

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 11, No. 67, May, 1863 eBook

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 11, No. 67, May, 1863

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I.

What Southey says of Cottle's shop is true of the little bookstore in a certain old town of New England, which I used to frequent years ago, and where I got my first peep into Chaucer, and Spenser, and Fuller, and Sir Thomas Browne, and other renowned old authors, from whom I now derive so much pleasure and solacement. 'Twas a place where sundry lovers of good books used to meet and descant eloquently and enthusiastically upon the merits and demerits of their favorite authors. I, then a young man, with a most praiseworthy desire of reading "books that are books," but with a most lamentable ignorance of even the names of the principal English authors, was both a pleased and a benefited listener to the conversations of these bookish men. Hawthorne says that to hear the old Inspector (whom he has immortalized in the quaint and genial introduction to the "Scarlet Letter") expatiate on fish, poultry, and butcher's-meat, and the most eligible methods of preparing the same for the table, was as appetizing as a pickle or an oyster; and to hear these literary gourmands talk with such gusto of this writer's delightful style, or of that one's delicious humor, or t' other's brilliant wit and merciless satire, gave one a taste and a relish for the authors so lovingly and heartily commended. Certainly, after hearing the genial, scholarly, gentlemanly lawyer S—— sweetly discourse on the old English divines,—or bluff, burly, good-natured, wit-loving Master R—— declaim, in his loud, bold, enthusiastic manner, on the old English dramatists,—or queer, quaint, golden-hearted Dr. D—— mildly and modestly, yet most pertinently, express himself about Old Burton and Old Fuller,—or wise, thoughtful, ingenious Squire M—— ably, if not very eloquently, hold forth on Shakspeare and Milton, I had (who but a dunce or dunderhead would not have had?) a "greedy great desire" to look into the works of

"Such famous men, such worthies of the earth."

And after listening to the stout, brawny, two-fisted, whole-soled, big-hearted, large-brained Parson A——, as he talked in his wise and winsome manner about Charles Lamed and his writings, I could not refrain from forthwith procuring and reading Elia's famous and immortal essays. Since then I have been a constant reader of Elia, and a most zealous admirer of Charles Lamb the author and Charles Lamb the man. Thackeray, you remember, somewhere mentions a youthful admirer of Dickens, who, when she is happy, reads "Nicholas Nickleby,"—when she is unhappy, reads "Nicholas Nickleby,"—when she is in bed, reads "Nicholas Nickleby,"—when she has nothing to do, reads "Nicholas Nickleby,"—and when she has finished the book, reads "Nicholas Nickleby": and so do I read and re-read the essays and letters of Charles Lamb; and the oftener I read them, the better I like them, the higher I value them. Indeed, I live upon the essays of Elia, as Hazlitt did upon "Tristram Shandy," as a sort of food that simulates with my natural disposition.

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And yet, despite all my love and admiration of Charles Lamb,—nay, rather in consequence of it,—I must blame him of what Mr. Barron Field was please to eulogize him for,—writing so little. Undoubtedly in most authors suppression in writing would be a virtue. In Lamb it was a fault. There are a score or two of subjects which he, “no less from temerity than felicity of his pen,” should have written upon,—subjects on which he had thought and ruminated for years, and which he, and none but he, could do justice to. He who loved and admired before or since, such sterling old writers as Burton, Browne, Fuller, and Walton, should have given us an article on each of those worthies and their inditing. Chaucer and Spenser, though proud and happy in having had such an appreciating reader of there writings as Elia was, when denizen of this earth, would, methinks, have given him a warmer, heartier, gladder welcome to heaven, if he had done for them what he did for Hogarth and the old dramatists,—pointed out to the would “with a finger of fire” the truth and beauty contained in their works. Instead of writing only two volumes of essays, Elia should have written a dozen. He had read, heard, thought, and seen enough to furnish matter for twice that number. He himself confesseth, in a letter written a year or two before his death, that he felt as if he had a thousand essays swelling within him. Oh that Elia, like Mr. Spectator, had printed himself out before he died!

But notwithstanding Lamb's fame and popularity, notwithstanding all readers of his inimitable essays lament that one who wrote so delightfully as Elia did should have written so little, their has not yet be published a complete collection of his writings. The standard edition of his works, edited by Talfourd, is far from being complete. Surely the author of “Ion” was unwise in not publishing all of Lamb's productions. Carlyle said he wanted to know all about Margaret Fuller, even to the color of her stocking. And the admirers of Elia wanted to possess every scrap and fragment of his inditing. They cannot let oblivion have the lease “notelet” or “essaykin” of his. For, however inferior to his best productions these uncollected articles may be, they must contain more or less of Lamb's humor, sense, and observation. Somewhat of his delightful individuality must be stamped upon them. In brief, they cannot but contain much that would amuse and entertain all admirers of their author. For myself, I would rather read the poorest of these uncollected essays of Elia than the best productions of some of the most popular of modern authors. “The king's chaff is as good as other people's corn,” saith the old proverb. “There is a pleasure arising from the very bagatelles of men renowned for their knowledge and genius,” says Goldsmith; “and we receive with veneration those pieces, after they are dead, which would lessen them in our estimation while living: sensible that we shall enjoy them no more, we treasure up, as precious relics, every saying and word that has escaped them; but their writings, of every kind, we deem inestimable.”

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For years I have been hopefully and patiently waiting for somebody to collect and publish these scattered and all but forgotten articles of Lamb's; but at last, seeing no likelihood of its being done at present, if ever in my day, and fearing that I might else never have an opportunity of perusing these strangely neglected writings of my favorite author, I commenced the task of searching out and discovering them myself for mine own delectation. And after a deal of fruitless and aimless labor, (for, unlike Johannes Scotus Erigena, in his quest of a treatise of Aristotle, I had no oracle to consult,) after spending as many days in turning over the leaves of I know not how many volumes of old, dusty, musty, fusty periodicals as Mr. Vernon ran miles after a butterfly, I was amply rewarded for all my pains. For I not only found all of Lamb's uncollected writings that are spoken of in his "Life and Letters," but a goodly number of articles from his pen which neither he nor his biographer has ever alluded to. As I read these (to me) new essays of Elia, I could not but feel somewhat indignant that such excellent productions of such an excellent writer should have been "underkept and down suppress" so long. I was as much ravished with these new-found essays of Lamb's as good old Nicholas Gerbelius (see Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," Partition II., Section 2, Member 4) was with a few Greek authors restored to light. If I had had one or two loving, enthusiastic admirers of Charles Lamb to enjoy with me the delight of perusing these uncollected Elias, I should have been "all felicity up to the brim." For with me, as with Michael de Montaigne and Hans Andersen, there is no pleasure without communication.

And therefore, partly to please myself, and partly to please the admirers of Charles Lamb, I herewith publish a part of Elia's uncollected essays and sketches. To ninety-nine hundredths of their author's readers they will be as good as MSS. And not only will they be new to most readers, but they will be found to be not wholly unworthy of him who wrote the immortal dissertation on "Roast Pig." Albeit not to be compared with Elia's best and most finished productions, these articles contain some of the best qualities and peculiarities of his genius. Without doubt, all genuine admirers, all true lovers of the gentle, genial, delightful Elia, will be mightily pleased with these productions of his inimitable pen.

Those who were so fortunate as to be personally acquainted with Charles Lamb are lavish in their praise of his conversational powers. Hazlitt says that no one ever stammered out such fine, piquant, deep, eloquent things in a half-dozen half-sentences as he did. "He always made the best pun and the best remark in the course of the evening." Lamb was undoubtedly "matchless as a fireside companion," inimitable as a table-talker, "great at the midnight hour." The "wit-combats" at his Wednesday-evening parties were waged with scarcely

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inferior skill and ability to those fought at the old Mermaid tavern between Shakspeare and Ben Jonson. Hazlitt, in his delightful essay intituled "Persons One would Wish to have Seen," gives a masterly report of the sayings and doings at one of these parties. It is to be regretted that he did not report the conversation at all of these weekly assemblages of wits, humorists, and good-fellows. He made a capital book out of the conversation of James Northcote: he could have made a better one out of the conversation of Charles Lamb. Indeed, Elia himself seems to have been conscious that many of his deepest, wisest, best thoughts and ideas, as well as wildest, wittiest, airiest fancies and conceits, were vented in conversation; and a few months before his death he noted down for the entertainment of the readers of the London "Athenaeum," a few specimens of his table-talk. Although these paragraphs of table-talk are not transcripts of their author's actual conversation, they doubtless contain the pith and substance of what he had really said in some of his familiar discourses with friends and acquaintances. They contain none of his "jests that scald like tears," none of his play upon words, none of his flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table on a roar, but some of his sweet, serious, beautiful thoughts and fancies.

Strange that Talfourd neglected to print "Table-Talk" in his edition of Lamb! He does not even mention it. It is certainly as good, if not a great deal better than some things of Lamb's which he saw fit to reprint. But the best way to praise Elia's "Table-Talk" is, as the "Tatler" says of South's wise and witty discourse on the "Pleasures of Religious Wisdom," to quote it; and therefore here followeth, without further comment or introduction,—

"Table-talk. By the late Elia.

"It is a desideratum in works that treat *de re culinaria*, that we have no rationale of sauces, or theory of mixed flavors: as to show why cabbage is reprehensible with roast beef, laudable with bacon; why the haunch of mutton seeks the alliance of currant-jelly, the shoulder civilly declineth it; why loin of veal, (a pretty problem,) being itself unctuous, seeketh the adventitious lubricity of melted butter,—and why the same part in pork, not more oleaginous, abhorreth from it; why the French bean sympathizes with the flesh of deer; why salt fish points to parsnip, brawn makes a dead-set at mustard; why cats prefer valerian to heart's-ease, old ladies *vice versa*,—though this is rather travelling out of the road of the dietetics, and may be thought a question more curious than relevant; why salmon (a strong sapor *per se*) fortieth its condition with the mighty lobster-sauce, whose embraces are fatal to the delicater relish of the turbot; why oysters in death rise up against the contamination of brown sugar, while they are posthumously amorous of vinegar; why the sour mango and the sweet jam by

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turns court and are accepted by the compilable mutton-hash,—she not yet decidedly declaring for either. We are as yet but in the empirical stage of cookery. We feed ignorantly, and want to be able to give a reason of the relish that is in us; so that, if Nature should furnish us with a new meat, or be prodigally pleased to restore the phoenix, upon a *given* flavor, we might be able to pronounce instantly, on philosophical principles, what the sauce to it should be,—what the curious adjuncts.”

* * * * *

“The greatest pleasure I know is to do a good action by stealth and to have it found out by accident.”

* * * * *

“T is unpleasant to meet a beggar. It is painful to deny him; and if you relieve him, it is so much out of your pocket.”

* * * * *

“Men marry for fortune, and sometimes to please their fancy; but, much oftener than is suspected, they consider what the world will say of it, how such a woman in their friends’ eyes will look at the head of a table. Hence we see so many insipid beauties made wives of, that could not have struck the particular fancy of any man that had any fancy at all. These I call *furniture wives*; as men buy *furniture pictures*, because they suit this or that niche in their dining-parlors.

“Your universally cried-up beauties are the very last choice which a man of taste would make. What pleases all cannot have that individual charm which makes this or that countenance engaging to you, and to you only perhaps, you know not why. What gained the fair Gunnings titled husbands, who, after all, turned out very sorry wives? Popular repute.”

* * * * *

“It is a sore trial, when a daughter shall marry against her father’s approbation. A little hard-heartedness, and aversion to a reconciliation, is almost pardonable. After all, Will Dockwray’s way is, perhaps, the wisest. His best-loved daughter made a most imprudent match,—in fact, eloped with the last man in the world that her father would have wished her to marry. All the world said that he would never speak to her again. For months she durst not write to him, much less come near him. But, in a casual rencounter, he met her in the streets of Ware,—Ware, that will long remember the mild virtues of William Dockwray, Esq. What said the parent to his disobedient child, whose knees faltered under her at the sight of him? ‘Ha, Sukey, is it you?’ with that benevolent

aspect with which he paced the streets of Ware, venerated as an angel,—‘come and dine with us on Sunday’; then turning away, and again turning back, as if he had forgotten something, he added,—‘and, Sukey, do you hear? bring your husband with you.’ This was all the reproof she ever heard from him. Need it be added that the match turned out better for Susan than the world expected?”

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* * * * *

“‘We read the “Paradise Lost” as a task,’ says Dr. Johnson. Nay, rather as a celestial recreation, of which the dullard mind is not at all hours alike recipient. ‘Nobody ever wished it longer’;—nor the moon rounder, he might have added. Why, ’tis the perfectness and completeness of it which makes us imagine that not a line could be added to it, or diminished from it, with advantage. Would we have a cubit added to the stature of the Medicean Venus? Do we wish her taller?”

* * * * *

“Amidst the complaints of the wide spread of infidelity among us, it is consolatory that a sect is sprung up in the heart of the metropolis, and is daily on the increase, of teachers of that healing doctrine which Pope upheld, and against which Voltaire directed his envenomed wit. We mean those practical preachers of Optimism, or the belief that *Whatever is best*, the cads of omnibuses, who, from their little back pulpits, not once in three or four hours, as those proclaimers of ‘God and His prophet’ in Mussulman countries, but every minute, at the entry or exit of a brief passenger, are heard, in an almost prophetic tone, to exclaim, (Wisdom crying out, as it were, in the streets,) ‘*All’s right!*’”

* * * * *

“Advice is not so commonly thrown away as is imagined. We seek it in difficulties. But, in common speech, we are apt to confound with it *admonition*: as when a friend reminds one that drink is prejudicial to the health, *etc.* We do not care to be told of that which we know better than the good man that admonishes. M—— sent to his friend L——, who is no water-drinker, a two-penny tract ‘Against the Use of Fermented Liquors.’ L—— acknowledged the obligation, as far as to *twopence*. Penotier’s advice was the safest, after all:—

“‘I advised him’—

“But I must tell you. The dear, good-meaning, no-thinking creature had been dumbfounding a company of us with a detail of inextricable difficulties in which the circumstances of an acquaintance of his were involved. No clue of light offered itself. He grew more and more misty as he proceeded. We pitied his friend, and thought,—

“‘God help the man so wrapt in error’s endless
maze!’

“when, suddenly brightening up his placid countenance, like one that had found out a riddle, and looked to have the solution admired,—

“‘At last,’ said he, ‘I advised him’—

“Here he paused, and here we were again interminably thrown back. By no possible guess could any of us aim at the drift of the meaning he was about to be delivered of.

“‘I advised him,’ he repeated, ‘to have some *advice* upon the subject.’

“A general approbation followed; and it was unanimously agreed, that, under all the circumstances of the case, no sounder or more judicious counsel could have been given.”

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* * * * *

“A laxity pervades the popular use of words.

“Parson W—— is not quite so continent as Diana, yet prettily dissembleth his frailty. Is Parson W—— therefore a *hypocrite*? I think not. Where the concealment of a vice is less pernicious than the barefaced publication of it would be, no additional delinquency is incurred in the secrecy.

“Parson W—— is simply an immoral clergyman. But if Parson W—— were to be forever haranguing on the opposite virtue,—choosing for his perpetual text, in preference to all other pulpit-topics, the remarkable resistance recorded in the 89th of Exodus [Genesis?],—dwelling, moreover, and dilating upon it,—then Parson W—— might be reasonably suspected of hypocrisy. But Parson W—— rarely diverteth into such line of argument, or toucheth it briefly. His ordinary topics are fetched from ‘obedience to the powers that are,’—‘submission to the civil magistrate in all commands that are not absolutely unlawful’; on which he can delight to expatiate with equal fervor and sincerity.

“Again. To *despise* a person is properly to *look down* upon him with none or the least possible emotion. But when Clementina, who has lately lost her lover, with bosom heaving, eyes flashing, and her whole frame in agitation, pronounces with a peculiar emphasis that she ‘*despises* the fellow,’ depend upon it that he is not quite so despicable in her eyes as she would have us imagine.

“One more instance. If we must naturalize that portentous phrase, *a truism*, it were well that we limited the use of it. Every commonplace or trite observation is not a truism. For example: A good name helps a man on in the world. This is nothing but a simple truth, however hackneyed. It has a distinct subject and predicate. But when the thing predicated is involved in the term of the subject, and so necessarily involved that by no possible conception they can be separated, then it becomes a truism; as to say, A good name is a proof of a man’s estimation in the world. We seem to be saying something, when we say nothing. I was describing to F—— some knavish tricks of a mutual friend of ours. ‘If he did so and so,’ was the reply, ‘he cannot be an honest man.’ Here was a genuine truism, truth upon truth, inference and proposition identical,—or rather, a dictionary definition usurping the place of an inference.”

* * * * *

“We are ashamed at sight of a monkey,—somehow as we are shy of poor relations.”

* * * * *



“C—— imagined a Caledonian compartment in Hades, where there should be fire without sulphur.”

* * * * *

“Absurd images are sometimes irresistible. I will mention two. An elephant in a coach-office gravely coming to have his trunk booked;—a mermaid over a fish-kettle cooking her own tail.”

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* * * * *

“It is the praise of Shakspeare, with reference to the playwrights, his contemporaries, that he has so few revolting characters. Yet he has one that is singularly mean and disagreeable,—the King in ‘Hamlet.’ Neither has he characters of insignificance, unless the phantom that stalks over the stage as Julius Caesar, in the play of that name, may be accounted one. Neither has he envious characters, excepting the short part of Don John, in ‘Much Ado about Nothing.’ Neither has he unentertaining characters, if we except Parolles, and the little that there is of the Clown, in ‘All’s Well that Ends Well.’”

* * * * *

“It would settle the dispute as to whether Shakspeare intended Othello for a jealous character, to consider how differently we are affected towards him, and for Leontes in the ‘Winter’s Tale.’ Leontes *is* that character. Othello’s fault was simply credulity.”

* * * * *

“Is it possible that Shakspeare should never have read Homer, in Chapman’s version at least? If he had read it, could he mean to *travesty* it in the parts of those big boobies, Ajax and Achilles? Ulysses, Nestor, and Agamemnon are true to their parts in the ‘Iliad’; they are gentlemen at least. Thersites, though unamusing, is fairly deducible from it. Troilus and Cressida are a fine graft upon it. But those two big bulks”—

* * * * *

Disraeli wrote a book on the Quarrels of Authors. Somebody should write one on the Friendships of Literary Men. If such a work is ever written, Charles Lamb and Samuel Taylor Coleridge will be honorably mentioned therein. For among all the friendships celebrated in tale or history there is none more admirable than that which existed between these two eminent men. The “golden thread that tied their hearts together” was never broken. Their friendship was never “chipped or diminished”; but the longer they lived, the stronger it grew. Death could not destroy it.

Lamb, after Coleridge’s death, as if weary of “this green earth,” as if not caring if “sun, and sky, and breeze, and solitary walks, and summer holidays, and the greenness of fields, and the delicious juices of meats and fishes, and society, and the cheerful glass, and candle-light, and fireside conversations, and innocent vanities, and jests, and irony itself,” went out with life, willingly sought “Lavinian shores.”

“Lamb,” as Mr. John Foster says, in his beautiful tribute to his memory, “never fairly recovered the death of Coleridge. He thought of little else (his sister was but another portion of himself) until his own great spirit joined his friend. He had a habit of venting his melancholy in a sort of mirth. He would, with nothing graver than a pun, ‘cleanse his

bosom of the perilous stuff that weighed' upon it. In a jest, or a few light phrases, he would lay open the last recesses

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of his heart. So in respect of the death of Coleridge. Some old friends of his saw him two or three weeks ago and remarked the constant turning and reference of his mind. He interrupted-himself and then almost every instant with some play of affected wonder, or astonishment, or humorous melancholy, on the words, '*Coleridge is dead.*' Nothing could divert him from that, for the thought of it never left him. About the same time, we had written to him to request a few lines for the literary album of a gentleman who entertained a fitting admiration of his genius. It was the last request we were destined to make, the last kindness we were allowed to receive. He wrote in Mr. Keymer's volume,—and wrote of Coleridge."

And this is what he said of his friend: it would be, as Mr. Foster says, impertinence to offer one remark on it:—

"When I heard of the death of Coleridge, it was without grief. It seemed to me that he long had been on the confines of the next world,—that he had a hunger for eternity. I grieved then that I could not grieve. But since, I feel how great a part he was of me. His great and dear spirit haunts me. I cannot think a thought, I cannot make a criticism on men or books, without an ineffectual turning and reference to him. He was the proof and touchstone of all my cogitations. He was a Grecian (or in the first form) at Christ's Hospital, where I was Deputy-Grecian; and the same subordination and deference to him I have preserved through a life-long acquaintance. Great in his writings, he was greatest in his conversation. In him was disproved that old maxim, that we should allow every one his share of talk. He would talk from morn to dewy eve, nor cease till far midnight; yet who ever would interrupt him? who would obstruct that continuous flow of converse, fetched from Helicon or Zion? He had the tact of making the unintelligible seem plain. Many who read the abstruser parts of his 'Friend' would complain that his works did not answer to his spoken wisdom. They were identical. But he had a tone in oral delivery which seemed to convey sense to those who were otherwise imperfect recipients. He was my fifty-years-old friend without a dissension. Never saw I his likeness, nor probably the world can see again. I seem to love the house he died at more passionately than when he lived. I love the faithful Gilmans more than while they exercised their virtues towards him living. What was his mansion is consecrated to me a chapel.

"CHS. LAMB.

"EDMONTON, November 21, 1834."

* * * * *

Having seen what Charles Lamb says of Coleridge, perhaps the reader would like to see what Charles Lamb says of himself. For he, (though but few of his readers are

aware of the fact,) like Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Gibbon, Franklin, and other eminent men, wrote an autobiography. It is certainly the briefest, and perhaps the wittiest and most truthful autobiographical sketch in the language. It was published in the “New Monthly Magazine” a few months after its author’s death, with the following preface or introduction from the pen of some unknown admirer of Elia:—

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“We have been favored, by the kindness of Mr. Upcott, with the following sketch, written in one of his manuscript collections, by Charles Lamb. It will be read with deep interest by all, but with the deepest interest by those who had the honor and the happiness of knowing the writer. It is so singularly characteristic, that we can scarcely persuade ourselves we do not hear it, as we read, spoken from his living lips. Slight as it is, it conveys the most exquisite and perfect notion of the personal manner and habits of our friend. For the intellectual rest, we lift the veil of its noble modesty, and can even here discern them. Mark its humor, crammed into a few thinking words,—its pathetic sensibility in the midst of contrast,—its wit, truth, and feeling,—and, above all, its fanciful retreat at the close under a phantom cloud of death.”

CHARLES LAMB’S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

“Charles Lamb, born in the Inner Temple, 10th February, 1775; educated in Christ’s Hospital; afterwards a clerk in the Accountants’ Office, East-India House; pensioned off from that service, 1825, after thirty-three years’ service; is now a gentleman at large;—can remember few specialties in his life worth noting, except that he once caught a swallow flying (*teste sua manu*). Below the middle stature; cast of face slightly Jewish, with no Judaic tinge in his complexional religion; stammers abominably, and is therefore more apt to discharge his occasional conversation in a quaint aphorism or a poor quibble than in set and edifying speeches; has consequently been libelled as a person always aiming at wit, which, as he told a dull fellow that charged him with it, is at least as good as aiming at dulness. A small eater, but not drinker; confesses a partiality for the production of the juniper-berry; was a fierce smoker of tobacco, but may be resembled to a volcano burnt out, emitting only now and then a casual puff. Has been guilty of obtruding upon the public a tale in prose, called ‘Rosamund Gray,’—a dramatic sketch, named ‘John Woodvil,’—a ‘Farewell Ode to Tobacco,’—with sundry other poems, and light prose matter, collected in two slight crown octavos, and pompously christened his works, though in fact they were his recreations, and his true works may be found on the shelves of Leadenhall Street, filling some hundred folios. He is also the true Elia, whose essays are extant in a little volume, published a year or two since, and rather better known from that name without a meaning than from anything he has done, or can hope to do, in his own. He also was the first to draw the public attention to the old English dramatists, in a work called ‘Specimens of English Dramatic Writers who lived about the Time of Shakspeare,’ published about fifteen years since. In short, all his merits and demerits to set forth would take to the end of Mr. Upcott’s book, and then not be told truly.

“He died ____ 18__, much lamented.[A]
Witness his hand,
CHARLES LAMB.

“18th April, 1827.”

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[Footnote A: "*To Anybody*—Please to fill up these blanks."]

Lamb, if he did not find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, and sermons in stones, found good in everything. The soul of goodness in things evil was visible to him. He had thought, felt, and suffered so much, that, as Leigh Hunt says, he literally had intolerance for nothing. Though he could see but little religion in many professing Christians, he nevertheless saw that the motley players, "made up of mimic laughter and tears, passing from the extremes of joy or woe at the prompter's call," were not so godless and impious as the world believed them to be.

Writing to Bernard Barton in the spring of 1826, Lamb says, speaking of his literary projects,—“A little thing without name will also be printed on the Religion of the Actors, but it is out of your way; so I recommend you, with true author's hypocrisy, to skip it.” I wonder if “good B.B.” read the article, and, if he did, how he liked it. Quaker though he was, he could not but have been pleased with it. Should you like to read the “Religion of the Actors,” reader? You will not find it in any edition of Charles Lamb's writings. Here it is.

THE RELIGION OF ACTORS.

“The world has hitherto so little troubled its head with the points of doctrine held by a community which contributes in other ways so largely to its amusement, that, before the late mischance of a celebrated tragic actor, it scarce condescended to look into the practice of any individual player, much less to inquire into the hidden and abscondite springs of his actions. Indeed, it is with some violence to the imagination that we conceive of an actor as belonging to the relations of private life, so closely do we identify these persons in our mind with the characters which they assume upon the stage. How oddly does it sound, when we are told that the late Miss Pope, for instance,—that is to say, in our notion of her, Mrs. Candor,—was a good daughter, an affectionate sister, and exemplary in all the parts of domestic life! With still greater difficulty can we carry our notions to church, and conceive of Liston kneeling upon a hassock, or Munden uttering a pious ejaculation, ‘making mouths at the invisible event.’ But the times are fast improving; and if the process of sanctity begun under the happy auspices of the present licenser go on to its completion, it will be as necessary for a comedian to give an account of his faith as of his conduct. Fawcett must study the five points; and Dicky Suett, if he were alive, would have had to rub up his catechism. Already the effects of it begin to appear. A celebrated performer has thought fit to oblige the world with a confession of his faith,—or, Br——’s ‘Religio Dramatici.’ This gentleman, in his laudable attempt to shift from his person the obloquy of Judaism, with the forwardness of a new convert, in trying to prove too much, has, in the opinion of many, proved too little. A simple

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declaration of his Christianity was sufficient; but, strange to say, his apology has not a word about it. We are left to gather it from some expressions which imply that he is a Protestant; but we did not wish to inquire into the niceties of his orthodoxy. To his friends of the *old persuasion* the distinction was impertinent; for what cares Rabbi Ben Kimchi for the differences which have split our novelty? To the great body of Christians that hold the Pope's supremacy—that is to say, to the major part of the Christian world—his religion will appear as much to seek as ever. But perhaps he conceived that all Christians are Protestants, as children, and the common people call all that are not animals Christians. The mistake was not very considerable in so young a proselyte. Or he might think the general (as logicians speak) involved in the particular. All Protestants are Christians; but I am a Protestant; *ergo, etc.*: as if a marmoset, contending to be a man, overleaping that term as too generic and vulgar, should at once roundly proclaim himself to be a gentleman. The argument would be, as we say, *ex abundanti*. From whichever cause this *excessus in terminis* proceeded, we can do no less than congratulate the general state of Christendom upon the accession of so extraordinary a convert. Who was the happy instrument of the conversion we are yet to learn: it comes nearest to the attempt of the late pious Doctor Watts to Christianize the Psalms of the Old Testament. Something of the old Hebrew raciness is lost in the transfusion; but much of its asperity is softened and pared down in the adaptation.

“The appearance of so singular a treatise at this conjuncture has set us upon an inquiry into the present state of religion upon the stage generally. By the favor of the church-wardens of Saint Martin's in the Fields, and Saint Paul's, Covent Garden, who have very readily, and with great kindness, assisted our pursuit, we are enabled to lay before the public the following particulars. Strictly speaking, neither of the two great bodies is collectively a religious institution. We had expected to have found a chaplain among them, as at Saint Stephen's, and other Court establishments; and were the more surprised at the omission, as the last Mr. Bengough, at the one house, and Mr. Powell at the other, from a gravity of speech and demeanor, and the habit of wearing black at their first appearances in the beginning of *fifth* or the conclusion of *fourth acts*, so eminently pointed out their qualifications for such office. These corporations, then, being not properly congregational, we must seek the solution of our question in the tastes, attainments, accidental breeding, and education of the individual members of them. As we were prepared to expect, a majority at both houses adhere to the religion of the Church Established, only that at one of them a pretty strong leaven of Catholicism is suspected,—which, considering

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the notorious education of the manager at a foreign seminary, is not so much to be wondered at. Some have gone so far as to report that Mr. T——y, in particular, belongs to an order lately restored on the Continent. We can contradict this: that gentleman is a member of the Kirk of Scotland; and his name is to be found, much to his honor, in the list of seceders from the congregation of Mr. Fletcher. While the generality, as we have said, are content to jog on in the safe trammels of national orthodoxy, symptoms of a sectarian spirit have broken out in quarters where we should least have looked for it. Some of the ladies at both houses are deep in controverted points. Miss F——e, we are credibly informed, is *Sub-*, and Madame V——a *Supra-*Lapsarian. Mr. Pope is the last of the exploded sect of the Ranters. Mr. Sinclair has joined the Shakers. Mr. Grimaldi, Senior, after being long a Jumper, has lately fallen into some whimsical theories respecting the Fall of Man; which he understands, not of an allegorical, but a *real tumble*, by which the whole body of humanity became, as it were, lame to the performance of good works. Pride he will have to be nothing but a stiff neck; irresolution, the nerves shaken; an inclination to sinister paths, crookedness of the joints; spiritual deadness, a paralysis; want of charity, a contraction in the fingers; despising of government, a broken head; the plaster, a sermon; the lint to bind it up, the text; the probers, the preachers; a pair of crutches, the old and new law; a bandage, religious obligation: a fanciful mode of illustration, derived from the accidents and habits of his past calling *spiritualized*, rather than from any accurate acquaintance with the Hebrew text, in which report speaks him but a raw scholar. Mr. Elliston, from all that we can learn, has his religion yet to choose; though some think him a Muggletonian.”

* * * * *

Willis, in his “Pencillings by the Way,” describing his interview with Charles and Mary Lamb, says,—“Nothing could be more delightful than the kindness and affection between the brother and the sister, though Lamb was continually taking advantage of her deafness to mystify her with the most singular gravity upon every topic that was started. ‘Poor Mary!’ said he, ‘she hears all of an epigram but the point.’ ‘What are you saying of me, Charles?’ she asked. ‘Mr. Willis,’ said he, raising his voice, ‘admires *your* “Confessions of a Drunkard” very much, and I was saying it was no merit of yours that you understood the subject.’ We had been speaking of this admirable essay (which is his own) half an hour before.”

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That essay has been strangely and purposely misunderstood. Elia, albeit he loved the cheerful glass, was not a drunkard. The “poor nameless egotist” of the Confessions is not Charles Lamb. In printing the article in the “London Magazine,” (it was originally contributed to a collection of tracts published by Basil Montagu,) Elia introduced it to the readers of that periodical in the following explanatory paragraphs. They should be printed in all editions of Elia as a note to the article they explain and comment on. For many persons, like a writer in the London “Quarterly Review” for July, 1822, believe, or profess to believe, that this “fearful picture of the consequences of intemperance” is a true tale. “How far it was from actual truth,” says Talfourd, “the essays of Elia, the production of a later day, in which the maturity of his feeling, humor, and reason is exhibited, may sufficiently show.”

ELIA ON HIS “CONFESSIONS OF A DRUNKARD.”

“Many are the sayings of Elia, painful and frequent his lucubrations, set forth for the most part (such his modesty!) without a name, scattered about in obscure periodicals and forgotten miscellanies. From the dust of some of these it is our intention occasionally to revive a tract or two that shall seem worthy of a better fate, especially at a time like the present, when the pen of our industrious contributor, engaged in a laborious digest of his recent Continental tour, may haply want the leisure to expatiate in more miscellaneous speculations. We have been induced, in the first instance, to reprint a thing which he put forth in a friend’s volume some years since, entitled ‘The Confessions of a Drunkard,’ seeing that Messieurs the Quarterly Reviewers have chosen to embellish their last dry pages with fruitful quotations therefrom; adding, from their peculiar brains, the gratuitous affirmation, that they have reason to believe that the describer (in his delineations of a drunkard, forsooth!) partly sat for his own picture. The truth is, that our friend had been reading among the essays of a contemporary, who has perversely been confounded with him, a paper in which Edax (or the Great Eater) humorously complaineth of an inordinate appetite; and it struck him that a better paper—of deeper interest, and wider usefulness—might be made out of the imagined experiences of a Great Drinker. Accordingly he set to work, and, with that mock fervor and counterfeit earnestness with which he is too apt to over-realize his descriptions, has given us a frightful picture indeed, but no more resembling the man Elia than the fictitious Edax may be supposed to identify itself with Mr. L., its author. It is, indeed, a compound extracted out of his long observations of the effects of drinking upon all the world about him; and this accumulated mass of misery he hath centred (as the custom is with judicious essayists) in a single figure. We deny not that a portion of his own experiences may have passed into the picture,

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(as who, that is not a washy fellow, but must at some times have felt the after-operation of a too generous cup?)—but then how heightened! how exaggerated! how little within the sense of the Review, where a part, in their slanderous usage, must be understood to stand for the whole! But it is useless to expostulate with this Quarterly slime, brood of Nilus, watery heads with hearts of jelly, spawned under the sign of Aquarius, incapable of Bacchus, and therefore cold, washy, spiteful, bloodless. Elia shall string them up one day, and show their colors,—or rather, how colorless and vapid the whole fry,—when he putteth forth his long-promised, but unaccountably hitherto delayed, ‘Confessions of a Water-Drinker.’”

* * * * *

In turning over the leaves of divers old periodicals in search of the “Religion of Actors,” I accidentally and unexpectedly found an article by Charles Lamb entitled, “On the Custom of Hissing at the Theatres, with some Account of a Club of Damned Authors.”

Lamb, we know, was a great lover of the drama,—a true patron and admirer of playwrights and play-actors. He was, perhaps, the greatest theatrical critic that ever lived. Many of the happiest hours of his life were passed in reading the works of the old English dramatists, and in witnessing the performances of favorite actors. He once had hopes of being a successful dramatist himself, and to that end devoted many of his spare hours and odd moments to the composition of a tragedy. (“John Woodvil,”) which John Kemble, “the stately manager of Drury Lane,” refused to bring out. But not wholly discouraged by the ill success of his tragedy, he tried his hand at a farce, and produced “Mr. H.,” which, to the author’s exceeding great delight, was accepted by the manager of Drury-Lane Theatre.[B]

[Footnote B: Talfourd says that the acceptance of “Mr. H.” gave Lamb some of the happiest moments he ever spent.]

To Manning, then sojourning among the Mandarins, he thus writes of “Mr. H.”:—

“Now you’d like to know the subject. The title is ‘Mr. H.’,—no more: how simple! how taking! A great H sprawling over the play-bill, and attracting eyes at every corner. The story is a coxcomb appearing at Bath, vastly rich,—all the ladies dying for him, all bursting to know who he is; but he goes by no other name than Mr. H.: a curiosity like that of the dames of Strasburg about the man with the great nose. But I won’t tell you any more about it. Yes, I will; but I can’t give you an idea how I have done it. I’ll just tell you, that, after much vehement admiration, when his true name comes out, ‘Hogsflesh,’ all the women shun him, avoid him, and not one can be found to change their name for him: that’s the idea: how flat it is here! but how whimsical in the farce! And only think

how hard upon me it is, that the ship is despatched to-morrow, and my triumph cannot be ascertained till the Wednesday after;—but all China will ring of it by-and-by.”

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Would that Lamb's joyous and exultant anticipations of "Mr. H."s success had proved true! But, instead of being greeted with the applause of pit and gallery, which would have stood Elia instead of "the unheard voice of posterity," the piece was hissed and hooted from the stage.

In a letter to Manning, written early in 1808, he thus, half humorously, half pathetically, describes the reception the town gave "Mr. H.":—

"So I go creeping on since I was lamed with that cursed fall from off the top of Drury-Lane Theatre into the pit, something more than a year ago. However, I have been free of the house ever since, and the house was pretty free with me upon that occasion. Hang 'em, how they hissed! It was not a hiss neither, but a sort of a frantic yell, like a congregation of mad geese, with roaring sometimes like bears, mows and mops like apes, sometimes snakes, that hissed me into madness. 'Twas like Saint Anthony's temptations. Mercy on us, that God should give his favorite children, men, mouths to speak with, to discourse rationally, to promise smoothly, to flatter agreeably, to encourage warmly, to counsel wisely, to sing with, to drink with, and to kiss with, and that they should turn them into mouths of adders, bears, wolves, hyenas, and whistle like tempests, and emit breath through them like distillations of aspic poison, to asperse and vilify the innocent labors of their fellow-creatures who are desirous to please them! Heaven be pleased to make the teeth rot out of them all, therefore! Make them a reproach, and all that pass by them to loll out their tongue at them! Blind mouths! as Milton somewhere calls them."

If his farce had been—what "Gentleman Lewis," who was present on the night of its performance, said, if he had had it, he would have made it, by a few judicious curtailments—"the most popular little thing that had been brought out for some time," Lamb would not have written the following article.

"ON THE CUSTOM OF HISSING AT THE THEATRES, WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF A CLUB OF DAMNED AUTHORS.

"Mr. Reflector,—I am one of those persons whom the world has thought proper to designate by the title of Damned Authors. In that memorable season of dramatic failures, 1806-7, in which no fewer, I think, than two tragedies, four comedies, one opera, and three farces suffered at Drury-Lane Theatre, I was found guilty of constructing an afterpiece, and was *damned*.

"Against the decision of the public in such instances there can be no appeal. The Clerk of Chatham might as well have protested against the decision of Cade and his followers, who were then *the public*. Like him, I was condemned because I could write.

"Not but it did appear to some of us that the measures of the popular tribunal at that period savored a little of harshness and of the *summum jus*. The public mouth was

early in the season fleshed upon the 'Vindictive Man,' and some pieces of that nature, and it retained through the remainder of it a relish of blood. As Dr. Johnson would have said: Sir, there was a habit of sibilation in the house.

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“Still less am I disposed to inquire into the reason of the comparative lenity, on the other hand, with which some pieces were treated, which, to indifferent judges, seemed at least as much deserving of condemnation as some of those which met with it. I am willing to put, a favorable construction upon the votes that were given against us; I believe that there was no bribery or designed partiality in the case;—only ‘our nonsense did not happen to suit their nonsense’; that was all.

“But against the *manner* in which the public on these occasions think fit to deliver their disapprobation I must and ever will protest.

“Sir, imagine—but you have been present at the damning of a piece,—those who never had that felicity, I beg them to imagine—a vast theatre, like that which Drury Lane was, before it was a heap of dust and ashes, (I insult not over its fallen greatness; let it recover itself when it can for me, let it lift up its towering head once more, and take in poor authors to write for it; *hic coestus artemque repono*,)—a theatre like that, filled with all sorts of disgusting sounds,—shrieks, groans, hisses, but chiefly the last, like the noise of many waters, or that which Don Quixote heard from the fulling-mills, or that wilder combination of devilish sounds which Saint Anthony listened to in the wilderness.

“Oh, Mr. Reflector, is it not a pity, that the sweet human voice, which was given man to speak with, to sing with, to whisper tones of love in, to express compliance, to convey a favor, or to grant a suit,—that voice, which in a Siddons or a Braham rouses us, in a Siren Catalani charms and captivates us,—that the musical, expressive human voice should be converted into a rival of the noises of silly geese, and irrational, venomous snakes?

“I never shall forget the sounds on *my night*; I never before that time fully felt the reception which the Author of All Ill in the ‘Paradise Lost’ meets with from the critics in the *pit*, at the final close of his Tragedy upon the Human Race,—though that, alas! met with too much success:—

“‘from innumerable tongues,
A dismal universal *hiss*, the sound
Of public scorn. Dreadful was the din
Of *hissing* through the hall, thick swarming now
With complicated monsters, head and tail,
Scorpion and asp, and Amphisbaena dire,
Cerastes horned, Hydrus, and Elops drear,
And Dipsas.’

“For *hall* substitute *theatre*, and you have the very image of what takes place at what is called the *damnation* of a piece,—and properly so called; for here you see its origin plainly, whence the custom was derived, and what the first piece was that so suffered. After this none can doubt the propriety of the appellation.

“But, Sir, as to the justice of bestowing such appalling, heart-withering denunciations of the popular obloquy upon the venial mistake of a poor author who thought to please us in the act of filling his pockets,—for the sum of his demerits amounts to no more than that,—it does, I own, seem to me a species of retributive justice far too severe for the offence. A culprit in the pillory (bate the eggs) meets with no severer exprobration.

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“Indeed, I have often wondered that some modest critic has not proposed that there should be a wooden machine to that effect erected in some convenient part of the *proscenium*, which an unsuccessful author should be required to mount, and stand his hour, exposed to the apples and oranges of the pit. This *amende honorable* would well suit with the meanness of some authors, who in their prologues fairly prostrate their skulls to the audience, and seem to invite a pelting.

“Or why should they not have their pens publicly broke over their heads, as the swords of recreant knights in old times were, and an oath administered to them that they should never write again?

“Seriously, *Messieurs the Public*, this outrageous way which you have got of expressing your displeasures is too much for the occasion. When I was deafening under the effects of it, I could not help asking what crime of great moral turpitude I had committed: for every man about me seemed to feel the offence as personal to himself, as something which public interest and private feelings alike called upon him in the strongest possible manner to stigmatize with infamy.

“The Romans, it is well known to you, Mr. Reflector, took a gentler method of marking their disapprobation of an author’s work. They were a humane and equitable nation. They left the *furca* and the *patibulum*, the axe and the rods, to great offenders: for these minor and (if I may so term them) extra-moral offences *the bent thumb* was considered as a sufficient sign of disapprobation,—*vertere pollicem*; as *the pressed thumb*, *premere pollicem*, was a mark of approving.

“And really there seems to have been a sort of fitness in this method, a correspondence of sign in the punishment to the offence. For, as the action of writing is performed by bending the thumb forward, the retroversion or bending back of that joint did not unaptly point to the opposite of that action, implying that it was the will of the audience that the author should *write no more*: a much more significant, as well as more humane, way of expressing that desire, than our custom of hissing, which is altogether senseless and indefensible. Nor do we find that the Roman audiences deprived themselves, by this lenity, of any tittle of that supremacy which audiences in all ages have thought themselves bound to maintain over such as have been candidates for their applause. On the contrary, by this method they seem to have had the author, as we should express it, completely *under finger and thumb*.

“The provocations to which a dramatic genius is exposed from the public are so much the more vexatious as they are removed from any possibility of retaliation, the hope of which sweetens most other injuries: for the public *never writes itself*. Not but something very like it took place at the time of the O.-P. differences. The placards which were nightly exhibited were, properly speaking, the composition of the public. The public wrote them, the public applauded them, and precious morceaux of wit and eloquence they were,—except some few, of a better quality, which it is well known were

furnished by professed dramatic writers. After this specimen of what the public can do for itself, it should be a little slow in condemning what others do for it.

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“As the degrees of malignancy vary in people according as they have more or less of the Old Serpent (the father of hisses) in their composition, I have sometimes amused myself with analyzing this many-headed hydra, which calls itself the public, into the component parts of which it is ‘complicated, head and tail,’ and seeing how many varieties of the snake kind it can afford.

“First, there is the Common English Snake.—This is that part of the auditory who are always the majority at damnations, but who, having no critical venom in themselves to sting them on, stay till they hear others hiss, and then join in for company.

“The Blind Worm is a, species very nearly allied to the foregoing. Some naturalists have doubted whether they are not the same.

“The Rattle—Snake.—These are your obstreperous talking critics,—the impertinent guides of the pit,—who will not give a plain man leave to enjoy an evening’s entertainment, but, with their frothy jargon and incessant finding of faults, either drown his pleasure quite, or force him in his own defence to join in their clamorous censure. The hiss always originates with these. When this creature springs his *rattle*, you would think, from the noise it makes, there was something in it; but you have only to examine the instrument from which the noise proceeds, and you will find it typical of a critic’s tongue,—a shallow membrane, empty, voluble, and seated in the most contemptible part of the creature’s body.

“The Whip-Snake.—This is he that lashes the poor author the next day in the newspapers.

“The Deaf Adder, or *Surda Echidna* of Linnaeus.—Under this head may be classed all that portion of the spectators (for audience they properly are not) who, not finding the first act of a piece answer to their preconceived notions of what a first act should be, like Obstinate in John Bunyan, positively thrust their fingers in their ears, that they may not hear a word of what is coming, though perhaps the very next act may be composed in a style as different as possible, and be written quite to their own tastes. These Adders refuse to hear the voice of the charmer, because the tuning of his instrument gave them offence.

“I should weary you, and myself too, if I were to go through all the classes of the serpent kind. Two qualities are common to them all. They are creatures of remarkably cold digestions, and chiefly haunt *pits* and low grounds.

“I proceed with more pleasure to give you an account of a club to which I have the honor to belong. There are fourteen of us, who are all authors that have been once in our lives what is called *damned*. We meet on the anniversaries of our respective nights, and make ourselves merry at the expense of the public. The chief tenets which

distinguish our society, and which every man among us is bound to hold for gospel, are,
—

“That the public, or mob, in all ages, have been a set of blind, deaf, obstinate, senseless, illiterate savages. That no man of genius, in his senses, would be ambitious of pleasing such a capricious, ungrateful rabble. That the only legitimate end of writing for them is to pick their pockets, and, that failing, we are at full liberty to vilify and abuse them as much as ever we think fit.

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“That authors, by their affected pretences to humility, which they made use of as a cloak to insinuate their writings into the callous senses of the multitude, obtuse to everything but the grossest flattery, have by degrees made that great beast their master; as we may act submission to children till we are obliged to practise it in earnest. That authors are and ought to be considered the masters and preceptors of the public, and not *vice versa*. That it was so in the days of Orpheus, Linus, and Musaeus, and would be so again, if it were not that writers prove traitors to themselves. That, in particular, in the days of the first of those three great authors just mentioned, audiences appear to have been perfect models of what audiences should be; for, though along with the trees and the rocks and the wild creatures, which he drew after him to listen to his strains, some serpents doubtless came to hear his music, it does not appear that any one among them ever lifted up a *dissentient voice*. They knew what was due to authors in those days. Now every stock and stone turns into a serpent, and has a voice.

“That the terms ‘Courteous Reader’ and ‘Candid Auditors,’ as having given rise to a false notion in those to whom they were applied, as if they conferred upon them some right, *which they cannot have*, of exercising their judgments, ought to be utterly banished and exploded.

“These are our distinguishing tenets. To keep up the memory of the cause in which we suffered, as the ancients sacrificed a goat, a supposed unhealthy animal, to Aesculapius, on our feast-nights we cut up a goose, an animal typical of *the popular voice*, to the deities of Candor and Patient Hearing. A zealous member of the society once proposed that we should revive the obsolete luxury of viper-broth; but the stomachs of some of the company rising at the proposition, we lost the benefit of that highly salutary and *antidotal dish*.

“The privilege of admission to our club is strictly limited to such as have been fairly *damned*. A piece that has met with ever so little applause, that has but languished its night or two, and then gone out, will never entitle its author to a seat among us. An exception to our usual readiness in conferring this privilege is in the case of a writer who, having been once condemned, writes again, and becomes candidate for a second martyrdom. Simple damnation we hold to be a merit, but to be twice-damned we adjudge infamous. Such a one we utterly reject, and blackball without a hearing:—

“The common damned shun his society.

“Hoping that your publication of our Regulations may be a means of inviting some more members into our society, I conclude this long letter.

“I am, Sir, yours, SEMEL-DAMNATUS.”

* * * * *

DARK WAYS.

“Tortured with winter’s storms, and tossed with a tumultuous sea.”

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When God's curse forsook my country, it fell on me. I had been young and heroic; I had fought well; what portion of the clock-work of Fate had been allotted me I had utterly performed. Twelve years ago I became a man and strove for my country's freedom; now she has attained her heights without me, and I—what am I? A shapeless hulk, that stays in the shadow, and that hates the world and the people of the world, and verily the God above the world!

"Fight!" whispered Father Anselmo, the young priest, to me, at my last shrift; and fight I did. For from Italy's bosom I had drawn the strength of sword-arm, hip, and thigh; and I vowed to lose that arm and life and all that made life dear toward the trampling of oppressors from the sacred place.

My sun rose in storm, it continued in storm,—why not so have set? Why not have died when swords swept their lightnings about me, when the glorious thunders of battle rolled around and sulphurous blasts enveloped, when the air was full of the bray of bugle and beat of drum, of shout and shriek, exultation and agony? Why not have gone with the crowd of souls reeking with daring and desire? Why, oh, why thus left alone to wither? Why still hangs that sun above me, yet wrapt and veiled and utterly obscured in thick, murky mists of sorrow and despair?

Peace!—let me tell you my story.

Since Father Anselmo—like all youth, whether under cowl, cap, or crown—was a Liberal at heart, I had not wanted counsel; but when I had told him all my yearnings and aspirations, had bared to him the throbbings of my very thought, and he had replied in that one blessed word, I hastened away. There were none to whom I should say farewell; I was alone in the world. This wild blood of my veins ran in no other veins; I knew thoroughly the wide freedom of solitude; the sins and the virtues of my race, whatever they were, had culminated in me. As I looked back, that morning, the castle, planted in a dimple of its demesnes, old and gray and watched by purple peaks of Apennine, seemed to hide its command only under the mask of silence. The wood through which I went, with its alluring depths, the moss verdant in everlasting spring beneath my eager feet, each bough I lifted, the blossoms that blew their gales after, the bearded grasses that shook in the wind, all gave me their secret sigh; all the sweet land around, the distant hill, the distant shore, said, "Redeem me from my chains!" I came across a sylvan statue, some faun nestled in the forest: the rains had stained, frosts cracked, suns blistered it; but what of those? A vine covered with thorns and stemmed with cords had wreathed about it and bound it closely in serpent-coils. I stayed and tore apart the fetters till my hands bled, cut away the twisting branches, and set the god free from his bonds. Triumph rose to my lips, for I said, "So will I free my country!" Ah, there was my error,—the shackling vines would grow again, and infold the marble

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image that had consecrated the forest-glooms; there is the flaw in all my work,—I have shorn, but have never uprooted an evil. Youth is a fool; the young Titans cannot scale heaven,—heaven, that, if what I live through be true, is ramparted round with tyrant lies! But is it true? Am I what I seem to myself? Did I fail in my purpose, in my will? Did Italy herself belie me? Did she, did she I loved, she I worshipped, she the woman to whom I gave all, for whom I sacrificed all, did she, too, forsake me? Ah, no! you will tell me Italy is free. But I did not free her! She waits only to put on in Venice her tiara. And for that other one, that fair Austrian woman, that devil whom I serve and adore, that yellow-haired witch who brewed her incantations in my holiest raptures,—she did not then play me foul, and falsely feign love to win me to disgrace? May all the woes in Heaven's hands fall on her!

God! what have I said? That I should live to ban her with a word! Did I say it? Oh, but it was vain! Woe for her? No, no! all blessings shower upon her, sunshine attend her, peace and gladness dwell about her! Traitor though she were, I must love her yet; I cannot unlove her; I would take her into my heart, and fold my arms about her.—Oh, I pray you do not look upon me with that mocking smile! Pity me, rather! pity this wretched heart that longs to curse God and die!—Nay, I want not your idle words. Can good destroy? Can love persecute? I was a worm that turned. What then? Why not have crushed me to annihilation? Oh, no, not that! He took me up and shook me before the world, clipped me, and let me fall. A derisive Deity,—why, the words give each other the lie!

Stop! Your sad eyes look as if you would go away, but for this infinite pity in you. What makes you pity me? Because I am shorn of my strength? because of all my fair proportions there is nothing left unshrivelled? because my body—such as it is—is racked with hourly and perpetual pain? because I die? For none of these? Truly, your judgments are insensible. For what then? Because,—yet, no, that cannot be,—because I bear a stubborn heart? because I will not bend my soul as He has bent my body? Partly,—but you are witless! What else? Because I toss off a shield and buckler, you say. Because I will not lean upon a tower of strength. Because I will not throw myself on the tide of divine love, and trust myself to its course. It was that divine love, then, that tower of strength, that shield and buckler, that made me this thing you see. Tarpeia was enough. Away with your generalities! Go, go, you slave of the past!

Yet no,—you have not gone? You believe what you say,—I know with those eyes you cannot deceive. Ah, but I trusted her eyes once! Yet it gives you rest;—your sorrows are not like mine,—there is no rest for me. I cannot go and gather that balm of Gilead, —I have no legs. I have as good as none. This wheel-chair and that dog of a turnkey are not the

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equipage for such a journey.—Ah, do not turn from me now! My railing is worse than my cursing, you feel indeed. Well, stay with me at least, and if it is twelve years since you shrived me at first, perhaps you shall shrive me at last,—for I doubt if I am ever brought out to this sunshine again, if I do not die in the prison-damps to-night,—and you, with all your change, are Father Anshmo, I think.—Stay, I will confess to you, confess this. Man! man! this infinite pity of your soul for mine throws a light on my dark ways; God's curse has fallen on me through man's curse, why not God's love through man's love? Anselmo, though you became priest, and I went to become hero, we were children together; I was dear to you then; I am so still, it seems. In your love let me find the love of that Heaven I have defied.—Stay, friend, yet another word. If man's love can be so great, what can God's love be? That which I said I said, in desperation; in very truth, that peace hangs like an unattainable city in the clouds before my soul's vision, that love like a broad river flowing through the lands, an atmosphere bathing the worlds, the subtile essence and ether of space in which the farthest star pursues its course,—why, then, should it escape me, the mote? Oh, when the world turned from me, I sought to flee thither! I sighed for the rest there! Wretched, alone, I have wept in the dark and in the light that I might go and fling myself at the heavenly feet. But, do you see? sin has broken down the bridge between God and me. Yet why, then, is sin in the world,—that scum that rises in the creation and fermentation of good,—why, but as a bridge on which to re-seek those shores from which we wander? Man, I do repent me,—in loving you I find God. And you call that blasphemy!—Nay, go, indeed, my friend! So humble, you are not the man for me. I can talk to the winds: they, at least, do not visit me too roughly.

These are thy tears, Anselmo? Thou a priest, yet a man? Still with me? Yet thou wilt have to bear with wayward moods,—scorn now, quiet then. I am a tetchy man; I am an old man, too, though but just past thirty.—So! I thank God for thee, dear friend!

* * * * *

Anselmo, look out on this scene below us here, as we sit on our lofty battlement. Not on the turrets or the loopholes, the grates and spikes, or all the fortified horror,—but on the earth. It is fair earth, though not Italy; this is a mountain-fortress; here are all the lights and shadows that play over grand hill-countries, and yonder are fields of grain, where the winds and sunbeams play at storm, and a little hamlet's sheltered valley. Doubtless there are towers, besides, half hidden in the hills. It is Austria: slaves tread it, and tyrants drain it, it is true,—but the wild, free gypsies troop now and then across it, and though no fiction of law supports a claim they would scorn to make, they use it so that you would swear they own it. Do

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you see how this iron reticulation of social rule and custom and force makes a scaffolding on which this tameless race build up their lives? I watch them often. Each country has its compensations. Anselmo, this first made me tremble in my petty defiance,—I, an ephemera of May, defying the dominations of eternity!—Not so,—not too lowly; I also am, and each limitation of life is as well, a domination of eternity. But I saw that it was no purpose of God to have destroyed Italy; when men in weakness and wantonness suffered their liberties to be torn from them, suffered themselves to become enslaved, there was compensation in that their sons had chance for heroic growth; they might, in efforts for freedom, create virtues that, born to freedom, they would never have known. I, too, had my field; I lost it; my enemy was myself. But when I think of her—Ay, there it is! Do not let me think of her! I become mad, when I think of her!—At least, allow me this: God's ways are dark. Not that? Not even that? I needed what I have? If my ambitions, my passions, my will, had ruled, my soul would have remained null? Ah, friend, and is that so much the worse? It is the soul that aches!—I am a man of the people, a man who acts,—I was, I mean,—not a man who thinks; and all your subtleties of word perchance entrap me. I am not wary when you come to logic. See! I surrender point after point. I shall be dead soon, you know; when this morning's sun shall have set, when the moon shall hold the night in fee, I shall depart,—wing up and away;—is it, that, my body already dead, my mind sickens and dies with it, bit after bit, and so I yield, and attest, that, without the agony of my life, death had failed to burst my soul's husk? Oh, for I was born of an earthy race, blood ran thick in our veins, we were sensuous and passionate, the breath and steam of pleasure stifled our brains, and our filmy eyes could not see heaven. Yes, yes, I needed it all; but, friend, it is pitiful.

* * * * *

I like to sit here in the sun. It is only a twelvemonth, of all my long years' imprisonment, that this has been allowed me. I like to sleep in it, like any wild creature,—the lizard, a mere reptile,—the bird, a hindered soul. To lie thus, weak as I am, but pillowed and warmed by the searching genial rays, seems such comfort, when I think of the bed I once had on the rack! This little slumber from which I wake revives me. I feared not to find you, and did not unclothe my eyes at once. It was good in you to come, Anselmo; it must have been at risk of much.

You ask me to speak of my life since I went away on that morning of your command,—to reconcile the hostile acts, to gather the scattered reports. Hear it all!

You know my wealth was equal to my demand. I used it; before six months were over, I was the life and soul of those who must needs be conspirators. They saw that I was earnest, that my sacrifices were real; they trusted me. Soon the movement had become general; all the smothered elements of national life were convulsed and throbbing under the crust of tyranny.

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How proud and glad was I that morning after our victory! I saw great Italy, beautiful Italy, once more put on her diadem; I beheld the future prospect of one broad, free land, barriered by Alps and set impregnably in summer seas, storied seas, keys of the West and East. We embraced each other as brothers of this glorious nation, ancient Rome risen from trance; as we walked the streets, we sang; Milan was turbulent with gladness; no gala-day was ever half so bright; the very spires appeared to spring in the white radiance of their flames up a deeper heaven; the sun stayed at perpetual dawn for us. Walking along, jubilant and daring, at length we paused in a square where a fountain dashed up its column of sunshine, and laved our hands. By Heaven! We forgot independence, Italy, freedom; we were crazed with success and hope; it seemed that the stream was Austrian blood! Then, in the midst of all, I looked up,—and on a balcony she stood. A fair woman, with hair like shredded light, her great blue eyes wide and full and of intense dye, her nostril distended with pride, and fear and hate of us,—but on the full lips, ripe with crimson bloom, juicy and young and fresh, on those Love lay. The others wound forward,—I with them, yet apart; and my eyes became fixed on hers. Then I lifted my cap with its tricolor. She did not return the courtesy, but stood as if spellbound, one hand threading back the straying hair, the lips a little parted; suddenly she turned to fly, that hand upraised to the casement's side, and still, as she looked back, the beautiful eyes on mine. My companions had preceded me; we were alone in the square; she wavered as she stood, then tore a rose from her bosom, kissed it deep into its heart, and tossed it to me.

“Let all its petals be joys!” I said, and she vanished.

Oh, friend, the leaves have fallen, the rose is dead! Look! I have kept it through all,—sear leaf and withered spray!

That night we danced; and the Austrian girl was there. They told me she was exiled, and that she loved liberty; no one told me she was a spy. I saw her swim along the dance, the white satin of her raiment flashing perpetual interchange of lustrous and obscure, the warm air playing in the lace that fell like the spray of the fountain round her golden hair and over her pearly shoulder; grace swept in all her motions, beauty crowned her, she seemed the perfect, pitch of womanhood.

Still she swims along the lazy line with indolent pleasure, still floats in dreamy waltz-circles perchance, still bends to the swaying tune as the hazel-branch bonds to the hidden treasure,—but as for me, my dancing days are over.

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By-and-by it was I with whom she danced, whose hand she touched, on whom she leaned. I wondered if there were any man so blest; I listened to her breath, I watched her cheek, our eyes met, and I loved her. The music grew deeper, more impassioned; we stood and listened to it,—for she danced then no more,—our hearts beat time to it, the wind wandering at the casement played in its measure; we said no words, but now and then each sought the other's glance, and, convicted there, turned in sudden shame away. When I bade her good-night, which I might never have done but that the revel broke, a great curl of her hair blew across my lips. I was bold,—I was heated, too, with this half-secret life of my heart, this warm blood that went leaping so riotously through my veins, and yet so silently,—I took my dagger from my belt and severed the curl. See, friend! will you look at it? It is like the little gold snakes of the Campagna, is it not? each thread, so fine and fair, a separate ray of light: once it was part of her! See how it twists round my hand! Haste! haste! let me put it up, lest I go mad!—Where was I?

I busied myself again in the work to be done; because of our victory we must not rest; once more all went forward. I saw the Austrian woman only from a window, or in a church, or as she walked in the gardens, for many days. Then the times grew hotter; I left the place, and lived with stern alarms; and thither she also came. I never sought what sent her. She was with the wounded, with the dying. Then the need of her was past, and she and all the others took their way. At length that also came to an end.

We were in Rome,—and thither, some time previously, she had gone.

One night, our business for the day was over, our plans for the morrow laid, our messages received, our messengers despatched, and those who had been conspirators and now bade fair to be saviours were sleeping. Sleep seemed to fold the world; each bough and twig was silent in repose; the spectral moonlight itself slept as it bathed the air. I alone wandered and waked. With me there were too many cares for rest; work kept me on the alert; to court slumber at once was not easy after the nervous tension of duty. I was torn, too, with conflicting feelings: half my soul went one way in devotion to my country, half my soul swerved to the other as I thought of the Austrian woman. I grew tired of the streets and squares; something that should be fragrant and bowery attracted me. I mounted on the broken water-god of a dry bath and leaped a garden-wall.

No sooner was I there than I knew why I had come. This was her garden.

Heart of Heaven! how all things spoke of her! How the great white roses hung their doubly heavy heads and poured their perfume out to her! how the sprays shivered as they spoke the name she owned! how the nightingales ceased for a breath their warbling as she rustled down a fragrant path and met me! All her hair was swept back in one great mass and held by an ivory comb; a white cloak wrapped her white array; she was jewel-less and stripped of lustre; she was like pearl, milky as a shell, white as the moonlight that followed in her wake.

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"You breathed my name,—I came," she said.

"Pardon!" I replied. "I heard the fountains dash and the nightingales sing, and I but came for rest under the spell."

"And have you found it?"

"I have found it."

We remained silent then, while floods of passion gathered and lay darkly still in our hearts. No, no! I know now that it was not so; yet I will tell it, tell it all, as I thought it then.

She did not stir; indeed, she had such capability of rest, that, had I not spoken, she would never have stirred, it may be. She knew that my glance was upon her; for herself, she looked at the broad lilies that grew at her feet, and listened to the melody that seemed to bubble from a thousand throats with interfluent sound upon the night. It was her repose that soothed me: moulded clay is not so calm, the marble rose of silence not half so beautifully folded to dreamful rest, so lovely and so still no garden-statue could have been; the cool, soft night infiltrated its tranquillity through all her being.

As we stood, the nightingales gave us capricious pause; one alone, distant and clear, fluted its faint piping like the phantom of the finished strain. Another sound broke the air and floated along on this too delicious accompaniment: music, fine and far. Some other lover sang to her his serenade. The voice in its golden sonority rose and crept toward her with persuading sweetness, winding through all the alleys and hovering over the plots of greenery with a tranquil strength, as if such song were but the natural spirit of the night, or as if the soul of the broad calm and silence itself had taken voice.

"Thy beauty, like a star
Whose life is light,
Shines on me from afar.
And on the night.

"Each midnight blossom bends
With sweetest weight,
And to thy casement sends
Its fragrant freight.

"Each, air that faintly curls
About thy nest
Its daring pinion furls
Within thy breast.



"The night is spread for thee,
The heavens are wide,
And the dark earth's mystery
Is magnified.

"For thee the garden waits,
The hours delay,
The fountains toss their jets
Of shimmering spray.

"Then leave thy dim delight
In dreams above,
Come forth, and crown the night
With her I love!"

She listened, but did not lift her head or suffer the change of a fold; then there came the tinkle of the strings that embalmed the tune, and the singer's steps grew soundless as he left the street. A new phantasm crept upon me. What right had any other man to sing to her his love-songs? Did she not live, was not her beauty created, her soul given, for me? Did not the very breath she drew belong to me? My voice, hoarse and husky, disturbed the stillness, my eyes flamed on her.

"Do you love that man who sang?" I murmured.

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“Signor, I love you,” she said.

Then we were silent as before, but she stood no longer alone and opposite. One passionate step, an outstretched arm, and her head on my bosom, my lips bent to hers.

All the nightingales burst forth in choral redundance of song, all the low winds woke and fainted again through the balmy boughs, all the great stars bent out of heaven to shed their sweet influences upon us.

It seemed to me that in that old palace-garden life began, my memory went out in confused joy. I held her, she was mine! mine, mine, in life and for eternity! Fool! it was I who was hers! Man, you are a priest, and must not love. I, too, was sworn a priest to my country. So we break oaths!

O moments of swift bliss, why are you torture to remember? Let me not think how the night slipped into dawn as we roamed, how pale gold filtered through the darkness and bleached the air, how bird after bird with distant chirrup and breaking time announced the day. She left me, and as well it might be night. I wound a strange way home. I questioned if it were the dream of a fevered brain; I wondered, would she remember when next she saw me? None met with me that day; I forgot all. With the night I again waited in the garden. In vain I waited; she came no more. I waxed full of love's anger, I crushed the tendril and the vine, I wandered up and down the walks and cursed these thorns that tore my heart. As I went, an angle of the shrubbery allured; I turned, and lo! full radiance from open doors, and silvery sounds of sport. I leaned against the ilex, lost in shadow, and watched her as she stirred and floated there before me in the light. She seemed to carry with her an atmosphere of warmth and brilliance; all things were ordered as she moved; one throng melted before her, another followed. By-and-by she stood at the long casement to seek acquaintance with the night. Constantly I thought to meet her eye, and I would not reflect that she saw only dusk and vacancy. Then indignantly I stepped from the ilex and confronted her. A low, glad cry escapes her lips, she holds her arms toward me and would cross the sill, when a voice constrains her from within. It is he, the accursed Neapolitan.

“Signor,” she says, “a vampire flitted past the dawn.”

Dawn indeed was breaking. The man still stood there when she left him, and still looked out; his eyes lay on me, and irate and motionless I returned their gaze. One by one her guests departed; with a last threatening glance, he, too, withdrew. I plunged into the silent places again, and waited now, assured that she would come. The constellations paled, and still I was alone. Then I wandered restlessly again, and, winding through thickets of leaf-distilled perfume, I came where just above a balcony, and almost beyond reach from it, a light burned dimly in one narrow window. I did not ask myself why I did it, but in another moment I had clambered to the place, and,

standing there, I bent forward to my right, pulled away the tangle of ivy that filled half the niche, and was peering in.

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"What is that?" said a voice I knew, with its silvery echo of the South, the accursed Neapolitan's.

"It is the owl that builds in the recess, and stirs the ivy," she replied.

"Haste!" said a third,— "the day breaks."

She was sitting at a low table, writing; Pia, the old nurse, stood behind her chair; the oil was richly scented that she burned; the single light illumined only her, and covered with her shadow the low ceiling,—a shadow that seemed to hang above her like a pall ready to fall from ghostly fingers and smother her in its folds; the others lounged about the room and waited on her pen, in gloom they, their faces gleaming from that dusk demoniacly. It was a concealed room, entered by secret ways, unknown to others than these.

When she had written, she sealed.

"There is no more to await. Adieu," she said.

"It is some transfer of property, some legal paper, some sale, some gift," I said to myself, as I watched them take it and depart. Then she was alone again. I saw her start up, pace the narrow spot,—saw her stand and pull down the masses, so interspersed with golden light, that crowned her head, and look at them wonderingly as they overlay her fingers,—then saw those fingers clasped across the eyes, and the lips part with a sigh that, prolonged and deepened, grew to be a groan,—while all the time that shadow on the ceiling hovered and fluttered and grew still, till it seemed the cluster of Eumenides waiting to pounce on its prey. In another pause I had taken the perilous step, had hung by the crumbling rock, the rending vine, had entered and was beside her. A cold horror iced her face; she warned me away with her trembling hands.

"What have you seen?" she said.

"You, O my love, in grief."

"And no more?"

"I have seen you give a letter to the Neapolitan, who departs to-morrow with the little Viennois,—perhaps to your friends at home."

"And that is all?"

"That is all."

"I have no friends at home. To whom, then, could the letter be?"

“How should I divine?”

“It was for the Austrian Government! Now love me, if you dare!”

“And do you suppose I did not know it?”

“Then is your love for me but a shield and mask?”

As I gazed in reply, my steady eyes, the soul that kindled my smile, my open arms, all must have asseverated for me the truth of my devotion.

“Still?” she said. “Still? And you can keep your faith to me and to Italy?”

What was this doubt of me, this stain she would have cast upon my honor? That armor’s polish was too intense to sustain it; it rolled off like a cloud from heaven. Italy’s fortunes were *my* fortunes; it was impossible for me to betray them; this woman I would win to wed them. How long, how long my blood had felt this thing in her! how long my brain had rebelled! In a proud innocence, I stood with folded arms, and could afford to smile.

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“Stay!” she said again, after our mute gaze, and laying her hand upon my arm. “You shall not love me in vain, you shall not trust me for nothing. Your cause is mine to-day. That is the last message I send to Vienna.”

And then I believed her.

The light, slanting up, crept in and touched the brow of an ideal bust of Mithras which she had invested with her faintly-faded wreath of heliotropes; their fragrance falling through the place already made the atmosphere more rich than that of chest of almond-wood,—this perfume that is like the soul of the earth itself exhaled to the amorous air. Behind an alabaster shrine she lighted a holy-taper, slowly to waste and pale in the spreading day. We went to the window, where among the ivy-nooks day’s life was just astir with gaudy wings.

“All will be seeking you, and yet you cannot go,” she said.

“Why can I not go?”

“It is broad morning.”

“And what of that?”

“One thing. You shall not compromise yourself, going from the house of an Austrian woman and worse!”

She was too winningly imperious to fail. I delayed, and together we looked out on the rosy sky.

“Come down,” she said at last, “and on an arbor-moss the sun shall drowse you, the flower-scents be your opiates, the birds your lullaby, and I your guard.”

We went, and, wandering again through the garden-paths, she brushed the dew with her trailing festal garments, and plucked the great blue convolvuli to crown her forehead. Soon, on a plot of Roman violets, screened by tall trees and trellises, we breakfasted. One might have said that the cloth was laid above giant mushroom-stems, the service acorn-cups and calices of milky blooms; golden was the honey-comb we broke, manna was our bread; she caught the water in her hand from the fountain and pledged me, and swift as sunshine I bent forward and prevented the thirsty lips. Then she laid my head on her shoulder, with her cool finger-tips she stroked the temples and soothed the lids, they fell and closed on the vision bending above me,—loveliness like painting, pallor that was waxen, yellow tresses wreathed with azure stars, eyes that caught the hue again and absorbed all Tyrian dyes.



The splash and bubble of waters swooned dreamily about my ears, and far off it seemed I heard the wild, sad songs of her native land, that now in tinkling tune, and now in long, slow rise and fall of mellow sound, swathed me with sweet satiety to dreamless rest.

The sun stole round and rose above the screen of trees at last and woke me. I was alone, the silent statues looked on me, the breath of the dark violets crushed by my weight rose in shrouding incense. I lifted myself and searched for her, and asked why I must needs believe each hour of joy a dream,—then went and cooled my brow in the lucent basin at hand, and waited till she came, in changed raiment, and gliding toward me as the Spirit of Noon might have come.

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She led me in, well refreshed, and in the cool north rooms of the palace the warm hours of the day slipped like beads from a leash. It scarcely seemed her fingers that touched the harp to tune, but as if some herald of sirocco, some faint, hot breeze, had brushed between the strings. It scarcely seemed her voice that talked to me, but something distant as the tone in a sad sea-shell. What I said I knew not; I was in a maze, bewildered with bliss; I only knew I loved her, I only felt my joy.

She told me many things: stories of her mountain-home, in distant view of the old fortress of Hellberg,—this is the fortress of Hellberg, Anselmo,—of her youth, her maidenhood, her life in Vienna, her lovers in Venice, her health, that had sent her finally there where we sat together.

“I thought it sad,” she said at length, “when they exiled me, so to say, from Vienna and all my gay career there, because Venice, with its water-breaths, might heal my attained health,—and sadder when the winter bade me leave night-tides and gondolas and repair to Rome. Now spring has come, and all the hills are blue with these deep violets, the very air is balm, the year is at flood, and life at what seems its height is perfected with you.”

“But you love that land you left?” I replied, after a while, and lifting her face to meet my gaze.

“Love it? Oh, yes! You love your land as you love a person in whose veins and yours kindred blood runs, because it is hardly possible to do otherwise. The land gave me life, that is all; I never knew till lately that it was anything to be thankful for. It is not sufficiently a *country* to kindle enthusiasm; it has no national life, you know,—is an automaton put through its motions by paid and cunning mechanists. I thought it right to obey orders and serve it. But now *you* are my country,—I serve only you.”

It was easy so to pass to my own hopes, to my own life, to my land, the land to which I had vowed the last drop of blood in my gift. Her eyes beamed upon me, smiles rippled over her face, she clasped me now and then and sealed my brow with kisses. Soon I left her side and strode from end to end of the long *salon*, speaking eagerly of the future that opened to Italy. I told her how the beautiful corpse lay waiting its resurrection, and how the Angel of Eternal Life hovered with spreading wings above, ready to sound his general trump. My pulses beat like trip-hammers, and as I passed a mirror I saw myself white with the excitement that fired me.

“You are wild with your joyous emotion,” she said, coming forward and clinging round me. “Your eyes flame from depths of darkness. What, after all, is Italy to you, that your blood should boil in thinking of her wrongs? These people, for whom in your terrible

magnanimity, I feel that you would sacrifice even me, to-morrow would turn and rend you!"

"No, no!" I answered. "All things but you! You, you, are before my country!"

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The tears filled her large, serious eyes, her lips quivered in melancholy smile, as sunshine plays with shower over autumn woodlands. Was I not right? Right, though the universe declare me wrong! I would do it all again; if she loved me, she had authority to be first of all in my care; in love lie the highest duties of existence.

I had forgotten the subject on which we spoke; I was thinking only of her, her beauty, her tenderness, and the debt of deathless devotion that I owed her. It was otherwise in her thought; she had not dropped the old thread, but, looking up, resumed.

"It is, then, an idea that you serve?"

Brought back from my reverie, "Could I serve a more worthy master?" I asked.

"You do not particularly love your countrymen, nine-tenths of whom you have never seen? You do not particularly hate the hostile race, nine-tenths of whom you have never seen?"

"Abstractly, I hate them. Kindliness of heart prevents individual hatred, and without kindliness of heart in the first place there can be no pure patriotism."

"And for the other part. What do you care for these men who herd in the old tombs, raise a pittance of vetch, and live the life of brutes? what for the lazzaroni of Naples, for the brigands of Romagua, the murderers of the Apennine? Nay, nothing, indeed. It is, then, for the land that you care, the mere face of the country, because it entombs myriad ancestors, because it is familiar in its every aspect, because it overflows with abundant beauty. But is the land less fair when foreign sway domineers it? do the blossoms cease to crowd the gorge, the mists to fill it with rolling color? is the sea less purple around you, the sky less blue above, the hills, the fields, the forests, less lavishly lovely?"

"Yes, the land is less fair," I said. "It is a fair slave. It loses beauty in the proportion of difference that exists between any two creatures,—the one a slave of supple symmetry and perfect passivity, the other a daring woman who stands nearer heaven by all the height of her freedom. And for these people of whom you speak, first I care for them because they *are* my countrymen,—and next, because the idea which I serve is a purpose to raise them into free and responsible agents."

"Each man does that for himself; no one can do it for another."

"But any one may remove the obstacles from another's way, scatter the scales from the eyes of the blind, strip the dead coral from the reef."

She took yellow honeysuckles from a vase of massed amethyst and began to weave them in her yellow hair,—humming a tune, the while, that was full of the subtlest curves of sound. Soon she had finished, and finished the fresh thought as well.

“Do you know, my own,” she said, “the men who begin as hierophants of an idea are apt to lose sight of the pure purpose, and to become the dogged, bigoted, inflexible, unreasoning adherents of a party? All leaders of liberal movements should beware how far they commit themselves to party-organizations. Only that man is free. It is easier to be a partisan than a patriot.”

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I laughed.

"Lady, you are like all women who talk politics, however capable they may be of acting them. You immediately beg the question. We are speaking of patriotism, not of partisanship."

"You it was who forsook the subject. You know nothing about it; you confess that it is with you merely a blind instinct; you cannot tell me even what patriotism is."

"Stay!" I replied. "All love is instinct in the germ. Can you define the yearnings that the mother feels toward her child, the tie that binds son to father? Then you can define the sentiment that attaches me to the land from whose breast I have drawn life. The love of country is more invisible, more imponderable, more inappreciable than the electricity that fills the air and flows with perpetual variation from pole to pole of the earth. It is as deep, as unsearchable, as ineffable as the power which sways me to you. It is the sublimation of other affection. A portion of you has always gone out into the material spot where you have been, a portion of that has entered you, your past life is entwined with river and shore. You become the country, and the country becomes a part of God. Those who love their country, love the vast abstraction, can almost afford not to love God. She is a beneficence, she is a shield, something for which to do and die, something for worship, ideal, grand; and though the sky is their only roof, the earth their only bed, affluent are they who have a land! Passion rooted deeply as the foundations of the hills: a man may adore one woman, but in adoring his land the aggregation of all men's love for all other women overwhelms him and accentuates to a fuller emotion. It is unselfish, impersonal, sheer sentiment clarified at its white heat from all interest and deceit, the noblest joy, the noblest sorrow. Bold should they be, and pure as the priests who bore the ark, that dare to call themselves patriots. And those, Lenore, who live to see their country's hopeless ruin, plunge into a sadness at heart that no other loss can equal, no remaining blessing mitigate,—neither the devotion of a wife nor the perfection of a child. You have seen exiles from a lost land? Pride is dead in them, hope is dead, ambition is dead, joy is dead. Tell me, would you choose me to suffer the personal loss of love and you, a loss I could hide in my aching soul, or to bear those black marks of gall and melancholy which forever overshadow them in widest grief and gloom?"

She had sunk upon a seat, and was looking up at me with a pained unwavering glance, as if in my words she foresaw my fate.

"You are too intense!" she cried. "Your tones, your eyes, your gestures, make it an individual thing with you."

"And so it is!" I exclaimed. "I cannot sleep in peace, nor walk upon the ways, while these Austrian bayonets take my sunshine, these threatening approaching French banners hide the fair light of heaven!"

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"Come," she said, rising. "Speak no more. I am tired of the burden of the ditty, dear; and it may do you such injury yet that already I hate it. Come out again into our garden with me. Dismiss these cares, these burning pains and rankling wounds. Be soothed by the cool evening air, taste the gorgeous quiet of sunset, gather peace with the dew."

So we went. I trusted her the more that she differed from me, that then she promised to love Italy only because I loved it. I told her my secret schemes, I took her advice on points of my own responsibility, I learned the joy of help and confidence in one whom you deem devotedly true. Finally we remained without speech, stood long heart to heart while the night fell around us like a curtain; her eyes deepened from their azure noon-splendor and took the violet glooms of the hour, a great planet rose and painted itself within them; again and again I printed my soul on her lips ere I left her.

At first, when I was sure that I was once more alone in the streets, I could not shake from myself the sense of her presence. I could not escape from my happiness, I was able to bring my thought to no other consideration. I reached home mechanically, slept an hour, performed the routine of bath and refreshment, and sought my former duties. But how changed seemed all the world to me! what air I breathed! in what light I worked! Still I felt the thrilling pressure of those kisses on my lips, still those dear embraces!

So days passed on. I worked faithfully for the purpose to which I was so utterly committed that let that be lost and I was lost! We were victorious; after the banner fell in Lombardy to soar again in Venice and to sink, the Republic struggled to life; Rome rose once more on her seven hills, free and grand, child and mother of an idea, the idea of national unity, of independence and liberty from Tyrol to Sicily. My God! think of those dear people who for the first time said, "We have a country!"

Yet how could we have hoped then to continue? Such brief success dazzled us to the past. Piedmont had long since struck the key-note of Italy's fortunes. As Charles Albert forsook Milan and suffered Austria once more to mow the betrayed land and drip its blood from her heavy jaws, till in a baptism of redder dye he absolved himself from the sin,—so woe heaped on woe, all came to crisis, ruin, and loss,—the Republic fell, Rome fell, the French entered.

Our names had become too famous, our heroic defence too familiar, for us to escape unknown: the Vascello had not been the only place where youth fought as the lioness fights for her whelps. Many of us died. Some fled. Others, and I among them, remained impenetrably concealed in the midst of our enemies. Weeks then dragged away, and months. New schemes chipped their shell. Again the central glory of the land might rise revealed to the nations. We never lost courage; after each downfall we rose

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like Antaeus with redoubled strength from contact with the beloved soil, for each fall plunged us farther into the masses of the people, into closer knowledge of them and kinder depths of their affection, and so, learning their capabilities and the warmth of their hearts and the strength of their endurance, we became convinced that freedom was yet to be theirs. Meanwhile, you know, our operations were shrouded in inscrutable secrecy; the French held Rome in frowning terror and subjection; the Pope trembled on his chair, and clutched it more frantically with his weak fingers: it was not even known that we, the leaders, were now in the city; all supposed us to be awaiting quietly the turn of events, in some other land. As if we ourselves were not events, and Italy did not hang on our motions! But, as I said, all this time we were at work; our emissaries gave us enough to do: we knew what spoil the robbers in the March had made, the decree issued in Vienna, the order of the day in Paris, the last word exchanged between the Cardinals, what whispers were sibilant in the Vatican; we mined deeper every day, and longed for the electric stroke which should kindle the spark and send princes and principalities shivered widely into atoms. But, friend, this was not to be. We knew one thing more, too: we knew at last that we also were watched,—when men sang our songs in the echoing streets at night, and when each of us, and I, chief of all, renewed our ancient fame, and became the word in every one's mouth, so that old men blessed us in the way as we passed, wrapt, we had thought, in safe disguise, and crowds applauded. Thus again we changed our habits, our rendezvous, our quarters, and again we eluded suspicion.

There came breathing-space. I went to her to enjoy it, as I would have gone with some intoxicating blossom to share with her its perfume,—with any band of wandering harpers, that together our ears might be delighted. I went as when, utterly weary, I had always gone and rested awhile with her I loved in the sweet old palace-garden: I had my ways, undreamed of by army or police or populace. There had I lingered, soothed at noon by the hum of the bee, at night by that spirit that scatters the dew, by the tranquillity and charm of the place, ever rested by her presence, the repose of her manner, the curve of her dropping eyelid, so that looking on her face alone gave me pleasant dreams.

Now, as I entered, she threw down her work,—some handkerchief for her shoulders, perhaps, or yet a banner for those unrisen men of Rome, I said,—a white silk square on which she had wrought a hand with a gleaming sickle, reversed by tall wheat whose barbed grains bent full and ripe to the reaper, and round the margin, half-pictured, wound the wild hedge-roses of Paestum. She threw it down and came toward me in haste, and drew me through an inner apartment.

“He has returned, they say,” she said presently,—mentioning the Neapolitan,—“and it would be unfortunate, if you met.”

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"Unfortunate for *him*, if we met here!"

"How fearless! Yet he is subtler than the snake in Eden. I fear him as I detest him."

"Why fear him?"

"That I cannot tell. Some secret sign, some unspeakable intuition, assures me of injury through him."

"Dearest, put it by. The strength of all these surrounding leagues with their swarm does not flow through his wrist, as it does through mine. He is more powerless than the mote in the air."

"You are so confident!" she said.

"How can I be anything else than confident? The very signs in the sky speak for us, and half the priests are ours, and the land itself is an oath. Look out, Lenore! Look down on these purple fields that so sweetly are taking nightfall; look on these rills that braid the landscape and sing toward the sea; see yonder the row of columns that have watched above the ruins of their temple for centuries, to wait this hour; behold the heaven, that, lucid as one dome of amethyst, darkens over us and blooms in star on star;—was ever such beauty? Ah, take this wandering wind,—was ever such sweetness? And since every inch of earth is historic,—since here rose glory to fill the world with wide renown, —since here the heroes walked, the gods came down,—since Oreads haunt the hill, and Nereids seek the shore"—

"Whereabout do Nereids seek the shore?" she archly asked.

"Why, if you must have data," I answered, laughing, "let us say Naples."

"What is that you have to say of Naples?" demanded a voice in the door-way,—and turning, I confronted the Neapolitan.

She had started back at the abrupt apparition, and before she could recover, stung by rage and surprise I had replied,—

"What have I to say of Naples? That its tyrant walks in blood to his knees!"

A man, I, with my hot furies, to be intrusted with the commonwealth!

"I will trouble you to repeat that sentence at some day," he said.

"Here and now, if you will!" I uttered, my hand on my hilt.



“Thanks. Not here and now. It will answer, if you remember it *then*.—I hope I see Her Highness well. Pardon this little *brusquerie*, I pray. The southern air is kind to loveliness: I regret to bring with me Her Highness’s recall.”

She replied in the same courteous air, inquired concerning her acquaintance, and ordered lights,—took the letter he brought, and held it, still sealed, in the taper’s flame till it fell in ashes.

“Signor,” she said, lifting the white atoms of dust and sifting them through her fingers, “you may carry back these as my reply.”

“Nay, I do not return,” he answered. “And, Signorina, many things are pardoned to one in—your condition. Recover your senses, and you will find this so among others.”

Then, as coolly as if nothing had happened, he spoke of the affairs of the day, the tendency of measures, the feeling of the people, and finally rose, kissed her hand, and departed. He was joined without by the little Viennois, and the accursed couple sauntered down the street together. I should have gone then,—the place was no longer safe for me,—but something, the old spell, yet detained me.

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Lenore did not speak, but threw open all the windows and doors that were closed.

“Let us be purified of his presence, at least!” she cried, when this was done.

“And you have ceased to fear this man whom you have dared so offend?” I asked.

“He is not offended,” said Lenore. “Austria is not Naples. He will not transmit my reply till he is utterly past hope.”

“Hope of what?”

“Of my hand.”

“Lenore! Then put him beyond hope now! Become my wife!”

“Ah,—if it were less unwise”—

“If you loved me, Lenore, you would not think of that.”

“And you doubt it? Why should I, then, say again that I love you,—I love you?”

Ah, friend, how can I repeat those words? Never have I given her endearments again to the air: sacred were they then, sacred now, however false. Ah, passionate words! oh, sweet *issimos!* tender intonations! how deeply, how deeply ye lie in my soul! Let me repeat but one sentence: it was the, key to my destiny.

“Yes, yes,” she said, rising from my arms, “already I do you injury. You think oftener of me than of Italy.”

It was true. I sprang to my feet and began pacing the floor, as I sought to recall any instance in which I had done less than I might for my country. The cool evening-breeze, and the bell-notes sinking through the air from distant old campaniles, soothed my tumult, and, turning, I said,—

“My devotion to you sanctifies my devotion to her. And not only for her own sake do I work, but that you, you, Lenore, may have a land where no one is your master, and where your soul may develop and become perfect.”

“And those who have not such object, why do they work?”

Then first I felt that I had fallen from the heights where my companions stood. This ardent patriotism of mine was sullied, a stain of selfishness rose and blotted out my glory, others should wear the conquering crowns of this grand civic game. Oh, friend! that was sad enough, but it was inevitable. Here is where the crime came in,—that,

knowing this, I still continued as their leader, suffered them to call me Master and Saviour, and walked upon the palms they spread.

Lenore mistook my silence.

“You cannot tell me why they work?” she said. “From habit, from fear, because committed? It cannot be, then, that they are in earnest, that they are sincere, that they care a rush for this cause so holy to you. They have entered into it, as all this common people do, for the love of a new excitement, for the pleasurable mystery of conspiracy, for the self-importance and gratulation. They will scatter at the signal of danger, like mischievous boys when a gendarme comes round the corner. They will betray you at the lifting of an Austrian finger. Leave them!”

This was too much to hear in silence,—to hear of these faithful comrades, who had endured everything, and were yet to overcome because they possessed their souls in patience, each of whom stood higher before God than I in unspotted public purity, and whose praise and love led me constantly to larger effort. At least I would make them the reparation of vindication.

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"You mistrust them?" I exclaimed. "They whose souls have been tried in the furnace, who have the temper of fine steel, pliant as gold, but incorruptible as adamant,—heroes and saints, they stand so low in your favor? Come, then, come with me now,—for the bells have struck the hour, and shadows clothe the earth,—come to their conclave where discovery is death, and judge if they be idle prattlers, or men who carry their lives in their hands!"

Fool! Fool! Fool! Every sound in the air cries out that word to me: the bee that wings across the tower hums it in my ear; the booming alarm-bell rings it forth; my heart, my failing heart, beats it while I speak. I would have carried a snake to the sacred ibis-nest, and thenceforth hope was hollow as an egg-shell!

She ran from the room, but, pausing in the door-way, exclaimed,—

"Remember, if you take me there, that I am no Roman patriot,—I! I, who am of the House of Austria, that House that wears the crown of the Caesars, those Caesars who swayed the very imperial sceptre, who trailed the very imperial purple of old Rome! I endure the cause because it is yours. I beseech you to be faithful to it; because I should despise you, if for any woman you swerved from an object that had previously been with you holier than heaven!"

I stood there leaning from the lofty window, and looking down over the wide, solitary fields. Recollections crowded upon me, hopes rose before me. One day, that yet lives in my heart, Anselmo, sprang up afresh, a day forever domed in memory. Fair rose the sun that day, and I walked on the nation's errands through the streets of a distant town,—a hoar and antique place, that sheltered me safely, so slight guard was it thought to need by our oppressors! It pleased that reverend arch-hypocrite to take at this hour his airing. Late events had given the people courage. It was a market-day, peasants from the country obstructed the ancient streets, the citizens were all abroad. Not few were the maledictions muttered over a column of French infantry that wound along as it returned to Rome from some movement of subjection, not low the curses showered on an officer who escorted ladies upon their drive. As I went, I considered what a day it would have been for *emeute*, and what mortal injury *emeute* would have done our cause. Italy, we said, like fools, but honest fools, must not be redeemed with blood. As if there were ever any sacred pact, any new order of things, that was not first sealed by blood! Therefore, when I, alone perhaps of all the throng, saw one man—a man in whose soul I knew the iron rankled—stealing behind the crowd, behind the monuments, and, as the coach of His Excellency rolled luxuriously along, levelling a glittering barrel,—it was but an instant's work to seize the advancing creatures, to hold them rearing,—and then a deadly flash,—while the ball whistled past me, grazed my hand, and pierced the leader's heart.

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In a twinkling the dead horse was cut away, and His Excellency, cowering in the bottom of the coach, galloped borne more swiftly than the wind, without a word. But the populace appreciated the action, took it up with *vivas* long and loud, that rang after me when I had slipped away, and before nightfall had echoed in all ears through leagues of country round. I went that night to the theatre. The house was filled, and, as we entered, a murmur went about, and then cries broke forth,—the multitude rose with cheers and bravos, calling my name, intoxicated with enthusiasm, and dazzled, not by a daring feat, but by the spirit that prompted it. Women tore off their jewels to twist them into a sling for my injured hand; men rose and made me a conqueror's ovation; the orchestra played the old Etrurian hymns of freedom; I was attended home with a more than Roman triumph of torch and song, stately men and beautiful women. But chameleons change their tint in the sunshine, and why should men always march under one color? Friend, not six months later there came another day, when triumph was shame,—plaudits, curses,—joyous tumult, scorching silence. Oh!— But I shall come to that in time. Now let me hasten; the hours are less tardy than I, and they bring with them my last.

Thought of this day—sole pageant defiling through memory—was startled again by the far, sweet sound of a bell, some bell ringing twilight out and evening in across the wide Campagna. I wondered what delayed Lenore. Did it take so long to toss off the cloudy back-falling veil, to wrap in any long cloak her gown of white damask and all the sheen of her milky pearl-dusters and fiery rubies? I thought with exultation then of what she was so soon to see,—of the route through sunken ruins, down wells forsaken of their pristine sources and hidden by masses of moss, winding with the faint light in our hands through the awful ways and avenues of the catacombs. The scene grew real to me, as I mused. Alone, what should I fear? These silent hosts encamped around would but have cheered their child. But with her, every murmur becomes a portent of danger, every current of air gives me fresh tremors; as we pass casual openings into the sky, the vault of air, the glint of stars, shall seem a malignant face; I fancy to hear impossible footsteps behind us, some bone that crumbling falls from its shelf makes my heart beat high, her dear hand trembles in my hold, and, full of a new and superstitious awe, I half fear this ancient population of the graves will rise and surround us with phantom array. Now and then, a cold, lonely wind, blowing from no one knows where, rises and careers past us, piercing to the marrow. I think, too, of that underground space, half choked with rubbish, into which we are to emerge at last, once the hall of some old Roman revel. I see the troubled flashes flung from the flaring torch over our assembly. Alert and startled, I see Lenore listen to the names as if they

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summoned the wraiths and not the bodies of men whom she had supposed to be lost in the pampas of Paraguay, dead in the Papal prisons, sheltered in English homes, or tossing far away on the long voyages of the Pacific seas. I see myself at length taking the torch from its niche and restoring it, as a hundred times before, to Pietro da Valambo, while it glitters on some strange object looking in at the vine-clad opening above with its breaths of air, serpent or hare, or the large face and slow eyes of a browsing buffalo. And as I think, lo! an echo in the house, a dull tramp in the hall, a stealthy tread in the room, a heavy hand upon my shoulder,—I was arrested for high treason.

Do not think I surrendered then. Without a struggle I would be the prize of Pope nor King nor Kaiser! I shook the minions' grasp from my shoulder, I flashed my sword in their eyes; and not till the crescent of weapons encircled me in one blinding gleam, vain grew defence, vain honor, vain bravery. Of what use was my soul to me thenceforth? I became but carrion prey. I fell, and the world fell from me.

Sensation, emotion, awoke from their swooning lapse only in the light of day, the next or another, I knew not which. I was lifted from some conveyance, I saw blue reaches of curving bay and the great purifying priest of flame, and knew I was in the city guarded by its pillar of cloud by day, of fire by night. I had reason to know it, when, yet unfed, unrested, faint, smirched and smeared with blood and travel, loaded with chains, I was brought to a tribunal where sat the sleek and subtle tyrant of Naples.

"Signor," said a bland voice from the king's side,—and looking in its direction, I encountered the Neapolitan,—“Signor, I lately said that at some day I would trouble you to repeat a brilliant sentence addressed to me. The day has arrived. I scarcely dared dream it would be so soon. Shall we listen?”

I was silent: not that I feared to say it; they could but finish their play.

Then I saw the beautifully cut lips of my judge part, that the voice might slide forth, and, taking a comfit, he tittered, with unchanging tint and sweetest tone, the three words, “Apply the question.”

Why should I endure that for a whim? Who courts torment? Already they drew near with the cunning instruments. Let me say it, and what then? Nothing worse than torture. Let me *not* say it, and certainly torture. Oh, I was weaker than a child! my body ruled my spirit with its exhaustion and pain. Yet there was a certain satisfaction in flinging the words in their faces. I waved back with my remaining arm the slaves who approached.



“You should allow a weary man the time to collect his thoughts,” I said, and then turned to my persecutors. “I have spoken with you many times, Signor,” I replied to the Neapolitan, “yet of all our words I can remember none but these, that you could care to hear with this auditory. I said,—that the tyrant of Naples walks in blood to his knees!”

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The Neapolitan smiled. The king rose.

“Well said!” he murmured, in his silvery tones. “One that knows so much must know more. Exhaust his knowledge, I pray. Do not spare your courtesies; remember he is my guest. I leave him in your hands.”

He fixed me with his eye,—that darkly-glazed eye, devoid of life, of love, of joy, as if he were the thing of another element,—then bowed and passed away.

“The urbanity of His Majesty is too well known to suppose it possible that he should prove you a liar,” said the Neapolitan.

Truly, I was loft in their hands! Shall I tell you of the charities I found there? Not I, friend! it would wring your heart as dry of tears as mine was wrung of groans. At last I was alone, it seemed,—on a wet stone floor, sweat pouring from every muscle, each fibre quivering; I was distorted and unjointed, I only hoped I was dying. But no, that was too good for me. Anselmo, how can I but be full of scoffs, when I remember those hours, those ages? The cold dampness of the place crept into my bones; I became swollen and teeming with intimate pain. But that was light, my body might have ached till the throbs stiffened into death-spasms, and yet the suffering had been nought, compared with that loathing and disgust in my soul. It had seemed that I was alone, I said. Alone as the corpse in unshrouded grave! I was in a charnel-house. Men who were sinless as you hung dead upon the wall, hung dying there. Darkness covered all things at a distance, sighs crept up from far corners, chains clanked, or imprecations or prayer uttered themselves,—bodiless voices in the night. I did not know what untold horror there might yet be hid. I heard the drip of water from the black vaults; I heard the short, fierce pants and deadly groans. Oh, worst infliction of Hell’s armory it is to see another suffer! Why was it allowed, Anselmo? Did it come in the long train of a broken law? was it one of the dark places of Providence? or was it indeed the vile compost to mature some beautiful germ? Ah, then, is it possible that Heaven looks on us so in the mass?

But for me, after a while I lay torpid, and then perchance I slept, for finally I opened my eyes and found the white strong light; I lay on a bed, and a surgeon handled me. Too elastic was I to be long crushed, once the weight removed. Soon I breathed fresh air; and save that my frame had become in its distortion hideous, I was the same as before.

Then, indeed, began my torture,—torture to which this had been idle jest. I was taken once more to the room of tribunal. Beside the Neapolitan a woman sat veiled and shrouded in masses of sable drapery. “A queen?” I thought, “or a slave?” But I had no further room for fancy; the same interrogatories as before were given me to answer, and then I felt why I had been nursed back to life. In the months that had elapsed, I could not know if Italy were saved or lost, if Naples

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tottered or remained impregnable. I stood only on my personal basis of right or wrong. I refused to open my lips. They wheeled forward a low bed that I knew well. Oh, the slow starting of the socket! Oh, the long wrench of tendon and nerve! A bed of steel and cords, rollers and levers, bound me there, and bent to their creaking toil. I was strong to endure; I had set my teeth and sworn myself to silence; no woman should hear me moan. Even in this misery I saw that she who sat there, shaking, fell.

The tyrant was lily-livered; seldom he witnessed what others died under; he intended nothing further then;—many men who faint at sight of blood can probe a soul to its utmost gasp. Now he motioned, and they paused. Then others lifted the woman and held her beside him, yet a little in advance.

“Keep your silence,” said he, in a voice unrecognizable, and as if a wild beast, half-glutted, should speak, “and I keep her! She is in my power. Mine, and you know what that means. Mine,” and he bent toward me, “*body and—soul*. To use, to blast, to destroy, to tear piecemeal,—as I will do, so help me God! unless you meet my condition.” And extending his hand, he drew aside the black veil, and my eye lay on the face of Lenore, thin and white as the familiar faces of corpses, and utterly insensible in swoon.

All, that mortal horror stops my pulse! Was I wrong? Why not have borne that, too? Had she loved me, she had chosen it, chosen it rather. And death would have made all right!—God! why not have seized some poignard lying there? why not have sprung upon her, have slain her? Then silence had been simply secure. Then I could have smiled in their frustrated faces, one keen, deep smile, and died. I was dissolved in pain, writhed with prolonged strokes that thrilled me from head to foot, pierced as with acute stabs, my heart seemed to forge thunderbolts to break upon my brain,—but this agony had been spared me. They unbound me, fed me with some stimulating cordial, gave me cold air, and I rose on my elbow a little.

“Swear!” I said, hoarsely. “But you do not keep oaths. God help you? Never! There must be a Hell to help you! Imprecate this, then, on yourself! May you in your smooth white body know the torture I have known, be racked till each bone in your skin changes place, hang festering in chains from the wall of a living grave, make fellowship with putridity, and lie in the pitiless dark to see all the dead who died under your hand rise, rise and accuse you before God! And may your little son know the deeds you have done, live the life those deeds merit, and die the death that I shall die,—if you do not keep your word!”

“What word?” he said.

“Promise, if I reveal all, and my revelations shall be true and thorough therefore,—
promise that you will leave her in safe security and freedom to-day, untouched,
unscathed, unharmed, and that so ever shall she remain. And false to this oath, may no
priest shrive you, no land own you, God blight you and curse you and wither you from
the face of the earth!”

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And taking a crucifix, he swore the oath.

Then they busied themselves about Lenore, revived her, soothed her, gave her of the same cordial to drink, and placed her once more in her dais-seat. Her veil was thrown back, her wide blue eyes fixed on me in intense strain, her face and lips still blanched more bitterly beneath that hue, her features sharp as chisel-graven death. Ah, God! must I endure that too? Was she to hear me,—she, not knowing why, never knowing why,—she in whom that look of aching passion and pity was to die out and freeze and fade in one of utter scorn?

They brought me some strange draught, as if one swallowed fire. The blood coursed richly through my shrunken veins; I felt filled with a different life. I arose and left that bed of torture, but came back to it as to my rest.

And lying there, I betrayed Italy.

Root and branch and spray and leaf, I uprooted all my memories; I forgot no name, I lost no fact; I was eagerer than they; I modified nothing, I abbreviated nothing; the past, the future, what had been, was to be, plan and scheme and supreme purpose, I never faltered, I told the whole!

I did not look at her, I kept my eyes on the tyrant; I wished I might have the evil eye,—but that gift was for him, the Neapolitan. Yet at length I heard a low moan trailing toward me; I turned, and saw her face, as I saw it last, Anselmo,—stonily quiet, frozen from indignant pain to icy apathy, and the words she would have said had hissed inarticulately through her ashen lips. Then they brought me the confession, and, as I could, I signed it.

“Madame,” said the tyrant, “your knowledge is coextensive with his. Does all this agree?”

“Sire, it does agree,” she answered, and they led her out.

“I have no authority over you,” said the tyrant then to me. “You might go freely now, but that, precious as Homer, seven cities claim you, Signor! My prisons also will now be full of rarer game. But as a crime of your commission places you within Austrian jurisdiction, I shall take pleasure in presenting you to my cousin and surrendering you to his mercy,” and he withdrew.

“You may not be aware,” said the courteous Neapolitan, “that on the night of your arrest your frantic sword-slashes had serious result. My friend the little Viennois fell at your hands.”

[Transcriber’s note: Page missing in source text.]



through dazzling rings of light, and I fell forward in the cart and hung by my chains among the hoofs of the trampling horses who dragged me. On that day I had taken my last step; I never set foot on the round earth again. But, with all, I smiled through my groans; for the shining, solid hoofs that did their work on me did their work as well on the man who walked by my side,—dashed dead the accursed Neapolitan.

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They were not the surgeons of Naples who essayed to galvanize volition through my paralyzed limbs, but those who knew the utmost resources of their art. And so I lived,—lived, too, by reason of my inextinguishable vitality, by reason of this spark that will not quench,—and so I came to Hellberg. It would have been mockery to give this shapeless hulk to sentence, and then to headsman or hangman; perhaps, too, her haughty name had been involved; and so I was never brought to trial, and so I am at Hellberg.

And I have never set foot on the ground again. But, oh, to touch it for a moment, to sit anywhere on the summer mould, to pull down the sun-quivering, sun-steeped branches about me, to scent the fresh grass as it springs to the light! Oh, but to touch the sweet, kind earth, the warm earth, silent with ineffable tenderness and soothing, to feel it under my hand, to lay my cheek there for a moment, while it drew away pain and weariness with its absorbing, purifying power! Oh, but to lie once more where the blossoms grow! Soon, soon, they will grow above me! Soon the kind mother will cover me!

* * * * *

What had happened in the outer world I knew not till you came. I fancied Lenore returned, breathing Austrian air, and living under the same horizon that girds me in. Sometimes I have seen a distant cavalcade skimming over the vale, as once we careered over the Campagna, when she handled her steed as another woman handles her needle, and the sweet wind fanned peach-tints to her cheeks and drew out unravelled braids of gold in lingering caress. She could have come to me, had she pleased, then: this old chief who rules the place was her father's friend and hers.—But look I but see! Who is it comes now,—sweeps round the donjon flank? Lean over the embrasure, and learn! Ah, man, are my eyes so old, my memories so treacherous, that I do not know day from night? They have gone on,—or did they enter, think you? Or yet, there is to be carousal, perhaps, in the halls beyond and below, and she comes to join the gay feast; she will drink healths in red wine, will listen to flattering dalliance with pleased eyes, will utter light laughs through the lips that once glowed to my kisses, and will forget that the same roof which shelters the revellers shelters also her lover dying in moans! Careless—Best so! best so! What cavalier whispered in her ear as she passed? Have years tarnished her beauty? Ah, God! this wind, that maddens me now, a moment since touched her!

Anselmo, I will go in. This vault of heaven with its spotless blue, this wide land that laughs in festive summer, these winds that lift my hair and come heavy with odors,—these do not fit with me, I burlesque the fair face of creation. O invisible airs, that softly sport round the castle-towers, why do you not woo my soul forth and bear it and lose it in the flawless cope of sky?

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Nay, why, any more than Ajax, should I die in the dark? Never again will I enter the cell, never again! The wide universe shall receive my breath. Lower the back of my chair, pull away the cushions, wrap my cloak round me, Anselmo. There! I will lie, and wait, and look up. Give me ghostly counsel, my friend, console me. You are not too weary with this long tale? Tell me I needed all the tears I have shed to quench the fiery defiance, the independence of heaven and tumult of earth in my being. If you could tell me that she had not been false, that she never feigned her passion to decoy, that, Austrian though she were—Ah, but I had evidence! I had evidence! his words, that ate out my life like gangrene and rust.—Speak slower, Anselmo, slower. Can it be that I sinned most, when I held his words before hers,—his black damning falsehoods?—Mother of God! do you know what you say?

Tell me, then, that I am a fool,—that not through other loss than the loss of faith did the curse fall on me! Tell me, then, that these dark ways lead me out on a height! Needful the shadow and the groping. He anointed my eyes with the clay beneath his feet,—I was blind, but now I see God!

Repeat, Anselmo, repeat that she was true, though the knowledge blast me with self-consuming pangs. But, true or false, one thing she promised me: though other spheres, though other lives had come between us, she would be with me in my dying hour. Soon the bell will toll that hour, and toll my knell!

* * * * *

What is this, Anselmo,—this face that hangs between me and heaven,—this pitying, sorrowing countenance?—Ave Maria!—Never! Never! Still of the earth, this melting mouth, these violet eyes, this brow of snow, this fragrant bosom pillowing my head! Mirage of fainting fancy,—out, beautiful thing, away! Do not torment me with such a despairing lie! do not cheat me into death! Let me at least look on the unobstructed sky, as I sink lower and lower to my eternal rest!

* * * * *

Still there? Still there? Still bending above me, smiling and weeping, sweet April face? Oh, were they truly thy lips that lay on mine, then, that stamped them with life's impress, that woke me? Are they truly thy fingers that pressed my throbbless temples? These arms that are wound about me, are thine? Thy heart beats for me, thy tears flow, thy perfect womanhood does not recoil in horror? Lenore! Lenore! is it thou?

* * * * *

Nay, nay, Sweet, ask me no question; I have wronged thee; he shall tell thee how. Yet best thou shouldst never hear it. Sin to thee greater than all treachery had been. Forgive, forgive! I go,—in meeting, leave thee; but be glad for me,—whether I sleep or

whether I wake, know that a great curse will have fallen from me. Swathe my memory in thy love. Kiss me again, child! Rock me a little; stoop lower, and croon those old mountain-songs that once you sang when the sunshine soaked the sward and your hair was crowned with blue morning-glories.

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Ah, your song drowns in tears! Yet you do not wish me to live, Lenore? O love, I can do nothing but die!

The sunlight fades from the hills, the air wavers and glimmers, and day is dim. Thy face is mistier than a vision of angels. There are faint, strange voices in my ear, swift rustlings, far harmonics;—has sense become so attenuated that I hear the blood in my failing pulses? Lenore, love, lower. Thy lips to mine, and breathe my life away. Twice would I die to save thee!

—Anselmo! man! where art thou? Come back ere I fall,—strength flares up like a dying flame. *Never tell her why I betrayed Italy!*

—Closer, dear love, closer! What old murmurs do I hear?

“The night is spread for thee,
The heavens are wide,
And the dark earth’s mystery”—

So,—in thy arms,—from thee to God! O love, forever—kiss—forgive!—Lift me, that I confront eternity and Christ!

AFTER “TAPS.”

Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! Tramp!
As I lay with my blanket on,
By the dim fire-light, in the moonlit night,
When the skirmishing fight was done.

The measured beat of the sentry’s feet,
With the jingling scabbard’s ring!
Tramp! Tramp! in my meadow-camp
By the Shenandoah’s spring.

The moonlight seems to shed cold beams
On a row of pale gravestones:
Give the bugle breath, and that image of Death
Will fly from the reveille’s tones.

By each tented roof, a charger’s hoof
Makes the frosty hill-side ring:
Give the bugle breath, and a spirit of Death
To each horse’s girth will spring.



Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! Tramp!
The sentry, before my tent,
Guards, in gloom, his chief, for whom
Its shelter to-night is lent.

I am not there. On the hill-side bare
I think of the ghost within;
Of the brave who died at my sword-hand side,
To-day, 'mid the horrible din

Of shot and shell and the infantry yell,
As we charged with the sabre drawn.
To my heart I said, "Who shall be the dead
In *my* tent, at another dawn?"

I thought of a blossoming almond-tree,
The stateliest tree that I know;
Of a golden bowl; of a parted soul;
And a lamp that is burning low.

Oh, thoughts that kill! I thought of the hill
In the far-off Jura chain;
Of the two, the three, o'er the wide salt sea,
Whose hearts would break with pain;

Of my pride and joy,—my eldest boy;
Of my darling, the second—in years;
Of *Willie*, whose face, with its pure, mild grace,
Melts memory into tears;

Of their mother, my bride, by the Alpine lake's side,
And the angel asleep in her arms;
Love, Beauty, and Truth, which she brought to my youth,
In that sweet April day of her charms.

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"HALT! *Who comes there?*" The cold midnight air
And the challenging word chill me through.
The ghost of a fear whispers, close to my ear,
"Is peril, love, coming to you?"

The hoarse answer, "RELIEF," makes the shade of a grief
Die away, with the step on the sod.
A kiss melts in air, while a tear and a prayer
Confide my beloved to God. Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! Tramp!
With a solemn, pendulum-swing!
Though I slumber all night, the fire burns bright,
And my sentinels' scabbards ring.

* * * * *

"Boot and saddle!" is sounding. Our pulses are bounding.
"To horse!" And I touch with my heel
Black Gray in the flanks, and ride down the ranks,
With my heart, like my sabre, of steel.

THE HUMAN WHEEL, ITS SPOKES AND FELLOES.

[Illustration]

The starting-point of this paper was a desire to call attention to certain remarkable AMERICAN INVENTIONS, especially to one class of mechanical contrivances, which, at the present time, assumes a vast importance and interests great multitudes. The limbs of our friends and countrymen are a part of the melancholy harvest which War is sweeping down with Dahlgren's mowing-machine and the patent reapers of Springfield and Hartford. The admirable contrivances of an American inventor, prized as they were in ordinary times, have risen into the character of great national blessings since the necessity for them has become so widely felt. While the weapons that have gone from Mr. Colt's armories have been carrying death to friend and foe, the beneficent and ingenious inventions of MR. PALMER have been repairing the losses inflicted by the implements of war.

The study of the artificial limbs which owe their perfection to his skill and long-continued labor has led us a little beyond its first object, and finds its natural prelude in some remarks on the natural limbs and their movements. Accident directed our attention, while engaged with this subject, to the efforts of another ingenious American to render the use of our lower extremities easier by shaping their artificial coverings more in accordance with their true form than is done by the empirical cordwainer, and thus *Dr. Plumer* must submit to the coupling of some mention of his praiseworthy efforts in the same pages with the striking achievements of his more aspiring compatriot.

We should not tell the whole truth, if we did not own that we have for a long time been lying in wait for a chance to say something about the mechanism of walking, because we thought we could add something to what is known about it from a new source, accessible only within the last few years, and never, so far as we know, employed for its elucidation, namely, *the instantaneous photograph*.

* * * * *

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The two accomplishments common to all mankind are walking and talking. Simple as they seem, they are yet acquired with vast labor, and very rarely understood in any clear way by those who practise them with perfect ease and unconscious skill.

Talking seems the hardest to comprehend. Yet it has been clearly explained and successfully imitated by artificial contrivances. We know that the moist membranous edges of a narrow crevice (the glottis) vibrate as the reed of a clarinet vibrates, and thus produce the human *bleat*. We narrow or widen or check or stop the flow of this sound by the lips, the tongue, the teeth, and thus *articulate*, or break into joints, the even current of sound. The sound varies with the degree and kind of interruption, as the “babble” of the brook with the shape and size of its impediments,—pebbles, or rocks, or dams. To whisper is to articulate without *bleating*, or vocalizing; to *coo* as babies do is to bleat or vocalize without articulating. Machines are easily made that bleat not unlike human beings. A bit of India-rubber tube tied round a piece of glass tube is one of the simplest voice-uttering contrivances. To make a machine that *articulates* is not so easy; but we remember Maelzel’s wooden children, which said, “Pa-pa” and “Ma-ma”; and more elaborate and successful speaking machines have, we believe, been since constructed.

But no man has been able to make a figure that can *walk*. Of all the automata imitating men or animals moving, there is not one in which the legs are the true sources of motion. So said the Webers[A] more than twenty years ago, and it is as true now as then. These authors, after a profound experimental and mathematical investigation of the mechanism of animal locomotion, recognize the fact that our knowledge is not yet advanced enough to hope to succeed in making real walking machines. But they conceive that the time may come hereafter when colossal figures will be constructed whose giant strides will not be arrested by the obstacles which are impassable to wheeled conveyances.

[Footnote A: *Traite de la Mechanique des Organes de la Locomotion*, Translated from the German in the *Encyclopedie Anatomique*. Paris, 1843.]

We wish to give our readers as clear an idea as possible of that wonderful art of balanced vertical progression which they have practised, as M. Jourdain talked prose, for so many years, without knowing what a marvellous accomplishment they had mastered. We shall have to begin with a few simple anatomical data.

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The foot is arched both longitudinally and transversely, so as to give it elasticity, and thus break the sudden shock when the weight of the body is thrown upon it. The ankle-joint is a loose hinge, and the great muscles of the calf can straighten the foot out so far that practised dancers walk on the tips of their toes. The knee is another hinge-joint, which allows the leg to bend freely, but not to be carried beyond a straight line in the other direction. Its further forward movement is checked by two very powerful cords in the interior of the joint, which cross each other like the letter X, and are hence called the *crucial ligaments*. The upper ends of the thighbones are almost globes, which are received into the deep cup-like cavities of the haunch-bones. They are tied to these last so loosely, that, if their ligaments alone held them, they would be half out of their sockets in many positions of the lower limbs. But here comes in a simple and admirable contrivance. The smooth, rounded head of the thighbone, moist with glairy fluid, fits so perfectly into the smooth, rounded cavity which receives it, that it holds firmly by *suction*, or atmospheric pressure. It takes a hard pull to draw it out after all the ligaments are cut, and then it comes with a smack like a tight cork from a bottle. Holding in this way by the close apposition of two polished surfaces, the lower extremity swings freely forward and backward like a *pendulum*, if we give it a chance, as is shown by standing on a chair upon the other limb, and moving the pendent one out of the vertical line. The force with which it swings depends upon its weight, and this is much greater than we might at first suppose; for our limbs not only carry themselves, but our bodies also, with a sense of lightness rather than of weight, when we are in good condition. Accident sometimes makes us aware how heavy our limbs are. An officer, whose arm was shattered by a ball in one of our late battles, told us that the dead weight of the helpless member seemed to drag him down to the earth; he could hardly carry it; it “weighed a ton,” to his feeling, as he said.

In *ordinary walking*, a man’s lower extremity swings essentially by its own weight, requiring little muscular effort to help it. So heavy a body easily overcomes all impedimenta from clothing, even in the sex least favored in its costume. But if a man’s legs are pendulums, then a short man’s legs will swing quicker than a tall man’s, and he will take more steps to a minute, other things being equal. Thus there is a natural rhythm to a man’s walk, depending on the length of his legs, which beat more or less rapidly as they are longer or shorter, like metronomes differently adjusted, or the pendulums of different time-keepers. Commodore Nutt is to M. Bihin in this respect as a little, fast-ticking mantel-clock is to an old-fashioned, solemn-clicking, upright time-piece.

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The mathematical formulae in which the Messrs. Weber embody their results would hardly be instructive to most of our readers. The figures of their Atlas would serve our purpose better, had we not the means of coming nearer to the truth than even their careful studies enabled them to do. We have selected a number of instantaneous stereoscopic views of the streets and public places of Paris and of New York, each of them showing numerous walking figures, among which some may be found in every stage of the complex act we are studying. Mr. Darley has had the kindness to leave his higher tasks to transfer several of these to our pages, so that the reader may be sure that he looks upon an exact copy of real human individuals in the act of walking.

[Illustration: Fig. 1.]

The first subject is caught with his legs stretched in a stride, the remarkable length of which arrests our attention. The sole of the right foot is almost vertical. By the action of the muscles of the calf it has *rolled off* from the ground like a portion of the tire of a wheel, the heel rising first, and thus the body, already advancing with all its acquired velocity, and inclined forward, has been pushed along, and, as it were, *tipped over*, so as to fall upon the other foot, now ready to receive its weight.

[Illustration: Fig. 2.]

In the second figure, the right leg is bending at the knee, so as to lift the foot from the ground, in order that it may swing forward.

[Illustration: Fig. 3.]

The next stage of movement is shown in the *left* leg of figure 3. This leg is seen suspended in air, a little beyond the middle of the arc through which it swings, and before it has straightened itself, which it will presently do, as shown in the next figure.

[Illustration: Fig. 4.]

The foot has now swung forward, and, tending to swing back again, the limb being straightened, and the body tipped forward, the heel strikes the ground. The angle which the sole of the foot forms with the ground increases with the length of the stride; and as this last surprised us, so the extent of this angle astonishes us in many of the figures, in this among the rest.

The heel strikes the ground with great force, as the wear of our boots and shoes in that part shows us. But the projecting heel of the human foot is the arm of a lever, haying the ankle-joint as its fulcrum, and, as it strikes the ground, brings the sole of the foot down flat upon it, as shown in figure 1. At the same time the weight of the limb and body is thrown upon the foot, by the joint effect of muscular action and acquired velocity,

and the other foot is now ready to rise from the ground and repeat the process we have traced in its fellow.

No artist would have dared to draw a walking figure in attitudes like some of these. The swinging limb is so much shortened that the toe never by any accident scrapes the ground, if this is tolerably even. In cases of partial paralysis, the scraping of the toe, as the patient walks, is one of the characteristic marks of imperfect muscular action.

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Walking, then, is a perpetual falling with a perpetual self-recovery. It is a most complex, violent, and perilous operation, which we divest of its extreme danger only by continual practice from a very early period of life. We find how complex it is when we attempt to analyze it, and we see that we never understood it thoroughly until the time of the instantaneous photograph. We learn how violent it is, when we walk against a post or a door in the dark. We discover how dangerous it is, when we slip or trip and come down, perhaps breaking or dislocating our limbs, or overlook the last step of a flight of stairs, and discover with what headlong violence we have been hurling ourselves forward.

Two curious facts are easily proved. First, a man is shorter when he is walking than when at rest. We have found a very simple way of showing this by having a rod or yardstick placed horizontally, so as to touch the top of the head forcibly, as we stand under it. In walking rapidly beneath it, even if the eyes are shut, to avoid involuntary stooping, the top of the head will not even graze the rod. The other fact is, that one side of a man always tends to outwalk the other, so that no person can walk far in a straight line, if he is blindfolded.

The somewhat singular illustration at the head of our article carries out an idea which has only been partially alluded to by others. Man is a *wheel*, with two spokes, his legs, and two fragments of a tire, his feet. He *rolls* successively on each of these fragments from the heel to the toe. If he had spokes enough, he would go round and round as the boys do when they “make a wheel” with their four limbs for its spokes. But having only two available for ordinary locomotion, each of these has to be taken up as soon as it has been used, and carried forward to be used again, and so alternately with the pair. The peculiarity of biped-walking is, that the centre of gravity is shifted from one leg to the other, and the one not employed can shorten itself so as to swing forward, passing by that which supports the body.

This is just what no automaton can do. Many of our readers have, however, seen a young lady in the shop-windows, or entertained her in their own nurseries, who professes to be this hitherto impossible walking automaton, and who calls herself by the Homeric-sounding epithet *Autoperipatetikos*. The golden-booted legs of this young lady remind us of Miss Kilmansegg, while their size assures us that she is not in any way related to Cinderella. On being wound up, as if she were a piece of machinery, and placed on a level surface, she proceeds to toddle off, taking very short steps like a child, holding herself very stiff and straight, with a little lifting at each step, and all this with a mighty inward whirring and buzzing of the enginery which constitutes her muscular system.

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An autopsy of one of her family who fell into our hands reveals the secret springs of her action. Wishing to spare her as a member of the defenceless sex, it pains us to say, that, ingenious as her counterfeit walking is, she is an impostor. Worse than this,—with all our reverence for her brazen crinoline, duty compels us to reveal a fact concerning her which will shock the feelings of those who have watched the stately rigidity of decorum with which she moves in the presence of admiring multitudes. *She is a quadruped!* Inside of her great golden boots, which represent one pair of feet, is another smaller pair, which move freely through these hollow casings.

[Illustration]

Four *cams* or eccentric wheels impart motion to her four supports, by which she is carried forward, always resting on two of them,—the boot of one side, and the foot of the other. Her movement, then, is not walking; it is not skating, which it seems to resemble; it is more like that of a person walking with two crutches besides his two legs. The machinery is simple enough: a strong spiral spring, three or four cog-wheels and pinions, a fly to regulate the motion as in a musical box, and the cams before mentioned. As a toy, it or she is very taking to grown people as well as children. It is a literal fact, that the police requested one of our dealers to remove Miss Autoperipatetikos from his window, because the crowd she drew obstructed the sidewalk.

We see by our analysis of the process, and by the difficulty of imitating it, that walking is a much more delicate, perilous, complicated operation than we should suppose, and well worth studying in a practical point of view, to see what can be done to make it easier and safer. Two Americans have applied themselves to this task: one laboring for those who possess their lower limbs and want to use them to advantage, the other for such as have had the misfortune to lose one or both of them.

Dr. J.C. Plumer, formerly of Portland, now of Boston, has devoted himself to the study of the foot, and to the construction of a last upon which a boot or shoe can be moulded which shall be adapted to its form and accommodated to its action.

Most persons know something of the cruel injustice to which the feet are subjected, and the extraordinary distortions and diseases to which they are liable in consequence. The foot's fingers are the slaves in the republic of the body. Their black leathern integument is only the mask of their servile condition. They bear the burdens, while the hands, their white masters, handle the money and wear the rings. They are crowded promiscuously in narrow prisons, while each of the hand's fingers claims its separate apartment, leading from the antechamber, in the dainty glove. As a natural consequence of all this, their faculties are cramped, they grow into ignoble shapes, they become callous by long abuse, and all their natural gifts are crushed and trodden out of them.

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Dr. Plumer is the Garrison of these oppressed members of the body corporeal. He comes to break their chains, to lift their bowed figures, to strengthen their weakness, to restore them to the dignity of digits. To do this, he begins where every sensible man would, by contemplating the natural foot as it appears in infancy, unspoiled as yet by social corruptions, in adults fortunate enough to have escaped these destructive influences, in the grim skeleton aspect divested of its outward disguises. We will give the reader two views of the latter kind, illustrating the longitudinal and transverse arches before spoken of.

[Illustration]

A man who walks on natural surfaces, with his feet unprotected by any artificial defences, calls the action of these arches into full play at every step. The longitudinal arch is the most strikingly marked of the two. In some races and in certain individuals it is much developed, so as to give the high instep which is prized as an evidence of good blood. The Arab says that a stream of water can flow under his foot without touching its sole. Under the conditions supposed, of a naked foot on a natural surface, the arches of the foot will commonly maintain their integrity, and give the noble savage or the barefooted Scotch lassie the elasticity of gait which we admire in the children of Nature.

But as a large portion of mankind tread on artificial hard surfaces, especially pavements, their feet are subjected to a very unnatural amount of wear and tear. How great this is the inhabitants of cities are apt to forget. After passing some months in the country, we have repeatedly found ourselves terribly lamed and shaken by our first walk on the pavement. A party of city-folk who landed on a beach upon Cape Cod complained greatly to one of the natives accompanying them of the difficulty of walking through the deep sand. "Ah," he answered, "it's nothing to the trouble I have walking on your city-sidewalks." To save the feet from the effects of violent percussion and uneven surfaces, they must be protected by thick soles, and thick soles require strong upper-leather. When the foot is wedged into one of these casings, a new boot, a struggle begins between them, which ends in a compromise. The foot becomes more or less compressed or deformed, and the boot more or less stretched at the points where the counter-pressure takes place.

On the part of the foot, the effects of this warfare are liable to show themselves in thickening and inflammation of the integuments, in displacement of the toes, and occasionally in the breaking down of the transverse or longitudinal arches. On the part of the boot or shoe, there is a gradual accommodation which in time fits it to the foot almost as if it had been moulded upon it, so that a little before it is worn out it is invaluable, like other blessings brightening before they take their flight.

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Now Mr. Plumer's improvements proceed from two series of data. *First*, certain theoretical inferences from the facts above named. Finding the arches liable to break down, he supports the transverse arch by making the inner surface of the sole corresponding to it *convex* instead of concave transversely; he makes the middle portion of the sole convex again in both directions to support the longitudinal arch, and for the same reason extends the heel of the boot or shoe forward, so as to support the anterior portion of the heel of the foot. *Secondly*, Mr. Plumer takes an old shoe that has done good service, and studies the reliefs and hollows-which the foot has shaped on the inner surface of its sole. Comparing the empirical results of this examination with those based on the anatomical data above given, and finding a general coincidence in them, he constructs his last in accordance with their joint teachings. Theoretically, Mr. Plumer is on somewhat dangerous ground. If the arches of the foot are made to yield like elliptical springs, why support them? But we subject them to such unnatural conditions by pressure from above over the instep, by adding high heels to our boots and shoes, by taking away all yielding qualities from the soil on which we tread, that very probably they may want artificial support as much as the soles of the feet want artificial protection. If, now, we find that an old, easy shoe has worked the inside surface of its sole into convexities which support the arches, we are safe in imitating that at any rate. We shall have a new shoe with some, at least, of the virtues of the old one.

This all sounds very well, and the next question is, whether it works well. We cannot but remember the coat made for Mr. Gulliver by the Laputan tailors, which, though projected from the most refined geometrical data and the most profound calculations, he found to be the worst fit he ever put on his back. We must ask those who have eaten the pudding how it tastes, and those who have worn the shoe how it wears. We have no satisfactory experience of our own, having only within a week or two, by mere accident, stumbled into a pair of Plumerian boots, and being thus led to look into a matter which seemed akin to the main subject of this paper. But the author of "Views Afoot," who ought to be a sovereign authority on all that interests pedestrians, confirms from his own experience the favorable opinions expressed by several of our most eminent physicians, from an examination of the principles of construction. We are informed that the Plumer last has been recently adopted for the use of the army. We add our own humble belief that Dr. Plumer deserves well of mankind for applying sound anatomical principles to the construction of coverings for the feet, and for contriving a last serving as a model for a boot or shoe which is adapted to the form of the foot from the first, instead of having to be broken in by a painful series of limping excursions, too often accompanied by impatient and even profane utterances.

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It is not two years since the sight of a person who had lost one of his lower limbs was an infrequent occurrence. Now, alas! there are few of us who have not a cripple among our friends, if not in our own families. A mechanical art which provided for an occasional and exceptional want has become a great and active branch of industry. War unmakes legs, and human skill must supply their places as it best may.

Our common idea of a wooden leg is realized in the “peg” of the Greenwich pensioner. This humble contrivance has done excellent service in its time, and may serve a good purpose still in some cases. A plain working-man, who has outlived his courting-days and need not sacrifice much to personal appearance, may find an honest, old-fashioned wooden leg, cheap, lasting, requiring no repairs, the best thing for his purpose. In higher social positions, and at an age when appearances are realities, in the condition of the Marquis of Anglesea, for instance, it becomes important to provide the cripple with a limb which shall be presentable in polite society, where misfortunes of a certain obtrusiveness may be pitied, but are never tolerated under the chandeliers.

The leg invented by Mr. Potts, and bearing the name of the “Anglesea leg,” was long famous, and doubtless merited the reputation it acquired as superior to its predecessors. But legs cannot remain stationary while the march of improvement goes on around them, and they, too, have moved onward with the stride of progress.

A boy of ten years old, living in a New-Hampshire village, had one of his legs crushed so as to require amputation. The little fellow was furnished with a “Peg” and stumped round upon it for ten years. We can imagine what he suffered as he grew into adolescence under the cross of this unsightly appendage. He was of comely aspect, tall, well-shaped, with well-marked, regular features. But just at the period when personal graces are most valued, when a good presence is a blank check on the Bank of Fortune, with Nature’s signature at the bottom, he found himself made hideous by this fearful-looking counterfeit of a limb. It announced him at the threshold he reached with beating heart by a thump more energetic than the palpitation in his breast. It identified him as far as the eye of jealousy could see his moving figure. The “peg” became intolerable, and he unstrapped it and threw himself on the tender mercies of the crutch.

But the crutch is at best an instrument of torture. It presses upon a great bundle of nerves; it distorts the figure; it stamps a character of its own upon the whole organism; it is even accused of distempering the mind itself.

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This young man, whose name was “B. FRANK. PALMER,” (the abbreviations probably implying the name of a distinguished Boston philosopher of the last century, whose visit to Philadelphia is still remembered in that city,) set himself at work to contrive a limb which should take the place of the one he had lost, fulfilling its functions and counterfeiting its aspect so far as possible. The result was the “Palmer leg,” one of the most unquestionable triumphs of American ingenuity. Its victorious march has been unimpeded by any serious obstacle since it first stepped into public notice. The inventor was introduced by the late Dr. John C. Warren, in 1846, to the Massachusetts General Hospital, which institution he has for many years supplied with his artificial limbs. He received medals from the American Institute, the Massachusetts Charitable Association, and the Great Exhibition in New York, and obtained an honorary mention from the Royal Commissioners of the World’s Exhibition in London,—being the only maker of legs so distinguished. These are only a few of fifty honorary awards he has received at various times. The famous surgeons of London, the *Societe de Chirurgie* of Paris, and the most celebrated practitioners of the United States have given him their hearty recommendations. So lately as last August, that shrewd and skilful surgeon, Dr. Henry J. Bigelow, who is as cautious in handling his epithets as he is bold in using the implements of his art, strongly advised Surgeon-General Hammond to adopt the Palmer leg, which, after a dozen years’ experience, he had found none to equal. We see it announced that the Board of Surgeons appointed by the Surgeon-General to select the best arm and leg to be procured by the Government for its crippled soldiers chose that of Mr. Palmer, and that Dr. Hammond approved their selection.

We have thought it proper to show that Mr. Palmer’s invention did not stand in need of our commendation. Its merits, as we have seen, are conceded by the tribunals best fitted to judge, and we are therefore justified in selecting it as an illustration of American mechanical skill.

We give three views of the Palmer leg: an inside view when extended, a second when flexed, a third as it appears externally.

[Illustration]

[Illustration]

[Illustration]

The Committee on Science and the Arts of the Franklin Institute of Pennsylvania thus stated the peculiarities of Mr. Palmer’s invention:—

“*First*, An ingenious arrangement of springs and cords in the *inside* of the limb, by which, when the wearer is in the erect position, the limb is extended, and the foot flexed so as to present a natural appearance.



“Second. By a second arrangement of cords and springs in the inside of the limb, the foot and toes are gradually and easily extended, when the heel is placed in contact with the ground. In consequence of this arrangement, the limping gait, and the unpleasant noise made by the sudden stroke of the ball of the foot upon the ground in walking, which are so obvious in the ordinary leg, are avoided.

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“*Third*. By a peculiar arrangement of the knee-joint, it is rendered little liable to wear, and all lateral or rotary motion is avoided. It is hardly necessary to remark that any such motion is undesirable in an artificial leg, as it renders its support unstable.”

Before reporting some of the facts which we have seen, or learned by personal inquiry, we must be allowed, for the sake of convenience, to exercise the privilege granted to all philosophical students, of enlarging the nomenclature applicable to the subject of which we are treating.

Man, according to the Sphinx, is successively a *quadruped*, a *biped*, and a *triped*. But circumstances may change his natural conditions. If he loses a leg, he becomes a *uniped*. If he loses both his legs, he becomes a *nulliped*. If art replaces the loss of one limb with a factitious substitute, he becomes a *ligniped*, or, if we wish to be very precise, a *uni-ligniped*; two wooden legs entitle him to be called a *biligniped*. Our terminology being accepted, we are ready to proceed.

To make ourselves more familiar with the working of the invention we are considering, we have visited Mr. Palmer's establishments in Philadelphia and Boston. The distinguished “Surgeon-Artist” is a man of fine person, as we have said. But if he has any personal vanity, it does not betray itself with regard to that portion of his organism which Nature furnished him. There is some reason to think that Mr. Palmer is a little ashamed of the lower limb which he brought into the world with him. At least, if he follows the common rule and puts that which he considers his best foot foremost, he evidently awards the preference to that which was born of his brain over the one which he owes to his mother. He walks as well as many do who have their natural limbs, though not so well as some of his own patients. He puts his vegetable leg through many of the movements which would seem to demand the contractile animal fibre. He goes up and down stairs with very tolerable ease and despatch. Only when he comes to *stand* upon the human limb, we begin, to find that it is not in all respects equal to the divine one. For a certain number of seconds he can poise himself upon it; but Mr. Palmer, if he indulges in verse, would hardly fill the Horatian complement of lines in that attitude. In his anteroom were unipeds in different stages of their second learning to walk as lignipeds. At first they move with a good deal of awkwardness, but gradually the wooden limb seems to become, as it were, penetrated by the nerves, and the intelligence to run downwards until it reaches the last joint of the member.

Mr. Palmer, as we have incidentally mentioned, has a branch establishment in Boston, to which also we have paid a visit, in order to learn some of the details of the manufacture to which we had not attended in our pleasant interview with the inventor. The antechamber here, too, was the nursery of immature lignipeds, ready to exhibit their growing accomplishments to the inquiring stranger. It almost seems as if the artificial leg were the scholar, rather than the person who wears it. The man does well enough, but the leg is stupid until practice has taught it just what is expected from its various parts.

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The polite Boston partner, who, if he were in want of a customer, would almost persuade a man with two good legs to provide himself with a third, carried us to the back part of the building, where legs are organized.

The *willow*, which furnishes the charcoal for the gunpowder that blows off limbs, is the wood chosen to supply the loss it has helped to occasion. It is light, strong, does not warp or “check” much as many other woods, and is, as the workmen say, *healthy*, that is, not irritating to the parts with which it is in contact. Whether the *salicine* it may contain enters the pores and invigorates the system may be a question for those who remember the drugs in the Sultan’s bat-handle and the remarkable cure they wrought. This wood is kept in a dry-house with as much care as that intended for the manufacture of pianos. It is thoroughly steamed also, before using.

The wood comes in rudely shaped blocks, as lasts are sent to the factory, seeming to have been coarsely hewed out of the log. The shaping, as we found to our surprise, is all done by hand. We had expected to see great lathes, worked by steam-power, taking in a rough stick and turning out a finished limb. But it is shaped very much as a sculptor finishes his marble, with an eye to artistic effect,—not so much in the view of the stranger, who does not look upon its naked loveliness, as in that of the wearer, who is seduced by its harmonious outlines into its purchase, and solaced with the consciousness that he carries so much beauty and symmetry about with him. The hollowing-out of the interior is done by wicked-looking blades and scoops at the end of long stems, suggesting the thought of dentists’ instruments as they might have been in the days of the giants. The joints are most carefully made, more particularly at the knee, where a strong bolt of steel passes through the solid wood. Windows, oblong openings, are left in the sides of the limb, to insure a good supply of air to the extremity of the mutilated limb. Many persons are not aware that all parts of the surface *breathe* just as the lungs breathe, exhaling carbonic acid as well as water, and taking in more or less oxygen.

One of the workmen, a pleasant-looking young fellow, was himself, we were told, a ligniped. We begged him to give us a specimen of his walking. He arose and walked rather slowly across the room and back. “Once more,” we said, not feeling quite sure which was Nature’s leg and which Mr. Palmer’s. So he walked up and down the room again, until we had satisfied ourselves which was the leg of willow and which that of flesh and bone. It is not, perhaps, to the credit of our eyes or observing powers, but it is a fact, that we deliberately selected *the wrong leg*. No victim of the thimble-rigger’s trickery was ever more completely taken in than we were by the contrivance of the ingenious Surgeon-Artist.

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Our freely expressed admiration led to the telling of wonderful stories about the doings of persons with artificial legs. One individual was mentioned who *skated* particularly well; another who *danced* with zeal and perseverance; and a third who must needs *swim* in his leg, which brought on a dropsical affection of the limb,—to which kind of complaint the willow has, of course, a constitutional tendency,—and for which it had to come to the infirmary where the diseases that wood is heir to are treated.

But the most wonderful monuments of the great restorer's skill are the patients who have lost both legs,—*nullipeds*, as presented to Mr. Palmer, *bilignipeds*, as they walk forth again before the admiring world, balanced upon their two new-born members. We have before us delineations of six of these hybrids between the animal and vegetable world. One of them was employed at a railway-station near this (Atlantic) city, where he was often seen by a member of our own household, whose testimony we are in the habit of considering superior in veracity to the naked truth as commonly delivered. He walked about, we are assured, a little slowly and stiffly, but in a way that hardly attracted attention.

The inventor of the leg has not been contented to stop there. He has worked for years upon the construction of an artificial *arm*, and has at length succeeded in arranging a mechanism, which, if it cannot serve a pianist or violinist, is yet equal to holding the reins in driving, receiving fees for professional services, and similar easy labors. Where Mr. Palmer means to stop in supplying bodily losses it would be premature to say. We suppose the accidents happening occasionally from the use of the guillotine are beyond his skill, and spare our readers the lively remark suggested by the contrary hypothesis.

* * * * *

It is one of the signs of our advancing American civilization, that the arts which preserve and restore the personal advantages necessary or favorable to cultivated social life should have reached such perfection among us. American dentists have achieved a reputation which has sent them into the palaces of Europe to open the mouths of sovereigns and princes as freely as the jockeys look into those of horses and colts. Bad teeth, too common among us, help to breed good dentists, no doubt; but besides this there is an absolute demand for a certain comeliness of person throughout all the decent classes of our society. It is the same standard of propriety in appearances which lays us open to the reproach of caring too much for dress. If the national ear for music is not so acute as that of some other peoples, the national eye for the harmonies of form and color is better than we often find in older communities. We have a right to claim that our sculptors and painters prove so much as this for us. American taste was offended, outraged, by the odious “peg” which the Old-World soldier or beggar was proud to show. We owe the well-shaped, intelligent, docile limb, the half-reasoning willow of Mr. Palmer, to the same sense of beauty and fitness which moulded the soft outlines of the Indian Girl and the White Captive in the studio of his namesake at Albany.

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As we wean ourselves from the Old World, and become more and more nationalized in our great struggle for existence as a free people, we shall carry this aptness for the production of beautiful forms more and more into common life, which demands first what is necessary and then what is pleasing. It is but a step from the painter's canvas to the weaver's loom, and the pictures which are leaving the easel to-day will show themselves in the patterns that sweep the untidy sidewalks to-morrow. The same plastic power which is showing itself in the triumphs of American sculpture will reach the forms of our household-utensils. The beans of Beverly shall yet be baked in vases that Etruria might have envied, and the clay pipe of the Americanized Milesian shall be a thing of beauty as well as a joy forever. We are already pushing the plastic arts farther than many persons have suspected. There is a small town not far from us where a million dollars' worth of gold is annually beaten into ornaments for the breasts, the fingers, the ears, the necks of women. Many a lady supposes she is buying Parisian adornments, when *Attleborough* could say to her proudly, like Cornelia, "These are my jewels." The workmen of this little town not only meet the tastes of the less fastidious classes, to whom all that glisters is gold, but they shape the purest metal into artistic and effective patterns. When the Koh-i-noor—the Mountain of Light—was to be fashioned, it was found to be almost as formidable a task as that of Xerxes, when he undertook to hew Mount Athos to the shape of man. The great crystal was sent to Holland, as the only place where it could be properly cut. We have lately seen a brilliant which, if not a mountain of light, was yet a very respectable mound of radiance, valued at some ten or twelve thousand dollars, cut in this virgin settlement, and exposed in one of our shop-windows to tempt our frugal villagers.

Monsieur Trousseau, Professor in the Medical School of Paris, delivered a discursive lecture not long ago, in which he soared from the region of drugs, his well-known special province, into the thin atmosphere of aesthetics. It is the influence that surrounds his fortunate fellow-citizens, he declares, which alone preserves their intellectual supremacy. If a Parisian milliner, he says, remove to New York, she will so degenerate in the course of a couple of years that the squaw of a Choctaw chief would be ashamed to wear one of her bonnets.

Listen, O Parisian cockney, pecking among the brood most plethoric with conceit, of all the coop-fed citizens who tread the pavements of earth's many-chimneyed towns! America has made implements of husbandry which out-mow and out-reap the world. She has contrived man-slaying engines which kill people faster than any others. She has modelled the wave-slicing clipper which outsails all your argosies and armadas. She has revolutionized naval warfare once by the steamboat.

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She has revolutionized it a second time by planting towers of iron on the elephantine backs of the waves. She has invented the sewing-machine to save the dainty fingers of your virtuous grisettes from uncongenial toil, so that Fifine and Fretillon may have more leisure for self-development. She has taught you a whole new system of labor in her machinery for making watches and rifles. She has bestowed upon you and all the world an anodyne which enables you to cut arms and legs off without hurting the patient; and when his leg is off, she has given you a true artist's limb for your cripple to walk upon, instead of the peg on which he has stumped from the days of Guy de Chauliac to those of M. Nelaton. She has been contriving well-shaped boots and shoes for the very people who, if they were your countrymen, would be clumping about in wooden *sabots*. In works of scientific industry, hardly to be looked for among so new a people she has distanced your best artificers. The microscopes made at Canastota, in the backwoods of New York, look in vain for their rivals in Paris, and must challenge the best workmanship of London before they can be approached in excellence. The great eye that stares into the celestial spaces from its workshop in Cambridge, dives deeper through their clouds of silvery dust than any instrument mounted in your observatory in face of the Luxembourg. Our artisans produce no Gobelin tapestries or Sevres porcelain as yet; but when your mobs have looted the Tuileries, our shopkeepers have bought up enough specimens to serve them as patterns by-and-by.

All this is something for a nation which has hardly pulled up the stumps out of its city market-places. It is sad to reflect that milliners, like Burgundy, are spoiled by transportation to the headquarters of American fashion. But as the best bonnet of the Empress's own artist would be exploded with yells a couple of seasons after the time when it was the rage, the Icarian professor's flight into the regions of rhetoric has not led him to any very logical resting-place from which he can look down on the aesthetic possibilities of New York or other Western cities emerging from the semi-barbarous state.

We are not proud, of course, of any of the mechanical triumphs we have won; they are well enough, and show—to borrow the words of a distinguished American, whom, during his too brief career, we held unrivalled by any experimenter in the Old World for the depth as well as the daring of his investigations—that some things can be done as well as others.

Our specialty is of somewhat larger scope. We profess to make men and women out of human beings better than any of the joint-stock companies called dynasties have done or can do it. We profess to make citizens out of men,—not *citoyens*, but persons educated to question all privileges asserted by others, and claim all rights belonging to themselves,—the only way in which the infinitely most important party

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to the compact between the governed and governing can avoid being cheated out of the best rights inherent in human nature, as an experience the world has seen almost enough of has proved. We are in trouble just now, on account of a neglected hereditary *melanosis*, as Monsieur Trousseau might call it. When we recover from the social and political convulsion it has produced, and eliminate the *materies morbi*,—and both these events are only matters of time,—perhaps we shall have leisure to breed our own milliners. If not, there will probably be refugees enough from the Old World, who have learned the fashions in courts, and will be glad to turn their knowledge to a profitable use for the benefit of their republican patronesses in New York and Boston.

We have run away from our subject farther than we intended at starting; but an essay on legs could hardly avoid the rambling tendency which naturally belongs to these organs.

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PAUL BLECKER.

PART I.

“Which serves life’s purpose best,
To enjoy or to renounce?”

A thorough American, who comprehends what America has to do, and means to help on with it, ought to choose to be born in New England, for the vitalized brain, finely-chorded nerves, steely self-control,—then to go West, for more live, muscular passion, succulent manhood, naked-handed grip of his work. But when he wants to die, by all means let him hunt out a town in the valley of Pennsylvania or Virginia: Nature and man there are so ineffably self-contained, content with that which is, shut in from the outer surge, putting forth their little peculiarities, as tranquil and glad to be alive as if they were pulseless sea-anemones, and after a while going back to the Being whence they came, just as tranquil and glad to be dead.

Paul Blecker had some such fancy as this, that last evening before the regiment of which he was surgeon started for Harper’s Ferry, while he and the Captain were coming from camp by the hill-road into the village (or burgh: there are no Villages in Pennsylvania). Nothing was lost on Blecker; his wide, nervous eyes took all in: the age and complacent quiet of this nook of the world, the full-blooded Nature asleep in the yellow June sunset; why! she had been asleep there since the beginning, he knew. The very Indians in these hills must have been a fishing, drowsy crew; their names and graves yet dreamily haunted the farms and creek-shores. The Covenanters who came



after them never had roused themselves enough to shake them off. Covenanters: the Doctor began joking to himself, as he walked along, humming some tune, about how the spirit of every sect came out, always alike, in the temperament, the very cut of the face, or whim of accent. These descendants of the Covenanters, now,—Presbyterian elders

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and their wives,—going down to camp to bid their boys good-bye, devoted them to death with just as stern integrity, as partial a view of the right, as their ancestors did theirs at Naseby or Drumclog: their religion loved its friends and hated its enemies just as bitterly as when it scowled at Monmouth; the “boys,” no doubt, would call themselves Roundheads, as they had done in the three months’ service. Paul Blecker, who had seen a good many sides of the world, laughed to himself: the very Captain here, good, anxious, innocent as a baby, as he was, looked at the world exactly through Balfour of Burley’s dead eyes, was going to cure the disease of it by the old pill of intolerance and bigotry. No wonder Paul laughed.

The sobered Quaker evening was making ready for night: the yellow warmth overhead thinning into tintless space; the low hills drawing farther off in the melancholy light; the sky sinking nearer; clouds, unsteady all day, softened at last into a thoughtful purple, and couching themselves slowly in the hollows of the horizon; the sweep of cornfields and woods and distant farms growing dim,—daguerreotype-like; the tinkle of the sheep-bells on the meadows, the shouts of the boys in camp yonder, the bass drone of the frogs in the swamp dulling down into the remoteness of sleep. The Doctor slackened his sharp, jerking stride, and fell into the monotonous gait of his companion, glancing up to him. McKinstry, he thought, was going out to battle to-morrow with just as cool phlegm and childlike content as he would set out to buy his merino ewes; but he would receive no pay,—meant to transfer it to his men. And he would be in the thickest of the fight,—you might bet on that. Umph! his quick eyes darting over the big, leisurely frame, the neat yellow hair, and the blue eyes mildly peering through spectacles. Then, having satisfactorily anatomized McKinstry, he turned to the evening again with open senses, the sensitive pulsing of his wide nostrils telling that even the milky scent of the full-uddered cows gave him keen enjoyment. The cows were going home from pasture, up shady barn-lanes, into the grayer shadows about the houses on either side of the road, in whose windows lights were beginning to glimmer. Solid old homesteads they were, stone or brick, never wood. Out in these Western settlements, a hundred years ago, they built durable homes, curiously enough, more than in the Northern States; planted oaks about them, that bore the strength of the earth up to heaven in sturdy arms, shaming the graceful, uncertain elm of shallower soils. Just such old farm-houses as those, Blecker thought, would turn out such old-time moulded men as McKinstry: houses whose orchards still held on to the Waldower and Smoke-house apples; their gardens gay with hollyhocks and crimson prince’s-feather; on the book-shelves the “Spectator” and “Gentleman’s Magazine.” The women of them kept up the old-fashioned knitting-parties, and a donation-visit to the pastor once a year; and

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the men were all gone to the war, to keep the Union as it was in their fathers' time, and would doubtless vote the conservative ticket next election because their fathers did, which would make the war a horrible farce. The town, Blecker thought, had rooted itself in between the hills with as solid a persistence as the prejudices of its builders. Obstinate steep streets, shaded by gnarled locust-trees; houses drawn back from the sidewalks, in surly dread of all new-comers; the very smoke, vaporizing through the sky, had defiance in it of the outer barbarous world and its vulgar newness. Yet the town had an honest country heart in it, if it was a bit gray and crusty with age. Blecker, knowing it as he did, did not wonder the boys who left it named a village for it out in Kansas, trying to fancy themselves at home,—or that one old beggar in it asked to be buried in the middle of the street, "So's I kin hear the stages a-comin' in, an' know if the old place is a-gittin' on."

There seemed to be a migration from it to-night: they met, every minute, buggies, old-fashioned carriages, horsemen.

"Going out to camp," McKinstry said; "the boys all have some one to bid them good-bye."

What a lonely, reserved voice the man had! Blecker had the curiosity of all sensitive men to know the soul-history of people; he glanced again keenly in McKinstry's face. Pshaw! one might as well ask their story from the deaf and dumb. But that they were dumb,—there was hint of a tragedy in that!

Everybody stopped to speak to the Doctor. He had been but a few months in the place; but the old church-goers had found him out as a passionate, free-and-easy, honorable fellow, full of joke and anecdote,—shrewd, too. They "fellowshipped" with him heartily, and were glad when he got the post of surgeon with their sons. If there were anything more astringent below this, any more real self in the man, held back, belonging to a world outside of theirs, they did not see it. They knew him better, they thought, than they did Daniel McKinstry, who had grown up among them, just as mild and silent when he was a tow-haired boy as now, a man of forty-five. He touched his hat to them now, and went on, while Blecker leaned on the carriage-doors, his brown face aglow with fun, his uneasy fingers drumming boyishly on the panel. Not knowing that through the changeful face, and fierce, pitiful eyes of the boy, the man Paul Blecker looked coolly out, testing, labelling them. The boy in him, that they saw, Nature had made; but years of a hand-to-hand fight with starvation came after, crime, and society, whose work is later than Nature's, and sometimes better done.

"Fine girl!" said the Doctor, touching his hat to Miss Mallard, as she cantered past. "Got a head of her own, too. Made a deused good speech, when she presented the flag to-day."



Miss Mallard overheard him, as he intended she should, and blushed a visible acknowledgment. All of her character was visible, well-developed as her body: her timidity showed itself in the unceasing dropping of her eyelid; her arch simplicity in the pouting lips; a coy reserve—well, that everywhere, to the very rosette on her retreating slipper; and her patriotism was quite palpable in the color of her Balmoral. She rode Squire Mallard's gray.

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"And very well they turn out," sneered Blecker.

"She is a woman," said the Captain, blushing,—differently from the lady, however.

"And if she is?" turning suddenly. "She has the nature of a Bowery rough. Pah, McKinstry! Sexes stand alike with me. If a woman's flesh is weaker-grained a bit, what of that? Whoever would earn esteem must work for it."

The Captain said nothing, stammered a little, then, hoisting his foot on a stump, tied his shoe nervously.

Blecker smiled, a queer, sorrowful smile, as if, oddly enough, he felt sorry for himself.

"I'd like to think of women as you do, Mac," he said. "You never knew many?"

"Only two, until now,—my mother and little Sarah. They're gone now."

Sarah? The Doctor was silent a moment, thinking. He had heard of a sister of McKinstry's, sick for years with some terrible disease, whom he had nursed until the end. She was Sarah, most likely. Well, that was what *his* life had been given up for, was it? There was a twitching about McKinstry's wide mouth: Paul looked away from him a moment, and then, glancing furtively back, began again.

"No, I never knew my mother or sister, Mac. The great discovery of this age is woman, old fellow! I've been, knocked about too much not to have lost all delusions about them. It did well enough for the crusading times to hold them as angels in theory, and in practice as idiots; but in these rough-and-tumble days we'd better give 'em their places as flesh and blood, with exactly such wants and passions as men."

The Captain never argued.

"I don't know," he said, dryly.

After that he jogged on in silence, glancing askance at the masculine, self-assertant figure of his companion,—at the face, acrid, unyielding, beneath its surface-heat: ruminating mildly to himself on what a good thing it was for him never to have known any but old-fashioned women. This Blecker, now, had been made by intercourse with such women as those he talked of: he came from the North. The Captain looked at him with a vague, moony compassion: the usual Western vision of a Yankee female in his head,—Bloomer-clad, hatchet-faced, capable of anything, from courting a husband to commanding a ship. (It is all your fault, genuine women of New England! Why don't you come among us, and know your country, and let your country know you? Better learn the meaning of Chicago than of Venice, for your own sakes, believe me.)

They were near the town now, the road crossing a railroad-track, where the hill, chopped apart for the grade, left bare the black stratum of coal, tinged here and there with a bloody brown and whitish shale.

“Hillo! this means iron,” said the Doctor, climbing up the bank, cat-like, to break off a bit; “and here an odd formation, Mac. Take it in to old Gurney.”

The Captain cleaned his spectacles with piece of chamois-leather, put them on, folded the leather and replaced it in its especial place in his pocket, before he took the bit of rock.

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"All that finical ceremony he would go through in the face of the enemy," thought Blecker, jumping down on the track.

"Give it to old Gurney, Mac. It will insure you a welcome."

"It is curious, Doctor Blecker. But you"—

"I never care to gratify anybody. Besides, the old gentleman and I inter-despised. Our instincts cried out, 'Ware dog!' the first day You are a friend of his, eh, Mac?"

The Captain's face grew red, like a bashful woman's. He thought Blecker had divined his secret, would haul it out roughly in another moment. If this slang-talking Yankee should take little Lizzy's name into his mouth! But the Doctor was silent, even looked away until the heat on the poor old bachelor's face had died out. He knew McKinstry's thought of that little girl well enough, but he held the child-hearted man's secret tenderly and charily in his hand. Paul Blecker did talk slang and assert himself; but every impulse in him was clean, delicate, liberal. So, Paul remaining silent, the Captain took heart of grace, going down the street, and ventured back to the Gurney question.

"I thought I would accompany you there, Doctor Blecker. They might only think it seemly in me to bid farewell. I"—

Blecker nodded. The man had not been able to hide an harassed frown that day under his usual vigor of speech and look. It became more palpable after this; his voice, when he did speak, was fretful, irritable,—his lips compressed; he stopped at a village-well to drink, as though his mouth were parched.

"How old is that house,—the Gurneys?" he asked, affecting carelessness, to baffle the curious inspection of McKinstry.

"The Fort? We call it the Fort because it was used for one in Indian times," McKinstry began, chafing his lean whiskers delightedly.

Old houses were his hobby, especially this which they approached,—a narrow, long building of unhewn stone, facing on the street, the lintels and doors worm-eaten, and green with moss.

"Built by Bradford, the new part,—Bradford, of the Whiskey Insurrection, you know? Carvings on the walls brought over the mountains, when to bring them by panels was a two-months' journey. There's queer stories hang about these old Pennsylvania homesteads."

"Bradford? The Gurneys are a new family here, then?"

“Came here but a few years back, from a country farther up the mountains. They’re different from us.”

“How, different?” with a keen, surprised glance. “*I* see they are a newer people than the others; but I thought the village accepted them with shut eyes.”

The Captain stammered again.

“Old Father Gurney, as we call him, taught school when they first came, but he gave that up. This section is a good geological field, and he wished to devote himself to that,” he went on, evading the question. “They live off of those acres at the back of the house since that. You see? Corn, potatoes, buckwheat,—good yield.”

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"Who oversees the planting?" sharply.

McKinstry wondered vaguely at the little Doctor's curious interest in the Gurneys, but went on with his torpid, slow answers.

"That eldest girl, I believe, Grey. Cow there, you see, and ducks. He's popular, old Father Gurney. People have a liking for his queer ways, help him collect specimens for his cabinet; the boys bring him birds to stuff, and snakes. If it hadn't been for the troubles breaking out, he was on the eve of a most im-por-tant discovery,—the crater of an exhausted volcano in Virginia." McKinstry lowered his voice cautiously. "Fact, Sir. In Mercer County. But the guerrillas interfered with his researches."

"I think it probable. So he stuffs birds, does he?" Blecker's lips closing tighter.

"And keeps the snakes in alcohol. There are shelves in Miss Lizzy's room quite full of them. That lower room it was, but Joseph has taken it for a study. She has the upper one for her flowers and her father's birds."

"And Grey, and the twins, and the four boys bedaubed with molasses, and the dog, and the cooking?"

"Stowed away somewhere," the Captain mildly responded.

Dr. Blecker was testy.

"You know Joseph, her brother? I mean our candidate for Congress next term?"

"Yes. Democratic. J. Schuyler Gurney,—give him his name, Mac. Republican last winter. Joseph trims to wind and tide well. I heard him crow like a barn-yard fowl on the Capitol-steps at Washington when Lincoln called for the seventy-five thousand: now, he hashes up Breckinridge's conservative speech for your hickory-backed farmers. Does he support the family, Mac?"

"His election-expenses are heavy."

"Brandy-slings. I know his proclivities."

McKinstry colored. Dr. Blecker was coarse, an ill-bred man, he suspected,—noting, too, the angry repression in his eyes, as he stood leaning on the gate, looking in at the Fort, for they had reached it by this time. The Captain looked in, too, through the dusky clumps of altheas and plum-trees, at the old stone house, dyed tawny-gray in the evening light, and talked on, the words falling unconscious and simple as a stream of milk. The old plodder was no longer dumb. Blecker had hit on the one valve of the shut-up nature, the obstinate point of self-reliant volition in a life that had been one long drift of circumstance. This old stone house, shaggy with vines, its bloody script of



Indian warfare hushed down and covered with modern fruit-trees and sunflowers,—this fort, and the Gurneys within it, stood out in the bare swamped stretch of the man's years, their solitary bit of enchantment. They were bare years,—the forty he had known: Fate had drained them tolerably dry before she flung them to him to accomplish duty in;—the duty was done now. McKinstry, a mild, common-faced man, had gone through it for nearly half a century, pleasantly,—never called it heroism.

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It was done. He had time now to stretch his nerves of body and soul with a great sigh of relief,—to see that Duty was, after all, a lean, meagre-faced angel, that Christ sends first, but never meant should be nearest and best. Faith, love, and so, happiness, these were words of more pregnant meaning in the gospel the Helper left us. So McKinstry stood straight up, for the first time in his life, and looked about him. A man, with an adult's blood, muscles, needs; an idle soul which his cramped creed did not fill, hungry domestic instincts, narrow and patient habit;—he claimed work and happiness, his right. Of course it came, and tangibly. Into every life God sends an actual messenger to widen and lift it above itself: puerile or selfish the messenger often is, but so straight from Him that the divine radiance clings about it, and all that it touches. We call that *love*, you remember. A secular affair, according to McKinstry's education, as much as marketing. So when he found that the tawny old house and the quiet little girl in there with the curious voice, which people came for miles to hear, were gaining an undue weight in his life, held, to be plain, all the fairy-land of which his childhood had been cheated, all fierce beauty, aspiration, passionate strength to insult Fate, which his life had never known, he kept the knowledge to himself. It was boyish weakness. He choked it out of thought on Sundays as sacrilege: how could he talk of the Gurney house and Lizzy to that almighty, infinite Vagueness he worshipped? Stalking to and fro, in the outskirts of the churchyard, he used to watch the flutter of the little girl's white dress, as she passed by to "meeting." He could not help it that his great limbs trembled, if the dress touched them, or that he had a mad longing to catch the tired-looking child up to his brawny breast and hold her there forever. But he felt guilty and ashamed that it was so; not knowing that Christ, seeing the pure thrill in his heart, smiled just as he did long ago when Mary brought the beloved disciple to him.

He never had told little Lizzy that he loved her,—hardly told himself. Why, he was forty-five,—and a year or two ago she was sledding down the street with her brothers, a mere yellow-haired baby. He remembered the first time he had noticed her,—one Christmas eve; his mother and Sarah were alive then. There was an Italian woman came to the village with a broken hand-organ, a filthy, starving wretch, and Gurney's little girl went with her from house to house in the snow, singing Christmas carols, and handing the tambourine. Everybody said, "Why, you little tot!" and gave her handfuls of silver. Such a wonderful voice she had even then, and looked so chubby and pretty in her little blue cloak and hood; and going about with the woman was such a pure-hearted thing to do. She danced once or twice that day, striking the tambourine, he remembered; the sound of it seemed to put her in a sort of ecstasy, laughing

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till her eyes were full of tears, and her tangled hair fell all about her red cheeks. She could not help but do it, he believed, for at other times she was shy, terrified, if one spoke to her; but he wished he had not seen her dance then, though she was only a child: dancing, he thought, was as foul and effective a snare as ever came from hell. After that day she used often to come to the farm to see his mother and Sarah. They tried to teach her to sew, but she was a lazy little thing, he remembered, with an indulgent smile. And he was "Uncle Dan." So now she was grown up, quite a woman: in those years, when she had been with her kinsfolk in New York, she had been taught to sing. Well, well! McKinstry reckoned music as about as useful as the crackling of thorns under a pot; so he never cared to know, what was the fact, that this youngest daughter of Gurney's had one of the purest contralto voices in the States. She came home, grown, but just as shy; only tired, needing care: no one could look in Lizzy Gurney's face without wishing to comfort and help the child. The Gurneys were so wretchedly poor, that might be the cause of her look. She was a woman now. Well, and then? Why, nothing then. He was Uncle Dan still, of whom she was less afraid than of any other living creature; that was all. Thinking, as he stood with Paul Blecker, leaning over the gate, of how she had brought him a badly-made havelock that morning. "You're always so kind to me," she said. "So I am kind to her," he thought, his quiet blue eyes growing duller behind their spectacles; "so I will be."

The Doctor opened the gate, and went in, turning into the shrubbery, and seating himself under a sycamore.

"Don't wait for me, McKinstry," he said. "I'll sit here and smoke a bit. Here comes the aforesaid Joseph."

He did not light his cigar, however, when the other left him; took off his hat to let the wind blow through his hair, the petulant heat dying out of his face, giving place to a rigid settling, at last, of the fickle features.

A flabby, red-faced man in fine broadcloth and jaunty beaver came down the path, fumbling his seals, and met the Captain with a puffing snort of salutation. To Blecker, whose fancy was made sultry to-night by some passion we know nothing of, he looked like a bloated spider coming out of the cell where his victims were. "Gorging himself, while they and the country suffer the loss," he muttered. But Paul was a hot-brained young man. We should only have seen a vulgar, commonplace trickster in politics, such as the people make pets of. "Such men as Schuyler Gurney get the fattest offices. God send us a monarchy soon!" he hissed under his breath, as the gate closed after the politician. By which you will perceive that Dr. Blecker, like most men fighting their way up, was too near-sighted for any abstract theories. Liberty, he thought, was a very poetic, Millennium-like idea for stump-speeches

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and college-cubs, but he grappled with the time the States were too chaotic, untaught a mass for self-government; he cursed secession as anarchy, and the government at Washington for those equally anarchical, drunken whims of tyranny; he would like to see an iron heel put on the whole concern, for wholesome discipline. The Doctor was born in one of the Border States; men there, it is said, have a sort of hand-to-mouth politics; their daily bread of rights is all they care for; so Paul seldom looked into to-morrow for anything. In other ways, too, his birth had curdled his blood into a sensuous languor. To-night, after McKinstry had entered the house, and he was left alone, the quaint old garden quiet, the air about him clean, pure, unperfumed, the stars distant and lonely, his limbs bedded in the clinging moss, he was rested for the moment, happy like a child, with no subtle-sensed questionings why. The sounds of the village could not penetrate there; the content, the listless hush of the night was with him; the delicious shimmer of the trees in the starlight, the low call of the pigeon to its mate, even the fall of the catalpa-blossoms upon his hand, thrilled him with unreasoning pleasure: a dull consciousness that the earth was alive and well, and he was glad to live with the rest.

Something in Blecker's nature came into close *rapprochement* with the higher animal life. If he had been born with money, and lived here in these stagnating hills, or down yonder on some lazy cotton-plantation, he would have settled down before this into a genial, child-loving, arbitrary husband and master, fond of pictures and horses, his house in decent taste, his land pleasure-giving, his wines good. By this time he would have been Judge Blecker, with a portly voice, flushed face, and thick eyelids. But he had scuffled and edged his way in the thin air of Connecticut as errand-boy, daguerreotypist, teacher, doctor;—so he came into the Gurney garden that night, shrewd, defiant, priding himself on detecting shams. His waistcoat and trousers were of coarser stuff than suited his temperament; a taint of vulgarity in his talk, his whiskers untrimmed, the meaning of his face compacted, sharpened. It was many a year since a tear had come into his black eyes; yet tears belonged there, as much as to a woman's.

Only for a few moments, therefore, he was contented to sit quiet in the soft gloaming: then he puffed his cigar impatiently, watching the house. Waiting for some one: with no fancies about the old fort, like McKinstry. An over-full house, with an unordered, slipshod life, hungry, clinging desperately in its poverty to an old prestige of rank, one worker inside patiently bearing the whole selfish burden. Well, there was the history of the anxious, struggling, middle class of America: why need he have been goaded so intolerably by this instance? Paul's eyes were jaundiced; he sat moodily watching the lighted window off in the darkness, through which he could

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catch glimpses of the family-room within: he called it a pitiful tragedy going on there; yet it seemed to be a cheerful and hearty life. This girl Grey, whom he looked on as one might on some victim from whose lungs the breath was drawn slowly, was fresh, careless, light-hearted enough. Going to and fro in the room, now carrying one of the children, she sang it to sleep with no doleful ditty, such as young women fresh from boarding-school affect, but with a ringing, cheery song. You might be sure that Baby would wake laughing to-morrow morning after it. He could see her shadow pass and repass the windows; she would be out presently; she was used to come out always after the hot day's flurry,—to say her prayers, he believed; and he chose to see her there in the dark and coolness to bid her good-bye. He waited, not patiently.

Grey, trotting up and down, holding by the chubby legs and wriggling arms of Master Pen, sang herself out of breath with “Roy’s Wife,” and stopped short.

“I’m sure, Pen, I don’t know what to do with you,”—half ready to cry.

“‘Dixie,’ now, Sis.”

Pen was three years old, but he was the baby when his mother died; so Sis walked him to sleep every night: all tender memories of her who was gone clinging about the little fat lump of mischief in his white night-gown. A wiry voice spoke out of some corner,—

“Yer ‘d hev a thumpin’ good warmin’, Mars’ Penrose, ef ole Oth hed his will o’ yer! It ‘ud be a special ‘pensation ob de Lord fur dat chile!”

Pen prospected his sister’s face with the corner of one blue eye. There was a line about the freckled cheeks and baby-mouth of “Sis” that sometimes agreed with Oth on the subject of dispensations, but it was not there to-night.

“No, no, uncle. Not the last thing before he goes to bed. I always try, myself, to see something bright and pretty for the last thing, and then shut my eyes, quick,—just as Pen will do now: quick! there’s my sonny boy!”

Nobody ever called Grey Gurney pretty; but Pen took an immense delight in her now; shook and kicked her for his pony, but could not make her step less firm or light; thrust his hands about her white throat; pulled the fine reddish hair down; put his dumpling face to hers. A thin, uncertain face, but Pen knew nothing of that; he did know, though, that the skin was fresh and dewy as his own, the soft lips very ready for kisses, and the pale hazel eyes just as straightforward-looking as a baby’s. Children and dogs believe in women like Grey Gurney. Finally, from pure exhaustion, Pen cuddled up and went to sleep.



It was a long, narrow room where Grey and the children were, covered with rag-carpet, (she and the boys and old Oth had made the balls for it last winter): well lighted, for Father Gurney had his desk in there to-night. He was working at his catalogue of Sauroidichnites in Pennsylvania. A tall, lean man, with hook-nose, and peering, protruding, blue eyes. Captain McKinstry sat by him, turning over Brongniart; his brain, if one might judge from the frequency with which he blew his nose, evidently the worse from the wear since he came in; glancing with an irresolute awe from the book to the bony frame of the old man in his red dressing-gown, and then to the bony carcasses of the birds on the wall in their dusty plumage.

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"Like enough each to t' other," old Oth used to mutter; "on'y dem birds done forgot to eat, an' Mars' Gurney neber will, gorry knows dat!"

"If you could, Captain McKinstry,"—it was the old man who spoke now, with a sort of whiffle through his teeth,—“if you could? A chip of shale next to this you brought this evening would satisfy me. This is evidently an original fossil foot-mark: no work of Indians. I'll go with you,”—gathering his dressing-gown about his lank-legs.

"No," said the Captain, some sudden thought bringing gravity and self-reliance into his face. "My little girl is going with Uncle Dan. It's the last walk I can take with her. Go, child, and bring your bonnet."

Little Lizzy (people generally called her that) got up from the door-step where she sat, and ran up-stairs. She was one of those women who look as if they ought to be ordered and taken care of. Grey put a light shawl over her shoulders as she passed her. Grey thought of Lizzy always very much as a piece of fine porcelain among some earthen crocks, she being a very rough crock herself. Did not she have to make a companion in some Ways of old Oth? When she had no potatoes for dinner, or could get no sewing to pay for Lizzy's shoes, (Lizzy was hard on her shoes, poor thing!) she found herself talking it over with Oth. The others did not-care for such things, and it would be mean to worry them, but Oth liked a misery, and it was such a relief to tell things sometimes! The old negro had been a slave of her grandfather's until he was of age; he was quite helpless now, having a disease of the spine. But Grey had brought him to town with them, "because, you know, uncle, I couldn't keep house without you, at all,—I really couldn't." So he had his chair covered with sheepskin in the sunniest corner always, and Grey made over her father's old clothes for him on the machine. Oth had learned to knit, and made "hissself s'ficiently independent, heelin' an' ribbin' der boys' socks, an' keepin' der young debbils in order," he said.

It was but a cheap machine Grey had, but a sturdy little chap; the steel band of it, even the wheel, flashed back a jolly laugh at her as she passed it, slowly hushing Pen, as if it would like to say, "I'll put you through, Sis!" and looked quite contemptuously at the heaps of white muslin piled up beside it. The boys' shirts, you know,—but wasn't it a mercy she had made enough to buy them before muslin went up? There were three of the boys asleep now, legs and arms adrift over the floor, pockets gorged with half-apples, bits of twine instead of suspenders, other surreptitious bits under their trousers for straps. There were the twins, girls of ten, hungry for beaux, pickles, and photographic albums. They were gone to a party in the village. "Sis" had done up their white dresses; and such fun as they had with her, putting them on to hide the darns! She made it so comical that they laughed more than they did the whole evening.

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Grey had saved some money to buy them ribbon for sashes, but Joseph had taken it from her work-basket that morning to buy cigars. One of the girls had cried, and even Grey's lips grew scarlet; her Welsh blood maddened. This woman was neither an angel nor an idiot, Paul Blecker. Then—it was such a trifle! Poor Joseph! he had been her mother's favorite, was spoiled a little. So she hurried to his chamber-door with his shaving-water, calling, "Brother!" Grey had a low, always pleasant voice, I remember; you looked in her eyes, when you heard it, to see her laughing. The ex-Congressman was friendly, but dignified, when he took the water. Grey presumed on her usefulness; women seldom did know their place.

There was yet another girl busy now, convoying the lubberly hulks of boys to bed,—a solid, Dutch-built little clipper, Loo by name. Loo looked upon Grey secretly as rather silly; (she did all the counting for her; Grey hardly knew the multiplication-table;) she always, however, kept her opinions to herself. Tugging the boys after her in the manner of a tow-boat, she thumped past her father and "that gype, McKinstry, colloging over their bits of rock," indignation in every twist of her square shoulders.

"Fresh air," she said to Grey, jerking her head emphatically toward the open door.

"I will, Looey."

"Looey! Pish!"

It was no admiring glance she bestowed on the slight figure that came down the stairs, and stood timidly waiting for McKinstry.

"You're going, Captain?" the old man's nose and mind starting suddenly up from his folio. "Lizzy,—eh? Here's the bit of rock. In the coal formation, you say? Impossible, then, to be as old as the batrachian track that"—

A sudden howl brought him back to the present era. Loo was arguing her charge up to bed by a syllogism applied at the right time in the right place. The old man held his hands to his ears with a patient smile, until McKinstry was out of hearing.

"It is hard to devote the mind pure to a search for truth here, my daughter," looking over Grey's head as usual, with pensive, benevolent eyes. "But I do what I can,—I do what I can."

"I know, father,"—stroking his hair as she might a child's, trimming the lamp, and bringing his slippers while he held out his feet for her to put them on,—"I know."

Then, when he took up the pen, she went out into the cool night.

"I do what I can," said he, earnestly, looking at the catalogue, with his head to one side.

It was Oth's time,—now or never.

“Debbil de bit yer do! Ef yer did what yer could, Mars' Si, dar 'ud be more 'n one side o' sparerib in de cellar fur ten hungry mouths. We've gone done eat dat pig o' Miss Grey's from head ter tail. An' pigs in June's a disgrace ter Christians, let alone Presbyterians like us uns.”

The old man glanced at him. Oth's spine gave his tongue free license.

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"I'll discharge him," faintly.

"Scharge yerself," growled Oth, under his breath.

So the old man went back to his batrachians, and Oth ribbed Pen's sock in silence: the old fort stood at last as quiet in the moonlight as if it were thinking over all of its long-ago Indian sieges.

Grey's step was noiseless, going down the tan-bark path. She drew long breaths, her lungs being choked with the day's work, and threw back the hair from her forehead and throat. There was a latent dewiness in the air that made the clear moonlight as fresh and invigorating as a winter's morning. Grey stretched out her arms in it, with a laugh, as a child might. You would know, to look at her hair, that there was a strong poetic capacity in that girl below her simple Quaker character; as it lay in curly masses where the child had pulled it down, there was no shine, but clear depth of color in it: her eyes the same; not soggy, black, flashing as women's are who effuse their experience every day for the benefit of by-standers; this girl's were pale hazel, clear, meaningless at times, but when her soul did force itself to the light they gave it fit utterance. Women with hair and eyes like those, with passionate lips and strong muscles like Grey Gurney's, are children, single-natured all their lives, until some day God's test comes: then they live tragedies, unconscious of their deed.

The night was singularly clear, in its quiet: only a few dreamy trails of gray mist, asleep about the moon: far off on the crest of the closing hills, she fancied she could see the wind-stir in the trees that made a feathered shadow about the horizon. She leaned on the stile, looking over the sweep of silent meadows and hills, and slow—creeping watercourses. The whole earth waited, she fancied, with newer life and beauty than by day: going back, it might be, in the pure moonlight, to remember that dawn when God said, "Let there be light." The girl comprehended the meaning of the night better, perhaps, because of the house she had left. Every night she came out there. She left the clothes and spareribs behind her, and a Something, a Grey Gurney that might have been, came back to her in the coolness and rest, the nearer she drew to the pure old earth. She never went down into those mossy hollows, or among the shivering pines, with a soiled, tawdry dress; she wore always the clear, primitive colors, or white,—Grey: it was the girl's only bit of self-development. This night she could see McKinstry's figure, as he went down the path through the rye-field. He was stooping, leading Lizzy by the hand, as a nurse might an infant. Grey thrust the currant-bushes aside eagerly; she could catch a glimpse of the girl's face in the colorless light. It always had a livid tinge, but she fancied it was red now with healthy blushes; her eyes were on the ground: in the house they looked out from under their heavy brows on their daily life with a tired coldness that made silly Grey ashamed of her own light-heartedness. The man's common face was ennobled with such infinite tenderness and pain, Grey thought the help that lay therein would content her sister. It was time for the girl's rest to come;

she was sick of herself and of life. So the tears came to Grey's eyes, though to the very bottom of her heart she was thankful and glad.

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“She has found home at last!”—she said; and, maybe, because something in the thought clung to her as she sauntered slowly down the garden—alleys, her lips kept moving in a childish fashion of hers. “A home at last, at last!”—that was what she said.

Paul Blecker, too, waiting back yonder among the trees, saw McKinstry and his companion, and read the same story that Grey did, but in a different fashion. “The girl loves him.” There were possibilities, however, in that woman’s curious traits, that Blecker, being a physician and a little of a soul-fancier, saw: nothing in McKinstry’s formal, orthodox nature ran parallel with them; therefore he never would know them. As they passed Blecker’s outlook through the trees, his half-shut eye ran over her,—the despondent step, the lithe, nervous limbs, the manner in which she clung for protection to his horny hand. “Poor child!” the Doctor thought. There was something more, in the girl’s face, that, people called gentle and shy: a weak, uncertain chin; thin lips, never still an instant, opening and shutting like a starving animal’s; gray eyes, dead, opaque, such as Blecker had noted in the spiritual mediums in New England.

“I’m glad it is McKinstry she loves, and not I,” he said.

He turned, and forgot her, watching Grey coming nearer to him. The garden sloped down to the borders of the creek, and she stood on its edge now, looking at the uneasy crusting of the black water and the pearly glint of moonlight. Thinking of Lizzy, and the strong love that held her; feeling a little lonely, maybe, and quiet, she did not know why; trying to wrench her thoughts back to the house, and the clothes, and the spareribs. Why! he could read her thoughts on her face as if it were a baby’s! A homely, silly girl they called her. He thanked God nobody had found her out before him. Look at the dewy freshness of her skin! how pure she was! how the world would knock her about, if he did not keep his hold on her! But he would do that; to-night he meant to lay his hand upon her life, and never take it off, absorb it in his own. She moved forward into the clear light: that was right. There was a broken boll of a beech—tree covered with lichen: she should sit on that, presently, her face in open light, he in the shadow, while he told her. “Watching her with hot breath where she stood, then going down to her:—

“Is Grey waiting to bid her friend good-bye?”

She put her hand in his,—her very lips trembling with the sudden heat, her untrained eyes wandering restlessly.

“I thought you would come to me, Doctor Blecker.”

“Call me Paul,” roughly. “I was coarser born and bred than you. I want to think that matters nothing to you.”

She looked up proudly.

“You know it matters nothing. I am not vulgar.”

“No, Grey. But—it is curious, but no one ever called me Paul, as boy or man. It is a sign of equality; and I’ve always had, in the *me/ee*, the underneath taint about me. You are not vulgar enough to care for it. Yours is the highest and purest nature I ever knew. Yet I know it is right for you to call me Paul. Your soul and mine stand on a plane before God.”

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The childish flush left her face; the timid woman-look was in it now. He bent nearer.

"They stand there alone, Grey."

She drew back from him, her hands nervously catching in the thick curls.

"You do not believe that?" his breath clogged and hot. "It is a fancy of mine? not true?"

"It is true."

He caught the whisper, his face growing pale, his eyes flashing.

"Then you are mine, child! What is the meaning of these paltry contradictions? Why do you evade me from day to day?"

"You promised me not to speak of this again,"—weakly.

"Pah! You have a man's straightforward, frank instinct, Grey; and this is cowardly,—paltry, as I said before. I will speak of it again. To-night is all that is left to me."

He seated her upon the beech-trunk. One could tell by the very touch and glance of the man how the image of this woman stood solitary in his coarser thoughts, delicate, pure: a disciple would have laid just such reverential fingers on the robe of the Madonna. Then he stood off from her, looking straight into her hazel eyes. Grey, with all her innocent timidity, was the cooler, stronger, maybe, of the two: the poor Doctor's passionate nature, buffeted from one anger and cheat to another in the world, brought very little quiet or tact or aptitude in language for this one hour. Yet, standing there, his man's sturdy heart throbbing slow as an hysteric woman's, his eyeballs burning, it seemed to him that all his life had been but the weak preface to these words he was going to speak.

"It angers me," he muttered, abruptly, "that, when I come to you with the thought that a man's or a woman's soul can hold but once in life, you put me aside with the silly whims of a schoolgirl. It is not worthy of you, Grey. You are not as other women."

What was this that he had touched? She looked up at him steadily, her hands clasped about her knees, the childlike rose-glow and light banished from her face.

"I am not like other women. You speak truer than you know. You call me a silly, happy child. Maybe I am; but, Paul, once in my life God punished me. I don't know for what,"—getting up, and stretching out her groping arms, blindly.

There was a sudden silence. This was not the cheery, healthful Grey Gurney of a moment before, this woman with the cold terror creeping out in her face. He caught her hands and held them.

“I don’t know for what,” she moaned. “He did it. He is good.”

He watched the slow change in her face: it made his hands tremble as they held hers. No longer a child, but a woman whose soul the curse had touched. Miriam, leprous from God’s hand, might have thus looked up to Him without the camp. Blecker drew her closer. Was she not his own? He would defend her against even this God, for whom he cared but little.

“What has been done to you, child?”

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She shook herself free, speaking in a fast, husky whisper.

"Do not touch me, Dr. Blecker. It was no school-girl's whim that kept me from you. I am not like other women. I am not worthy of any man's love."

"I think I know what you mean," he said, gravely. "I know your story, Grey. They made you live a foul lie once. I know it all. You were a child then."

She had gone still farther from him, holding by the trunk of a dead tree, her face turned towards the water. The black sough of wind from it lifted her hair, and dampened her forehead. The man's brain grew clearer, stronger, somehow, as he looked at her; as thought does in the few electric moments of life when sham and conventionality crumble down like ashes, and souls stand bare, face to face. For the every-day, cheery, unselfish Grey of the coarse life in yonder he cared but little; it was but the husk that held the woman whose nature grappled with his own, that some day would take it with her to the Devil or to God. He knew that. It was this woman that stood before him now: looking back, out of the inbred force and purity within her, the indignant man's sense of honor that she had, on the lie they had made her live: daring to face the truth, that God had suffered this thing, yet clinging, like a simple child, to her old faith in Him. That childish faith, that worked itself out in her common life, Paul Blecker set aside, in loving her. She was ignorant: he knew the world, and, he thought, very plainly saw that the Power who had charge of it suffered unneeded ills, was a traitor to the Good his own common sense and kindly feeling could conceive; which is the honest belief of most of the half-thinkers in America.

"You were but a child," he said again. "It matters nothing to me, Grey. It left no taint upon you."

"It did," she cried, passionately. "I carry the marks of it to my grave. I never shall be pure again."

"Why did your God let you go down into such foulness, then?"—the words broke from his lips irrepressibly. "It was He who put you in the hands of a selfish woman; it was He who gave you a weak will. It is He who suffers marriages as false as yours. Why, child! you call it crime, the vow that bound you for that year to a man you loathed; yet the world celebrates such vows daily in every church in Christendom."

"I know that";—her voice had gone down into its quiet sob, like a little child's.

She sat down on the ground, now, the long shore-grass swelling up around her, thrusting her fingers into the pools of eddying water, with a far-off sense of quiet and justice and cold beneath there.

“I don’t understand,” she said. “The world’s wrong somehow. I don’t think God does it. There’s thousands of young girls married as I was. Maybe, if I ’d told Him about it, it wouldn’t have ended as it did. I did not think He cared for such things.”

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Blecker was silent. What did he care for questions like this now? He sat by her on the broken trunk, his elbows on his knees, his sultry eyes devouring her face and body. What did it matter, if once she had been sold to another man? She was free now: he was dead. He only knew that here was the only creature in earth or heaven that he loved: there was not a breath in her lungs, a tint of her flesh, that was not dear to him, allied by some fierce passion to his own sense: there was that in her soul which he needed, starved for: his life balked blank here, demanding it,—her,—he knew not what: but that gained, a broader freedom opened behind, unknown possibilities of honor and truth and deed. He would take no other step, live no farther, until he gained her. Holding, too, the sense of her youth, her rare beauty, as it seemed to him; loving it with keener passion because he alone developed it, drawing her soul to the light! how like a baby she was: how dainty the dimpling white flesh of her arms, the soft limbs crouching there! So pure, the man never came near her without a dull loathing of himself, a sudden remembrance of places where he had been tainted, made unfit to touch her,—rows in Bowery dance-houses, waltzes with musk-scented fine ladies: when this girl put her cool little hand in his sometimes, he felt tears coming to his eyes, as if the far-off God or the dead mother had blessed him. She sat there, now, going back to that blot in her life, her eyes turned every moment up to the Power beyond in whom she trusted, to know why it had been. He had seen little children, struck by their mother's hand, turn on them a look just so grieved and so appealing.

"It was no one's fault altogether, Paul," she said. "My mother was not selfish, more than other women. There were very many mouths to feed: it is so in most families like ours."

"I know."

"I am very dull about books,—stupid, they say. I could not teach; and they would not let me sew for money, because of the disgrace. These are the only ways a woman has. If I had been a boy"—

"I understand."

"No man can understand,"—her voice growing shrill with pain. "It's not easy to eat the bread needed for other mouths day after day, with your hands tied, idle and helpless. A boy can go out and work, in a hundred ways: a girl must marry; it's her only chance for a livelihood, or a home, or anything to fill her heart with. Don't blame my mother, Paul. She had ten of us to work for. From the time I could comprehend, I knew her only hope was, to live long enough to see her boys educated, and her daughters in homes of their own. It was the old story, Doctor Blecker,"—with a shivering laugh more pitiful than a cry. "I've noticed it since in a thousand other houses. Young girls like me in these poor-genteel families,—there are none of God's creatures more helpless or goaded, starving at their souls. I couldn't teach. I had no talent; but if I had, a woman's a woman: she wants something else in her life than dog-eared school-books and her wages year after year."

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Blecker could hardly repress a smile.

"You are coming to political economy by a woman's road, Grey."

"I don't know what that is. I know what my life was then. I was only a child; but when that man came and held out his hand to take me, I was willing when they gave me to him,—when they sold me, Doctor Blecker. It was like leaving some choking pit, where air was given to me from other lungs, to go out and find it for my own. What marriage was or ought to be I did not know; but I wanted, as every human being does want, a place for my own feet to stand on, not to look forward to the life of an old maid, living on sufferance, always the one too many in the house."

"That is weak and vulgar argument, child. It should not touch a true woman, Grey. Any young girl can find work and honorable place for herself in the world, without the defilement of a false marriage."

"I know that now. But young girls are not taught that. I was only a child, not strong-willed. And now, when I'm free,"—a curious clearness coming to her eye,—"I'm glad to think of it all. I never blame other women. Because, you see,"—looking up with the flickering smile,—"a woman's so hungry for something of her own to love, for some one to be kind to her, for a little house and parlor and kitchen of her own; and if she marries the first man who says he loves her, out of that first instinct of escape from dependence, and hunger for love, she does not know she is selling herself, until it's too late. The world's all wrong, somehow."

She stopped, her troubled face still upturned to his.

"But you,—you are free now?"

"He is dead."

She slowly rose as she spoke, her voice hardening.

"He was my cousin, you know,—the same name as mine. Only a year he was with me. Then he went to Cuba, where he died. He is dead. But I am not free,"—lifting her hands fiercely, as she spoke. "Nothing can wipe the stain of that year off of me."

"You know what man he was," said the Doctor, with a natural thrill of pleasure that he could say it honestly. "I know, poor child! A vapid, cruel tyrant, weak, foul. You hated him, Grey? There's a strength of hatred in your blood. Answer me. You dare speak truth to me."

"He's dead now,"—with a long, choking breath. "We will not speak of him."

She stood a moment, looking down the stretch of curdling black water,—then, turning with a sudden gesture, as though she flung something from her, looked at him with a pitiful effort to smile.

“I don’t often think of that time. I cannot bear pain very well. I like to be happy. When I’m busy now, or playing with little Pen, I hardly believe I am the woman who was John Gurney’s wife. I was so old then! I was like a hard, tigerish soul, tried and tempted day by day. He made me that.”

She could not bear pain, he saw: remembrance of it, alone, made the flesh about her lips blue, unsteadied her brain; the well-accented face grew vacant, dreary; neither nerves nor will of this woman were tough. Her family were not the stuff out of which voluntary heroes are made. He saw, too, she was thrusting it back,—out of thought: it was her temperament to do that.

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“So, now, Grey,” he said, cheerfully, “the story’s told. Shall we lay that ghost of the old life, and see what these healthful new years have for us?”

Paul Blecker’s voice was never so strong or pure: whatever of coarseness had clung to him fell off then, as he came nearer to the weak woman whom God had given to him to care for; whatever of latent manhood, of chivalry, slept beneath, some day to make him an earnest husband and father, and helpful servant of the True Man, came out in his eager face and eye, now. He took her two hands in his: how strong his muscles were! how the man’s full pulse throbbed healthfully against her own! She looked up with a sudden blush and smile. A minute ago she thought herself so strong to renounce! She meant, this weak, incomplete woman, to keep to the shame of that foul old lie of hers, accepting that as her portion for life. There is a chance comes to some few women, once in their lives, to escape into the full development of their natures by contact with the one soul made in the same mould as their own. It came to this woman to-night. Grey was no theorist about it: all that she knew was, that, when Paul Blecker stood near her, for the first time in her life she was not alone,—that, when he spoke, his words were but more forcible utterances of her own thought,—that, when she thought of leaving him, it was like drawing the soul from her living body, to leave it pulseless, dead. Yet she would do it.

“I am not fit to be any man’s wife. If you had come to me when I was a child, it might have been,—it ought to have been,”—with an effort to draw her hands from him.

Blecker only smiled, and seated her gently on the mossy boll of the beech-tree.

“Stay. Listen to me,” he whispered.

And Grey, being a woman and no philosopher, sat motionless, her hands folded, nerveless, where he had let them fall, her face upturned, like that of the dead maiden waiting the touch of infinite love to tremble and glow back into beautiful life. He did not speak, did not touch her, only bent nearer. It seemed to him, as the pure moonlight then held them close in its silent bound, the great world hushed without, the light air scarce daring to touch her fair, waiting face, the slow-heaving breast, the kindling glow in her dark hair, that all the dead and impure years fell from them, and in a fresh new-born life they stood alone, with the great Power of strength and love for company. What need was there of words? She knew it all: in the promise and question of his face waited for her the hope and vigor the time gone had never known: her woman’s nature drooped and leaned on his, content: the languid hazel eye followed his with such intent, one would have fancied that her soul in that silence had found its rest and home forever.

He took her hand, and drew from it the old ring that yet bound one of her fingers, the sign of a lie long dead, and without a word dropped it in the current below them. The girl looked up suddenly, as it fell: her eyes were wet: the woman whom Christ loosed

from her infirmity of eighteen years might have thanked him with such a look as Grey's that night. Then she looked back to her earthly master.

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"It is dead now, child, the past,—never to live again. Grey holds a new life in her hands to-night." He stopped: the words came weak, paltry, for his meaning. "Is there nothing with which she dares to fill it? no touch that will make it dear, holy for her?"

There was a heavy silence. Nature rose impatient in the crimson blood that dyed her lips and cheek, in the brilliance of her eye; but she forced back the words that would have come, and sat timid and trembling.

"None, Grey? You are strong and cool. I know. The lie dead and gone from your life, you can control the years alone, with your religion and cheery strength. Is that what you would say?"—bitterly.

She did not answer. The color began to fade, the eyes to dim.

"You have told me your story; let me tell you mine,"—throwing himself on the grass beside her. "Look at me, Grey. Other women have despised me, as rough, callous, uncouth: you never have. I've had no hot-house usage in the world; the sun and rain hardly fell on me unpaid. I've earned every inch of this flesh and muscle, worked for it as it grew; the knowledge that I have, scanty enough, but whatever thought I do have of God or life, I've had to grapple and struggle for. Other men grow, inhale their being, like yonder tree God planted and watered. I think sometimes He forgot me,"—with a curious woman's tremor in his voice, gone in an instant. "I scrambled up like that scraggy parasite, without a root. Do you know now why I am sharp, wary, suspicious, doubt if there be a God? Grey," turning fiercely, "I am tired of this. God did make me. I want rest. I want love, peace, religion, in my life."

She said nothing. She forgot herself, her timid shyness now, and looked into his eyes, a noble, helpful woman, sounding the depths of the turbid soul laid bare for her.

He laid his big, ill-jointed hand on her knee.

"I thought," he said.—great drops of sweat coming out on his sallow lips,—“God meant you to help me. There is my life, little girl. You may do what you will with it. It does not value much to me.”

And Grey, woman-like, gathered up the despised hand and life, and sobbed a little as she pressed them to her heart. An hour after, they went together up the old porch-steps, halting a moment where the grape-vines clustered thickest about the shingled wall. The house was silent; even the village slept in the moonlight: no sound of life in the great sweep of dusky hill and valley, save the wreaths of mist over the watercourses, foaming and drifting together silently: before morning they would stretch from base to base of the hills like a Dead Sea, ashy and motionless. They stood silent a moment, until the chirp of some robin, frightened by their steps in its nest overhead, had hummed drowsily down into sleep.

“It is not good-night, but good-bye, that I must bid you, Grey,” he said, stooping to see her face.

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"I know. But you will come again. God tells me that."

"I will come. Remember, Grey, I am going to save life, not to take it. Corrupt as I am, my hands are clean of this butchery for the sake of interest."

Grey's eyes wandered. She knows nothing about the war, to be candid: only that it is like a cold pain at her heart, day and night,—sorry that the slaves are slaves, wondering if they could be worse off than the free negroes swarming in the back-alleys yonder,—as sorry, being unpatriotic, for the homeless women in Virginia as for the stolen horses of Chambersburg. Grey's principles, though mixed, are sound, as far as they go, you see. Just then thinking only of herself.

"You will come back to me?" clinging to his arm.

"Why, I must come back," cheerfully, choking back whatever stopped his breath, pushing back the curling hair from her forehead with a half-reverential touch. "I have so much, to do, little girl! There is a farm over yonder I mean to earn enough to buy, where you and I shall rest and study and grow,—stronger and healthier, more helpful every day. We'll find our work and place in the world yet, poor child! You shall show me what a pure, earnest life is, Grey, and above us—what there is there," lowering his voice. "And I,—how much I have to do with this bit of humanity here on my hands!"—playfully. "An unhewn stone, with the beautiful statue lying *perdu* within. Bid you know you were that, Grey? and I the sculptor?"

She looked up bewildered.

"It is true," passing his fingers over the low, broad, curiously moulded forehead. "My girl does not know what powers and subtle forces lie asleep beneath this white skin? I know. I know lights and words and dramas of meaning these childish eyes hold latent: that I will set free. I will teach your very silent lips a new language. You never guessed how like a prison your life has been, how unfinished you are; but I thank God for it, Grey. You would not have loved me, if it had been different; I can grow with you now, grow to your height, if—He helps me."

He took off his hat, and stood, looking silently into the deep blue above,—for the first time in his life coming to his Friend with a manly, humble look. His eyes were not clear when he spoke again, his voice very quiet.

"Good bye, Grey! I'm going to try to be a better man than I've ever been. You are my wife now in His eyes. I need you so: for life and for eternity, I think. You will remember that?"



And so, holding her to his heart a moment or two, and kissing her lips passionately once or twice, he left her, trying to smile as he went down the path, but with a strange clogging weight in his breast, as if his heart would not beat.

Going in, Grey found the old negro asleep over his knitting, the candle with a flaring black crust beside him.

“He waited for me,” she said; and as she stroked the skinny old hand, the tears came at the thought of it. Everybody was so kind to her! The world was so full of love! God was so good to her to-night!

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Oth, waking fully as she helped him to his room-door, looked anxiously in her face.

“Er’ ye well to-night, chile?” he said. “Yer look as yer did when yer wor a little baby. Peart an’ purty yer wor, dat’s true. Der good Lord loved yer, I think.”

“He loves me now,” she said, softly, to herself, as in her own room she knelt down and thanked Him, and then, undressed, crept into the white trundle-bed beside little Pen; and when he woke, and, putting his little arms about her neck, drew her head close to his to kiss her good-night, she cried quietly to herself, and fell asleep with the tears upon her cheek.

Her sister, in the next room to hers, with the same new dream in her heart, did not creep into any baby’s arms for sympathy. Lizzy Gurney never had a pet, dog or child. She sat by the window waiting, her shawl about her head in the very folds McKinstry had wrapped it, motionless, as was her wont. But for the convulsive movement of her lips now and then, no gutta-percha doll could be more utterly still. As the night wore down into the intenser sleep of the hours after midnight, her watch grew more breathless. The moon sank far enough in the west to throw the beams directly across her into the dark chamber behind. She was a small-moulded woman, you could see now: her limbs, like those of a cat, or animals of that tribe, from their power of trance-like quiet, gave you the idea of an intense vitality: a gentle face,—pretty, the villagers called it, from its waxy tint and faint coloring,—you wished to do something for her, seeing it. Paul Blecker never did: the woman never spoke to him; but he noted often the sudden relaxed droop of the eyelids, when she sat alone, as if some nerve had grown weary: he had seen that peculiarity in some women before, and knew all it meant. He had nothing for her; her hunger lay out of his ken.

It grew later: the moon hung now so low that deep shadows lay heavy over the whole valley; not a breath broke the sleep of the night; even the long melancholy howl of the dog down in camp was hushed long since. When the clock struck two, she got up and went noiselessly out into the open air. There was no droop in her eyelids now; they were straight, nerved, the eyes glowing with a light never seen by day beneath them. Down the long path into the cornfield, slowly, pausing at some places, while her lips moved as though she repeated words once heard there. What folly was this? Was this woman’s life so bare, so empty of its true food, that she must needs go back and drag again into life a few poor, happy moments? distil them slowly, to drink them again drop by drop? I have seen children so live over in their play the one great holiday of their lives. Down through the field to the creek-ford, where the stones lay for crossing, slippery with moss: she could feel the strong grasp of the hand that had led her over there that night; and so, with slow, and yet slower step, where the path had been rocky, and

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she had needed cautious help. Into the thicket of lilacs, with the old scent of the spring blossoms yet hanging on their boughs; along the bank, where her foot had sunk deep into plushy moss, where he had gathered a cluster of fern and put it into her hand. Its pale feathery green was not more quaint or pure than the delicate love in the uncouth man beside her,—not nearer kin to Nature. Did she know that? Had it been like the breath of God coming into her nostrils to be so loved, appreciated, called home, as she had been to-night? Was she going back to feel that breath again? Neither pain nor pleasure was on her face: her breath came heavy and short, her eyes shone, that was all. Out now into the open road, stopping and glancing around with every broken twig, being a cowardly creature, yet never leaving the track of the footsteps in the dust, where she had gone before. Coming at last to the old-fashioned gabled house, where she had gone when site was a child, set in among stiff rows of evergreens. A breathless quiet always hung about the place: a pure, wholesome atmosphere, because pure and earnest people had acted out their souls there, and gone home to God. He had led her through the gate here, given her to drink of the well at the side of the house. “My mother never would taste any water but this, do you remember, Lizzy?” They had gone through the rooms, whispering, if they spoke, as though it were a church. Here was the pure dead sister’s face looking down from the wall; there his mother’s worn wicker work-stand. Her work was in it still. “The needle just where she placed it, Lizzy.” The strong man was weak as a little child with the memory of the old mother who had nursed and loved him as no other could love. He stood beside her chair irresolute; forty years ago he had stood there, a little child bringing all his troubles to be healed: since she died no hand had touched it. “Will you sit there, Lizzy? You are dearer to me than she. When I come back, will you take their place here? Only you are pure as they, and dearer, Lizzy. We will go home to them hand in hand.” She sat in the dead woman’s chair. *She*. Looking in at her own heart as she did it. Yet her love for him would make her fit to sit there: she believed that. He had not kissed her,—she was too sacred to the simple-hearted man for that,—had only taken her little hand in both his, saying, “God bless you, little Lizzy!” in an unsteady voice.

“He may never say it again,” the girl said, when she crept home from her midnight pilgrimage. “I’ll come here every day and live it all over again. It will keep me quiet until he comes. Maybe he’ll never come,”—catching her breast, and tearing it until it grew black. She was so tired of herself, this child! She would have torn that nerve in her heart out that sometimes made her sick, if she could. Her life was so cramped, and selfish, too, and she knew it. Passing by the door of Grey’s room, she saw her asleep with Pen in her arms,—some other little nightcapped heads in the larger beds. *She* slept alone. “They tire me so!” she said; “yet I think,” her eye growing fiercer, “if I had anything all my own, if I had a little baby to make pure and good, I’d be a better girl. Maybe—*he* will make me better.”

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Paul Blecker, heart-anatomist, laughed when this woman, with the aching brain and the gnawing hunger at heart, seized on the single, Christ-like love of McKinstry, a common, bigoted man, and made it her master and helper. Her instinct was wiser than he, being drifted by God's under-currents of eternal order. That One who knows when the sparrow is ready for death knows well what things are needed for a tired girl's soul.

* * * * *

UP THE THAMES.

The upper portion of Greenwich (where my last article left me loitering) is a cheerful, comely, old-fashioned town, the peculiarities of which, if there be any, have passed out of my remembrance. As you descend towards the Thames, the streets get meaner, and the shabby and sunken houses, elbowing one another for frontage, bear the sign-boards of beer-shops and eating-rooms, with especial promises of whitebait and other delicacies in the fishing line. You observe, also, a frequent announcement of "Tea Gardens" in the rear; although, estimating the capacity of the premises by their external compass, the entire sylvan charm and shadowy seclusion of such blissful resorts must be limited within a small back-yard. These places of cheap sustenance and recreation depend for support upon the innumerable pleasure-parties who come from London Bridge by steamer, at a fare of a few pence, and who get as enjoyable a meal for a shilling a head as the Ship Hotel would afford a gentleman for a guinea.

The steamers, which are constantly smoking their pipes up and down the Thames, offer much the most agreeable mode of getting to London. At least, it might be exceedingly agreeable, except for the myriad floating particles of soot from the stove-pipe, and the heavy heat of midsummer sunshine on the unsheltered deck, or the chill, misty air-draught of a cloudy day, and the spiteful little showers of rain that may spatter down upon you at any moment, whatever the promise of the sky; besides which there is some slight inconvenience from the inexhaustible throng of passengers, who scarcely allow you standing-room, nor so much as a breath of unappropriated air, and never a chance to sit down. If these difficulties weigh little with you, the panorama along the shores of the memorable river, and the incidents and shows of passing life upon its bosom, render the trip far preferable to the brief, yet tiresome shoot along the railway-track. On one such voyage, a regatta of wherries raced past us, and at once involved every soul on board our steamer in the tremendous excitement of the struggle. The spectacle was but a moment within our view, and presented nothing more than a few light skiffs, in each of which sat a single rower, bare-armed, and with little apparel, save a shirt and drawers, pale, anxious, with every muscle on the stretch, and plying his oars in such fashion that the boat skimmed along with the aerial

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celerity of a swallow. I wondered at myself for so immediately catching an interest in the affair, which seemed to contain no very exalted rivalry of manhood; but, whatever the kind of battle or the prize of victory, it stirs one's sympathy immensely, and is even awful, to behold the rare sight of a man thoroughly in earnest, doing his best, putting forth all there is in him, and staking his very soul (as these rowers appeared willing to do) on the issue of the contest. It was the seventy-fourth annual regatta of the Free Watermen of Greenwich, and announced itself as under the patronage of the Lord Mayor and other distinguished individuals, at whose expense, I suppose, a prize-boat was offered to the conqueror, and some small amounts of money to the inferior competitors.

The aspect of London along the Thames, below Bridge, as it is called, is by no means so impressive as it ought to be, considering what peculiar advantages are offered for the display of grand and stately architecture by the passage of a river through the midst of a great city. It seems, indeed, as if the heart of London had been cleft open for the mere purpose of showing how rotten and drearily mean it had become. The shore is lined with the shabbiest, blackest, and ugliest buildings that can be imagined, decayed warehouses with blind windows, and wharves that look ruinous; insomuch that, had I known nothing more of the world's metropolis, I might have fancied that it had already experienced the down-fall which I have heard commercial and financial prophets predict for it, within the century. And the muddy tide of the Thames, reflecting nothing, and hiding a million of unclean secrets within its breast,—a sort of guilty conscience, as it were, unwholesome with the rivulets of sin that constantly flow into it,—is just the dismal stream to glide by such a city. The surface, to be sure, displays no lack of activity, being fretted by the passage of a hundred steamers and covered with a good deal of shipping, but mostly of a clumsier build than I had been accustomed to see in the Mersey: a fact which I complacently attributed to the smaller number of American clippers in the Thames, and the less prevalent influence of American example in refining away the broad-bottomed capacity of the old Dutch or English models. About midway between Greenwich and London Bridge, at a rude landing-place on the left bank of the river, the steamer rings its bell and makes a momentary pause in front of a large circular structure, where it may be worth our while to scramble ashore. It indicates the locality of one of those prodigious practical blunders that would supply John Bull with a topic of inexhaustible ridicule, if his cousin Jonathan had committed them, but of which he himself perpetrates two to our one in the mere wantonness of wealth that lacks better employment. The circular building covers the entrance to the Thames Tunnel, and is surmounted by a dome of glass, so as to throw daylight down into

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the great depth at which the passage of the river commences. Descending a wearisome succession of staircases, we at last find ourselves, still in the broad noon, standing before a closed door, on opening which we behold the vista of an arched corridor that extends into everlasting midnight. In these days, when glass has been applied to so many new purposes, it is a pity that the architect had not thought of arching portions of his abortive tunnel with immense blocks of the lucid substance, over which the dusky Thames would have flowed like a cloud, making the sub-fluvial avenue only a little gloomier than a street of upper London. At present, it is illuminated at regular intervals by jets of gas, not very brilliantly, yet with lustre enough to show the damp plaster of the ceiling and walls, and the massive stone pavement, the crevices of which are oozy with moisture, not from the incumbent river, but from hidden springs in the earth's deeper heart. There are two parallel corridors, with a wall between, for the separate accommodation of the double throng of foot-passengers, equestrians, and vehicles of all kinds, which was expected to roll and reverberate continually through the Tunnel. Only one of them has ever been opened, and its echoes are but feebly awakened by infrequent footfalls.

Yet there seem to be people who spend their lives here, and who probably blink like owls, when, once or twice a year, perhaps, they happen to climb into the sunshine. All along the corridor, which I believe to be a mile in extent, we see stalls or shops in little alcoves, kept principally by women; they were of a ripe age, I was glad to observe, and certainly robbed England of none of its very moderate supply of feminine loveliness by their deeper than tomb-like interment. As you approach, (and they are so accustomed to the dusky gas-light that they read all your characteristics afar off,) they assail you with hungry entreaties to buy some of their merchandise, holding forth views of the Tunnel put up in cases of Derbyshire spar, with a magnifying-glass at one end to make the vista more effective. They offer you, besides, cheap jewelry, sunny topazes and resplendent emeralds for sixpence, and diamonds as big as the Koh-i-noor at a not much heavier cost, together with a multifarious trumpery which has died out of the upper world to reappear in this Tartarean bazaar. That you may fancy yourself still in the realms of the living, they urge you to partake of cakes, candy, ginger-beer, and such small refreshment, more suitable, however, for the shadowy appetite of ghosts than for the sturdy stomachs of Englishmen. The most capacious of the shops contains a dioramic exhibition of cities and scenes in the daylight-world, with a dreary glimmer of gas among them all; so that they serve well enough to represent the dim, unsatisfactory remembrances that dead people might be supposed to retain from their past lives, mixing them up with the ghastliness of their unsubstantial state. I dwell the more upon these trifles, and do my best to give them a mockery of importance, because, if these are nothing, then all this elaborate contrivance and mighty piece of work has been wrought in vain. The Englishman has burrowed under the bed of his great river, and set ships of two or three thousand tons a-rolling over his head, only to provide new sites for a few old women to sell cakes and ginger-beer!

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Yet the conception was a grand one; and though it has proved an absolute failure, swallowing an immensity of toil and money, with annual returns hardly sufficient to keep the pavement free from the ooze of subterranean springs, yet it needs, I presume, only an expenditure three or four (or, for aught I know, twenty) times as large, to make the enterprise brilliantly successful. The descent is so great from the bank of the river to its surface, and the Tunnel dips so profoundly under the river's bed, that the approaches on either side must commence a long way off, in order to render the entrance accessible to horsemen or vehicles; so that the larger part of the cost of the whole affair should have been expended on its margins. It has turned out a sublime piece of folly; and when the New Zealander of distant ages shall have moralized sufficiently among the ruins of London Bridge, he will bethink himself that somewhere thereabout was the marvellous Tunnel, the very existence of which will seem to him as incredible as that of the hanging-gardens of Babylon. But the Thames will long ago have broken through the massive arch, and choked up the corridors with mud and sand and with the large stones of the structure itself, intermixed with skeletons of drowned people, the rusty iron-work of sunken vessels, and a great many such precious and curious things as a river always contrives to hide in its bosom; the entrance will have been obliterated, and its very site forgotten beyond the memory of twenty generations of men, and the whole neighborhood be held a dangerous spot on account of the malaria; insomuch that the traveller will make but a brief and careless inquisition for the traces of the old wonder, and will stake his credit before the public, in some Pacific Monthly of that day, that the story of it is but a myth, though enriched with a spiritual profundity which he will proceed to unfold.

Yet it is impossible (for a Yankee, at least) to see so much magnificent ingenuity thrown away, without trying to endow the unfortunate result with some kind of usefulness, though perhaps widely different from the purpose of its original conception. In former ages, the mile-long corridors, with their numerous alcoves, might have been utilized as a series of dungeons, the fittest of all possible receptacles for prisoners of state. Dethroned monarchs and fallen statesmen would not have needed to remonstrate against a domicile so spacious, so deeply secluded from the world's scorn, and so admirably in accordance with their thenceforward sunless fortunes. An alcove here might have suited Sir Walter Raleigh better than that darksome hiding-place communicating with the great chamber in the Tower, pacing from end to end of which he meditated upon his "History of the World." His track would here have been straight and narrow, indeed, and would therefore have lacked somewhat of the freedom that his intellect demanded; and yet the length to which his footsteps might have travelled forth and

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retraced themselves would partly have harmonized his physical movement with the grand curves and planetary returns of his thought, through cycles of majestic periods. Having it in his mind to compose the world's history, methinks he could have asked no better retirement than such a cloister as this, insulated from all the seductions of mankind and womankind, deep beneath their mysteries and motives, down into the heart of things, full of personal reminiscences in order to the comprehensive measurement and verification of historic records, seeing into the secrets of human nature,—secrets that daylight never yet revealed to mortal,—but detecting their whole scope and purport with the infallible eyes of unbroken solitude and night. And then the shades of the old mighty men might have risen from their still profounder abodes and joined him in the dim corridor, treading beside him with an antique stateliness of mien, telling him in melancholy tones, grand, but always melancholy, of the greater ideas and purposes that were so poorly embodied in their most renowned performances. As Raleigh was a navigator, Noah would have explained to him the peculiarities of construction that made the ark so seaworthy; as Raleigh was a statesman, Moses would have discussed with him the principles of laws and government; as Raleigh was a soldier, Caesar and Hannibal would have held debate in his presence, with this martial student for their umpire; as Raleigh was a poet, David, or whatever most illustrious bard he might call up, would have touched his harp, and made manifest all the true significance of the past by means of song and the subtile intelligences of music.

Meanwhile, I had forgotten that Sir Walter Raleigh's century knew nothing of gas-light, and that it would require a prodigious and wasteful expenditure of tallow-candles to illuminate the Tunnel sufficiently to discern even a ghost. On this account, however, it would be all the more suitable place of confinement for a metaphysician, to keep him from bewildering mankind with his shadowy speculations; and, being shut off from external converse, the dark corridor would help him to make rich discoveries in those cavernous regions and mysterious by-paths of the intellect, which he had so long accustomed himself to explore. But how would every successive age rejoice in so secure a habitation for its reformers, and especially for each best and wisest man that happened to be then alive! He seeks to burn up our whole system of society, under pretence of purifying it from its abuses! Away with him into the Tunnel, and let him begin by setting the Thames on fire, if he is able!

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If not precisely these, yet akin to these were some of the fantasies that haunted me as I passed under the river: for the place is suggestive of such idle and irresponsible stuff by its own abortive character, its lack of whereabouts on upper earth, or any solid foundation of realities. Could I have looked forward a few years, I might have regretted that American enterprise had not provided a similar tunnel, under the Hudson or the Potomac, for the convenience of our National Government in times hardly yet gone by. It would be delightful to clap up all the enemies of our peace and Union in the dark together, and there let them abide, listening to the monotonous roll of the river above their heads, or perhaps in a state of miraculously suspended animation, until,—be it after months, years, or centuries,—when the turmoil shall be all over, the Wrong washed away in blood, (since that must needs be the cleansing fluid,) and the Right firmly rooted in the soil which that blood will have enriched, they might crawl forth again and catch a single glimpse at their redeemed country, and feel it to be a better land than they deserve, and die!

I was not sorry when the daylight reached me after a much briefer abode in the nether regions than, I fear, would await the troublesome personages just hinted at. Emerging on the Surrey side of the Thames, I found myself in Rotherhithe, a neighborhood not unfamiliar to the readers of old books of maritime adventure. There being a ferry hard by the mouth of the Tunnel, I recrossed the river in the primitive fashion of an open boat, which the conflict of wind and tide, together with the swash and swell of the passing steamers, tossed high and low rather tumultuously. This inquietude of our frail skiff (which, indeed, bobbed up and down like a cork) so much alarmed an old lady, the only other passenger, that the boatmen essayed to comfort her. “Never fear, mother!” grumbled one of them, “we’ll make the river as smooth as we can for you. We’ll get a plane and plane down the waves!” The joke may not read very brilliantly; but I make bold to record it as the only specimen that reached my ears of the old, rough water-wit for which the Thames used to be so celebrated. Passing directly along the line of the sunken Tunnel, we landed in Wapping, which I should have presupposed to be the most tarry and pitchy spot on earth, swarming with old salts, and full of warm, bustling, coarse, homely, and cheerful life. Nevertheless, it turned out to be a cold and torpid neighborhood, mean, shabby, and unpicturesque, both as to its buildings and inhabitants: the latter comprising (so far as was visible to me) not a single unmistakable sailor, though plenty of land-sharks, who get a half dishonest livelihood by business connected with the sea. Ale-and-spirit vaults (as petty drinking-establishments are styled in England, pretending to contain vast cellars full of liquor within the compass of ten feet square above-ground) were particularly

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abundant, together with apples, oranges, and oysters, the stalls of fishmongers and butchers, and slop-shops, where blue jackets and duck trousers swung and capered before the doors. Everything was on the poorest scale, and the place bore an aspect of unredeemable decay. From this remote point of London, I strolled leisurely towards the heart of the city; while the streets, at first but thinly occupied by man or vehicle, got more and more thronged with foot-passengers, carts, drays, cabs, and the all-pervading and all-accommodating omnibus. But I lack courage, and feel that I should lack perseverance, as the gentlest reader would lack patience, to undertake a descriptive stroll through London streets; more especially as there would be a volume ready for the printer before we could reach a midway resting-place at Charing Cross. It will be the easier course to step aboard another passing steamer, and continue our trip up the Thames.

The next notable group of objects is an assemblage of ancient walls, battlements, and turrets, out of the midst of which rises prominently one great square tower, of a grayish hue, bordered with white stone, and having a small turret at each corner of the roof. This central structure is the White Tower, and the whole circuit of ramparts and inclosed edifices constitutes what is known in English history, and still more widely and impressively in English poetry, as the Tower. A crowd of river-craft are generally moored in front of it; but if we look sharply at the right moment under the base of the rampart, we may catch a glimpse of an arched water-entrance, half submerged, past which the Thames glides as indifferently as if it were the mouth of a city-kennel. Nevertheless, it is the Traitor's Gate, a dreary kind of triumphal passage-way, (now supposed to be shut up and barred forever,) through which a multitude of noble and illustrious personages have entered the Tower, and found it a brief resting-place on their way to heaven. Passing it many times, I never observed that anybody glanced at this shadowy and ominous trap-door, save myself. It is well that America exists, if it were only that her vagrant children may be impressed and affected by the historical monuments of England in a degree of which the native inhabitants are evidently incapable. These matters are too familiar, too real, and too hopelessly built in amongst and mixed up with the common objects and affairs of life, to be easily susceptible of imaginative coloring in their minds; and even their poets and romancers feel it a toil, and almost a delusion, to extract poetic material out of what seems embodied poetry itself to an American. An Englishman cares nothing about the Tower, which to us is a haunted castle in dreamland. That honest and excellent gentleman, the late Mr. G.P.R. James, (whose mechanical ability, one might have supposed, would nourish itself by devouring every old stone of such a structure,) once assured me that he had never in his life set eyes upon the Tower, though for years an historic novelist in London.

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Not to spend a whole summer's day upon the voyage, we will suppose ourselves to have reached London Bridge, and thence to have taken another steamer for a farther passage up the river. But here the memorable objects succeed each other so rapidly that I can spare but a single sentence even for the great Dome, though I deem it more picturesque, in that dusky atmosphere, than St. Peter's in its clear blue sky. I must mention, however, (since everything connected with royalty is especially interesting to my dear countrymen,) that I once saw a large and beautiful barge, splendidly gilded and ornamented, and overspread with a rich covering, lying at the pier nearest to St. Paul's Cathedral; it had the royal banner of Great Britain displayed, besides being decorated with a number of other flags; and many footmen (who are universally the grandest and gaudiest objects to be seen in England at this day, and these were regal ones, in a bright scarlet livery bedizened with gold-lace, and white silk stockings) were in attendance. I know not what festive or ceremonial occasion may have drawn out this pageant; after all, it might have been merely a city-spectacle, appertaining to the Lord Mayor; but the sight had its value in bringing vividly before me the grand old times when the sovereign and nobles were accustomed to use the Thames as the high street of the metropolis, and join in pompous processions upon it; whereas, the desuetude of such customs, nowadays, has caused the whole show of river-life to consist in a multitude of smoke-begrimed steamers. An analogous change has taken place in the streets, where cabs and the omnibus have crowded out a rich variety of vehicles; and thus life gets more monotonous in hue from age to age, and appears to seize every opportunity to strip off a bit of its gold-lace among the wealthier classes, and to make itself decent in the lower ones.

Yonder is Whitefriars, the old rowdy Alsatia, now wearing as decorous a face as any other portion of London; and, adjoining it, the avenues and brick squares of the Temple, with that historic garden, close upon the river-side, and still rich in shrubbery and flowers, where the partisans of York and Lancaster plucked the fatal roses, and scattered their pale and bloody petals over so many English battle-fields. Hard by, we see the long white front or rear of Somerset House, and, farther on, rise the two new Houses of Parliament, with a huge unfinished tower already hiding its imperfect summit in the smoky canopy,—the whole vast and cumbrous edifice a specimen of the best that modern architecture can effect, elaborately imitating the masterpieces of those simple ages when men "builded better than they knew." Close by it, we have a glimpse of the roof and upper towers of the holy Abbey; while that gray, ancestral pile on the opposite side of the river is Lambeth Palace, a venerable group of halls and turrets, chiefly built of brick, but with at least one large tower of stone.

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In our course, we have passed beneath half a dozen bridges, and, emerging out of the black heart of London, shall soon reach a cleanly suburb, where old Father Thames, if I remember, begins to put on an aspect of unpolluted innocence. And now we look back upon the mass of innumerable roofs, out of which rise steeples, towers, columns, and the great crowning Dome,—look back, in short, upon that mystery of the world's proudest city, amid which a man so longs and loves to be: not, perhaps, because it contains much that is positively admirable and enjoyable, but because, at all events, the world has nothing better. The cream of external life is there; and whatever merely intellectual or material good we fail to find perfect in London, we may as well content ourselves to seek that unattainable thing no farther on this earth.

The steamer terminates its trip at Chelsea, an old town endowed with a prodigious number of pot-houses, and some famous gardens, called the Cremorne, for public amusement. The most noticeable thing, however, is Chelsea Hospital, which, like that of Greenwich, was founded, I believe, by Charles II., (whose bronze statue, in the guise of an old Roman, stands in the centre of the quadrangle,) and appropriated as a home for aged and infirm soldiers of the British army. The edifices are of three stories with windows in the high roofs, and are built of dark, sombre brick, with stone edgings and facings. The effect is by no means that of grandeur, (which is somewhat disagreeably an attribute of Greenwich Hospital,) but a quiet and venerable neatness. At each extremity of the street-front there is a spacious and hospitably open gateway, lounging about which I saw some gray veterans in long scarlet coats of an antique fashion, and the cocked hats of a century ago, or occasionally a modern foraging-cap. Almost all of them moved with a rheumatic gait, two or three stumped on wooden legs, and here and there an arm was missing. Inquiring of one of these fragmentary heroes whether a stranger could be admitted to see the establishment, he replied most cordially, "Oh, yes, Sir,—anywhere! Walk in, and go where you please,—up-stairs, or anywhere!" So I entered, and, passing along the inner side of the quadrangle, came to the door of the chapel, which forms a part of the contiguity of edifices next the street. Here another pensioner, an old warrior of exceedingly peaceable and Christian demeanor, touched his three-cornered hat and asked if I wished to see the interior; to which I assenting, he unlocked the door, and we went in.

The chapel consists of a great hall with a vaulted roof, and over the altar is a large painting in fresco, the subject of which I did not trouble myself to make out. More appropriate adornments of the place, dedicated as well to martial reminiscences as religious worship, are the long ranges of dusty and tattered banners that hang from their staves all round the ceiling of the chapel. They are trophies of battles

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fought and won in every quarter of the world, comprising the captured flags of all the nations with whom the British lion has waged war since James II's time,—French, Dutch, East-Indian, Prussian, Russian, Chinese, and American,—collected together in this consecrated spot, not to symbolize that there shall be no more discord upon earth, but drooping over the aisle in sullen, though peaceable humiliation. Yes, I said “American” among the rest; for the good old pensioner mistook me for an Englishman, and failed not to point out (and, methought, with an especial emphasis of triumph) some flags that had been taken at Bladensburg and Washington. I fancied, indeed, that they hung a little higher and drooped a little lower than any of their companions in disgrace. It is a comfort, however, that their proud devices are already indistinguishable, or nearly so, owing to dust and tatters and the kind offices of the moths, and that they will soon rot from the banner-staves and be swept out in unrecognized fragments from the chapel-door.

It is a good method of teaching a man how imperfectly cosmopolitan he is, to show him his country's flag occupying a position of dishonor in a foreign land. But, in truth, the whole system of a people crowing over its military triumphs had far better be dispensed with, both on account of the ill-blood that it helps to keep fermenting among the nations, and because it operates as an accumulative inducement to future generations to aim at a kind of glory, the gain of which has generally proved more ruinous than its loss. I heartily wish that every trophy of victory might crumble away, and that every reminiscence or tradition of a hero, from the beginning of the world to this day, could pass out of all men's memories at once and forever. I might feel very differently, to be sure, if we Northerners had anything especially valuable to lose by the fading of those illuminated names.

I gave the pensioner (but I am afraid there may have been a little affectation in it) a magnificent guerdon of all the silver I had in my pocket, to requite him for having unintentionally stirred up my patriotic susceptibilities. He was a meek-looking, kindly old man, with a humble freedom and affability of manner that made it pleasant to converse with him. Old soldiers, I know not why, seem to be more accostable than old sailors. One is apt to hear a growl beneath the smoothest courtesy of the latter. The mild veteran, with his peaceful voice, and gentle, reverend aspect, told me that he had fought at a cannon all through the Battle of Waterloo, and escaped unhurt; he had now been in the hospital four or five years, and was married, but necessarily underwent a separation from his wife, who lived outside of the gates. To my inquiry whether his fellow-pensioners were comfortable and happy, he answered, with great alacrity, “Oh, yes, Sir!” qualifying his evidence, after a moment's consideration, by saying, in an undertone,

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"There are some people, your Honor knows, who could not be comfortable anywhere." I did know it, and fear that the system of Chelsea Hospital allows too little of that wholesome care and regulation of their own occupations and interests which might assuage the sting of life to those naturally uncomfortable individuals by giving them something external to think about. But my old friend here was happy in the hospital, and by this time, very likely, is happy in heaven, in spite of the bloodshed that he may have caused by touching off a cannon at Waterloo.

Crossing Battersea Bridge, in the neighborhood of Chelsea, I remember seeing a distant gleam of the Crystal Palace, glimmering afar in the afternoon sunshine like an imaginary structure,—an air-castle by chance descended upon earth, and resting there one instant before it vanished, as we sometimes see a soap-bubble touch unharmed on the carpet,—a thing of only momentary visibility and no substance, destined to be overburdened and crushed down by the first cloud-shadow that might fall upon that spot. Even as I looked, it disappeared. Shall I attempt 'a picture of this exhalation of modern ingenuity, or what else shall I try to paint? Everything in London and its vicinity has been depleted innumerable times, but never once translated into intelligible images; it is an "old, old story," never yet told, nor to be told. While writing these reminiscences, I am continually impressed with the futility of the effort to give any creative truth to my sketch, so that it might produce such pictures in the reader's mind as would cause the original scenes to appear familiar when afterwards beheld. Nor have other writers often been more successful in representing definite objects prophetically to my own mind. In truth, I believe that the chief delight and advantage of this kind of literature is not for any real information that it supplies to untravelled people, but for reviving the recollections and reawakening the emotions of persons already acquainted with the scenes described. Thus I found an exquisite pleasure, the other day, in reading Mr. Tuckerman's "Month in England,"—a fine example of the way in which a refined and cultivated American looks at the Old Country, the things that he naturally seeks there, and the modes of feeling and reflection which they excite. Correct outlines avail little or nothing, though truth of coloring may be somewhat more efficacious. Impressions, however, states of mind produced by interesting and remarkable objects, these, if truthfully and vividly recorded, may work a genuine effect, and, though but the result of what we see, go farther towards representing the actual scene than any direct effort to paint it. Give the emotions that cluster about it, and, without being able to analyze the spell by which it is summoned up, you get something like a simulachre of the object in the midst of them. From some of the above reflections I draw the comfortable inference, that, the longer and better known a thing may be, so much the more eligible is it as the subject of a descriptive sketch.

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On a Sunday afternoon, I passed through a side—entrance in the time-blackened wall of a place of worship, and found myself among a congregation assembled in one of the transepts and the immediately contiguous portion of the nave. It was a vast old edifice, spacious enough, within the extent covered by its pillared roof and overspread by its stone pavement, to accommodate the whole of church-going London, and with a far wider and loftier concave than any human power of lungs could fill with audible prayer. Oaken benches were arranged in the transept, on one of which I seated myself, and joined, as well as I knew how, in the sacred business that was going forward. But when it came to the sermon, the voice of the preacher was puny, and so were his thoughts, and both seemed impertinent at such a time and place, where he and all of us were bodily included within a sublime act of religion which could be seen above and around us and felt beneath our feet. The structure itself was the worship of the devout men of long ago, miraculously preserved in stone without losing an atom of its fragrance and fervor; it was a kind of anthem-strain that they had sung and poured out of the organ in centuries gone by; and being so grand and sweet, the Divine benevolence had willed it to be prolonged for the behoof of auditors unborn. I therefore came to the conclusion, that, in my individual case, it would be better and more reverent to let my eyes wander about the edifice than to fasten them and my thoughts on the evidently uninspired mortal who was venturing—and felt it no venture at all—to speak here above his breath.

The interior of Westminster Abbey (for the reader recognized it, no doubt, the moment we entered) is built of rich brown stone; and the whole of it—the lofty roof, the tall, clustered pillars, and the pointed arches—appears to be in consummate repair. At all points where decay has laid its finger, the structure is clamped with iron, or otherwise carefully protected; and being thus watched over,—whether as a place of ancient sanctity, a noble specimen of Gothic art, or an object of national interest and pride,—it may reasonably be expected to survive for as many ages as have passed over it already. It was sweet to feel its venerable quietude, its long-enduring peace, and yet to observe how kindly and even cheerfully it received the sunshine of to-day, which fell from the great windows into the fretted aisles and arches that laid aside somewhat of their aged gloom to welcome it. Sunshine always seems friendly to old abbeys, churches, and castles, kissing them, as it were, with a more affectionate, though still reverential familiarity, than it accords to edifices of later date. A square of golden light lay on the sombre pavement afar off, falling through the grand western entrance, the folding leaves of which were wide open, and afforded glimpses of people passing to and fro in the outer world, while we sat dimly enveloped in the solemnity

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of antique devotion. In the south transept, separated from us by the full breadth of the minster, there were painted glass windows, of which the uppermost appeared to be a great orb of many-colored radiance, being, indeed, a cluster of saints and angels whose glorified bodies formed the rays of an aureole emanating from a cross in the midst. These windows are modern, but combine softness with wonderful brilliancy of effect. Through the pillars and arches, I saw that the walls in that distant region of the edifice were almost wholly incrustured with marble, now grown yellow with time, no blank, unlettered slabs, but memorials of such men as their respective generations deemed wisest and bravest. Some of them were commemorated merely by inscriptions on mural tablets, others by sculptured bas-reliefs, others (once famous, but now forgotten generals or admirals, these) by ponderous tombs that aspired towards the roof of the aisle, or partly curtained the immense arch of a window. These mountains of marble were peopled with the sisterhood of Allegory, winged trumpeters, and classic figures in full-bottomed wigs; but it was strange to observe how the old Abbey melted all such absurdities into the breadth of its own grandeur, even magnifying itself by what would elsewhere have been ridiculous. Methinks it is the test of Gothic sublimity to overpower the ridiculous without deigning to hide it; and these grotesque monuments of the last century answer a similar purpose with the grinning faces which the old architects scattered among their most solemn conceptions.

From these distant wanderings, (it was my first visit to Westminster Abbey, and I would gladly have taken it all in at a glance,) my eyes came back and began to investigate what was immediately about me in the transept. Close at my elbow was the pedestal of Canning's statue. Next beyond it was a massive tomb, on the spacious tablet of which reposed the full-length figures of a marble lord and lady, whom an inscription announced to be the Duke and Duchess of Newcastle,—the historic Duke of Charles I.'s time, and the fantastic Duchess, traditionally remembered by her poems and plays. She was of a family, as the record on her tomb proudly informed us, of which all the brothers had been valiant and all the sisters virtuous. A recent statue of Sir John Malcom, the new marble as white as snow, held the next place; and near by was a mural monument and bust of Sir Peter Warren. The round visage of this old British admiral has a certain interest for a New-Englander, because it was by no merit of his own, (though he took care to assume it as such,) but by the valor and warlike enterprise of our colonial forefathers, especially the stout men of Massachusetts, that he won rank and renown, and a tomb in Westminster Abbey. Lord Mansfield, a huge mass of marble done into the guise of a judicial gown and wig, with a stern face in the midst of the latter, sat on the other side of the transept; and on the pedestal beside

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him was a figure of Justice, holding forth, instead of the customary grocer's scales, an actual pair of brass steelyards. It is an ancient and classic instrument, undoubtedly; but I had supposed that Portia (when Shylock's pound of flesh was to be weighed) was the only judge that ever really called for it in a court of justice. Pitt and Fox were in the same distinguished company; and John Kemble, in Roman costume, stood not far off, but strangely shorn of the dignity that is said to have enveloped him like a mantle in his lifetime. Perhaps the evanescent majesty of the stage is incompatible with the long endurance of marble and the solemn reality of the tomb; though, on the other hand, almost every illustrious personage here represented has been invested with more or less of stage-trickery by his sculptor. In truth, the artist (unless there be a divine efficacy in his touch, making evident a heretofore hidden dignity in the actual form) feels it an imperious law to remove his subject as far from the aspect of ordinary life as may be possible without sacrificing every trace of resemblance. The absurd effect of the contrary course is very remarkable in the statue of Mr. Wilberforce, whose actual self, save for the lack of color, I seemed to behold, seated just across the aisle.

This excellent man appears to have sunk into himself in a sitting posture, with a thin leg crossed over his knee, a book in one hand, and a finger of the other under his chin, I believe, or applied to the side of his nose, or to some equally familiar purpose; while his exceedingly homely and wrinkled face, held a little on one side, twinkles at you with the shrewdest complacency, as if he were looking right into your eyes, and twiggled something there which you had half a mind to conceal from him. He keeps this look so pertinaciously that you feel it to be insufferably impertinent, and bethink yourself what common ground there may be between yourself and a stone image, enabling you to resent it. I have no doubt that the statue is as like Mr. Wilberforce as one pea to another, and you might fancy, that, at some ordinary moment, when he least expected it, and before he had time to smooth away his knowing complication of wrinkles, he had seen the Gorgon's head, and whitened into marble,—not only his personal self, but his coat and small-clothes, down to a button and the minutest crease of the cloth. The ludicrous result marks the impropriety of bestowing the age-long duration of marble upon small, characteristic individualities, such as might come within the province of waxen imagery. The sculptor should give permanence to the figure of a great man in his mood of broad and grand composure, which would obliterate all mean peculiarities; for, if the original were unaccustomed to such a mood, or if his features were incapable of assuming the guise, it seems questionable whether he could really have been entitled to a marble immortality. In point of fact, however, the English face and form are seldom statuesque, however illustrious the individual.

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It ill becomes me, perhaps, to have lapsed into this mood of half-jocose criticism in describing my first visit to Westminster Abbey, a spot which I had dreamed about more reverentially, from my childhood upward, than any other in the world, and which I then beheld, and now look back upon, with profound gratitude to the men who built it, and a kindly interest, I may add, in the humblest personage that has contributed his little all to its impressiveness, by depositing his dust or his memory there. But it is a characteristic of this grand edifice that it permits you to smile as freely under the roof of its central nave as if you stood beneath the yet grander canopy of heaven. Break into laughter, if you feel inclined, provided the vergers do not hear it echoing among the arches. In an ordinary church, you would keep your countenance for fear of disturbing the sanctities or proprieties of the place; but you need leave no honest and decorous portion of your human nature outside of these benign and truly hospitable walls. Their mild awfulness will take care of itself. Thus it does no harm to the general impression, when you come to be sensible that many of the monuments are ridiculous, and commemorate a mob of people who are mostly forgotten in their graves, and few of whom ever deserved any better boon from posterity. You acknowledge the force of Sir Godfrey Kneller's objection to being buried in Westminster Abbey, because "they do bury fools there!" Nevertheless, these grotesque carvings of marble, that break out in dingy-white blotches on the old freestone of the interior walls, have come there by as natural a process as might cause mosses and ivy to cluster about the external edifice; for they are the historical and biographical record of each successive age, written with its own hand, and all the truer for the inevitable mistakes, and none the less solemn for the occasional absurdity. Though you entered the Abbey expecting to see the tombs only of the illustrious, you are content, at last, to read many names, both in literature and history, that have now lost the reverence of mankind, if, indeed, they ever really possessed it. Let these men rest in peace. Even if you miss a name or two that you hoped to find there, they may well be spared. It matters little a few more or less, or whether Westminster Abbey contains or lacks any one man's grave, so long as the Centuries, each with the crowd of personages that it deemed memorable, have chosen it as their place of honored sepulture, and laid themselves down under its pavement. The inscriptions and devices on the walls are rich with evidences of the fluctuating tastes, fashions, manners, opinions, prejudices, follies, wisdoms of the past, and thus they combine into a more truthful memorial of their dead times than any individual epitaph-maker ever meant to write.

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When the services were over, many of the audience seemed inclined to linger in the nave or wander away among the mysterious aisles; for there is nothing in this world so fascinating as a Gothic minster, which always invites you deeper and deeper into its heart both by vast revelations and shadowy concealments. Through the open-work screen that divides the nave from the chancel and choir, we could discern the gleam of a marvellous window, but were debarred from entrance into that more sacred precinct of the Abbey by the vergers. These vigilant officials (doing their duty all the more strenuously because no fees could be exacted from Sunday visitors) flourished their staves, and drove us towards the grand entrance like a flock of sheep. Lingered through one of the aisles, I happened to look down, and found my foot upon a stone inscribed with this familiar exclamation, "*O rare Ben Jonson!*" and remembered the story of stout old Ben's burial in that spot, standing upright,—not, I presume, on account of any unseemly reluctance on his part to lie down in the dust, like other men, but because standing-room was all that could reasonably be demanded for a poet among the slumberous notabilities of his age. It made me weary to think of it!—such a prodigious length of time to keep one's feet!—apart from the honor of the thing, it would certainly have been better for Ben to stretch himself at ease in some country-churchyard. To this day, however, I fancy that there is a contemptuous alloy mixed up with the admiration which the higher classes of English society profess for their literary men.

Another day—in truth, many other days—I sought out Poets' Corner, and found a sign-board and pointed finger, directing the visitor to it, on the corner house of a little lane leading towards the rear of the Abbey. The entrance is at the southeastern end of the south transept, and it is used, on ordinary occasions, as the only free mode of access to this building. It is no spacious arch, but a small, lowly door, passing through which, and pushing aside an inner screen that partly keeps out an exceedingly chill wind, you find yourself in a dim nook of the Abbey, with the busts of poets gazing at you from the otherwise bare stonework of the walls. Great poets, too; for Ben Jonson is right behind the door, and Spenser's tablet is next, and Butler's on the same side of the transept, and Milton's (whose bust you know at once by its resemblance to one of his portraits, though older, more wrinkled, and sadder than that) is close by, and a profile-medallion of Gray beneath it. A window high aloft sheds down a dusky daylight on these and many other sculptured marbles, now as yellow as old parchment, that cover the three walls of the nook up to an elevation of about twenty feet above the pavement. It seemed to me that I had always been familiar with the spot. Enjoying a humble intimacy—and how much of my life had else been a dreary solitude!—with

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many of its inhabitants, I could not feel myself a stranger there. It was delightful to be among them. There was a genial awe, mingled with a sense of kind and friendly presences about me; and I was glad, moreover, at finding so many of them there together in fit companionship, mutually recognized and duly honored, all reconciled now, whatever distant generations, whatever personal hostility or other miserable impediment, had divided them far asunder while they lived. I have never felt a similar interest in any other tombstones, nor have I ever been deeply moved by the imaginary presence of other famous dead people. A poet's ghost is the only one that survives for his fellow-mortals, after his bones are in the dust,—and he not ghostly, but cherishing many hearts with his own warmth in the chilliest atmosphere of life. What other fame is worth aspiring for? Or, let me speak it more boldly, what other long-enduring fame can exist? We neither remember nor care anything for the past, except as the poet has made it intelligibly noble and sublime to our comprehension. The shades of the mighty have no substance; they flit ineffectually about the darkened stage where they performed their momentary parts, save when the poet has thrown his own creative soul into them, and imparted a more vivid life than ever they were able to manifest to mankind while they dwelt in the body. And therefore—though he cunningly disguises himself in their armor, their robes of state, or kingly purple—it is not the statesman, the warrior, or the monarch that survives, but the despised poet, whom they may have fed with their crumbs, and to whom they owe all that they now are or have,—a name!

In the foregoing paragraph I seem to have been betrayed into a flight above or beyond the customary level that best agrees with me; but it represents fairly enough the emotions with which I passed from Poets' Corner into the chapels, which contain the sepulchres of kings and great people. They are magnificent even now, and must have been inconceivably so when the marble slabs and pillars wore their new polish, and the statues retained the brilliant colors with which they were originally painted, and the shrines their rich gilding, of which the sunlight still shows a glimmer or a streak, though the sunbeam itself looks tarnished with antique dust. Yet this recondite portion of the Abbey presents few memorials of personages whom we care to remember. The shrine of Edward the Confessor has a certain interest, because it was so long held in religious reverence, and because the very dust that settled upon it was formerly worth gold. The helmet and war-saddle of Henry V., worn at Agincourt, and now suspended above his tomb, are memorable objects, but more for Shakspeare's sake than the victor's own. Rank has been the general passport to admission here. Noble and regal dust is as cheap as dirt under the pavement. I am glad to recollect, indeed, (and it is too characteristic

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of the right English spirit not to be mentioned) one or two gigantic statues of great mechanics, who contributed largely to the material welfare of England, sitting familiarly in their marble chairs among forgotten kings and queens. Otherwise, the quaintness of the earlier monuments, and the antique beauty of some of them, are what chiefly gives them value. Nevertheless, Addison is buried among the men of rank; not on the plea of his literary fame, however, but because he was connected with nobility by marriage, and had been a Secretary of State. His gravestone is inscribed with a resounding verse from Tickell's lines to his memory, the only lines by which Tickell himself is now remembered, and which (as I discovered a little while ago) he mainly filched from an obscure versifier of somewhat earlier date.

Returning to Poets' Corner, I looked again at the walls, and wondered how the requisite hospitality can be shown to poets of our own and the succeeding ages. There is hardly a foot of space left, although room has lately been found for a bust of Southey and a full-length statue of Campbell. At best, only a little portion of the Abbey is dedicated to poets, literary men, musical composers, and others of the gentle artist-breed, and even into that small nook of sanctity men of other pursuits have thought it decent to intrude themselves. Methinks the tuneful throng, being at home here, should recollect how they were treated in their lifetime, and turn the cold shoulder, looking askance at nobles and official personages, however worthy of honorable interment elsewhere. Yet it shows aptly and truly enough what portion of the world's regard and honor has heretofore been awarded to literary eminence in comparison with other modes of greatness,—this dimly lighted corner (nor even that quietly to themselves) in the vast minster, the walls of which are sheathed and hidden under marble that has been wasted upon the illustrious obscure. Nevertheless, it may not be worth while to quarrel with the world on this account; for, to confess the very truth, their own little nook contains more than one poet whose memory is kept alive by his monument, instead of imbuing the senseless stone with a spiritual immortality,—men of whom you do not ask, "Where is he?" but "Why is he here?" I estimate that all the literary people who really make an essential part of one's inner life, including the period since English literature first existed, might have ample elbow-room to sit down and quaff their draughts of Castaly round Chaucer's broad, horizontal tombstone. These divinest poets consecrate the spot, and throw a reflected glory over the humblest of their companions. And as for the latter, it is to be hoped that they may have long outgrown the characteristic jealousies and morbid sensibilities of their craft, and have found out the little value, (probably not amounting to sixpence in immortal currency) of the posthumous renown which they once aspired to win. It would be a poor compliment to a dead poet to fancy him leaning out of the sky and snuffing up the impure breath of earthly praise.

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Yet we cannot easily rid ourselves of the notion that those who have bequeathed us the inheritance of an undying song would fain be conscious of its endless reverberations in the hearts of mankind, and would delight, among sublimer enjoyments, to see their names emblazoned in such a treasure-place of great memories as Westminster Abbey. There are some men, at all events,—true and tender poets, moreover, and fully deserving of the honor,—whose spirits, I feel certain, would linger a little while about Poets' Corner for the sake of witnessing their own apotheosis among their kindred. They have had a strong natural yearning, not so much for applause as sympathy, which the cold fortune of their lifetime did but scantily supply; so that this unsatisfied appetite may make itself felt upon sensibilities at once so delicate and retentive, even a step or two beyond the grave. Leigh Hunt, for example, would be pleased, even now, if he could learn that his bust had been repositied in the midst of the old poets whom he admired and loved; though there is hardly a man among the authors of to-day and yesterday whom the judgment of Englishmen would be less likely to place there. He deserves it, however, if not for his verse, (the value of which I do not estimate, never having been able to read it,) yet for his delightful prose, his unmeasured poetry, the inscrutable happiness of his touch, working soft miracles by a life-process like the growth of grass and flowers. As with all such gentle writers, his page sometimes betrayed a vestige of affectation, but, the next moment, a rich, natural luxuriance overgrew and buried it out of sight. I knew him a little, and (since, Heaven be praised, few English celebrities whom I chanced to meet have enfranchised my pen by their decease, and as I assume no liberties with living men) I will conclude this rambling article by sketching my first interview with Leigh Hunt.

He was then at Hammersmith, occupying a very plain and shabby little house, in a contiguous range of others like it, with no prospect but that of an ugly village-street, and certainly nothing to gratify his craving for a tasteful environment, inside or out. A slatternly maid-servant opened the door for us, and he himself stood in the entry, a beautiful and venerable old man, buttoned to the chin in a black dress-coat, tall and slender, with a countenance quietly alive all over, and the gentlest and most naturally courteous manner. He ushered us into his little study, or parlor, or both,—a very forlorn room, with poor paper-hangings and carpet, few books, no pictures that I remember, and an awful lack of upholstery. I touch distinctly upon these external blemishes and this nudity of adornment, not that they would be worth mentioning in a sketch of other remarkable persons, but because Leigh Hunt was born with such a faculty of enjoying all beautiful things that it seemed as if Fortune did him as much wrong in not supplying them as in withholding a sufficiency of vital breath from ordinary men. All kinds of mild magnificence, tempered by his taste, would have become him well; but he had not the grim dignity that assumes nakedness as the better robe.

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I have said that he was a beautiful old man. In truth, I never saw a finer countenance, either as to the mould of features or the expression, nor any that showed the play of feeling so perfectly without the slightest theatrical emphasis. It was like a child's face in this respect. At my first glimpse of him, when he met us in the entry, I discerned that he was old, his long hair being white and his wrinkles many; it was an aged visage, in short, such as I had not at all expected to see, in spite of dates, because his books talk to the reader with the tender vivacity of youth. But when he began to speak, and as he grew more earnest in conversation, I ceased to be sensible of his age; sometimes, indeed, its dusky shadow darkened through the gleam which his sprightly thoughts diffused about his face, but then another flash of youth came out of his eyes and made an illumination again. I never witnessed such a wonderfully illusive transformation, before or since; and, to this day, trusting only to my recollection, I should find it difficult to decide which was his genuine and stable predicament, —youth or age. I have met no Englishman whose manners seemed to me so agreeable, soft, rather than polished, wholly unconventional, the natural growth of a kindly and sensitive disposition without any reference to rule, or else obedient to some rule so subtle that the nicest observer could not detect the application of it.

His eyes were dark and very fine, and his delightful voice accompanied their visible language like music. He appeared to be exceedingly appreciative, of whatever was passing among those who surrounded him, and especially of the vicissitudes in the consciousness of the person to whom he happened to be addressing himself at the moment. I felt that no effect upon my mind of what he uttered, no emotion, however transitory, in myself, escaped his notice, though not from any positive vigilance on his part, but because his faculty of observation was so penetrative and delicate; and to say the truth, it a little confused me to discern always a ripple on his mobile face, responsive to any slightest breeze that passed over the inner reservoir of my sentiments, and seemed thence to extend to a similar reservoir within himself. On matters of feeling, and within a certain depth, you might spare yourself the trouble of utterance, because he already knew what you wanted to say, and perhaps a little more than you would have spoken. His figure was full of gentle movement, though, somehow, without disturbing its quietude; and as he talked, he kept folding his hands nervously, and betokened in many ways a fine and immediate sensibility, quick to feel pleasure or pain, though scarcely capable, I should imagine, of a passionate experience in either direction. There was not an English trait in him from head to foot, morally, intellectually, or physically. Beef, ale, or stout, brandy, or port-wine, entered not at all into his composition. In his earlier

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life, he appears to have given evidences of courage and sturdy principle, and of a tendency to fling himself into the rough struggle of humanity on the liberal side. It would be taking too much upon myself to affirm that this was merely a projection of his fancy-world into the actual, and that he never could have hit a downright blow, and was altogether an unsuitable person to receive one. I beheld him not in his armor, but in his peaceablest robes. Nevertheless, drawing my conclusion merely from what I saw, it would have occurred to me that his main deficiency was a lack of grit. Though anything but a timid man, the combative and defensive elements were not prominently developed in his character, and could have been made available only when he put an unnatural force upon his instincts. It was on this account, and also because of the fineness of his nature generally, that the English appreciated him no better, and left this sweet and delicate poet poor, and with scanty laurels in his declining age.

It was not, I think, from his American blood that Leigh Hunt derived either his amiability or his peaceful inclinations; at least, I do not see how we can reasonably claim the former quality as a national characteristic, though the latter might have been fairly inherited from his ancestors on the mother's side, who were Pennsylvania Quakers. But the kind of excellence that distinguished him—his fineness, subtilty, and grace—was that which the richest cultivation has heretofore tended to develop in the happier examples of American genius, and which (though I say it a little reluctantly) is perhaps what our future intellectual advancement may make general among us. His person, at all events, was thoroughly American, and of the best type, as were likewise his manners; for we are the best-as well as the worst-mannered people in the world.

Leigh Hunt loved dearly to be praised. That is to say, he desired sympathy as a flower seeks sunshine, and perhaps profited by it as much in the richer depth of coloring that it imparted to his ideas. In response to all that we ventured to express about his writings, (and, for my part, I went quite to the extent of my conscience, which was a long way, and there left the matter to a lady and a young girl, who happily were with me,) his face shone, and he manifested great delight, with a perfect, and yet delicate, frankness for which I loved him. He could not tell us, he said, the happiness that such appreciation gave him; it always took him by surprise, he remarked, for—perhaps because he cleaned his own boots, and performed other little ordinary offices for himself—he never had been conscious of anything wonderful in his own person. And then he smiled, making himself and all the poor little parlor about him beautiful thereby. It is usually the hardest thing in the world to praise a man to his face; but Leigh Hunt received the incense with such gracious satisfaction, (feeling it to be sympathy, not vulgar praise,) that the only

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difficulty was to keep the enthusiasm of the moment within the limit of permanent opinion. A storm had suddenly come up while we were talking; the rain poured, the lightning flashed, and the thunder broke; but I hope, and have great pleasure in believing, that it was a sunny hour for Leigh Hunt. Nevertheless, it was not to my voice that he most favorably inclined his ear, but to those of my companions. Women are the fit ministers at such a shrine.

He must have suffered keenly in his lifetime, and enjoyed keenly, keeping his emotions so much upon the surface as he seemed to do, and convenient for everybody to play upon. Being of a cheerful temperament, happiness had probably the upper hand. His was a light, mildly joyous nature, gentle, grace-fill, yet seldom attaining to that deepest grace which results from power; for beauty, like woman, its human representative, dallies with the gentle, but yields its consummate favor only to the strong. I imagine that Leigh Hunt may have been more beautiful when I met him, both in person and character, than in his earlier days. As a young man, I could conceive of his being finical in certain moods, but not now, when the gravity of age shed a venerable grace about him. I rejoiced to hear him say that he was favored with most confident and cheering anticipations in respect to a future life; and there were abundant proofs, throughout our interview, of an unrepining spirit, resignation, quiet relinquishment of the worldly benefits that were denied him, thankful enjoyment of whatever he had to enjoy, and piety, and hope shining onward into the dusk,—all of which gave a reverential cast to the feeling with which we parted from him. I wish that he could have had one full draught of prosperity before he died. As a matter of artistic propriety, it would have been delightful to see him inhabiting a beautiful house of his own, in an Italian climate, with all sorts of elaborate upholstery and minute elegancies about him, and a succession of tender and lovely women to praise his sweet poetry from morning to night. I hardly know whether it is my fault, or the effect of a weakness in Leigh Hunt's character, that I should be sensible of a regret of this nature, when, at the same time, I sincerely believe that he has found an infinity of better things in the world whither he has gone.

At our leave-taking, he grasped me warmly by both hands, and seemed as much interested in our whole party as if he had known us for years. All this was genuine feeling, a quick, luxuriant growth out of his heart, which was a soil for flower-seeds of rich and rare varieties, not acorns, but a true heart, nevertheless. Several years afterwards I met him for the last time at a London dinner-party, looking sadly broken down by infirmities; and my final recollection of the beautiful old man presents him arm in arm with, nay, partly embraced and supported by, if I mistake not, another beloved and honored poet, whose minstrel-name, since he has a week-day one for his personal occasions, I will venture to speak. It was Barry Cornwall, whose kind introduction had first made me known to Leigh Hunt.

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THE FERN FORESTS OF THE CARBONIFEROUS PERIOD.

Draw two lines on your map, the upper one running from the mouth of the St. Lawrence westward nearly to St. Paul on the Mississippi, and the lower one from the neighborhood of St. John's in Newfoundland running southwesterly about to the point where the Wisconsin joins the Mississippi, but jutting down to form an extensive peninsula comprising part of the States of Indiana and Illinois, and you include between them all of the United States which existed at the close of the Devonian period. The upper line rests against the granite hills dividing the Silurian and Devonian deposits of the British Possessions to the north from those of the United States to the south, Canada itself consisting, in great part, of the granite ridge.

How far the early deposits extended to the north of the Laurentian Hills, as well as the outline of that portion of the continent in those times, remains still very problematical; but the investigations thus far undertaken in those regions would lead to the supposition that the same granite upheaval which raised Canada stretched northward in a broad, low ridge of land, widening in its upper part and extending to the neighborhood of Bathurst Inlet and King William's Island, while on either side of it to the east and west the Silurian and Devonian deposits extended far toward the present outlines of the continent.

Indeed, our geological surveys, as well as the information otherwise obtained concerning the primitive condition of North America and the gradual accessions it has received in more recent periods, point to a very early circumscription of the area which, in the course of time, was to become the continent we now inhabit, with its modern features.[A]

[Footnote A: It would be impossible to encumber the pages of the *Atlantic Monthly* with references to all the authorities on which such geological results rest. They are drawn from the various State Surveys, including that of the mineral lands of Lake Superior, and other more general works on American geology.]

Not only from the geology of America, but from that of Europe also, it would seem that the position of the continents was sketched out very early in the progressive development of the physical constitution of our earth. It is true that in the present state of our knowledge such wide generalizations must be taken with caution, and held in abeyance to the additional facts which future investigations may develop. But thus far the results certainly do not sustain the theories which have lately found favor among geologists, of entire changes in the relative distribution of land and sea and in the connection of continents with one another; on the contrary, it would appear, that, in

accordance with the laws of all organic progress, arising from a fixed starting-point and proceeding

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through regular changes toward a well-defined end, the continents have grown steadily and consistently from the beginning, through successive accessions in a definite direction, to their present form and Organic correlations. If, indeed, there is any meaning in the remarkably symmetrical combinations of the double twin continents in the Eastern Hemisphere, so closely soldered in their northern half, as contrasted with the single pair in the Western Hemisphere, isolated in their position, but so strikingly similar in their Outlines, they must be the result of a progressive and predetermined growth already hinted at in the relative position and gradual increase of the first lands raised above the level of the ocean.

However this may be, there can be no doubt that we now know with tolerable accuracy the limits of the land raised above the water at that period in the present United States. Let us see, then, what we inclose between our two lines. We have Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, the greater part of New England, the whole of New York, a narrow strip along the north of Ohio, a great part of Indiana and Illinois, and nearly the whole of Michigan and Wisconsin.

Within this region lie all the Great Lakes. The origin of these large troughs, holding such immense sheets of fresh water, remains still the subject of discussion and investigation among geologists. It has been supposed that in the primitive configuration of the globe, when the formation of those depressions at the poles in which the Arctic seas are accumulated gave rise to a corresponding protrusion at the equator, the curve thus produced throughout the North Temperate Zone may have forced up the Canada granite, and have caused, at the same time, those rents in the earth's surface now filled by the Canada lakes; and this view is sustained by the fact that there is a belt of lakes, among which, however, the Canada lakes are far the largest, all around the world in that latitude. The geological phenomena connected with all these lakes have not, however, been investigated with sufficient accuracy and detail, nor has there been any comparison of them extensive and comprehensive enough to justify the adoption of any theory respecting their origin. In an excursion to Lake Superior, some years since, I satisfied myself that the position and outline of that particular lake had their immediate cause in several distinct systems of dikes which intersect its northern shore, and have probably cut up the whole tract of rock over the space now filled by that wonderful sheet of fresh water in such a way as to destroy its continuity, to produce depressions, and gradually create the excavation which now forms the basin of the lake. How far the same causes have been effectual in producing the other large lakes I am unable to say, never having had the opportunity of studying their formation with the same care.

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The existence of the numerous smaller lakes running north and south in the State of New York, as the Canandaigua, Seneca, Cayuga, *etc.*, is more easily accounted for. Slow and gradual as was the process by which all that region was lifted above the ocean, it was, nevertheless, accompanied by powerful dislocations of the stratified deposits, as we shall see when we examine them with reference to the local phenomena connected with them. To these dislocations of the strata we owe the transverse cracks across the central part of New York, which needed only the addition of the fresh water poured into them by the rains to transform them into lakes.

I shall not attempt any account of the differences between the animals of the Devonian period and those of the Silurian period, because they consist of structural details difficult to present in a popular form and uninteresting to all but the professional naturalist. Suffice it to say, that, though the organic world had the same general character in these two closely allied periods, yet its representatives in each were specifically distinct, and their differences, however slight, are as constant and as definitely marked as those between more widely separated creations.

At the close of the Devonian period, several upheavals occurred of great significance for the future history of America. One in Ohio raised the elevated ground on which Cincinnati now stands; another hill lifted its granite crest in Missouri, raising with it an extensive tract of Silurian and Devonian deposits; while a smaller one, which does not seem, however, to have disturbed the beds about it so powerfully, broke through in Arkansas. At the same time, elevations took place toward the East,—the first links, few and detached, in the great Alleghany chain which now raises its rocky wall from New England to Alabama.

In the Ohio hill, the granite did not break through, though the force of the upheaval was such as to rend asunder the Devonian deposits, for we find them lying torn and broken about the base of the hill; while the Silurian beds, which should underlie them in their natural position, form its centre and summit. This accounts for the great profusion of Silurian organic remains in that neighborhood. Indeed, there is no locality which forces upon the observer more strongly the conviction of the profusion and richness of the early creation; for one may actually collect the remains of Silurian Shells and Crustacea by cart-loads around the city of Cincinnati. A naturalist would find it difficult to gather along any modern sea-shore, even on tropical coasts, where marine life is more abundant than elsewhere, so rich a harvest, in the same time, as he will bring home from an hour's ramble in the environs of that city.

These elevations naturally gave rise to depressions between themselves and the land on either side of them, and caused also so many counter-slopes dipping toward the uniform southern slope already formed at the north. Thus between the several new upheavals, as well as between them all and the land to the north of them, wide basins or troughs were formed, inclosed on the south, west, and east by low hills, (for these

more recent eruptions were, like all the early upheavals, insignificant in height,) and bounded on the north by the more ancient shores of the preceding ages.

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These were the inland seas of the Carboniferous period. Here, again, we must infer the successive stages of a history which we can read only in its results. Shut out from the ocean, these shallow sea-basins were gradually changed by the rains to fresh-water lakes; the lakes, in their turn, underwent a transformation, becoming filled, in the course of centuries, with the materials worn away from their shores, with the *debris* of the animals which lived and died in their waters, as well as with the decaying matter from aquatic plants, till at last they were changed to spreading marshes, and on these marshes arose the gigantic fern-vegetation of which the first forests chiefly consisted. Such are the separate chapters in the history of the coal-basins of Illinois, Missouri, Pennsylvania, New England, and Nova Scotia. First inland seas, then fresh-water lakes, then spreading marshes, then gigantic forests, and lastly vast storehouses of coal for the human race.

Although coal-beds are by no means peculiar to the Carboniferous period, since such deposits must be formed wherever the decay of vegetation is going on extensively, yet it would seem that coal-making was the great work in that age of the world's physical history. The atmospheric conditions, so far as we can understand them, were then especially favorable to this result. Though the existence of such an extensive terrestrial vegetation shows conclusively that an atmosphere must have been already established, with all the attendant phenomena of light, heat, air, moisture, *etc.*, yet it is probable that this atmosphere differed from ours in being very largely charged with carbonic acid.

We should infer this from the nature of the animals characteristic of the period; for, though land-animals were introduced, and the organic world was no longer exclusively marine, there were as yet none of the higher beings in whom respiration is an active process. In all warm-blooded animals the breathing is quick, requiring a large proportion of oxygen in the surrounding air, and indicating by its rapidity the animation of the whole system; while the slow-breathing, cold-blooded animals can live in an air that is heavily loaded with carbon. It is well known, however, that, though carbon is so deadly to higher animal life, plants require it in great quantities; and it would seem that one of the chief offices of the early forests was to purify the atmosphere of its undue proportion of carbonic acid, by absorbing the carbon into their own substance, and eventually depositing it as coal in the soil.

Another very important agent in the process of purifying the atmosphere, and adapting it to the maintenance of a higher organic life, is found in the deposits of lime. My readers will excuse me, if I introduce here a very elementary chemical fact to explain this statement. Limestone is carbonate of calcium. Calcium is a metal, fusible as such, and, forming a part of the melted masses within the earth, it was thrown out with the eruptions of Plutonic rocks. Brought to the air, it would appropriate a certain amount of oxygen, and by that process would become oxide of calcium, in which condition it combines very readily with carbonic acid. Thus it becomes carbonate of lime; and all lime deposits played an important part in establishing the atmospheric proportions essential to the existence of the warm-blooded animals.

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Such facts remind us how far more comprehensive the results of science will become when the different branches of scientific investigation are pursued in connection with each other. When chemists have brought their knowledge out of their special laboratories into the laboratory of the world, where chemical combinations are and have been through all time going on in such vast proportions,—when physicists study the laws of moisture, of clouds and storms, in past periods as well as in the present,—when, in short, geologists and zoologists are chemists and physicists, and *vice versa*,—then we shall learn more of the changes the world has undergone than is possible now that they are separately studied.

It may be asked, how any clue can be found to phenomena so evanescent as those of clouds and moisture. But do we not trace in the old deposits the rainstorms of past times? The heavy drops of a passing shower, the thick, crowded tread of a splashing rain, or the small pinpricks of a close and fine one,—all the story, in short, of the rising vapors, the gathering clouds, the storms and showers of ancient days, we find recorded for us in the fossil rain-drops; and when we add to this the possibility of analyzing the chemical elements which have been absorbed into the soil, but which once made part of the atmosphere, it is not too much to hope that we shall learn something hereafter of the meteorology even of the earliest geological ages.

The peculiar character of the vegetable tissue in the trees of the Carboniferous period, containing, as it did, a large supply of resin drawn from the surrounding elements, confirms the view of the atmospheric conditions above stated; and this fact, as well as the damp, soggy soil in which the first forests must have grown, accounts for the formation of coal in greater quantity and more combustible in quality than is found in the more recent deposits. But stately as were those fern forests, where plants which creep low at our feet to-day, or are known to us chiefly as underbrush, or as rushes and grasses in swampy grounds, grew to the height of lofty trees, yet the vegetation was of an inferior kind.

There has been a gradation in time for the vegetable as well as the animal world. With the marine population of the more ancient geological ages we find nothing but seaweeds,—of great variety, it is true, and, as it would seem, from some remains of the marine Cryptogams in early times, of immense size, as compared with modern seaweeds. But in the Carboniferous period, the plants, though still requiring a soaked and marshy soil, were aerial or atmospheric plants: they were covered with leaves; they breathed; their fructification was like that which now characterizes the ferns, the club-mosses, and the so-called “horse-tail plants,” (*Equisetaceae*,) those grasses of low, damp grounds remarkable for the strongly marked articulations of the stem.

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These were the lords of the forests all over the world in the Carboniferous period. Wherever the Carboniferous deposits have been traced, in the United States, in Canada, in England, France, Belgium, Germany, in New Holland, at the Cape of Good Hope, and in South America, the general aspect of the vegetation has been found to be the same, though characterized in the different localities by specific differences of the same nature as those by which the various floras are distinguished now in different parts of the same zone. For instance, the Temperate Zone throughout the world is characterized by certain families of trees: by Oaks, Maples, Beeches, Birches, Pines, *etc.*; but the Oaks, Maples, Beeches, Birches, and the like, of the American flora in that latitude differ in species from the corresponding European flora. So in the Carboniferous period, when more uniform climatic conditions prevailed throughout the world, the character of the vegetation showed a general unity of structure everywhere; but it was nevertheless broken up into distinct botanical provinces by specific differences of the same kind as those which now give such diversity of appearance to the vegetation of the Temperate Zone in Europe as compared with that of America, or to the forests of South America as compared with those of Africa.

There can be no doubt as to the true nature of the Carboniferous forests; for the structural character of the trees is as strongly marked in their fossil remains as in any living plants of the same character. We distinguish the Ferns not only by the peculiar form of their leaves, often perfectly preserved, but also by the fructification on the lower surface of the leaves, and by the distinct marks made on the stem at their point of juncture with it. The leaf of the Fern, when falling, leaves a scar on the stem varying in shape and size according to the kind of Fern, so that the botanist readily distinguishes any particular species of Fern by this means,—a birth-mark, as it were, by which he detects the parentage of the individual. Another indication, equally significant, is found in the tubular structure of the wood in Ferns. On a vertical section of any well-preserved Fern-trunk from the old forests the little tubes may be seen very distinctly running up its length; or, if it be cut through transversely, they may be traced by the little pores like dots on the surface. Trees of this description are found in the Carboniferous marshes, standing erect and perfectly preserved, with trunks a foot and a half in diameter, rising to a height of many feet. Plants so strongly bituminous as the Ferns, when they equalled in size many of our present forest-trees, naturally made coal deposits of the most combustible quality. It is true that we find the anthracite coal of the same period with comparatively little bituminous matter; but this is where the bitumen has been destroyed by the action of the internal heat of the earth.

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Next to the Ferns, the Club-Mosses (*Lycopodiaceae*) seem to have contributed most largely to the marsh-forests. They were characterized, then, as now, by the small size of the leaves growing close against the stem, so that the stem itself, though covered with leaves, looks almost naked, like the stem of the Cactus. Beside these, there are the tree-like Equiseta, in which we find the articulations on the trunk corresponding exactly to those now so characteristic of those marsh-grasses which are the modern representatives of this family of plants, with cone-like fructifications on the summit of the stem.

I would merely touch here upon a subject which does not belong to my own branch of Natural History, but is of the greatest interest in botanical research, namely, the gradation of plants in the geological ages, and the combination of characters in some of the earlier vegetable forms, corresponding to that already noticed in the ancient animal types. For instance, in the Carboniferous period we have only Cryptogams, Ferns, *Lycopodiaceae*, and *Equisetaceae*. In the middle geological ages, Conifers are introduced, the first flowering plant known on earth, but in which the flower is very imperfect as compared with those of the higher groups. The *Coniferae* were chiefly represented in the middle periods by the *Cycadae*, that peculiar group of *Coniferae*, resembling Pines in their structure, but recalling the Ferns by their external appearance. The stem is round and short, its surface being covered with scars similar to those of the Ferns; while on the summit are ten or more leaves, fan-like and spreading when their growth is complete, but rolled up at first, like Fern-leaves before they expand. Their fruit resembles somewhat the Pine-Apple.

The mode of growth of the *Coniferae* recalls a feature of the *Equisetaceae* also, in the tufts of little leaves which appear in whorls at regular intervals along the length of the stem in proportion as it elongates, reminding one of the articulations on the stem of the *Equisetaceae*. The first cone also appears on the summit of the stem, like the terminal cone in the *Equisetaceae* and the Club-Mosses. Thus in certain types of the vegetable, as well as the animal creation of earlier times, there was a continuation of features, afterwards divided and presented in separate groups. In the present times, no one of these families of plants overlaps the others, but each has a distinct individual character of its own.

At the close of the middle geological ages and the opening of the Tertiary periods, the Monocotyledons become abundant, the first plants with flower and inclosed seed, though with no true floral envelope: but not until the two last epochs of the Tertiary age do we find in any number the Dicotyledonous plants, in which flower and fruit rise to their highest perfection. Thus there has been a procession of plants from their earliest introduction to the present day, corresponding to their botanical rank as they now exist, so that the series of gradation in the Vegetable Kingdom, as well as the Animal Kingdom, is the same, whether founded upon succession in time or upon comparative structural rank.

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Some attempt has been made to reproduce under an artistic form the aspect of the world in the different geological ages, and to present in single connected pictures the animal and vegetable world of each period. Professor F. Unger, of Vienna, has prepared a collection of fourteen such sketches, entitled, "Tableaux Physionomiques de la Vegetation des Diverses Perodes du Monde Primitif."

First, we have the Devonian shores, with spreading fields of sea-weed and numbers of the club-shaped Algae of gigantic size. He has ventured, also, to represent a few trees, with scanty foliage; but I believe their existence at so early a period to be very problematical.

Next comes the Carboniferous forest, with still pools of water lying between the Fern-trees, which, much as they affect damp, swampy grounds, seem scarcely able to find foothold on the dripping earth. Their trunks, as well as those of the Club-Moss trees which make the foreground of the picture, stand up free from any branches for many feet above the ground, giving one a glimpse between them into the dim recesses of this quiet, watery wood, where the silence was unbroken by the song of birds or the hum of insects. We shall find, it is true, when we give a glance at the animals of this time, that certain insects made their appearance with the first terrestrial vegetation; but they were few in number and of a peculiar kind, such as thrive now in low, wet lands.

Upon this follow a number of sketches introducing us to the middle periods, where the land is higher and more extensive, covered chiefly with Pine forests, beneath which grows a thick carpet of underbrush, consisting mostly of Grasses, Rushes, and Ferns. Here and there one of the gigantic reptiles of the time may be seen sunning himself on the shore. One of these sketches shows us such a creature hungrily inspecting a pool where Crinoids, with their long stems, large, closely-coiled Chambered Shells, and Brachiopods, the Oysters and Clams of those days, offer him a tempting repast. Here and there a Pterodactyl, the curious winged reptile of the later middle periods, stretches its long neck from the water, and birds also begin to make their appearance.

After these come the Tertiary periods: the Eocene first, where the landscape is already broken up by hills and mountains, clothed with a varied vegetation of comparatively modern character. Lily-pads are floating on the stream which makes the central part of the picture; large herds of the Palaeotherium, the ancient Pachyderm, reconstructed with such accuracy by Cuvier, are feeding along its banks; and a tall bird of the Heron or Pelican kind stands watching by the water's edge. In the Miocene the vegetation looks still more familiar, though the Elephants roaming about in regions of the Temperate Zone, and the huge Salamanders crawling out of the water, remind us that we are still far removed from present times. Lastly, we have the ice period, with the glaciers coming down to the borders of a river where large troops of Buffalo are drinking, while on the shore some Bears are feasting on the remains of a huge carcass.

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It is, however, with the Carboniferous age that we have to do at present, and I will not anticipate the coming chapters of my story by dwelling now on the aspect of the later periods. To return, then, to the period of the coal, it would seem that extensive freshets frequently overflowed the marshes, and that even after many successive forests had sprung up and decayed upon their soil, they were still subject to submergence by heavy floods. These freshets, at certain intervals, are not difficult to understand, when we remember, that, beside the occasional influx of violent rains, the earth was constantly undergoing changes of level, and that a subsidence or upheaval in the neighborhood would disturb the equilibrium of the waters, causing them to overflow and pour over the surface of the country, thus inundating the marshes anew.

That such was the case we can hardly doubt, after the facts revealed by recent investigations of the Carboniferous deposits. In some of the deeper coal-beds there is a regular alternation between layers of coal and layers of sand or clay; in certain localities, as many as ten, twelve, and even fifteen coal-beds have been found alternating with as many deposits of clay or mud or sand; and in some instances, where the trunks of the trees are hollow and have been left standing erect, they are filled to the brim, or to the height of the next layer of deposits, with the materials that have been swept over them. Upon this set of deposits comes a new bed of coal with the remains of a new forest, and above this again a layer of materials left by a second freshet, and so on through a number of alternate strata. It is evident from these facts that there have been a succession of forests, one above another, but that in the intervals of their growth great floods have poured over the marshes, bringing with them all kinds of loose materials, such as sand, pebbles, clay, mud, lime, *etc.*, which, as the freshets subsided, settled down over the coal, filling not only the spaces between such trees as remained standing, but even the hollow trunks of the trees themselves.

Let us give a glance now at the animals which inhabited the waters of this period. In the Radiates we shall not find great changes; the three classes are continued, though with new representatives, and the Polyp Corals are increasing, while the Acalephian Corals, the Kugosa and Tabulata, are diminishing. The Crinoids were still the most prominent representatives of the class of Echinoderms, though some resembling the Ophiurans and Echinoids (Sea-Urchins) began to make their appearance. The adjoining wood-cut represents a characteristic Crinoid of the Carboniferous age.

[Illustration]

Among the Mollusks, Brachiopods are still prominent, one new genus among them, the *Productus*, being very remarkable on account of the manner in which one valve rises above the other. The wood-cut below represents such a shell, looked at from the side of the flat valve, showing the straight cut of the line of juncture between the valves and the rising curve of the opposite one, which looks like a hooked beak when seen in profile.

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[Illustration]

Other species of Bivalves were also introduced, approaching more nearly our Clams and Oysters, or, as they are called in scientific nomenclature, the Lamellibranchiates. They differ from the Brachiopods chiefly in the higher character of their breathing-apparatus; for they have free gills, instead of the net-work of vessels on the lining skin which serves as the organ of respiration in the Brachiopods. We shall always find, that, in proportion as the functions are distinct, and, as it were, individualized by having special organs appropriated to them, animals rise in the scale of structure. The next class of Mollusks, the Gasteropods, or Univalves, with spiral shells, were numerous, but, from their brittle character, are seldom found in a good state of preservation.

The Chambered Shells, or the Cephalopods, represented chiefly in the earlier periods by the straight Orthoceratites described in a previous article, are now curled in a close coil, and the internal structure of their chambers has become more complicated. The subjoined wood-cut represents a characteristic Chambered Shell of the Carboniferous age. Goniatites is the scientific name of these later forms. If we had looked for them in the Devonian period, we should have found many with looser coils than these, and some only slightly curved in the shape of a horn. These, as well as the perfectly straight forms, still exist in the coal period, but the Goniatites with close whorls are the more numerous and more characteristic.

[Illustration]

The Articulates have gained their missing class since the close of the Devonian period, for Insects have come in, and that division of the Animal Kingdom is therefore complete, and represented by three classes, as it is at present. Of the Worms little can be said; their traces are found as before, but they are very imperfectly preserved. There are still Trilobites, but they are very few in number, and other groups of Crustacea have been added.

One of the most prominent of these new types bears a striking resemblance to the Horse-Shoe Crab of present times.

[Illustration]

[Illustration]

I here present one of our common Horse-Shoe Crabs above one of these old-world Crustaceans, and it will be seen, that, while the latter preserves some of the Trilobitic characters, such as the marked articulations on the posterior part of the body and their division into three lobes, yet in the prominence of its anterior shield, its more elongated form, and tapering extremity, it resembles its modern representative. In some of them, however, there is no such sharp point as is here figured, and the body terminates

bluntly. There were a large number of these Entomostraca in the Carboniferous period, a group which is chiefly represented among living Crustacea by an exceedingly minute kind of Shrimp; but in those days they were of the size of our Crabs and Lobsters, or even larger, and the Horse-Shoe Crab still maintains their claim to a place among the larger and more conspicuous members of the class.

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The Insects were few, and, as I have said above, of a kind which seeks a moist atmosphere, or whose larvae live altogether in water. They are not usually well preserved, as will be seen from the broken character of the one here represented, although the wood-cut is made from a better specimen than is often found. We have, however, remains enough to establish unquestionably the fact of their existence in the Carboniferous period, and to show us that the type of Articulates was already represented by all its classes.

[Illustration]

Not so with the Vertebrates. Fishes abound, but their class still consists, as before, of the Ganoids, those fishes of the earlier periods built on the Gar-Pike and Sturgeon pattern, and the Selachians, represented now by Sharks and Skates. In the Carboniferous period we begin to find perfectly preserved specimens of the Ganoids, and the adjoining wood-cut represents such a one. Of the old type of Selachians we have again one lingering representative in our own times to give us the clue to its ancestors,—as the Gar-Pike explains the old Ganoids, and the Chambered Nautilus helps us to understand the Chambered Shells of past times. The so-called Port-Jackson Shark has features which were very characteristic of the Carboniferous Sharks and are lost in the modern ones, so that it affords us a sort of link, as it were, and a measure of comparison, between those now living and the more ancient forms. It is an interesting fact that this only living representative of the Carboniferous Shark should be found in New Holland, because it is there, in that isolated continent, left apart, as it would seem, for a special purpose, that we find reproduced for us most fully the character of the Animal Kingdom in earlier creations.

[Illustration]

The first Mammalia in the world were pouched animals, having that extraordinary attachment to the mother after birth which characterizes the Kangaroo. In New Holland almost all the Mammalia are pouched, and have also the imperfect organization of the brain, as compared with the other Mammalia, which accompanies that peculiar structural feature; and although the American Opossum makes an exception to the rule, it is nevertheless true that this type of the Animal Kingdom is now confined almost exclusively to New Holland. Whether this living picture of old creations in modern garb was meant to be educational for man or not, it is at least well that we should take advantage of it in learning all it has to teach us of the relations between the organic world of past and present times.

There were a great variety of the Selachians in the Carboniferous period. The wood-cuts below represent a tooth and a spine from one of the most characteristic groups, but I have not thought it worth while to enumerate or to figure others here, for there are no perfect specimens, and their structural differences consist chiefly in the various form and appearance of the teeth, scales, and spines, and would be uninteresting to most of

my readers. I would refer the more scientific ones, who may care to know something of these details, to my investigations on Fossil Fishes, published many years since under the title of “Recherches sur les Poissons Fossiles.”

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[Illustration]

[Illustration]

Although the Vertebrate division of the Animal Kingdom still waited for its higher classes, yet it had received one important addition since the Silurian and Devonian periods. The Carboniferous marshes were not without their reptilian inhabitants; but they were Reptiles of the lowest class, the so-called Amphibians, those which are hatched from the egg in an immature condition, undergoing metamorphosis after birth. They have no hard scales, and lay a large number of eggs. I am unable to present any figure of one of these ancient Reptiles, as they are found in so imperfect a state of preservation that no plates have been made from them. I would add in connection with this subject that I believe a large number of animals found in the Carboniferous deposits, and referred to the class of Reptiles, to be Fishes allied to Saurians.

Before leaving the Carboniferous period, let us see what territory the United States has conquered from the Ocean during that time. All its central portion, from Canada to Alabama, and from Western Iowa, Missouri, and Arkansas to Eastern Virginia, was raised above the water. But as yet the Alleghanies and the Rocky Mountains did not exist; a great gulf ran up to the mouth of the Ohio, for the Mississippi had not yet accumulated the soil for the fertile valley through which it was to take its southern course; the Coral-Builders had still their work to do in constructing the peninsula of Florida; and, indeed, all the borders of the continent of North America, as well as a large part of its Western territory, were still to be added. But although its central portion held its ground and was never submerged again, yet the continent was slowly subsiding during the middle geological periods, so that, instead of enlarging gradually by the increase of deposits, its limits remained much the same.

This accounts for the very scanty traces to be found in America of the secondary deposits; for the Permian, Triassic, and Jurassic beds, instead of being raised to form successive shores, along which their deposits could be accumulated in regular sequence, as had been the case with the Azoic, Silurian, and Devonian deposits in the northern part of the United States, were constantly sinking, so that the Triassic settled above the Permian, the Jurassic above the Triassic, and so on, each set of strata thus covering over and concealing the preceding one. Though we find the stratified rocks of these periods cropping out here and there, where some violent disturbance or the abrading action of water has torn asunder or worn away the overlying strata, yet we never find them consecutively over any extensive region; and it is not till the Cretaceous and earlier Tertiary periods that we find again a regular succession of deposits around the shores of the continent, marking its present outlines. It is, then, in Europe, where the sequence of their beds is most complete, that we must seek to decipher the history of the middle geological ages; and therefore, when I meet my readers again, it will be in the Old World of civilization, though more recent in its physical features than the one we leave.



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* * * * *

TO E.W.

I know not, Time and Space so intervene,
Whether, still waiting with a trust serene,
Thou bearest up thy fourscore years and ten,
Or, called at last, art now Heaven's citizen;
But, here or there, a pleasant thought of thee,
Like an old friend, all day has been with me.
The shy, still boy, for whom thy kindly hand
Smoothed his hard pathway to the wonder-land
Of thought and fancy, in gray manhood yet
Keeps green the memory of his early debt.
To-day, when truth and falsehood speak their words
Through hot-lipped cannon and the teeth of swords,
Listening with quickened heart and ear intent
To each sharp clause of that stern argument,
I still can hear at times a softer note
Of the old pastoral music round me float,
While through the hot gleam of our civil strife
Looms the green mirage of a simpler life.
As, at his alien post, the sentinel
Drops the old bucket in the homestead well,
And hears old voices in the winds that toss
Above his head the live-oak's beard of moss,
So, in our trial-time, and under skies
Shadowed by swords like Islam's paradise,
I wait and watch, and let my fancy stray
To milder scenes and youth's Arcadian day;
And howsoe'er the pencil dipped in dreams
Shades the brown woods or tints the sunset streams,
The country doctor in the foreground seems,
Whose ancient sulky down the village lanes
Dragged, like a war-car, captive ills and pains.
I could not paint the scenery of my song,
Mindless of one who looked thereon so long;
Who, night and day, on duty's lonely round,
Made friends o' th' woods and rocks, and knew the sound
Of each small brook, and what the hill-side trees
Said to the winds that touched their leafy keys;
Who saw so keenly and so well could paint
The village-folk, with all their humors quaint,—



The parson ambling on his wall-eyed roan,
Grave and erect, with white hair backward blown,—
The tough old boatman, half amphibious grown,—
The muttering witch-wife of the gossip's tale,
And the loud straggler levying his black mail,—
Old customs, habits, superstitions, fears,
All that lies buried under fifty years.
To thee, as is most fit, I bring my lay,
And, grateful, own the debt I cannot pay.

* * * * *

THE COUNTESS.

Over the wooded northern ridge,
Between its houses brown,
To the dark tunnel of the bridge
The street comes straggling down.

You catch a glimpse through birch and pine
Of gable, roof, and porch,
The tavern with its swinging sign,
The sharp horn of the church.

The river's steel-blue crescent curves
To meet, in ebb and flow,
The single broken wharf that serves
For sloop and gundelow.



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With salt sea-scents along its shores
The heavy hay-boats crawl,
The long antennae of their oars
In lazy rise and fall.

Along the gray abutment's wall
The idle shad-net dries;
The toll-man in his cobbler's stall
Sits smoking with closed eyes.

You hear the pier's low undertone
Of waves that chafe and gnaw;
You start,—a skipper's horn is blown
To raise the creaking draw.

At times a blacksmith's anvil sounds
With slow and sluggard beat,
Or stage-coach on its dusty rounds
Wakes up the staring street.

A place for idle eyes and ears,
A cobwebbed nook of dreams;
Left by the stream whose waves are years
The stranded village seems.

And there, like other moss and rust,
The native dweller clings,
And keeps, in uninquiring trust,
The old, dull round of things.

The fisher drops his patient lines,
The farmer sows his grain,
Content to hear the murmuring pines
Instead of railroad-train.

Go where, along the tangled steep
That slopes against the west,
The hamlet's buried idlers sleep
In still profounder rest.

Throw back the locust's flowery plume,
The birch's pale-green scarf,
And break the web of brier and bloom
From name and epitaph.



A simple muster-roll of death,
Of pomp and romance shorn,
The dry, old names that common breath
Has cheapened and outworn.

Yet pause by one low mound and part
The wild vines o'er it laced,
And read the words by rustic art
Upon its headstone traced.

Haply yon white-haired villager
Of fourscore years can say
What means the noble name of her
Who sleeps with common clay.

An exile from the Gascon land
Found refuge here and rest,
And loved, of all the village band,
Its fairest and its best.

He knelt with her on Sabbath morns,
He worshipped through her eyes,
And on the pride that doubts and scorns
Stole in her faith's surprise.

Her simple daily life he saw
By homeliest duties tried,
In all things by an untaught law
Of fitness justified.

For her his rank aside he laid;
He took the hue and tone
Of lowly life and toil, and made
Her simple ways his own.

Yet still, in gay and careless ease,
To harvest-field or dance
He brought the gentle courtesies,
The nameless grace of France.

And she who taught him love not less
From him she loved in turn
Caught in her sweet unconsciousness
What love is quick to learn.

Each grew to each in pleased accord,
Nor knew the gazing town

If she looked upward to her lord
Or he to her looked down.



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How sweet, when summer's day was o'er,
His violin's mirth and wail,
The walk on pleasant Newbury's shore,
The river's moonlit sail!

Ah! life is brief, though love be long
The altar and the bier,
The burial hymn and bridal song,
Were both in one short year!

Her rest is quiet on the hill
Beneath the locust's bloom;
Far off her lover sleeps as still
Within his scutcheoned tomb.

The Gascon lord, the village maid
In death still clasp their hands;
The love that levels rank and grade
Unites their severed lands.

What matter whose the hill-side grave,
Or whose the blazoned stone?
Forever to her western wave
Shall whisper blue Garonne!

O Love!—so hallowing every soil
That gives thy sweet flower room,
Wherever, nursed by ease or toil,
The human heart takes bloom!—

Plant of lost Eden, from the sod
Of sinful earth unriven,
White blossom of the trees of God
Dropped down to us from heaven!—

This tangled waste of mound and stone
Is holy for thy sake;
A sweetness which is all thy own
Breathes out from fern and brake.

And while ancestral pride shall twine
The Gascon's tomb with flowers,
Fall sweetly here, O song of mine,
With summer's bloom and showers!

And let the lines that severed seem
Unite again in thee,
As western wave and Gallic stream
Are mingled in one sea!

* * * * *

GALA-DAYS.

I.

Once there was a great noise in our house,—a thumping and battering and grating. It was my own self dragging my big trunk down from the garret. I did it myself because I wanted it done. If I had said, “Halicarnassus, will you fetch my trunk down?” he would have asked me what trunk? and what did I want of it? and would not the other one be better? and couldn’t I wait till after dinner?—and so the trunk would probably have had a three-days’ journey from garret to basement. Now I am strong in the wrists and weak in the temper; therefore I used the one and spared the other, and got the trunk down-stairs myself. Halicarnassus heard the uproar. He must have been deaf not to hear it; for the old ark banged and bounced, and scraped the paint off the stairs, and pitched head-foremost into the wall, and gouged out the plastering, and dented the mop-board, and was the most stupid, awkward, uncompromising, unmanageable thing I ever got hold of in my life.

By the time I had zigzagged it into the back chamber, Halicarnassus loomed up the back stairs. I stood hot and panting, with the inside of my fingers tortured into burning leather, the skin rasped off three knuckles, and a bruise on the back of my right hand, where the trunk had crushed it against a sharp edge of the door-way.

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"Now, then?" said Halicarnassus interrogatively.

"To be sure," I replied affirmatively.

He said no more, but went and looked up the garret-stairs. They bore traces of a severe encounter, that must be confessed.

"Do you want me to give you a bit of advice?" he asked.

"No!" I answered promptly.

"Well, then, here it is. The next time you design to bring a trunk downstairs, you would better cut away the underpinning, and knock out the beams, and let the garret down into the cellar. It will make less uproar, and not take so much to repair damages."

He intended to be severe. His words passed by me as the idle wind. I perched on my trunk, took a pasteboard box-cover and fanned myself. I was very warm. Halicarnassus sat down on the lowest stair and remained silent several minutes, expecting a meek explanation, but, not getting it, swallowed a bountiful piece of what is called in homely talk "humble-pie," and said,—

"I should like to know what's in the wind now."

I make it a principle always to resent an insult and to welcome repentance with equal alacrity. If people thrust out their horns at me wantonly, they very soon run against a stone wall; but the moment they show signs of contrition, I soften. It is the best way. Don't insist that people shall grovel at your feet before you accept their apology. That is not magnanimous. Let mercy temper justice. It is a hard thing at best for human nature to go down into the Valley of Humiliation; and although, when circumstances arise which make it the only fit place for a person, I insist upon his going, still, no sooner does he actually begin the descent than my sense of justice is appeased, my natural sweetness of disposition resumes sway, and I trip along by his side chatting as gayly as if I did not perceive it was the Valley of Humiliation at all, but fancied it the Delectable Mountains. So, upon the first symptoms of placability, I answered cordially,—

"Halicarnassus, it has been the ambition of my life to write a book of travels. But to write a book of travels, one must first have travelled."

"Not at all," he responded. "With an atlas and an encyclopedia one can travel around the world in his arm-chair."

"But one cannot have personal adventures," I said. "You can, indeed, sit in your arm-chair and describe the crater of Vesuvius; but you cannot tumble into the crater of Vesuvius from your arm-chair."

"I have never heard that it was necessary to tumble in, in order to have a good view of the mountain."

"But it is necessary to do it, if one would make a readable book."

"Then I should let the book slide,—rather than slide myself."

"If you would do me the honor to listen," I said, scornful of his paltry attempt at wit, "you would see that the book is the object of my travelling. I travel to write. I do not write because I have travelled. I am not going to subordinate my book to my adventures. My adventures are going to be arranged beforehand with a view to my book."

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"A most original way of getting up a book!"

"Not in the least. It is the most common thing in the world. Look at our dear British cousins."

"And see them make guys of themselves. They visit a magnificent country that is trying the experiment of the world, and write about their shaving-soap and their babies' nurses."

"Just where they are right. Just why I like the race, from Trollope down. They give you something to take hold of. I tell you, Halicarnassus, it is the personality of the writer, and not the nature of the scenery or of the institutions, that makes the interest. It stands to reason. If it were not so, one book would be all that ever need be written, and that book would be a census report. For a republic is a republic, and Niagara is Niagara forever; but tell how you stood on the chain-bridge at Niagara—if there is one there—and bought a cake of shaving-soap from a tribe of Indians at a fabulous price, or how your baby jumped from the arms of the careless nurse into the Falls, and immediately your own individuality is thrown around the scenery, and it acquires a human interest. It is always five miles from one place to another, but that is mere almanac and statistics. Let a poet walk the five miles, and narrate his experience with birds and bees and flowers and grasses and water and sky, and it becomes literature. And let me tell you further, Sir, a book of travels is just as interesting as the person who writes it is interesting. It is not the countries, but the persons, that are 'shown up.' You go to France and write a dull book. I go to France and write a lively book. But France is the same. The difference is in ourselves."

Halicarnassus glowered at me. I think I am not using strained or extravagant language when I say that he glowered at me. Then he growled out,—

"So your book of travels is just to put yourself into pickle."

"Say rather," I answered, with sweet humility,— "say rather it is to shrine myself in amber. As the insignificant fly, encompassed with molten glory, passes into a crystallized immortality, his own littleness uplifted into loveliness by the beauty in which he is imprisoned, so I, wrapped around by the glory of my land, may find myself niched into a fame which my unattended and naked merit could never have claimed."

Halicarnassus was a little stunned, but, presently recovering himself, suggested that I had travelled enough already to make out quite a sizable book.

"Travelled!" I said, looking him steadily in the face,— "travelled! I have been up to Tudiz huckleberrying; and once, when there was a freshet, you took a superannuated broom and paddled me, around the orchard in a leaky pig's trough!"

He could not deny it; so he laughed and said,—

“Ah, well!—ah, well! Suit yourself. Take your trunk and pitch into Vesuvius, if you like. I won’t stand in your way.”

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His acquiescence was ungraciously, and I believe I may say ambiguously, expressed; but it mattered little, for in three days from that time I took my trunk, Halicarnassus his cane, and we started on our travels. An evil omen met us at the beginning. Just as I was stepping into the car, I observed a violent smoke issuing from under it. I started back in alarm.

"They are only getting up steam," said Halicarnassus. "Always do, when they start."

"I know better!" I answered briskly, for there was no time to be circumlocutional. "They don't get up steam under the cars."

"Why not? Bet a sixpence you couldn't get Uncle Cain's dobbin out of his jog-trot without building a fire under him."

"I know that wheel is on fire," I said, not to be turned from the direct and certain line of assertion into the winding ways of argument.

"No matter," replied Halicarnassus, conceding everything, "we are insured."

Upon the strength of which consolatory information I went in. By-and-by a man entered and took a seat in front of us. "The box is all afire," chuckled he to his neighbor, as if it were a fine joke. By-and-by several people who had been looking out of the windows drew in their heads, rose, and went into the next car.

"What do you suppose they did that for?" I asked Halicarnassus.

"More aristocratical. Belong to old families. This is a new car, don't you see? We are *parvenus*."

"Nothing of the sort," I rejoined. "This car is on fire, and they have gone into the next one so as not to be burned up."

"They are not going to write books, and can afford to run away from adventures."

"But suppose I am burned up in my adventure?"

"Obviously, then, your book will end in smoke."

I ceased to talk, for I was provoked at his indifference. I leave every impartial mind to judge for itself whether the circumstances were such as to warrant composure. To be sure, somebody said the car was to be left at Jeru; but Jeru was eight miles away, and any quantity of mischief might be done before we reached it,—if, indeed, we were not prevented from reaching it altogether. It was a mere question of dynamics. Would dry wood be able to hold its own against a raging fire for half an hour? Of course the conductor thought it would; but even conductors are not infallible; and you may imagine



how comfortable it was to sit and know that a fire was in full blast beneath you, and to look down every few minutes expecting to see the flames forking up under your feet. I confess I was not without something like a hope that one tongue of the devouring element would flare up far enough to give Halicarnassus a start; but it did not. No casualty occurred. We reached Jeru in safety; but that does not prove that there was no danger, or that indifference was anything but the most foolish hardihood. If our burning car had been in mid-ocean,

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serenity would have been sublimity, but to stay in the midst of peril when two steps would take one out of it is idiocy. And that there was peril is conclusively shown by the fact that the very next day the Eastern Railroad Depot took fire and was burned to the ground. I have in my own mind no doubt that it was a continuation of the same fire, and if we had stayed in the car much longer, we should have shared the same fate.

We found Jeru to be a pleasant city, with only one fault: the inhabitants will crowd into a car before passengers can get out; consequently the heads of the two columns collide near the car-door, and there is a general choke. Otherwise Jeru is a delightful city. It is famous for its beautiful women. Its railroad-station is a magnificent piece of architecture. Its men are retired East-India merchants. Everybody in Jeru is rich and has real estate. The houses in Jeru are three stories high and face on the Common. People in Jeru are well-dressed and well-bred, and they all came over in the Mayflower.

We stopped in Jeru five minutes.

When we were ready to continue our travels Halicarnassus seceded into the smoking-car, and while the engine was shrieking off its inertia, a small boy, laboring under great agitation, hurried in, darted up to me, and, thrusting a pinchbeck ring with a pink glass in it into my face, exclaimed, in a hoarse whisper,—

“A beautiful ring, Ma’am! I’ve just picked it up. Can’t stop to find the owner. Worth a dollar, Ma’am; but if you’ll give me fifty cents”—

“Boy!”

I rose fiercely, convulsively, in my seat, drew one long breath, but whether he thought I was going to kill him,—I dare say I looked it,—or whether he saw a sheriff behind, or a phantom gallows before, I know not; but without waiting for the thunderbolt to strike, he rushed from the car as precipitately as he had rushed in. I was angry,—not because I was to have been cheated, for I have been repeatedly and atrociously cheated and only smiled, but because the rascal dared attempt on me such a threadbare, ragged, shoddy trick as that. Do I *look* like a rough-hewn, unseasoned backwoodsman? Have I the air of never having read a newspaper? Is there a patent innocence of eye-teeth in my demeanor? Oh, Jeru! Jeru! Somewhere in your virtuous bosom you are nourishing a viper, for I have felt his fangs. Woe unto you, if you do not strangle him before he develops into mature anacondaism! In point of natural history I am not sure that vipers do grow up anacondas, but for the purposes of moral philosophy the development theory answers perfectly well.

In Boston a dreadful thing happened to me,—a thing too horrible to relate. I have no reason to suppose that the outrage was intentional; but if I were absolute monarch of all

I survey, there is one house in one street in Boston which I would have razed to the ground; and tobacco I would banish forever from the haunts of civilization.

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In Boston we had three hours to spare; so we sent our luggage,—that is, my trunk—to the Worcester Depot, and walked leisurely ourselves. I had a little shopping to do, to complete my outfit for the journey,—a very little shopping,—only a nightcap or two. Ordinarily such a thing is a matter of small moment, but in my case the subject had swollen into unnatural dimensions. Nightcaps are not generally considered healthy,—at least not by physicians. Nature has given to the head its sufficient and appropriate covering, the hair. Anything more than this injures the head, by confining the heat, preventing the soothing, cooling contact of air, and so deranging the circulation of the blood. Therefore I have always heeded the dictates of Nature, which I have supposed to be to brush out the hair thoroughly at night and let it fly. But there are serious disadvantages connected with this course. For Nature will be sure to whisk the hair away from your ears where you want it, and into your eyes where you don't want it, besides crowning you with magnificent disorder in the morning. But as I have always believed that no evil exists without its remedy, I had long been exercising my inventive genius in attempts to produce a head-gear which should at once protect the ears, confine the hair, and let the skull alone. I regret to say that my experiments were an utter failure, notwithstanding the amount of science and skill brought to bear upon them. One idea lay at the basis of all my endeavors. Every combination, however elaborate or intricate, resolved into its simplest elements, consisted of a pair of rosettes laterally to keep the ears warm, a bag posteriorly to put the hair into, and some kind of a string somewhere to hold the machine together. Every possible shape into which lace or muslin or sheeting could be cut or plaited or sewed or twisted, into which crewel or cord could be crocheted or netted or tatted, I make bold to declare was essayed, until things came to such a pass that every odd bit of dry goods lying around the house was, in the absence of any positive testimony on the subject, assumed to be one of my nightcaps,—an utterly baseless assumption, because my achievements never went so far as concrete capuality, but stopped short in the later stages of abstract idealism. However, prejudice is stronger than truth; and, as I said, every fragment of every fabric that could not give an account of itself was charged with being a nightcap till it was proved to be a dishcloth or a cart-rope. I at length surrendered at discretion, and remembered that somewhere in my reading I had met with exquisite lace caps, and I did not know but that from the combined fineness and strength of their material they might answer the purpose, even if in form they should not be everything that was desirable,—and I determined to ascertain, if possible, whether such things existed anywhere out of poetry.

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As you perceive, therefore, my Boston shopping was not every-day trading. It was to mark the abandonment of an old and the inauguration of a new line of policy. Thus it was with no ordinary interest that I looked carefully at all the shops, and when I found one that seemed to hold out a possibility of nightcaps, I went in. Halicarnassus obeyed the hint which I pricked into him with the point of my parasol, and stopped outside. The one place in the world where a man has no business to be is the inside of a dry-goods shop. He never looks and never is so big and bungling as there. A woman skips from silk to muslin, from muslin to ribbons, from ribbons to table-cloths with the grace and agility of a bird. She glides in and out among crowds of her sex, steers sweepingly clear of all obstacles, and emerges triumphant. A man enters and immediately becomes all boots and elbows. He needs as much room to turn round in as the English iron-clad Warrior, and it takes him about as long. He treads on all the flounces, runs against all the clerks, knocks over all the children, and is generally under-foot. If he gets an idea into his head, a Nims's battery cannot dislodge it. You thought of buying a shawl; but a thousand considerations in the shape of raglans, cloaks, talmas, pea-jackets, induce you to modify your views. He stands by you. He hears all your inquiries and all the clerk's suggestions. The whole process of your reasoning is visible to his naked eye. He sees the sack, or visite, or cape put upon your shoulders and you walking off in it, and when you are half-way home, he will mutter, in idiotic amazement, "I thought you were going to buy a shawl!" It is enough to drive one wild.

No! Halicarnassus is absurd and mulish in many things, but he knows I will not be hampered with him when I am shopping, and he obeys the smallest hint and stops outside.

To be sure, he puts my temper on the rack by standing with his hands in his pockets, or by looking meek, or, likely as not, peering into the shop-door after me with great staring eyes and parted lips; and this is the most provoking of all. If there is anything vulgar, slipshod, and shiftless, it is a man lounging about with his hands in his pockets. If you have paws, stow them away; but if you are endowed with hands, learn to carry them properly, or else cut them off. Nor can I abide a man's looking as if he were under control. I want him to *be* submissive, but I don't want him to look so. I want him to do just as he is bidden, but I want him to carry himself like the man and monarch he was made to be. I want him to stay where he is put, yet not as if he were put there, but as if he had taken his position deliberately. But, of all things, to have a man act as if he were a clod just emerged for the first time from his own barnyard! Upon this occasion, however, I was too much absorbed in my errand to note anybody's demeanor, and I threaded straightway the crowd of customers, went up to the counter, and inquired in a clear voice,—

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"Have you lace nightcaps?"

The clerk looked at me with a troubled, bewildered glance, and made no reply. I supposed he had not understood me, and repeated the question. Then he answered, dubiously,—

"We have breakfast-caps."

It was my turn to look bewildered. What had I to do with breakfast-caps? What connection was there between my question and his answer? What field was there for any further inquiry? "Have you ox-bows?" imagine a farmer to ask. "We have rainbows," says the shopman. "Have you cameo-pins?" inquires the elegant Mrs. Jenkins. "We have linchpins." "Have you young apple-trees?" asks the nursery-man. "We have whiffle-trees." If I had wanted breakfast-caps, shouldn't I have asked for breakfast-caps? Or do the Boston people take their breakfast at one o'clock in the morning? I concluded that the man was demented, and marched out of the shop. When I laid the matter before Halicarnassus, the following interesting colloquy took place.

I. "What do you suppose it meant?"

H. "He took you for a North American Indian."

I. "What do you mean?"

H. "He did not understand your *patois*."

I. "What *patois*?"

H. "Your squaw dialect. You should have asked for a *bonnet de nuit*."

I. "Why?"

H. "People never talk about nightcaps in good society."

I. "Oh!"

I was very warm, and Halicarnassus said he was tired; so we went into a restaurant and ordered strawberries,—that luscious fruit, quivering on the border-land of ambrosia and nectar.

"Doubtless," says honest, quaint, delightful Isaac,—and he never spoke a truer word,— "doubtless, God might have made a better berry than a strawberry, but, doubtless, God never did."

The bill of fare rated their excellence at fifteen cents.

“Not unreasonable,” I pantomimed.

“Not if I pay for them,” replied Halicarnassus.

Then we sat and amused ourselves after the usual brilliant fashion of people who are waiting in hotel parlors, railroad-stations, and restaurants. We surveyed the gilding and the carpet and the mirrors and the curtains. We hazarded profound conjectures touching the people assembled. We studied the bill of fare as if it contained the secret of our army’s delay upon the Potomac, and had just concluded that the first crop of strawberries was exhausted and they were waiting for the second crop to grow, when Hebe hove in sight with her nectared ambrosia in a pair of cracked, browny-white saucers, with browny-green silver spoons. I poured out what professed to be cream, but proved very low-spirited milk, in which a few disheartened strawberries appeared *rari nantes*. I looked at them in dismay. Then curiosity smote me, and I counted them. Just fifteen.

“Cent apiece,” said Halicarnassus.

I was not thinking of the cent, but I had promised myself a feast; and what is a feast, susceptible of enumeration? Cleopatra was right. “That love”—and the same is true of strawberries—“is beggarly which can be reckoned.” Infinity alone is glory.

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"Perhaps the quality will atone for the quantity," said Halicarnassus, scooping up at least half of his at one "arm-sweep."

"How do they taste?" I asked.

"Rather coppery," he answered.

"It is the spoons!" I exclaimed, in a fright. "They are German silver! You will be poisoned!"—and knocked his out of his hand with such instinctive, sudden violence that it flew to the other side of the room, where an old gentleman sat over his newspaper and dinner.

He started, dropped his newspaper, and looked around in a maze. Halicarnassus behaved beautifully,—I will give him the credit of it. He went on with my spoon and his strawberries as unconcernedly as if nothing had happened. I was conscious that I blushed, but my face was in the shade, and nobody else knew it; and to this day I have no doubt the old gentleman would have marvelled what sent that mysterious spoon rattling against his table and whizzing between his boots, had not Halicarnassus, when the uproar was over, conceived it his duty to go and pick up the spoon and apologize for the accident, lest the gentleman should fancy it an intentional rudeness. Partly to reward him for his good behavior, partly because I never did think it worth while to make two bites of a cherry, and partly because I did not fancy being poisoned, I gave my fifteen berries to him. He devoured them with evident relish.

"Does my spoon taste as badly as yours?" I asked.

"My spoon?" inquired he, innocently.

"Yes. You said before that they tasted coppery."

"I don't think," replied this unprincipled man,—"I don't think it was the flavor of the spoon so much as of the coin which each berry represented."

I could have boxed his ears.

I never made a more unsatisfactory investment in my life than the one I made in that restaurant. I felt as if I had been swindled, and I said so to Halicarnassus. He remarked that there was plenty of cream and sugar. I answered curtly, that the cream was chiefly water, and the sugar chiefly flour; but if they had been Simon Pure himself, was it anything but an aggravation of the offence to have them with nothing to eat them on?

"You might do as they do in France,—carry away what you don't eat, seeing you pay for it."

“A pocketful of milk and water would be both delightful and serviceable; but I might take the sugar,” I added, with a sudden thought, upsetting the sugar-bowl into a “Boston Journal” which we had bought in the train. “I can never use it, but it will be a consolation to reflect on.”

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Halicarnassus, who, though fertile in evil conceptions, lacks nerve to put them into execution, was somewhat startled at this sudden change of base. He had no idea that I should really act upon his suggestion, but I did. I bundled the sugar into my pocket with a grim satisfaction; and Halicarnassus paid his thirty cents, looking—and feeling, as he afterwards told me—as if a policeman’s gripe were on his shoulders. If any restaurant in Boston recollects having been astonished at any time during the summer of 1862 by an unaccountably empty sugar-bowl, I take this occasion to explain the phenomenon. I gave the sugar afterwards to a little beggar-girl, with a dime for a brace of lemons, and shook off the dust of my feet against Boston at the “B. & W.R.R.D.”

Boston is a beautiful city, situated on a peninsula at the head of Massachusetts Bay. It has three streets: Cornhill, Washington, and Beacon Streets. It has a Common and a Frog-Pond, and many sprightly squirrels. Its streets are straight and cross each other like lines on a chess-board. It has a State-House which is the finest edifice in the world or out of it. It has one church, the Old South, which was built, as its name indicates, before the Proclamation of Emancipation was issued. It has one bookstore, a lofty and imposing pile, of the Egyptian style (and date) of architecture, on the corner of Washington and School Streets. It has one magazine, the “Atlantic Monthly,” one daily newspaper, the “Boston Journal,” one religious weekly, the “Congregationalist,” and one orator, whose name is Train, a model of chaste, compact, and classic elegance. In politics, it was a Webster Whig, till Whig and Webster both went down, when it fell apart and waited for something to turn up,—which proved to be drafting. Boston is called the Athens of America. Its men are solid. Its women wear their bonnets to bed, their nightcaps to breakfast, and talk Greek at dinner. I spent two hours and a half in Boston, and I know.

We had a royal progress from Boston to Fontdale. Summer lay on the shining hills and scattered benedictions. Plenty smiled up from a thousand fertile fields. Patient oxen, with their soft, deep eyes, trod heavily over mines of greater than Indian wealth. Kindly cows stood in the grateful shade of cathedral elms, and gave thanks to God in their dumb, fumbling way. Motherly, sleepy, stupid sheep lay on the plains, little lambs rollicked out their short-lived youth around them, and no premonition floated over from the adjoining pea-patch, nor any misgiving of approaching mutton marred their happy heyday. Straight through the piny forests, straight past the vocal orchards, right in among the robins and the jays and the startled thrushes, we dashed inexorable, and made harsh dissonance in the wild-wood orchestra; but not for that was the music hushed, nor did one color fade. Brooks leaped in headlong chase down the furrowed sides of gray old rocks, and glided whispering beneath the sorrowful

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willows. Old trees renewed their youth in the slight tenacious grasp of many a tremulous tendril, and, leaping lightly above their topmost heights, vine laughed to vine, swaying dreamily in the summer air; and not a vine nor brook nor hill nor forest but sent up a sweet-smelling incense to its Maker. Not an ox or cow or lamb or bird living its own dim life but lent its charm of unconscious grace to the great picture that unfolded itself, mile after mile, in ever fresher loveliness to ever unsated eyes. Well might the morning stars sing together, and all the sons of God shout for joy, when first this grand and perfect world swung free from its moorings, flung out its spotless banner, and sailed majestic down the thronging skies. Yet, though but once God spoke the world to life, the miracle of creation is still incomplete. New every springtime, fresh every summer, the earth comes forth as a bride adorned for her husband. Not only in the gray dawn of our history, but now in the full brightness of its noon-day, may we hear the voice of the Lord walking in the garden. I look out upon the gray degraded fields left naked of the kindly snow, and inwardly ask: Can these dry bones live again? And while the question is yet trembling on my lips, lo! a Spirit breathes upon the earth, and beauty thrills into bloom. Who shall lack faith in man's redemption, when every year the earth is redeemed by unseen hands, and death is lost in resurrection?

To Fontdale sitting among her beautiful meadows we are borne swiftly on. There we must tarry for the night, for I will not travel in the dark when I can help it. I love it. There is no solitude in the world, or at least I have never felt any, like standing alone in the door-way of the rear car on a dark night, and rushing on through the darkness,—darkness, darkness everywhere, and if one could only be sure of rushing on till daylight doth appear! But with the frightful and not remote possibility of bringing up in a crash and being buried under a general huddle, one prefers daylight. You may not be able to get out of the huddle even by daylight; but you will at least know where you are, if there is anything of you left. So at Fontdale Halicarnassus branches off temporarily on a business errand, and I stop for the night a-cousining.

You object to this? Some people do. For my part, I like it. You say you don't want to turn your own house or your friend's house into a hotel. If people want to see you, let them come and make a visit; if you want to see them, you will go and make them one; but this touch and go,—what is it worth? O foolish Galatians! much every way. For don't you see, supposing the people are people you don't like, how much better it is to have them come and sleep or dine and be gone than to have them before your face and eyes for a week? An ill that is temporary is tolerable. You could entertain the Evil One himself, if you were sure he would go away after dinner. The trouble about

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him is not so much that he comes as that he won't go. He hangs around. If you once open your door to him, there is no getting rid of him; and some of his followers, it must be confessed, are just like him. You must resist them both, or they will never flee. But if they do flee after a day's tarry, do not complain. You protest against turning your house into a hotel. Why, the hotelry is the least irksome part of the whole business, when your guests are uninteresting. It is not the supper or the bed that costs, but keeping people going after supper is over and before bed-time is come. Never complain, if you have nothing worse to do than to feed or house your guests for a day or an hour.

On the other hand, if they are people you like, how much better to have them come so than not to come at all! People cannot often make long visits,—people that are worth anything,—people who use life; and they are the only ones that are worth anything. And if you cannot get your good things in the lump, are you going to refuse them altogether? By no means. You are going to take them by dribblets, and if you will only be sensible and not pout, but keep your tin pan right side up, you will find that golden showers will drizzle through all your life. So, with never a nugget in your chest, you shall die rich. If you can stop over-night with your friend, you have no sand-grain, but a very respectable boulder. For a night is infinite. Daytime is well enough for business, but it is little worth for happiness. You sit down to a book, to a picture, to a friend, and the first you know it is time to get dinner, or time to eat it, or time for the train, or you must put out your dried apples, or set the bread to rising, or something breaks in impertinently and chokes you off at flood-tide. But the night has no end. Everything is done but that which you would be forever doing. The curtains are drawn, the lamp is lighted and veiled into exquisite soft shadowiness. All the world is far off. All its din and dole strike into the bank of darkness that envelops you and are lost to your tranced sense. In all the world are only your friend and you, and then you strike out your oars, silver-sounding, into the shoreless night.

But the night comes to an end, you say. No, it does not. It is you that come to an end. You grow sleepy, clod that you are. But as you don't think, when you begin, that you ever shall grow sleepy, it is just the same as if you never did. For you have no foreshadow of an inevitable termination to your rapture, and so practically your night has no limit. It is fastened at one end to the sunset, but the other end floats off into eternity. And there really is no abrupt termination. You roll down the inclined plane of your social happiness into the bosom of another happiness,—sleep. Sleep for the sleepy is bliss just as truly as society to the lonely. What in the distance would have seemed Purgatory, once reached, is Paradise, and your

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happiness is continuous. Just as it is in mending. Short-sighted, superficial, unreflecting people have a way—which in time fossilizes into a principle—of mending everything as soon as it comes up from the wash, a very unthrifty, uneconomical habit, if you use the words thrift and economy in the only way in which they ought to be used, namely, as applied to what is worth economizing. Time, happiness, life, these are the only things to be thrifty about. But I see people working and worrying over quince-marmalade and tucked petticoats and embroidered chair-covers, things that perish with the using and leave the user worse than they found him. This I call waste and wicked prodigality. Life is too short to permit us to fret about matters of no importance. Where these things can minister to the mind and heart, they are a part of the soul's furniture; but where they only pamper the appetite or the vanity or any foolish and hurtful lust, they are foolish and hurtful. Be thrifty of comfort. Never allow an opportunity for cheer, for pleasure, for intelligence, for benevolence, for any kind of good, to go unimproved. Consider seriously whether the sirup of your preserves or the juices of your own soul will do the most to serve your race. It may be that they are compatible,—that the concoction of the one shall provide the ascending sap of the other; but if it is not so, if one must be sacrificed, do not hesitate a moment as to which it shall be. If a peach does not become sweetmeat, it will become something, it will not stay a withered, unsightly peach; but for souls there is no transmigration out of fables. Once a soul, forever a soul,—mean or mighty, shrivelled or full, it is for you to say. Money, land, luxury, so far as they are money, land, and luxury, are worthless. It is only as fast and as far as they are turned into life that they acquire value.

So you are thriftless when you eagerly seize the first opportunity to fritter away your time over old clothes. You precipitate yourself unnecessarily against a disagreeable thing. For you are not going to put your stockings on. Perhaps you will not need your buttons for a week, and in a week you may have passed beyond the jurisdiction of buttons. But even if you should not, let the buttons and the holes alone all the same. For, first, the pleasant and profitable thing which you will do instead is a funded capital which will roll you up a perpetual interest; and secondly, the disagreeable duty is forever abolished. I say forever, because, when you have gone without the button awhile, the inconvenience it occasions will reconcile you to the necessity of sewing it on,—will even go farther, and make it a positive relief amounting to positive pleasure. Besides, every time you use it, for a long while after you will have a delicious sense of satisfaction, such as accompanies the sudden complete cessation of a dull, continuous pain. Thus what was at best characterless routine, and most likely an exasperation, is turned into actual delight, and adds to the sum of life. This is thrift. This is economy. But, alas! few people understand the art of living. They strive after system, wholeness, buttons, and neglect the weightier matters of the higher law.

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—I wonder how I got here, or how I am to get back again. I started for Fontdale, and I find myself in a mending-basket. As I know no good in tracing the same road back, we may as well strike a bee-line and begin new at Fontdale.

We stopped at Fontdale a-cousining. I have a veil, a beautiful—*have*, did I say? Alas! Troy was. But I must not anticipate—a beautiful veil of brown tissue, none of your woolleny, gruff fabrics, fit only for penance, but a silken gossamery cloud, soft as a baby's cheek. Yet everybody fleers at it. Everybody has a joke about it. Everybody looks at it, and holds it out at arms' length, and shakes it, and makes great eyes at it, and says, "What in the world"—, and ends with a huge, bouncing laugh. Why? One is ashamed of human nature at being forced to confess. Because, to use a Gulliverism, it is longer by the breadth of my nail than any of its contemporaries. In fact, it is two yards long. That is all. Halicarnassus fired the first gun at it by saying that its length was to enable one end of it to remain at home while the other end went with me, so that neither of us should get lost. This is an allusion to a habit which I and my property have of finding ourselves individually and collectively left in the lurch. After this initial shot, everybody considered himself at liberty to let off his rusty old blunderbuss, and there was a constant peppering. But my veil never lowered its colors nor curtailed its resources. Alas! what ridicule and contumely failed to effect, destiny accomplished. Softness and plenitude are no shields against the shafts of fate.

I went into the station waiting-room to write a note. I laid my bonnet, my veil, my packages upon the table. I wrote my note. I went away. The next morning, when I would have arrayed myself to resume my journey, there was no veil. I remembered that I had taken it into the station the night before, and that I had not taken it out. At the station we inquired of the waiting-woman concerning it. It is as much as your life is worth to ask these people about lost articles. They take it for granted at the first blush that you mean to accuse them of stealing. "Have you seen a brown veil lying about anywhere?" asked Crene, her sweet bird-voice warbling out from her sweet rose-lips. "No, I 'a'n't seen nothin' of it," says Gnome, with magnificent indifference.

"It was lost here last night," continues Crene, in a soliloquizing undertone, pushing investigating glances beneath the sofas.

"I do' know nothin' about it. I 'a'n't took it"; and the Gnome tosses her head back defiantly. "I seen the lady when she was a-writin' of her letter, and when she went out ther' wa'n't nothin' left on the table but a hangkerchuf, and that wa'n't hern. I do' know nothin' about it, nor I 'a'n't seen nothin' of it."

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Oh, no, my Gnome, you knew nothing of it; you did not take it. But since no one accused you or even suspected you, why could you not have been less aggressive and more sympathetic in your assertions? But we will plough no longer in that field. The ploughshare has struck against a rock and grits, denting its edge in vain. My veil is gone,—my ample, historic, heroic veil. There is a woman in Fontdale who breathes air filtered through—I will not say *stolen* tissue, but certainly through tissue which was obtained without rendering its owner any fair equivalent. Does not every breeze that softly stirs its fluttering folds say to her, “O friend, this veil is not yours, not yours,” and still sighingly, “not yours! Up among the northern hills, yonder towards the sunset, sits the owner, sorrowful, weeping, wailing”? I believe I am wading out into the Sally Waters of Mother Goosery; but, prose or poetry, somewhere a woman,—and because nobody of taste could surreptitiously possess herself of my veil, I have no doubt that she cut it incontinently into two equal parts, and gave one to her sister, and that there are two women,—nay, since niggardly souls have no sense of grandeur and will shave down to microscopic dimensions, it is every way probable that she divided it into three unequal parts, and took three quarters of a yard for herself, three quarters for her sister, and gave the remaining half-yard to her daughter, and that at this very moment there are two women and a little girl taking their walks abroad under the silken shadows of my veil! And yet there are people who profess to disbelieve in total depravity.

Nor did the veil walk away alone. My trunk became imbued with the spirit of adventure, and branched off on its own account up somewhere into Vermont. I suppose it would have kept on and reached perhaps the North Pole by this time, had not Crene’s dark eyes—so pretty to look at that one instinctively feels they ought not to be good for anything, if a just impartiality is to be maintained, but they are—Crene’s dark eyes seen it tilting up into a baggage-crate and trundling off towards the Green Mountains, but too late. Of course there was a formidable hitch in the programme. A court of justice was improvised on the car-steps. I was the plaintiff, Crene chief evidence, baggage-master both defendant and examining-counsel. The case did not admit of a doubt. There was the little insurmountable check whose brazen lips could speak no lie.

“Keep hold of that,” whispered Crene, and a yoke of oxen could not have drawn it from me.

“You are sure you had it marked for Fontdale,” says Mr. Baggage-master.

I hold the impracticable check before his eyes in silence.

“Yes, well, it must have gone on to Albany.”

“But it went away on that track,” says Crene.

“Couldn’t have gone on that track. Of course they wouldn’t have carried it away over there just to make it go wrong.”

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For me, I am easily persuaded and dissuaded. If he had told me that it must have gone in such a direction, that it was a moral and mental impossibility it should have gone in any other, and have said it times enough, with a certain confidence and contempt of any other contingency, I should gradually have lost faith in my own eyes, and said, "Well, I suppose it did." But Crene is not to be asserted into yielding one inch, and insists that the trunk went to Vermont and not to New York, and is thoroughly unmanageable. Then the baggage-master, in anguish of soul, trots out his subordinates, one after another,—

"Is this the man that wheeled the trunk away? Is this? Is this?"

The brawny-armed fellows hang back, and scowl, and muffle words in a very suspicious manner, and protest they won't be got into a scrape. But Crene has no scrape for them. She cannot swear to their identity. She had eyes only for the trunk.

"Well," says Baggager, at his wits' end, "you let me take your check, and I'll send the trunk on by express, when it comes."

I pity him, and relax my clutch.

"No," whispers Crene; "as long as you have your check, you as good as have your trunk; but when you give that up, you have nothing. Keep that till you see your trunk."

My clutch re-tightens.

"At any rate, you can wait till the next train, and see if it doesn't come back. You'll get to your journey's end just as soon."

"Shall I? Well, I will," compliant as usual.

"No," interposes my good genius again. "Men are always saying that a woman never goes when she engages to go. She is always a train later or a train earlier, and you can't meet her."

Pliant to the last touch I say aloud,—

"No, I must go in this train"; and so I go trunkless and crest-fallen to meet Halicarnassus.

It is a dismal day, and Crene, to comfort me, puts into my hands two books as companions by the way. They are Coventry Patmore's "Angel in the House," "The Espousals and the Betrothal." I do not approve of reading in the cars; but without is a dense, white, unvarying fog, and within my heart it is not clear sunshine. So I turn to my books.

Did any one ever read them before? Somebody wrote a vile review of them once, and gave the idea of a very puerile, ridiculous, apron-stringy attempt at poetry. Whoever wrote that notice ought to be shot, for the books are charming pure and homely and householdy, yet not effeminate. Critics may sneer as much as they choose: it is such love as Vaughan's that Honorias value. Because a woman's nature is not proof against deterioration, because a large and long-continued infusion of gross blood, and perhaps even the monotonous pressure of rough, pitiless, degrading circumstances, may displace, eat out, rub off the delicacy of a soul, may change its texture to unnatural coarseness and scatter ashes for beauty, women do exist, victims

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rather than culprits, coarse against their nature, hard, material, grasping, the saddest sight humanity can see. Such a woman can accept coarse men. They may come courting on all fours, and she will not be shocked. But women in the natural state want men to stand god-like erect, to tread majestically, and live delicately. Women do not often make an ado about this. They talk it over among themselves, and take men as they are. They quietly soften them down, and smooth them out, and polish them up, and make the best of them, and simply and sedulously shut their eyes and make believe there isn't any worst, or reason it away,—a great deal more than I should think they would. But if you want to see the qualities that a woman, spontaneously loves, the expression, the tone, the bearing that thoroughly satisfies her self-respect, that not only secures her acquiescence, but arouses her enthusiasm and commands her abdication, crucify the flesh, and read Coventry Patmore. Not that he is the world's great poet, nor Arthur Vaughan the ideal man; but this I do mean: that the delicacy, the spirituality of his love, the scrupulous respectfulness of his demeanor, his unfeigned inward humility, as far removed from servility on the one side as from assumption on the other, and less the opponent than the offspring of self-respect, his thorough gentleness, guilelessness, deference, his manly, unselfish homage, are such qualities, and such alone, as lead womanhood captive. Listen to me, you rattling, roaring, rollicking Ralph Roister Doisters, you calm, inevitable Gradgrinds, as smooth, as sharp, as bright as steel, and as soulless, and you men, whoever, whatever, and wherever you are, with fibres of rope and nerves of wire, there is many and many a woman who tolerates you because she finds you, but there is nothing in her that ever goes out to seek you. Be not deceived by her placability. "Here he is," she says to herself, "and something must be done about it. Buried under Ossa and Pelion somewhere he must be supposed to have a soul, and the sooner he is dug into, the sooner it will be exhumed." So she digs. She would never have made you, nor of her own free-will elected you; but being made, such as you are, and on her hands in one way or another, she carves and chisels, and strives to evoke from the block a breathing statue. She may succeed so far as that you shall become her Frankenstein, a great, sad, monstrous, incessant, inevitable caricature of her ideal, the monument at once of her success and her failure, the object of her compassion, the intimate sorrow of her soul, a vast and dreadful form into which her creative power can breathe the breath of life, but not of sympathy. Perhaps she loves you with a remorseful, pitying, protesting love, and carries you on her shuddering shoulders to the grave. Probably, as she is good and wise, you will never find it out. A limpid brook ripples in beauty and bloom by the side of your muddy, stagnant self-complacency, and you discern no essential difference.

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“Water’s water,” you say, with your broad, stupid generalization, and go oozing along contentedly through peat-bogs and meadow-ditches, mounting, perhaps, in moments of inspiration, to the moderate sublimity of a cranberry-meadow, but subsiding with entire satisfaction into a muck-puddle; and all the while the little brook that you patronize when you are full-fed, and snub when you are hungry, and look down upon always,—the little brook is singing its own melody through grove and orchard and sweet wild-wood,—singing with the birds and the blooms songs that you cannot hear; but they are heard by the silent stars, singing on and on into a broader and deeper destiny, till it pours, one day, its last earthly note, and becomes forevermore the unutterable sea.

And you are nothing but a ditch.

No, my friend, Lucy will drive with you, and talk to you, and sing your songs; she will take care of you, and pray for you, and cry when you go to the war; if she is not your daughter or your sister, she will, perhaps, in a moment of weakness or insanity, marry you; she will be a faithful wife, and float you to the end; but if you wish to be her love, her hero, her ideal, her delight, her spontaneity, her utter rest and ultimatum, you must attune your soul to fine issues,—you must bring out the angel in you, and keep the brute under. It is not that you shall stop making shoes, and begin to write poetry. That is just as much discrimination as you have. Tell you to be gentle, and you think we want you to dissolve into milk-and-water; tell you to be polite, and you infer hypocrisy; to be neat, and you leap over into dandyism, fancying all the while that bluster is manliness. No, Sir. You may make shoes, you may run engines, you may carry coals; you may blow the huntsman’s horn, hurl the base-ball, follow the plough, smite the anvil; your face may be brown, your veins knotted, your hands grimed; and yet you may be a hero. And, on the other hand, you may write verses and be a clown. It is not necessary to feed on ambrosia in order to become divine; nor shall one be accursed, though he drink of the ninefold Styx. The Israelites ate angels’ food in the wilderness, and remained stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears. The white water-lily feeds on slime, and unfolds a heavenly glory. Come as the June morning comes. It has not picked its way daintily, passing only among the roses. It has breathed up the whole earth. It has blown through the fields and the barn-yards and all the common places of the land. It has shrunk from nothing. Its purity has breasted and overborne all things, and so mingled and harmonized all that it sweeps around your forehead and sinks into your heart as soft and sweet and pure as the fragrant of Paradise. So come you, rough from the world’s rough work, with all out-door airs blowing around you, and all your earth-smells clinging to you, but with a fine inward grace, so strong, so sweet, so salubrious that it meets and masters all things, blending every faintest or foulest odor of earthliness into the grateful incense of a pure and lofty life.

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Thus I read and mused in the soft summer fog, and the first I knew the cars had stopped, I was standing on the platform, and Coventry and his knight were—where? Wandering up and down somewhere among the Berkshire hills. At some junction of roads, I suppose, I left them on the cushion, for I have never beheld them since. Tell me, O ye daughters of Berkshire, have you seen them,—a princely pair, sore weary in your mountain-land, but regal still, through all their travel-stain? I pray you, entreat them hospitably, for their mission is “not of an age, but for all time.”

GIVE.

“The vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew.”

The fire of Freedom burns,
March to her altar now:
Bear on the sacred urns
Where all her sons must bow.

Woman of nerve and thought,
Bring in the urn your power!
By you is manhood taught
To meet this supreme hour.

Come with your sunlit life,
Maiden of gentle eye!
Bring to the gloom of strife
Light by which heroes die.

Give, rich men, proud and free,
Your children's costliest gem!
For Liberty shall be
Your heritage to them.

O friend, with heavy urn,
What offering bear you on?
The figure did not turn;
I heard a voice, “My son.”

The fire of Freedom burns,
Her flame shall reach the heaven:
Heap up our sacred urns,
Though life for life be given!

ONLY AN IRISH GIRL!

“Oh, it’s only an Irish girl!”

I flamed into a wrath far too intense for restraint. My whole soul rose up and cried out against the Deacon’s wife. I answered,—

“True. A small thing! But are lies and murder small things, Mrs. Adams? Murderers, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie, are to be left outside of the heavenly city. And, Mrs. Adams, suppose it should appear that a woman of high respectability, moving in the best society, and most excellent housekeeper, has both those two tickets for hell? Do you remember the others that make up that horrible company in the last chapter of Revelation? Mrs. Adams, *the girl is DEAD!*”

The Deacon’s wife’s hard face had blazed instantly into passionate scarlet. But I cared not for her, nor for man nor woman. For the words *said themselves*, and thrilled and sounded fearful to me also; they hurt me; they burnt from my tongue as melted iron might; and, scarcely knowing it, I rose up and emphasized with my forefinger. And her face, at those last four words, turned stony and whity-gray, like a corpse. I thought she would die. Oh, it was awful to think so, and to feel that she deserved it! For I did. I do now. For, reason as I will, I cannot help feeling as if a tinge of the poor helpless child’s blood was upon my own garments. I do well to be angry. It is not that I desire any personal revenge. But I have a feeling,—not pleasure, it is almost all pity and pain,—but yet a feeling that sudden death or lingering death would be small satisfaction of justice upon her for what she rendered to another.

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Her strong, hard, cruel nature fought tigerishly up again from the horrible blow of my news. She was frightened almost to swooning at the thing that I told and my denunciation, and the deep answering stab of her own conscience. But her angry iron will rallied with an effort which must have been an agony; her face became human again, and, looking straight and defiantly at me, she said, yet with difficulty,

“Ah! I’ll see if my husband’ll hev sech things said to me! That’s all!”

And she turned and went straightway out of my house, erect and steady as ever.

It may seem a trifling story, and its lesson a trifling one. But it is not so,—neither trifling nor needless.

It is a rare thing, indeed, for a woman in this America to long and love to have children. The only two women whom I know in this large town who do are Mrs. O’Reilly, the mother of poor Bridget, and—one more.

Poor old Mrs. O’Reilly! She came to me this morning, and sat in my kitchen, and cried so bitterly, and talked in her strong Corkonian brogue, and rocked herself backwards and forwards, and shook abroad the great lambent banners of her cap-border,—a grotesque old woman, but sacred in her tender motherhood and her great grief. Her first coming was to peddle blackberries in the summer. I asked her if she picked them herself.

“Och thin and shure I’ve the childher to do that saam,” said she. And what wonderful music must the voice of her youth have been! It was deep of intonation and heartfelt,—rich and smooth and thrilling yet, after fifty years of poverty and toil. “And id’s enough of thim that’s in id!” she added, with a curious air of satisfaction and reflectiveness.

“How many children have you?” I inquired.

She laughed and blushed, old woman though she was; and pride and deep delight and love shone in her large, clear, gray eyes.

“I’ve fourteen darlins, thank God for ivery wan of thim! And it’s a purrty parthy they are!”

“Fourteen!” I exclaimed,—“how lovely!” I stopped short and blushed. My heart had spoken. “But how”—I stopped again.

The old blackberry-woman answered me with tears and smiles. What a deep, rich, loving heart was covered out of sight in her squalid life! It makes me proud that I felt my heart and my love in some measure like hers; and she saw it, too.

“An’ it’s yersilf, Ma’m, that has the mother’s own heart in yez, to be sure! An’ I can see it in your eyes, Ma’m! But it’s the thruth it’s mighty scarce intirely! I do be seein’ the

ladies that's not glad at all for the dear childher that's sint 'em, and sure it's sthrange, Ma'm! Indade, it was with the joy I did be cryin' over ivery wan o' me babies; and I could aisy laugh at the pain, Ma'm! And sure now it's cryin' I am betimes because I'll have no more!"

The dear, beautiful, dirty old woman! I cried and laughed with her, and I bought ten times as many blackberries as I wanted; and Mrs. O'Reilly and I were fast friends.

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She and hers, her “ould man,” her sons and her daughters, were thenceforth our ready and devoted retainers, dexterous and efficient in all manner of service, generous in acknowledging any return that we could make them; respectful and self-respectful; true men and women in their place, not unfit for a higher, and showing the same by their demeanor in a low one.

They came in and went out among us for a long time, in casual employments, until, with elaborate prefaces and doubtful apologetic circumlocutions, shyly and hesitatingly, Mrs. O’Reilly managed to prefer her petition that her youngest girl, Bridget, by name,—there were a few junior boys,—might be taken into my family as a servant. I asked the old woman a few questions about her daughter’s experiences and attainments in the household graces and economies; could not remember her; thought I had seen all the “childher”; found that she had been living with Mrs. Deacon Adams, and had not been at my house. It was only for form’s sake that I catechized; Bridget came, of course.

She was such a maiden as her mother must have been, one of Nature’s own ladies, but more refined in type, texture, and form, as the American atmosphere and food and life always refine the children of European stock,—slenderer, more delicate, finer of complexion, and with a soft, exquisite sweetness of voice, more thrilling than her mother’s, larger and more robust heartfelnness of tone,—and with the same, but shyier ways, and swift blushes and smiles. In one thing she differed: she was a silent, reticent girl: her tears were not so quick as her mother’s, nor her words; she hid her thoughts. She had learned it of us secretive Americans, or had inherited it of her father, a silent, though cheery man.

Her glossy wealth of dark-brown hair, her great brown eyes, long eyelashes, sensitive, delicately cut, mobile red lips, oval face, beautifully formed arms and hands, and lithe, graceful, lady-like movements, were a sweet household picture, sunshiny with unfailing good-will, and of a dexterous neat-handedness very rare in her people. My husband was looking at her one day, and as she tripped away on some errand he observed,—

“She is a graceful little saint. All her attitudes are beatitudes.”

Bridget was pure and devout enough for the compliment; and I had not been married so long but that I could excuse the evidence of his observation of another, for the sake of the neatness of his phrase. I should have thought the unconscious child incongruously lovely amongst brooms and dust-pans, pots and kettles, suds and slops and dishwater, had I not been about as much concerned among them myself.

Bridget had been with me only a day or two, when a friend and fellow-matron, in the course of an afternoon call, apprised me that there were reports that Bridget O’Reilly was a thief,—in fact, that she had been turned away by Mrs. Adams for that very offence, which she told me “out of kindness, and with no desire to injure the girl; but

there is so much wickedness among these Irish!" She had heard this tale, through only one person, from Mrs. Adams herself.

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This troubled me; yet I should have quickly forgotten it. I met the same story in several other directions within a few days; and now it troubled me more. Women are suspicious creatures. I don't like to confess it, but it is true. Besides, servants do sometimes steal. And little foreign blood of the oppressed nationalities has truth in it, or honesty. Why should it? Why should the subjugated Irish, any more than the Southern slaves, beaten down for centuries by brutal strength, seeking to exterminate their religion and their speech, to terrify them out of intelligence and independence, to crush them into permanent poverty and ignorance,—why should they tell the truth or respect property? Falsehood and theft are that cunning which is the natural and necessary weapon of weakness. Their falsehood is their resistance, in the only form that weakness can use, evasion instead of force. Their theft is the taking of what is instinctively felt to be due; their gratification of an instinct after justice; done secretly because they have not the strength to demand openly. Such things are unnecessary in America, no doubt. But habits survive emigration. They are to be deplored, charitably and hopefully and tenderly cured as diseases, not attacked and furiously struck and thrust at as wild beasts. Thus it might be with Bridget, notwithstanding her great, clear, innocent eyes, and open, honest ways. If she had grown up to think such doings harmless, she would have no conscience about it. Conscience is very pliant to education. It troubles no man for what he is trained to do.

So I felt these stories. I could not find it in my heart to talk to poor Bridget about it. I could not tell her large-hearted old mother. This reluctance was entirely involuntary, an instinct. I wish I had felt it more clearly and obeyed it altogether! There is some fatal cloud of human circumstance that covers up from our sight our just instinctive perceptions,—makes us drive them out before the mechanical conclusions of mere reason; and when our reason, our special human pride, has failed us, we say in our sorrow, I see now; if I had only trusted my first impulse!—What is this cloud? Is it original sin? I asked my husband. He was writing his sermon. He stopped and told me with serious interest,—“This cloud is that original or inbred sin which we receive from Adam; obscuring and vitiating the free exercise of the originally perfect faculties; wilting them down, as it were, from a high native assimilation to the operative methods of the Divine Mind, to the painful, creeping, mechanical procedures of the comparing and judging reason. And this lost power is to be restored, we may expect, by the regenerating force of conversion.”

I know I've got this right; because, after Henry had thanked me for my question, he said I was a good preaching-stock,—that the inquiry “joggled up” his mind, and suggested just what fayed in with his sermon; and afterwards I heard him preach it; and now I have copied it out of his manuscript, and have it all correct and satisfactory. What will he do to me, if he should see this in print? But I can't help it. And what is more, I don't believe his theological stuff. If it were true, there would not so many good people be such geese.

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But whatever this cloud is, it now blinded and misguided me. I quietly, very quietly, put away some little moneys that lay about,—locked up nearly all my small stock of silver and my scanty jewelry,—locked my bureau-drawers,—counted unobtrusively the weekly proceeds of the washing,—and was extremely watchful against the least alteration of my manner towards my poor pretty maid.

It might have been a week after this, when my husband said one morning that Bridget's eyes were heavy, and she had moved with a start several times, as though she were half-asleep. Now that he spoke, I saw it, and wondered that I had not seen it before; but I think some men notice things more quickly than women. I asked the child if she were well.

"Yes, Ma'am," she said, spiritlessly, "but my head aches."

I observed her; and she dragged herself about with difficulty, and was painfully slow about her dishes. At tea-time I made her lie down in my little back parlor and got the meal myself, and made her a nice cup of tea. She slept a little, but grew flushed. Next morning she was not fit to get up, but insisted that she was, and would not remain in bed. But she ate nothing,—indeed, for a day or two she had not eaten,—and after breakfast she grew faint, and then more flushed than ever; seemed likely to have a hard run of fever; and I sent for my doctor,—a homoeopath.

He came, saw, queried, and prescribed. Doctor-like, he evaded my inquiry what was the matter, so that I saw it was a serious case. On my intimating as much, he said, with sudden decision,—

"I'll tell you what, Madam. She may be better by night. If not, you'd better send for Bagford. He might do better for her than I."

I was extremely surprised, for Bagford is a vigorous allopath of the old school, drastic, bloody,—and an uncompromising enemy of "that quack," as he called my grave young friend. I said as much. Doctor Nash smiled.

"Oh, I don't mind it, so long as the patients come to me. I can very well afford to send him one now and then. The fact is, the Irish must *feel* their medicine. It's quite often that a raking dose will cure 'em, not because it's the right thing, but because it takes their imagination with it. The Irish imagination goes with Bagford and against me; and the wrong medicine with the imagination is better than the right one against it. I care more about curing this child than I do about him. Besides,"—and he grew grave,—"it may be no great favor to him."

I obliged him to tell me that he feared the attack would develop into brain-fever; and he said something was on the girl's mind. As soon as he was gone, I ran up to poor Bridget, whose sweet face and great brown eyes were kindled, in her increasing fever,

into a hot, fearful beauty; and now I could see a steady, mournful, pained look contracting her mouth and lifting the delicate lines of her eyebrows. Poor little girl! I felt the same deep yearning

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sorrow which we have at the sufferings of a little child, who seems to look in scared wonder at us, as if to ask, What is this? and Why do you not help? When a child suffers, we feel a sense of injustice done. Bridget's lips were dry. Her skin was so hot, her whole frame so restless! And the silent misery of her eyes ate into my very heart. I smoothed her pillow and bathed her head, and would fain have comforted her, as if she had been my own little sister. But I could plainly see that my help was not welcome. When, however, I had done all that I could for her, I quietly told her that she was sick, and that I wanted to have her get well,—that I saw something was troubling her, and she must tell me what it was. I don't think the silent, enduring thing would have spoken even then, if she had not seen that I was crying. Her own tears came, too; and she briefly said,—

“You all think I'm a thief.”

I assured her most earnestly to the contrary.

She turned her restless head over towards me again, and her great eyes, all glittering with fever and pain, searched solemnly into mine; and she replied,—

“You all think I'm a thief. Yis, I saw you had locked up the money and the silver. I saw you count the clane clothes that was washed in the house. Wouldn't I be after seein' it? And they says so in the town.”

It went to my heart to have done those things. All that I could say was utterly in vain. She evidently *felt* nothing of it to be true. She had received a deep and cruel hurt; and the poor, wild, half-civilized, shy, silent soul had not wherewith to reason on it. She only endured, and held her peace, and let the fire burn; and her sensitive nerves had allowed pain of mind to become severe physical disease. My words she scarcely heard; my tears were to her only sympathy. She knew what she had seen. Besides, her disease increased upon her. Almost from minute to minute she grew more restless, and her increasing inattention to what I said frightened as well as hurt me. The medicines of Dr. Nash were useless. Before noon I sent for Dr. Bagford, who said it was decidedly brain-fever,—that she must be leeches, and have ice at her head, and so forth.

Ah, it was useless. She grew worse and worse; passed through one or two long terrible days of frantic misery, crying and protesting against false accusations with a lamenting voice that made us all cry, too; then lay long in a stupid state, until the doctor said that now it would be better for her to die, because, after such an attack, a brain so sensitive would be disorganized,—she would be an idiot.

Her poor mother came and helped us wait on her. But neither care nor medicine availed. Bridget died; and the funeral was from our house. I was surprised by the lofty

demeanor of Father MacMullen, the Irish priest, the first I had ever met: a tall, gaunt, bony, black-haired, hollow-eyed man, of inscrutable and guarded demeanor, who received with absolute haughtiness the courtesies of my husband and the reverences of his own flock. A few of his expressions might indicate a consciousness that we had endeavored to deal kindly with poor little Bridget. But he did not think so; or at least we know that he has so handled the matter that we meet ill feeling on account of it.

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The griefs for any such misfortune were, however, obscure and shallow in comparison with my sorrow for the untimely quenching of Bridget's young life, and my sympathy with her poor old mother. When I reasoned about the affair, I could see that I had done nothing which would not be commended by careful housekeepers. I could see it, but, in spite of me, I could not feel it. I was tormented by vain wishes that I had done otherwise. I could not help feeling as if her people charged me with her blood,—as if I had been in some sense aiding in her death. Nor do I even now escape obscure returns of the same inexpressibly sad pain.

The garnishing of sepulchres is an employment which by no means went out with the Scribes and Pharisees. Under the circumstances, the death of my pretty young maid, although she was only an Irish girl, produced a deep impression in the village. Very soon, now that it could do no good, it was generally agreed that the imputations against her were wholly unfounded. It was pretty distinctly whispered that they had arisen out of things said by Mrs. Deacon Adams, in her wrath, because Bridget had left her service to enter mine; and I now ascertained that this Mrs. Adams was a woman of bitter tongue, and enduring, hot, and unscrupulous in anger and in revengefulness. I have inquired sufficiently; I know it is true. The vulgar malice of a hard woman has murdered a fair and good maiden with the invisible arrows of her wicked words.

But she begins already to be punished, coarse cast-iron as she is. People do not exactly like to talk with her. She is growing thin. She has been ill,—a thing, I am told, never dreamed of before. Of course she reported to her husband the reproaches with which I had surprised her on the very day of Bridget's death. She had called in by chance, and had not even heard of her illness; had herself begun to retail to me the kind of talk with which she had poisoned the village, not knowing that her evil work was finished; and it was the scornful carelessness of her reply to my first reproof that stung me to answer her so bitterly. It was two weeks before good, white-haired, old Deacon Adams came to the house of his pastor. His face looked careworn enough. He stayed long in the study with my husband, and went away sadly. I happened to pass through our little hall just as the Deacon opened the study-door to depart; and I caught his last words, very sorrowful in tone,—

"She might git well, ef she could stop dreamin' on't, and git the weight off 'm her mind. But words that's once spoken can't be called back as you call the cows home at night."

SHALL WE COMPROMISE?

In that period of remote antiquity when all birds of the air and beasts of the field were able to talk, it befell that a certain shepherd suffered many losses through the constant depredations of a wolf. Fearing at length that his means of subsistence would be quite taken away, he devised a powerful trap for the creature, and set it with wonderful cunning. He could hardly sleep that night for thinking of the matter, and early next

morning took a stout club in his hand, and set forth to learn of his success; when, lo! on drawing near the spot, there he saw the wolf, sure enough, a huge savage, fast held in the trap.

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"Ah," cried he, with triumph, "now I have got you!"

The wolf held his peace until the other was quite near, and then in a tone of the severest moral rebuke, and with a voice that was made quite low and grave with its weight of judicial reprehension, said,—

"Is it you, then? Can it be one wearing the form of a man, who has laid this wicked plot against the peace, nay, as I infer from that club, against the very life, of an innocent creature? Behold what I suffer, and how unjustly!—I, of all animals, whose life,—the sad state I am now in constrains me against modesty to say it,—whose life is notoriously a pattern of all the virtues;—I, too, ungrateful biped, who have watched your flock through so many sleepless nights, lest some ill-disposed dog might do harm to the helpless sheep and lambs!"

The shepherd, one of the simplest souls that ever lived, was utterly confounded by this reproof, and hung his head with shame, unable, for a season, to utter a word in his own defence. At length he managed to stammer,—

"I pray your pardon, brother, but—but in truth I have lost a great many lambs lately, and began to think my little ones at home would starve."

"How harder than stone is the heart of man!" murmured the wolf, as if to himself.

Then, raising his voice, he went on to say,—

"I despair of reaching your conscience; nevertheless I will speak as if I had hope. You never paid me anything for protecting your flock; it was on my part a pure labor of love; and yet, because I cannot quite succeed in guarding it against all the bad dogs that are about, you would take my life!"

And the creature put on such a look of meek suffering innocence that the shepherd was touched to the very heart, and felt more guilty and abashed than ever. He therefore said at once,—

"Brother, I fear that I have done you wrong; and if you will swear to mind your own affairs, and not prey upon my flock, I will at once set you free."

"My character ought to be a sufficient guaranty," answered the quadruped, with much dignity; "but I submit, since I must, to your unjust suspicions, and promise as you require."

So, lifting up his paw, he swore solemnly, by all the gods that wolves worship, to keep his pledge. Thereupon the other set him free, with many apologies and professions of confidence and friendship. Only a few days, however, had passed before the shepherd,

happening to mount a knoll, saw at a little distance the self-same wolf eagerly devouring the warm remains of a lamb.

“Villain! villain!” he shouted, in great wrath, “is this the way you keep your oath? Did not you swear to mind your own business?”

“I am minding it,” said the wolf, with a grin; “it is my business to eat lambs; it should be yours not to believe in wolves’ promises.”

So saying, he seized upon the last fragment of the lamb, and ran away as fast as his legs would carry him.

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Moral.—Shepherds who make compromises with wolves sell their mutton at an exceedingly cheap market.

Now just such short-witted shepherds are we, the people of these free American States, invited by numbers of citizens to become. Just such, do I say? A thousand times more silly than such. Our national wolf meets us with jaws that drip blood and eyes that glare hunger for more. Instead of professing sanctity and innocence, it only howls immitigable hate and steadfast resolution to devour. "Give me," it howls, "half the pasture and flock for my own, with, of course, a supervision over the rest, and a child or two when I am dainty; and I will be content,—until I want more!"

In speaking of our "national wolf," we are using no mere rhetoric, but are, in truth, getting at the very heart of the matter. This war, in its final relations to human history, is an encounter between opposing tendencies in man,—between the beast-of-prey that is in him and is always seeking brute domination, on the one hand, and the rational and moral elements of manhood, which ever urge toward the lawful supremacy, on the other. This is a conflict as old as the world, and perhaps one that, in some shape, will continue while the world lasts; and I have tried in vain to think of a single recorded instance wherein the issue was more simple, or the collision more direct, than in our own country to-day.

That principle in nature which makes the tiger tiger passes obviously into man in virtue of the fact that he is on one side, on the side of body and temperament, cousin to the tiger, as comparative anatomy shows. This presence in man of a tiger-principle does not occur by a mistake, for it is an admirable fuel or fire, an admirable generator of force, which the higher powers may first master and then use. But at first it assumes place in man wholly untamed and seemingly tameless, indisposed for aught but sovereignty. Of course, having place in man, it passes, and in the same crude state, into society. And thus it happens, that, when the unconquerable affinities of men bring them together, this principle arises in its brutal might, and strives to make itself central and supreme.

But what is highest in man has its own inevitable urgency, as well as what is lowest. It can never be left out of the account. Gravitation is powerful and perpetual; but the pine pushes up in opposition to it nevertheless. The forces of the inorganic realm strive with might to keep their own; but organic life *will* exist on the planet in their despite, and will conquer from the earth what material it needs. And, in like manner, no sooner do men aggregate than there begin to play back and forth between them ideal or ascending forces, mediations of reason, conscience, soul; and the ever growing interpretations of these appear as courtesies, laws, moralities, worships,—as all the noble communities which constitute a high social state. In fine, there is that in man which seeks perpetually, for it seeks necessarily, to give the position of centrality in society to the ideal principle of justice and to the great charities of the human soul.

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Hence a contest. Two antagonistic principles leap forth from the bosom of man, so soon as men come together, seeking severally to establish the law of social relationship. One of these is predaceous, brutal; the other ideal, humane. One says, "Might makes Right"; the other, "Might should serve Right." One looks upon mankind at large as a harvest to be gathered for the behoof of a few, who are confederate only for that purpose, even as wolves hunt in packs; the other regards humanity as a growth to be fostered for its own sake and worth, and affirms that superiority of strength is given for service, not for spoil. One makes the *ego* supreme; the other makes rational right supreme. One seeks private gratification at any expense to higher values, even as the tiger would, were it possible, draw and drink the blood of the universe as soon as the blood of a cow; the other establishes an ideal estimate of values, and places private gratification low on the scale. But the deepest difference between them, the root of separation, remains to be stated. It is the opposite climate they have of man in the pure simplicity of his being. The predaceous principle says,—“Man is in and of himself valueless; he attains value only by position, by subduing the will of others to his own; and in subjecting others he destroys nothing of worth, since those who are weak enough to fall are by that very fact proved to be worthless.” The humane or socializing principle, on the contrary, says,—“Manhood is value; the essence of all value is found in the individual soul; and therefore the final use of the world, of society, of action, of all that man does and of all that surrounds him, is to develop intelligence, to bring forth the mind and soul into power,—in fine, to realize in each the spiritual possibilities of man.”

True socialization now exists only as this nobler principle is victorious. It exists only in proportion as force is lent to ideal relations, relations prescribed by reason, conscience, and reverence for the being of man,—only in proportion, therefore, as the total force of the state kneels before each individual soul, and, without foolish intermeddlings, or confusions of order, proffers protection, service, succor. Here is a socialization flowing, self-poised, fertilizing; it is full of gracious invitation to all, yet regulates all; it makes liberty by making law; it produces and distributes privilege. Here there is not only *community*, that is, the unity of many in the enjoyment of common privilege, but there is more, there is positive fructification, there is a wide, manifold, infinitely precious evocation of intelligence, of moral power, and of all spiritual worth.

As, on the contrary, the baser principle triumphs, there is no genuine socialization, but only a brute aggregation of subjection beneath and a brute dominance of egotism above. Society is mocked and travestied, not established, in proportion as force is lent to egotism. If anywhere the power which we call *state* set its heel on an innocent soul, —if anywhere it suppress, instead of uniting intelligence,—if anywhere it deny, though only to one individual, the privilege of becoming human,—to such an extent it wars against society and civilization, to such extent sets its face against the divine uses of the world.

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Now the contest between these opposing principles is that which is raging in our country this day. Of course, any broad territorial representation of this must be of a very mixed quality. Our best civilizations are badly mottled with stains of barbarism. In no state or city can egotism, either of the hot-blooded or cold-blooded kind,—and the latter is far the more virulent,—be far to seek. On the other hand, no social system, thank God, can quite reverse the better instincts of humanity; and it may be freely granted that even American slavery shades off, here and there, into quite tender modifications. Yet not in all the world could there possibly be found an antagonism so deep and intense as exists here. The Old World seems to have thrown upon the shores of the New its utmost extremes, its Oriental barbarisms and its orients and auroras of hope and belief; so that here coexist what Asia was three thousand years ago, and what Europe may be one thousand years hence. Let us consider the actual *status*.

In certain localities of Southern Africa there is a remarkable fly, the Tsetse fly. In the ordinary course of satisfying its hunger, this insect punctures the skin of a horse, and the animal dies in consequence. A fly makes a lunch, and a horse's life pays the price of the meal. This has ever seemed to me to represent the beast-of-prey principle in Nature more vigorously than any other fact. But in that system whose fangs are now red with the blood of our brave there is an expression of this principle not less enormous. It is the very Tsetse fly of civilization. That a small minority of Southern men may make money without earning it,—that a few thousand individuals may monopolize the cotton-market of the world,—what a suppression and destruction of intelligence it perpetrates! what consuming of spiritual possibilities! what mental wreck and waste! Whites, too, suffer equally with blacks. Less oppressed, they are perhaps even more demoralized. No parallel example does the earth exhibit of the sacrifice of transcendent values for pitiful ends.

In attempting to destroy free government and rational socialization in America, this system is treading no new road, it is only proceeding on the old. Its central law is that of destroying any value, however great, for the sake of any gratification, however small. Accustomed to batten on the hopes of humanity,—accustomed to taking stock in human degradation, and declaring dividends upon enforced ignorance and crime,—existing only while every canon of the common law is annulled, and every precept of morals and civilization set at naught,—could it be expected to pause just when, or rather just *because*, it had apparently found the richest possible prey? Could it be expected to withhold its fang for no other reason than that its fang was allured by a more opulent artery than ever before? The simple truth is—and he knows nothing about this controversy who fails to perceive such truth—that the system whose hands are now armed against us has always borne these arms in its heart; that the fang which is now bared has hitherto been only concealed, not wanting; that the tree which is to-day in bloody blossom is the same tree it ever was, and carried these blossoms in its sap long ere spreading them upon its boughs.

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To this predaceous system what do we oppose? We oppose a socialization that has features,—I will say no more,—has *features* of generous breadth and promise, that are the best fruition of many countries and centuries. Faults and drawbacks it has enough and to spare; conspicuous among which may be named the vulgar and disgusting “negrophobia,”—a mark of under-breeding which one hopes may not disgrace us always. But let us be carried away by no mania for self-criticism. Two claims for ourselves may be made. First, a higher grade of laws nowhere exists with a less amount of coercive application,—exists, that is, by the rational and constant choice of the whole people. Secondly, it may be questioned whether anywhere in the world the development of intelligence and moral force in the whole people is to a greater extent a national aim. But abandoning all comparison with other peoples, this we may say with no doubtful voice: We stand for the best ideas of the Old World in the New; we stand for orderly-freedom and true socialization in America; we stand for these, and with us these must here stand or fall.

Now, of course, we are not about to become the offscouring of the earth by yielding these up to destruction. Of course, we shall not convert ourselves into a nation of Iscariots, and give over civilization to the bowie-knife, with the mere hope of so making money out of Southern trade,—which we should not do,—and with the certainty of a gibbet in history, to mention no greater penalty.

But refusing this perfidy, could we have avoided this war? No; for it was simply our refusal of such perfidy which, so far as we are concerned, brought the war on. The South, having ever since the Mexican War stood with its sword half out of the scabbard, perpetually threatening to give its edge,—having made it the chief problem of our politics, by what gift or concession to purchase exemption from that dreaded blade,—at last reached its ultimate demand. “Will you,” it said to the North, “abdicate the privileges of equal citizenship? Will you give up this continent, territory, Free States and all, to our predaceous, blood-eating system? Will you sell into slavery the elective franchise itself? Will you sell the elective franchise itself into slavery, and take for pay barely the poltroon’s price, that of being scornfully spared by the sword we stand ready to draw?” The North excused itself politely. In the softest voice, but with a soft-voicedness that did not wholly conceal an iron thread of resolution, it declined to comply with that most modest demand. Then the sword came out and struck at our life. “Was it matter of choice with us whether we would fight? Not unless it were also matter of choice whether we would become the very sweepings and blemish of creation.

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“But we might have permitted secession.” No, we could not. It was clearly impracticable. “But why not?” *Because that would have been to surrender the whole under the guise of giving up half.* Such a concession could have meant to the people of the rebellious States, and, in the existing state of national belief, could have meant to our very selves, nothing other than this:—“We submit; do what you will; we are shopkeepers and cowards; we must have your trade; and besides, though expert in the use of yardsticks, we have not the nerve for handling guns.” From that moment we should have lost all authority on this continent, and all respect on the other.

The English papers have blamed us for fighting; but had we failed to fight, not one of these censoring mouths but would have hissed at us like an adder with contempt. Nay, we ourselves should, as it were, soon have lost the musical speech and high carriage of men, and fallen to a proneness and a hissing, degraded in our own eyes even more than in those of our neighbors. Of course, from this state we should have risen; but it would have been to see the redness of war on our own fields and its flames wrapping our own households. We should have risen, but through a contest to which this war, gigantic though it be, is but a quarrel of school-boys.

By sheer necessity we began to fight; by the same we must fight it out. Compromise is, in the nature of the case, impossible. It can mean only *surrender*. Had there been an inch more of ground for us to yield without total submission, the war would have been, for the present, staved off. We turned to bay only when driven back to the vital principle of our polity and the vital facts of our socialization.

Politically, what was the immediate grievance of the South? Simply that Northern freemen went to the polls as freemen; simply that they there expressed, under constitutional forms, their lawful preference. How can we compromise here, even to the breadth of a hair? How compromise without stipulating that all Northern electors shall henceforth go to the polls in charge of an armed police, and there deposit such ballot as the slave-masters of the Secession States shall direct?

Again, in our social state what is it that gives umbrage to our antagonists? They have answered the question for us; they have stated it repeatedly in the plainest English. It is simply the fact that we *are* free States; that we have, and honor, free labor; that we have schools for the people; that we teach the duty of each to all and of all to each; that we respect the human principle, the spiritual possibility, in man; in fine, that ours is a human socialization, whose fundamental principles are the venerableness of man's nature and the superiority of reason and right to any individual will. So far as we are base bargainers and unbelievers, they can tolerate us, even though they despise; just where our praise begins, begin their detestation and animosity.

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It is, by the pointed confession of Southern spokesmen, what we are, rather than what we have done, which makes them Secessionists; and any man of sense might, indeed must, see this fact, were the confession withheld. In action we have conformed to Southern wishes, as if conformity could not be in excess. We have conformed to an extent that—to mention nothing of more importance—had nearly ruined us in the estimation of mankind. One chief reason, indeed, why the sympathy of Europe did not immediately go with us was that a disgust toward us had been created by the football passivity, as it seemed abroad, with which we had submitted to be kicked to and fro. The rebellion was deemed to be on our side, not on theirs. We, born servitors and underlings, it was thought, had forgotten our proper places,—nay, had presumed to strike back, when our masters chastised us. Of course, we should soon be whipped to our knees again. And when we were again submissive and abject, Europe must so have demeaned itself as still to be on good terms with the conquerors. As for us, our final opinion of their demeanor, so they deemed, mattered very little. The ill opinion of the servants can be borne; but one must needs be on friendly terms with the master of the house. The conduct of Europe toward us at the outbreak of this war is to be thus explained, more than in any other way. According to European understanding, we had before written ourselves down menials; therefore, on rising to the attitude of men, we were scorned as upstarts.

The world has now discovered that there was less cowardice and more comity in this yielding than had been supposed. Yet in candor one must confess that it was barely not carried to a fatal extent. One step more in that direction, and we had gone over the brink and into the abyss. Only when the last test arrived, and we must decide once and forever whether we would be the champions or the apostates of civilization, did we show to the foe not the dastard back, but the dauntless front. And the proposal to “compromise” is simply and exactly a proposal to us to reverse that decision.

Again, we can propose no compromise, such as would stay the war, without confessing that there was no occasion for beginning it. And if, indeed, we began it without occasion, without an occasion absolutely imperative, then does the whole mountain—weight of its guilt lie on our hearts. Then in every man that has fallen on either side we are assassins. The proposal to bring back the seceded States by submission to their demands is neither more nor less than a proposal to write “Murderer” on the brow of every soldier in our armies, and “Twice Murderer” over the grave of every one of our slain. If such submission be due now, not less was it due before the war began. To say that it was then due, and then withheld, is, I repeat, merely to brand with the blackness of assassination the whole patriotic service of the United States, both civil and military, for the last two years.

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If, now, such be, in very deed, our guilt, let us lose no moment in confessing the fact,—nor afterwards lose a moment in creeping to the gallows, that must, in that case, be hungering for us. But if no such guilt be ours, then why should not our courage be as good as our cause? If not only by the warrant, but by the imperative bidding of Heaven, we have taken up arms, then why should we not, as under the banner of Heaven, bear them to the end?

In this course, no *real* failure can await us. Obeying the necessity which is laid upon us, and simply conducting ourselves as men of humanity, courage, and honor, we shall surely vindicate the principles of civilization and Orderly society, within our own States, whether we immediately succeed in impressing them on South Carolina and her evil sisterhood or not. Let us but vindicate their existence on any part of this continent, and that alone will insure their final prevalence on the continent as a whole. Let us now but make them inexpugnable, and they will make themselves universal. This law of necessary prevalence, in a socialization whose vital principle is reverence for the nature of man, was clearly seen by the masters, or rather, one should say, by the subjects, of the slave system; and this war signifies their immediate purpose to build up between it and themselves a Chinese excluding wall, and their ulterior purpose to starve and trample it out of this hemisphere.

Finally, just that which teaches us charity toward the slaveholders teaches us also, forbearing all thought of base and demoralizing compositions, to press the hand steadily upon the hilt it has grasped, until war's work is done. These servants of a predaceous principle are nearly, if not quite, its earliest prey. Enemies to us, they are twice enemies to themselves. They are driven helplessly on, and will be so until we slay the tyrant that wrings from them their evil services. During that fatal month's *siesta* at Yorktown, the country was horror-stricken to hear that the enemy were forcing negroes at the point of the bayonet to work those pieces of ordnance from which the whites, in terror of our sharpshooters, had fled away. But behind the whites themselves, behind the whole disloyal South, had long been another bayonet goading heart and brain, and pricking them on to aggression after aggression, till aggression found its goal, where we trust it will find its grave, in civil war. Poor wretches! Who does not pity them? Who that pities them wisely would not all the more firmly grasp that sword which alone can deliver them?

Nor has the slave-system been any worse than it must be, in pushing us and them to the present pass. So bad it must be, or cease to be at all. All things obey their nature. Hydrophobia will bite, small-pox infect, plague enter upon life and depart upon death, hyenas scent the new-made graves, and predaceous systems of society open their mouths ever and ever for prey. What else *can* they

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do? Even would the Secessionists consent to partial compositions, as they will not, they must inevitably break faith, as ever before. They are slaves to the slave-system. As wise were it to covenant with the dust not to fly, or with the sea not to foam, when the hurricane blows, as to bargain with these that they shall resist that despotic impetus which compels them. They are slaves. And their master is one whose law is to devour. Only he who might meditate letting go a Bengal tiger on its parole of honor, or binding over a pestilence to keep the peace, should so much as dream for a moment of civil compositions with this system. Its action is inevitable. And therefore our only wisdom will be to make our way by the straightest path to this, which is our chief, and in the last analysis our only enemy, and cut it through and through. This only will be a final preservation to ourselves; this only the noblest amity to the South; this, deliverance to the captivity of two continents, Africa and America: so that here principle and policy are for once so obviously, as ever they are really, one and the same, that no man of sense should fail to perceive their unity.

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