

Library of the World's Best Literature, Ancient and Modern — Volume 3 eBook

Library of the World's Best Literature, Ancient and Modern — Volume 3

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

Contents

Library of the World's Best Literature, Ancient and Modern — Volume 3 eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	17
Page 1.....	21
Page 2.....	23
Page 3.....	25
Page 4.....	27
Page 5.....	29
Page 6.....	31
Page 7.....	33
Page 8.....	35
Page 9.....	37
Page 10.....	39
Page 11.....	41
Page 12.....	43
Page 13.....	45
Page 14.....	47
Page 15.....	49
Page 16.....	51
Page 17.....	53
Page 18.....	55
Page 19.....	57
Page 20.....	59
Page 21.....	61
Page 22.....	63

Page 23.....	65
Page 24.....	67
Page 25.....	69
Page 26.....	71
Page 27.....	73
Page 28.....	75
Page 29.....	77
Page 30.....	79
Page 31.....	81
Page 32.....	83
Page 33.....	85
Page 34.....	87
Page 35.....	89
Page 36.....	91
Page 37.....	93
Page 38.....	95
Page 39.....	96
Page 40.....	98
Page 41.....	100
Page 42.....	102
Page 43.....	103
Page 44.....	105
Page 45.....	106
Page 46.....	108
Page 47.....	109
Page 48.....	110

Page 49.....	111
Page 50.....	112
Page 51.....	113
Page 52.....	114
Page 53.....	116
Page 54.....	118
Page 55.....	120
Page 56.....	121
Page 57.....	122
Page 58.....	123
Page 59.....	125
Page 60.....	127
Page 61.....	129
Page 62.....	131
Page 63.....	133
Page 64.....	134
Page 65.....	135
Page 66.....	136
Page 67.....	138
Page 68.....	139
Page 69.....	141
Page 70.....	143
Page 71.....	144
Page 72.....	146
Page 73.....	148
Page 74.....	150

Page 75.....	152
Page 76.....	154
Page 77.....	156
Page 78.....	158
Page 79.....	160
Page 80.....	162
Page 81.....	164
Page 82.....	166
Page 83.....	168
Page 84.....	170
Page 85.....	171
Page 86.....	172
Page 87.....	174
Page 88.....	175
Page 89.....	176
Page 90.....	178
Page 91.....	179
Page 92.....	180
Page 93.....	181
Page 94.....	183
Page 95.....	184
Page 96.....	186
Page 97.....	188
Page 98.....	190
Page 99.....	192
Page 100.....	194

Page 101.....	196
Page 102.....	198
Page 103.....	199
Page 104.....	201
Page 105.....	203
Page 106.....	204
Page 107.....	205
Page 108.....	206
Page 109.....	207
Page 110.....	208
Page 111.....	210
Page 112.....	212
Page 113.....	213
Page 114.....	214
Page 115.....	216
Page 116.....	218
Page 117.....	220
Page 118.....	222
Page 119.....	224
Page 120.....	226
Page 121.....	228
Page 122.....	230
Page 123.....	232
Page 124.....	234
Page 125.....	236

Page 126.....	237
Page 127.....	238
Page 128.....	239
Page 129.....	240
Page 130.....	241
Page 131.....	243
Page 132.....	244
Page 133.....	245
Page 134.....	247
Page 135.....	248
Page 136.....	250
Page 137.....	252
Page 138.....	254
Page 139.....	256
Page 140.....	258
Page 141.....	259
Page 142.....	260
Page 143.....	261
Page 144.....	263
Page 145.....	265
Page 146.....	267
Page 147.....	268
Page 148.....	269
Page 149.....	270
Page 150.....	271
Page 151.....	272

Page 152.....	273
Page 153.....	274
Page 154.....	275
Page 155.....	276
Page 156.....	277
Page 157.....	278
Page 158.....	279
Page 159.....	280
Page 160.....	281
Page 161.....	282
Page 162.....	283
Page 163.....	284
Page 164.....	285
Page 165.....	286
Page 166.....	287
Page 167.....	288
Page 168.....	289
Page 169.....	290
Page 170.....	291
Page 171.....	292
Page 172.....	293
Page 173.....	294
Page 174.....	295
Page 175.....	296
Page 176.....	297
Page 177.....	299

Page 178.....	300
Page 179.....	301
Page 180.....	303
Page 181.....	304
Page 182.....	306
Page 183.....	308
Page 184.....	310
Page 185.....	312
Page 186.....	314
Page 187.....	316
Page 188.....	317
Page 189.....	318
Page 190.....	319
Page 191.....	320
Page 192.....	321
Page 193.....	322
Page 194.....	323
Page 195.....	325
Page 196.....	327
Page 197.....	328
Page 198.....	329
Page 199.....	330
Page 200.....	331
Page 201.....	332
Page 202.....	333
Page 203.....	334

Page 204.....	335
Page 205.....	336
Page 206.....	337
Page 207.....	338
Page 208.....	339
Page 209.....	340
Page 210.....	341
Page 211.....	343
Page 212.....	344
Page 213.....	346
Page 214.....	347
Page 215.....	349
Page 216.....	350
Page 217.....	352
Page 218.....	354
Page 219.....	356
Page 220.....	357
Page 221.....	358
Page 222.....	359
Page 223.....	361
Page 224.....	363
Page 225.....	365
Page 226.....	367
Page 227.....	368
Page 228.....	370
Page 229.....	372

Page 230.....	374
Page 231.....	376
Page 232.....	378
Page 233.....	380
Page 234.....	382
Page 235.....	384
Page 236.....	386
Page 237.....	388
Page 238.....	390
Page 239.....	392
Page 240.....	393
Page 241.....	394
Page 242.....	395
Page 243.....	396
Page 244.....	397
Page 245.....	398
Page 246.....	399
Page 247.....	400
Page 248.....	401
Page 249.....	403
Page 250.....	404
Page 251.....	405
Page 252.....	406
Page 253.....	407
Page 254.....	408
Page 255.....	409

Page 256.....	410
Page 257.....	411
Page 258.....	412
Page 259.....	413
Page 260.....	414
Page 261.....	415
Page 262.....	416
Page 263.....	417
Page 264.....	418
Page 265.....	419
Page 266.....	420
Page 267.....	421
Page 268.....	422
Page 269.....	423
Page 270.....	424
Page 271.....	425
Page 272.....	427
Page 273.....	429
Page 274.....	431
Page 275.....	433
Page 276.....	435
Page 277.....	437
Page 278.....	439
Page 279.....	442
Page 280.....	445
Page 281.....	447

Page 282.....	449
Page 283.....	451
Page 284.....	454
Page 285.....	456
Page 286.....	458
Page 287.....	460
Page 288.....	463
Page 289.....	466
Page 290.....	468
Page 291.....	470
Page 292.....	472
Page 293.....	474
Page 294.....	475
Page 295.....	476
Page 296.....	477
Page 297.....	478
Page 298.....	479
Page 299.....	480
Page 300.....	481
Page 301.....	482
Page 302.....	483
Page 303.....	484
Page 304.....	485
Page 305.....	486
Page 306.....	487
Page 307.....	488

Page 308.....	489
Page 309.....	490
Page 310.....	491
Page 311.....	492
Page 312.....	493
Page 313.....	494
Page 314.....	495
Page 315.....	496
Page 316.....	497
Page 317.....	498
Page 318.....	499
Page 319.....	500
Page 320.....	502
Page 321.....	503
Page 322.....	505
Page 323.....	506
Page 324.....	508
Page 325.....	510
Page 326.....	512
Page 327.....	514
Page 328.....	515
Page 329.....	516
Page 330.....	518
Page 331.....	520
Page 332.....	522
Page 333.....	523

Page 334.....	525
Page 335.....	527
Page 336.....	528
Page 337.....	530
Page 338.....	532
Page 339.....	533
Page 340.....	534
Page 341.....	535
Page 342.....	536
Page 343.....	537
Page 344.....	538
Page 345.....	539
Page 346.....	541
Page 347.....	543
Page 348.....	545
Page 349.....	546
Page 350.....	548
Page 351.....	549
Page 352.....	550
Page 353.....	551
Page 354.....	552
Page 355.....	553
Page 356.....	554
Page 357.....	555
Page 358.....	556
Page 359.....	557

Page 360.....	558
Page 361.....	559
Page 362.....	560
Page 363.....	562
Page 364.....	564
Page 365.....	565
Page 366.....	566
Page 367.....	567
Page 368.....	568
Page 369.....	569
Page 370.....	570
Page 371.....	572
Page 372.....	573
Page 373.....	574
Page 374.....	576
Page 375.....	578
Page 376.....	579
Page 377.....	580

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Start of eBook	1
VOL. III	1
AVERROES 1126-1198	1
	2
	3
FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS	3
VIGNETTE PORTRAITS	3
(Continued from Volume II)	3
THE FIRST FALSE STEP	6
THE NEW HOME AND THE OLD ONE	9
THE COURT PHYSICIAN'S PHILOSOPHY	17
IN COUNTESS IRMA'S DIARY	20
EMILE AUGIER	25
A CONVERSATION WITH A PURPOSE	26
A SEVERE YOUNG JUDGE	30
A CONTENTED IDLER	31
THE FEELINGS OF AN ARTIST	33
A CONTEST OF WILLS	35
ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO	37
BY SAMUEL HART	37
THE GODLY SORROW THAT WORKETH REPENTANCE	39
CONSOLATION	40
THE FOES OF THE CITY	41
THE PRAISE OF GOD	42
A PRAYER	42
MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS	43
BY JAMES FRASER GLUCK	43
EXCERPTS FROM THE 'MEDITATIONS'	49
THE SUPREME NOBILITY OF DUTY	50
THE FUTURE LIFE. IMMORTALITY	50
THE UNIVERSAL BEAUTY OF THE WORLD	52
THE GOOD MAN	52
THE BREVITY OF LIFE	53

VANITY OF LIFE	53
DEATH	54
FAME	54
PRAYER	54
FAITH	55
PAIN	55
LOVE AND FORGIVENESS FOR THE EVIL-DOER	55
ETERNAL CHANGE THE LAW OF THE UNIVERSE	55
THE PERFECT LIBERTY OF THE GOOD MAN	56
THE HARMONY AND UNITY OF THE UNIVERSE	56
THE CONDUCT OF LIFE	56
JANE AUSTEN	61
AN OFFER OF MARRIAGE	66
MOTHER AND DAUGHTER	69
A LETTER OF CONDOLENCE	71
MR. COLLINS TO MR. BENNET, ON HIS DAUGHTER'S ELOPEMENT WITH A RAKE	71
A WELL-MATCHED SISTER AND BROTHER	72
FAMILY DOCTORS	77
FAMILY TRAINING	81
PRIVATE THEATRICALS	83
FRUITLESS REGRETS AND APPLES OF SODOM	85
AVERROES	89
THE AVESTA	93
BY A.V. WILLIAMS JACKSON	93
A PSALM OF ZOROASTER: YASNA 30	97
A PRAYER FOR KNOWLEDGE	100
THE ANGEL OF DIVINE OBEDIENCE	101
TO THE FIRE	101
THE GODDESS OF THE WATERS	102
GUARDIAN SPIRITS	102
AN ANCIENT SINDBAD	103
THE WISE MAN	103
INVOCATION TO RAIN	103
A PRAYER FOR HEALING	104
FRAGMENT	104
AVICEBRON	104



ON MATTER AND FORM	107
ROBERT AYTOUN	110
WILLIAM EDMONSTOUNE AYTOUN	112
A BALL IN THE UPPER CIRCLES	122
A HIGHLAND TRAMP	124
MASSIMO TAPARELLI D'AZEGLIO	126
A HAPPY CHILDHOOD	127
THE PRIESTHOOD	130
MY FIRST VENTURE IN ROMANCE	133
BABER	135
BY EDWARD S. HOLDEN	135
FROM BABER'S 'MEMOIRS'	136
BABRIUS	140
FRANCIS BACON	146
BY CHARLTON T. LEWIS	146
OF TRUTH	160
OF REVENGE	161
OF SIMULATION AND	162
DISSIMULATION	
OF TRAVEL	164
OF FRIENDSHIP	166
DEFECTS OF THE UNIVERSITIES	171
TO MY LORD TREASURER	175
BURGHLEY	
IN PRAISE OF KNOWLEDGE	176
TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR,	179
TOUCHING THE HISTORY OF	
BRITAIN	
TO VILLIERS ON HIS PATENT AS	181
VISCOUNT	
CHARGE TO JUSTICE HUTTON	182
A PRAYER, OR PSALM	183
FROM THE 'APOPHTHEGMS'	184
WALTER BAGEHOT	186
BY FORREST MORGAN	186
THE VIRTUES OF STUPIDITY	192
REVIEW WRITING	193
LORD ELDON	194
TASTE	194
CAUSES OF THE STERILITY OF	195
LITERATURE	
THE SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS	196
ON EARLY READING	197
THE CAVALIERS	199
MORALITY AND FEAR	200
THE TYRANNY OF CONVENTION	201

HOW TO BE AN INFLUENTIAL POLITICIAN	202
CONDITIONS OF CABINET GOVERNMENT	203
WHY EARLY SOCIETIES COULD NOT BE FREE	204
BENEFITS OF FREE DISCUSSION IN MODERN TIMES	207
ORIGIN OF DEPOSIT BANKING	210
JENS BAGGESEN	212
A COSMOPOLITAN	214
PHILOSOPHY ON THE HEATH	215
PHILIP JAMES BAILEY	218
JOANNA BAILLIE	225
HENRY MARTYN BAIRD	237
THE BATTLE OF IVRY	238
SIR SAMUEL WHITE BAKER	241
HUNTING IN ABYSSINIA	242
THE SOURCES OF THE NILE	248
ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR	249
THE PLEASURES OF READING	250
THE BALLAD	264
BY F.B. GUMMERE	264
HONORE DE BALZAC	292
BY WILLIAM P. TRENT	292
THE MEETING IN THE CONVENT	310
A PASSION IN THE DESERT	337
FROM 'THE COUNTRY DOCTOR'	347
GEORGE BANCROFT	363
BY AUSTIN SCOTT	363
THE BEGINNINGS OF VIRGINIA	368
MEN AND GOVERNMENT IN EARLY MASSACHUSETTS	370
KING PHILIP'S WAR	372
THE NEW NETHERLAND	373
FRANKLIN	375



Page 1

VOL. III

&nb

sp; *Lived*
Berthold Auerbach—*Continued*: 1812-1882
The First False Step ('On the Heights')
The New Home and the Old One (same)
The Court Physician's Philosophy (same)
In Countess Irma's Diary (same)

Emile Augier 1820-1889
A Conversation with a Purpose ('Giboyer's Boy')
A Severe Young Judge ('The Adventuress')
A Contented Idler ('M. Poirier's Son-in-Law')
Feelings of an Artist (same)
A Contest of Wills ('The Fourchambaults')

St. Augustine of hippo (by Samuel Hart) 354-430
The Godly Sorrow that Worketh Repentance ('The Confessions')
Consolation (same)
The Foes of the City ('The City of God')
The Praise of God (same)
A Prayer ('The Trinity')

Marcus Aurelius antoninus A.D. 121-180
Reflections

Jane Austen 1775-1817
An Offer of Marriage ('Pride and Prejudice')
Mother and Daughter (same)
A Letter of Condolence (same)
A Well-Matched Sister and Brother ('Northanger Abbey')
Family Doctors ('Emma')
Family Training ('Mansfield Park')
Private Theatricals (same)
Fruitless Regrets and Apples of Sodom (same)

AVERROES 1126-1198

The avesta (by A.V. Williams Jackson)
Psalm of Zoroaster
Prayer for Knowledge
The Angel of Divine Obedience



To the Fire
The Goddess of the Waters
Guardian Spirits
An Ancient Sindbad
The Wise Man
Invocation to Rain
Prayer for Healing
Fragment

Avicbron 1028-?1058

On Matter and Form ('The Fountain of Life')

Robert Aytoun 1570-1638

Inconstancy Upbraided

Lines to an Inconstant Mistress (with Burns's Adaptation)

William EDMONSTOUNE Aytoun 1813-1865

Burial March of Dundee ('Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers')

Execution of Montrose (same)

The Broken Pitcher ('Bon Gaultier Ballads')

Sonnet to Britain. "By the Duke of Wellington" (same)

A Ball in the Upper Circles ('The Modern Endymion')

A Highland Tramp ('Norman Sinclair')

Massimo Taparelli D'AZEGLIO 1798-1866

A Happy Childhood ('My Recollections')

The Priesthood (same)

My First Venture in Romance (same)

Baber (by Edward S. Holden) 1482-1530

From Baber's 'Memoirs'

Page 2

Babrius First Century A.D.

The North Wind and the Sun
Jupiter and the Monkey
The Mouse that Fell into the Pot
The Fox and the Grapes
The Carter and Hercules
The Young Cocks
The Arab and the Camel
The Nightingale and the Swallow
The Husbandman and the stork
The Pine
The Woman and Her Maid-Servants
The Lamp
The Tortoise and the Hare

Francis Bacon (by Charlton T. Lewis) 1561-1626

Of Truth ('Essays')
Of Revenge (same)
Of Simulation and Dissimulation (same)
Of Travel (same)
Of Friendship (same)
Defects of the Universities ('The Advancement of Learning')
To My Lord Treasurer Burghley
In Praise of Knowledge
To the Lord Chancellor
To Villiers on his Patent as a Viscount
Charge to Justice Hutton
A Prayer, or Psalm
From the 'Apophthegms'
Translation of the 137th Psalm
The World's a Bubble

Walter bagehot (by Forrest Morgan) 1826-1877

The Virtues of Stupidity ('Letters on the French Coup d'Etat')
Review Writing ('The First Edinburgh Reviewers')
Lord Eldon (same)
Taste ('Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning')
Causes of the Sterility of Literature ('Shakespeare')
The Search for Happiness ('William Cowper')
On Early Reading ('Edward Gibbon')
The Cavaliers ('Thomas Babington Macaulay')
Morality and Fear ('Bishop Butler')
The Tyranny of Convention ('Sir Robert Peel')



How to Be an Influential Politician ('Bolingbroke')
Conditions of Cabinet Government ('The English Constitution')
Why Early Societies could not be Free ('Physics and Politics')
Benefits of Free Discussion in Modern Times (same)
Origin of Deposit Banking ('Lombard Street')

Jens Baggesen 1764-1826

A Cosmopolitan ('The Labyrinth')
Philosophy on the Heath (same)
There was a Time when I was Very Little

Philip James Bailey 1816-

From "Festus": Life: The Passing-Bell; Thoughts;
Dreams; Chorus of the Saved

Joanna Baillie 1762-1851

Woo'd and Married and A'
It Was on a Morn when We were Thrang
Fy, Let Us A' to the Wedding
The Weary Pund o' Tow
From 'De Montfort'
To Mrs. Siddons
A Scotch Song
Song, 'Poverty Parts Good Company'
The Kitten

HENRY MARTYN BAIRD 1832- The Battle of Ivry ('The Huguenots and Henry of Navarre')

Sir Samuel white baker 1821-1893

Hunting in Abyssinia ('The Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia')
The Sources of the Nile ('The Albert Nyanza')

Page 3

ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR 1848- The Pleasures of Reading (Rectorial Address)

The ballad (by F.B. Gummere)

Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne

The Hunting of the Cheviot

Johnie Cock

Sir Patrick Spens

The Bonny Earl of Murray

Mary Hamilton

Bonnie George Campbell

Bessie Bell and Mary Gray

The Three Ravens

Lord Randal

Edward

The Twa Brothers

Babylon

Childe Maurice

The Wife of Usher's Well

Sweet William's Ghost

Honore de Balzac (by William P. Trent) 1799-1850

The Meeting in the Convent ('The Duchess of Langeais')

An Episode Under the Terror

A Passion in the Desert

The Napoleon of the People ('The Country Doctor')

George Bancroft (by Austin Scott) 1800-1891

The Beginnings of Virginia ('History of the United States')

Men and Government in Early Massachusetts (same)

King Philip's War (same)

The New Netherland (same)

Franklin (same)

FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS

Volume iii.

* * * * *

Page

Ancient Irish Miniature (Colored Plate) Frontispiece

"St. Augustine and His Mother" (Photogravure) 1014

Papyrus, Sermons of St. Augustine (Fac-simile)	1018
Marcus Aurelius (Portrait)	1022
The Zend Avesta (Fac-simile)	1084
Francis Bacon (Portrait)	1156
“The Cavaliers” (Photogravure)	1218
Honore de Balzac (Portrait)	1348
George Bancroft (Portrait)	1432

VIGNETTE PORTRAITS

Emile Augier
Jane Austen
Robert Aytoun
Walter Bagehot
Jens Baggesen
Philip James Bailey
Joanna Baillie
Henry Martyn Baird
Sir Samuel White Baker
Arthur James Balfour

(Continued from Volume II)

“Do you imagine that every one is kindly disposed towards you? Take my word for it, a palace contains people of all sorts, good and bad. All the vices abound in such a place. And there are many other matters of which you have no idea, and of which you will, I trust, ever remain ignorant. But all you meet are wondrous polite. Try to remain just as you now are, and when you leave the palace, let it be as the same Walpurga you were when you came here.”

Walpurga stared at her in surprise. Who could change her?

Word came that the Queen was awake and desired Walpurga to bring the Crown Prince to her.

Accompanied by Doctor Gunther, Mademoiselle Kramer, and two waiting-women, she proceeded to the Queen’s bedchamber. The Queen lay there, calm and beautiful, and with a smile of greeting, turned her face towards those who had entered. The curtains had been partially drawn aside, and a broad, slanting ray of light shone into the apartment, which seemed still more peaceful than during the breathless silence of the previous night.

Page 4

“Good morning!” said the Queen, with a voice full of feeling. “Let me have my child!” She looked down at the babe that rested in her arms, and then, without noticing any one in the room, lifted her glance on high and faintly murmured:—

“This is the first time I behold my child in the daylight!”

All were silent; it seemed as if there was naught in the apartment except the broad slanting ray of light that streamed in at the window.

“Have you slept well?” inquired the Queen. Walpurga was glad the Queen had asked a question, for now she could answer. Casting a hurried glance at Mademoiselle Kramer, she said:—

“Yes, indeed! Sleep’s the first, the last, and the best thing in the world.”

“She’s clever,” said the Queen, addressing Doctor Gunther in French.

Walpurga’s heart sank within her. Whenever she heard them speak French, she felt as if they were betraying her; as if they had put on an invisible cap, like that worn by the goblins in the fairy-tale, and could thus speak without being heard.

“Did the Prince sleep well?” asked the Queen.

Walpurga passed her hand over her face, as if to brush away a spider that had been creeping there. The Queen doesn’t speak of her “child” or her “son,” but only of “the Crown Prince.”

Walpurga answered:—

“Yes, quite well, thank God! That is, I couldn’t hear him, and I only wanted to say that I’d like to act towards the—” she could not say “the Prince”—“that is, towards him, as I’d do with my own child. We began on the very first day. My mother taught me that. Such a child has a will of its own from the very start, and it won’t do to give way to it. It won’t do to take it from the cradle, or to feed it, whenever it pleases; there ought to be regular times for all those things. It’ll soon get used to that, and it won’t harm it either, to let it cry once in a while. On the contrary, that expands the chest.”

“Does he cry?” asked the Queen.

The infant answered the question for itself, for it at once began to cry most lustily.

“Take him and quiet him,” begged the Queen.

The King entered the apartment before the child had stopped crying.

“He will have a good voice of command,” said he, kissing the Queen’s hand.

Walpurga quieted the child, and she and Mademoiselle Kramer were sent back to their apartments.

The King informed the Queen of the dispatches that had been received, and of the sponsors who had been decided upon. She was perfectly satisfied with the arrangements that had been made.

When Walpurga had returned to her room and had placed the child in the cradle, she walked up and down and seemed quite agitated.

“There are no angels in this world!” said she. “They’re all just like the rest of us, and who knows but—” She was vexed at the Queen: “Why won’t she listen patiently when her child cries? We must take all our children bring us, whether it be joy or pain.”

Page 5

She stepped out into the passage-way and heard the tones of the organ in the palace-chapel. For the first time in her life these sounds displeased her. "It don't belong in the house," thought she, "where all sorts of things are going on. The church ought to stand by itself."

When she returned to the room, she found a stranger there. Mademoiselle Kramer informed her that this was the tailor to the Queen.

Walpurga laughed outright at the notion of a "tailor to the Queen." The elegantly attired person looked at her in amazement, while Mademoiselle Kramer explained to her that this was the dressmaker to her Majesty the Queen, and that he had come to take her measure for three new dresses.

"Am I to wear city clothes?"

"God forbid! You're to wear the dress of your neighborhood, and can order a stomacher in red, blue, green, or any color that you like best."

"I hardly know what to say; but I'd like to have a workday suit too. Sunday clothes on week-days—that won't do."

"At court one always wears Sunday clothes, and when her Majesty drives out again you will have to accompany her."

"A11 right, then. I won't object."

While he took her measure, Walpurga laughed incessantly, and he was at last obliged to ask her to hold still, so that he might go on with his work. Putting his measure into his pocket, he informed Mademoiselle Kramer that he had ordered an exact model, and that the master of ceremonies had favored him with several drawings, so that there might be no doubt of success.

Finally he asked permission to see the Crown Prince. Mademoiselle Kramer was about to let him do so, but Walpurga objected.

"Before the child is christened," said she, "no one shall look at it just out of curiosity, and least of all a tailor, or else the child will never turn out the right sort of man."

The tailor took his leave, Mademoiselle Kramer having politely hinted to him that nothing could be done with the superstition of the lower orders, and that it would not do to irritate the nurse.

This occurrence induced Walpurga to administer the first serious reprimand to Mademoiselle Kramer. She could not understand why she was so willing to make an

exhibition of the child. “Nothing does a child more harm than to let strangers look at it in its sleep, and a tailor at that.”

All the wild fun with which, in popular songs, tailors are held up to scorn and ridicule, found vent in Walpurga, and she began singing:—

“Just list, ye braves, who love to roam!
A snail was chasing a tailor home.
And if Old Shears hadn’t run so fast,
The snail would surely have caught him at last.”

Mademoiselle Kramer’s acquaintance with the court tailor had lowered her in Walpurga’s esteem; and with an evident effort to mollify the latter, Mademoiselle Kramer asked:—

“Does the idea of your new and beautiful clothes really afford you no pleasure?”

Page 6

"To be frank with you, no! I don't wear them for my own sake, but for that of others, who dress me to please themselves. It's all the same to me, however! I've given myself up to them, and suppose I must submit."

"May I come in?" asked a pleasant voice. Countess Irma entered the room. Extending both her hands to Walpurga, she said:—

"God greet you, my countrywoman! I am also from the Highlands, seven hours distance from your village. I know it well, and once sailed over the lake with your father. Does he still live?"

"Alas! no: he was drowned, and the lake hasn't given up its dead."

"He was a fine-looking old man, and you are the very image of him."

"I am glad to find some one else here who knew my father. The court tailor—I mean the court doctor—knew him too. Yes, search the land through, you couldn't have found a better man than my father, and no one can help but admit it."

"Yes: I've often heard as much."

"May I ask your Ladyship's name?"

"Countess Wildenort."

"Wildenort? I've heard the name before. Yes, I remember my mother's mentioning it. Your father was known as a very kind and benevolent man. Has he been dead a long while?"

"No, he is still living."

"Is he here too?"

"No."

"And as what are you here, Countess?"

"As maid of honor."

"And what is that?"

"Being attached to the Queen's person; or what, in your part of the country, would be called a companion."

"Indeed! And is your father willing to let them use you that way?"



Irma, who was somewhat annoyed by her questions, said:—

“I wished to ask you something—Can you write?”

“I once could, but I’ve quite forgotten how.”

“Then I’ve just hit it! that’s the very reason for my coming here. Now, whenever you wish to write home, you can dictate your letter to me, and I will write whatever you tell me to.”

“I could have done that too,” suggested Mademoiselle Kramer, timidly; “and your Ladyship would not have needed to trouble yourself.”

“No, the Countess will write for me. Shall it be now?”

“Certainly.”

But Walpurga had to go to the child. While she was in the next room, Countess Irma and Mademoiselle Kramer engaged each other in conversation.

When Walpurga returned, she found Irma, pen in hand, and at once began to dictate.

Translation of S.A. Stern.

THE FIRST FALSE STEP

From ‘On the Heights’

The ball was to be given in the palace and the adjoining winter garden. The intendant now informed Irma of his plan, and was delighted to find that she approved of it. At the end of the garden he intended to erect a large fountain, ornamented with antique groups. In the foreground he meant to have trees and shrubbery and various kinds of rocks, so that none could approach too closely; and the background was to be a Grecian landscape, painted in the grand style.

Page 7

Irma promised to keep his secret. Suddenly she exclaimed, "We are all of us no better than lackeys and kitchen-maids. We are kept busy stewing, roasting, and cooking for weeks, in order to prepare a dish that may please their Majesties."

The intendant made no reply.

"Do you remember," continued Irma, "how, when we were at the lake, we spoke of the fact that man possessed the advantage of being able to change his dress, and thus to alter his appearance? While yet a child, masquerading was my greatest delight. The soul wings its flight in callow infancy. A *bal costume* is indeed one of the noblest fruits of culture. The love of coquetry which is innate with all of us displays itself there undisguised."

The intendant took his leave. While walking away, his mind was filled with his old thoughts about Irma.

"No," said he to himself, "such a woman would be a constant strain, and would require one to be brilliant and intellectual all day long. She would exhaust one," said he, almost aloud.

No one knew what character Irma intended to appear in, although many supposed that it would be as "Victory," since it was well known that she had stood for the model of the statue that surmounted the arsenal. They were busy conjecturing how she could assume that character without violating the social proprieties.

Irma spent much of her time in the atelier, and worked assiduously. She was unable to escape a feeling of unrest, far greater than that she had experienced years ago when looking forward to her first ball. She could not reconcile herself to the idea of preparing for the *fete* so long beforehand, and would like to have had it take place in the very next hour, so that something else might be taken up at once. The long delay tried her patience. She almost envied those beings to whom the preparation for pleasure affords the greatest part of the enjoyment. Work alone calmed her unrest. She had something to do, and this prevented the thoughts of the festival from engaging her mind during the day. It was only in the evening that she would recompense herself for the day's work, by giving full swing to her fancy.

The statue of Victory was still in the atelier and was almost finished. High ladders were placed beside it. The artist was still chiseling at the figure, and would now and then hurry down to observe the general effect, and then hastily mount the ladder again in order to add a touch here or there. Irma scarcely ventured to look up at this effigy of herself in Grecian costume—transformed and yet herself. The idea of being thus translated into the purest of art's forms filled her with a tremor, half joy, half fear.

It was on a winter afternoon. Irma was working assiduously at a copy of a bust of Theseus, for it was growing dark. Near her stood her preceptor's marble bust of Doctor Gunther. All was silent; not a sound was heard save now and then the picking or scratching of the chisel.

Page 8

At that moment the master descended the ladder, and drawing a deep breath, said:—

“There—that will do. One can never finish. I shall not put another stroke to it. I am afraid that retouching would only injure it. It is done.”

In the master's words and manner, struggling effort and calm content seemed mingled. He laid the chisel aside. Irma looked at him earnestly and said:—

“You are a happy man; but I can imagine that you are still unsatisfied. I don't believe that even Raphael or Michael Angelo was ever satisfied with the work he had completed. The remnant of dissatisfaction which an artist feels at the completion of a work is the germ of a new creation.”

The master nodded his approval of her words. His eyes expressed his thanks. He went to the water-tap and washed his hands. Then he placed himself near Irma and looked at her, while telling her that in every work an artist parts with a portion of his life; that the figure will never again inspire the same feelings that it did while in the workshop. Viewed from afar, and serving as an ornament, no regard would be had to the care bestowed upon details. But the artist's great satisfaction in his work is in having pleased himself; and yet no one can accurately determine how, or to what extent, a conscientious working up of details will influence the general effect.

While the master was speaking, the King was announced. Irma hurriedly spread a damp cloth over her clay model.

The King entered. He was unattended, and begged Irma not to allow herself to be disturbed in her work. Without looking up, she went on with her modeling. The King was earnest in his praise of the master's work.

“The grandeur that dwells in this figure will show posterity what our days have beheld. I am proud of such contemporaries.”

Irma felt that the words applied to her as well. Her heart throbbed. The plaster which stood before her suddenly seemed to gaze at her with a strange expression.

“I should like to compare the finished work with the first models,” said the king to the artist.

“I regret that the experimental models are in my small atelier. Does your Majesty wish me to have them brought here?”

“If you will be good enough to do so.”

The master left. The King and Irma were alone. With rapid steps the King mounted the ladder, and exclaimed in a tremulous voice:—



“I ascend into heaven—I ascend to you. Irma, I kiss you, I kiss your image, and may this kiss forever rest upon those lips, enduring beyond all time. I kiss thee with the kiss of eternity.” He stood aloft and kissed the lips of the statue. Irma could not help looking up, and just at that moment a slanting sunbeam fell on the King and on the face of the marble figure, making it glow as if with life.

Irma felt as if wrapped in a fiery cloud, bearing her away into eternity.

Page 9

The King descended and placed himself beside her. His breathing was short and quick. She did not dare to look up; she stood as silent and as immovable as a statue. Then the King embraced her—and living lips kissed each other.

Translation of S.A. Stern.

THE NEW HOME AND THE OLD ONE

From 'On the Heights'

Hansei received various offers for his cottage, and was always provoked when it was spoken of as a 'tumble-down old shanty.' He always looked as if he meant to say, "Don't take it ill of me, good old house: the people only abuse you so that they may get you cheap." Hansei stood his ground. He would not sell his home for a penny less than it was worth; and besides that, he owned the fishing-right, which was also worth something. Grubersepp at last took the house off his hands, with the design of putting a servant of his, who intended to marry in the fall, in possession of the place.

All the villagers were kind and friendly to them,—doubly so since they were about to leave,—and Hansei said:—

"It hurts me to think that I must leave a single enemy behind me, I'd like to make it up with the innkeeper."

Walpurga agreed with him, and said that she would go along; that she had really been the cause of the trouble, and that if the innkeeper wanted to scold any one, he might as well scold her too.

Hansei did not want his wife to go along, but she insisted upon it.

It was in the last evening in August that they went up into the village. Their hearts beat violently while they drew near to the inn. There was no light in the room. They groped about the porch, but not a soul was to be seen. Dachsel and Wachsel, however, were making a heathenish racket. Hansei called out:

"Is there no one at home?"

"No. There's no one at home," answered a voice from the dark room.

"Well, then tell the host, when he returns, that Hansei and his wife were here, and that they came to ask him to forgive them if they've done him any wrong; and to say that they forgive him too, and wish him luck."

"All right: I'll tell him," said the voice. The door was again slammed to, and Dachsel and Wachsel began barking again.

Hansei and Walpurga returned homeward.

"Do you know who that was?" asked Hansei.

"Why, yes: 'twas the innkeeper himself."

"Well, we've done all we could."

They found it sad to part from all the villagers. They listened to the lovely tones of the bell which they had heard every hour since childhood. Although their hearts were full, they did not say a word about the sadness of parting. Hansei at last broke silence:—"Our new home isn't out of the world: we can often come here."

When they reached the cottage they found that nearly all of the villagers had assembled in order to bid them farewell, but every one added, "I'll see you again in the morning."

Page 10

Grubersepp also came again. He had been proud enough before; but now he was doubly so, for he had made a man of his neighbor, or at all events had helped to do so. He did not give way to tender sentiment. He condensed all his knowledge of life into a few sentences, which he delivered himself of most bluntly.

"I only want to tell you," said he, "you'll have lots of servants now. Take my word for it, the best of them are good for nothing; but something may be made of them for all that. He who would have his servants mow well, must take the scythe in hand himself. And since you got your riches so quickly, don't forget the proverb: 'Light come, light go.' Keep steady, or it'll go ill with you."

He gave him much more good advice, and Hansei accompanied him all the way back to his house. With a silent pressure of the hand they took leave of each other.

The house seemed empty, for quite a number of chests and boxes had been sent in advance by a boat that was already crossing the lake. On the following morning two teams would be in waiting on the other side.

"So this is the last time that we go to bed in this house," said the mother. They were all fatigued with work and excitement, and yet none of them cared to go to bed. At last, however, they could not help doing so, although they slept but little.

The next morning they were up and about at an early hour. Having attired themselves in their best clothes, they bundled up the beds and carried them into the boat. The mother kindled the last fire on the hearth. The cows were led out and put into the boat, the chickens were also taken along in a coop, and the dog was constantly running to and fro.

The hour of parting had come.

The mother uttered a prayer, and then called all of them into the kitchen. She scooped up some water from the pail and poured it into the fire, with these words:—"May all that's evil be thus poured out and extinguished, and let those who light a fire after us find nothing but health in their home."

Hansei, Walpurga, and Gundel were each of them obliged to pour a ladleful of water into the fire, and the grandmother guided the child's hand while it did the same thing.

After they had all silently performed this ceremony, the grandmother prayed aloud:—

"Take from us, O Lord our God, all heartache and home-sickness and all trouble, and grant us health and a happy home where we next kindle our fire."

She was the first to cross the threshold. She had the child in her arms and covered its eyes with her hands while she called out to the others:—



“Don’t look back when you go out.”

Page 11

“Just wait a moment,” said Hansei to Walpurga when he found himself alone with her. “Before we cross this threshold for the last time, I’ve something to tell you. I must tell it. I mean to be a righteous man and to keep nothing concealed from you. I must tell you this, Walpurga. While you were away and Black Esther lived up yonder, I once came very near being wicked—and unfaithful—thank God, I wasn’t. But it torments me to think that I ever wanted to be bad; and now, Walpurga, forgive me and God will forgive me, too. Now I’ve told you, and have nothing more to tell. If I were to appear before God this moment, I’d know of nothing more.”

Walpurga embraced him, and sobbing, said, “You’re my dear good husband!” and they crossed the threshold for the last time.

When they reached the garden, Hansei paused, looked up at the cherry-tree, and said:

“And so you remain here. Won’t you come with us? We’ve always been good friends, and spent many an hour together. But wait! I’ll take you with me, after all,” cried he, joyfully, “and I’ll plant you in my new home.”

He carefully dug out a shoot that was sprouting up from one of the roots of the tree. He stuck it in his hat-band, and went to join his wife at the boat.

From the landing-place on the bank were heard the merry sounds of fiddles, clarinets, and trumpets.

Hansei hastened to the landing-place. The whole village had congregated there, and with it the full band of music. Tailor Schneck’s son, he who had been one of, the cuirassiers at the christening of the crown prince, had arranged and was now conducting the parting ceremonies. Schneck, who was scraping his bass-viol, was the first to see Hansei, and called out in the midst of the music:—

“Long live farmer Hansei and the one he loves best! Hip, hip, hurrah!”

The early dawn resounded with their cheers. There was a flourish of trumpets, and the salutes fired from several small mortars were echoed back from the mountains. The large boat in which their household furniture, the two cows, and the fowls were placed, was adorned with wreaths of fir and oak. Walpurga was standing in the middle of the boat, and with both hands held the child aloft, so that it might see the great crowd of friends and the lake sparkling in the rosy dawn.

“My master’s best respects,” said one of Grubersepp’s servants, leading a snow-white colt by the halter: “he sends you this to remember him by.”

Grubersepp was not present. He disliked noise and crowds. He was of a solitary and self-contained temperament. Nevertheless he sent a present which was not only of



intrinsic value, but was also a most flattering souvenir; for a colt is usually given by a rich farmer to a younger brother when about to depart. In the eyes of all the world—that is to say, the whole village—Hansei appeared as the younger brother of Grubersepp.

Little Burgei shouted for joy when she saw them leading the snow-white foal into the boat. Gruberwaldl, who was but six years old, stood by the whinnying colt, stroking it and speaking kindly to it.

Page 12

"Would you like to go to the farm with me and be my servant?" asked Hansei of Gruberwaldl.

"Yes, indeed, if you'll take me."

"See what a boy he is," said Hansei to his wife. "What a boy!"

Walpurga made no answer, but busied herself with the child.

Hansei shook hands with every one at parting. His hand trembled, but he did not forget to give a couple of crown thalers to the musicians.

At last he got into the boat and exclaimed:—

"Kind friends! I thank you all. Don't forget us, and we shan't forget you. Farewell! may God protect you all."

Walpurga and her mother were in tears.

"And now, in God's name, let us start!" The chains were loosened; the boat put off. Music, shouting, singing, and the firing of cannon resounded while the boat quietly moved away from the shore. The sun burst forth in all his glory.

The mother sat there, with her hands clasped. All were silent. The only sound heard was the neighing of the foal.

Walpurga was the first to break the silence. "O dear Lord! if people would only show each other half as much love during life as they do when one dies or moves away."

The grandmother, who was in the middle of a prayer, shook her head. She quickly finished her prayer and said:—

"That's more than one has the right to ask. It won't do to go about all day long with your heart in your hand. But remember, I've always told you that the people are good enough at heart, even if there are a few bad ones among them."

Hansei bestowed an admiring glance upon his wife, who had so many different thoughts about almost everything. He supposed it was caused by her having been away from home. But his heart was full, too, although in a different way.

"I can hardly realize," said Hansei, taking a long breath and putting the pipe, which he had intended to light, back into his pocket, "what has become of all the years that I spent there and all that I went through during the time. Look, Walpurga! the road you see there leads to my home. I know every hill and every hollow. My mother's buried there. Do you see the pines growing on the hill over yonder? That hill was quite bare;



every tree was cut down when the French were here; and see how fine and hardy the trees are now. I planted most of them myself. I was a little boy about eleven or twelve years old when the forester hired me. He had fresh soil brought for the whole place and covered the rocky spots with moss. In the spring I worked from six in the morning till seven in the evening, putting in the little plants. My left hand was almost frozen, for I had to keep putting it into a tub of wet loam, with which I covered the roots. I was scantily clothed into the bargain, and had nothing to eat all day long but a piece of bread. In the morning it was cold enough to freeze the marrow in one's bones, and at noon I was

Page 13

almost roasted by the hot sun beating on the rocks. It was a hard life. Yes, I had a hard time of it when I was young. Thank God, it hasn't harmed me any. But I shan't forget it; and let's be right industrious and give all we can to the poor. I never would have believed that I'd live to call a single tree or a handful of earth my own; and now that God has given me so much, let's try and deserve it all."

Hansei's eyes blinked, as if there was something in them, and he pulled his hat down over his forehead. Now, while he was pulling himself up by the roots as it were, he could not help thinking of how thoroughly he had become engrafted into the neighborhood by the work of his hands and by habit. He had felled many a tree, but he knew full well how hard it was to remove the stumps.

The foal grew restive. Gruberwaldl, who had come with them in order to hold it, was not strong enough, and one of the boatmen was obliged to go to his assistance.

"Stay with the foal," said Hansei. "I'll take the oar."

"And I too," cried Walpurga. "Who knows when I'll have another chance? Ah! how often I've rowed on the lake with you and my blessed father."

Hansei and Walpurga sat side by side plying their oars in perfect time. It did them both good to have some employment which would enable them to work off the excitement.

"I shall miss the water," said Walpurga; "without the lake, life'll seem so dull and dry. I felt that, while I was in the city."

Hansei did not answer.

"At the summer palace there's a pond with swans swimming about in it," said she, but still received no answer. She looked around, and a feeling of anger arose within her. When she said anything at the palace, it was always listened to.

In a sorrowful tone she added, "It would have been better if we'd moved in the spring; it would have been much easier to get used to things."

"Maybe it would," replied Hansei, at last, "but I've got to hew wood in the winter. Walpurga, let's make life pleasant to each other, and not sad. I shall have enough on my shoulders, and can't have you and your palace thoughts besides."

Walpurga quickly answered, "I'll throw this ring, which the Queen gave me, into the lake, to prove that I've stopped thinking of the palace."

“There’s no need of that. The ring’s worth a nice sum, and besides that it’s an honorable keepsake. You must do just as I do.”

“Yes; only remain strong and true.”

The grandmother suddenly stood up before them. Her features were illumined with a strange expression, and she said:—

“Children! Hold fast to the good fortune that you have. You’ve gone through fire and water together; for it was fire when you were surrounded by joy and love and every one greeted you with kindness—and you passed through the water, when the wickedness of others stung you to the soul. At that time the water was up to your neck, and yet you weren’t drowned. Now you’ve got over it all. And when my last hour comes, don’t weep for me; for through you I’ve enjoyed all the happiness a mother’s heart can have in this world.”

Page 14

She knelt down, scooped up some water with her hand, and sprinkled it over Hansei's and also over Walpurga's face.

They rowed on in silence. The grandmother laid her head on a roll of bedding and closed her eyes. Her face wore a strange expression. After a while she opened her eyes again, and casting a glance full of happiness on her children, she said:

"Sing and be merry. Sing the song that father and I so often sang together; that one verse, the good one."

Hansei and Walpurga plied the oars while they sang:—

"Ah, blissful is the tender tie
That binds me, love, to thee;
And swiftly speed the hours by,
When thou art near to me."

They repeated the verse again, although at times the joyous shouting of the child and the neighing of the foal bade fair to interrupt it.

* * * * *

As they drew near the house, they could hear the neighing of the white foal.

"That's a good beginning," cried Hansei.

The grandmother placed the child on the ground, and got her hymn-book out of the chest. Pressing the book against her breast with both hands, she went into the house, being the first to enter. Hansei, who was standing near the stable, took a piece of chalk from his pocket and wrote the letters C.M.B., and the date, on the stable door. Then he too went into the house,—his wife, Irma, and the child following him.

Before going into the sitting-room the grandmother knocked thrice at the door. When she had entered she placed the open hymn-book upon the open window-sill, so that the sun might read in it. There were no tables or chairs in the room.

Hansei shook hands with his wife and said, "God be with you, freeholder's wife."

From that moment Walpurga was known as the "freeholder's wife," and was never called by any other name.

And now they showed Irma her room. The view extended over meadow and brook and the neighboring forest. She examined the room. There was naught but a green Dutch oven and bare walls, and she had brought nothing with her. In her paternal mansion,

and at the castle, there were chairs and tables, horses and carriages; but here—None of these follow the dead.

Irma knelt by the window and gazed out over meadow and forest, where the sun was now shining.

How was it yesterday—was it only yesterday when you saw the sun go down?

Her thoughts were confused and indistinct. She pressed her hand to her forehead; the white handkerchief was still there. A bird looked up to her from the meadow, and when her glance rested upon it it flew away into the woods.

“The bird has its nest,” said she to herself, “and I—”

Suddenly she drew herself up. Hansei had walked out to the grass plot in front of Irma’s window, removed the slip of the cherry-tree from his hat, and planted it in the ground.

Page 15

The grandmother stood by and said, "I trust that you'll be alive and hearty long enough to climb this tree and gather cherries from it, and that your children and grandchildren may do the same."

There was much to do and to set to rights in the house, and on such occasions it usually happens that those who are dearest to one another are as much in each other's way as closets and tables which have not yet been placed where they belong. The best proof of the amiability of these folks was that they assisted each other cheerfully, and indeed with jest and song.

Walpurga moved her best furniture into Irma's room. Hansei did not interpose a word. "Aren't you too lonely here?" asked Walpurga, after she had arranged everything as well as possible in so short a time.

"Not at all. There is no place in all the world lonely enough for me. You've so much to do now; don't worry about me. I must now arrange things within myself. I see how good you and yours are; fate has directed me kindly."

"Oh, don't talk in that way. If you hadn't given me the money, how could we have bought the farm? This is really your own."

"Don't speak of that," said Irma, with a sudden start. "Never mention that money to me again."

Walpurga promised, and merely added that Irma needn't be alarmed at the old man who lived in the room above hers, and who at times would talk to himself and make a loud noise. He was old and blind. The children teased and worried him, but he wasn't bad and would harm no one. Walpurga offered at all events to leave Gundel with Irma for the first night; but Irma preferred to be alone.

"You'll stay with us, won't you?" said Walpurga hesitatingly. "You won't have such bad thoughts again?"

"No, never. But don't talk now: my voice pains me, and so does yours too. Good-night! leave me alone."

Irma sat by the window and gazed out into the dark night. Was it only a day since she had passed through such terrors? Suddenly she sprang from her seat with a shudder. She had seen Black Esther's head rising out of the darkness, had again heard her dying shriek, had beheld the distorted face and the wild black tresses.—Her hair stood on end. Her thoughts carried her to the bottom of the lake, where she now lay dead. She opened the window and inhaled the soft, balmy air. She sat by the open casement for a long while, and suddenly heard some one laughing in the room above her.

“Ha! ha! I won’t do you the favor! I won’t die! I won’t die! Pooh, pooh! I’ll live till I’m a hundred years old, and then I’ll get a new lease of life.”

It was the old pensioner. After a while he continued:—

“I’m not so stupid; I know that it’s night now, and the freeholder and his wife are come. I’ll give them lots of trouble. I’m Jochem. Jochem’s my name, and what the people don’t like, I do for spite. Ha! ha! I don’t use any light, and they must make me an allowance for that. I’ll insist on it, if I have to go to the King himself about it.”

Page 16

Irma started when she heard the King mentioned.

“Yes, I’ll go to the King, to the King! to the King!” cried the old man overhead, as if he knew that the word tortured Irma.

She heard him close the window and move a chair. The old man went to bed.

Irma looked out into the dark night. Not a star was to be seen. There was no light anywhere; nothing was heard but the roaring of the mountain stream and the rustling of the trees. The night seemed like a dark abyss.

“Are you still awake?” asked a soft voice without. It was the grandmother.

“I was once a servant at this farm,” said she. “That was forty years ago; and now I’m the mother of the freeholder’s wife, and almost the head one on the farm. But I keep thinking of you all the time. I keep trying to think how it is in your heart. I’ve something to tell you. Come out again. I’ll take you where it’ll do you good to be. Come!”

Irma went out into the dark night with the old woman. How different this guide from the one she had had the day before!

The old woman led her to the fountain. She had brought a cup with her and gave it to Irma. “Come, drink; good cold water’s the best. Water comforts the body; it cools and quiets us; it’s like bathing one’s soul. I know what sorrow is too. One’s insides burn as if they were afire.”

Irma drank some of the water of the mountain spring. It seemed like a healing dew, whose influence was diffused through her whole frame.

The grandmother led her back to her room and said, “You’ve still got the shirt on that you wore at the palace. You’ll never stop thinking of that place till you’ve burned that shirt.”

The old woman would listen to no denial, and Irma was as docile as a little child. The grandmother hurried to get a coarse shirt for her, and after Irma had put it on, brought wood and a light and burnt the other at the open fire. Irma was also obliged to cut off her long nails and throw them into the fire. Then Beate disappeared for a few moments, and returned with Irma’s riding-habit. “You must have been shot; for there are balls in this,” said she, spreading out the long blue habit.

A smile passed over Irma’s face, as she felt the balls that had been sewed into the lower part of the habit, so that it might hang more gracefully. Beate had also brought something very useful,—a deerskin. “Hansei sends you this,” said she. “He thinks that maybe you’re used to having something soft for your feet to rest on. He shot the deer himself.”

Irma appreciated the kindness of the man who could show such affection to one who was both a stranger and a mystery to him.

The grandmother remained at Irma's bedside until she fell asleep. Then she breathed thrice on the sleeper and left the room.

It was late at night when Irma awoke.

"To the King! to the King! to the King!" The words had been uttered thrice in a loud voice. Was it hers, or that of the man overhead? Irma pressed her hand to her forehead and felt the bandage. Was it sea-grass that had gathered there? Was she lying alive at the bottom of the lake? Gradually all that had happened became clear to her.

Page 17

Alone, in the dark and silent night, she wept. And these were the first tears she had shed since the terrible events through which she had passed.

It was evening when Irma awoke. She put her hand to her forehead. A wet cloth had been bound round it. She had been sleeping nearly twenty-four hours. The grandmother was sitting by her bed.

"You've a strong constitution," said the old woman, "and that helped you. It's all right now."

Irma arose. She felt strong, and guided by the grandmother, walked over to the dwelling-house.

"God be praised that you're well again," said Walpurga, who was standing there with her husband; and Hansei added, "yes, that's right."

Irma thanked them, and looked up at the gable of the house. What words there met her eye?

"Don't you think the house has a good motto written on its forehead?" asked Hansei.

Irma started. On the gable of the house she read the following inscription:—

*Eat and drink: Forget not god: Thine honor guard:
Of all thy store,
THOU'LT carry hence
A winding-sheet
and nothing more.*

Translation of S.A. Stern.

THE COURT PHYSICIAN'S PHILOSOPHY

From 'On the Heights'

Gunther continued, "I am only a physician, who has held many a hand hot with fever or stiff in death in his own. The healing art might serve as an illustration. We help all who need our help, and do not stop to ask who they are, whence they come, or whether when restored to health they persist in their evil courses. Our actions are incomplete, fragmentary; thought alone is complete and all-embracing. Our deeds and ourselves are but fragments—the whole is God."

"I think I grasp your meaning [replied the Queen]. But our life, as you say, is indeed a mere fraction of life as a whole; and how is each one to bear up under the portion of

suffering that falls to his individual lot? Can one—I mean it in its best sense—always be outside of one’s self?”

“I am well aware, your Majesty, that passions and emotions cannot be regulated by ideas; for they grow in a different soil, or, to express myself correctly, move in entirely different spheres. It is but a few days since I closed the eyes of my old friend Eberhard. Even he never fully succeeded in subordinating his temperament to his philosophy; but in his dying hour he rose beyond the terrible grief that broke his heart—grief for his child. He summoned the thoughts of better hours to his aid,—hours when his perception of the truth had been undimmed by sorrow or passion,—and he died a noble, peaceful death. Your Majesty must still live and labor, elevating yourself and others, at one and the same time. Permit me to remind you of the

Page 18

moment when, seated under the weeping ash, your heart was filled with pity for the poor child that from the time it enters into the world is doubly helpless. Do you still remember how you refused to rob it of its mother? I appeal to the pure and genuine impulse of that moment. You were noble and forgiving then, because you had not yet suffered. You cast no stone at the fallen; you loved, and therefore you forgave.”

“O God!” cried the Queen, “and what has happened to me? The woman on whose bosom my child rested is the most abandoned of creatures. I loved her just as if she belonged to another world—a world of innocence. And now I am satisfied that she was the go-between, and that her naivete was a mere mask concealing an unparalleled hypocrite. I imagined that truth and purity still dwelt in the simple rustic world—but everything is perverted and corrupt. The world of simplicity is base; aye, far worse than that of corruption!”

“I am not arguing about individuals. I think you mistaken in regard to Walpurga; but admitting that you are right, of this at least we can be sure: morality does not depend upon so-called education or ignorance, belief or unbelief. The heart and mind which have regained purity and steadfastness alone possess true knowledge. Extend your view beyond details and take in the whole—that alone can comfort and reconcile you.”

“I see where you are, but I cannot get up there. I can’t always be looking through your telescope that shows naught but blue sky. I am too weak. I know what you mean; you say in effect, ‘Rise above these few people, above this span of space known as a kingdom: compared with the universe, they are but as so many blades of grass or a mere clod of earth.’”

Gunther nodded a pleased assent: but the Queen, in a sad voice, added:—

“Yes, but this space and these people constitute my world. Is purity merely imaginary? If it be not about us, where can it be found?”

“Within ourselves,” replied Gunther. “If it dwell within us, it is everywhere; if not, it is nowhere. He who asks for more has not yet passed the threshold. His heart is not yet what it should be. True love for the things of this earth, and for God, the final cause of all, does not ask for love in return. We love the divine spark that dwells in creatures themselves unconscious of it: creatures who are wretched, debased, and as the church has it, unredeemed. My Master taught me that the purest joys arise from this love of God or of eternally pure nature. I made this truth my own, and you can and ought to do likewise. This park is yours; but the birds that dwell in it, the air, the light, its beauty, are not yours alone, but are shared with you by all. So long as the world is ours, in the vulgar sense of the word, we may love it; but when we have made it our own, in a purer and better sense, no one can take it from us. The great thing is to be strong and to

know that hatred is death, that love alone is life, and that the amount of love that we possess is the measure of the life and the divinity that dwells within us.”

Page 19

Gunther rose and was about to withdraw. He feared lest excessive thought might over-agitate the Queen, who, however, motioned him to remain. He sat down again.

“You cannot imagine—” said the Queen after a long pause, “—but that is one of the cant phrases that we have learned by heart. I mean just the reverse of what I have said. You can imagine the change that your words have effected in me.”

“I can conceive it.”

“Let me ask a few more questions. I believe—nay, I am sure—that on the height you occupy, and toward which you would fain lead me, there dwells eternal peace. But it seems so cold and lonely up there. I am oppressed with a sense of fear, just as if I were in a balloon ascending into a rarer atmosphere, while more and more ballast was ever being thrown out. I don’t know how to make my meaning clear to you. I don’t understand how to keep up affectionate relations with those about me, and yet regard them from a distance, as it were,—looking upon their deeds as the mere action and reaction of natural forces. It seems to me as if, at that height, every sound and every image must vanish into thin air.”

“Certainly, your Majesty. There is a realm of thought in which hearing and sight do not exist, where there is pure thought and nothing more.”

“But are not the thoughts that there abound projected from the realm of death into that of life, and is that any better than monastic self-mortification?”

“It is just the contrary. They praise death, or at all events extol it, because after it life is to begin. I am not one of those who deny a future life. I only say, in the words of my Master, ‘Our knowledge is of life and not of death,’ and where my knowledge ceases my thoughts must cease. Our labors, our love, are all of this life. And because God is in this world and in all that exist in it, and only in those things, have we to liberate the divine essence wherever it exists. The law of love should rule. What the law of nature is in regard to matter, the moral law is to man.”

“I cannot reconcile myself to your dividing the divine power into millions of parts. When a stone is crushed, every fragment still remains a stone; but when a flower is torn to pieces, the parts are no longer flowers.”

“Let us take your simile as an illustration, although in truth no example is adequate. The world, the firmament, the creatures that live on the face of the earth, are not divided—they are one; thought regards them as a whole. Take for instance the flower. The idea of divinity which it suggests to us, and the fragrance which ascends from it, are yet part and parcel of the flower; attributes without which it is impossible for us to conceive of its existence. The works of all poets, all thinkers, all heroes, may be likened to streams of fragrance wafted through time and space. It is in the flower that they live forever.

Although the eternal spirit dwells in the cell of every tree or flower and in every human heart, it is undivided and in its unity fills the world. He whose thoughts dwell in the infinite regards the world as the mighty corolla from which the thought of God exhales.”

Page 20

Translation of S.A. Stern.

IN COUNTESS IRMA'S DIARY

From 'On the Heights'

Yesterday was a year since I lay at the foot of the rock. I could not write a word. My brain whirled with the thoughts of that day; but now it is over.

* * * * *

I don't think I shall write much more. I have now experienced all the seasons in my new world. The circle is complete. There is nothing new to come from without. I know all that exists about me, or that can happen. I am at home in my new world.

* * * * *

Unto Jesus the Scribes and Pharisees brought a woman who was to be stoned to death, and He said unto them, "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone."

Thus it is written.

But I ask: How did she continue to live—she who was saved from being stoned to death; she who was pardoned—that is, condemned to live? How did she live on? Did she return to her home? How did she stand with the world? And how with her own heart?

No answer. None.

I must find the answer in my own experience

* * * * *

"Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone." These are the noblest, the greatest words ever uttered by human lips, or heard by human ear. They divide the history of the human race into two parts. They are the "Let there be light" of the second creation. They divide and heal my little life too, and create me anew.

Has one who is not wholly without sin a right to offer precepts and reflections to others?

Look into your own heart. What are you?

Behold my hands. They are hardened by toil. I have done more than merely lift them in prayer.

* * * * *

Since I am alone I have not seen a letter of print. I have no book and wish for none; and this is not in order to mortify myself, but because I wish to be perfectly alone.

* * * * *

She who renounces the world, and in her loneliness still cherishes the thought of eternity, has assumed a heavy burden.

Convent life is not without its advantages. The different voices that join in the *chorale* sustain each other; and when the tone at last ceases, it seems to float away on the air and vanish by degrees. But here I am quite alone. I am priest and church, organ and congregation, confessor and penitent, all in one; and my heart is often so heavy, as if I must needs have another to help me bear the load. "Take me up and carry me, I cannot go further!" cries my soul. But then I rouse myself again, seize my scrip and my pilgrim's staff and wander on, solitary and alone; and while I wander, strength returns to me.

* * * * *

It often seems to me as if it were sinful thus to bury myself alive. My voice is no longer heard in song, and much more that dwells within me has become mute.

Page 21

Is this right?

If my only object in life were to be at peace with myself, it would be well enough; but I long to labor and to do something for others. Yet where and what shall it be?

* * * * *

When I first heard that the beautifully carved furniture of the great and wealthy is the work of prisoners, it made me shudder. And now, although I am not deprived of freedom, I am in much the same condition. Those who have disfigured life should, as an act of expiation, help to make life more beautiful for others. The thought that I am doing this comforts and sustains me.

* * * * *

My work prospers. But last winter's wood is not yet fit for use. My little pitchman has brought me some that is old, excellent, and well seasoned, having been part of the rafters of an old house that has just been torn down. We work together cheerfully, and our earnings are considerable.

* * * * *

Vice is the same everywhere, except that here it is more open. Among the masses, vice is characterized by coarseness; among the upper classes, by meanness.

The latter shake off the consequences of their evil deeds, while the former are obliged to bear them.

* * * * *

The rude manners of these people are necessary, and are far preferable to polite deceit. They must needs be rough and rude. If it were not for its coarse, thick bark, the oak could not withstand the storm.

I have found that this rough bark covers more tenderness and sincerity than does the smoothest surface.

* * * * *

Jochem told me, to-day, that he is still quite a good walker, but that a blind man finds it very troublesome to go anywhere; for at every step he is obliged to grope about, so that he may feel sure of his ground before he firmly plants his foot on the earth.

Is it not the same with me? Am I not obliged to be sure of the ground before I take a step?

Such is the way of the fallen.

Ah! why does everything I see or hear become a symbol of my life?

* * * * *

I have now been here between two and three years. I have formed a resolve which it will be difficult to carry out. I shall go out into the world once more. I must again behold the scenes of my past life. I have tested myself severely.

May it not be a love of adventure, that genteel yet vulgar desire to undertake what is unusual or fraught with peril? Or is it a morbid desire to wander through the world after having died, as it were?

No; far from it. What can it be? An intense longing to roam again, if it be only for a few days. I must kill the desire, lest it kill me.

Whence arises this sudden longing?

Every tool that I use while at work burns my hand.

Page 22

I must go.

I shall obey the impulse, without worrying myself with speculations as to its cause. I am subject to the rules of no order. My will is my only law. I harm no one by obeying it. I feel myself free; the world has no power over me.

I dreaded informing Walpurga of my intention. When I did so, her tone, her words, her whole manner, and the fact that she for the first time called me “child,” made it seem as if her mother were still speaking to me.

“Child,” said she, “you’re right! Go! It’ll do you good. I believe that you’ll come back and will stay with us; but if you don’t, and another life opens up to you—your expiation has been a bitter one, far heavier than your sin.”

Uncle Peter was quite happy when he learned that we were to be gone from one Sunday to the Sunday following. When I asked him whether he was curious as to where we were going, he replied:—

“It’s all one to me. I’d travel over the whole world with you, wherever you’d care to go; and if you were to drive me away, I’d follow you like a dog and find you again.”

I shall take my journal with me, and will note down every day.

* * * * *

[By the lake.]—I find it difficult to write a word.

The threshold I am obliged to cross, in order to go out into the world, is my own gravestone.

I am equal to it.

How pleasant it was to descend toward the valley. Uncle Peter sang; and melodies suggested themselves to me, but I did not sing. Suddenly he interrupted himself and said:—

“In the inns you’ll be my niece, won’t you?”

“Yes.”

“But you must call me ‘uncle’ when we’re there?”

“Of course, dear uncle.”

He kept nodding to himself for the rest of the way, and was quite happy.



We reached the inn at the landing. He drank, and I drank too, from the same glass.

"Where are you going?" asked the hostess.

"To the capital," said he, although I had not said a word to him about it. Then he said to me in a whisper:—

"If you intend to go elsewhere, the people needn't know everything."

I let him have his own way.

I looked for the place where I had wandered at that time. There—there was the rock—and on it a cross, bearing in golden characters the inscription:—

Here perished

Irma, countess Von Wildenort,

*In the twenty-first year
of her life.*

Traveler, pray for her and honor her memory.

I never rightly knew why I was always dissatisfied, and yearning for the next hour, the next day, the next year, hoping that it would bring me that which I could not find in the present. It was not love, for love does not satisfy. I desired to live in the passing moment, but could not. It always seemed as if something were waiting for me without the door, and calling me. What could it have been?

Page 23

I know now; it was a desire to be at one with myself, to understand myself. Myself in the world, and the world in me.

* * * * *

The vain man is the loneliest of human beings. He is constantly longing to be seen, understood, acknowledged, admired, and loved.

I could say much on the subject, for I too was once vain. It was only in actual solitude that I conquered the loneliness of vanity. It is enough for me that I exist.

How far removed this is from all that is mere show.

* * * * *

Now I understand my father's last act. He did not mean to punish me. His only desire was to arouse me; to lead me to self-consciousness; to the knowledge which, teaching us to become different from what we are, saves us.

* * * * *

I understand the inscription in my father's library:—"When I am alone, then am I least alone."

Yes; when alone, one can more perfectly lose himself in the life universal. I have lived and have come to know the truth. I can now die.

* * * * *

He who is at one with himself, possesses all....

I believe that I know what I have done. I have no compassion for myself. This is my full confession.

I have sinned—not against nature, but against the world's rules. Is that sin? Look at the tall pines in yonder forest. The higher the tree grows, the more do the lower branches die away; and thus the tree in the thick forest is protected and sheltered by its fellows, but can nevertheless not perfect itself in all directions.

I desired to lead a full and complete life and yet to be in the forest, to be in the world and yet in society. But he who means to live thus, must remain in solitude. As soon as we become members of society, we cease to be mere creatures of nature. Nature and morality have equal rights, and must form a compact with each other; and where there are two powers with equal rights, there must be mutual concessions.

Herein lies my sin.

He who desires to live a life of nature alone, must withdraw himself from the protection of morality. I did not fully desire either the one or the other; hence I was crushed and shattered.

My father's last action was right. He avenged the moral law, which is just as human as the law of nature. The animal world knows neither father nor mother, so soon as the young is able to take care of itself. The human world does know them and must hold them sacred.

I see it all quite clearly. My sufferings and my expiation are deserved. I was a thief! I stole the highest treasures of all: confidence, love, honor, respect, splendor.

How noble and exalted the tender souls appear to themselves when a poor rogue is sent to jail for having committed a theft! But what are all possessions which can be carried away, when compared with those that are intangible!

Page 24

Those who are summoned to the bar of justice are not always the basest of mankind.

I acknowledge my sin, and my repentance is sincere.

My fatal sin, the sin for which I now atone, was that I dissembled, that I denied and extenuated that which I represented to myself as a natural right. Against the Queen I have sinned worst of all. To me she represents that moral order which I violated and yet wished to enjoy.

To you, O Queen, to you—lovely, good, and deeply injured one—do I confess all this!

If I die before you,—and I hope that I may,—these pages are to be given to you.

* * * * *

I can now accurately tell the season of the year, and often the hour of the day, by the way in which the first sunbeams fall into my room and on my work-bench in the morning. My chisel hangs before me on the wall, and is my index.

The drizzling spring showers now fall on the trees; and thus it is with me. It seems as if there were a new delight in store for me. What can it be? I shall patiently wait!

* * * * *

A strange feeling comes over me, as if I were lifted up from the chair on which I am sitting, and were flying, I know not whither! What is it? I feel as if dwelling in eternity.

Everything seems flying toward me: the sunlight and the sunshine, the rustling of the forests and the forest breezes, beings of all ages and of all kinds—all seem beautiful and rendered transparent by the sun's glow.

I am!

I am in God!

If I could only die now and be wafted through this joy to dissolution and redemption!

But I will live on until my hour comes.

Come, thou dark hour, whenever thou wilt! To me thou art light!

I feel that there is light within me. O Eternal Spirit of the universe,
I am one with thee!

I was dead, and I live—I shall die and yet live.



Everything has been forgiven and blotted out.—There was dust on my wings.—I soar aloft into the sun and into infinite space. I shall die singing from the fullness of my soul. Shall I sing!

Enough.

* * * * *

I know that I shall again be gloomy and depressed and drag along a weary existence; but I have once soared into infinity and have felt a ray of eternity within me. That I shall never lose again. I should like to go to a convent, to some quiet, cloistered cell, where I might know nothing of the world, and could live on within myself until death shall call me. But it is not to be. I am destined to live on in freedom and to labor; to live with my fellow-beings and to work for them.

The results of my handiwork and of my powers of imagination belong to you; but what I am within myself is mine alone.

* * * * *

I have taken leave of everything here; of my quiet room, of my summer bench; for I know not whether I shall ever return. And if I do, who knows but what everything may have become strange to me?

Page 25

* * * * *

(Last page written in pencil.)—It is my wish that when I am dead, I may be wrapped in a simple linen cloth, placed in a rough unplanned coffin, and buried under the apple-tree, on the road that leads to my paternal mansion. I desire that my brother and other relatives may be apprised of my death at once, and that they shall not disturb my grave by the wayside.

No stone, no name, is to mark my grave.

EMILE AUGIER

(1820-1889)

As an observer of society, a satirist, and a painter of types and characters of modern life, Emile Augier ranks among the greatest French dramatists of this century. Critics consider him in the line of direct descent from Moliere and Beaumarchais. His collected works ('Theatre Complet') number twenty-seven plays, of which nine are in verse. Eight of these were written with a literary partner. Three are now called classics: 'Le Gendre de M. Poirier' (M. Poirier's Son-in-Law), 'L'Aventuriere' (The Adventuress), and 'Fils de Giboyer' (Giboyer's Boy). 'Le Gendre de M. Poirier' was written with Jules Sandeau, but the admirers of Augier have proved by internal evidence that his share in its composition was the greater. It is a comedy of manners based on the old antagonism between vulgar ignorant energy and ability on the one side, and lazy empty birth and breeding on the other; embodied in Poirier, a wealthy shopkeeper, and M. de Presles, his son-in-law, an impoverished nobleman. Guillaume Victor Emile Augier was born in Valence, France, September 17th, 1820, and was intended for the law; but inheriting literary tastes from his grandfather, Pigault Lebrun the romance writer, he devoted himself to letters. When his first play, 'La Cigue' (The Hemlock),—in the preface to which he defended his grandfather's memory,—was presented at the Odeon in 1844, it made the author famous. Theophile Gautier describes it at length in Vol. iii. of his 'Art Dramatique,' and compares it to Shakespeare's 'Timon of Athens.' It is a classic play, and the hero closes his career by a draught of hemlock.

Augier's works are:—'Un Homme de Bien' (A Good Man); 'L'Aventuriere' (The Adventuress); 'Gabrielle'; 'Le Joueur de Flute' (The Flute Player); 'Diane' (Diana), a romantic play on the same theme as Victor Hugo's 'Marion Delorme,' written for and played by Rachel; 'La Pierre de Touche' (The Touchstone), with Jules Sandeau; 'Philberte,' a comedy of the last century; 'Le Mariage d'Olympe' (Olympia's Marriage); 'Le Gendre de M. Poirier' (M. Poirier's Son-in-Law); 'Ceinture Doree' (The Golden Belt), with Edouard Foussier; 'La Jeunesse' (Youth); 'Les Lionnes Pauvres' (Ambition and Poverty),—a bold story of social life in Paris during the Second Empire, also with

Foussier; 'Les Effrontes' (Brass), an attack on the worship of money; 'Le Fils de Giboyer' (Giboyer's Boy), the story of a father's devotion, ambitions, and

Page 26

self-sacrifice; 'Maitre Guerin' (Guerin the Notary), the hero being an inventor; 'La Contagion' (Contagion), the theme of which is skepticism; 'Paul Forestier,' the story of a young artist; 'Le Post-Scriptum' (The Postscript); 'Lions et Renards' (Lions and Foxes), whose motive is love of power; 'Jean Thommeray,' the hero of which is drawn from Sandeau's novel of the same title; 'Madame Caverlet,' hinging on the divorce question; 'Les Fourchambault' (The Fourchambaults), a plea for family union; 'La Chasse au Roman' (Pursuit of a Romance), and 'L'Habit Vert' (The Green Coat), with Sandeau and Alfred de Musset; and the libretto for Gounod's opera 'Sappho.' Augier wrote one volume of verse, which he modestly called 'Parietaire,' the name of a common little vine, the English danewort. In 1858 he was elected to the French Academy, and in 1868 became a Commander of the Legion of Honor. He died at Croissy, October 25th, 1889. An analysis of his dramas by Emile Montegut is published in the Revue de Deux Mondes for April, 1878.

A CONVERSATION WITH A PURPOSE

From 'Giboyer's Boy'

Marquis—Well, dear Baroness, what has an old bachelor like me done to deserve so charming a visit?

Baroness—That's what I wonder myself, Marquis. Now I see you I don't know why I've come, and I've a great mind to go straight back.

Marquis—Sit down, vexatious one!

Baroness—No. So you close your door for a week; your servants all look tragic; your friends put on mourning in anticipation; I, disconsolate, come to inquire—and behold, I find you at table!

Marquis—I'm an old flirt, and wouldn't show myself for an empire when I'm in a bad temper. You wouldn't recognize your agreeable friend when he has the gout;—that's why I hide.

Baroness—I shall rush off to reassure your friend.

Marquis—They are not so anxious as all that. Tell me something of them.

Baroness—But somebody's waiting in my carriage.

Marquis—I'll send to ask him up.



Baroness—But I'm not sure that you know him.

Marquis—His name?

Baroness—I met him by chance.

Marquis—And you brought him by chance. [*He rings.*] You are a mother to me. [*To Dubois.*] You will find an ecclesiastic in Madame's carriage. Tell him I'm much obliged for his kind alacrity, but I think I won't die this morning.

Baroness—O Marquis! what would our friends say if they heard you?

Marquis—Bah! I'm the black sheep of the party, its spoiled child; that's taken for granted. Dubois, you may say also that Madame begs the Abbe to drive home, and to send her carriage back for her.

Baroness—Allow me—

Marquis—Go along, Dubois.—Now you are my prisoner.



Page 27

Baroness—But, Marquis, this is very unconventional.

Marquis [kissing her hand]—Flatterer! Now sit down, and let's talk about serious things. *[Taking a newspaper from the table.]* The gout hasn't kept me from reading the news. Do you know that poor Deodat's death is a serious mishap?

Baroness—What a loss to our cause!

Marquis—I have wept for him.

Baroness—Such talent! Such spirit! Such sarcasm!

Marquis—He was the hussar of orthodoxy. He will live in history as the angelic pamphleteer. And now that we have settled his noble ghost—

Baroness—You speak very lightly about it, Marquis.

Marquis—I tell you I've wept for him.—Now let's think of some one to replace him.

Baroness—Say to succeed him. Heaven doesn't create two such men at the same time.

Marquis—What if I tell you that I have found such another? Yes, Baroness, I've unearthed a wicked, cynical, virulent pen, that spits and splashes; a fellow who would lard his own father with epigrams for a consideration, and who would eat him with salt for five francs more.

Baroness—Deodat had sincere convictions.

Marquis—That's because he fought for them. There are no more mercenaries. The blows they get convince them. I'll give this fellow a week to belong to us body and soul.

Baroness—If you haven't any other proofs of his faithfulness—

Marquis—But I have.

Baroness—Where from?

Marquis—Never mind. I have it.

Baroness—And why do you wait before presenting him?

Marquis—For him in the first place, and then for his consent. He lives in Lyons, and I expect him to-day or to-morrow. As soon as he is presentable, I'll introduce him.

Baroness—Meanwhile, I'll tell the committee of your find.



Marquis—I beg you, no. With regard to the committee, dear Baroness, I wish you'd use your influence in a matter which touches me.

Baroness—I have not much influence—

Marquis—Is that modesty, or the exordium of a refusal?

Baroness—If either, it's modesty.

Marquis—Very well, my charming friend. Don't you know that these gentlemen owe you too much to refuse you anything?

Baroness—Because they meet in my parlor?

Marquis—That, yes; but the true, great, inestimable service you render every day is to possess such superb eyes.

Baroness—It's well for you to pay attention to such things!

Marquis—Well for me, but better for these Solons whose compliments don't exceed a certain romantic intensity.

Baroness—You are dreaming.

Marquis—What I say is true. That's why serious societies always rally in the parlor of a woman, sometimes clever, sometimes beautiful. You are both, Madame: judge then of your power!

Page 28

Baroness—You are too complimentary: your cause must be detestable.

Marquis—If it was good I could win it for myself.

Baroness—Come, tell me, tell me.

Marquis—Well, then: we must choose an orator to the Chamber for our Campaign against the University. I want them to choose—

Baroness—Monsieur Marechal?

Marquis—You are right.

Baroness—Do you really think so, Marquis? Monsieur Marechal?

Marquis—Yes, I know. But we don't need a bolt of eloquence, since we'll furnish the address. Marechal reads well enough, I assure you.

Baroness—We made him deputy on your recommendation. That was a good deal.

Marquis—Marechal is an excellent recruit.

Baroness—So you say.

Marquis—How disgusted you are! An old subscriber to the Constitutionnel, a liberal, a Voltairean, who comes over to the enemy bag and baggage. What would you have? Monsieur Marechal is not a man, my dear: it's the stout *bourgeoisie* itself coming over to us. I love this honest *bourgeoisie*, which hates the revolution, since there is no more to be gotten out of it; which wants to stem the tide which brought it, and make over a little feudal France to its own profit. Let it draw our chestnuts from the fire if it wants to. This pleasant sight makes me enjoy politics. Long live Monsieur Marechal and his likes, *bourgeois* of the right divine. Let us heap these precious allies with honor and glory until our triumph ships them off to their mills again.

Baroness—Several of our deputies are birds of the same feather. Why choose the least capable for orator?

Marquis—It's not a question of capacity.

Baroness—You're a warm patron of Monsieur Marechal!

Marquis—I regard him as a kind of family protege. His grandfather was farmer to mine. I'm his daughter's guardian. These are bonds.

Baroness—You don't tell everything.



Marquis—All that I know.

Baroness—Then let me complete your information. They say that in old times you fell in love with the first Madame Marechal.

Marquis—I hope you don't believe this silly story?

Baroness—Faith, you do so much to please Monsieur Marechal—

Marquis—That it seems as if I must have injured him? Good heavens! Who is safe from malice? Nobody. Not even you, dear Baroness.

Baroness—I'd like to know what they can say of me.

Marquis—Foolish things that I certainly won't repeat.

Baroness—Then you believe them?

Marquis—God forbid! That your dead husband married his mother's companion? It made me so angry!

Baroness—Too much honor for such wretched gossip.

Page 29

Marquis—I answered strongly enough, I can tell you.

Baroness—I don't doubt it.

Marquis—But you are right in wanting to marry again.

Baroness—Who says I want to?

Marquis—Ah! you don't treat me as a friend. I deserve your confidence all the more for understanding you as if you had given it. The aid of a sorcerer is not to be despised, Baroness.

Baroness [*sitting down by the table*]—Prove your sorcery.

Marquis [*sitting down opposite*]—Willingly! Give me your hand.

Baroness [*removing her glove*]—You'll give it back again.

Marquis—And help you dispose of it, which is more. [*Examining her hand.*] You are beautiful, rich, and a widow.

Baroness—I could believe myself at Mademoiselle Lenormand's!

Marquis—While it is so easy, not to say tempting, for you to lead a brilliant, frivolous life, you have chosen a role almost austere with its irreproachable morals.

Baroness—If it was a role, you'll admit that it was much like a penitence.

Marquis—Not for you.

Baroness—What do you know about it?

Marquis—I read it in your hand. I even see that the contrary would cost you more, for nature has gifted your heart with unalterable calmness.

Baroness [*drawing away her hand*]—Say at once that I'm a monster.

Marquis—Time enough! The credulous think you a saint; the skeptics say you desire power; I, Guy Francois Condorier, Marquis d'Auberive, think you a clever little German, trying to build a throne for yourself in the Faubourg Saint-Germain. You have conquered the men, but the women resist you: your reputation offends them; and for want of a better weapon they use this miserable rumor I've just repeated. In short, your flag's inadequate and you're looking for a larger one. Henry IV. said that Paris was worth a mass. You think so too.



Baroness—They say sleep-walkers shouldn't be contradicted. However, do let me say that if I really wanted a husband—with my money and my social position, I might already have found twenty.

Marquis—Twenty, yes; but not one. You forget this little devil of a rumor.

Baroness [rising]—Only fools believe that.

Marquis [rising]—There's the *hic*. It's only very clever men, too clever, who court you, and you want a fool.

Baroness—Why?

Marquis—Because you don't want a master. You want a husband whom you can keep in your parlor, like a family portrait, nothing more.

Baroness—Have you finished, dear diviner? What you have just said lacks common-sense, but you are amusing, and I can refuse you nothing.

Marquis—Marechal shall have the oration?



Page 30

Baroness—Or I'll lose my name.

Marquis—And you *shall* lose your name—I promise you.

A SEVERE YOUNG JUDGE

From 'The Adventuress'

Clorinde [*softly*]—Here's Celie. Look at her clear eyes. I love her, innocent child!

Annibal—Yes, yes, yes! [*He sits down in a corner.*]

Clorinde [*approaching Celie, who has paused in the doorway*]—My child, you would not avoid me to-day if you knew how happy you make me!

Celie—My father has ordered me to come to you.

Clorinde—Ordered you? Did you need an order? Are we really on such terms? Tell me, do you think I do not love you, that you should look upon me as your enemy? Dear, if you could read my heart you would find there the tenderest attachment.

Celie—I do not know whether you are sincere, Madame. I hope that you are not, for it distresses one to be loved by those—

Clorinde—Whom one does not love? They must have painted me black indeed, that you are so reluctant to believe in my friendship.

Celie—They have told me—what I have heard, thanks to you, Madame, was not fit for my young ears. This interview is cruel—Please let me—

Clorinde—No, no! Stay, Mademoiselle. For this interview, painful to us both, nevertheless concerns us both.

Celie—I am not your judge, Madame.

Clorinde—Nevertheless you do judge me, and severely! Yes, my life has been blameworthy; I confess it. But you know nothing of its temptations. How should you know, sweet soul, to whom life is happy and goodness easy? Child, you have your family to guard you. You have happiness to keep watch and ward for you. How should you know what poverty whispers to young ears on cold evenings! You, who have never been hungry, how should you understand the price that is asked for a mouthful of bread?



Celie—I don't know the pleadings of poverty, but one need not listen to them. There are many poor girls who go hungry and cold and keep from harm.

Clorinde—Child, their courage is sublime. Honor them if you will, but pity the cowards.

Celie—Yes, for choosing infamy rather than work, hunger, or death! Yes, for losing the respect of all honest souls! Yes, I can pity them for not being worthier of pity.

Clorinde—So that's your Christian charity! So nothing in the world—bitter repentance or agonies of suffering, or vows of sanctity for all time to come—may obliterate the past?

Celie—You force me to speak without knowledge. But—since I must give judgment—who really hates a fault will hate the fruit of it. If you keep this place, Madame, you will not expect me to believe in the genuineness of your renunciations.

Page 31

Clorinde—I do not dishonor it. There is no reason why I should leave it. I have already proved my sincerity by high-minded and generous acts. I bear myself as my place demands. My conscience is at rest.

Celie—Your good action—for I believe you—is only the beginning of expiation. Virtue seems to me like a holy temple. You may leave it by a door with a single step, but to enter again you must climb up a hundred on your knees, beating your breast.

Clorinde—How rigid you all are, and how your parents train their first-born never to open the ranks! Oh, fortunate race! impenetrable phalanx of respectability, who make it impossible for the sinner to reform! You keep the way of repentance so rough that the foot of poor humanity cannot tread it. God will demand from you the lost souls whom your hardness has driven back to sin.

Celie—God, do you say? When good people forgive they betray his justice. For punishment is not retribution only, but the acknowledgment and recompense of those fighting ones that brave hunger and cold in a garret, Madame, yet do not surrender.

Clorinde—Go, child! I cannot bear more—

Celie—I have said more than I meant to say. Good-by. This is the first and last time that I shall ever speak of this.

[*She goes.*]

A CONTENTED IDLER

From 'M. Poirier's Son-in-Law'

[*The party are leaving the dining-room.*]

Gaston—Well, Hector! What do you think of it? The house is just as you see it now, every day in the year. Do you believe there is a happier man in the world than I?

Duke—Faith! I envy you; you reconcile me to marriage.

Antoinette [*in a low voice to Verdelet*—Monsieur de Montmeyran is a charming young man!

Verdelet [*in a low voice*—He pleases me.

Gaston [*to Poirier, who comes in last*—Monsieur Poirier, I must tell you once for all how much I esteem you. Don't think I'm ungrateful.



Poirier—Oh! Monsieur!

Gaston—Why the devil don't you call me Gaston? And you, too, dear Monsieur Verdelet, I'm very glad to see you.

Antoinette—He is one of the family, Gaston.

Gaston—Shake hands then, Uncle.

Verdelet [*aside, giving him his hand*]*—He's not a bad fellow.*

Gaston—Agree, Hector, that I've been lucky. Monsieur Poirier, I feel guilty. You make my life one long fete and never give me a chance in return. Try to think of something I can do for you.

Poirier—Very well, if that's the way you feel, give me a quarter of an hour. I should like to have a serious talk with you.

Duke—I'll withdraw.

Poirier—No, stay, Monsieur. We are going to hold a kind of family council. Neither you nor Verdelet will be in the way.



Page 32

Gaston—The deuce, my dear father-in-law. A family council! You embarrass me!

Poirier—Not at all, dear Gaston. Let us sit down.

[They seat themselves around the fireplace.]

Gaston—Begin, Monsieur Poirier.

Poirier—You say you are happy, dear Gaston, and that is my greatest recompense.

Gaston—I'm willing to double your gratification.

Poirier—But now that three months have been given to the joys of the honeymoon, I think that there has been romance enough, and that it's time to think about history.

Gaston—You talk like a book. Certainly, we'll think about history if you wish. I'm willing.

Poirier—What do you intend to do?

Gaston—To-day?

Poirier—And to-morrow, and in the future. You must have some idea.

Gaston—True, my plans are made. I expect to do to-day what I did yesterday, and to-morrow what I shall do to-day. I'm not versatile, in spite of my light air; and if the future is only like the present I'll be satisfied.

Poirier—But you are too sensible to think that the honeymoon can last forever.

Gaston—Too sensible, and too good an astronomer. But you've probably read Heine?

Poirier—You must have read that, Verdelet?

Verdelet—Yes; I've read him.

Poirier—Perhaps he spent his life at playing truant.

Gaston—Well, Heine, when he was asked what became of the old full moons, said that they were broken up to make the stars.

Poirier—I don't understand.

Gaston—When our honeymoon is old, we'll break it up and there'll be enough to make a whole Milky Way.

Poirier—That is a clever idea, of course.



Gaston—Its only merit is simplicity.

Poirier—But seriously, don't you think that the idle life you lead may jeopardize the happiness of a young household?

Gaston—Not at all.

Verdelet—A man of your capacity can't mean to idle all his life.

Gaston—With resignation.

Antoinette—Don't you think you'll find it dull after a time, Gaston?

Gaston—You calumniate yourself, my dear.

Antoinette—I'm not vain enough to suppose that I can fill your whole existence, and I admit that I'd like to see you follow the example of Monsieur de Montmeyran.

Gaston [*rising and leaning against the mantelpiece*—Perhaps you want me to fight?

Antoinette—No, of course not.

Gaston—What then?

Poirier—We want you to take a position worthy of your name.

Gaston—There are only three positions which my name permits me: soldier, bishop, or husbandman. Choose.

Page 33

Poirier—We owe everything to France. France is our mother.

Verdelet—I understand the vexation of a son whose mother remarries; I understand why he doesn't go to the wedding: but if he has the right kind of heart he won't turn sulky. If the second husband makes her happy, he'll soon offer him a friendly hand.

Poirier—The nobility cannot always hold itself aloof, as it begins to perceive. More than one illustrious name has set the example: Monsieur de Valcherriere, Monsieur de Chazerolles, Monsieur de Mont Louis—

Gaston—These men have done as they thought best. I don't judge them, but I cannot imitate them.

Antoinette—Why not, Gaston?

Gaston—Ask Montmeyran.

Verdelet—The Duke's uniform answers for him.

Duke—Excuse me, a soldier has but one opinion—his duty; but one adversary—the enemy.

Poirier—However, Monsieur—

Gaston—Enough, it isn't a matter of politics, Monsieur Poirier. One may discuss opinions, but not sentiments. I am bound by gratitude. My fidelity is that of a servant and of a friend. Not another word. [*To the Duke.*] I beg your pardon, my dear fellow. This is the first time we've talked politics here, and I promise you it shall be the last.

The Duke [*in a low voice to Antoinette*]—You've been forced into making a mistake, Madame.

Antoinette—I know it, now that it's too late.

Verdelet [*softly, to Poirier*]—Now you're in a fine fix.

Poirier [*in same tone*]—He's repulsed the first assault, but I don't raise the siege.

Gaston—I'm not resentful, Monsieur Poirier. Perhaps I spoke a little too strongly, but this is a tender point with me, and unintentionally you wounded me. Shake hands.

Poirier—You are very kind.

A Servant—There are some people in the little parlor who say they have an appointment with Monsieur Poirier.

Poirier—Very well, ask them to wait a moment. [*The servant goes out.*] Your creditors, son-in-law.

Gaston—Yours, my dear father-in-law. I've turned them over to you.

Duke—As a wedding present.

THE FEELINGS OF AN ARTIST

From 'M. Poirier's Son-in-Law'

Poirier [alone]—How vexatious he is, that son-in-law of mine! and there's no way to get rid of him. He'll die a nobleman, for he will do nothing and he is good for nothing.—There's no end to the money he costs me.—He is master of my house.—I'll put a stop to it. [*He rings. Enter a servant.*] Send up the porter and the cook. We shall see my son-in-law! I have set up my back. I've unsheathed my velvet paws. You will make no concessions, eh, my fine gentleman? Take your comfort! I will not yield either: you may remain marquis, and I will again become a *bourgeois*. At least I'll have the pleasure of living to my fancy.



Page 34

The Porter—Monsieur has sent for me?

Poirier—Yes, Francois, Monsieur has sent for you. You can put the sign on the door at once.

The Porter—The sign?

Poirier—“To let immediately, a magnificent apartment on the first floor, with stables and carriage houses.”

The Porter—The apartment of Monsieur le Marquis?

Poirier—You have said it, Francois.

The Porter—But Monsieur le Marquis has not given the order.

Poirier—Who is the master here, donkey? Who owns this mansion?

The Porter—You, Monsieur.

Poirier—Then do what I tell you without arguing.

The Porter—Yes, Monsieur. [*Enter Vatel.*]

Poirier—Go, Francois. [*Exit Porter.*] Come in, Monsieur Vatel: you are getting up a big dinner for to-morrow?

Vatel—Yes, Monsieur, and I venture to say that the menu would not be disowned by my illustrious ancestor himself. It is really a work of art, and Monsieur Poirier will be astonished.

Poirier—Have you the menu with you?

Vatel—No, Monsieur, it is being copied; but I know it by heart.

Poirier—Then recite it to me.

Vatel—Le potage aux ravioles a l’Italienne et le potage a l’orge a la Marie Stuart.

Poirier—You will replace these unknown concoctions by a good meat soup, with some vegetables on a plate.

Vatel—What, Monsieur?

Poirier—I mean it. Go on.



Vatel—Releve. La carpe du Rhin a la Lithuanienne, les poulardes a la Godard—le filet de boeuf braise aux raisins a la Napolitaine, le jambon de Westphalie, rotie madere.

Poirier—Here is a simpler and far more sensible fish course: brill with caper sauce—then Bayonne ham with spinach, and a savory stew of bird, with well-browned rabbit.

Vatel—But, Monsieur Poirier—I will never consent.

Poirier—I am master—do you hear? Go on.

Vatel—Entrees. Les filets de volaille a la concordat—les croustades de truffe garnies de foies a la royale, le faison etoffe a la Montpensier, les perdreaux rouges farcis a la bohemienne.

Poirier—In place of these side dishes we will have nothing at all, and we will go at once to the roast,—that is the only essential.

Vatel—That is against the precepts of art.

Poirier—I'll take the blame of that: let us have your roasts.

Vatel—It is not worth while, Monsieur: my ancestor would have run his sword through his body for a less affront. I offer my resignation.

Poirier—And I was about to ask for it, my good friend; but as one has eight days to replace a servant—

Vatel—A servant, Monsieur? I am an artist!



Page 35

Poirier—I will fill your place by a woman. But in the mean time, as you still have eight days in my service, I wish you to prepare my menu.

Vatel—I will blow my brains out before I dishonor my name.

Poirier [*aside*]—Another fellow who adores his name! [*Aloud.*] You may burn your brains, Monsieur Vatel, but don't burn your sauces.—Well, *bon jour!* [*Exit Vatel.*] And now to write invitations to my old cronies of the Rue des Bourdonnais. Monsieur le Marquis de Presles, I'll soon take the starch out of you.

[*He goes out whistling the first couplet of 'Monsieur and Madame Denis.'*]

A CONTEST OF WILLS

From 'The Fourchambaults'

Madame Fourchambault—Why do you follow me?

Fourchambault—I'm not following you: I'm accompanying you.

Madame Fourchambault—I despise you; let me alone. Oh! my poor mother little thought what a life of privation would be mine when she gave me to you with a dowry of eight hundred thousand francs!

Fourchambault—A life of privation—because I refuse you a yacht!

Madame Fourchambault—I thought my dowry permitted me to indulge a few whims, but it seems I was wrong.

Fourchambault—A whim costing eight thousand francs!

Madame Fourchambault—Would you have to pay for it?

Fourchambault—That's the kind of reasoning that's ruining me.

Madame Fourchambault—Now he says I'm ruining him! His whole fortune comes from me.

Fourchambault—Now don't get angry, my dear. I want you to have everything in reason, but you must understand the situation.

Madame Fourchambault—The situation?



Fourchambault—I ought to be a rich man; but thanks to the continual expenses you incur in the name of your dowry, I can barely rub along from day to day. If there should be a sudden fall in stocks, I have no reserve with which to meet it.

Madame Fourchambault—That can't be true! Tell me at once that it isn't true, for if it were so you would be without excuse.

Fourchambault—I or you?

Madame Fourchambault—This is too much! Is it my fault that you don't understand business? If you haven't had the wit to make the best use of your way of living and your family connections—any one else—

Fourchambault—Quite likely! But I am petty enough to be a scrupulous man, and to wish to remain one.

Madame Fourchambault—Pooh! That's the excuse of all the dolts who can't succeed. They set up to be the only honest fellows in business. In my opinion, Monsieur, a timid and mediocre man should not insist upon remaining at the head of a bank, but should turn the position over to his son.



Page 36

Fourchambault—You are still harping on that? But, my dear, you might as well bury me alive! Already I'm a mere cipher in my family.

Madame Fourchambault—You do not choose your time well to pose as a victim, when like a tyrant you are refusing me a mere trifle.

Fourchambault—I refuse you nothing. I merely explain my position. Now do as you like. It is useless to expostulate.

Madame Fourchambault—At last! But you have wounded me to the heart, Adrien, and just when I had a surprise for you—

Fourchambault—What is your surprise? [*Aside: It makes me tremble.*]

Madame Fourchambault—Thanks to me, the Fourchambaults are going to triumph over the Duhamels.

Fourchambault—How?

Madame Fourchambault—Madame Duhamel has been determined this long time to marry her daughter to the son of the prefect.

Fourchambault—I knew it. What about it?

Madame Fourchambault—While she was making a goose of herself so publicly, I was quietly negotiating, and Baron Rastiboulois is coming to ask our daughter's hand.

Fourchambault—That will never do! I'm planning quite a different match for her.

Madame Fourchambault—You? I should like to know—

Fourchambault—He's a fine fellow of our own set, who loves Blanche, and whom she loves if I'm not mistaken.

Madame Fourchambault—You are entirely mistaken. You mean Victor Chauvet, Monsieur Bernard's clerk?

Fourchambault—His right arm, rather. His *alter ego*.

Madame Fourchambault—Blanche did think of him at one time. But her fancy was just a morning mist, which I easily dispelled. She has forgotten all about him, and I advise you to follow her example.

Fourchambault—What fault can you find with this young man?



Madame Fourchambault—Nothing and everything. Even his name is absurd. I never would have consented to be called Madame Chauvet, and Blanche is as proud as I was. But that is only a detail; the truth is, I won't have her marry a clerk.

Fourchambault—You won't have! You won't have! But there are two of us.

Madame Fourchambault—Are you going to portion Blanche?

Fourchambault—I? No.

Madame Fourchambault—Then you see there are not two of us. As I am going to portion her, it is my privilege to choose my son-in-law.

Fourchambault—And mine to refuse him. I tell you I won't have your little baron at any price.

Madame Fourchambault—Now it is your turn. What fault can you find with him, except his title?

Fourchambault—He's fast, a gambler, worn out by dissipation.

Madame Fourchambault—Blanche likes him just as he is.

Page 37

Fourchambault—Heavens! He's not even handsome.

Madame Fourchambault—What does that matter? Haven't I been the happiest of wives?

Fourchambault—What? One word is as good as a hundred. I won't have him. Blanche need not take Chauvet, but she shan't marry Rastiboulois either. That's all I have to say.

Madame Fourchambault—But, Monsieur—

Fourchambault—That's all I have to say.

[*He goes out.*]

ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

(354-430)

BY SAMUEL HART

St. Augustine of Hippo (Aurelius Augustinus) was born at Tagaste in Numidia, November 13th, 354. The story of his life has been told by himself in that wonderful book addressed to God which he called the 'Confessions'. He gained but little from his father Patricius; he owed almost everything to his loving and saintly mother Monica. Though she was a Christian, she did not venture to bring her son to baptism; and he went away from home with only the echo of the name of Jesus Christ in his soul, as it had been spoken by his mother's lips. He fell deeply into the sins of youth, but found no satisfaction in them, nor was he satisfied by the studies of literature to which for a while he devoted himself. The reading of Cicero's 'Hortensius' partly called him back to himself; but before he was twenty years old he was carried away into Manichaeism, a strange system of belief which united traces of Christian teaching with Persian doctrines of two antagonistic principles, practically two gods, a good god of the spiritual world and an evil god of the material world. From this he passed after a while into less gross forms of philosophical speculation, and presently began to lecture on rhetoric at Tagaste and at Carthage. When nearly thirty years of age he went to Rome, only to be disappointed in his hopes for glory as a rhetorician; and after two years his mother joined him at Milan.

[Illustration: *ST. AUGUSTINE AND HIS MOTHER*. Photogravure from a Painting by Ary Scheffer.]

[Illustration]

The great Ambrose had been called from the magistrate's chair to be bishop of this important city; and his character and ability made a great impression on Augustine. But Augustine was kept from acknowledging and submitting to the truth, not by the intellectual difficulties which he propounded as an excuse, but by his unwillingness to submit to the moral demands which Christianity made upon him. At last there came one great struggle, described in a passage from the 'Confessions' which is given below; and Monica's hopes and prayers were answered in the conversion of her son to the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ. On Easter Day, 387, in the thirty-third year of his life, he was baptized, an unsubstantiated tradition assigning to this occasion the composition and first use of

Page 38

the *Te Deum*. His mother died at Ostia as they were setting out for Africa; and he returned to his native land, with the hope that he might there live a life of retirement and of simple Christian obedience. But this might not be: on the occasion of Augustine's visit to Hippo in 391, the bishop of that city persuaded him to receive ordination to the priesthood and to remain with him as an adviser; and four years later he was consecrated as colleague or coadjutor in the episcopate. Thus he entered on a busy public life of thirty-five years, which called for the exercise of all his powers as a Christian, a metaphysician, a man of letters, a theologian, an ecclesiastic, and an administrator.

Into the details of that life it is impossible to enter here; it must suffice to indicate some of the ways in which as a writer he gained and still holds a high place in Western Christendom, having had an influence which can be paralleled, from among uninspired men, only by that of Aristotle. He maintained the unity of the Church, and its true breadth, against the Donatists; he argued, as he so well could argue, against the irreligion of the Manichaeans; when the great Pelagian heresy arose, he defended the truth of the doctrine of divine grace as no one could have done who had not learned by experience its power in the regeneration and conversion of his own soul; he brought out from the treasures of Holy Scripture ample lessons of truth and duty, in simple exposition and exhortation; and in full treatises he stated and enforced the great doctrines of Christianity.

Augustine was not alone or chiefly the stern theologian whom men picture to themselves when they are told that he was the Calvin of those early days, or when they read from his voluminous and often illogical writings quotations which have a hard sound. If he taught a stern doctrine of predestinarianism, he taught also the great power of sacramental grace; if he dwelt at times on the awfulness of the divine justice, he spoke also from the depths of his experience of the power of the divine love; and his influence on the ages has been rather that of the 'Confessions'—taking their key-note from the words of the first chapter, "Thou, O Lord, hast made us for Thyself, and our heart is unquiet until it find rest in Thee"—than that of the writings which have earned for their author the foremost place among the Doctors of the Western Church. But his greatest work, without any doubt, is the treatise on the 'City of God.' The Roman empire, as Augustine's life passed on, was hastening to its end. Moral and political declension had doubtless been arrested by the good influence which had been brought to bear upon it; but it was impossible to avert its fall. "Men's hearts," as well among the heathen as among the Christians, were "failing them for fear and for looking after those things that were coming on the earth." And Christianity was called to meet the argument drawn from the fact that the

Page 39

visible declension seemed to date from the time when the new religion was introduced into the Roman world, and that the most rapid decline had been from the time when it had been accepted as the religion of the State. It fell to the Bishop of Hippo to write in reply one of the greatest works ever written by a Christian. Eloquence and learning, argument and irony, appeals to history and earnest entreaties, are united to move enemies to acknowledge the truth and to strengthen the faithful in maintaining it. The writer sets over against each other the city of the world and the city of God, and in varied ways draws the contrast between them; and while mourning over the ruin that is coming upon the great city that had become a world-empire, he tells of the holy beauty and enduring strength of "the city that hath the foundations."

Apart from the interest attaching to the great subjects handled by St. Augustine in his many works, and from the literary attractions of writings which unite high moral earnestness and the use of a cultivated rhetorical style, his works formed a model for Latin theologians as long as that language continued to be habitually used by Western scholars; and to-day both the spirit and the style of the great man have a wide influence on the devotional and the controversial style of writers on sacred subjects.

He died at Hippo, August 28th, 430.

[Illustration: signature]

The selections are from the 'Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,' by permission of the Christian Literature Company.

THE GODLY SORROW THAT WORKETH REPENTANCE

From the 'Confessions'

Such was the story of Pontitianus: but thou, O Lord, while he was speaking, didst turn me round towards myself, taking me from behind my back, when I had placed myself, unwilling to observe myself; and setting me before my face, that I might see how foul I was, how crooked and defiled, bespotted and ulcerous. And I beheld and stood aghast; and whither to flee from myself I found not. And if I sought to turn mine eye from off myself, he went on with his relation, and thou didst again set me over against myself, and thrust me before my eyes, that I might find out mine iniquity and hate it. I had known it, but made as though I saw it not, winked at it, and forgot it.

But now, the more ardently I loved those whose healthful affections I heard of, that they had resigned themselves wholly to thee to be cured, the more did I abhor myself when

compared with them. For many of my years (some twelve) had now run out with me since my nineteenth, when, upon the reading of Cicero's 'Hortensius,' I was stirred to an earnest love of wisdom; and still I was deferring to reject mere earthly felicity and to give myself to search out that, whereof not the finding only, but the very search, was to be preferred to the treasures and kingdoms of the world, though

Page 40

already found, and to the pleasures of the body, though spread around me at my will. But I, wretched, most wretched, in the very beginning of my early youth, had begged chastity of thee, and said, "Give me chastity and continency, only not yet." For I feared lest thou shouldest hear me soon, and soon cure me of the disease of concupiscence, which I wished to have satisfied, rather than extinguished. And I had wandered through crooked ways in a sacrilegious superstition, not indeed assured thereof, but as preferring it to the others which I did not seek religiously, but opposed maliciously.

But when a deep consideration had, from the secret bottom of my soul, drawn together and heaped up all my misery in the sight of my heart, there arose a mighty storm, bringing a mighty shower of tears. And that I might pour it forth wholly in its natural expressions, I rose from Alypius: solitude was suggested to me as fitter for the business of weeping; and I retired so far that even his presence could not be a burden to me. Thus was it then with me, and he perceived something of it; for something I suppose he had spoken, wherein the tones of my voice appeared choked with weeping, and so had risen up. He then remained where we were sitting, most extremely astonished. I cast myself down I know not how, under a fig-tree, giving full vent to my tears; and the floods of mine eyes gushed out, an acceptable sacrifice to thee. And, not indeed in these words, yet to this purpose, spake I much unto thee:—"And thou, O Lord, how long? how long, Lord, wilt thou be angry—forever? Remember not our former iniquities," for I felt that I was held by them. I sent up these sorrowful words: "How long? how long? To-morrow and to-morrow? Why not now? why is there not this hour an end to my uncleanness?"

CONSOLATION

From the 'Confessions'

So was I speaking, and weeping, in the most bitter contrition of my heart, when lo! I heard from a neighboring house a voice, as of boy or girl (I could not tell which), chanting and oft repeating, "Take up and read; take up and read." Instantly my countenance altered, and I began to think most intently whether any were wont in any kind of play to sing such words, nor could I remember ever to have heard the like. So, checking the torrent of my tears, I arose; interpreting it to be no other than a command from God, to open the book and read the first chapter I should find. Eagerly then I returned to the place where Alypius was sitting; for there had I laid the volume of the Epistles when I arose thence. I seized, opened, and in silence read that section on which my eyes first fell:—"Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." No further would I read; nor

heeded I, for instantly at the end of this sentence, by a light, as it were, of serenity infused into my heart, all the darkness of doubt vanished away.

Page 41

PAPYRUS.

Reduced facsimile of a Latin manuscript containing the

SERMONS OF ST. AUGUSTINE.

Sixth Century. In the National Library at Paris.

A fine specimen of sixth-century writing upon sheets formed of two thin layers of longitudinal strips of the stem or pith of the papyrus plant pressed together at right angles to each other.

[Illustration]

Then putting my finger between (or some other mark), I shut the volume, and with a calmed countenance, made it known to Alypius. And what was wrought in him, which I know not, he thus shewed me. He asked to see what I had read; I shewed him, and he looked even farther than I had read, and I knew not what followed. This followed: "Him that is weak in the faith, receive ye"; which he applied to himself and disclosed to me. And by this admonition was he strengthened; and by a good resolution and purpose, and most corresponding to his character, wherein he did always far differ from me for the better, without any turbulent delay he joined me. Thence we go to my mother: we tell her; she rejoiceth: we relate in order how it took place; she leapeth for joy, and triumpheth and blesseth thee, "who art able to do above all that we ask or think": for she perceived that thou hadst given her more for me than she was wont to beg by her pitiful and most sorrowful groanings.

THE FOES OF THE CITY

From 'The City of God'

Let these and similar answers (if any fuller and fitter answers can be found) be given to their enemies by the redeemed family of the Lord Christ, and by the pilgrim city of the King Christ. But let this city bear in mind that among her enemies lie hid those who are destined to be fellow-citizens, that she may not think it a fruitless labor to bear what they inflict as enemies, till they become confessors of the faith. So also, as long as she is a stranger in the world, the city of God has in her communion, and bound to her by the sacraments, some who shall not eternally dwell in the lot of the saints. Of these, some are not now recognized; others declare themselves, and do not hesitate to make common cause with our enemies in murmuring against God, whose sacramental badge they wear. These men you may see to-day thronging the churches with us, to-morrow crowding the theatres with the godless. But we have the less reason to despair of the reclamation of even such persons, if among our most declared enemies there are now some, unknown to themselves, who are destined to become our friends. In truth, these

two cities are entangled together in this world, and intermingled until the last judgment shall effect their separation. I now proceed to speak, as God shall help me, of the rise and progress and end of these two cities; and what I write, I write for the glory of the city of God, that being placed in comparison with the other, it may shine with a brighter lustre.

Page 42

THE PRAISE OF GOD

From 'The City of God'

Wherefore it may very well be, and it is perfectly credible, that we shall in the future world see the material forms of the new heavens and the new earth, in such a way that we shall most distinctly recognize God everywhere present, and governing all things, material as well as spiritual; and shall see Him, not as we now understand the invisible things of God, by the things that are made, and see Him darkly as in a mirror and in part, and rather by faith than by bodily vision of material appearances, but by means of the bodies which we shall wear and which we shall see wherever we turn our eyes. As we do not believe, but see, that the living men around us who are exercising the functions of life are alive, although we cannot see their life without their bodies, but see it most distinctly by means of their bodies, so, wherever we shall look with the spiritual eyes of our future bodies, we shall also, by means of bodily substances, behold God, though a spirit, ruling all things. Either, therefore, the eyes shall possess some quality similar to that of the mind, by which they shall be able to discern spiritual things, and among them God,—a supposition for which it is difficult or even impossible to find any support in Scripture,—or what is more easy to comprehend, God will be so known by us, and so much before us, that we shall see Him by the spirit in ourselves, in one another, in Himself, in the new heavens and the new earth, in every created thing that shall then exist; and that also by the body we shall see Him in every bodily thing which the keen vision of the eye of the spiritual body shall reach. Our thoughts also shall be visible to all, for then shall be fulfilled the words of the Apostle, "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God." How great shall be that felicity, which shall be tainted with no evil, which shall lack no good, and which shall afford leisure for the praises of God, who shall be all in all! For I know not what other employment there can be where no weariness shall slacken activity, nor any want stimulate to labor. I am admonished also by the sacred song, in which I read or hear the words, "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be always praising Thee."

A PRAYER

From 'The Trinity'

O Lord our God, directing my purpose by the rule of faith, so far as I have been able, so far as Thou hast made me able, I have sought Thee, and have desired to see with my understanding what I have believed; and I have argued and labored much. O Lord my God, my only hope, hearken to me, lest through weariness I be unwilling to seek Thee, but that I may always ardently seek Thy face. Do Thou give me strength

Page 43

to seek, who hast led me to find Thee, and hast given the hope of finding Thee more and more. My strength and my weakness are in Thy sight; preserve my strength and heal my weakness. My knowledge and my ignorance are in Thy sight; when Thou hast opened to me, receive me as I enter; when Thou hast closed, open to me as I knock. May I remember Thee, understand Thee, love Thee. Increase these things in me, until Thou renew me wholly. But oh, that I might speak only in preaching Thy word and in praising Thee. But many are my thoughts, such as Thou knowest, "thoughts of man, that are vain." Let them not so prevail in me, that anything in my acts should proceed from them; but at least that my judgment and my conscience be safe from them under Thy protection. When the wise man spake of Thee in his book, which is now called by the special name of Ecclesiasticus, "We speak," he says, "much, and yet come short; and in sum of words, He is all." When therefore we shall have come to Thee, these very many things that we speak, and yet come short, shall cease; and Thou, as One, shalt remain "all in all." And we shall say one thing without end, in praising Thee as One, ourselves also made one in Thee. O Lord, the one God, God the Trinity, whatever I have said in these books that is of Thine, may they acknowledge who are Thine; if I have said anything of my own, may it be pardoned both by Thee and by those who are Thine. Amen.

The three immediately preceding citations, from 'A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, First Series,' are reprinted by permission of the Christian Literature Company, New York.

MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS

(121-180 A.D.)

BY JAMES FRASER GLUCK

Marcus Aurelius, one of the most illustrious emperors of Rome, and, according to Canon Farrar, "the noblest of pagan emperors", was born at Rome April 20th, A.D. 121, and died at Vindobona—the modern Vienna—March 17th, A.D. 180, in the twentieth year of his reign and the fifty-ninth year of his age.

His right to an honored place in literature depends upon a small volume written in Greek, and usually called 'The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius.' The work consists of mere memoranda, notes, disconnected reflections and confessions, and also of excerpts from the Emperor's favorite authors. It was evidently a mere private diary or note-book written in great haste, which readily accounts for its repetitions, its occasional obscurity, and its frequently elliptical style of expression. In its pages the Emperor gives his aspirations, and his sorrow for his inability to realize them in his daily life; he expresses his tentative opinions concerning the problems of creation, life, and death;

his reflections upon the deceitfulness of riches, pomp, and power, and his conviction of the vanity of all things except the performance of

Page 44

duty. The work contains what has been called by a distinguished scholar “the common creed of wise men, from which all other views may well seem mere deflections on the side of an unwarranted credulity or of an exaggerated despair.” From the pomp and circumstance of state surrounding him, from the manifold cares of his exalted rank, from the tumult of protracted wars, the Emperor retired into the pages of this book as into the sanctuary of his soul, and there found in sane and rational reflection the peace that the world could not give and could never take away. The tone and temper of the work is unique among books of its class. It is sweet yet dignified, courageous yet resigned, philosophical and speculative, yet above all, intensely practical.

Through all the ages from the time when the Emperor Diocletian prescribed a distinct ritual for Aurelius as one of the gods; from the time when the monks of the Middle Ages treasured the ‘Meditations’ as carefully as they kept their manuscripts of the Gospels, the work has been recognized as the precious life-blood of a master spirit. An adequate English translation would constitute to-day a most valuable *vade mecum* of devotional feeling and of religious inspiration. It would prove a strong moral tonic to hundreds of minds now sinking into agnosticism or materialism.

[Illustration: MARCUS AURELIUS]

The distinguished French writer M. Martha observes that in the ‘Meditations of Marcus Aurelius’ “we find a pure serenity, sweetness, and docility to the commands of God, which before him were unknown, and which Christian grace has alone surpassed. One cannot read the book without thinking of the sadness of Pascal and the gentleness of Fenelon. We must pause before this soul, so lofty and so pure, to contemplate ancient virtue in its softest brilliancy, to see the moral delicacy to which profane doctrines have attained.”

Those in the past who have found solace in its pages have not been limited to any one country, creed, or condition in life. The distinguished Cardinal Francis Barberini the elder occupied his last years in translating the ‘Meditations’ into Italian; so that, as he said, “the thoughts of the pious pagan might quicken the faith of the faithful.” He dedicated the work to his own soul, so that it “might blush deeper than the scarlet of the cardinal robe as it looked upon the nobility of the pagan.” The venerable and learned English scholar Thomas Gataker, of the religious faith of Cromwell and Milton, spent the last years of his life in translating the work into Latin as the noblest preparation for death. The book was the constant companion of Captain John Smith, the discoverer of Virginia, who found in it “sweet refreshment in his seasons of despondency.” Jean Paul Richter speaks of it as a vital help in “the deepest floods of adversity.” The French translator Pierron says that it exalted his soul into a serene region, above all petty cares

Page 45

and rivalries. Montesquieu declares, in speaking of Marcus Aurelius, "He produces such an effect upon our minds that we think better of ourselves, because he inspires us with a better opinion of mankind." The great German historian Niebuhr says of the Emperor, as revealed in this work, "I know of no other man who combined such unaffected kindness, mildness, and humility with such conscientiousness and severity toward himself." Renan declares the book to be "a veritable gospel. It will never grow old, for it asserts no dogma. Though science were to destroy God and the soul, the 'Meditations of Marcus Aurelius' would remain forever young and immortally true." The eminent English critic Matthew Arnold was found on the morning after the death of his eldest son engaged in the perusal of his favorite Marcus Aurelius, wherein alone he found comfort and consolation.

The 'Meditations of Marcus Aurelius' embrace not only moral reflections; they include, as before remarked, speculations upon the origin and evolution of the universe and of man. They rest upon a philosophy. This philosophy is that of the Stoic school as broadly distinguished from the Epicurean. Stoicism, at all times, inculcated the supreme virtues of moderation and resignation; the subjugation of corporeal desires; the faithful performance of duty; indifference to one's own pain and suffering, and the disregard of material luxuries. With these principles there was, originally, in the Stoic philosophy conjoined a considerable body of logic, cosmogony, and paradox. But in Marcus Aurelius these doctrines no longer stain the pure current of eternal truth which ever flowed through the history of Stoicism. It still speculated about the immortality of the soul and the government of the universe by a supernatural Intelligence, but on these subjects proposed no dogma and offered no final authoritative solution. It did not forbid man to hope for a future life, but it emphasized the duties of the present life. On purely rational grounds it sought to show men that they should always live nobly and heroically, and how best to do so. It recognized the significance of death, and attempted to teach how men could meet it under any and all circumstances with perfect equanimity.

* * * * *

Marcus Aurelius was descended from an illustrious line which tradition declared extended to the good Numa, the second King of Rome. In the descendant Marcus were certainly to be found, with a great increment of many centuries of noble life, all the virtues of his illustrious ancestor. Doubtless the cruel persecutions of the infamous Emperors who preceded Hadrian account for the fact that the ancestors of Aurelius left the imperial city and found safety in Hispania Baetica, where in a town called Succubo—not far from the present city of Cordova—the Emperor's great-grandfather, Annius Verus, was born. From Spain also came the family of the Emperor Hadrian, who was an intimate friend of Annius Verus. The death of the father of Marcus Aurelius when the lad was of tender years led to his adoption by his grandfather and subsequently by Antoninus Pius. By Antoninus he was subsequently named as joint heir to the Imperial

dignity with Commodus, the son of Aelius Caesar, who had previously been adopted by Hadrian.

Page 46

From his earliest youth Marcus was distinguished for his sincerity and truthfulness. His was a docile and a serious nature. "Hadrian's bad and sinful habits left him," says Niebuhr, "when he gazed on the sweetness of that innocent child. Punning on the boy's paternal name of *Verus*, he called him *Verissimus*, 'the *most* true.'" Among the many statues of Marcus extant is one representing him at the tender age of eight years offering sacrifice. He was even then a priest of Mars. It was the hand of Marcus alone that threw the crown so carefully and skillfully that it invariably alighted upon the head of the statue of the god. The entire ritual he knew by heart. The great Emperor Antoninus Pius lived in the most simple and unostentatious manner; yet even this did not satisfy the exacting, lofty spirit of Marcus. At twelve years of age he began to practice all the austerities of Stoicism. He became a veritable ascetic. He ate most sparingly; slept little, and when he did so it was upon a bed of boards. Only the repeated entreaties of his mother induced him to spread a few skins upon his couch. His health was seriously affected for a time; and it was, perhaps, to this extreme privation that his subsequent feebleness was largely due. His education was of the highest order of excellence. His tutors, like Nero's, were the most distinguished teachers of the age; but unlike Nero, the lad was in every way worthy of his instructors. His letters to his dearly beloved teacher Fronto are still extant, and in a very striking and charming way they illustrate the extreme simplicity of life in the imperial household in the villa of Antoninus Pius at Lorum by the sea. They also indicate the lad's deep devotion to his studies and the sincerity of his love for his relatives and friends.

When his predecessor and adoptive father Antoninus felt the approach of death, he gave to the tribune who asked him for the watchword for the night the reply "Equanimity," directed that the golden statue of Fortune that always stood in the Emperor's chamber be transferred to that of Marcus Aurelius, and then turned his face and passed away as peacefully as if he had fallen asleep. The watchword of the father became the life-word of the son, who pronounced upon that father in the 'Meditations' one of the noblest eulogies ever written. "We should," says Renan, "have known nothing of Antoninus if Marcus Aurelius had not handed down to us that exquisite portrait of his adopted father, in which he seems, by reason of humility, to have applied himself to paint an image superior to what he himself was. Antoninus resembled a Christ who would not have had an evangel; Marcus Aurelius a Christ who would have written his own."

* * * * *

Page 47

It would be impossible here to detail even briefly all the manifold public services rendered by Marcus Aurelius to the Empire during his reign of twenty years. Among his good works were these: the establishment, upon eternal foundation, of the noble fabric of the Civil Law—the prototype and basis of Justinian's task; the founding of schools for the education of poor children; the endowment of hospitals and homes for orphans of both sexes; the creation of trust companies to receive and distribute legacies and endowments; the just government of the provinces; the complete reform of the system of collecting taxes; the abolition of the cruelty of the criminal laws and the mitigation of sentences unnecessarily severe; the regulation of gladiatorial exhibitions; the diminution of the absolute power possessed by fathers over their children and of masters over their slaves; the admission of women to equal rights to succession to property from their children; the rigid suppression of spies and informers; and the adoption of the principle that merit, as distinguished from rank or political friendship, alone justified promotion in the public service.

But the greatest reform was the reform in the Imperial Dignity itself, as exemplified in the life and character of the Emperor. It is this fact which gives to the 'Meditations' their distinctive value. The infinite charm, the tenderness and sweetness of their moral teachings, and their broad humanity, are chiefly noteworthy because the Emperor himself practiced in his daily life the principles of which he speaks, and because tenderness and sweetness, patience and pity, suffused his daily conduct and permeated his actions. The horrible cruelties of the reigns of Nero and Domitian seemed only awful dreams under the benignant rule of Marcus Aurelius.

It is not surprising that the deification of a deceased emperor, usually regarded by Senate and people as a hollow mockery, became a veritable fact upon the death of Marcus Aurelius. He was not regarded in any sense as mortal. All men said he had but returned to his heavenly place among the immortal gods. As his body passed, in the pomp of an imperial funeral, to its last resting-place, the tomb of Hadrian,—the modern Castle of St. Angelo at Rome,—thousands invoked the divine blessing of Antoninus. His memory was sacredly cherished. His portrait was preserved as an inspiration in innumerable homes. His statue was almost universally given an honored place among the household gods. And all this continued during successive generations of men.

* * * * *

Page 48

Marcus Aurelius has been censured for two acts: the first, the massacre of the Christians which took place during his reign; the second, the selection of his son Commodus as his successor. Of the massacre of the Christians it may be said, that when the conditions surrounding the Emperor are once properly understood, no just cause for condemnation of his course remains. A prejudice against the sect was doubtless acquired by him through the teachings of his dearly beloved instructor and friend Fronto. In the writings of the revered Epictetus he found severe condemnation of the Christians as fanatics. Stoicism enjoined upon men obedience to the law, endurance of evil conditions, and patience under misfortunes. The Christians openly defied the laws; they struck the images of the gods, they scoffed at the established religion and its ministers. They welcomed death; they invited it. To Marcus Aurelius, as he says in his 'Meditations,' death had no terrors. The wise man stood, like the trained soldier, ready to be called into action, ready to depart from life when the Supreme Ruler called him; but it was also, according to the Stoic, no less the duty of a man to remain until he was called, and it certainly was not his duty to invite destruction by abuse of all other religions and by contempt for the distinctive deities of the Roman faith. The Roman State was tolerant of all religions so long as they were tolerant of others. Christianity was intolerant of all other religions; it condemned them all. In persecuting what he regarded as a "pernicious sect" the Emperor regarded himself only as the conservator of the peace and the welfare of the realm. The truth is, that Marcus Aurelius enacted no new laws on the subject of the Christians. He even lessened the dangers to which they were exposed. On this subject one of the Fathers of the Church, Tertullian, bears witness. He says in his address to the Roman officials:—"Consult your annals, and you will find that the princes who have been cruel to us are those whom it was held an honor to have as persecutors. On the contrary, of all princes who have known human and Divine law, name one of them who has persecuted the Christians. We might even cite one of them who declared himself their protector,—the wise Marcus Aurelius. If he did not openly revoke the edicts against our brethren, he destroyed the effect of them by the severe penalties he instituted against their accusers." This statement would seem to dispose effectually of the charge of cruel persecution brought so often against the kindly and tender-hearted Emperor.

Page 49

Of the appointment of Commodus as his successor, it may be said that the paternal heart hoped against hope for filial excellence. Marcus Aurelius believed, as clearly appears from many passages in the 'Meditations,' that men did not do evil willingly but through ignorance; and that when the exceeding beauty of goodness had been fully disclosed to them, the depravity of evil conduct would appear no less clearly. The Emperor who, when the head of his rebellious general was brought to him, grieved because that general had not lived to be forgiven; the ruler who burned unread all treasonable correspondence, would not, nay, could not believe in the existence of such an inhuman monster as Commodus proved himself to be. The appointment of Commodus was a calamity of the most terrific character; but it testifies in trumpet tones to the nobility of the Emperor's heart, the sincerity of his own belief in the triumph of right and justice.

The volume of the 'Meditations' is the best mirror of the Emperor's soul. Therein will be found expressed delicately but unmistakably much of the sorrow that darkened his life. As the book proceeds the shadows deepen, and in the latter portion his loneliness is painfully apparent. Yet he never lost hope or faith, or failed for one moment in his duty as a man, a philosopher, and an Emperor. In the deadly marshes and in the great forests which stretched beside the Danube, in his mortal sickness, in the long nights when weakness and pain rendered sleep impossible, it is not difficult to imagine him in his tent, writing, by the light of his solitary lamp, the immortal thoughts which alone soothed his soul; thoughts which have out-lived the centuries—not perhaps wholly by chance—to reveal to men in nations then unborn, on continents whose very existence was then unknown, the Godlike qualities of one of the noblest of the sons of men.

* * * * *

The best literal translation of the work into English thus far made is that of George Long. It is published by Little, Brown & Co. of Boston. A most admirable work, 'The Life of Marcus Aurelius,' by Paul Barron Watson, published by Harper & Brothers, New York, will repay careful reading. Other general works to be consulted are as follows:— 'Seekers After God,' by Rev. F.W. Farrar, Macmillan & Co. (1890); and 'Classical Essays,' by F.W.H. Myers, Macmillan & Co. (1888). Both of these contain excellent articles upon the Emperor. Consult also Renan's 'History of the Origins of Christianity,' Book vii., Marcus Aurelius, translation published by Mathieson & Co. (London, 1896); 'Essay on Marcus Aurelius' by Matthew Arnold, in his 'Essays in Criticism,' Macmillan & Co. Further information may also be had in Montesquieu's 'Decadence of the Romans,' Sismondi's 'Fall of the Roman Empire,' and Gibbon's 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.'

[Illustration: Signature: James F. Gluck]

EXCERPTS FROM THE 'MEDITATIONS'

Page 50

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

Begin thy morning with these thoughts: I shall meet the meddler, the ingrate, the scorner, the hypocrite, the envious man, the cynic. These men are such because they know not to discern the difference between good and evil. But I know that Goodness is Beauty and that Evil is Loathsomeness: I know that the real nature of the evil-doer is akin to mine, not only physically but in a unity of intelligence and in participation in the Divine Nature. Therefore I know that I cannot be harmed by such persons, nor can they thrust upon me what is base. I know, too, that I should not be angry with my kinsmen nor hate them, because we are all made to work together fitly like the feet, the hands, the eyelids, the rows of the upper and the lower teeth. To be at strife one with another is therefore contrary to our real nature; and to be angry with one another, to despise one another, *is* to be at strife one with another. (Book ii, Sec. 1.)

Fashion thyself to the circumstances of thy lot. The men whom Fate hath made thy comrades here, love; and love them in sincerity and in truth. (Book vi., Sec. 39.)

This is distinctive of men,—to love those who do wrong. And this thou shalt do if thou forget not that they are thy kinsmen, and that they do wrong through ignorance and not through design; that ere long thou and they will be dead; and more than all, that the evil-doer hath really done thee no evil, since he hath left thy conscience unharmed. (Book viii., Sec. 22.)

THE SUPREME NOBILITY OF DUTY

As A Roman and as a man, strive steadfastly every moment to do thy duty, with dignity, sincerity, and loving-kindness, freely and justly, and freed from all disquieting thought concerning any other thing. And from such thought thou wilt be free if every act be done as though it were thy last, putting away from thee slothfulness, all loathing to do what Reason bids thee, all dissimulation, selfishness, and discontent with thine appointed lot. Behold, then, how few are the things needful for a life which will flow onward like a quiet stream, blessed even as the life of the gods. For he who so lives, fulfills their will. (Book ii., Sec. 5.)

So long as thou art doing thy duty, heed not warmth nor cold, drowsiness nor wakefulness, life, nor impending death; nay, even in the very act of death, which is indeed only one of the acts of life, it suffices to do well what then remains to be done. (Book vi., Sec. 2.)

I strive to do my duty; to all other considerations I am indifferent, whether they be material things or unreasoning and ignorant people. (Book vi., Sec. 22.)

THE FUTURE LIFE. IMMORTALITY

Page 51

This very moment thou mayest die. Think, act, as if this were now to befall thee. Yet fear not death. If there are gods they will do thee no evil. If there are not gods, or if they care not for the welfare of men, why should I care to live in a Universe that is devoid of Divine beings or of any providential care? But, verily, there are Divine beings, and they do concern themselves with the welfare of men; and they have given unto him all power not to fall into any real evil. If, indeed, what men call misfortunes were really evils, then from these things also, man would have been given the power to free himself. But—thou sayest—are not death, dishonor, pain, really evils? Reflect that if they were, it is incredible that the Ruler of the Universe has, through ignorance, overlooked these things, or has not had the power or the skill to prevent them; and that thereby what is real evil befalls good and bad alike. For true it is that life and death, honor and dishonor, pain and pleasure, come impartially to the good and to the bad. But none of these things can affect our lives if they do not affect our true selves. Now our real selves they do not affect either for better or for worse; and therefore such things are not really good or evil. (Book ii., Sec.11.)

* * * * *

If our spirits live, how does Space suffice for all during all the ages? Well, how does the earth contain the bodies of those who have been buried therein during all the ages? In the latter case, the decomposition and—after a certain period—the dispersion of the bodies already buried, affords room for other bodies; so, in the former case, the souls which pass into Space, after a certain period are purged of their grosser elements and become ethereal, and glow with the glory of flame as they meet and mingle with the Creative Energy of the world. And thereby there is room for other souls which in their turn pass into Space. This, then, is the explanation that may be given, if souls continue to exist at all.

Moreover, in thinking of all the bodies which the earth contains, we must have in mind not only the bodies which are buried therein, but also the vast number of animals which are the daily food of ourselves and also of the entire animal creation itself. Yet these, too, Space contains; for on the one hand they are changed into blood which becomes part of the bodies that are buried in the earth, and on the other hand these are changed into the ultimate elements of fire or air. (Book iv., Sec.21.)

I am spirit and body: neither will pass into nothingness, since neither came therefrom; and therefore every part of me, though changed in form, will continue to be a part of the Universe, and that part will change into another part, and so on through all the ages. And therefore, through such changes I myself exist; and, in like manner, those who preceded me and those who will follow me will exist forever,—a conclusion equally true though the Universe itself be dissipated at prescribed cycles of time. (Book v., Sec. 13.)

Page 52

* * * * *

How can it be that the gods, who have clothed the Universe with such beauty and ordered all things with such loving-kindness for the welfare of man, have neglected this alone, that the best men—the men who walked as it were with the Divine Being, and who, by their acts of righteousness and by their reverent service, dwelt ever in his presence—should never live again when once they have died? If this be really true, then be satisfied that it is best that it should be so, else it would have been otherwise ordained. For whatever is right and just is possible; and therefore, if it were in accord with the will of the Divine Being that we should live after death—so it would have been. But because it is otherwise,—if indeed it be otherwise,—rest thou satisfied that this also is just and right.

Moreover, is it not manifest to thee that in inquiring so curiously concerning these things, thou art questioning God himself as to what is right, and that this thou wouldst not do didst thou not believe in his supreme goodness and wisdom? Therefore, since in these we believe, we may also believe that in the government of the Universe nothing that is right and just has been overlooked or forgotten. (Book xii., Sec. 5.)

THE UNIVERSAL BEAUTY OF THE WORLD

To him who hath a true insight into the real nature of the Universe, every change in everything therein that is a part thereof seems appropriate and delightful. The bread that is over-baked so that it cracks and bursts asunder hath not the form desired by the baker; yet none the less it hath a beauty of its own, and is most tempting to the palate. Figs bursting in their ripeness, olives near even unto decay, have yet in their broken ripeness a distinctive beauty. Shocks of corn bending down in their fullness, the lion's mane, the wild boar's mouth all flecked with foam, and many other things of the same kind, though perhaps not pleasing in and of themselves, yet as necessary parts of the Universe created by the Divine Being they add to the beauty of the Universe, and inspire a feeling of pleasure. So that if a man hath appreciation of and an insight into the purpose of the Universe, there is scarcely a portion thereof that will not to him in a sense seem adapted to give delight. In this sense the open jaws of wild beasts will appear no less pleasing than their prototypes in the realm of art. Even in old men and women he will be able to perceive a distinctive maturity and seemliness, while the winsome bloom of youth he can contemplate with eyes free from lascivious desire. And in like manner it will be with very many things which to every one may not seem pleasing, but which will certainly rejoice the man who is a true student of Nature and her works. (Book iii., Sec. 2.)

THE GOOD MAN

In the mind of him who is pure and good will be found neither corruption nor defilement nor any malignant taint. Unlike the actor who leaves the stage before his part is played, the life of such a man is complete whenever death may come. He is neither cowardly nor presuming; not enslaved to life nor indifferent to its duties; and in him is found nothing worthy of condemnation nor that which putteth to shame. (Book iii., Sec. 8.)



Page 53

Test by a trial how excellent is the life of the good man;—the man who rejoices at the portion given him in the universal lot and abides therein, content; just in all his ways and kindly minded toward all men. (Book iv., Sec. 25.)

This is moral perfection: to live each day as though it were the last; to be tranquil, sincere, yet not indifferent to one's fate. (Book vii., Sec. 69.)

THE BREVITY OF LIFE

Cast from thee all other things and hold fast to a few precepts such as these: forget not that every man's real life is but the present moment,—an indivisible point of time,—and that all the rest of his life hath either passed away or is uncertain. Short, then, the time that any man may live; and small the earthly niche wherein he hath his home; and short is longest fame,—a whisper passed from race to race of dying men, ignorant concerning themselves, and much less really knowing thee, who died so long ago. (Book iii., Sec. 10.)

VANITY OF LIFE

Many are the doctors who have knit their brows over their patients and now are dead themselves; many are the astrologers who in their day esteemed themselves renowned in foretelling the death of others, yet now they too are dead. Many are the philosophers who have held countless discussions upon death and immortality, and yet themselves have shared the common lot; many the valiant warriors who have slain their thousands and yet have themselves been slain by Death; many are the rulers and the kings of the earth, who, in their arrogance, have exercised over others the power of life or death as though they were themselves beyond the hazard of Fate, and yet themselves have, in their turn, felt Death's remorseless power. Nay, even great cities—Helice, Pompeii, Herculaneum—have, so to speak, died utterly. Recall, one by one, the names of thy friends who have died; how many of these, having closed the eyes of their kinsmen, have in a brief time been buried also. To conclude: keep ever before thee the brevity and vanity of human life and all that is therein; for man is conceived to-day, and to-morrow will be a mummy or ashes. Pass, therefore, this moment of life in accord with the will of Nature, and depart in peace: even as does the olive, which in its season, fully ripe, drops to the ground, blessing its mother, the earth, which bore it, and giving thanks to the tree which put it forth. (Book iv., Sec. 48.)

A simple yet potent help to enable one to despise Death is to recall those who, in their greed for life, tarried the longest here. Wherein had they really more than those who were cut off untimely in their bloom? Together, at last, somewhere, they all repose in death. Cadicianus, Fabius, Julianus, Lepidus, or any like them, who bore forth so many to the tomb, were, in their turn, borne thither also. Their longer span was but trivial!

Think too, of the cares thereof, of the people with whom it was passed, of the infirmities of the flesh! All vanity! Think of the infinite deeps of Time in the past, of the infinite depths to be! And in that vast profound of Time, what difference is there between a life of three centuries and the three days' life of a little child! (Book iv., Sec. 50.)

Page 54

* * * * *

Think of the Universe of matter!—an atom thou! Think of the eternity of Time—thy predestined time but a moment! Reflect upon the great plan of Fate—how trivial this destiny of thine! (Book v., Sec. 24.)

* * * * *

All things are enveloped in such darkness that they have seemed utterly incomprehensible to those who have led the philosophic life—and those too not a few in number, nor of ill-repute. Nay, even to the Stoics the course of affairs seems an enigma. Indeed, every conclusion reached seems tentative; for where is the man to be found who does not change his conclusions? Think too of the things men most desire, —riches, reputation, and the like,—and consider how ephemeral they are, how vain! A vile wretch, a common strumpet, or a thief, may possess them. Then think of the habits and manners of those about thee—how difficult it is to endure the least offensive of such people—nay how difficult, most of all, it is to endure one's self!

Amidst such darkness, then, and such unworthiness, amidst this eternal change, with all temporal things and even Time itself passing away, with all things moving in eternal motion, I cannot imagine what, in all this, is worthy of a man's esteem or serious effort. (Book v., Sec. 10.)

DEATH

To cease from bodily activity, to end all efforts of will and of thought, to stop all these forever, is no evil. For do but contemplate thine own life as a child, a growing lad, a youth, an old man: the change to each of these periods was the death of the period which preceded it. Why then fear the death of all these—the death of thyself? Think too of thy life under the care of thy grandfather, then of thy life under the care of thy mother, then under the care of thy father, and so on with every change that hath occurred in thy life, and then ask thyself concerning any change that hath yet to be, Is there anything to fear? And then shall all fear, even of the great change,—the change of death itself,—vanish and flee away. (Book ix., Sec.21.)

FAME

Contemplate men as from some lofty height. How innumerable seem the swarms of men! How infinite their pomps and ceremonies! How they wander to and fro upon the deep in fair weather and in storm! How varied their fate in their births, in their lives, in their deaths! Think of the lives of those who lived long ago, of those who shall follow thee, of those who now live in uncivilized lands who have not even heard of thy name,

and, of those who have heard it, how many will soon forget it; of how many there are who now praise thee who will soon malign thee,—and thence conclude the vanity of fame, glory, reputation. (Book ix., Sec.30.)

PRAYER

Page 55

The gods are all-powerful or they are not. If they are not, why pray to them at all? If they are, why dost thou not pray to them to remove from thee all desire and all fear, rather than to ask from them the things thou longest for, or the removal of those things of which thou art in fear? For if the gods can aid men at all, surely they will grant this request. Wilt thou say that the removal of all fear and of all desire is within thine own power? If so, is it not better, then, to use the strength the gods have given, rather than in a servile and fawning way to long for those things which our will cannot obtain? And who hath said to thee that the gods will not *strengthen* thy will? I say unto thee, begin to pray that this may come to pass, and thou shalt see what shall befall thee. One man prays that he may enjoy a certain woman: let thy prayer be to not have even the desire so to do. Another man prays that he may not be forced to do his duty: let thy prayer be that thou mayest not even desire to be relieved of its performance. Another man prays that he may not lose his beloved son: let thy prayer be that even the fear of losing him may be taken away. Let these be thy prayers, and thou shalt see what good will befall thee. (Book ix., Sec.41.)

FAITH

The Universe is either a chaos or a fortuitous aggregation and dispersion of atoms; or else it is builded in order and harmony and ruled by Wisdom. If then it is the former, why should one wish to tarry in a hap-hazard disordered mass? Why should I be concerned except to know how soon I may cease to be? Why should I be disquieted concerning what I do, since whatever I may do, the elements of which I am composed will at last, at last be scattered? But if the latter thought be true, then I reverence the Divine One; I trust; I possess my soul in peace. (Book vi., Sec. 10.)

PAIN

If pain cannot be borne, we die. If it continue a long time it becomes endurable; and the mind, retiring into itself, can keep its own tranquillity and the true self be still unharmed. If the body feel the pain, let the body make its moan. (Book vii., Sec.30.)

LOVE AND FORGIVENESS FOR THE EVIL-DOER

If it be in thy power, teach men to do better. If not, remember it is always in thy power to forgive. The gods are so merciful to those who err, that for some purposes they grant their aid to such men by conferring upon them health, riches, and honor. What prevents thee from doing likewise? (Book ix., Sec.11.)

ETERNAL CHANGE THE LAW OF THE UNIVERSE

Page 56

Think, often, of how swiftly all things pass away and are no more—the works of Nature and the works of man. The substance of the Universe—matter—is like unto a river that flows on forever. All things are not only in a constant state of change, but they are the cause of constant and infinite change in other things. Upon a narrow ledge thou standest! Behind thee, the bottomless abyss of the Past! In front of thee, the Future that will swallow up all things that now are! Over what things, then, in this present life, wilt thou, O foolish man, be disquieted or exalted—making thyself wretched; seeing that they can vex thee only for a time—a brief, brief time! (Book v., Sec.23.)

THE PERFECT LIBERTY OF THE GOOD MAN

Peradventure men may curse thee, torture thee, kill thee; yet can all these things not prevent thee from keeping at all times thy thoughts pure, considerate, sober, and just. If one should stand beside a limpid stream and cease not to revile it, would the spring stop pouring forth its refreshing waters? Nay, if such an one should even cast into the stream mud and mire, would not the stream quickly scatter it, and so bear it away that not even a trace would remain? How then wilt thou be able to have within thee not a mere well that may fail thee, but a fountain that shall never cease to flow? By wonting thyself every moment to independence in judgment, joined together with serenity of thought and simplicity in act and bearing. (Book viii., Sec.51.)

THE HARMONY AND UNITY OF THE UNIVERSE

O divine Spirit of the Universe, Thy will, Thy wish is mine! Calmly I wait Thy appointed times, which cannot come too early or too late! Thy providences are all fruitful to me! Thou art the source, Thou art the stay, Thou art the end of all things. The poet says of his native city, “Dear city of Cecrops”; and shall I not say of the Universe, “Beloved City of God”? (Book iv., Sec.23.)

Either there is a predestined order in the Universe, or else it is mere aggregation, fortuitous yet not without a certain kind of order. For how within thyself can a certain system exist and yet the entire Universe be chaos? And especially when in the Universe all things, though separate and divided, yet work together in unity? (Book iv., Sec.27.)

Think always of the Universe as one living organism, composed of one material substance and one soul. Observe how all things are the product of a single conception—the conception of a living organism. Observe how one force is the cause of the motion of all things: that all existing things are the concurrent causes of all that is to be—the eternal warp and woof of the ever-weaving web of existence. (Book iv., Sec.40.)

THE CONDUCT OF LIFE

Page 57

Country houses, retreats in the mountains or by the sea—these things men seek out for themselves; and often thou, too, dost most eagerly desire such things. But this does but betoken the greatest ignorance; for thou art able, when thou desirest, to retreat into thyself. No otherwhere can a man find a retreat more quiet and free from care than in his own soul; and most of all, when he hath such rules of conduct that if faithfully remembered, they will give to him perfect equanimity,—for equanimity is naught else than a mind harmoniously disciplined. Cease not then to betake thyself to this retreat, there to refresh thyself. Let thy rules of conduct be few and well settled; so that when thou hast thought thereon, straightway they will suffice to thoroughly purify the soul that possesses them, and to send thee back, restless no more, to the things to the which thou must return. With what indeed art thou disquieted? With the wickedness of men? Meditate on the thought that men do not do evil of set purpose. Remember also how many in the past, who, after living in enmity, suspicion, hatred, and strife one with another, now lie prone in death and are but ashes. Fret then no more. But perhaps thou art troubled concerning the portion decreed to thee in the Universe? Remember this alternative: either there is a Providence or simply matter! Recall all the proofs that the world is, as it were, a city or a commonwealth! But perhaps the desires of the body still torment thee? Forget not, then, that the mind, when conscious of its real self, when self-reliant, shares not the agitations of the body, be they great or small. Recall too all thou hast learned (and now holdest as true) concerning pleasure and pain. But perhaps what men call Fame allures thee? Behold how quickly all things are forgotten! Before us, after us, the formless Void of endless ages! How vain is human praise! How fickle and indiscriminating those who seem to praise! How limited the sphere of the greatest fame! For the whole earth is but a point in space, thy dwelling-place a tiny nook therein. How few are those who dwell therein, and what manner of men are those who will praise thee!

Therefore, forget not to retire into thine own little country place,—thyself. Above all, be not diverted from thy course. Be serene, be free, contemplate all things as a man, as a lover of his kind, and of his country—yet withal as a being born to die. Have readiest to thy hand, above all others, these two thoughts: one, that *things* cannot touch the soul; the other, that things are perpetually changing and ceasing to be. Remember how many of these changes thou thyself hast seen! The Universe is change. But as thy thoughts are, so thy life shall be. (Book iv., Sec.3.)

* * * * *

All things that befall thee should seem to thee as natural as roses in spring or fruits in autumn: such things, I mean, as disease, death, slander, dissimulation, and all other things which give pleasure or pain to foolish men. (Book iv., Sec.44.)

Page 58

* * * * *

Be thou like a lofty headland. Endlessly against it dash the waves; yet it stands unshaken, and lulls to rest the fury of the sea. (Book iv., Sec.49.)

* * * * *

“Unhappy me upon whom this misfortune hath fallen!”—nay, rather thou shouldst say, “Fortunate I, that having met with such a misfortune, I am able to endure it without complaining; in the present not dismayed, in the future dreading no evil. Such a misadventure might have befallen a man who could not, perchance, have endured it without grievous suffering.” Why then shouldst thou call *anything* that befalls thee a misfortune, and not the rather a blessing? Is that a “misfortune,” in all cases, which does not defeat the purpose of man’s nature? and does that defeat man’s nature which his *Will* can accept? And what that *Will* can accept, thou knowest. Can this misadventure, then, prevent thy Will from being just, magnanimous, temperate, circumspect, free from rashness or error, considerate, independent? Can it prevent thy Will from being, in short, all that becomes a man? Remember, then, should anything befall thee which might cause thee to complain, to fortify thyself with this truth: this is not a misfortune, while to endure it nobly is a blessing. (Book iv., Sec.49.)

* * * * *

Be not annoyed or dismayed or despondent if thou art not able to do all things in accord with the rules of right conduct. When thou hast not succeeded, renew thy efforts, and be serene if, in most things, thy conduct is such as becomes a man. Love and pursue the philosophic life. Seek Philosophy, not as thy taskmaster but to find a medicine for all thy ills, as thou wouldst seek balm for thine eyes, a bandage for a sprain, a lotion for a fever. So it shall come to pass that the voice of Reason shall guide thee and bring to thee rest and peace. Remember, too, that Philosophy enjoins only such things as are in accord with thy better nature. The trouble is, that in thy heart thou prefer-rest those things which are not in accord with thy better nature. For thou sayest, “What can be more delightful than these things?” But is not the word “delightful” in this sense misleading? Are not magnanimity, broad-mindedness, sincerity, equanimity, and a reverent spirit more “delightful”? Indeed, what is more “delightful” than Wisdom, if so be thou wilt but reflect upon the strength and contentment of mind and the happiness of life that spring from the exercise of the powers of thy reason and thine intelligence? (Book v., Sec.9.)

* * * * *

As are thy wonted thoughts, so is thy mind; and the soul is tinged by the coloring of the mind. Let then thy mind be constantly suffused with such thoughts as these: Where it

is possible for a man to live, there he can live nobly. But suppose he must live in a palace? Be it so; even there he can live nobly. (Book v., Sec.16.)

Page 59

* * * * *

Live with the gods! And he so lives who at all times makes it manifest that he is content with his predestined lot, fulfilling the entire will of the indwelling spirit given to man by the Divine Ruler, and which is in truth nothing else than the Understanding—the Reason of man. (Book v., Sec.27.)

Seek the solitude of thy spirit. This is the law of the indwelling Reason—to be self-content and to abide in peace when what is right and just hath been done. (Book vii., Sec. 28.)

* * * * *

Let thine eyes follow the stars in their courses as though their movements were thine own. Meditate on the eternal transformation of Matter. Such thoughts purge the mind of earthly passion and desire. (Book vii., Sec. 45.)

* * * * *

Search thou thy heart! Therein is the fountain of good! Do thou but dig, and abundantly the stream shall gush forth. (Book vii., Sec. 59.)

* * * * *

Be not unmindful of the graces of life. Let thy body be stalwart, yet not ungainly either in motion or in repose. Let not thy face alone, but thy whole body, make manifest the alertness of thy mind. Yet let all this be without affectation. (Book vii., Sec. 60.)

* * * * *

Thy breath is part of the all-encircling air, and is one with it. Let thy mind be part, no less, of that Supreme Mind comprehending all things. For verily, to him who is willing to be inspired thereby, the Supreme Mind flows through all things and permeates all things as truly as the air exists for him who will but breathe. (Book viii., Sec. 54.)

* * * * *

Men are created that they may live for each other. Teach them to be better or bear with them as they are. (Book viii., Sec. 59.)

* * * * *

Write no more, Antoninus, about what a good man is or what he ought to do. *Be* a good man. (Book x., Sec. 16.)

* * * * *

Look steadfastly at any created thing. See! it is changing, melting into corruption, and ready to be dissolved. In its essential nature, it was born but to die. (Book x., Sec. 18.)

Co-workers are we all, toward one result. Some, consciously and of set purpose; others, unwittingly even as men who sleep,—of whom Heraclitus (I think it is he) says they also are co-workers in the events of the Universe. In diverse fashion also men work; and abundantly, too, work the fault-finders and the hinderers,—for even of such as these the Universe hath need. It rests then with thee to determine with what workers thou wilt place thyself; for He who governs all things will without failure place thee at thy proper task, and will welcome thee to some station among those who work and act together. (Book vi., Sec.42.)

Page 60

* * * * *

Unconstrained and in supreme joyousness of soul thou mayest live though all men revile thee as they list, and though wild beasts rend in pieces the unworthy garment—thy body. For what prevents thee, in the midst of all this, from keeping thyself in profound calm, with a true judgment of thy surroundings and a helpful knowledge of the things that are seen? So that the Judgment may say to whatever presents itself, “In truth this is what thou really art, howsoever thou appearest to men;” and thy Knowledge may say to whatsoever may come beneath its vision, “Thee I sought; for whatever presents itself to me is fit material for nobility in personal thought and public conduct; in short, for skill in work for man or for God.” For all things which befall us are related to God or to man, and are not new to us or hard to work upon, but familiar and serviceable. (Book vii., Sec.68.)

* * * * *

When thou art annoyed at some one’s impudence, straightway ask thyself, “Is it possible that there should be no impudent men in the world?” It is impossible. Ask not then the impossible. For such an one is but one of these impudent persons who needs must be in the world. Keep before thee like conclusions also concerning the rascal, the untrustworthy one, and all evil-doers. Then, when it is quite clear to thy mind that such men must needs exist, thou shalt be the more forgiving toward each one of their number. This also will aid thee to observe, whensoever occasion comes, what power for good, Nature hath given to man to frustrate such viciousness. She hath bestowed upon man Patience as an antidote to the stupid man, and against another man some other power for good. Besides, it is wholly in thine own power to teach new things to the one who hath erred, for every one who errs hath but missed the appointed path and wandered away. Reflect, and thou wilt discover that no one of these with whom thou art annoyed hath done aught to debase thy *mind*, and that is the only real evil that can befall thee.

Moreover, wherein is it wicked or surprising that the ignorant man should act ignorantly? Is not the error really thine own in not foreseeing that such an one would do as he did? If thou hadst but taken thought thou wouldst have known he would be prone to err, and it is only because thou hast forgotten to use thy Reason that thou art surprised at his deed. Above all, when thou condemnest another as untruthful, examine thyself closely; for upon thee rests the blame, in that thou dost trust to such an one to keep his promise. If thou didst bestow upon him thy bounty, thine is the blame not to have given it freely, and without expectation of good to thee, save the doing of the act itself. What more dost thou wish than to do good to man? Doth not this suffice,—that thou hast done what conforms to thy true nature? Must thou then have a reward, as though the eyes demanded pay for seeing or the feet for walking? For even as these are formed for such work, and by co-operating in their distinctive duty come into their own, even so man (by his real nature disposed to do good), when he hath done some

good deed, or in any other way furthered the Commonweal, acts according to his own nature, and in so doing hath all that is truly his own. (Book ix., Sec.42.)

Page 61

O Man, thou hast been a citizen of this great State, the Universe! What matters what thy prescribed time hath been, five years or three? What the law prescribes is just to every one.

Why complain, then, if thou art sent away from the State, not by a tyrant or an unjust judge, but by Nature who led thee thither,—even as the manager excuses from the stage an actor whom he hath employed?

“But I have played three acts only?”

True. But in the drama of thy life three acts conclude the play. For what its conclusion shall be, He determines who created it and now ends it; and with either of these thou hast naught to do. Depart thou, then, well pleased; for He who dismisses thee is well pleased also. (Book xii., Sec.36.)

Be not disquieted lest, in the days to come, some misadventure befall thee. The Reason which now sufficeth thee will then be with thee, should there be the need. (Book vii., Sec.8.)

* * * * *

To the wise man the dictates of Reason seem the instincts of Nature. (Book vii., Sec.11)

* * * * *

My true self—the philosophic mind—hath but one dread: the dread lest I do something unworthy of a man, or that I may act in an unseemly way or at an improper time. (Book vii., Sec.20.)

* * * * *

Accept with joy the Fate that befalls thee. Thine it is and not another's. What then could be better for thee? (Book vii., Sec.57)

* * * * *

See to it that thou art humane to those who are not humane. (Book vii., Sec.65.)

* * * * *

He who does *not* act, often commits as great a wrong as he who acts. (Book ix., Sec.5.)

* * * * *



The wrong that another has done—let alone! Add not to it thine own. (Book ix., Sec.20.)

* * * * *

How powerful is man! He is able to do all that God wishes him to do. He is able to accept all that God sends upon him. (Book xii., Sec.11.)

* * * * *

A lamp sends forth its light until it is completely extinguished. Shall Truth and Justice and Equanimity suffer abatement in thee until all are extinguished in death? (Book xii., Sec.15.)

JANE AUSTEN

(1775-1817)

The biography of one of the greatest English novelists might be written in a dozen lines, so simple, so tranquil, so fortunate was her life. Jane Austen, the second daughter of an English clergyman, was born at Steventon, in Hampshire, in 1775. Her father had been known at Oxford as “the handsome proctor,” and all his children inherited good looks. He was accomplished enough to fit his boys for the University, and the atmosphere of the household was that of culture,

Page 62

good breeding, and healthy fun. Mrs. Austen was a clever woman, full of epigram and humor in conversation, and rather famous in her own coterie for improvised verses and satirical hits at her friends. The elder daughter, Cassandra, adored by Jane, who was three years her junior, seems to have had a rare balance and common-sense which exercised great influence over the more brilliant younger sister. Their mother declared that of the two girls, Cassandra had the merit of having her temper always under her control; and Jane the happiness of a temper that never required to be commanded.

[Illustration: JANE AUSTEN]

From her cradle, Jane Austen was used to hearing agreeable household talk, and the freest personal criticism on the men and women who made up her small, secluded world. The family circumstances were easy, and the family friendliness unlimited,—conditions determining, perhaps, the cheerful tone, the unexciting course, the sly fun and good-fellowship of her stories.

It was in this Steventon rectory, in the family room where the boys might be building their toy boats, or the parish poor folk complaining to “passon’s madam,” or the county ladies paying visits of ceremony, in monstrous muffs, heelless slippers laced over open-worked silk stockings, short flounced skirts, and lutestring pelisses trimmed with “Irish,” or where tradesmen might be explaining their delinquencies, or farmers’ wives growing voluble over foxes and young chickens—it was in the midst of this busy and noisy publicity, where nobody respected her employment, and where she was interrupted twenty times in an hour, that the shrewd and smiling social critic managed, before she was twenty-one, to write her famous ‘Pride and Prejudice.’ Here too ‘Sense and Sensibility’ was finished in 1797, and ‘Northanger Abbey’ in 1798. The first of these, submitted to a London publisher, was declined as unavailable, by return of post. The second, the gay and mocking ‘Northanger Abbey,’ was sold to a Bath bookseller for L10, and several years later bought back again, still unpublished, by one of Miss Austen’s brothers. For the third story she seems not even to have sought a publisher. These three books, all written before she was twenty-five, were evidently the employment and delight of her leisure. The serious business of life was that which occupied other pretty girls of her time and her social position,—dressing, dancing, flirting, learning a new stitch at the embroidery frame, or a new air on “the instrument”; while all the time she was observing, with those soft hazel eyes of hers, what honest Nym calls the “humors” of the world about her. In 1801, the family removed to Bath, then the most fashionable watering-place in England. The gay life of the brilliant little city, the etiquette of the Pump Room and the Assemblies, regulated by the autocratic Beau Nash, the drives, the routs, the card parties, the toilets, the shops, the Parade, the general frivolity, pretension, and display of the eighteenth century Vanity Fair, had already been studied by the good-natured satirist on occasional visits, and already immortalized in the swiftly changing comedy scenes of ‘Northanger Abbey.’ But they tickled her fancy none the

less, now that she lived among them, and she made use of them again in her later novel, 'Persuasion.'

Page 63

For a period of eight years, spent in Bath and in Southampton, Miss Austen wrote nothing save some fragments of 'Lady Susan' and 'The Watsons,' neither of them of great importance. In 1809 the lessened household, composed of the mother and her two daughters only, removed to the village of Chawton, on the estate of Mrs. Austen's third son; and here, in a rustic cottage, now become a place of pilgrimage, Jane Austen again took up her pen. She rewrote 'Pride and Prejudice.' She revised 'Sense and Sensibility,' and between February 1811 and August 1816 she completed 'Mansfield Park,' 'Emma,' and 'Persuasion.' At Chawton, as at Steventon, she had no study, and her stories were written on a little mahogany desk near a window in the family sitting-room, where she must often have been interrupted by the prototypes of her Mrs. Allen, Mrs. Bennet, Miss Bates, Mr. Collins, or Mrs. Norris. When at last she began to publish, her stories appeared in rapid succession: 'Sense and Sensibility' in 1811; 'Pride and Prejudice' early in 1813; 'Mansfield Park' in 1814; 'Emma' in 1816; 'Northanger Abbey' and 'Persuasion' in 1818, the year following her death. In January 1813 she wrote to her beloved Cassandra:—"I want to tell you that I have got my own darling child 'Pride and Prejudice' from London. We fairly set at it and read half the first volume to Miss B. She was amused, poor soul! ... but she really does seem to admire Elizabeth. I must confess that I think her as delightful a creature as ever appeared in print, and how I shall be able to tolerate those who do not like *her* at least, I do not know." A month later she wrote:—"Upon the whole, however, I am quite vain enough, and well satisfied enough. The work is rather too light, and bright, and sparkling: it wants shade; it wants to be stretched out here and there with a long chapter of sense, if it could be had; if not, of solemn, specious nonsense, about something unconnected with the story; an essay on writing, a critique on Walter Scott, or the history of Bonaparte, or something that would form a contrast, and bring the reader with increased delight to the playfulness and epigrammatism of the general style!"

Thus she who laughed at everybody else laughed at herself, and set her critical instinct to estimate her own capacity. To Mr. Clarke, the librarian of Carlton House, who had requested her to "delineate a clergyman" of earnestness, enthusiasm, and learning, she replied:—"I am quite honored by your thinking me capable of drawing such a clergyman as you gave the sketch of in your note. But I assure you I am not. The comic part of the character I might be equal to, but not the good, the enthusiastic, the literary.... I think I may boast myself to be, with all possible vanity, the most unlearned and uninformed female who ever dared to be an authoress." And when the same remarkable bibliophile suggested to her, on the approach of the marriage of the Princess Charlotte

Page 64

with Prince Leopold, that “an historical romance, illustrative of the august House of Coburg, would just now be very interesting,” she answered:—“I am fully sensible that an historical romance, founded on the House of Saxe-Coburg, might be much more to the purpose of profit or popularity than such pictures of domestic life in country villages as I deal in. But I could no more write a romance than an epic poem. I could not sit seriously down to write a serious romance under any other motive than to save my life; and if it were indispensable to keep it up, and never relax into laughing at myself or at other people, I am sure that I should be hung before I had finished the first chapter. No! I must keep to my own style, and go on in my own way: and though I may never succeed again in that, I am convinced that I shall totally fail in any other.” And again she writes: “What shall I do with your ‘strong, manly, vigorous sketches, full of variety and glow’? How could I possibly join them on to the little bit (two inches wide) of ivory on which I work with so fine a brush as produces little effect, after much labor?”

Miss Austen read very little. She “detested quartos.” Richardson, Johnson, Crabbe, and Cowper seem to have been the only authors for whom she had an appreciation. She would sometimes say, in jest, that “if ever she married at all, she could fancy being Mrs. Crabbe!” But her bent of original composition, her amazing power of observation, her inexhaustible sense of humor, her absorbing interest in what she saw about her, were so strong that she needed no reinforcement of culture. It was no more in her power than it was in Wordsworth’s to “gather a posy of other men’s thoughts.”

During her lifetime she had not a single literary friend. Other women novelists possessed their sponsors and devotees. Miss Ferrier was the delight of a brilliant Edinboro’ coterie. Miss Edgeworth was feasted and flattered, not only in England, but on the Continent; Miss Burney counted Johnson, Burke, Garrick, Windham, Sheridan, among the admiring friends who assured her that no flight in fiction or the drama was beyond her powers. But the creator of Elizabeth Bennet, of Emma, and of Mr. Collins, never met an author of eminence, received no encouragement to write except that of her own family, heard no literary talk, and obtained in her lifetime but the slightest literary recognition. It was long after her death that Walter Scott wrote in his journal:—“Read again, and for the third time at least, Miss Austen’s finely written novel of *Pride and Prejudice*. That young lady had a talent for describing the involvements and feelings and characters of ordinary life which is to me the most wonderful I ever met with. The Big Bow-wow strain I can do myself, like any now going; but the exquisite touch which renders commonplace things and characters interesting from the truth of the description and the sentiment is denied to me.”

Page 65

It was still later that Macaulay made his famous estimate of her genius:—"Shakespeare has neither equal nor second; but among those who, in the point we have noticed (the delineation of character), approached nearest the great master, we have no hesitation in placing Jane Austen as a woman of whom England may justly be proud. She has given us a multitude of characters, all, in a certain sense, commonplace, all such as we meet every day. Yet they are all as perfectly discriminated from each other as if they were the most eccentric of human beings.... And all this is done by touches so delicate that they elude analysis, that they defy the powers of description, and that we know them to exist only by the general effect to which they have contributed." And a new generation had almost forgotten her name before the exacting Lewes wrote:—"To make our meaning precise, we would say that Fielding and Jane Austen are the greatest novelists in the English language.... We would rather have written 'Pride and Prejudice' or 'Tom Jones,' than any of the Waverley novels.... The greatness of Miss Austen (her marvelous dramatic power) seems more than anything in Scott akin to Shakespeare."

The six novels which have made so great a reputation for their author relate the least sensational of histories in the least sensational way. 'Sense and Sensibility' might be called a novel with a purpose, that purpose being to portray the dangerous haste with which sentiment degenerates into sentimentality; and because of its purpose, the story discloses a less excellent art than its fellows. 'Pride and Prejudice' finds its motive in the crass pride of birth and place that characterize the really generous and high-minded hero, Darcy, and the fierce resentment of his claims to love and respect on the part of the clever, high-tempered, and chivalrous heroine, Elizabeth Bennet. 'Northanger Abbey' is a laughing skit at the school of Mrs. Radcliffe; 'Persuasion,' a simple story of upper middle-class society, of which the most charming of her charming girls, Anne Elliot, is the heroine; 'Mansfield Park' a new and fun-loving version of 'Cinderella'; and finally 'Emma,'—the favorite with most readers, concerning which Miss Austen said, "I am going to take a heroine whom no one but myself will much like,"—the history of the blunders of a bright, kind-hearted, and really clever girl, who contrives as much discomfort for her friends as stupidity or ill-nature could devise.

Numberless as are the novelist's characters, no two clergymen, no two British matrons, no two fussy spinsters, no two men of fashion, no two heavy fathers, no two smart young ladies, no two heroines, are alike. And this variety results from the absolute fidelity of each character to the law of its own development, each one growing from within and not being simply described from without. Nor are the circumstances which she permits herself to use less genuine than her people. What surrounds them is what one must expect; what happens to them is seen to be inevitable.

Page 66

The low and quiet key in which her “situations” are pitched produces one artistic gain which countervails its own loss of immediate intensity: the least touch of color shows strongly against that subdued background. A very slight catastrophe among those orderly scenes of peaceful life has more effect than the noisier incidents and contrived convulsions of more melodramatic novels. Thus, in ‘Mansfield Park’ the result of private theatricals, including many rehearsals of stage love-making, among a group of young people who show no very strong principles or firmness of character, appears in a couple of elopements which break up a family, occasion a pitiable scandal, and spoil the career of an able, generous, and highly promising young man. To most novelists an incident of this sort would seem too ineffective: in her hands it strikes us as what in fact it is—a tragic misfortune and the ruin of two lives.

In a word, it is life which Miss Austen sees with unerring vision and draws with unerring touch; so that above all other writers of English fiction she seems entitled to the tribute which an Athenian critic gave to an earlier and more famous realist,—

“O life! O Menander!
Which of you two is the plagiarist?”

AN OFFER OF MARRIAGE

From ‘Pride and Prejudice’

The next day opened a new scene at Longbourn. Mr. Collins made his declaration in form. Having resolved to do it without loss of time, as his leave of absence extended only to the following Saturday, and having no feelings of diffidence to make it distressing to himself even at the moment, he set about it in a very orderly manner, with all the observances which he supposed a regular part of the business. On finding Mrs. Bennet, Elizabeth, and one of the younger girls together, soon after breakfast, he addressed the mother in these words:—

“May I hope, madam, for your interest with your fair daughter Elizabeth, when I solicit for the honor of a private audience with her in the course of this morning?”

Before Elizabeth had time for anything but a blush of surprise, Mrs. Bennet instantly answered: “Oh, dear. Yes; certainly. I am sure Lizzy will be very happy—I am sure she can have no objection. Come, Kitty, I want you upstairs.” And, gathering her work together, she was hastening away, when Elizabeth called out:—

“Dear ma’am, do not go. I beg you will not go. Mr. Collins must excuse me. He can have nothing to say to me that anybody need not hear. I am going away myself.”

“No, no; nonsense, Lizzy. I desire you will stay where you are.” And upon Elizabeth’s seeming really, with vexed and embarrassed looks, about to escape, she added, “Lizzy, I *insist* upon your staying and hearing Mr. Collins.”

Elizabeth would not oppose such an injunction; and a moment’s consideration making her also sensible that it would be wisest to get it over as soon and as quietly as possible, she sat down again, and tried to conceal by incessant employment the feelings which were divided between distress and diversion. Mrs. Bennet and Kitty walked off; and as soon as they were gone, Mr. Collins began:—

Page 67

“Believe me, my dear Miss Elizabeth, that your modesty, so far from doing you any disservice, rather adds to your other perfections. You would have been less amiable in my eyes had there *not* been this little unwillingness; but allow me to assure you that I have your respected mother’s permission for this address. You can hardly doubt the purport of my discourse, however your natural delicacy may lead you to dissemble: my attentions have been too marked to be mistaken. Almost as soon as I entered the house I singled you out as the companion of my future life. But before I am run away with by my feelings on this subject, perhaps it will be advisable for me to state my reasons for marrying—and moreover, for coming into Hertfordshire with the design of selecting a wife, as I certainly did.”

The idea of Mr. Collins, with all his solemn composure, being run away with by his feelings, made Elizabeth so near laughing that she could not use the short pause he allowed in any attempt to stop him further, and he continued:—

“My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think it a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances (like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish; secondly, that I am convinced it will add very greatly to my happiness; and thirdly,—which perhaps I ought to have mentioned earlier,—that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honor of calling patroness. Twice has she condescended to give me her opinion (unasked, too!) on this subject; and it was but the very Saturday night before I left Hunsford—between our pools at quadrille, while Mrs. Jenkinson was arranging Miss de Bourgh’s footstool—that she said, ‘Mr. Collins, you must marry. A clergyman like you must marry. Choose properly, choose a gentlewoman, for *my* sake; and for your *own*, let her be an active, useful sort of person, not brought up high, but able to make a small income go a good way. This is my advice. Find such a woman as soon as you can, bring her to Hunsford, and I will visit her!’ Allow me, by the way, to observe, my fair cousin, that I do not reckon the notice and kindness of Lady Catherine de Bourgh as among the least of the advantages in my power to offer. You will find her manners beyond anything I can describe; and your wit and vivacity, I think, must be acceptable to her, especially when tempered with the silence and respect which her rank will inevitably excite. Thus much for my general intention in favor of matrimony; it remains to be told why my views are directed to Longbourn instead of my own neighborhood, where, I assure you, there are many amiable young women. But the fact is, that being, as I am, to inherit this estate after the death of your honored father (who, however, may live many years longer), I could not satisfy myself without resolving to choose a wife from among his daughters, that the loss to them might be as little as possible, when the melancholy event takes place,—which,

Page 68

however, as I have already said, may not be for several years. This has been my motive, my fair cousin, and I flatter myself it will not sink me in your esteem. And now, nothing remains for me but to assure you, in the most animated language, of the violence of my affection. To fortune I am perfectly indifferent, and shall make no demand of that nature on your father, since I am well aware that it could not be complied with; and that one thousand pounds in the four per cents., which will not be yours till after your mother's decease, is all that you may ever be entitled to. On that head, therefore, I shall be uniformly silent; and you may assure yourself that no ungenerous reproach shall ever pass my lips when we are married."

It was absolutely necessary to interrupt him now.

"You are too hasty, sir," she cried. "You forget that I have made no answer. Let me do it without further loss of time. Accept my thanks for the compliment you are paying me. I am very sensible of the honor of your proposals, but it is impossible for me to do otherwise than decline them."

"I am not now to learn," replied Mr. Collins, with a formal wave of the hand, "that it is usual with young ladies to reject the addresses of the man whom they secretly mean to accept, when he first applies for their favor; and that sometimes the refusal is repeated a second, or even a third time. I am therefore by no means discouraged by what you have just said, and shall hope to lead you to the altar ere long."

"Upon my word, sir," cried Elizabeth, "your hope is rather an extraordinary one, after my declaration. I do assure you that I am not one of those young ladies (if such young ladies there are) who are so daring as to risk their happiness on the chance of being asked a second time. I am perfectly serious in my refusal. You could not make *me* happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who would make *you* so. Nay, were your friend Lady Catherine to know me, I am persuaded she would find me in every respect ill qualified for the situation."

"Were it certain that Lady Catherine would think so," said Mr. Collins, very gravely—"but I cannot imagine that her ladyship would at all disapprove of you. And you may be certain that when I have the honor of seeing her again, I shall speak in the highest terms of your modesty, economy, and other amiable qualifications."

"Indeed, Mr. Collins, all praise of me will be unnecessary. You must give me leave to judge for myself, and pay me the compliment of believing what I say. I wish you very happy and very rich, and by refusing your hand do all in my power to prevent your being otherwise. In making me the offer, you must have satisfied the delicacy of your feelings with regard to my family, and may take possession of Longbourn estate whenever it falls, without any self-reproach. This matter may be considered, therefore, as finally

settled.” And rising as she thus spoke, she would have quitted the room had not Mr. Collins thus addressed her:—

Page 69

“When I do myself the honor of speaking to you next on the subject, I shall hope to receive a more favorable answer than you have now given me: though I am far from accusing you of cruelty at present, because I know it to be the established custom of your sex to reject a man on the first application; and perhaps you have even now said as much to encourage my suit as would be consistent with the true delicacy of the female character.”

“Really, Mr. Collins,” cried Elizabeth, with some warmth, “you puzzle me exceedingly. If what I have hitherto said can appear to you in the form of encouragement, I know not how to express my refusal in such a way as may convince you of its being one.”

“You must give me leave to flatter myself, my dear cousin, that your refusal of my addresses is merely a thing of course. My reasons for believing it are briefly these:—It does not appear to me that my hand is unworthy your acceptance, or that the establishment I can offer would be any other than highly desirable. My situation in life, my connections with the family of De Bourgh, and my relationship to your own, are circumstances highly in my favor; and you should take it into further consideration that, in spite of your manifold attractions, it is by no means certain that another offer of marriage may ever be made you. Your portion is unhappily so small that it will in all likelihood undo the effects of your loveliness and amiable qualifications. As I must therefore conclude that you are not serious in your rejection of me, I shall choose to attribute it to your wish of increasing my love by suspense, according to the usual practice of elegant females.”

“I do assure you, sir, that I have no pretensions whatever to that kind of elegance which consists in tormenting a respectable man. I would rather be paid the compliment of being believed sincere. I thank you again and again for the honor you have done me in your proposals, but to accept them is absolutely impossible. My feelings in every respect forbid it. Can I speak plainer? Do not consider me now as an elegant female intending to plague you, but as a rational creature speaking the truth from her heart.”

“You are uniformly charming!” cried he, with an air of awkward gallantry; “and I am persuaded that when sanctioned by the express authority of both your excellent parents, my proposals will not fail of being acceptable.”

To such perseverance in willful self-deception Elizabeth would make no reply, and immediately and in silence withdrew; determined, if he persisted in considering her repeated refusals as flattering encouragement, to apply to her father, whose negative might be uttered in such a manner as must be decisive, and whose behavior at least could not be mistaken for the affectation and coquetry of an elegant female.

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER

From 'Pride and Prejudice'

Page 70

[Lydia Bennet has eloped with the worthless rake Wickham, who has no intention of marrying her.]

Mrs. Bennet, to whose apartment they all repaired, after a few minutes' conversation together, received them exactly as might be expected: with tears and lamentations of regret, invectives against the villainous conduct of Wickham, and complaints of her own suffering and ill-usage;—blaming everybody but the person to whose ill-judging indulgence the errors of her daughter must be principally owing.

"If I had been able," said she, "to carry my point in going to Brighton with all my family, *this* would not have happened; but poor, dear Lydia had nobody to take care of her. Why did the Forsters ever let her go out of their sight? I am sure there was some great neglect or other on their side, for she is not the kind of girl to do such a thing, if she had been well looked after. I always thought they were very unfit to have the charge of her; but I was overruled, as I always am. Poor, dear child! And now here's Mr. Bennet gone away, and I know he will fight Wickham, wherever he meets him, and then he will be killed, and what is to become of us all? The Collinses will turn us out, before he is cold in his grave; and if you are not kind to us, brother, I do not know what we shall do."

They all exclaimed against such terrific ideas; and Mr. Gardiner, after general assurances of his affection for her and all her family, told her that he meant to be in London the very next day, and would assist Mr. Bennet in every endeavor for recovering Lydia.

"Do not give way to useless alarm," added he: "though it is right to be prepared for the worst, there is no occasion to look on it as certain. It is not quite a week since they left Brighton. In a few days more, we may gain some news of them; and till we know that they are not married, and have no design of marrying, do not let us give the matter over as lost. As soon as I get to town, I shall go to my brother, and make him come home with me, to Grace-church-street, and then we may consult together as to what is to be done."

"Oh! my dear brother," replied Mrs. Bennet, "that is exactly what I could most wish for. And now do, when you get to town, find them out, wherever they may be; and if they are not married already, *make* them marry. And as for wedding clothes, do not let them wait for that, but tell Lydia she shall have as much money as she chooses to buy them, after they are married. And above all things, keep Mr. Bennet from fighting. Tell him what a dreadful state I am in—that I am frightened out of my wits; and have such tremblings, such flutterings, all over me, such spasms in my side, and pains in my head, and such beatings at heart, that I can get no rest by night nor by day. And tell my dear Lydia not to give any directions about her clothes till she has seen me, for she does not know which are the best warehouses. Oh! brother, how kind you are! I know you will contrive it all."

Page 71

But Mr. Gardiner, though he assured her again of his earnest endeavors in the cause, could not avoid recommending moderation to her, as well in her hopes as her fears; and after talking with her in this manner till dinner was on the table, they left her to vent all her feelings on the housekeeper, who attended, in the absence of her daughters.

Though her brother and sister were persuaded that there was no real occasion for such a seclusion from the family, they did not attempt to oppose it, for they knew that she had not prudence enough to hold her tongue before the servants, while they waited at table, and judged it better that one only of the household, and the one whom they could most trust, should comprehend all her fears and solicitude on the subject.

In the dining-room they were soon joined by Mary and Kitty, who had been too busily engaged in their separate apartments to make their appearance before. One came from her books, and the other from her toilette. The faces of both, however, were tolerably calm; and no change was visible in either, except that the loss of her favorite sister, or the anger which she had herself incurred in the business, had given something more of fretfulness than usual to the accents of Kitty. As for Mary, she was mistress enough of herself to whisper to Elizabeth, with a countenance of grave reflection, soon after they were seated at table:—

“This is a most unfortunate affair; and will probably be much talked of. But we must stem the tide of malice, and pour into the wounded bosoms of each other the balm of sisterly consolation.”

Then, perceiving in Elizabeth no inclination of replying, she added, “Unhappy as the event must be for Lydia, we may draw from it this useful lesson: that loss of virtue in a female is irretrievable—that one false step involves her in endless ruin—that her reputation is no less brittle than it is beautiful—and that she cannot be too much guarded in her behavior towards the undeserving of the other sex.”

Elizabeth lifted up her eyes in amazement, but was too much oppressed to make any reply.

A LETTER OF CONDOLENCE

From ‘Pride and Prejudice’

MR. COLLINS TO MR. BENNET, ON HIS DAUGHTER’S ELOPEMENT WITH A RAKE

My Dear Sir:



I feel myself called upon, by our relationship and my situation in life, to condole with you on the grievous affliction you are now suffering under, of which we were yesterday informed by letter from Hertfordshire. Be assured, my dear sir, that Mrs. Collins and myself sincerely sympathize with you, and all your respectable family, in your present distress, which must be of the bitterest kind, because proceeding from a cause which no time can remove. No arguments shall be wanting, on my part, that can alleviate so severe a misfortune; or that may comfort you under a circumstance

Page 72

that must be of all others most afflicting to a parent's mind. The death of your daughter would have been a blessing in comparison of this. And it is the more to be lamented because there is reason to suppose, as my dear Charlotte informs me, that this licentiousness of behavior in your daughter has proceeded from a faulty degree of indulgence; though at the same time, for the consolation of yourself and Mrs. Bennet, I am inclined to think that her own disposition must be naturally bad, or she could not be guilty of such an enormity at so early an age. Howsoever that may be, you are grievously to be pitied, in which opinion I am not only joined by Mrs. Collins, but likewise by Lady Catherine and her daughter, to whom I have related the affair. They agree with me in apprehending that this false step in one daughter will be injurious to the fortunes of all the others; for who, as Lady Catherine herself condescendingly says, will connect themselves with such a family? And this consideration leads me, moreover, to reflect with augmented satisfaction on a certain event of last November; for had it been otherwise, I must have been involved in all your sorrows and disgrace. Let me advise you, then, my dear sir, to console yourself as much as possible, to throw off your unworthy child from your affection forever, and leave her to reap the fruits of her own heinous offense.

I am, dear sir, *etc.*, *etc.*

A WELL-MATCHED SISTER AND BROTHER

From 'Northanger Abbey'

"My dearest Catherine, have you settled what to wear on your head to-night? I am determined, at all events, to be dressed exactly like you. The men take notice of *that* sometimes, you know."

"But it does not signify if they do," said Catherine, very innocently.

"Signify! oh, heavens! I make it a rule never to mind what they say. They are very often amazingly impertinent, if you do not treat them with spirit, and make them keep their distance."

"Are they? Well I never observed *that*. They always behave very well to me."

"Oh! they give themselves such airs. They are the most conceited creatures in the world, and think themselves of so much importance! By the by, though I have thought of it a hundred times, I have always forgot to ask you what is your favorite complexion in a man. Do you like them best dark or fair?"

“I hardly know. I never much thought about it. Something between both, I think—brown: not fair, and not very dark.”

“Very well, Catherine. That is exactly he. I have not forgot your description of Mr. Tilney: ‘a brown skin, with dark eyes, and rather dark hair.’ Well, my taste is different. I prefer light eyes; and as to complexion, do you know, I like a sallow better than any other. You must not betray me, if you should ever meet with one of your acquaintance answering that description.”

Page 73

"Betray you! What do you mean?"

"Nay, do not distress me. I believe I have said too much. Let us drop the subject."

Catherine, in some amazement, complied; and after remaining a few moments silent, was on the point of reverting to what interested her at that time rather more than anything else in the world, Laurentina's skeleton, when her friend prevented her by saying, "For Heaven's sake! let us move away from this end of the room. Do you know, there are two odious young men who have been staring at me this half-hour. They really put me quite out of countenance. Let us go and look at the arrivals. They will hardly follow us there."

Away they walked to the book; and while Isabella examined the names, it was Catherine's employment to watch the proceedings of these alarming young men.

"They are not coming this way, are they? I hope they are not so impertinent as to follow us. Pray let me know if they are coming. I am determined I will not look up."

In a few moments Catherine, with unaffected pleasure, assured her that she need not be longer uneasy, as the gentlemen had just left the Pump-room.

"And which way are they gone?" said Isabella, turning hastily round. "One was a very good-looking young man."

"They went towards the churchyard."

"Well, I am amazingly glad I have got rid of them! And now what say you to going to Edgar's Buildings with me, and looking at my new hat? You said you should like to see it."

Catherine readily agreed. "Only," she added, "perhaps we may overtake the two young men."

"Oh! never mind that. If we make haste, we shall pass by them presently, and I am dying to show you my hat."

"But if we only wait a few minutes, there will be no danger of our seeing them at all."

"I shall not pay them any such compliment, I assure you. I have no notion of treating men with such respect. *That* is the way to spoil them."

Catherine had nothing to oppose against such reasoning; and therefore, to show the independence of Miss Thorpe, and her resolution of humbling the sex, they set off immediately, as fast as they could walk, in pursuit of the two young men.



Half a minute conducted them through the Pump-yard to the archway, opposite Union Passage; but here they were stopped. Everybody acquainted with Bath may remember the difficulties of crossing Cheap Street at this point; it is indeed a street of so impertinent a nature, so unfortunately connected with the great London and Oxford roads, and the principal inn of the city, that a day never passes in which parties of ladies, however important their business, whether in quest of pastry, millinery, or even (as in the present case) of young men, are not detained on one side or other by carriages, horsemen, or carts. This evil had been felt and lamented, at least three times a day, by Isabella since her residence in Bath:

Page 74

and she was now fated to feel and lament it once more; for at the very moment of coming opposite to Union Passage, and within view of the two gentlemen who were proceeding through the crowds and treading the gutters of that interesting alley, they were prevented crossing by the approach of a gig, driven along on bad pavements by a most knowing-looking coachman, with all the vehemence that could most fitly endanger the lives of himself, his companion, and his horse.

“Oh, these odious gigs!” said Isabella, looking up, “how I detest them!” But this detestation, though so just, was of short duration, for she looked again, and exclaimed, “Delightful! Mr. Morland and my brother!”

“Good Heaven! ’tis James!” was uttered at the same moment by Catherine; and on catching the young men’s eyes, the horse was immediately checked with a violence which almost threw him on his haunches; and the servant having now scampered up, the gentlemen jumped out, and the equipage was delivered to his care.

Catherine, by whom this meeting was wholly unexpected, received her brother with the liveliest pleasure; and he, being of a very amiable disposition, and sincerely attached to her, gave every proof on his side of equal satisfaction, which he could have leisure to do, while the bright eyes of Miss Thorpe were incessantly challenging his notice; and to her his devoirs were speedily paid, with a mixture of joy and embarrassment which might have informed Catherine, had she been more expert in the development of other people’s feelings, and less simply engrossed by her own, that her brother thought her friend quite as pretty as she could do herself.

John Thorpe, who in the mean time had been giving orders about the horse, soon joined them, and from him she directly received the amends which were her due; for while he slightly and carelessly touched the hand of Isabella, on her he bestowed a whole scrape and half a short bow. He was a stout young man, of middling height, who, with a plain face and ungraceful form, seemed fearful of being too handsome unless he wore the dress of a groom, and too much like a gentleman unless he were easy where he ought to be civil, and impudent where he might be allowed to be easy. He took out his watch:—“How long do you think we have been running in from Tetbury, Miss Morland?”

“I do not know the distance.” Her brother told her that it was twenty-three miles.

“*Three-and-twenty!*” cried Thorpe; “*five-and-twenty* if it is an inch.” Morland remonstrated, pleaded the authority of road-books, innkeepers, and milestones: but his friend disregarded them all; he had a surer test of distance. “I know it must be *five-and-twenty*,” said he, “by the time we have been doing it.” “It is now half after one; we drove out of the inn-yard at Tetbury as the town-clock struck eleven; and I defy any man in

England to make my horse go less than ten miles an hour in harness; that makes it exactly twenty-five."

Page 75

"You have lost an hour," said Morland: "it was only ten o'clock when we came from Tetbury."

"Ten o'clock! it was eleven, upon my soul! I counted every stroke. This brother of yours would persuade me out of my senses, Miss Morland. Do but look at my horse: did you ever see an animal so made for speed in your life?" (The servant had just mounted the carriage and was driving off.) "Such true blood! Three hours and a half, indeed, coming only three-and-twenty miles! Look at that creature, and suppose it possible, if you can!"

"He *does* look very hot, to be sure."

"Hot! he had not turned a hair till we came to Walcot Church: but look at his forehead; look at his loins; only see how he moves: that horse *cannot* go less than ten miles an hour; tie his legs, and he will get on. What do you think of my gig, Miss Morland? A neat one, is it not? Well hung; town built: I have not had it a month. It was built for a Christ Church man, a friend of mine, a very good sort of fellow; he ran it a few weeks, till, I believe, it was convenient to have done with it. I happened just then to be looking out for some light thing of the kind, though I had pretty well determined on a curricule too; but I chanced to meet him on Magdalen Bridge, as he was driving into Oxford, last term: 'Ah, Thorpe,' said he, 'do you happen to want such a little thing as this? It is a capital one of the kind, but I am cursed tired of it.' 'Oh! d——,' said I, 'I am your man; what do you ask?' And how much do you think he did, Miss Morland?"

"I am sure I cannot guess at all."

"Curricule-hung, you see; seat, trunk, sword-case, splashing-board, lamps, silver molding, all, you see, complete; the ironwork as good as new, or better. He asked fifty guineas: I closed with him directly, threw down the money, and the carriage was mine."

"And I am sure," said Catherine, "I know so little of such things, that I cannot judge whether it was cheap or dear."

"Neither one nor t'other; I might have got it for less, I dare say; but I hate haggling, and poor Freeman wanted cash."

"That was very good-natured of you," said Catherine, quite pleased.

"Oh! d—— it, when one has the means of doing a kind thing by a friend, I hate to be pitiful."

An inquiry now took place into the intended movements of the young ladies; and on finding whither they were going, it was decided that the gentlemen should accompany them to Edgar's Buildings, and pay their respects to Mrs. Thorpe. James and Isabella led the way; and so well satisfied was the latter with her lot, so contentedly was she endeavoring to insure a pleasant walk to him who brought the double recommendation

of being her brother's friend and her friend's brother, so pure and uncoquettish were her feelings, that though they overtook and passed the two offending young men in Milsom Street, she was so far from seeking to attract their notice that she looked back at them only three times.

Page 76

John Thorpe kept of course with Catherine, and after a few minutes' silence renewed the conversation about his gig:—"You will find, however, Miss Morland, it would be reckoned a cheap thing by some people, for I might have sold it for ten guineas more the next day; Jackson of Oriel bid me sixty at once; Morland was with me at the time."

"Yes," said Morland, who overheard this; "bet you forgot that your horse was included."

"My horse! oh, d—— it! I would not sell my horse for a hundred. Are you fond of an open carriage, Miss Morland?"

"Yes, very: I have hardly ever an opportunity of being in one; but I am particularly fond of it."

"I am glad of it: I will drive you out in mine every day."

"Thank you," said Catherine, in some distress, from a doubt of the propriety of accepting such an offer.

"I will drive you up Lansdown Hill to-morrow."

"Thank you; but will not your horse want rest?"

"Rest! he has only come three-and-twenty miles to-day; all nonsense: nothing ruins horses so much as rest; nothing knocks them up so soon. No, no: I shall exercise mine at the average of four hours every day while I am here."

"Shall you, indeed!" said Catherine, very seriously: "that will be forty miles a day."

"Forty! ay, fifty, for what I care. Well, I will drive you up Lansdown to-morrow; mind, I am engaged."

"How delightful that will be!" cried Isabella, turning round; "my dearest Catherine, I quite envy you; but I am afraid, brother, you will not have room for a third."

"A third, indeed! no, no; I did not come to Bath to drive my sisters about: that would be a good joke, faith! Morland must take care of you."

This brought on a dialogue of civilities between the other two; but Catherine heard neither the particulars nor the result. Her companion's discourse now sunk from its hitherto animated pitch to nothing more than a short, decisive sentence of praise or condemnation on the face of every woman they met; and Catherine, after listening and agreeing as long as she could, with all the civility and deference of the youthful female mind, fearful of hazarding an opinion of its own in opposition to that of a self-assured man, especially where the beauty of her own sex is concerned, ventured at length to

vary the subject by a question which had been long uppermost in her thoughts. It was, "Have you ever read 'Udolpho,' Mr. Thorpe?"

"'Udolpho'! O Lord! not I: I never read novels; I have something else to do."

Catherine, humbled and ashamed, was going to apologize for her question; but he prevented her by saying, "Novels are all so full of nonsense and stuff! there has not been a tolerable decent one come out since 'Tom Jones,' except the 'Monk'; I read that t'other day: but as for all the others, they are the stupidest things in creation."

"I think you must like 'Udolpho,' if you were to read it: it is so very interesting."

Page 77

"Not I, faith! No, if I read any, it shall be Mrs. Radcliffe's; her novels are amusing enough: they are worth reading; some fun and nature in *them*."

"'Udolpho' was written by Mrs. Radcliffe," said Catherine, with some hesitation, from the fear of mortifying him.

"No, sure; was it? Ay, I remember, so it was; I was thinking of that other stupid book, written by that woman they made such a fuss about; she who married the French emigrant."

"I suppose you mean 'Camilla'?"

"Yes, that's the book: such unnatural stuff! An old man playing at see-saw: I took up the first volume once, and looked it over, but I soon found it would not do; indeed, I guessed what sort of stuff it must be before I saw it; as soon as I heard she had married an emigrant, I was sure I should never be able to get through it."

"I have never read it."

"You have no loss, I assure you; it is the horridest nonsense you can imagine: there is nothing in the world in it but an old man's playing at see-saw and learning Latin; upon my soul, there is not."

This critique, the justness of which was unfortunately lost on poor Catherine, brought them to the door of Mrs. Thorpe's lodgings, and the feelings of the discerning and unprejudiced reader of 'Camilla' gave way to the feelings of the dutiful and affectionate son, as they met Mrs. Thorpe, who had descried them from above, in the passage. "Ah, mother, how do you do?" said he, giving her a hearty shake of the hand; "where did you get that quiz of a hat? it makes you look like an old witch. Here is Morland and I come to stay a few days with you; so you must look out for a couple of good beds somewhere near." And this address seemed to satisfy all the fondest wishes of the mother's heart, for she received him with the most delighted and exulting affection. On his two younger sisters he then bestowed an equal portion of his fraternal tenderness, for he asked each of them how they did, and observed that they both looked very ugly.

FAMILY DOCTORS

From 'Emma'

While they were thus comfortably occupied, Mr. Woodhouse was enjoying a full flow of happy regrets and tearful affection with his daughter.

"My poor, dear Isabella," said he, fondly taking her hand, and interrupting for a few moments her busy labors for some one of her five children, "how long it is, how terribly



long since you were here! And how tired you must be after your journey! You must go to bed early, my dear,—and I recommend a little gruel to you before you go. You and I will have a nice basin of gruel together. My dear Emma, suppose we all have a little gruel.”

Emma could not suppose any such thing, knowing as she did that both the Mr. Knightleys were as unpersuadable on that article as herself, and two basins only were ordered. After a little more discourse in praise of gruel, with some wondering at its not being taken every evening by everybody, he proceeded to say, with an air of grave reflection:—

Page 78

"It was an awkward business, my dear, your spending the autumn at South End instead of coming here. I never had much opinion of the sea air."

"Mr. Wingfield most strenuously recommended it, sir, or we should not have gone. He recommended it for all the children, but particularly for the weakness in little Bella's throat,—both sea air and bathing."

"Ah, my dear, but Perry had many doubts about the sea doing her any good; and as to myself, I have been long perfectly convinced, though perhaps I never told you so before, that the sea is very rarely of use to anybody. I am sure it almost killed me once."

"Come, come," cried Emma, feeling this to be an unsafe subject, "I must beg you not to talk of the sea. It makes me envious and miserable; I who have never seen it! South End is prohibited, if you please. My dear Isabella, I have not heard you make one inquiry after Mr. Perry yet; and he never forgets you."

"Oh, good Mr. Perry, how is he, sir?"

"Why, pretty well; but not quite well. Poor Perry is bilious, and he has not time to take care of himself; he tells me he has not time to take care of himself—which is very sad—but he is always wanted all round the country. I suppose there is not a man in such practice anywhere. But then, there is not so clever a man anywhere."

"And Mrs. Perry and the children, how are they? Do the children grow? I have a great regard for Mr. Perry. I hope he will be calling soon. He will be so pleased to see my little ones."

"I hope he will be here to-morrow, for I have a question or two to ask him about myself of some consequence. And, my dear, whenever he comes, you had better let him look at little Bella's throat."

"Oh, my dear sir, her throat is so much better that I have hardly any uneasiness about it. Either bathing has been of the greatest service to her, or else it is to be attributed to an excellent embrocation of Mr. Wingfield's, which we have been applying at times ever since August."

"It is not very likely, my dear, that bathing should have been of use to her; and if I had known you were wanting an embrocation, I would have spoken to—"

"You seem to me to have forgotten Mrs. and Miss Bates," said Emma: "I have not heard one inquiry after them."

"Oh, the good Bateses—I am quite ashamed of myself; but you mention them in most of your letters. I hope they are quite well. Good old Mrs. Bates. I will call upon her to-



morrow, and take my children. They are always so pleased to see my children. And that excellent Miss Bates!—such thorough worthy people! How are they, sir?”

“Why, pretty well, my dear, upon the whole. But poor Mrs. Bates had a bad cold about a month ago.”

“How sorry I am! but colds were never so prevalent as they have been this autumn. Mr. Wingfield told me that he had never known them more general or heavy, except when it has been quite an influenza.”

Page 79

"That has been a good deal the case, my dear, but not to the degree you mention. Perry says that colds have been very general, but not so heavy as he has very often known them in November. Perry does not call it altogether a sickly season."

"No, I do not know that Mr. Wingfield considers it *very* sickly, except—"

"Ah, my poor, dear child, the truth is, that in London it is always a sickly season. Nobody is healthy in London, nobody can be. It is a dreadful thing to have you forced to live there;—so far off!—and the air so bad!"

"No, indeed, we are not at all in a bad air. Our part of London is so very superior to most others. You must not confound us with London in general, my dear sir. The neighborhood of Brunswick Square is very different from almost all the rest. We are so very airy! I should be unwilling, I own, to live in any other part of the town; there is hardly any other that I could be satisfied to have my children in: but we are so remarkably airy! Mr. Wingfield thinks the vicinity of Brunswick Square decidedly the most favorable as to air."

"Ah, my dear, it is not like Hartfield. You make the best of it—but after you have been a week at Hartfield, you are all of you different creatures; you do not look like the same. Now, I cannot say that I think you are any of you looking well at present."

"I am sorry to hear you say so, sir; but I assure you, excepting those little nervous headaches and palpitations which I am never entirely free from anywhere, I am quite well myself; and if the children were rather pale before they went to bed, it was only because they were a little more tired than usual from their journey and the happiness of coming. I hope you will think better of their looks to-morrow; for I assure you Mr. Wingfield told me that he did not believe he had ever sent us off, altogether, in such good case. I trust at least that you do not think Mr. Knightley looking ill," turning her eyes with affectionate anxiety toward her husband.

"Middling, my dear; I cannot compliment you. I think Mr. John Knightley very far from looking well."

"What is the matter, sir? Did you speak to me?" cried Mr. John Knightley, hearing his own name.

"I am sorry to find, my love, that my father does not think you looking well; but I hope it is only from being a little fatigued. I could have wished, however, as you know, that you had seen Mr. Wingfield before you left home."

"My dear Isabella," exclaimed he hastily, "pray do not concern yourself about my looks. Be satisfied with doctoring and coddling yourself and the children, and let me look as I choose."

“I did not thoroughly understand what you were telling your brother,” cried Emma, “about your friend Mr. Graham’s intending to have a bailiff from Scotland to look after his new estate. But will it answer? Will not the old prejudice be too strong?”

Page 80

And she talked in this way so long and successfully that, when forced to give her attention again to her father and sister, she had nothing worse to hear than Isabella's kind inquiry after Jane Fairfax; and Jane Fairfax, though no great favorite with her in general, she was at that moment very happy to assist in praising.

"That sweet, amiable Jane Fairfax!" said Mrs. John Knightley. "It is so long since I have seen her, except now and then for a moment accidentally in town. What happiness it must be to her good old grandmother and excellent aunt when she comes to visit them! I always regret excessively, on dear Emma's account, that she cannot be more at Highbury; but now their daughter is married I suppose Colonel and Mrs. Campbell will not be able to part with her at all. She would be such a delightful companion for Emma."

Mr. Woodhouse agreed to it all, but added:—

"Our little friend Harriet Smith, however, is just such another pretty kind of young person. You will like Harriet. Emma could not have a better companion than Harriet."

"I am most happy to hear it; but only Jane Fairfax one knows to be so very accomplished and superior, and exactly Emma's age."

This topic was discussed very happily, and others succeeded of similar moment, and passed away with similar harmony; but the evening did not close without a little return of agitation. The gruel came and supplied a great deal to be said—much praise and many comments—undoubting decision of its wholesomeness for every constitution, and pretty severe philippics upon the many houses where it was never met with tolerably; but unfortunately, among the failures which the daughter had to instance, the most recent and therefore most prominent was in her own cook at South End, a young woman hired for the time, who never had been able to understand what she meant by a basin of nice smooth gruel, thin, but not too thin. Often as she had wished for and ordered it, she had never been able to get anything tolerable. Here was a dangerous opening.

"Ah," said Mr. Woodhouse, shaking his head, and fixing his eyes on her with tender concern. The ejaculation in Emma's ear expressed, "Ah, there is no end of the sad consequences of your going to South End. It does not bear talking of." And for a little while she hoped he would not talk of it, and that a silent rumination might suffice to restore him to the relish of his own smooth gruel. After an interval of some minutes, however, he began with—

"I shall always be very sorry that you went to the sea this autumn, instead of coming here."

"But why should you be sorry, sir? I assure you it did the children a great deal of good."

“And moreover, if you must go to the sea, it had better not have been to South End. South End is an unhealthy place. Perry was surprised to hear you had fixed upon South End.”

“I know there is such an idea with many people, but indeed it is quite a mistake, sir. We all had our health perfectly well there, never found the least inconvenience from the mud, and Mr. Wingfield says it is entirely a mistake to suppose the place unhealthy; and I am sure he may be depended on, for he thoroughly understands the nature of the air, and his own brother and family have been there repeatedly.”

Page 81

"You should have gone to Cromer, my dear, if you went anywhere. Perry was a week at Cromer once, and he holds it to be the best of all the sea-bathing places. A fine open sea, he says, and very pure air. And by what I understand, you might have had lodgings there quite away from the sea—a quarter of a mile off—very comfortable. You should have consulted Perry."

"But my dear sir, the difference of the journey: only consider how great it would have been. A hundred miles, perhaps, instead of forty."

"Ah, my dear, as Perry says, where health is at stake, nothing else should be considered; and if one is to travel, there is not much to choose between forty miles and a hundred. Better not move at all, better stay in London altogether than travel forty miles to get into a worse air. This is just what Perry said. It seemed to him a very ill-judged measure."

Emma's attempts to stop her father had been vain; and when he had reached such a point as this, she could not wonder at her brother-in-law's breaking out.

"Mr. Perry," said he, in a voice of very strong displeasure, "would do as well to keep his opinion till it is asked for. Why does he make it any business of his to wonder at what I do at my taking my family to one part of the coast or another? I may be allowed, I hope, the use of my judgment as well as Mr. Perry. I want his directions no more than his drugs." He paused, and growing cooler in a moment, added, with only sarcastic dryness, "If Mr. Perry can tell me how to convey a wife and five children a distance of a hundred and thirty miles with no greater expense or inconvenience than a distance of forty, I should be as willing to prefer Cromer to South End as he could himself."

"True, true," cried Mr. Knightley, with most ready interposition, "very true. That's a consideration, indeed. But, John, as to what I was telling you of my idea of moving the path to Langham, of turning it more to the right that it may not cut through the home meadows, I cannot conceive any difficulty. I should not attempt it, if it were to be the means of inconvenience to the Highbury people, but if you call to mind exactly the present light of the path—The only way of proving it, however, will be to turn to our maps. I shall see you at the Abbey to-morrow morning, I hope, and then we will look them over, and you shall give me your opinion."

Mr. Woodhouse was rather agitated by such harsh reflections on his friend Perry, to whom he had in fact, though unconsciously, been attributing many of his own feelings and expressions; but the soothing attentions of his daughters gradually removed the present evil, and the immediate alertness of one brother, and better recollections of the other, prevented any renewal of it.

FAMILY TRAINING

From 'Mansfield Park'

Page 82

As her [Fanny Price's] appearance and spirits improved, Sir Thomas and Mrs. Norris thought with greater satisfaction of their benevolent plan; and it was pretty soon decided between them, that though far from clever, she showed a tractable disposition, and seemed likely to give them little trouble. A mean opinion of her abilities was not confined to *them*. Fanny could read, work, and write, but she had been taught nothing more; and as her cousins found her ignorant of many things with which they had been long familiar, they thought her prodigiously stupid, and for the first two or three weeks were continually bringing some fresh report of it into the drawing-room.

"Dear mamma, only think, my cousin cannot put the map of Europe together"—or "my cousin cannot tell the principal rivers in Russia"—or "she never heard of Asia Minor"—or "she does not know the difference between water-colors and crayons! How strange! Did you ever hear anything so stupid?"

"My dear," their aunt would reply, "it is very bad, but you must not expect everybody to be as quick at learning as yourself."

"But, aunt, she is really so very ignorant! Do you know, we asked her last night which way she would go to get to Ireland; and she said she should cross to the Isle of Wight. She thinks of nothing but the Isle of Wight, and she calls it *the Island*, as if there were no other island in the world. I am sure I should have been ashamed of myself, if I had not known better long before I was so old as she is. I cannot remember the time when I did not know a great deal that she has not the least notion of yet. How long ago it is, aunt, since we used to repeat the chronological order of the kings of England, with the dates of their accession, and most of the principal events of their reigns!"

"Yes," added the other; "and of the Roman emperors as low as Severus; besides a great deal of the heathen mythology, and all the metals, semi-metals, planets, and distinguished philosophers."

"Very true, indeed, my dears, but you are blessed with wonderful memories, and your poor cousin has probably none at all. There is a vast deal of difference in memories, as well as in everything else; and therefore you must make allowance for your cousin, and pity her deficiency. And remember that if you are ever so forward and clever yourselves, you should always be modest, for, much as you know already, there is a great deal more for you to learn."

"Yes, I know there is, till I am seventeen. But I must tell you another thing of Fanny, so odd and so stupid. Do you know, she says she does not want to learn either music or drawing?"

"To be sure, my dear, that is very stupid indeed, and shows a great want of genius and emulation. But, all things considered, I do not know whether it is not as well that it should be so: for though you know (owing to me) your papa and mamma are so good

as to bring her up with you, it is not at all necessary that she should be as accomplished as you are; on the contrary, it is much more desirable that there should be a difference."

Page 83

Such were the counsels by which Mrs. Norris assisted to form her nieces' minds; and it is not very wonderful that, with all their promising talents and early information, they should be entirely deficient in the less common acquirements of self-knowledge, generosity, and humility. In everything but disposition, they were admirably taught. Sir Thomas did not know what was wanting, because, though a truly anxious father, he was not outwardly affectionate, and the reserve of his manner repressed all the flow of their spirits before him.

PRIVATE THEATRICALS

From 'Mansfield Park'

Fanny looked on and listened, not unamused to observe the selfishness which, more or less disguised, seemed to govern them all, and wondering how it would end.

Three of the characters were now cast, besides Mr. Rushworth, who was always answered for by Maria as willing to do anything; when Julia, meaning, like her sister, to be Agatha, began to be scrupulous on Miss Crawford's account.

"This is not behaving well by the absent," said she. "Here are not women enough. Amelia and Agatha may do for Maria and me, but here is nothing for your sister, Mr. Crawford."

Mr. Crawford desired *that* might not be thought of; he was very sure his sister had no wish of acting but as she might be useful, and that she would not allow herself to be considered in the present case. But this was immediately opposed by Tom Bertram, who asserted the part of Amelia to be in every respect the property of Miss Crawford, if she would accept it. "It falls as naturally as necessarily to her," said he, "as Agatha does to one or other of my sisters. It can be no sacrifice on their side, for it is highly comic."

A short silence followed. Each sister looked anxious; for each felt the best claim to Agatha, and was hoping to have it pressed on her by the rest. Henry Crawford, who meanwhile had taken up the play, and with seeming carelessness was turning over the first act, soon settled the business.

"I must entreat Miss *Julia* Bertram," said he, "not to engage in the part of Agatha, or it will be the ruin of all my solemnity. You must not, indeed you must not [turning to her]. I could not stand your countenance dressed up in woe and paleness. The many laughs we have had together would infallibly come across me, and Frederick and his knapsack would be obliged to run away."

Pleasantly, courteously, it was spoken; but the manner was lost in the matter to Julia's feelings. She saw a glance at Maria, which confirmed the injury to herself: it was a scheme, a trick; she was slighted, Maria was preferred; the smile of triumph which

Maria was trying to suppress showed how well it was understood: and before Julia could command herself enough to speak, her brother gave his weight against her too, by saying, "Oh yes! Maria must be Agatha. Maria will be the best Agatha.

Page 84

Though Julia fancies she prefers tragedy, I would not trust her in it. There is nothing of tragedy about her. She has not the look of it. Her features are not tragic features, and she walks too quick, and speaks too quick, and would not keep her countenance. She had better do the old countrywoman—the Cottager's wife; you had, indeed, Julia. Cottager's wife is a very pretty part, I assure you. The old lady relieves the high-flown benevolence of her husband with a good deal of spirit. You shall be the Cottager's wife."

"Cottager's wife!" cried Mr. Yates. "What are you talking of? The most trivial, paltry, insignificant part; the merest commonplace; not a tolerable speech in the whole. Your sister do that! It is an insult to propose it. At Ecclesford the governess was to have done it. We all agreed that it could not be offered to anybody else. A little more justice, Mr. Manager, if you please. You do not deserve the office if you cannot appreciate the talents of your company a little better."

"Why, as to *that*, my good friends, till I and my company have really acted, there must be some guesswork; but I mean no disparagement to Julia. We cannot have two Agathas, and we must have one Cottager's wife; and I am sure I set her the example of moderation myself in being satisfied with the old Butler. If the part is trifling she will have more credit in making something of it: and if she is so desperately bent against everything humorous, let her take Cottager's speeches instead of Cottager's wife's, and so change the parts all through; *he* is solemn and pathetic enough, I am sure. It could make no difference in the play; and as for Cottager himself, when he has got his wife's speeches, *I* would undertake him with all my heart."

"With all your partiality for Cottager's wife," said Henry Crawford, "it will be impossible to make anything of it fit for your sister, and we must not suffer her good nature to be imposed on. We must not *allow* her to accept the part. She must not be left to her own complaisance. Her talents will be wanted in Amelia. Amelia is a character more difficult to be well represented than even Agatha. I consider Amelia as the most difficult character in the whole piece. It requires great powers, great nicety, to give her playfulness and simplicity without extravagance. I have seen good actresses fail in the part. Simplicity, indeed, is beyond the reach of almost every actress by profession. It requires a delicacy of feeling which they have not. It requires a gentlewoman—a Julia Bertram. You *will* undertake it, I hope?" turning to her with a look of anxious entreaty, which softened her a little; but while she hesitated what to say, her brother again interposed with Miss Crawford's better claim.

"No, no, Julia must not be Amelia. It is not at all the part for her. She would not like it. She would not do well. She is too tall and robust. Amelia should be a small, light, girlish, skipping figure. It is fit for Miss Crawford, and Miss Crawford only. She looks the part, and I am persuaded will do it admirably."

Page 85

Without attending to this, Henry Crawford continued his supplication. "You must oblige us," said he, "indeed you must. When you have studied the character I am sure you will feel it suits you. Tragedy may be your choice, but it will certainly appear that comedy chooses *you*. You will have to visit me in prison with a basket of provisions; you will not refuse to visit me in prison? I think I see you coming in with your basket."

The influence of his voice was felt. Julia wavered; but was he only trying to soothe and pacify her, and make her overlook the previous affront? She distrusted him. The slight had been most determined. He was, perhaps, but at treacherous play with her. She looked suspiciously at her sister; Maria's countenance was to decide it; if she were vexed and alarmed—but Maria looked all serenity and satisfaction, and Julia well knew that on this ground Maria could not be happy but at her expense. With hasty indignation, therefore, and a tremulous voice, she said to him, "You do not seem afraid of not keeping your countenance when I come in with a basket of provisions—though one might have supposed—but it is only as Agatha that I was to be so overpowering!" She stopped, Henry Crawford looked rather foolish, and as if he did not know what to say. Tom Bertram began again:—

"Miss Crawford must be Amelia. She will be an excellent Amelia."

"Do not be afraid of *my* wanting the character," cried Julia, with angry quickness: "I am *not* to be Agatha, and I am sure I will do nothing else; and as to Amelia, it is of all parts in the world the most disgusting to me. I quite detest her. An odious little, pert, unnatural, impudent girl. I have always protested against comedy, and this is comedy in its worst form." And so saying, she walked hastily out of the room, leaving awkward feelings to more than one, but exciting small compassion in any except Fanny, who had been a quiet auditor of the whole, and who could not think of her as under the agitations of *jealousy* without great pity....

The inattention of the two brothers and the aunt to Julia's discomposure, and their blindness to its true cause, must be imputed to the fullness of their own minds. They were totally preoccupied. Tom was engrossed by the concerns of his theatre, and saw nothing that did not immediately relate to it. Edmund, between his theatrical and his real part—between Miss Crawford's claims and his own conduct—between love and consistency, was equally unobservant: and Mrs. Norris was too busy in contriving and directing the general little matters of the company, superintending their various dresses with economical expedients, for which nobody thanked her, and saving, with delighted integrity, half-a-crown here and there to the absent Sir Thomas, to have leisure for watching the behavior, or guarding the happiness, of his daughters.

FRUITLESS REGRETS AND APPLES OF SODOM

Page 86

From 'Mansfield Park'

These were the circumstances and the hopes which gradually brought their alleviation to Sir Thomas, deadening his sense of what was lost, and in part reconciling him to himself; though the anguish arising from the conviction of his own errors in the education of his daughters was never to be entirely done away.

Too late he became aware how unfavorable to the character of any young people must be the totally opposite treatment which Maria and Julia had been always experiencing at home, where the excessive indulgence and flattery of their aunt had been continually contrasted with his own severity. He saw how ill he had judged, in expecting to counteract what was wrong in Mrs. Norris by its reverse in himself, clearly saw that he had but increased the evil, by teaching them to repress their spirits in his presence so as to make their real disposition unknown to him, and sending them for all their indulgences to a person who had been able to attach them only by the blindness of her affection and the excess of her praise.

Here had been grievous mismanagement; but, bad as it was, he gradually grew to feel that it had not been the most direful mistake in his plan of education. Something must have been wanting *within*, or time would have worn away much of its ill effect. He feared that principle, active principle, had been wanting; that they had never been properly taught to govern their inclinations and tempers, by that sense of duty which can alone suffice. They had been instructed theoretically in their religion, but never required to bring it into daily practice. To be distinguished for elegance and accomplishments—the authorized object of their youth—could have had no useful influence that way, no moral effect on the mind. He had meant them to be good, but his cares had been directed to the understanding and manners, not the disposition; and of the necessity of self-denial and humility, he feared they had never heard from any lips that could profit them.

Bitterly did he deplore a deficiency which now he could scarcely comprehend to have been possible. Wretchedly did he feel, that with all the cost and care of an anxious and expensive education, he had brought up his daughters without their understanding their first duties, or his being acquainted with their character and temper.

The high spirit and strong passions of Mrs. Rushworth especially were made known to him only in their sad result. She was not to be prevailed on to leave Mr. Crawford. She hoped to marry him, and they continued together till she was obliged to be convinced that such hope was vain, and till the disappointment and wretchedness arising from the conviction rendered her temper so bad, and her feelings for him so like hatred, as to make them for a while each other's punishment, and then induce a voluntary separation.

She had lived with him to be reproached as the ruin of all his happiness in Fanny, and carried away no better consolation in leaving him, than that she *had* divided them. What can exceed the misery of such a mind in such a situation!

Page 87

Mr. Rushworth had no difficulty in procuring a divorce; and so ended a marriage contracted under such circumstances as to make any better end the effect of good luck, not to be reckoned on. She had despised him, and loved another—and he had been very much aware that it was so. The indignities of stupidity, and the disappointments of selfish passion, can excite little pity. His punishment followed his conduct, as did a deeper punishment the deeper guilt of his wife. *He* was released from the engagement, to be mortified and unhappy till some other pretty girl could attract him into matrimony again, and he might set forward on a second, and it is to be hoped more prosperous trial of the state—if duped, to be duped at least with good humor and good luck; while *she* must withdraw with infinitely stronger feelings, to a retirement and reproach which could allow no second spring of hope or character.

Where she could be placed, became a subject of most melancholy and momentous consultation. Mrs. Norris, whose attachment seemed to augment with the demerits of her niece, would have had her received at home and countenanced by them all. Sir Thomas would not hear of it; and Mrs. Norris's anger against Fanny was so much the greater, from considering *her* residence there as the motive. She persisted in placing his scruples to *her* account, though Sir Thomas very solemnly assured her that had there been no young woman in question, had there been no young person of either sex belonging to him, to be endangered by the society or hurt by the character of Mrs. Rushworth, he would never have offered so great an insult to the neighborhood as to expect it to notice her. As a daughter—he hoped a penitent one—she should be protected by him, and secured in every comfort and supported by every encouragement to do right which their relative situations admitted; but farther than *that* he would not go. Maria had destroyed her own character; and he would not, by a vain attempt to restore what never could be restored, be affording his sanction to vice, or, in seeking to lessen its disgrace, be anywise accessory to introducing such misery in another man's family as he had known himself....

Henry Crawford, ruined by early independence and bad domestic example, indulged in the freaks of a cold-blooded vanity a little too long. Once it had, by an opening undesigned and unmerited, led him into the way of happiness. Could he have been satisfied with the conquest of one amiable woman's affections, could he have found sufficient exultation in overcoming the reluctance, in working himself into the esteem and tenderness of Fanny Price, there would have been every probability of success and felicity for him. His affection had already done something. Her influence over him had already given him some influence over her. Would he have deserved more, there can be no doubt that more would have been obtained; especially when that marriage had taken place, which

Page 88

would have given him the assistance of her conscience in subduing her first inclination, and brought them very often together. Would he have persevered, and uprightly, Fanny must have been his reward—and a reward very voluntarily bestowed—within a reasonable period from Edmund's marrying Mary. Had he done as he intended, and as he knew he ought, by going down to Everingham after his return from Portsmouth, he might have been deciding his own happy destiny. But he was pressed to stay for Mrs. Fraser's party: his staying was made of flattering consequence, and he was to meet Mrs. Rushworth there. Curiosity and vanity were both engaged, and the temptation of immediate pleasure was too strong for a mind unused to make any sacrifice to right; he resolved to defer his Norfolk journey, resolved that writing should answer the purpose of it, or that its purpose was unimportant—and staid. He saw Mrs. Rushworth, was received by her with a coldness which ought to have been repulsive, and have established apparent indifference between them for ever: but he was mortified, he could not bear to be thrown off by the woman whose smiles had been so wholly at his command; he must exert himself to subdue so proud a display of resentment: it was anger on Fanny's account; he must get the better of it, and make Mrs. Rushworth Maria Bertram again in her treatment of himself.

In this spirit he began the attack; and by animated perseverance had soon re-established the sort of familiar intercourse—of gallantry—of flirtation—which bounded his views: but in triumphing over the discretion, which, though beginning in anger, might have saved them both, he had put himself in the power of feelings on her side more strong than he had supposed. She loved him; there was no withdrawing attentions avowedly dear to her. He was entangled by his own vanity, with as little excuse of love as possible, and without the smallest inconstancy of mind towards her cousin. To keep Fanny and the Bertrams from a knowledge of what was passing became his first object. Secrecy could not have been more desirable for Mrs. Rushworth's credit than he felt it for his own. When he returned from Richmond, he would have been glad to see Mrs. Rushworth no more. All that followed was the result of her imprudence; and he went off with her at last because he could not help it, regretting Fanny even at the moment, but regretting her infinitely more when all the bustle of the intrigue was over, and a very few months had taught him, by the force of contrast, to place a yet higher value on the sweetness of her temper, the purity of her mind, and the excellence of her principles.

Page 89

That punishment, the public punishment of disgrace, should in a just measure attend *his* share of the offense, is, we know, not one of the barriers which society gives to virtue. In this world, the penalty is less equal than could be wished; but without presuming to look forward to a juster appointment hereafter, we may fairly consider a man of sense, like Henry Crawford, to be providing for himself no small portion of vexation and regret—vexation that must rise sometimes to self-reproach, and regret to wretchedness—in having so requited hospitality, so injured family peace, so forfeited his best, most estimable, and endeared acquaintance, and so lost the woman whom he had rationally as well as passionately loved.

AVERROES

(1126-1198)

Averroes (Abu 'l Walid Muhammad, ibn Achmad, ibn Muhammad, IBN RUSHD; or more in English, Abu 'l Walid Muhammed, the son of Achmet, the son of Muhammed, the son of Rushd) was born in 1126 at Cordova, Spain. His father and grandfather, the latter a celebrated jurist and canonist, had been judges in that city. He first studied theology and canon law, and later medicine and philosophy; thus, like Faust, covering the whole field of mediaeval science. His life was cast in the most brilliant period of Western Muslim culture, in the splendor of that rationalism which preceded the great darkness of religious fanaticism. As a young man, he was introduced by Ibn Tufail (Abubacer), author of the famous 'Hayy al-Yukdhan,' a philosophical 'Robinson Crusoe,' to the enlightened Khalif Abu Ya'kub Yusuf (1163-84), as a fit expounder of the then popular philosophy of Aristotle. This position he filled with so much success as to become a favorite with the Prince, and finally his private physician. He likewise filled the important office of judge, first at Seville, later at Cordova.

He enjoyed even greater consideration under the next Khalif, Ya'kub al-Mansur, until the year 1195, when the jealousy of his rivals and the fanaticism of the Berbers led to his being accused of championing philosophy to the detriment of religion. Though Averroes always professed great respect for religion, and especially for Islam, as a valuable popular substitute for science and philosophy, the charge could hardly be rebutted (as will be shown later), and the Amir of the Faithful could scarcely afford openly to favor a heretic. Averroes was accordingly deprived of his honors, and banished to Lacena, a Jewish settlement near Cordova—a fact which gives coloring to the belief that he was of Jewish descent. To satisfy his fanatical subjects for the moment, the Khalif published severe edicts not only against Averroes, but against all learned men and all learning as hostile to religion. For a time the poor philosopher could not appear in public without being mobbed; but after two years, a less fanatical party having come into power, the Prince revoked his edicts, and Averroes was restored to favor. This event he did not long survive. He died on 10th December 1198, in Marocco. Here too he was buried;

but his body was afterward transported to Cordova, and laid in the tomb of his fathers. He left several sons, more than one of whom came to occupy important positions.

Page 90

Averroes was the last great Muslim thinker, summing up and carrying to its conclusions the thought of four hundred years. The philosophy of Islam, which flourished first in the East, in Basra and Bagdad (800-1100), and then in the West, Cordova, Toledo, *etc.* (1100-1200), was a mixture of Aristotelianism and Neo-Platonism, borrowed, under the earlier Persianizing Khalifs, from the Christian (mainly Nestorian) monks of Syria and Mesopotamia, being consequently a naturalistic system. In it God was acknowledged only as the supreme abstraction; while eternal matter, law, and impersonal intelligence played the principal part. It was necessarily irreconcilable with Muslim orthodoxy, in which a crudely conceived, intensely personal God is all in all. While Persian influence was potent, philosophy flourished, produced some really great scholars and thinkers, made considerable headway against Muslim fatalism and predestination, and seemed in a fair way to bring about a free and rational civilization, eminent in science and art. But no sooner did the fanatical or scholastic element get the upper hand than philosophy vanished, and with it all hope of a great Muslim civilization in the East. This change was marked by Al-Ghazzali, and his book 'The Destruction of the Philosophers.' He died in A.D. 1111, and then the works of Al-Farabi, Ibn-Sina, and the "Brothers of Purity," wandered out to the far West, to seek for appreciation among the Muslim, Jews, and Christians of Spain. And for a brief time they found it there, and in the twelfth century found also eloquent expounders at the mosque-schools of Cordova, Toledo, Seville, and Saragossa. Of these the most famous were Ibn Baja, Ibn Tufail, and Ibn Rushd (Averroes).

During its progress, Muslim philosophy had gradually been eliminating the Neo-Platonic, mystic element, and returning to pure Aristotelianism. In Averroes, who professed to be merely a commentator on Aristotle, this tendency reached its climax; and though he still regarded the pseudo-Aristotelian works as genuine, and did not entirely escape their influence, he is by far the least mystic of Muslim thinkers. The two fundamental doctrines upon which he always insisted, and which long made his name famous, not to say notorious, the eternity of matter and of the world (involving a denial of the doctrine of creation), and the oneness of the active intellect in all men (involving the mortality of the individual soul and the impossibility of resurrection and judgment), are both of Aristotelian origin. It was no wonder that he came into conflict with the orthodox Muslim; for in the warfare between Arab prophetism, with its shallow apologetic scholasticism, and Greek philosophy, with its earnest endeavor to find truth, and its belief in reason as the sole revealer thereof, he unhesitatingly took the side of the latter. He held that man is made to discover truth, and that the serious study of God and his works is the noblest form of worship.

Page 91

However little one may agree with his chief tenets, there can be no doubt that he was the most enlightened man of the entire Middle Age, in Europe at least; and if his spirit and work had been continued, Western Islam might have become a great permanent civilizing power. But here again, after a brief period of extraordinary philosophic brilliancy, fanaticism got the upper hand. With the death of Averroes the last hope of a beneficent Muslim civilization came to an end. Since then, Islam has been a synonym for blind fanaticism and cruel bigotry. In many parts of the Muslim world, "philosopher" is a term of reproach, like "miscreant."

But though Islam rejected its philosopher, Averroes's work was by no means without its effect. It was through his commentaries on Aristotle that the thought of that greatest of ancient thinkers became known to the western world, both Jewish and Christian. Among the Jews, his writings soon acquired almost canonical authority. His system found expression in the works of the best known of Hebrew thinkers, Maimonides (1135-1204), "the second Moses" works which, despite all orthodox opposition, dominated Jewish thought for nearly three hundred years, and made the Jews during that time the chief promoters of rationalism. When Muslim persecution forced a large number of Jews to leave Spain and settle in Southern France, the works of Averroes and Maimonides were translated into Hebrew, which thenceforth became the vehicle of Jewish thought; and thus Muslim Aristotelianism came into direct contact with Christianity.

Among the Christians, the works of Averroes, translated by Michael Scott, "wizard of dreaded fame," Hermann the German, and others, acted at once like a mighty solvent. Heresy followed in their track, and shook the Church to her very foundations. Recognizing that her existence was at stake, she put forth all her power to crush the intruder. The Order of Preachers, initiated by St. Dominic of Calahorra (1170-1221), was founded; the Inquisition was legalized (about 1220). The writings of Aristotle and his Arab commentators were condemned to the flames (1209, 1215, 1231). Later, when all this proved unavailing, the best intellects in Christendom, such as Albertus Magnus (1193-1280), and Thomas Aquinas (1227-74), undertook to repel the new doctrine with its own weapons; that is, by submitting the thought of Aristotle and his Arab commentators to rational discussion. Thus was introduced the second or palmy period of Christian Scholasticism, whose chief industry, we may fairly say, was directed to the refutation of the two leading doctrines of Averroes. Aiming at this, Thomas Aquinas threw the whole dogmatic system of the Church into the forms of Aristotle, and thus produced that colossal system of theology which still prevails in the Roman Catholic world; witness the Encyclical *AETerni Patris* of Leo XIII., issued in 1879.

Page 92

By the great thinkers of the thirteenth century, Averroes, though regarded as heretical and dangerous in religion, was looked up to as an able thinker, and the commentator *par excellence*; so much so that St. Thomas borrowed from him the very form of his own Commentaries, and Dante assigned him a distinguished place, beside Plato and Aristotle, in the limbo of ancient sages ('Inferno,' iv. 143). But in the following century—mainly, no doubt, because he was chosen as the patron of certain strongly heretical movements, such as those instigated by the arch-rationalist Frederic II—he came to be regarded as the precursor of Antichrist, if not that personage himself: being credited with the awful blasphemy of having spoken of the founders of the three current religions—Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad—as “the three impostors.” Whatever truth there may be in this, so much is certain, that infidelity, in the sense of an utter disbelief in Christianity as a revealed religion, or in any sense specially true, dates from the thirteenth century, and is due in large measure to the influence of Averroes. Yet he was a great favorite with the Franciscans, and for a time exercised a profound influence on the universities of Paris and Oxford, finding a strong admirer even in Roger Bacon. His thought was also a powerful element in the mysticism of Meister Eckhart and his followers; a mysticism which incurred the censure of the Church.

Thus both the leading forms of heresy which characterized the thirteenth century—naturalism with its tendency to magic, astrology, alchemy, *etc.*, *etc.*, and mysticism with its dreams of beatific visions, its self-torture and its lawlessness (see Goerres, 'Die Christliche Mystik')—were due largely to Averroes. In spite of this, his commentaries on Aristotle maintained their credit, their influence being greatest in the fourteenth century, when his doctrines were openly professed. After the invention of printing, they appeared in numberless editions,—several times in connection with the text of Aristotle. As the age of the Renaissance and of Protestantism approached, they gradually lost their prestige. The chief humanists, like Petrarch, as well as the chief reformers, were bitterly hostile to them. Nevertheless, they contributed important elements to both movements.

Averroism survived longest in Northern Italy, especially in the University of Padua, where it was professed until the seventeenth century, and where, as a doctrine hostile to supernaturalism, it paved the way for the study of nature and the rise of modern science. Thus Averroes may fairly be said to have had a share in every movement toward freedom, wise and unwise, for the last seven hundred years. In truth, free thought in Europe owes more to him than to any other man except Abelard. His last declared follower was the impetuous Lucilio Vanini, who was burned for atheism at Toulouse in 1619.

The best work on Averroes is Renan's 'Averroes et l'Averroisme' (fourth edition, Paris, 1893). This contains, on pages 58-79, a complete list both of his commentaries and his original writings.

Page 93

THE AVESTA

(From about B.C. Sixth Century)

BY A.V. WILLIAMS JACKSON

Avesta, or Zend-Avesta, an interesting monument of antiquity, is the Bible of Zoroaster, the sacred book of ancient Iran, and holy scripture of the modern Parsis. The exact meaning of the name "Avesta" is not certain; it may perhaps signify "law," "text," or, more doubtfully, "wisdom," "revelation." The modern familiar designation of the book as Zend-Avesta is not strictly accurate; if used at all, it should rather be Avesta-Zend, like "Bible and Commentary," as *zand* signifies "explanation," "commentary," and *Avesta u Zand* is employed in some Persian allusions to the Zoroastrian scriptures as a designation denoting the text of the Avesta accompanied by the Pahlavi version or interpretation.

The story of the recovery of the Avesta, or rather the discovery of the Avesta, by the enthusiastic young French scholar Anquetil du Perron, who was the first to open to the western world the ancient records of Zoroastrianism, reads almost like a romance. Du Perron's own account of his departure for India in 1754, of his experiences with the *dasturs* (or priests) during a seven years' residence among them, of his various difficulties and annoyances, setbacks and successes, is entertainingly presented in the introductory volume of his work 'Zend-Avesta, Ouvrage de Zoroastre' (3 Vols., Paris, 1771). This was the first translation of the ancient Persian books published in a European language. Its appearance formed one of those epochs which are marked by an addition to the literary, religious, or philosophical wealth of our time; a new contribution was added to the riches of the West from the treasures of the East. The field thus thrown open, although worked imperfectly at first, has yielded abundant harvests to the hands of later gleaners.

THE ZEND-AVESTA.

Facsimile of a Page of the AVESTA; from the oldest preserved manuscript containing the YACNA. A. D. 1325. In the Royal Library at Copenhagen.

The Zend-Avesta—more properly the Avesta-Zend, *i.e.*, "Text and Commentary" is the "Bible" of the Persians. The four parts into which it is divided are called Yacna, Vispered, Vendidad, and Khordah-Avesta.

[Illustration]

With the growth of our knowledge of the language of the sacred texts, we have now a clear idea also of the history of Zoroastrian literature and of the changes and chances

through which with varying fortunes the scriptures have passed. The original Zoroastrian Avesta, according to tradition, was in itself a literature of vast dimensions. Pliny, in his 'Natural History,' speaks of two million verses of Zoroaster; to which may be added the Persian assertion that the original copy of the scriptures was written upon twelve thousand parchments, with gold illuminated letters,

Page 94

and was deposited in the library at Persepolis. But what was the fate of this archetype? Parsi tradition has an answer. Alexander the Great—"the accursed Iskander," as he is called—is responsible for its destruction. At the request of the beautiful Thais, as the story goes, he allowed the palace of Persepolis to be burned, and the precious treasure perished in the flames. Whatever view we may take of the different sides of this story, one thing cannot be denied: the invasion of Alexander and the subjugation of Iran was indirectly or directly the cause of a certain religious decadence which followed upon the disruption of the Persian Empire, and was answerable for the fact that a great part of the scriptures was forgotten or fell into disuse. Persian tradition lays at the doors of the Greeks the loss of another copy of the original ancient texts, but does not explain in what manner this happened; nor has it any account to give of copies of the prophet's works which Semitic writers say were translated into nearly a dozen different languages. One of these versions was perhaps Greek, for it is generally acknowledged that in the fourth century B.C. the philosopher Theopompus spent much time in giving in his own tongue the contents of the sacred Magian books.

Tradition is unanimous on one point at least: it is that the original Avesta comprised twenty-one *Nasks*, or books, a statement which there is no good reason to doubt. The same tradition which was acquainted with the general character of these Nasks professes also to tell exactly how many of them survived the inroad of Alexander; for although the sacred text itself was destroyed, its contents were lost only in part, the priests preserving large portions of the precious scriptures. These met with many vicissitudes in the five centuries that intervened between the conquest of Alexander and the great restoration of Zoroastrianism in the third century of our era, under the Sassanian dynasty. At this period all obtainable Zoroastrian scriptures were collected, the compilation was codified, and a detailed notice made of the contents of each of the original Nasks compared with the portions then surviving. The original Avesta was, it would appear, a sort of encyclopaedic work; not of religion alone, but of useful knowledge relating to law, to the arts, science, the professions, and to every-day life. If we may judge from the existing table of contents of these Nasks, the zealous Sassanians, even in the time of the collecting (A. D. 226-380), were able to restore but a fragment of the archetype, perhaps a fourth part of the original Avesta. Nor was this remnant destined to escape misfortune. The Mohammedan invasion, in the seventh century of our era added a final and crushing blow. Much of the religion that might otherwise have been handed down to us, despite "the accursed Iskander's" conquest, now perished through the sword and the Koran. Its loss, we must remember, is in part compensated by the Pahlavi religious literature of Sassanian days.

Page 95

Fragmentary and disjointed as are the remnants of the Avesta, we are fortunate in possessing even this moiety of the Bible of Zoroaster, whose compass is about one tenth that of our own sacred book. A grouping of the existing texts is here presented:—
1. Yasna (including Gathas). 2. Visperad. 3. Yashts. 4. Minor Texts. 5. Vendidad. 6. Fragments.

Even these texts no single manuscript in our time contains complete. The present collection is made by combining various Avestan codexes. In spite of the great antiquity of the literature, all the existing manuscripts are comparatively young. None is older than the thirteenth century of our own era, while the direct history of only one or two can be followed back to about the tenth century. This mere external circumstance has of course no bearing on the actual early age of the Zoroastrian scriptures. It must be kept in mind that Zoroaster lived at least six centuries before the birth of Christ.

Among the six divisions of our present Avesta, the Yasna, Visperad, and Vendidad are closely connected. They are employed in the daily ritual, and they are also accompanied by a version or interpretation in the Pahlavi language, which serves at the same time as a sort of commentary. The three divisions are often found combined into a sort of prayer-book, called Vendidad-Sadah (Vendidad Pure); *i.e.*, Avesta text without the Pahlavi rendering. The chapters in this case are arranged with special reference to liturgical usage.

Some idea of the character of the Avesta as it now exists may be derived from the following sketch of its contents and from the illustrative selections presented:—

1. *Yasna* (sacrifice, worship), the chief liturgical work of the sacred canon. It consists mainly of ascriptions of praise and of prayer, and corresponds nearly to our idea of a prayer-book. The *Yasna* comprises seventy-two chapters; these fall into three nearly equal parts. The middle, or oldest part, is the section of Gathas below described.

The meaning of the word *yasna* as above gives at once some conception of the nature of the texts. The *Yasna* chapters were recited at the sacrifice: a sacrifice that consisted not in blood-offerings, but in an offering of praise and thanksgiving, accompanied by ritual observances. The white-robed priest, girt with the sacred cord and wearing a veil, the *paitidana*, before his lips in the presence of the holy fire, begins the service by an invocation of Ahura Mazda (Ormazd) and the heavenly hierarchy; he then consecrates the *zaothra* water, the *myazda* or oblation, and the *baresma* or bundle of sacred twigs. He and his assistant now prepare the *haoma* (the *soma* of the Hindus), or juice of a sacred plant, the drinking of which formed part of the religious rite. At the ninth chapter of the book, the rhythmical chanting of the praises of Haoma is begun. This deified being, a personification of the consecrated drink, is supposed to have appeared before the prophet himself, and to have described to him the blessings which the *haoma* bestows upon its pious worshiper. The lines are metrical, as in fact they commonly are

in the older parts of the Avesta, and the rhythm somewhat recalls the Kalevala verse of Longfellow's 'Hiawatha.' A specimen is here presented in translation:—

Page 96

At the time of morning-worship
Haoma came to Zoroaster,
Who was serving at the Fire
And the holy Psalms intoning.

“What man art thou (asked the Prophet),
Who of all the world material
Art the fairest I have e’er seen
In my life, bright and immortal?”

The image of the sacred plant responds, and bids the priest prepare the holy extract.

Haoma then to me gave answer,
Haoma righteous, death-destroying:—
“Zoroaster, I am Haoma,
Righteous Haoma, death-destroying.
Do thou gather me, Spitama,
And prepare me as a potion;
Praise me, aye as shall hereafter
In their praise the Saviors praise me.”

Zoroaster again inquires, wishing to know of the pious men of old who worshiped Haoma and obtained blessings for their religious zeal. Among these, as is learned from Haoma, one was King Yima, whose reign was the time of the Golden Age; those were the happy days when a father looked as young as his children.

In the reign of princely Yima,
Heat there was not, cold there was not,
Neither age nor death existed,
Nor disease the work of Demons;

Son and father walked together
Fifteen years old, each in figure,
Long as Vivanghvat’s son Yima,
The good Shepherd, ruled as sovereign.

For two chapters more, Haoma is extolled. Then follows the Avestan Creed (Yasna 12), a prose chapter that was repeated by those who joined in the early Zoroastrian faith, forsook the old marauding and nomadic habits that still characterize the modern Kurds, and adopted an agricultural habit of life, devoting themselves peaceably to cattle-raising, irrigation, and cultivation of the fields. The greater part of the Yasna book is of a liturgic or ritualistic nature, and need not here be further described. Special mention, however, must be made of the middle section of the Yasna, which is constituted by “the Five Gathas” (hymns, psalms), a division containing the seventeen sacred psalms,

sayings, sermons, or teachings of Zoroaster himself. These Gathas form the oldest part of the entire canon of the Avesta. In them we see before our eyes the prophet of the new faith speaking with the fervor of the Psalmist of the Bible. In them we feel the thrill of ardor that characterizes a new and struggling religious band; we are warmed by the burning zeal of the preacher of a church militant. Now, however, comes a cry of despondency, a moment of faint-heartedness at the present triumph of evil, at the success of the wicked and the misery of the righteous; but this gives way to a clarion burst of hopefulness, the trumpet note of a prophet filled with the promise of ultimate victory, the triumph of good over evil. The end of the world cannot be far away; the final overthrow of Ahriman (Anra Mainyu) by Ormazd (Ahura Mazda) is assured; the establishment of a new order of things is certain; at the founding of this "kingdom" the resurrection of the dead will take place and the life eternal will be entered upon.

Page 97

The third Gatha, Yasna 30, may be chosen by way of illustration. This is a sort of Mazdian Sermon on the Mount. Zoroaster preaches the doctrine of dualism, the warfare of good and evil in the world, and exhorts the faithful to choose aright and to combat Satan. The archangels Good Thought (Vohu Manah), Righteousness (Asha), Kingdom (Khshathra), appear as the helpers of Man (Maretan); for whose soul, as in the old English morality play, the Demons (Daevas) are contending. Allusions to the resurrection and final judgment, and to the new dispensation, are easily recognized in the spirited words of the prophet. A prose rendering of this metrical psalm is here attempted; the verse order, however, is preserved, though without rhythm.

A PSALM OF ZOROASTER: YASNA 30

Now shall I speak of things which ye who seek them shall bear in mind, Namely, the praises of Ahura Mazda and the worship of Good Thought, And the joy of [*lit.* through] Righteousness which is manifested through Light.

2

Hearken with your ears to what is best; with clear understanding perceive it.

Awakening to our advising every man, personally, of the distinction Between the two creeds, before the Great Event [i.e., the Resurrection].

3

Now, Two Spirits primeval there were twins which became known through their activity,

To wit, the Good and the Evil, in thought, word, and deed.
The wise have rightly distinguished between these two; not so the unwise.

4

And, now, when these Two Spirits first came together, they established Life and destruction, and ordained how the world hereafter shall be, To wit, the Worst World [Hell] for the wicked, but the Best Thought [Heaven] for the righteous.

5

The Wicked One [Ahriman] of these Two Spirits chose to do evil, The Holiest Spirit [Ormazd]—who wears the solid heavens as a robe—chose Righteousness [Asha], And [so also those] who zealously gratified Ormazd by virtuous deeds.

6

Not rightly did the Demons distinguish these Two Spirits; for Delusion came Upon them, as they were deliberating, so that they chose the Worst Thought [Hell]. And away they rushed to Wrath [the Fiend] in order to corrupt the life of Man [Maretan].

7

And to him [i.e., to Gaya Maretan] came Khshathra [Kingdom], Vohu Manah [Good Thought] and Asha [Righteousness], And Armaiti [Archangel of Earth] gave [to him] bodily endurance unceasingly; Of these, Thy [creatures], when Thou earnest with Thy creations, he [i.e., Gaya Maretan] was the first.

8

But when the retribution of the sinful shall come to pass, Then shall Good Thought distribute Thy Kingdom, Shall fulfill it for those who shall deliver Satan [Druj] into the hand of Righteousness [Asha].

9

Page 98

And so may we be such as make the world renewed, And may
Ahura Mazda and Righteousness lend their aid, That our
thoughts may there be [set] where Faith is abiding.

10

For at the [final] Dispensation, the blow of annihilation to Satan shall come to pass; But
those who participate in a good report [in the Life Record] shall meet together In the
happy home of Good Thought, and of Mazda, and of Righteousness.

11

If, O ye men, ye mark these doctrines which Mazda gave, And [mark] the weal and the
woe—namely, the long torment of the wicked, And the welfare of the righteous—then in
accordance with these [doctrines] there will be happiness hereafter.

The *Visperad* (all the masters) is a short collection of prosaic invocations and laudations
of sacred things. Its twenty-four sections form a supplement to the Yasna. Whatever
interest this division of the Avesta possesses lies entirely on the side of the ritual, and
not in the field of literature. In this respect it differs widely from the book of the Yashts,
which is next to be mentioned.

The *Yashts* (praises of worship) form a poetical book of twenty-one hymns in which the
angels of the religion, “the worshipful ones” (*Yazatas, Izads*), are glorified, and the
heroes of former days. Much of the material of the Yashts is evidently drawn from pre-
Zoroastrian sagas which have been remodeled and adopted, worked over and modified,
and incorporated into the canon of the new-founded religion. There is a mythological
and legendary atmosphere about the Yashts, and Firdausi’s ‘Shah Nameh’ serves to
throw light on many of the events portrayed in them, or allusions that would otherwise
be obscure. All the longer Yashts are in verse, and some of them have poetic merit.
Chiefly to be mentioned among the longer ones are: first, the one in praise of Ardivi
Sura Anahita, or the stream celestial (Yt. 5); second, the Yasht which exalts the star
Tishtrya and his victory over the demon of drought (Yt. 8); then the one devoted to the
Fravashis or glorified souls of the righteous (Yt. 13) as well as the Yasht in honor of
Verethraghna, the incarnation of Victory (Yt. 14). Selections from the others, Yt. 10 and
Yt. 19, which are among the noblest, are here given.

The first of the two chosen (Yt. 10) is dedicated to the great divinity Mithra, the genius
who presides over light, truth, and the sun (Yt. 10, 13).

Foremost he, the celestial angel,
Mounts above Mount Hara (Alborz)
In advance of the sun immortal
Which is drawn by fleeting horses;



He it is, in gold adornment
First ascends the beauteous summits
Thence beneficent he glances
Over all the abode of Aryans.

As the god of light and of truth and as one of the judges of the dead, he rides out in lordly array to the battle and takes an active part in the conflict, wreaking vengeance upon those who at any time in their life have spoken falsely, belied their oath, or broken their pledge. His war-chariot and panoply are described in mingled lines of verse and prose, which may thus be rendered (Yt. 10, 128-132):—

Page 99

By the side of Mithra's chariot,
Mithra, lord of the wide pastures,
Stand a thousand bows well-fashioned
(The bow has a string of cowgut).

By his chariot also are standing a thousand vulture-feathered, gold-notched, lead-poised, well-fashioned arrows (the barb is of iron); likewise a thousand spears well-fashioned and sharp-piercing, and a thousand steel battle-axes, two-edged and well-fashioned; also a thousand bronze clubs well-fashioned.

And by Mithra's chariot also
Stands a mace, fair and well-striking,
With a hundred knobs and edges,
Dashing forward, felling heroes;
Out of golden bronze 'tis molded.

The second illustrative extract will be taken from Yasht 19, which magnifies in glowing strains the praises of the Kingly Glory. This "kingly glory" (*kavaem hvareno*) is a sort of halo, radiance, or mark of divine right, which was believed to be possessed by the kings and heroes of Iran in the long line of its early history. One hero who bore the glory was the mighty warrior Thraetaona (Feridun), the vanquisher of the serpent-monster Azhi Dahaka (Zohak), who was depopulating the world by his fearful daily banquet of the brains of two children. The victory was a glorious triumph for Thraetaona (Yt. 19, 37):

He who slew Azhi Dahaka,
Three-jawed monster, triple-headed,
With six eyes and myriad senses,
Fiend demoniac, full of power,
Evil to the world, and wicked.
This fiend full of power, the Devil
Anra Mainyu had created,
Fatal to the world material,
Deadly to the world of Righteousness.

Of equal puissance was another noble champion, the valiant Keresaspa, who dispatched a raging demon who, though not yet grown to man's estate, was threatening the world. The monster's thrasonical boasting is thus given (Yt. 19, 43):—

I am yet only a stripling,
But if ever I come to manhood
I shall make the earth my chariot
And shall make a wheel of heaven.
I shall drive the Holy Spirit

Down from out the shining heaven,
I shall rout the Evil Spirit
Up from out the dark abysm;
They as steeds shall draw my chariot,
God and Devil yoked together.

Passing over a collection of shorter petitions, praises, and blessings which may conveniently be grouped together as 'Minor Prayers,' for they answer somewhat to our idea of a daily manual of morning devotion, we may turn to the Vendidad (law against the demons), the Iranian Pentateuch. Tradition asserts that in the Vendidad we have preserved a specimen of one of the original Nasks. This may be true, but even the superficial student will see that it is in any case a fragmentary remnant. Interesting as the Vendidad is to the student of early rites, observances, manners, and customs, it is nevertheless a barren field for the student of literature, who will find in it little more than wearisome prescriptions like certain chapters of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. It need only be added that at the close of the colloquy between Zoroaster and Ormazd given in Vend. 6, he will find the origin of the modern Parsi "Towers of Silence."

Page 100

Among the Avestan Fragments, attention might finally be called to one which we must be glad has not been lost. It is an old metrical bit (Frag. 4, 1-3) in praise of the Airyama Ishya Prayer (Yt. 54, 1). This is the prayer that shall be intoned by the Savior and his companions at the end of the world, when the resurrection will take place; and it will serve as a sort of last trump, at the sound of which the dead rise from their graves and evil is banished from the world. Ormazd himself says to Zoroaster (Frag. 4, 1-3):—

The Airyama Ishya prayer, I tell thee,
Upright, holy Zoroaster,
Is the greatest of all prayers.
Verily among all prayers
It is this one which I gifted
With revivifying powers.

This prayer shall the Saoshyants, Saviors,
Chant, and at the chanting of it
I shall rule over my creatures,
I who am Ahura Mazda.
Not shall Ahriman have power,
Anra Mainyu, o'er my creatures,
He (the fiend) of foul religion.
In the earth shall Ahriman hide,
In the earth the demons hide.
Up the dead again shall rise,
And within their lifeless bodies
Incorporate life shall be restored.

Inadequate as brief extracts must be to represent the sacred books of a people, the citations here given will serve to show that the Avesta which is still recited in solemn tones by the white-robed priests of Bombay, the modern representatives of Zoroaster, the Prophet of ancient days, is a survival not without value to those who appreciate whatever has been preserved for us of the world's earlier literature. For readers who are interested in the subject there are several translations of the Avesta. The best (except for the Gathas, where the translation is weak) is the French version by Darmesteter, 'Le Zend Avesta,' published in the 'Annales du Musee Guimet' (Paris, 1892-93). An English rendering by Darmesteter and Mills is contained in the 'Sacred Books of the East,' Vols. iv., xxiii., xxxi.

[Illustration: Signature: A.V. Williams Jackson]

A PRAYER FOR KNOWLEDGE

This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: when praise is to be offered, how shall I complete the praise of the One like You, O Mazda? Let the One like Thee declare it earnestly to the friend who is such as I, thus through Thy Righteousness within us to offer friendly help to us, so that the One like Thee may draw near us through Thy Good Mind within the Soul.

2. This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright how, in pleasing Him, may we serve the Supreme One of the better world; yea, how to serve that chief who may grant us those blessings of his grace and who will seek for grateful requitals at our hands; for He, bountiful as He is through the Righteous Order, will hold off ruin from us all, guardian as He is for both the worlds, O Spirit Mazda! and a friend.

Page 101

3. This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: Who by generation is the first father of the Righteous Order within the world? Who gave the recurring sun and stars their undeviating way? Who established that whereby the moon waxes, and whereby she wanes, save Thee? These things, O Great Creator! would I know, and others likewise still.

4. This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: Who from beneath hath sustained the earth and the clouds above that they do not fall? Who made the waters and the plants? Who to the wind has yoked on the storm-clouds the swift and fleetest two? Who, O Great Creator! is the inspirer of the good thoughts within our souls?

5. This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: Who, as a skillful artisan, hath made the lights and the darkness? Who, as thus skillful, hath made sleep and the zest of waking hours? Who spread the Auroras, the noontides and midnight, monitors to discerning man, duty's true guides?

6. This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright these things which I shall speak forth, if they are truly thus. Doth the Piety which we cherish in reality increase the sacred orderliness within our actions? To these Thy true saints hath she given the Realm through the Good Mind? For whom hast thou made the Mother-kine, the produce of joy?

7. This I ask Thee, O Ahura! tell me aright: Who fashioned Aramaiti (our piety) the beloved, together with Thy Sovereign Power? Who, through his guiding wisdom, hath made the son revering the father? Who made him beloved? With questions such as these, so abundant, O Mazda! I press Thee, O bountiful Spirit, Thou maker of all!

Yasna xlv.: Translation of L.H. Mills.

THE ANGEL OF DIVINE OBEDIENCE

We worship Sraosha [Obedience] the blessed, whom four racers draw in harness, white and shining, beautiful and (27) powerful, quick to learn and fleet, obeying before speech, heeding orders from the mind, with their hoofs of horn gold-covered, (28) fleeter than [our] horses, swifter than the winds, more rapid than the rain [drops as they fall]; yea, fleeter than the clouds, or well-winged birds, or the well-shot arrow as it flies, (29) which overtake these swift ones all, as they fly after them pursuing, but which are never overtaken when they flee, which plunge away from both the weapons [hurled on this side and on that] and draw Sraosha with them, the good Sraosha and the blessed; which from both the weapons [those on this side and on that] bear the good Obedience the blessed, plunging forward in their zeal, when he takes his course from India on the East and when he lights down in the West.

Yasna lvii. 27-29: Translation of L.H. Mills.

TO THE FIRE

Page 102

I offer my sacrifice and homage to thee, the Fire, as a good offering, and an offering with our hail of salvation, even as an offering of praise with benedictions, to thee, the Fire, O Ahura, Mazda's son! Meet for sacrifice art thou, and worthy of [our] homage. And as meet for sacrifice, and thus worthy of our homage, may'st thou be in the houses of men [who worship Mazda]. Salvation be to this man who worships thee in verity and truth, with wood in hand and baresma [sacred twigs] ready, with flesh in hand and holding too the mortar. 2. And mayst thou be [ever] fed with wood as the prescription orders. Yea, mayst thou have thy perfume justly, and thy sacred butter without fail, and thine andirons regularly placed. Be of full age as to thy nourishment, of the canon's age as to the measure of thy food. O Fire, Ahura, Mazda's son! 3. Be now aflame within this house; be ever without fail in flame; be all ashine within this house: for long time be thou thus to the furtherance of the heroic [renovation], to the completion of [all] progress, yea, even till the good heroic [millennial] time when that renovation shall have become complete. 4. Give me, O Fire, Ahura, Mazda's son! a speedy glory, speedy nourishment and speedy booty and abundant glory, abundant nourishment, abundant booty, an expanded mind, and nimbleness of tongue and soul and understanding, even an understanding continually growing in its largeness, and that never wanders. Yasna Ixii. 1-4: Translation of L.H. Mills.

THE GODDESS OF THE WATERS

Offer up a sacrifice unto this spring of mine, Ardvi Sura Anahita (the exalted, mighty, and undefiled, image of the (128) stream celestial), who stands carried forth in the shape of a maid, fair of body, most strong, tall-formed, high-girded, pure, nobly born of a glorious race, wearing a mantle fully embroidered with gold. 129. Ever holding the baresma in her hand, according to the rules; she wears square golden ear-rings on her ears bored, and a golden necklace around her beautiful neck, she, the nobly born Ardvi Sura Anahita; and she girded her waist tightly, so that her breasts may be well shaped, that they may be tightly pressed. 128. Upon her head Ardvi Sura Anahita bound a golden crown, with a hundred stars, with eight rays, a fine well-made crown, with fillets streaming down. 129. She is clothed with garments of beaver, Ardvi Sura Anahita; with the skin of thirty beavers, of those that bear four young ones, that are the finest kind of beavers; for the skin of the beaver that lives in water is the finest colored of all skins, and when worked at the right time it shines to the eye with full sheen of silver and gold. Yasht v. 126-129: Translation of J. Darmesteter.

GUARDIAN SPIRITS

Page 103

We worship the good, strong, beneficent Fravashis [guardian spirits] of the faithful; with helms of brass, with weapons (45) of brass, with armor of brass; who struggle in the fights for victory in garments of light, arraying the battles and bringing them forwards, to kill thousands of Daevas [demons]. 46. When the wind blows from behind them and brings their breath unto men, then men know where blows the breath of victory: and they pay pious homage unto the good, strong, beneficent Fravashis of the faithful, with their hearts prepared and their arms uplifted. 47. Whichever side they have been first worshiped in the fulness of faith of a devoted heart, to that side turn the awful Fravashis of the faithful along with Mithra [angel of truth and light] and Rashnu [Justice] and the awful cursing thought of the wise and the victorious wind.

Yasht xiii. 45-47: Translation of J. Darmesteter.

AN ANCIENT SINDBAD

The manly-hearted Keresaspa was the sturdiest of the men of strength, for Manly Courage clave unto him. We worship [this] Manly Courage, firm of foot, unsleeping, quick to rise, and fully awake, that clave unto Keresaspa [the hero], who killed the snake Srvara, the horse-devouring, man-devouring, yellow poisonous snake, over which yellow poison flowed a thumb's breadth thick. Upon him Kerasaspa was cooking his food in a brass vessel, at the time of noon. The fiend felt the heat and darted away; he rushed from under the brass vessel and upset the boiling water: the manly-hearted Keresaspa fell back affrighted.

Yasht xix. 38-40: Translation of J. Darmesteter.

THE WISE MAN

Verily I say it unto thee, O Spitama Zoroaster! the man who has a wife is far above him who lives in continence; he who keeps a house is far above him who has none; he who has children is far above the childless man; he who has riches is far above him who has none.

And of two men, he who fills himself with meat receives in him good spirit [Vohu Mano] much more than he who does not do so; the latter is all but dead; the former is above him by the worth of a sheep, by the worth of an ox, by the worth of a man.

It is this man that can strive against the onsets of death; that can strive against the well-darted arrow; that can strive against the winter fiend with thinnest garment on; that can strive against the wicked tyrant and smite him on the head; it is this man that can strive against the ungodly fasting Ashemaogha [the fiends and heretics who do not eat].

Vendidad iv. 47-49: Translation of J. Darmesteter.

INVOCATION TO RAIN

“Come on, O clouds, along the sky, through the air, down on the earth, by thousands of drops, by myriads of drops,” thus say, O holy Zoroaster! “to destroy sickness altogether, to destroy death altogether, to destroy altogether the sickness made by the Gaini, to destroy altogether the death made by Gaini, to destroy altogether Gadha and Apagadha.

Page 104

"If death come at eve, may healing come at daybreak!

"If death come at daybreak, may healing come at night!

"If death come at night, may healing come at dawn!

"Let showers shower down new waters, new earth, new trees, new health, and new healing powers."

Vendidad xxi. 2: Translation of J. Darmesteter.

A PRAYER FOR HEALING

Ahura Mazda spake unto Spitama Zoroaster, saying, "I, Ahura Mazda, the Maker of all good things, when I made this mansion, the beautiful, the shining, seen afar (there may I go up, there may I arrive)!"

Then the ruffian looked at me; the ruffian Anra Mainyu, the deadly, wrought against me nine diseases and ninety, and nine hundred, and nine thousand, and nine times ten thousand diseases. So mayest thou heal me, O Holy Word, thou most glorious one!

Unto thee will I give in return a thousand fleet, swift-running steeds; I offer thee up a sacrifice, O good Saoka, made by Mazda and holy.

Unto thee will I give in return a thousand fleet, high-humped camels; I offer thee up a sacrifice, O good Saoka, made by Mazda and holy.

Unto thee will I give in return a thousand brown faultless oxen; I offer thee up a sacrifice, O good Saoka, made by Mazda and holy.

Unto thee will I give in return a thousand young of all species of small cattle; I offer thee up a sacrifice, O good Saoka, made by Mazda and holy.

And I will bless thee with the fair blessing-spell of the righteous, the friendly blessing-spell of the righteous, that makes the empty swell to fullness and the full to overflowing, that comes to help him who was sickening, and makes the sick man sound again.

Vendidad xxii. 1-5: Translation of J. Darmesteter.

FRAGMENT

All good thoughts, and all good words, and all good deeds are thought and spoken and done with intelligence; and all evil thoughts and words and deeds are thought and spoken and done with folly.

2. And let [the men who think and speak and do] all good thoughts and words and deeds inhabit Heaven [as their home]. And let those who think and speak and do evil thoughts and words and deeds abide in Hell. For to all who think good thoughts, speak good words, and do good deeds, Heaven, the best world, belongs. And this is evident and as of course. Avesta, Fragment iii.: Translation of L.H. Mills.

AVICEBRON

(1028-? 1058)

Avicbron, or Avicbrol (properly Solomon ben Judah ibn Gabirol), one of the most famous of Jewish poets, and the most original of Jewish thinkers, was born at Cordova, in Spain, about A.D. 1028. Of the events of his life we know little; and it was only in 1845 that Munk, in the 'Literaturblatt des Orient,' proved the Jewish poet Ibn Gabirol to be one and the same person with Avicbron, so often quoted by the Schoolmen as an Arab philosopher. He was educated at Saragossa, spent some years at Malaga, and died, hardly thirty years old, about 1058. His disposition seems to have been rather melancholy.

Page 105

Of his philosophic works, which were written in Arabic, by far the most important, and that which lent lustre to his name, was the 'Fountain of Life'; a long treatise in the form of a dialogue between teacher and pupil, on what was then regarded as the fundamental question in philosophy, the nature and relations of Matter and Form. The original, which seems never to have been popular with either Jews or Arabs, is not known to exist; but there exists a complete Latin translation (the work having found appreciation among Christians), which has recently been edited with great care by Professor Baeumker of Breslau, under the title 'Avengebrolis Fons Vitae, ex Arabico in Latinum translatus ab Johanne Hispano et Dominico Gundissalino' (Muenster, 1895). There is also a series of extracts from it in Hebrew. Besides this, he wrote a half-popular work, 'On the Improvement of Character,' in which he brings the different virtues into relation with the five senses. He is, further, the reputed author of a work 'On the Soul,' and the reputed compiler of a famous anthology, 'A Choice of Pearls,' which appeared, with an English translation by B.H. Ascher, in London, in 1859. In his poetry, which, like that of other mediaeval Hebrew poets, Moses ben Ezra, Judah Halevy, etc., is partly liturgical, partly worldly, he abandons native forms, such as we find in the Psalms, and follows artificial Arabic models, with complicated rhythms and rhyme, unsuited to Hebrew, which, unlike Arabic, is poor in inflections. Nevertheless, many of his liturgical pieces are still used in the services of the synagogue, while his worldly ditties find admirers elsewhere. (See A. Geiger, 'Ibn Gabirol und seine Dichtungen,' Leipzig, 1867.)

The philosophy of Ibn Gabirol is a compound of Hebrew monotheism and that Neo-Platonic Aristotelianism which for two hundred years had been current in the Muslim schools at Bagdad, Basra, etc., and which the learned Jews were largely instrumental in carrying to the Muslims of Spain. For it must never be forgotten that the great translators and intellectual purveyors of the Middle Ages were the Jews. (See Steinschneider, 'Die Hebraeischen Uebersetzungen des Mittelalters, und die Juden als Dolmetscher,' 2 vols., Berlin, 1893.)

The aim of Ibn Gabirol, like that of the other three noted Hebrew thinkers, Philo, Maimonides, and Spinoza, was—given God, to account for creation; and this he tried to do by means of Neo-Platonic Aristotelianism, such as he found in the Pseudo-Pythagoras, Pseudo-Empedocles, Pseudo-Aristotelian 'Theology' (an abstract from Plotinus), and 'Book on Causes' (an abstract from Proclus's 'Institutio Theologica'). It is well known that Aristotle, who made God a "thinking of thinking," and placed matter, as something eternal, over against him, never succeeded in bringing God into effective connection with the world (see K. Elser, 'Die Lehredes Aristotles ueber das Wirken Gottes,' Muenster, 1893); and this defect

Page 106

the Greeks never afterward remedied until the time of Plotinus, who, without propounding a doctrine of emanation, arranged the universe as a hierarchy of existence, beginning with the Good, and descending through correlated Being and Intelligence, to Soul or Life, which produces Nature with all its multiplicity, and so stands on "the horizon" between undivided and divided being. In the famous encyclopaedia of the "Brothers of Purity," written in the East about A.D. 1000, and representing Muslim thought at its best, the hierarchy takes this form: God, Intelligence, Soul, Primal Matter, Secondary Matter, World, Nature, the Elements, Material Things. (See Dieterici, 'Die Philosophie der Araber im X. Jahrhundert n. Chr.,' 2 vols., Leipzig, 1876-79.) In the hands of Ibn Gabirol, this is transformed thus: God, Will, Primal Matter, Form, Intelligence, Soul—vegetable, animal, rational, Nature, the source of the visible world. If we compare these hierarchies, we shall see that Ibn Gabirol makes two very important changes: *first*, he introduces an altogether new element, *viz.*, the Will; *second*, instead of placing Intelligence second in rank, next to God, he puts Will, Matter, and Form before it. Thus, whereas the earliest thinkers, drawing on Aristotle, had sought for an explanation of the world in Intelligence, he seeks for it in Will, thus approaching the standpoint of Schopenhauer. Moreover, whereas they had made Matter and Form originate in Intelligence, he includes the latter, together with the material world, among things compounded of Matter and Form. Hence, everything, save God and His Will, which is but the expression of Him, is compounded of Matter and Form (cf. Dante, 'Paradiso,' i. 104 *seq.*). Had he concluded from this that God, in order to occupy this exceptional position, must be pure matter (or substance), he would have reached the standpoint of Spinoza. As it is, he stands entirely alone in the Middle Age, in making the world the product of Will, and not of Intelligence, as the Schoolmen and the classical philosophers of Germany held.

The 'Fountain of Life' is divided into five books, whose subjects are as follows:—I. Matter and Form, and their various kinds. II. Matter as the bearer of body, and the subject of the categories. III. Separate Substances, in the created intellect, standing between God and the World. IV. Matter and Form in simple substances. V. Universal Matter and Universal Form, with a discussion of the Divine Will, which, by producing and uniting Matter and Form, brings being out of non-being, and so is the 'Fountain of Life.' Though the author is influenced by Jewish cosmogony, his system, as such, is almost purely Neo-Platonic. It remains one of the most considerable attempts that have ever been made to find in spirit the explanation of the world; not only making all matter at bottom one, but also maintaining that while form is due to the divine will, matter is due to the divine essence, so that both are equally spiritual. It is especially interesting as showing us, by contrast, how far Christian thinking, which rested on much the same foundation with it, was influenced and confined by Christian dogmas, especially by those of the Trinity and the Incarnation.

Page 107

Ibn Gabirol's thought exerted a profound influence, not only on subsequent Hebrew thinkers, like Joseph ben Saddig, Maimonides, Spinoza, but also on the Christian Schoolmen, by whom he is often quoted, and on Giordano Bruno. Through Spinoza and Bruno this influence has passed into the modern world, where it still lives. Dante, though naming many Arab philosophers, never alludes to Ibn Gabirol; yet he borrowed more of his sublimest thoughts from the 'Fountain of Life' than from any other book. (Cf. Ibn Gabirol's 'Bedeutung fuer die Geschichte der Philosophie,' appendix to Vol. i. of M. Joel's 'Beitraege zur Gesch. der Philos.,' Breslau, 1876.) If we set aside the hypostatic form in which Ibn Gabirol puts forward his ideas, we shall find a remarkable similarity between his system and that of Kant, not to speak of that of Schopenhauer. For the whole subject, see J. Guttman's 'Die Philosophic des Salomon Ibn Gabirol' (Goettingen, 1889).

ON MATTER AND FORM

From the 'Fountain of Life,' Fifth Treatise

Intelligence is finite in both directions: on the upper side, by reason of will, which is above it; on the lower, by reason of matter, which is outside of its essence. Hence, spiritual substances are finite with respect to matter, because they differ through it, and distinction is the cause of finitude; in respect to forms they are infinite on the lower side, because one form flows from another. And we must bear in mind that that part of matter which is above heaven, the more it ascends from it to the principle of creation, becomes the more spiritual in form, whereas that part which descends lower than the heaven toward quiet will be more corporeal in form. Matter, intelligence, and soul comprehend heaven, and heaven comprehends the elements. And just as, if you imagine your soul standing at the extreme height of heaven, and looking back upon the earth, the earth will seem but a point, in comparison with the heaven, so are corporeal and spiritual substance in comparison with the will. And first matter is stable in the knowledge of God, as the earth in the midst of heaven. And the form diffused through it is as the light diffused through the air....

We must bear in mind that the unity induced by the will (we might say, the will itself) binds matter to form. Hence that union is stable, firm, and perpetual from the beginning of its creation; and thus unity sustains all things.

Matter is movable, in order that it may receive form, in conformity with its appetite for receiving goodness and delight through the reception of form. In like manner, everything that is, desires to move, in order that it may attain something of the goodness of the primal being; and the nearer anything is to the primal being, the more easily it reaches this, and the further off it is, the more slowly and with the longer motion and time it does so. And the motion of matter and other substances is nothing but

Page 108

appetite and love for the mover toward which it moves, as, for example, matter moves toward form, through desire for the primal being; for matter requires light from that which is in the essence of will, which compels matter to move toward will and to desire it: and herein will and matter are alike. And because matter is receptive of the form that has flowed down into it by the flux of violence and necessity, matter must necessarily move to receive form; and therefore things are constrained by will and obedience in turn. Hence by the light which it has from will, matter moves toward will and desires it; but when it receives form, it lacks nothing necessary for knowing and desiring it, and nothing remains for it to seek for. For example, in the morning the air has an imperfect splendor from the sun; but at noon it has a perfect splendor, and there remains nothing for it to demand of the sun. Hence the desire for the first motion is a likeness between all substances and the first Maker, because it is impressed upon all things to move toward the first; because particular matter desires particular form, and the matter of plants and animals, which, in generating, move toward the forms of plants and animals, are also influenced by the particular form acting in them. In like manner the sensible soul moves toward sensible forms, and the rational soul to intelligible forms, because the particular soul, which is called the first intellect, while it is in its principle, is susceptible of form; but when it shall have received the form of universal intelligence, which is the second intellect, and shall become intelligence, then it will be strong to act, and will be called the second intellect; and since particular souls have such a desire, it follows that universal souls must have a desire for universal forms. The same thing must be said of natural matter,—that is, the substance which sustains the nine categories; because this matter moves to take on the first qualities, then to the mineral form, then to the vegetable, then to the sensible, then to the rational, then to the intelligible, until at last it is united to the form of universal intelligence. And this primal matter desires primal form; and all things that are, desire union and commixture, that so they may be assimilated to their principle; and therefore, genera, species, differentiae, and contraries are united through something in singulars.

Thus, matter is like an empty schedule and a wax tablet; whereas form is like a painted shape and words set down, from which the reader reaches the end of science. And when the soul knows these, it desires to know the wonderful painter of them, to whose essence it is impossible to ascend. Thus matter and form are the two closed gates of intelligence, which it is hard for intelligence to open and pass through, because the substance of intelligence is below them, and made up of them. And when the soul has subtilized itself, until it can penetrate them, it arrives at the word, that is, at perfect will; and then its motion ceases, and its joy remains.

Page 109

An analogy to the fact that the universal will actualizes universal form in the matter of intelligence is the fact that the particular will actualizes the particular form in the soul without time, and life and essential motion in the matter of the soul, and local motion and other motions in the matter of nature. But all these motions are derived from the will; and so all things are moved by the will, just as the soul causes rest or motion in the body according to its will. And this motion is different according to the greater or less proximity of things to the will. And if we remove action from the will, the will will be identical with the primal essence; whereas, with action, it is different from it. Hence, will is as the painter of all forms; the matter of each thing as a tablet; and the form of each thing as the picture on the tablet. It binds form to matter, and is diffused through the whole of matter, from highest to lowest, as the soul through the body; and as the virtue of the sun, diffusing its light, unites with the light, and with it descends into the air, so the virtue of the will unites with the form which it imparts to all things, and descends with it. On this ground it is said that the first cause is in all things, and that there is nothing without it.

The will holds all things together by means of form; whence we likewise say that form holds all things together. Thus, form is intermediate between will and matter, receiving from will, and giving to matter. And will acts without time or motion, through its own might. If the action of soul and intelligence, and the infusion of light are instantaneous, much more so is that of will.

Creation comes from the high creator, and is an emanation, like the issue of water flowing from its source; but whereas water follows water without intermission or rest, creation is without motion or time. The sealing of form upon matter, as it flows in from the will, is like the sealing or reflection of a form in a mirror, when it is seen. And as sense receives the form of the felt without the matter, so everything that acts upon another acts solely through its own form, which it simply impresses upon that other. Hence genus, species, differentia, property, accident, and all forms in matter are merely an impression made by wisdom.

The created soul is gifted with the knowledge which is proper to it; but after it is united to the body, it is withdrawn from receiving those impressions which are proper to it, by reason of the very darkness of the body, covering and extinguishing its light, and blurring it, just as in the case of a clear mirror: when dense substance is put over it its light is obscured. And therefore God, by the subtlety of his substance, formed this world, and arranged it according to this most beautiful order, in which it is, and equipped the soul with senses, wherein, when it uses them, that which is hidden in it is manifested in act; and the soul, in apprehending sensible things, is like a man who sees many things, and when he departs from them, finds that nothing remains with him but the vision of imagination and memory.

Page 110

We must also bear in mind that, while matter is made by essence, form is made by will. And it is said that matter is the seat of God, and that will, the giver of form, sits on it and rests upon it. And through the knowledge of these things we ascend to those things which are behind them, that is, to the cause why there is anything; and this is a knowledge of the world of deity, which is the greatest whole: whatever is below it is very small in comparison with it.

ROBERT AYTOUN

(1570-1638)

This Scottish poet was born in his father's castle of Kinaldie, near St. Andrews, Fifeshire, in 1570. He was descended from the Norman family of De Vescy, a younger son of which settled in Scotland and received from Robert Bruce the lands of Aytoun in Berwickshire. Kincardie came into the family about 1539. Robert Aytoun was educated at St. Andrews, taking his degree in 1588, traveled on the Continent like other wealthy Scottish gentlemen, and studied law at the University of Paris. Returning in 1603, he delighted James I. by a Latin poem congratulating him on his accession to the English throne. Thereupon the poet received an invitation to court as Groom of the Privy Chamber. He rose rapidly, was knighted in 1612, and made Gentleman of the Bedchamber to King James and private secretary to Queen Anne. When Charles I. ascended the throne, Aytoun was retained, and held many important posts. According to Aubrey, "he was acquainted with all the witts of his time in England." Sir Robert was essentially a court poet, and belonged to the cultivated circle of Scottish favorites that James gathered around him; yet there is no mention of him in the gossipy diaries of the period, and almost none in the State papers. He seems, however, to have been popular: Ben Jonson boasts that Aytoun "loved me dearly." It is not surprising that his mild verses should have faded in the glorious light of the contemporary poets.

[Illustration: ROBERT AYTOUN]

He wrote in Greek and French, and many of his Latin poems were published under the title 'Delitiae Poetarum Scotorum' (Amsterdam, 1637). His English poems on such themes as a 'Love Dirge,' 'The Poet Forsaken,' 'The Lover's Remonstrance,' 'Address to an Inconstant Mistress,' etc., do not show depth of emotion. He says of himself:—

"Yet have I been a lover by report,
Yea, I have died for love as others do;
But praised be God, it was in such a sort
That I revived within an hour or two."

The lines beginning "I do confess thou'rt smooth and fair," quoted below with their adaptation by Burns, do not appear in his MSS., collected by his heir Sir John Aytoun,

nor in the edition of his works with a memoir prepared by Dr. Charles Rogers, published in Edinburgh in 1844 and reprinted privately in 1871. Dean Stanley, in his 'Memorials of Westminster Abbey,' accords to him the original of 'Auld Lang Syne,' which Rogers includes in his edition. Burns's song follows the version attributed to Francis Temple.

Page 111

Aytoun passed his entire life in luxury, died in Whitehall Palace in 1638, and was the first Scottish poet buried in Westminster Abbey. His memorial bust was taken from a portrait by Vandyke.

INCONSTANCY UPBRAIDED

I loved thee once, I'll love no more;
Thine be the grief as is the blame:
Thou art not what thou wast before,
What reason I should be the same?
He that can love unloved again,
Hath better store of love than brain;
God send me love my debts to pay,
While unthrifths fool their love away.

Nothing could have my love o'erthrown,
If thou hadst still continued mine;
Yea, if thou hadst remained thy own,
I might perchance have yet been thine.
But thou thy freedom didst recall,
That it thou might elsewhere inthrall;
And then how could I but disdain
A captive's captive to remain?

When new desires had conquered thee,
And changed the object of thy will,
It had been lethargy in me,
Not constancy, to love thee still.
Yea, it had been a sin to go
And prostitute affection so;
Since we are taught no prayers to say
To such as must to others pray.

Yet do thou glory in thy choice,
Thy choice of his good fortune boast;
I'll neither grieve nor yet rejoice
To see him gain what I have lost.
The height of my disdain shall be
To laugh at him, to blush for thee;
To love thee still, but go no more
A-begging to a beggar's door.

LINES TO AN INCONSTANT MISTRESS



I do confess thou'rt smooth and fair,
And I might have gone near to love thee,
Had I not found the slightest prayer
That lips could speak had power to move thee.
But I can let thee now alone,
As worthy to be loved by none.

I do confess thou'rt sweet, yet find
Thee such an unthrift of thy sweets,
Thy favors are but like the wind
Which kisseth everything it meets!
And since thou canst love more than one,
Thou'rt worthy to be loved by none.

The morning rose that untouched stands,
Armed with her briars, how sweet she smells!
But plucked and strained through ruder hands,
Her scent no longer with her dwells.
But scent and beauty both are gone,
And leaves fall from her one by one.

Such fate ere long will thee betide,
When thou hast handled been awhile,
Like fair flowers to be thrown aside;
And thou shalt sigh while I shall smile,
To see thy love to every one
Hath brought thee to be loved by none.

BURNS'S ADAPTATION

I do confess thou art sae fair,
I wad been ower the lugs in love
Had I na found the slightest prayer
That lips could speak, thy heart could move.
I do confess thee sweet—but find
Thou art sae thriftless o' thy sweets,
Thy favors are the silly wind,
That kisses ilka thing it meets.
See yonder rosebud rich in dew,
Among its native briars sae coy,
How sune it tines its scent and hue
When pu'd and worn a common toy.
Sic fate, ere lang, shall thee betide,
Tho' thou may gaily bloom awhile;
Yet sune thou shalt be thrown aside
Like any common weed and vile.

Page 112

WILLIAM EDMONSTOUNE AYTOUN

(1813-1865)

Aytoun the second, balladist, humorist, and Tory, in proportions of about equal importance,—one of the group of wits and devotees of the *status quo* who made Blackwood's Magazine so famous in its early days,—was born in Edinburgh, June 21st, 1813. He was the son of Roger Aytoun, "writer to the Signet"; and a descendant of Sir Robert Aytoun (1570-1638), the poet and friend of Ben Jonson, who followed James VI. from Scotland and who is buried in Westminster Abbey. Both Aytoun's parents were literary. His mother, who knew Sir Walter Scott, and who gave Lockhart many details for his biography, helped the lad in his poems. She seemed to him to know all the ballads ever sung. His earliest verses were praised by Professor John Wilson ("Christopher North"), the first editor of Blackwood's, whose daughter he married in 1849. At the age of nineteen he published his 'Poland, Homer, and Other Poems' (Edinburgh, 1832). After leaving the University of Edinburgh, he studied law in London, visited Germany, and returning to Scotland, was called to the bar in 1840. He disliked the profession, and used to say that though he followed the law he never could overtake it.

While in Germany he translated the first part of 'Faust' in blank verse, which was never published. Many of his translations from Uhland and Homer appeared in Blackwood's from 1836 to 1840, and many of his early writings were signed "Augustus Dunshunner." In 1844 he joined the editorial staff of Blackwood's, to which for many years he contributed political articles, verse, translations of Goethe, and humorous sketches. In 1845 he became Professor of Rhetoric and Literature in the University of Edinburgh, a place which he held until 1864. About 1841 he became acquainted with Theodore Martin, and in association with him wrote a series of light papers interspersed with burlesque verses, which, reprinted from Blackwood's, became popular as the 'Bon Gaultier Ballads.' Published in London in 1855, they reached their thirteenth edition in 1877.

"Some papers of a humorous kind, which I had published under the *nom de plume* of Bon Gaultier," says Theodore Martin in his 'Memoir of Aytoun,' "had hit Aytoun's fancy; and when I proposed to go on with others in a similar vein, he fell readily into the plan, and agreed to assist in it. In this way a kind of a Beaumont-and-Fletcher partnership commenced in a series of humorous papers, which appeared in Tait's and Fraser's magazines from 1842 to 1844. In these papers, in which we ran a-tilt, with all the recklessness of youthful spirits, against such of the tastes or follies of the day as presented an opening for ridicule or mirth,—at the same time that we did not altogether lose sight of a purpose higher than mere amusement,—appeared the verses, with a few exceptions, which subsequently became

Page 113

popular, and to a degree we then little contemplated, as the 'Bon Gaultier Ballads.' Some of the best of these were exclusively Aytoun's, such as 'The Massacre of the McPherson,' 'The Rhyme of Sir Launcelot Bogle,' 'The Broken Pitcher,' 'The Red Friar and Little John,' 'The Lay of Mr. Colt,' and that best of all imitations of the Scottish ballad, 'The Queen in France.' Some were wholly mine, and the rest were produced by us jointly. Fortunately for our purpose, there were then living not a few poets whose style and manner of thought were sufficiently marked to make imitation easy, and sufficiently popular for a parody of their characteristics to be readily recognized. Macaulay's 'Lays of Rome' and his two other fine ballads were still in the freshness of their fame. Lockhart's 'Spanish Ballads' were as familiar in the drawing-room as in the study. Tennyson and Mrs. Browning were opening up new veins of poetry. These, with Wordsworth, Moore, Uhland, and others of minor note, lay ready to our hands,—as Scott, Byron, Crabbe, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey had done to James and Horace Smith in 1812, when writing the 'Rejected Addresses.' Never, probably, were verses thrown off with a keener sense of enjoyment."

With Theodore Martin he published also 'Poems and Ballads of Goethe' (London, 1858). Mr. Aytoun's fame as a poet rests on his 'Lays of the Cavaliers,' the themes of which are selected from stirring incidents of Scottish history, ranging from Flodden Field to the Battle of Culloden. The favorites in popular memory are 'The Execution of Montrose' and 'The Burial March of Dundee.' This book, published in London and Edinburgh in 1849, has gone through twenty-nine editions.

His dramatic poem, 'Firmilian: a Spasmodic Tragedy,' written to ridicule the style of Bailey, Dobell, and Alexander Smith, and published in 1854, had so many excellent qualities that it was received as a serious production instead of a caricature. Aytoun introduced this in Blackwood's Magazine as a pretended review of an unpublished tragedy (as with the 'Rolliad,' and as Lockhart had done in the case of "Peter's Letters," so successfully that he had to write the book itself as a "second edition" to answer the demand for it). This review was so cleverly done that "most of the newspaper critics took the part of the poet against the reviewer, never suspecting the identity of both, and maintained the poetry to be fine poetry and the critic a dunce." The sarcasm of 'Firmilian' is so delicate that only those familiar with the school it is intended to satirize can fairly appreciate its qualities. The drama opens showing Firmilian in his study, planning the composition of 'Cain: a Tragedy'; and being infused with the spirit of the hero, he starts on a career of crime. Among his deeds is the destruction of the cathedral of Badajoz, which first appears in his mental vision thus:—

"Methought I saw the solid vaults give way,
And the entire cathedral rise in air,
As if it leaped from Pandemonium's jaws."

Page 114

To effect this he employs—

“Some twenty barrels of the dusky grain
The secret of whose framing in an hour
Of diabolic jollity and mirth
Old Roger Bacon wormed from Beelzebub.”

When the horror is accomplished, at a moment when the inhabitants of Badajoz are at prayer, Firmilian rather enjoys the scene:—

“Pillars and altar, organ loft and screen,
With a singed swarm of mortals intermixed,
Whirling in anguish to the shuddering stars.”

“Firmilian,” to quote from Aytoun’s biographer again, “deserves to keep its place in literature, if only as showing how easy it is for a man of real poetic power to throw off, in sport, pages of sonorous and sparkling verse, simply by ignoring the fetters of nature and common-sense and dashing headlong on Pegasus through the wilderness of fancy.” Its extravagances of rhetoric can be imagined from the following brief extract, somewhat reminiscent of Marlowe:—

“And shall I then take Celsus for my guide,
Confound my brain with dull Justinian tomes,
Or stir the dust that lies o’er Augustine?
Not I, in faith! I’ve leaped into the air,
And clove my way through ether like a bird
That flits beneath the glimpses of the moon,
Right eastward, till I lighted at the foot
Of holy Helicon, and drank my fill
At the clear spout of Aganippe’s stream;
I’ve rolled my limbs in ecstasy along
The selfsame turf on which old Homer lay
That night he dreamed of Helen and of Troy:
And I have heard, at midnight, the sweet strains
Come quiring from the hilltop, where, enshrined
In the rich foldings of a silver cloud,
The Muses sang Apollo into sleep.”

In 1856 was printed ‘Bothwell,’ a poetic monologue on Mary Stuart’s lover. Of Aytoun’s humorous sketches, the most humorous are ‘My First Spec in the Biggleswades,’ and ‘How We Got Up the Glen Mutchkin Railway’; tales written during the railway mania of 1845, which treat of the folly and dishonesty of its promoters, and show many typical Scottish characters. His ‘Ballads of Scotland’ was issued in 1858; it is an edition of the best ancient minstrelsy, with preface and notes. In 1861 appeared ‘Norman Sinclair,’ a

novel published first in Blackwood's, and giving interesting pictures of society in Scotland and personal experiences.

After Professor Wilson's death, Aytoun was considered the leading man of letters in Scotland; a rank which he modestly accepted by writing in 1838 to a friend:—"I am getting a kind of fame as the literary man of Scotland. Thirty years ago, in the North countries, a fellow achieved an immense reputation as 'The Tollman,' being the solitary individual entitled by law to levy blackmail at a ferry." In 1860 he was made Honorary President of the Associated Societies of the University of Edinburgh, his competitor being Thackeray. This was the place held afterward by Lord Lytton, Sir David Brewster, Carlyle, and Gladstone. Aytoun wrote the 'The Life and Times of Richard the First' (London, 1840), and in 1863 a 'Nuptial Ode on the Marriage of the Prince of Wales.'

Page 115

Aytoun was a man of great charm and geniality in society; even to Americans, though he detested America with the energy of fear—the fear of all who see its prosperity sapping the foundations of their class society. He died in 1865; and in 1867 his biography was published by Sir Theodore Martin, his collaborator. Martin's definition of Aytoun's place in literature is felicitous:—

* * * * *

“Fashions in poetry may alter, but so long as the themes with which they deal have an interest for his countrymen, his ‘Lays’ will find, as they do now, a wide circle of admirers. His powers as a humorist were perhaps greater than as a poet. They have certainly been more widely appreciated. His immediate contemporaries owe him much, for he has contributed largely to that kindly mirth without which the strain and struggle of modern life would be intolerable. Much that is excellent in his humorous writings may very possibly cease to retain a place in literature from the circumstance that he deals with characters and peculiarities which are in some measure local, and phases of life and feeling and literature which are more or less ephemeral. But much will certainly continue to be read and enjoyed by the sons and grandsons of those for whom it was originally written; and his name will be coupled with those of Wilson, Lockhart, Sydney Smith, Peacock, Jerrold, Mahony, and Hood, as that of a man gifted with humor as genuine and original as theirs, however opinions may vary as to the order of their relative merits.”

‘The Modern Endymion,’ from which an extract is given, is a parody on Disraeli's earlier manner.

THE BURIAL MARCH OF DUNDEE

From the ‘Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers’

I

Sound the fife and cry the slogan;
Let the pibroch shake the air
With its wild, triumphant music,
Worthy of the freight we bear.
Let the ancient hills of Scotland
Hear once more the battle-song
Swell within their glens and valleys
As the clansmen march along!
Never from the field of combat,
Never from the deadly fray,
Was a nobler trophy carried
Than we bring with us to-day;



Never since the valiant Douglas
On his dauntless bosom bore
Good King Robert's heart—the priceless—
To our dear Redeemer's shore!
Lo! we bring with us the hero—
Lo! we bring the conquering Graeme,
Crowned as best beseems a victor
From the altar of his fame;
Fresh and bleeding from the battle
Whence his spirit took its flight,
'Midst the crashing charge of squadrons,
And the thunder of the fight!
Strike, I say, the notes of triumph,
As we march o'er moor and lea!
Is there any here will venture
To bewail our dead Dundee?

Page 116

Let the widows of the traitors
Weep until their eyes are dim!
Wail ye may full well for Scotland—
Let none dare to mourn for him!
See! above his glorious body
Lies the royal banner's fold—
See! his valiant blood is mingled
With its crimson and its gold.
See how calm he looks and stately,
Like a warrior on his shield,
Waiting till the flush of morning
Breaks along the battle-field!
See—oh, never more, my comrades,
Shall we see that falcon eye
Redden with its inward lightning,
As the hour of fight drew nigh!
Never shall we hear the voice that,
Clearer than the trumpet's call,
Bade us strike for king and country,
Bade us win the field, or fall!

II

On the heights of Killiecrankie
Yester-morn our army lay:
Slowly rose the mist in columns
From the river's broken way;
Hoarsely roared the swollen torrent,
And the Pass was wrapped in gloom,
When the clansmen rose together
From their lair amidst the broom.
Then we belted on our tartans,
And our bonnets down we drew,
As we felt our broadswords' edges,
And we proved them to be true;
And we prayed the prayer of soldiers,
And we cried the gathering-cry,
And we clasped the hands of kinsmen,
And we swore to do or die!
Then our leader rode before us,



On his war-horse black as night—
Well the Cameronian rebels
Knew that charger in the fight!—
And a cry of exultation
From the bearded warrior rose;
For we loved the house of Claver'se,
And we thought of good Montrose.
But he raised his hand for silence—
"Soldiers! I have sworn a vow;
Ere the evening star shall glisten
On Schehallion's lofty brow,
Either we shall rest in triumph,
Or another of the Graemes
Shall have died in battle-harness
For his country and King James!
Think upon the royal martyr—
Think of what his race endure—
Think on him whom butchers murdered
On the field of Magus Muir[1]:
By his sacred blood I charge ye,
By the ruined hearth and shrine—
By the blighted hopes of Scotland,
By your injuries and mine—
Strike this day as if the anvil
Lay beneath your blows the while,
Be they Covenanting traitors,
Or the blood of false Argyle!
Strike! and drive the trembling rebels
Backwards o'er the stormy Forth;
Let them tell their pale Convention
How they fared within the North.
Let them tell that Highland honor
Is not to be bought nor sold;

Page 117

That we scorn their prince's anger,
As we loathe his foreign gold.
Strike! and when the fight is over,
If you look in vain for me,
Where the dead are lying thickest
Search for him that was Dundee!"

[Footnote 1: Archbishop Sharp, Lord Primate of Scotland.]

III

Loudly then the hills re-echoed
With our answer to his call,
But a deeper echo sounded
In the bosoms of us all.
For the lands of wide Breadalbane,
Not a man who heard him speak
Would that day have left the battle.
Burning eye and flushing cheek
Told the clansmen's fierce emotion,
And they harder drew their breath;
For their souls were strong within them,
Stronger than the grasp of Death.
Soon we heard a challenge trumpet
Sounding in the Pass below,
And the distant tramp of horses,
And the voices of the foe;
Down we crouched amid the bracken,
Till the Lowland ranks drew near,
Panting like the hounds in summer,
When they scent the stately deer.
From the dark defile emerging,
Next we saw the squadrons come,
Leslie's foot and Leven's troopers
Marching to the tuck of drum;
Through the scattered wood of birches,
O'er the broken ground and heath,
Wound the long battalion slowly,
Till they gained the field beneath;
Then we bounded from our covert,—



Judge how looked the Saxons then,
When they saw the rugged mountain
Start to life with armed men!
Like a tempest down the ridges
Swept the hurricane of steel,
Rose the slogan of Macdonald—
Flashed the broadsword of Lochiel!
Vainly sped the withering volley
'Mongst the foremost of our band—
On we poured until we met them
Foot to foot and hand to hand.
Horse and man went down like drift-wood
When the floods are black at Yule,
And their carcasses are whirling
In the Garry's deepest pool.
Horse and man went down before us—
Living foe there tarried none
On the field of Killiecrankie,
When that stubborn fight was done!

IV

And the evening star was shining
On Schehallion's distant head,
When we wiped our bloody broadswords,
And returned to count the dead.
There we found him gashed and gory,
Stretched upon the cumbered plain,
As he told us where to seek him,
In the thickest of the slain.
And a smile was on his visage,
For within his dying ear
Pealed the joyful note of triumph
And the clansmen's clamorous cheer:
So, amidst the battle's thunder,
Shot, and steel, and scorching flame,
In the glory of his manhood
Passed the spirit of the Graeme!



Page 118

V

Open wide the vaults of Athol,
Where the bones of heroes rest—
Open wide the hallowed portals
To receive another guest!
Last of Scots, and last of freemen—
Last of all that dauntless race
Who would rather die unsullied,
Than outlive the land's disgrace!
O thou lion-hearted warrior!
Reck not of the after-time:
Honor may be deemed dishonor,
Loyalty be called a crime.
Sleep in peace with kindred ashes
Of the noble and the true,
Hands that never failed their country,
Hearts that never baseness knew.
Sleep!—and till the latest trumpet
Wakes the dead from earth and sea,
Scotland shall not boast a braver
Chieftain than our own Dundee!

THE EXECUTION OF MONTROSE

From 'Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers'

Come hither, Evan Cameron!
Come, stand beside my knee—
I hear the river roaring down
Toward the wintry sea.
There's shouting on the mountain-side,
There's war within the blast—
Old faces look upon me,
Old forms go trooping past.
I hear the pibroch wailing
Amidst the din of fight,
And my dim spirit wakes again
Upon the verge of night.

'Twas I that led the Highland host
Through wild Lochaber's snows,
What time the plaided clans came down
To battle with Montrose.



I've told thee how the Southrons fell
Beneath the broad claymore,
And how we smote the Campbell clan
By Inverlochy's shore;
I've told thee how we swept Dundee,
And tamed the Lindsays' pride:
But never have I told thee yet
How the great Marquis died.

A traitor sold him to his foes;—
A deed of deathless shame!
I charge thee, boy, if e'er thou meet
With one of Assynt's name,—
Be it upon the mountain's side
Or yet within the glen,
Stand he in martial gear alone,
Or backed by armed men,—
Face him, as thou wouldst face the man
Who wronged thy sire's renown;
Remember of what blood thou art,
And strike the caitiff down!

They brought him to the Watergate,
Hard bound with hempen span,
As though they held a lion there,
And not a fenceless man.
They set him high upon a cart,—
The hangman rode below,—
They drew his hands behind his back
And bared his noble brow.
Then, as a hound is slipped from leash,
They cheered, the common throng,
And blew the note with yell and shout,
And bade him pass along.

Page 119

It would have made a brave man's heart
Grow sad and sick that day,
To watch the keen malignant eyes
Bent down on that array.
There stood the Whig West-country lords
In balcony and bow;
There sat their gaunt and withered dames,
And their daughters all arow.
And every open window
Was full as full might be
With black-robed Covenanting carles,
That goodly sport to see!

But when he came, though pale and wan,
He looked so great and high,
So noble was his manly front,
So calm his steadfast eye,—
The rabble rout forbore to shout,
And each man held his breath,
For well they knew the hero's soul
Was face to face with death.
And then a mournful shudder
Through all the people crept,
And some that came to scoff at him
Now turned aside and wept.

But onwards—always onwards,
In silence and in gloom,
The dreary pageant labored,
Till it reached the house of doom.
Then first a woman's voice was heard
In jeer and laughter loud,
And an angry cry and hiss arose
From the heart of the tossing crowd;
Then, as the Graeme looked upwards,
He saw the ugly smile
Of him who sold his king for gold—
The master-fiend Argyle!

The Marquis gazed a moment,
And nothing did he say,
But the cheek of Argyle grew ghastly pale,
And he turned his eyes away.
The painted harlot by his side,



She shook through every limb,
For a roar like thunder swept the street,
And hands were clenched at him;
And a Saxon soldier cried aloud,
"Back, coward, from thy place!
For seven long years thou hast not dared
To look him in the face."

Had I been there with sword in hand,
And fifty Camerons by,
That day through high Dunedin's streets
Had pealed the slogan-cry.
Not all their troops of trampling horse,
Nor might of mailed men—
Not all the rebels in the South
Had borne us backward then!
Once more his foot on Highland heath
Had trod as free as air,
Or I, and all who bore my name,
Been laid around him there!

It might not be. They placed him next
Within the solemn hall,
Where once the Scottish kings were throned
Amidst their nobles all.
But there was dust of vulgar feet
On that polluted floor,
And perjured traitors filled the place
Where good men sate before.
With savage glee came Warriston
To read the murderous doom;
And then uprose the great Montrose
In the middle of the room.

Page 120

"Now, by my faith as belted knight,
And by the name I bear,
And by the bright Saint Andrew's cross
That waves above us there,—
Yea, by a greater, mightier oath—
And oh, that such should be!—By
that dark stream of royal blood
That lies 'twixt you and me,—
have not sought in battle-field
A wreath of such renown,
Nor dared I hope on my dying day
To win the martyr's crown.

"There is a chamber far away
Where sleep the good and brave,
But a better place ye have named for me
Than by my father's grave.
For truth and right, 'gainst treason's might,
This hand hath always striven,
And ye raise it up for a witness still
In the eye of earth and heaven.
Then nail my head on yonder tower—
Give every town a limb—And
God who made shall gather them:
I go from you to Him!"

The morning dawned full darkly,
The rain came flashing down,
And the jagged streak of the levin-bolt
Lit up the gloomy town.
The thunder crashed across the heaven,
The fatal hour was come;
Yet aye broke in, with muffled beat,
The larum of the drum.
There was madness on the earth below
And anger in the sky,
And young and old, and rich and poor,
Come forth to see him die.

Ah, God! that ghastly gibbet!
How dismal 'tis to see
The great tall spectral skeleton,
The ladder and the tree!
Hark! hark! it is the clash of arms—



The bells begin to toll—
“He is coming! he is coming!
God’s mercy on his soul!”
One long last peal of thunder—
The clouds are cleared away,
And the glorious sun once more looks down
Amidst the dazzling day.

“He is coming! he is coming!”
Like a bridegroom from his room,
Came the hero from his prison,
To the scaffold and the doom.
There was glory on his forehead,
There was lustre in his eye,
And he never walked to battle
More proudly than to die;
There was color in his visage,
Though the cheeks of all were wan,
And they marveled as they saw him pass,
That great and goodly man!

He mounted up the scaffold,
And he turned him to the crowd;
But they dared not trust the people,
So he might not speak aloud.
But looked upon the heavens
And they were clear and blue,
And in the liquid ether
The eye of God shone through:
Yet a black and murky battlement
Lay resting on the hill,
As though the thunder slept within—
All else was calm and still.

Page 121

The grim Geneva ministers
With anxious scowl drew near,
As you have seen the ravens flock
Around the dying deer.
He would not deign them word nor sign,
But alone he bent the knee,
And veiled his face for Christ's dear grace
Beneath the gallows-tree.
Then radiant and serene he rose,
And cast his cloak away;
For he had ta'en his latest look
Of earth and sun and day.

A beam of light fell o'er him,
Like a glory round the shriven,
And he climbed the lofty ladder
As it were the path to heaven.
Then came a flash from out the cloud,
And a stunning thunder-roll;
And no man dared to look aloft,
For fear was on every soul.
There was another heavy sound,
A hush and then a groan;
And darkness swept across the sky—
The work of death was done!

THE BROKEN PITCHER

From the 'Bon Gaultier Ballads'

It was a Moorish maiden was sitting by a well,
And what that maiden thought of, I cannot, cannot tell,
When by there rode a valiant knight, from the town of Oviedo—
Alphonso Guzman was he hight, the Count of Desparedo.

"O maiden, Moorish maiden! why sitt'st thou by the spring?
Say, dost thou seek a lover, or any other thing?
Why gazest thou upon me, with eyes so large and wide,
And wherefore doth the pitcher lie broken by thy side?"

"I do not seek a lover, thou Christian knight so gay,
Because an article like that hath never come my way;
But why I gaze upon you, I cannot, cannot tell,
Except that in your iron hose you look uncommon swell.



"My pitcher it is broken, and this the reason is—
A shepherd came behind me, and tried to snatch a kiss;
I would not stand his nonsense, so ne'er a word I spoke,
But scored him on the costard, and so the jug was broke.

"My uncle, the Alcayde, he waits for me at home,
And will not take his tumbler until Zorayda come.
I cannot bring him water,—the pitcher is in pieces;
And so I'm sure to catch it, 'cos he wallops all his nieces.

"O maiden, Moorish maiden! wilt thou be ruled by me?
So wipe thine eyes and rosy lips, and give me kisses three;
And I'll give thee my helmet, thou kind and courteous lady,
To carry home the water to thy uncle, the Alcayde."

He lighted down from off his steed—he tied him to a tree—
He bowed him to the maiden, and took his kisses three:
"To wrong thee, sweet Zorayda, I swear would be a sin!"
He knelt him at the fountain, and dipped his helmet in.

Up rose the Moorish maiden—behind the knight she steals,
And caught Alphonso Guzman up tightly by the heels;
She tipped him in, and held him down beneath the bubbling water,—
"Now, take thou that for venturing to kiss Al Hamet's daughter!"

Page 122

A Christian maid is weeping in the town of Oviedo;
She waits the coming of her love, the Count of Desparedo.
I pray you all in charity, that you will never tell
How he met the Moorish maiden beside the lonely well.

SONNET TO BRITAIN

“BY THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON”

Halt! Shoulder arms! Recover! As you were!
Right wheel! Eyes left! Attention! Stand at ease!
O Britain! O my country! Words like these
Have made thy name a terror and a fear
To all the nations. Witness Ebro's banks,
Assaye, Toulouse, Nivelle, and Waterloo,
Where the grim despot muttered, *Sauve qui pent!*
And Ney fled darkling.—Silence in the ranks!
Inspired by these, amidst the iron crash
Of armies, in the centre of his troop
The soldier stands—unmovable, not rash—
Until the forces of the foemen droop;
Then knocks the Frenchmen to eternal smash,
Pounding them into mummy. Shoulder, hoop!

A BALL IN THE UPPER CIRCLES

From “The Modern Endymion”

'Twas a hot season in the skies. Sirius held the ascendant, and under his influence even the radiant band of the Celestials began to droop, while the great ball-room of Olympus grew gradually more and more deserted. For nearly a week had Orpheus, the leader of the heavenly orchestra, played to a deserted floor. The *elite* would no longer figure in the waltz.

Juno obstinately kept her room, complaining of headache and ill-temper. Ceres, who had lately joined a dissenting congregation, objected generally to all frivolous amusements; and Minerva had established, in opposition, a series of literary soirees, at which Pluto nightly lectured on the fine arts and phrenology, to a brilliant and fashionable audience. The Muses, with Hebe and some of the younger deities, alone frequented the assemblies; but with all their attractions there was still a sad lack of partners. The younger gods had of late become remarkably dissipated, messed three times a week at least with Mars in the barracks, and seldom separated sober. Bacchus had been sent to Coventry by the ladies, for appearing one night in the ball-room, after



a hard sederunt, so drunk that he measured his length upon the floor after a vain attempt at a mazurka; and they likewise eschewed the company of Pan, who had become an abandoned smoker, and always smelt infamously of cheroots. But the most serious defection, as also the most unaccountable, was that of the beautiful Diana, *par excellence* the belle of the season, and assuredly the most graceful nymph that ever tripped along the halls of heaven. She had gone off suddenly to the country, without alleging any intelligible excuse, and with her the last attraction of the ball-room seemed to have disappeared. Even Venus, the perpetual lady patroness, saw that the affair was desperate.

Page 123

"Ganymede, *mon beau garçon*," said she, one evening at an unusually thin assembly, "we must really give it up at last. Matters are growing worse and worse, and in another week we shall positively not have enough to get up a tolerable gallopade. Look at these seven poor Muses sitting together on the sofa. Not a soul has spoken to them to-night, except that horrid Silenus, who dances nothing but Scotch reels."

"*Pardieu!*" replied the young Trojan, fixing his glass in his eye. "There may be a reason for that. The girls are decidedly *passees*, and most inveterate blues. But there's dear little Hebe, who never wants partners, though that clumsy Hercules insists upon his conjugal rights, and keeps moving after her like an enormous shadow. 'Pon my soul, I've a great mind—Do you think, *ma belle tante*, that anything might be done in that quarter?"

"Oh fie, Ganymede—fie for shame!" said Flora, who was sitting close to the Queen of Love, and overheard the conversation. "You horrid, naughty man, how can you talk so?"

"*Pardon, ma chere!*" replied the exquisite with a languid smile. "You must excuse my *badinage*; and indeed, a glance of your fair eyes were enough at any time to recall me to my senses. By the way, what a beautiful *bouquet* you have there. *Parole d'honneur*, I am quite jealous. May I ask who sent it?"

"What a goose you are!" said Flora, in evident confusion: "how should I know? Some general admirer like yourself, I suppose."

"Apollo is remarkably fond of hyacinths, I believe," said Ganymede, looking significantly at Venus. "Ah, well! I see how it is. We poor detrimentals must break our hearts in silence. It is clear we have no chance with the *preux chevalier* of heaven."

"Really, Ganymede, you are very severe this evening," said Venus with a smile; "but tell me, have you heard anything of Diana?"

"Ah! *la belle Diane*? They say she is living in the country somewhere about Caria, at a place they call Latmos Cottage, cultivating her faded roses—what a color Hebe has!—and studying the sentimental."

"*Tant pis!* She is a great loss to us," said Venus. "Apropos, you will be at Neptune's *fete champetre* to-morrow, *n'est ce pas?* We shall then finally determine about abandoning the assemblies. But I must go home now. The carriage has been waiting this hour, and my doves may catch cold. I suppose that boy Cupid will not be home till all hours of the morning."

"Why, I believe the Rainbow Club *does* meet to-night, after the dancing," said Ganymede significantly. "This is the last oyster-night of the season."

“Gracious goodness! The boy will be quite tipsy,” said Venus. “Do, dear Ganymede! try to keep him sober. But now, give me your arm to the cloak-room.”

“*Volontiers!*” said the exquisite.

As Venus rose to go, there was a rush of persons to the further end of the room, and the music ceased. Presently, two or three voices were heard calling for Aesculapius.

Page 124

"What's the row?" asked that learned individual, advancing leisurely from the refreshment table, where he had been cramming himself with tea and cakes.

"Leda's fainted!" shrieked Calliope, who rushed past with her vinaigrette in hand.

"*Gammon!*" growled the Abernethy of heaven, as he followed her.

"Poor Leda!" said Venus, as her cavalier adjusted her shawl. "These fainting fits are decidedly alarming. I hope it is nothing more serious than the weather."

"I hope so, too," said Ganymede. "Let me put on the scarf. But people will talk. Pray heaven it be not a second edition of that old scandal about the eggs!"

"*Fi done!* You odious creature! How can you? But after all, stranger things have happened. There now, have done. Good-night!" and she stepped into her chariot.

"*Bon soir*" said the exquisite, kissing his hand as it rolled away. "'Pon my soul, that's a splendid woman. I've a great mind—but there's no hurry about that. *Revenons a nos oeufs*. I must learn something more about this fainting fit." So saying, Ganymede re-ascended the stairs.

A HIGHLAND TRAMP

From "Norman Sinclair"

When summer came—for in Scotland, alas! there is no spring, winter rolling itself remorselessly, like a huge polar bear, over what should be the beds of the early flowers, and crushing them ere they develop—when summer came, and the trees put on their pale-green liveries, and the brakes were blue with the wood-hyacinth, and the ferns unfolded their curl, what ecstasy it was to steal an occasional holiday, and wander, rod in hand, by some quiet stream up in the moorlands, inhaling health from every breeze, nor seeking shelter from the gentle shower as it dropped its manna from the heavens! And then the long holidays, when the town was utterly deserted—how I enjoyed these, as they can only be enjoyed by the possess-ors of the double talisman of strength and youth! No more care—no more trouble—no more task-work—no thought even of the graver themes suggested by my later studies! Look—standing on the Calton Hill, behold yon blue range of mountains to the west—cannot you name each pinnacle from its form? Benledi, Benvoirlich, Benlomond! Oh, the beautiful land, the elysium that lies round the base of those distant giants! The forest of Glenfinlas, Loch Achray with its weeping birches, the grand defiles of the Trosachs, and Ellen's Isle, the pearl of the one lake that genius has forever hallowed! Up, sluggard! Place your knapsack on your back; but stow it not with unnecessary gear, for you have still further to go, and your rod also must be your companion, if you mean to penetrate the region beyond. Money? Little money suffices him who travels on foot, who can bring his own fare to the

shepherd's bothy where he is to sleep, and who sleeps there better and sounder than the tourist

Page 125

who rolls from station to station in his barouche, grumbling because the hotels are overcrowded, and miserable about the airing of his sheets. Money? You would laugh if you heard me mention the sum which has sufficed for my expenditure during a long summer month; for the pedestrian, humble though he be, has his own especial privileges, and not the least of these is that he is exempted from all extortion. Donald—God bless him!—has a knack of putting on the prices; and when an English family comes posting up to the door of his inn, clamorously demanding every sort of accommodation which a metropolitan hotel could afford, grumbling at the lack of attendance, sneering at the quality of the food, and turning the whole establishment upside down for their own selfish gratification, he not unreasonably determines that the extra trouble shall be paid for in that gold which rarely crosses his fingers except during the short season when tourists and sportsmen abound. But Donald, who is descended from the M'Gregor, does not make spoil of the poor. The sketcher or the angler who come to his door, with the sweat upon their brow and the dust of the highway or the pollen of the heather on their feet, meet with a hearty welcome; and though the room in which their meals are served is but low in the roof, and the floor strewn with sand, and the attic wherein they lie is garnished with two beds and a shake-down, yet are the viands wholesome, the sheets clean, and the tariff so undeniably moderate that even parsimony cannot complain. So up in the morning early, so soon as the first beams of the sun slant into the chamber—down to the loch or river, and with a headlong plunge scrape acquaintance with the pebbles at the bottom; then rising with a hearty gasp, strike out for the islet or the further bank, to the astonishment of the otter, who, thief that he is, is skulking back to his hole below the old saugh-tree, from a midnight foray up the burns. Huzza! The mallard, dozing among the reeds, has taken fright, and tucking up his legs under his round fat rump, flies quacking to a remoter marsh.

“By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes,”

and lo! Dugald the keeper, on his way to the hill, is arrested by the aquatic phenomenon, and half believes that he is witnessing the frolics of an Urisk! Then make your toilet on the green-sward, swing your knapsack over your shoulders, and cover ten good miles of road before you halt before breakfast with more than the appetite of an ogre.

In this way I made the circuit of well-nigh the whole of the Scottish Highlands, penetrating as far as Cape Wrath and the wild district of Edderachylis, nor leaving unvisited the grand scenery of Loch Corruisk, and the stormy peaks of Skye; and more than one delightful week did I spend each summer, exploring Gameshope, or the Linns of Talla, where the Covenanters of old held their gathering; or clambering up the steep ascent by the Grey Mare's Tail to lonely and lovely Loch Skene, or casting for trout in the silver waters of St. Mary's.

Page 126

MASSIMO TAPARELLI D'AZEGLIO

(1798-1866)

Massimo Taparelli, Marquis d'Azeglio, like his greater colleague and sometime rival in the Sardinian Ministry, Cavour, wielded a graceful and forcible pen, and might have won no slight distinction in the peaceful paths of literature and art as well, had he not been before everything else a patriot. Of ancient and noble Piedmontese stock, he was born at Turin in October, 1798. In his fifteenth year the youth accompanied his father to Rome, where the latter had been appointed ambassador, and thus early he was inspired with the passion for painting and music which never left him. In accordance with the paternal wish he entered on a military career, but soon abandoned the service to devote himself to art. But after a residence of eight years (1821-29) in the papal capital, having acquired both skill and fame as a landscape painter, D'Azeglio began to direct his thoughts to letters and politics.

After the death of his father in 1830 he settled in Milan, where he formed the acquaintance of the poet and novelist Alessandro Manzoni, whose daughter he married, and under whose influence he became deeply interested in literature, especially in its relation to the political events of those stirring times. The agitation against Austrian domination was especially marked in the north of Italy, where Manzoni had made himself prominent; and so it came to pass that Massimo d'Azeglio plunged into literature with the ardent hope of stimulating the national sense of independence and unity.

In 1833 he published, not without misgivings, 'Ettore Fieramosca,' his first romance, in which he aimed to teach Italians how to fight for national honor. The work achieved an immediate and splendid success, and unquestionably served as a powerful aid to the awakening of Italy's ancient patriotism. It was followed in 1841 by 'Nicolo de' Lapi,' a story conceived in similar vein, with somewhat greater pretensions to literary finish. D'Azeglio now became known as one of the foremost representatives of the moderate party, and exerted the potent influence of his voice as well as of his pen in diffusing liberal propaganda. In 1846 he published the bold pamphlet 'Gli Ultimi Casi di Romagna' (On the Recent Events in Romagna), in which he showed the danger and utter futility of ill-advised republican outbreaks, and the paramount necessity of adopting thereafter a wiser and more practical policy to gain the great end desired. Numerous trenchant political articles issued from his pen during the next two years. The year 1849 found him a member of the first Sardinian parliament, and in March of that year Victor Emmanuel called him to the presidency of the Council with the portfolio of Foreign Affairs. Obligated to give way three years later before the rising genius of Cavour, he served his country with distinction on several important diplomatic missions after the peace of Villafranca, and died in his native city on the 15th of January, 1866.

Page 127

In 1867 appeared D'Azeglio's autobiography, 'I Miei Ricordi,' translated into English by Count Maffei under title of 'My Recollections' which is undeniably the most interesting and thoroughly delightful product of his pen. "He was a 'character,'" said an English critic at the time: "a man of whims and oddities, of hobbies and crotchets.... This character of individuality, which impressed its stamp on his whole life, is charmingly revealed in every sentence of the memoirs which he has left behind him; so that, more than any of his previous writings, their mingled homeliness and wit and wisdom justify the epithet which I once before ventured to give him when I described him as 'the Giusti of Italian prose.'" As a polemic writer D'Azeglio was recognized as one of the chief forces in molding public opinion. If he had not been both patriot and statesman, this versatile genius, as before intimated, would not improbably have gained an enviable reputation in the realm of art; and although his few novels are—perhaps with justice—no longer remembered, they deeply stirred the hearts of his countrymen in their day, and to say the least are characterized by good sense, facility of execution, and a refined imaginative power.

A HAPPY CHILDHOOD

From 'My Recollections'

The distribution of our daily occupations was strictly laid down for Matilde and me in black and white, and these rules were not to be broken with impunity. We were thus accustomed to habits of order, and never to make anybody wait for our convenience; a fault which is one of the most troublesome that can be committed either by great people or small.

I remember one day that Matilde, having gone out with Teresa, came home when we had been at dinner some time. It was winter, and snow was falling. The two culprits sat down a little confused, and their soup was brought them in two plates, which had been kept hot; but can you guess where? On the balcony; so that the contents were not only below freezing-point, but actually had a thick covering of snow!

At dinner, of course my sister and I sat perfectly silent, waiting our turn, without right of petition or remonstrance. As to the other proprieties of behavior, such as neatness, and not being noisy or boisterous, we knew well that the slightest infraction would have entailed banishment for the rest of the day at least. Our great anxiety was to eclipse ourselves as much as possible; and I assure you that under this system we never fancied ourselves the central points of importance round which all the rest of the world was to revolve,—an idea which, thanks to absurd indulgence and flattery, is often forcibly thrust, I may say, into poor little brains, which if left to themselves would never have lost their natural simplicity.

Page 128

The lessons of 'Galateo' were not enforced at dinner only. Even at other times we were forbidden to raise our voices or interrupt the conversation of our elders, still more to quarrel with each other. If sometimes as we went to dinner I rushed forward before Matilde, my father would take me by the arm and make me come last, saying, "There is no need to be uncivil because she is your sister." The old generation in many parts of Italy have the habit of shouting and raising their voices as if their interlocutor were deaf, interrupting him as if he had no right to speak, and poking him in the ribs and otherwise, as if he could only be convinced by sensations of bodily pain. The regulations observed in my family were therefore by no means superfluous; and would to Heaven they were universally adopted as the law of the land!

On another occasion my excellent mother gave me a lesson of humility, which I shall never forget any more than the place where I received it.

In the open part of the Cascine, which was once used as a race-course, to the right of the space where the carriages stand, there is a walk alongside the wood. I was walking there one day with my mother, followed by an old servant, a countryman of Pylades; less heroic than the latter, but a very good fellow too. I forget why, but I raised a little cane I had in my hand, and I am afraid I struck him. My mother, before all the passers-by, obliged me to kneel down and beg his pardon. I can still see poor Giacolin taking off his hat with a face of utter bewilderment, quite unable to comprehend how it was that the Chevalier Massimo Taparelli d'Azeglio came to be at his feet.

An indifference to bodily pain was another of the precepts most carefully instilled by our father; and as usual, the lesson was made more impressive by example whenever an opportunity presented itself. If, for instance, we complained of any slight pain or accident, our father used to say, half in fun, half in earnest, "When a Piedmontese has both his arms and legs broken, and has received two sword-thrusts in the body, he may be allowed to say, but not till then, 'Really, I almost think I am not quite well.'"

The moral authority he had acquired over me was so great that in no case would I have disobeyed him, even had he ordered me to jump out of window.

I recollect that when my first tooth was drawn, I was in an agony of fright as we went to the dentist; but outwardly I was brave enough, and tried to seem as indifferent as possible. On another occasion my childish courage and also my father's firmness were put to a more serious test. He had hired a house called the Villa Billi, which stands about half a mile from San Domenico di Fiesole, on the right winding up toward the hill. Only two years ago I visited the place, and found the same family of peasants still there, and my two old playmates, Nando and Sandro,—who had both become even greater fogies than myself,—and we had a hearty chat together about bygone times.

Page 129

Whilst living at this villa, our father was accustomed to take us out for long walks, which were the subject of special regulations. We were strictly forbidden to ask, "Have we far to go?"—"What time is it?" or to say, "I am thirsty; I am hungry; I am tired:" but in everything else we had full liberty of speech and action. Returning from one of these excursions, we one day found ourselves below Castel di Poggio, a rugged stony path leading towards Vincigliata. In one hand I had a nosegay of wild flowers, gathered by the way, and in the other a stick, when I happened to stumble, and fell awkwardly. My father sprang forward to pick me up, and seeing that one arm pained me, he examined it and found that in fact the bone was broken below the elbow. All this time my eyes were fixed upon him, and I could see his countenance change, and assume such an expression of tenderness and anxiety that he no longer appeared to be the same man. He bound up my arm as well as he could, and we then continued our way homewards. After a few moments, during which my father had resumed his usual calmness, he said to me:—

"Listen, Mammolino: your mother is not well. If she knows you are hurt it will make her worse. You must be brave, my boy: to-morrow morning we will go to Florence, where all that is needful can be done for you; but this evening you must not show you are in pain. Do you understand?"

All this was said with his usual firmness and authority, but also with the greatest affection. I was only too glad to have so important and difficult a task intrusted to me. The whole evening I sat quietly in a corner, supporting my poor little broken arm as best I could, and my mother only thought me tired by the long walk, and had no suspicion of the truth.

The next day I was taken to Florence, and my arm was set; but to complete the cure I had to be sent to the Baths of Vinadio a few years afterward. Some people may, in this instance, think my father was cruel. I remember the fact as if it were but yesterday, and I am sure such an idea never for one minute entered my mind. The expression of ineffable tenderness which I had read in his eyes had so delighted me, it seemed so reasonable to avoid alarming my mother, that I looked on the hard task allotted me as a fine opportunity of displaying my courage. I did so because I had not been spoilt, and good principles had been early implanted within me: and now that I am an old man and have known the world, I bless the severity of my father; and I could wish every Italian child might have one like him, and derive more profit than I did,—in thirty years' time Italy would then be the first of nations.

Moreover, it is a fact that children are much more observant than is commonly supposed, and never regard as hostile a just but affectionate severity. I have always seen them disposed to prefer persons who keep them in order to those who constantly yield to their caprices; and soldiers are just the same in this respect.

Page 130

The following is another example to prove that my father did not deserve to be called cruel:—

He thought it a bad practice to awaken children suddenly, or to let their sleep be abruptly disturbed. If we had to rise early for a journey, he would come to my bedside and softly hum a popular song, two lines of which still ring in my ears:—

“Chi vuol veder l’aurora
Lasci le molli plume.”

(He who the early dawn would view
Downy pillows must eschew.)

And by gradually raising his voice, he awoke me without the slightest start. In truth, with all his severity, Heaven knows how I loved him.

THE PRIESTHOOD

From “My Recollections”

My occupations in Rome were not entirely confined to the domains of poetry and imagination. It must not be forgotten that I was also a diplomatist; and in that capacity I had social as well as official duties to perform.

The Holy Alliance had accepted the confession and repentance of Murat, and had granted him absolution; but as the new convert inspired little confidence, he was closely watched, in the expectation—and perhaps the hope—of an opportunity of crowning the work by the infliction of penance.

The penance intended was to deprive him of his crown and sceptre, and to turn him out of the pale. Like all the other diplomatists resident in Rome, we kept our court well informed of all that could be known or surmised regarding the intentions of the Neapolitan government; and I had the lively occupation of copying page after page of incomprehensible cipher for the newborn archives of our legation. Such was my life at that time; and in spite of the cipher, I soon found it pleasant enough. Dinner-parties, balls, routs, and fashionable society did not then inspire me with the holy horror which now keeps me away from them. Having never before experienced or enjoyed anything of the kind, I was satisfied. But in the midst of my pleasure, our successor—Marquis San Saturnino—made his appearance, and we had to prepare for our departure. One consolation, however, remained. I had just then been appointed to the high rank of cornet in the crack dragoon regiment “Royal Piedmont.” I had never seen its uniform, but I cherished a vague hope of being destined by Fortune to wear a helmet; and the prospect of realizing this splendid dream of my infancy prevented me from regretting my Roman acquaintances overmuch.



The Society of Jesus had meanwhile been restored, and my brother was on the eve of taking the vows. He availed himself of the last days left him before that ceremony to sit for his portrait to the painter Landi. This is one of that artist's best works, who, poor man, cannot boast of many; and it now belongs to my nephew Emanuel.

The day of the ceremony at length arrived, and I accompanied my brother to the Convent of Monte Cavallo, where it was to take place.

Page 131

The Jesuits at that time were all greatly rejoicing at the revival of their order; and as may be inferred, they were mostly old men, with only a few young novices among them.

We entered an oratory fragrant with the flowers adorning the altar, full of silver ornaments, holy images, and burning wax-lights, with half-closed windows and carefully drawn blinds; for it is a certain, although unexplained, fact that men are more devout in the dark than in the light, at night than in the day-time, and with their eyes closed rather than open. We were received by the General of the order, Father Panizzoni, a little old man bent double with age, his eyes encircled with red, half blind, and I believe almost in his dotage. He was shedding tears of joy, and we all maintained the pious and serious aspect suited to the occasion, until the time arrived for the novice to step forward, when, lo! Father Panizzoni advanced with open arms toward the place where I stood, mistaking me for my brother; a blunder which for a moment imperiled the solemnity of the assembly.

Had I yielded to the embrace of Father Panizzoni, it would have been a wonderful bargain both for him and me. But this was not the only invitation I then received to enter upon a sacerdotal career. Monsignor Morozzo, my great-uncle and god-father, then secretary to the bishops and regular monks, one day proposed that I should enter the Ecclesiastical Academy, and follow the career of the prelacy under his patronage. The idea seemed so absurd that I could not help laughing heartily, and the subject was never revived.

Had I accepted these overtures, I might in the lapse of time have long since been a cardinal, and perhaps even Pope. And if so, I should have drawn the world after me, as the shepherd entices a lamb with a lump of salt. It was very wrong in me to refuse. Doubtless the habit of expressing my opinion to every one, and on all occasions, would have led me into many difficulties. I must either have greatly changed, or a very few years would have seen an end of me.

We left Rome at last, in the middle of winter, in an open carriage, and traveling chiefly by night, as was my father's habit. While the horses are trotting on, I will sum up the impressions of Rome and the Roman world which I was carrying away. The clearest idea present to my mind was that the priests of Rome and their religion had very little in common with my father and Don Andreis, or with the religion professed by them and by the priests and the devout laity of Turin. I had not been able to detect the slightest trace of that which in the language of asceticism is called unction. I know not why, but that grave and downcast aspect, enlivened only by a few occasional flashes of ponderous clerical wit, the atmosphere depressing as the *plumbeus auster* of Horace, in which I had been brought up under the rule of my priest,—all seemed unknown at Rome. There I never met with a monsignore

Page 132

or a priest who did not step out with a pert and jaunty air, his head erect, showing off a well-made leg, and daintily attired in the garb of a clerical dandy. Their conversation turned upon every possible subject, and sometimes upon *quibusdam aliis*, to such a degree that it was evident my father was perpetually on thorns. I remember a certain prelate, whom I will not name, and whose conduct was, I believe, sufficiently free and easy, who at a dinner-party at a villa near Porta Pia related laughingly some matrimonial anecdotes, which I at that time did not fully understand. And I remember also my poor father's manifest distress, and his strenuous endeavors to change the conversation and direct it into a different channel.

The prelates and priests whom I used to meet in less orthodox companies than those frequented by my father seemed to me still more free and easy. Either in the present or in the past, in theory or in practice, with more or less or even no concealment, they all alike were sailing or had sailed on the sweet *fleuve du tendre*. For instance, I met one old canon bound to a venerable dame by a tie of many years' standing. I also met a young prelate with a pink-and-white complexion and eyes expressive of anything but holiness; he was a desperate votary of the fair sex, and swaggered about paying his homage right and left. Will it be believed, this gay apostle actually told me, without circumlocution, that in the monastery of Tor di Specchi there dwelt a young lady who was in love with me? I, who of course desired no better, took the hint instantly, and had her pointed out to me. Then began an interchange of silly messages, of languishing looks, and a hundred absurdities of the same kind; all cut short by the pair of post-horses which carried us out of the Porta del Popolo....

The opinions of my father respecting the clergy and the Court of Rome were certainly narrow and prejudiced; but with his good sense it was impossible for him not to perceive what was manifest even to a blind man. During our journey he kept insinuating (without appearing, however, to attach much importance to it) that it was always advisable to speak with proper respect of a country where we had been well received, even if we had noticed a great many abuses and disorders. To a certain extent, this counsel was well worthy of attention. He was doubtless much grieved at the want of decency apparent in one section of that society, or, to use a modern expression, at its absence of respectability; but he consoled himself by thinking, like Abraham the Jew in the 'Decameron,' that no better proof can be given of the truth of the religion professed by Rome than the fact of its enduring in such hands.

This reasoning, however, is not quite conclusive; for if Boccaccio had had patience to wait another forty years, he would have learnt, first from John Huss, and then from Luther and his followers, that although in certain hands things may last a while, it is only till they are worn out. What Boccaccio and the Jew would say now if they came back, I do not venture to surmise,

Page 133

MY FIRST VENTURE IN ROMANCE

From 'My Recollections'

While striving to acquire a good artistic position in my new residence, I had still continued to work at my 'Fieramosca,' which was now almost completed. Letters were at that time represented at Milan by Manzoni, Grossi, Torti, Pompeo Litta, etc. The memories of the period of Monti, Parini, Foscolo, Porta, Pellico, Verri, Beccaria, were still fresh; and however much the living literary and scientific men might be inclined to lead a secluded life, intrenched in their own houses, with the shyness of people who disliked much intercourse with the world, yet by a little tact those who wished for their company could overcome their reserve. As Manzoni's son-in-law, I found myself naturally brought into contact with them. I knew them all; but Grossi and I became particularly intimate, and our close and uninterrupted friendship lasted until the day of his but too premature death. I longed to show my work to him, and especially to Manzoni, and ask their advice; but fear this time, not artistic but literary, had again caught hold of me. Still, a resolve was necessary, and was taken at last. I disclosed my secret, imploring forbearance and advice, but no *indulgence*. I wanted the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. I preferred the blame of a couple of trusted friends to that of the public. Both seemed to have expected something a great deal worse than what they heard, to judge by their startled but also approving countenances, when my novel was read to them. Manzoni remarked with a smile, "We literary men have a strange profession indeed—any one can take it up in a day. Here is Massimo: the whim of writing a novel seizes him, and upon my word he does not do badly, after all!"

This high approbation inspired me with leonine courage, and I set to work again in earnest, so that in 1833 the work was ready for publication. On thinking it over now, it strikes me that I was guilty of great impertinence in thus bringing out and publishing with undaunted assurance my little novel among all those literary big-wigs; I who had never done or written anything before. But it was successful; and this is an answer to every objection.

The day I carried my bundle of manuscript to San Pietro all' Orto, and, as Berni expresses it,—

"—ritrovato
Un che di stampar opere lavora,
Dissi, Stampami questa alla malora!"

(—having
Discovered one, a publisher by trade,
'Print me this book, bad luck to it!' I said.)

I was in a still greater funk than on the two previous occasions. But I had yet to experience the worst I ever felt in the whole course of my life, and that was on the day of publication; when I went out in the morning, and read my illustrious name placarded in large letters on the street walls! I felt blinded by a thousand sparks. Now indeed *alea jacta erat*, and my fleet was burnt to ashes.

Page 134

This great fear of the public may, with good-will, be taken for modesty; but I hold that at bottom it is downright vanity. Of course I am speaking of people endowed with a sufficient dose of talent and common-sense; with fools, on the contrary, vanity takes the shape of impudent self-confidence. Hence all the daily published amount of nonsense; which would convey a strange idea of us to Europe, if it were not our good fortune that Italian is not much understood abroad. As regards our internal affairs, the two excesses are almost equally noxious. In Parliament, for instance, the first, those of the timidly vain genus, might give their opinion a little oftener with general advantage; while if the others, the impudently vain, were not always brawling, discussions would be more brief and rational, and public business better and more quickly dispatched. The same reflection applies to other branches—to journalism, literature, society, *etc.*; for vanity is the bad weed which chokes up our political field; and as it is a plant of hardy growth, blooming among us all the year round, it is just as well to be on our guard.

Timid vanity was terribly at work within me the day 'Fieramosca' was published. For the first twenty-four hours it was impossible to learn anything; for even the most zealous require at least a day to form some idea of a book. Next morning, on first going out, I encountered a friend of mine, a young fellow then and now a man of mature age, who has never had a suspicion of the cruel blow he unconsciously dealt me. I met him in Piazza San Fedele, where I lived; and after a few words, he said, "By the by, I hear you have published a novel. Well done!" and then talked away about something quite different with the utmost heedlessness. Not a drop of blood was left in my veins, and I said to myself, "Mercy on me! I am done for: not even a word is said about my poor 'Fieramosca!'" It seemed incredible that he, who belonged to a very numerous family, connected with the best society of the town, should have heard nothing, if the slightest notice had been taken of it. As he was besides an excellent fellow and a friend, it seemed equally incredible that if a word had been said and heard, he should not have repeated it to me. Therefore, it was a failure; the worst of failures, that of silence. With a bitter feeling at heart, I hardly knew where I went; but this feeling soon changed, and the bitterness was superseded by quite an opposite sensation.

'Fieramosca' succeeded, and succeeded so well that I felt *abasourdi*, as the French express it; indeed, I could say "Je n'aurais jamais cru etre si fort savant." My success went on in an increasing ratio: it passed from the papers and from the masculine half to the feminine half of society; it found its way to the studios and the stage. I became the vade-mecum of every prima-donna and tenor, the hidden treat of school-girls; I penetrated between the pillow and the mattress of college, boys, of the military academy cadet; and my apotheosis reached such a height that some newspapers asserted it to be Manzoni's work. It is superfluous to add that only the ignorant could entertain such an idea; those who were better informed would never have made such a blunder.

Page 135

My aim, as I said, was to take the initiative in the slow work of the regeneration of national character. I had no wish but to awaken high and noble sentiments in Italian hearts; and if all the literary men in the world had assembled to condemn me in virtue of strict rules, I should not have cared a jot, if, in defiance of all existing rules, I succeeded in inflaming the heart of one single individual. And I will also add, who can say that what causes durable emotion is unorthodox? It may be at variance with some rules and in harmony with others; and those which move hearts and captivate intellects do not appear to me to be the worst.

BABER

(1482-1530)

BY EDWARD S. HOLDEN

The emperor Baber was sixth in descent from Tamerlane, who died in 1405. Tamerlane's conquests were world-wide, but they never formed a homogeneous empire. Even in his lifetime he parceled them out to sons and grandsons. Half a century later Trans-oxiana was divided into many independent kingdoms each governed by a descendant of the great conqueror.

When Baber was born (1482), an uncle was King of Samarkand and Bokhara; another uncle ruled Badakhshan; another was King of Kabul. A relative was the powerful King of Khorasan. These princes were of the family of Tamerlane, as was Baber's father,—Sultan Omer Sheikh Mirza, who was the King of Ferghana. Two of Baber's maternal uncles, descendants of Chengiz Khan, ruled the Moghul tribes to the west and north of Ferghana; and two of their sisters had married the Kings of Samarkand and Badakhshan. The third sister was Baber's mother, wife of the King of Ferghana.

The capitals of their countries were cities like Samarkand, Bokhara, and Herat. Tamerlane's grandson—Ulugh Beg—built at Samarkand the chief astronomical observatory of the world, a century and a half before Tycho Brahe (1576) erected Uranibourg in Denmark. The town was filled with noble buildings,—mosques, tombs, and colleges. Its walls were five miles in circumference[2].

[Footnote 2: Paris was walled in 1358; so Froissart tells us.]

Its streets were paved (the streets of Paris were not paved till the time of Henri IV.), and running water was distributed in pipes. Its markets overflowed with fruits. Its cooks and bakers were noted for their skill. Its colleges were full of learned men, poets[3], and doctors of the law. The observatory counted more than a hundred observers and

calculators in its corps of astronomers. The products of China, of India, and of Persia flowed to the bazaars.

[Footnote 3: "In Samarkand, the Odes of Baiesanghar Mirza are so popular, that there is not a house in which a copy of them may not be found."—Baber's. 'Memoirs.']

Page 136

Bokhara has always been the home of learning. Herat was at that time the most magnificent and refined city of the world[4]. The court was splendid, polite, intelligent, and liberal. Poetry, history, philosophy, science, and the arts of painting and music were cultivated by noblemen and scholars alike. Baber himself was a poet of no mean rank. The religion was that of Islam, and the sect the orthodox Sunni; but the practice was less precise than in Arabia. Wine was drunk; poetry was prized; artists were encouraged. The mother-language of Baber was Turki (of which the Turkish of Constantinople is a dialect). Arabic was the language of science and of theology. Persian was the accepted literary language, though Baber's verses are in Turki as well.

[Footnote 4: Baber spent twenty days in visiting its various palaces, towers, mosques, gardens, colleges—and gives a list of more than fifty such sights.]

We possess Baber's 'Memoirs' in the original Turki and in Persian translations also. In what follows, the extracts will be taken from Erskine's translation[5], which preserves their direct and manly charm.

[Footnote 5: 'Memoirs of Baber, Emperor of Hindustan, written by himself, and translated by Leyden and Erskine,' etc. London, 1826, quarto.]

To understand them, the foregoing slight introduction is necessary. A connected sketch of Baber's life and a brief history of his conquests can be found in 'The Mogul Emperors of Hindustan[6].' We are here more especially concerned with his literary work. To comprehend it, something of his history and surroundings must be known.

[Footnote 6: By Edward S. Holden, New York, 1895, 8vo, illustrated.]

FROM BABER'S 'MEMOIRS'

In the month, of Ramzan, in the year 899 [A. D. 1494], and in the twelfth year of my age, I became King of Ferghana.

The country of Ferghana is situated in the fifth climate, on the extreme boundary of the habitable world. On the east it has Kashgar; on the west, Samarkand; on the south, the hill country; on the north, in former times there were cities, yet at the present time, in consequence of the incursions of the Usbeks, no population remains. Ferghana is a country of small extent, abounding in grain and fruits. The revenues may suffice, without oppressing the country, to maintain three or four thousand troops.

My father, Omer Sheikh Mirza, was of low stature, had a short, bushy beard, brownish hair, and was very corpulent. As for his opinions and habits, he was of the sect of Hanifah, and strict in his belief. He never neglected the five regular and stated prayers. He read elegantly, and he was particularly fond of reading the 'Shahnameh[7].' Though he had a turn for poetry, he did not cultivate it. He was so strictly just, that when the

caravan from [China] had once reached the hill country to the east of Ardejan, and the snow fell so deep as to bury it,

Page 137

so that of the whole only two persons escaped; he no sooner received information of the occurrence than he dispatched overseers to take charge of all the property, and he placed it under guard and preserved it untouched, till in the course of one or two years, the heirs coming from Khorasan, he delivered back the goods safe into their hands. His generosity was large, and so was his whole soul; he was of an excellent temper, affable, eloquent, and sweet in his conversation, yet brave withal and manly.

[Footnote 7: The 'Book of Kings,' by the Persian poet Firdausi.]

The early portion of Baber's 'Memoirs' is given to portraits of the officers of his court and country. A few of these may be quoted.

Khosrou Shah, though a Turk, applied his attention to the mode of raising his revenues, and he spent them liberally. At the death of Sultan Mahmud Mirza, he reached the highest pitch of greatness, and his retainers rose to the number of twenty thousand. Though he prayed regularly and abstained from forbidden foods, yet he was black-hearted and vicious, of mean understanding and slender talents, faithless and a traitor. For the sake of the short and fleeting pomp of this vain world, he put out the eyes of one and murdered another of the sons of the benefactor in whose service he had been, and by whom he had been protected; rendering himself accursed of God, abhorred of men, and worthy of execration and shame till the day of final retribution. These crimes he perpetrated merely to secure the enjoyment of some poor worldly vanities; yet with all the power of his many and populous territories, in spite of his magazines of warlike stores, he had not the spirit to face a barnyard chicken. He will often be mentioned in these memoirs.

Ali Shir Beg was celebrated for the elegance of his manners; and this elegance and polish were ascribed to the conscious pride of high fortune: but this was not the case; they were natural to him. Indeed, Ali Shir Beg was an incomparable person. From the time that poetry was first written in the Turki language, no man has written so much and so well. He has also left excellent pieces of music; they are excellent both as to the airs themselves and as to the preludes. There is not upon record in history any man who was a greater patron and protector of men of talent than he. He had no son nor daughter, nor wife nor family; he passed through the world single and unincumbered.

Another poet was Sheikhem Beg. He composed a sort of verses, in which both the words and the sense are terrifying and correspond with each other. The following is one of his couplets:—

*During my sorrows of the night, the whirlpool of my sighs bears
the firmament from its place;*

*The dragons of the inundations of my tears bear down the four
quarters of the habitable world!*

It is well known that on one occasion, having repeated these verses to Moulana Abdal Rahman Jami, the Mulla said, "Are you repeating poetry, or are you terrifying folks?"

Page 138

A good many men who wrote verses happened to be present. During the party the following verse of Muhammed Salikh was repeated:—

*What can one do to regulate his thoughts, with a mistress possessed
of every blandishment?
Where you are, how is it possible for our thoughts to wander to
another?*

It was agreed that every one should make an extempore couplet to the same rhyme and measure. Every one accordingly repeated his verse. As we had been very merry, I repeated the following extempore satirical verses:—

*What can one do with a drunken sot like you?
What can be done with one foolish as a she-ass?*

Before this, whatever had come into my head, good or bad, I had always committed it to writing. On the present occasion, when I had composed these lines, my mind led me to reflections, and my heart was struck with regret that a tongue which could repeat the sublimest productions should bestow any trouble on such unworthy verses; that it was melancholy that a heart elevated to nobler conceptions should submit to occupy itself with these meaner and despicable fancies. From that time forward I religiously abstained from satirical poetry. I had not then formed my resolution, nor considered how objectionable the practice was.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE YEAR 904 [A. D. 1498-99]

Having failed in repeated expeditions against Samarkand and Ardejan, I once more returned to Khojend. Khojend is but a small place; and it is difficult for one to support two hundred retainers in it. How then could a [young] man, ambitious of empire, set himself down contentedly in so insignificant a place? As soon as I received advice that the garrison of Ardejan had declared for me, I made no delay. And thus, by the grace of the Most High, I recovered my paternal kingdom, of which I had been deprived nearly two years. An order was issued that such as had accompanied me in my campaigns might resume possession of whatever part of their property they recognized. Although the order seemed reasonable and just in itself, yet it was issued with too much precipitation. It was a senseless thing to exasperate so many men with arms in their hands. In war and in affairs of state, though things may appear just and reasonable at first sight, no matter ought to be finally decided without being well weighed and considered in a hundred different lights. From my issuing this single order without sufficient foresight, what commotions and mutinies arose! This inconsiderate order of mine was in reality the ultimate cause of my being a second time expelled from Ardejan.

* * * * *

Baber's next campaign was most arduous, but in passing by a spring he had the leisure to have these verses of Saadi inscribed on its brink:—

*I have heard that the exalted Jemshid
Inscribed on a stone beside a fountain:—
"Many a man like us has rested by this fountain,
And disappeared in the twinkling of an eye.
Should we conquer the whole world by our manhood and strength,
Yet could we not carry it with us to the grave."*

Page 139

Of another fountain he says:—"I directed this fountain to be built round with stone, and formed a cistern. At the time when the *Arghwan* flowers begin to blow, I do not know that any place in the world is to be compared to it." On its sides he engraved these verses:—

*Sweet is the return of the new year;
Sweet is the smiling spring;
Sweet is the juice of the mellow grape;
Sweeter far the voice of love.
Strive, O Baber! to secure the joys of life,
Which, alas! once departed, never more return.*

From these flowers Baber and his army marched into the passes of the high mountains.

His narrative goes on:—

It was at this time that I composed the following verses:—

*There is no violence or injury of fortune that I have not
experienced;
This broken heart has endured them all. Alas! is there one left
that I have not encountered?*

For about a week we continued pressing down the snow without being able to advance more than two or three miles. I myself assisted in trampling down the snow. Every step we sank up to the middle or the breast, but we still went on, trampling it down. As the strength of the person who went first was generally exhausted after he had advanced a few paces, he stood still, while another took his place. The ten, fifteen, or twenty people who worked in trampling down the snow, next succeeded in dragging on a horse without a rider. Drawing this horse aside, we brought on another, and in this way ten, fifteen, or twenty of us contrived to bring forward the horses of all our number. The rest of the troops, even our best men, advanced along the road that had been beaten for them, hanging their heads. This was no time for plaguing them or employing authority. Every man who possesses spirit or emulation hastens to such works of himself. Continuing to advance by a track which we beat in the snow in this manner, we reached a cave at the foot of the Zirrin pass. That day the storm of wind was dreadful. The snow fell in such quantities that we all expected to meet death together. The cave seemed to be small. I took a hoe and made for myself at the mouth of the cave a resting-place about the size of a prayer-carpet. I dug down in the snow as deep as my breast, and yet did not reach the ground. This hole afforded me some shelter from the wind, and I sat down in it. Some desired me to go into the cavern, but I would not go. I felt that for me to be in a warm dwelling, while my men were in the, midst of snow and drift,—for me to be within, enjoying sleep and ease, while my followers were in trouble and distress,—would be

inconsistent with what I owed them, and a deviation from that society in suffering which was their due. I continued, therefore, to sit in the drift.

Ambition admits not of inaction; The world is his who exerts himself; In wisdom's eye, every condition May find repose save royalty alone.

By leadership like this, the descendant of Tamerlane became the ruler of Kabul. He celebrates its charms in verse:—

Page 140

Its verdure and flowers render Kabul, in spring, a heaven.—

but this kingdom was too small for a man of Baber's stamp. He used it as a stepping-stone to the conquest of India (1526).

*Return a hundred thanks, O Baber! for the bounty of the merciful God
Has given you Sind, Hind, and numerous kingdoms;
If, unable to stand the heat, you long for cold,
You have only to recollect the frost and cold of Ghazni.*

In spite of these verses, Baber did not love India, and his monarchy was an exile to him. Let the last extract from his memoirs be a part of a letter written in 1529 to an old and trusted friend in Kabul. It is an outpouring of the griefs of his inmost heart to his friend. He says:—

My solicitude to visit my western dominions (Kabul) is boundless and great beyond expression. I trust in Almighty Allah that the time is near at hand when everything will be completely settled in this country. As soon as matters are brought to that state, I shall, with the permission of Allah, set out for your quarters without a moment's delay. How is it possible that the delights of those lands should ever be erased from the heart? How is it possible to forget the delicious melons and grapes of that pleasant region? They very recently brought me a single muskmelon from Kabul. While cutting it up, I felt myself affected with a strong feeling of loneliness and a sense of my exile from my native country, and I could not help shedding tears. [He gives long instructions on the military and political matters to be attended to, and continues without a break:—] At the southwest of Besteh I formed a plantation of trees; and as the prospect from it was very fine, I called it Nazergah [the view]. You must there plant some beautiful trees, and all around sow beautiful and sweet-smelling flowers and shrubs. [And he goes straight on:—] Syed Kasim will accompany the artillery. [After more details of the government he quotes fondly a little trivial incident of former days and friends, and says:—] Do not think amiss of me for deviating intoThe 'Memoirs' of Baber deserve a place beside the writings of the greatest of generals and conquerors. He is not unworthy to be classed with Caesar as a general and as a man of letters. His character was more human, more frank, more lovable, more ardent. His fellow in our western world is not Caesar, but Henri IV. of France and Navarre.

[Illustration: Signature: Edward S. Holden]

BABRIUS

(First Century A.D.)

Page 141

Babrius, also referred to as Babrias and Gabrias, was the writer of that metrical version of the folk-fables, commonly referred to as Aesop, which delights our childhood. Until the time of Richard Bentley he was commonly thought of merely as a fabulist whose remains had been preserved by a few grammarians. Bentley, in the first draft (1697) of the part of his famous 'Dissertation' treating of the fables of Aesop, speaks thus of Babrius, and goes not far out of his way to give a rap at Planudes, a late Greek, who turned works of Ovid, Cato, and Caesar into Greek:—"... came one Babrius, that gave a new turn of the fables into choliambics. Nobody that I know of mentions him but Suidas, Avienus, and Tzetzes. There's one Gabrias, indeed, yet extant, that has comprised each fable in four sorry iambics. But our Babrius is a writer of another size and quality; and were his book now extant, it might justly be opposed, if not preferred, to the Latin of Phaedrus. There's a whole fable of his yet preserved at the end of Gabrias, of 'The Swallow and the Nightingale.' Suidas brings many citations out of him, all which show him an excellent poet.... There are two parcels of the present fables; the one, which are the more ancient, one hundred and thirty-six in number, were first published out of the Heidelberg Library by Neveletus, 1610. The editor himself well observed that they were falsely ascribed to Aesop, because they mention holy monks. To which I will add another remark,—that there is a sentence out of Job.... Thus I have proved one-half of the fables now extant that carry the name of Aesop to be above a thousand years more recent than he. And the other half, that were public before Neveletus, will be found yet more modern, and the latest of all.... This collection, therefore, is more recent than that other; and, coming first abroad with Aesop's 'Life,' written by Planudes, 'tis justly believed to be owing to the same writer. That idiot of a monk has given us a book which he calls 'The Life of Aesop,' that perhaps cannot be matched in any language for ignorance and nonsense. He had picked up two or three true stories,—that Aesop was a slave to a Xanthus, carried a burthen of bread, conversed with Croesus, and was put to death at Delphi; but the circumstances of these and all his other tales are pure invention.... But of all his injuries to Aesop, that which can least be forgiven him is the making such a monster of him for ugliness,—an abuse that has found credit so universally that all the modern painters since the time of Planudes have drawn him in the worst shapes and features that fancy could invent. 'Twas an old tradition among the Greeks that Aesop revived again and lived a second life. Should he revive once more and see the picture before the book that carries his name, could he think it drawn for himself?—or for the monkey, or some strange beast introduced in the 'Fables'? But what revelation had this monk about Aesop's

Page 142

deformity? For he must have it by dream or vision, and not by ordinary methods of knowledge. He lived about two thousand years after him, and in all that tract of time there's not a single author that has given the least hint that Aesop was ugly."

Thus Bentley; but to return to Babrius. Tyrwhitt, in 1776, followed this calculation of Bentley by collecting the remains of Babrius. A publication in 1809 of fables from a Florentine manuscript foreran the collection (1832) of all the fables which could be entirely restored. In 1835 a German scholar, Knoch, published whatever had up to that time been written on Babrius, or as far as then known by him. So much had been accomplished by modern scholarship. The calculation was not unlike the mathematical computation that a star should, from an apparent disturbance, be in a certain quarter of the heavens at a certain time. The manuscript of Babrius, it became clear, must have existed. In 1842 M. Mynas, a Greek, who had already discovered the 'Philosophoumena' of Hippolytus, came upon the parchment in the convent of St. Lama on Mount Athos. He was employed by the French government, and the duty of giving the new ancient to the world fell to French scholars. The date of the manuscript they referred to the tenth century. There were contained in it one hundred and twenty-three of the supposed one hundred and sixty fables, the arrangement being alphabetical and ending with the letter O. Again, in 1857 M. Mynas announced another discovery. Ninety-four fables and a prooemium were still in a convent at Mount Athos; but the monks, who made difficulty about parting with the first parchment, refused to let the second go abroad. M. Mynas forwarded a transcript which he sold to the British Museum. It was after examination pronounced to be the work of a forger, and not even what it purported to be—the tinkering of a writer who had turned the original of Babrius into barbarous Greek and halting metre. Suggestions were made that the forger was Mynas himself. And there were scholars who accounted the manuscript as genuine.

The discovery of the first part added substantially to the remains which we have of the poetry of ancient Greece. The terseness, simplicity, and humor of the poems belong to the popular classic all the world over, in whatever tongue it appears; and the purity of the Greek shows that Babrius lived at a time when the influence of the classical age was still vital. He is placed at various times. Bergk fixes him so far back as B.C. 250, while others place him at the same number of years in our own era. Both French and German criticism has claimed that he was a Roman. There is no trace of his fables earlier than the Emperor Julian, and no metrical version of the Aesopean fables existed before the writing of Babrius. Socrates tried his hand at a version or two. But when such Greek writers as Xenophon and Aristotle refer to old folk-tales and legends, it is always in their own words. His fables are written in choliambic verse; that is, imperfect iambic which has a spondee in the last foot and is fitted for the satire for which it was originally used.

Page 143

The fables of Babrius have been edited, with an interesting and valuable introduction, by W.G. Rutherford (1883), and by F.G. Schneidewin (1880). They have been turned into English metre by James Davies, M.A. (1860). The reader is also referred to the article 'Aesop' in the present work.

THE NORTH WIND AND THE SUN

Betwixt the North wind and the Sun arose
A contest, which would soonest of his clothes
Strip a wayfaring clown, so runs the tale.
First, Boreas blows an almost Thracian gale,
Thinking, perforce, to steal the man's capote:
He loosed it not; but as the cold wind smote
More sharply, tighter round him drew the folds,
And sheltered by a crag his station holds.
But now the Sun at first peered gently forth,
And thawed the chills of the uncanny North;
Then in their turn his beams more amply plied,
Till sudden heat the clown's endurance tried;
Stripping himself, away his cloak he flung:
The Sun from Boreas thus a triumph wrung.

The fable means, "My son, at mildness aim:
Persuasion more results than force may claim."

JUPITER AND THE MONKEY

A baby-show with prizes Jove decreed
For all the beasts, and gave the choice due heed.
A monkey-mother came among the rest;
A naked, snub-nosed pug upon her breast
She bore, in mother's fashion. At the sight
Assembled gods were moved to laugh outright.
Said she, "Jove knoweth where his prize will fall!
I know my child's the beauty of them all."

This fable will a general law attest,
That each one deems that what's his own, is best.

THE MOUSE THAT FELL INTO THE POT

A mouse into a lidless broth-pot fell;
Choked with the grease, and bidding life farewell,



He said, "My fill of meat and drink have I
And all good things: 'Tis time that I should die."

Thou art that dainty mouse among mankind,
If hurtful sweets are not by thee declined.

THE FOX AND THE GRAPES

There hung some bunches of the purple grape
On a hillside. A cunning fox, agape
For these full clusters, many times essayed
To cull their dark bloom, many vain leaps made.
They were quite ripe, and for the vintage fit;
But when his leaps did not avail a whit,
He journeyed on, and thus his grief composed:—
"The bunch was sour, not ripe, as I supposed."

THE CARTER AND HERCULES

A carter from the village drove his wain:
And when it fell into a rugged lane,
Inactive stood, nor lent a helping hand;
But to that god, whom of the heavenly band
He really honored most, Alcides, prayed:
"Push at your wheels," the god appearing said,
"And goad your team; but when you pray again,
Help yourself likewise, or you'll pray in vain."

Page 144

THE YOUNG COCKS

Two Tanagraean cocks a fight began;
Their spirit is, 'tis said, as that of man:
Of these the beaten bird, a mass of blows,
For shame into a corner creeping goes;
The other to the housetop quickly flew,
And there in triumph flapped his wings and crew.
But him an eagle lifted from the roof,
And bore away. His fellow gained a proof
That oft the wages of defeat are best,—
None else remained the hens to interest.

WHEREFORE, O man, beware of boastfulness:
Should fortune lift thee, others to depress,
Many are saved by lack of her caress.

THE ARAB AND THE CAMEL

An Arab, having heaped his camel's back,
Asked if he chose to take the upward track
Or downward; and the beast had sense to say
"Am I cut off then from the level way?"

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE SWALLOW

Far from men's fields the swallow forth had flown,
When she espied amid the woodlands lone
The nightingale, sweet songstress. Her lament
Was Itys to his doom untimely sent.
Each knew the other through the mournful strain,
Flew to embrace, and in sweet talk remain.
Then said the swallow, "Dearest, liv'st thou still?
Ne'er have I seen thee, since thy Thracian ill.
Some cruel fate hath ever come between;
Our virgin lives till now apart have been.
Come to the fields; revisit homes of men;
Come dwell with me, a comrade dear, again,
Where thou shalt charm the swains, no savage brood:
Dwell near men's haunts, and quit the open wood:
One roof, one chamber, sure, can house the two,
Or dost prefer the nightly frozen dew,
And day-god's heat? a wild-wood life and drear?
Come, clever songstress, to the light more near."



To whom the sweet-voiced nightingale replied:—
“Still on these lonesome ridges let me bide;
Nor seek to part me from the mountain glen:—
I shun, since Athens, man, and haunts of men;
To mix with them, their dwelling-place to view,
Stirs up old grief, and opens woes anew.”

Some consolation for an evil lot
Lies in wise words, in song, in crowds forgot.
But sore the pang, when, where you once were great,
Again men see you, housed in mean estate.

THE HUSBANDMAN AND THE STORK

Thin nets a farmer o'er his furrows spread,
And caught the cranes that on his tillage fed;
And him a limping stork began to pray,
Who fell with them into the farmer's way:—
“I am no crane: I don't consume the grain:
That I'm a stork is from my color plain;
A stork, than which no better bird doth live;
I to my father aid and

Page 145

succor give.”

The man replied:—“Good stork, I cannot tell
Your way of life: but this I know full well,
I caught you with the spoilers of my seed;
With them, with whom I found you, you must bleed.”

Walk with the bad, and hate will be as strong
'Gainst you as them, e'en though you no man wrong.

THE PINE

Some woodmen, bent a forest pine to split,
Into each fissure sundry wedges fit,
To keep the void and render work more light.
Out groaned the pine, “Why should I vent my spite
Against the axe which never touched my root,
So much as these cursed wedges, mine own fruit;
Which rend me through, inserted here and there!”

A fable this, intended to declare
That not so dreadful is a stranger's blow
As wrongs which men receive from those they know.

THE WOMAN AND HER MAID-SERVANTS

A very careful dame, of busy way,
Kept maids at home, and these, ere break of day,
She used to raise as early as cock-crow.
They thought 'twas hard to be awakened so,
And o'er wool-spinning be at work so long;
Hence grew within them all a purpose strong
To kill the house-cock, whom they thought to blame
For all their wrongs. But no advantage came;
Worse treatment than the former them befell:
For when the hour their mistress could not tell
At which by night the cock was wont to crow,
She roused them earlier, to their work to go.
A harder lot the wretched maids endured.

Bad judgment oft hath such results procured.

THE LAMP

A lamp that swam with oil, began to boast
At eve, that it outshone the starry host,
And gave more light to all. Her boast was heard:
Soon the wind whistled; soon the breezes stirred,
And quenched its light. A man rekindled it,
And said, "Brief is the faint lamp's boasting fit,
But the starlight ne'er needs to be re-lit."

THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE

To the shy hare the tortoise smiling spoke,
When he about her feet began to joke:
"I'll pass thee by, though fleeter than the gale."
"Pooh!" said the hare, "I don't believe thy tale.
Try but one course, and thou my speed shalt know."
"Who'll fix the prize, and whither we shall go?"
Of the fleet-footed hare the tortoise asked.
To whom he answered, "Reynard shall be tasked
With this; that subtle fox, whom thou dost see."
The tortoise then (no hesitater she!)
Kept jogging on, but earliest reached the post;
The hare, relying on his fleetness, lost
Space, during sleep, he thought he could recover
When he awoke. But then the race was over;
The tortoise gained her aim, and slept *her* sleep.

Page 146

From negligence doth care the vantage reap.

FRANCIS BACON

(1561-1626)

BY CHARLTON T. LEWIS

The startling contrasts of splendor and humiliation which marked the life of Bacon, and the seemingly incredible inconsistencies which hasty observers find in his character, have been the themes of much rhetorical declamation, and even of serious and learned debate. From Ben Jonson in his own day, to James Spedding the friend of Tennyson, he has not lacked eminent eulogists, who look up to him as not only the greatest and wisest, but as among the noblest and most worthy of mankind: while the famous epigram of Pope, expanded by Macaulay into a stately and eloquent essay, has impressed on the popular mind the lowest estimate of his moral nature; and even such careful scholars as Charles de Remusat and Dean Church, who have devoted careful and instructive volumes to the survey of Bacon's career and works, insist that with all his intellectual supremacy, he was a servile courtier, a false friend, and a corrupt judge. Yet there are few important names in human history of men who have left us so complete materials for a just judgment of their conduct; and it is only a lover of paradox who can read these and still regard Bacon's character as an unsolved problem.

Mr. Spedding has given a long life of intelligent labor to the collection of every fact and document throwing light upon the motives, aims, and thoughts of the great "Chancellor of Nature," from the cradle to the grave. The results are before us in the seven volumes of 'The Letters and the Life of Francis Bacon,' which form perhaps the most complete biography ever written. It is a book of absolute candor as well as infinite research, giving with equal distinctness all the evidence which makes for its hero's dishonor and that which tends to justify the writer's reverence for him. Another work by Mr. Spedding, 'Evenings with a Reviewer,' in two volumes, is an elaborate refutation, from the original and authentic records, of the most damning charges brought by Lord Macaulay against Bacon's good fame. It is a complete and overwhelming exposure of false coloring, of rhetorical artifices, and of the abuse of evidence, in the famous essay. As one of the most entertaining and instructive pieces of controversy in our literature, it deserves to be widely read. The unbiased reader cannot accept the special pleading by which, in his comments, Spedding makes every failing of Bacon "lean to virtue's side"; but will form upon the unquestioned facts presented a clear conception of him, will come to know him as no other man of an age so remote is known, and will find in his many-sided and magnificent nature a full explanation of the impressions which partial views of it have made upon his worshipers and his detractors.

Page 147

It is only in his maturity, indeed, that we are privileged to enter into his mind and read his heart. But enough is known of the formative period of his life to show us the sources of his weaknesses and of his strength. The child whom high authorities have regarded as endowed with the mightiest intellect of the human race was born at York House, on the Strand, in the third year of Elizabeth's reign, January 22d, 1561. He was the son of the Queen's Lord Keeper of the Seals, Sir Nicholas Bacon, and his second wife Anne, daughter of Sir Anthony Cook, formerly tutor of King Edward VI. Mildred, an elder daughter of the same scholar, was the wife of William Cecil, Lord Burghley, who for the first forty years of her reign was Elizabeth's chief minister. As a child Bacon was a favorite at court, and tradition represents him as something of a pet of the Queen, who called him "my young Lord Keeper." His mother was among the most learned women of an age when, among women of rank, great learning was as common and as highly prized as great beauty; and her influence was a potent intellectual stimulus to the boy, although he revolted in early youth from the narrow creed which her fierce Puritan zeal strove to impose on her household. Outside of the nursery, the atmosphere of his world was that of craft, all directed to one end; for the Queen was the source of honor, power, and wealth, and advancement in life meant only a share in the grace distributed through her ministers and favorites. Apart from the harsh and forbidding religious teachings of his mother, young Francis had before him neither precept nor example of an ambition more worthy than that of courting the smiles of power.

[Illustration: SIR FRANCIS BACON.]

At the age of twelve he entered Trinity College, Cambridge (April, 1573), and left it before he was fifteen (Christmas, 1575); the institution meanwhile having been broken up for more than half a year (August, 1574, to March, 1575) by the plague, so that his intermittent university career summed up less than fourteen months. There is no record of his studies, and the names of his teachers are unknown; for though Bacon in later years called himself a pupil of Whitgift, and his biographers assumed that the relation was direct and personal, yet that great master of Trinity had certainly ended his teaching days before Bacon went to Cambridge, and had entered as Dean of Lincoln on his splendid ecclesiastical career. University life was very different from that of our times. The statutes of Cambridge forbade a student, under penalties, to use in conversation with another any language but Latin, Greek, or Hebrew, unless in his private apartments and in hours of leisure. It was a regular custom at Trinity to bring before the assembled undergraduates every Thursday evening at seven o'clock such junior students as had been detected in breaches of the rules during the week, and to flog them. It would be interesting to know in what languages

Page 148

young Bacon conversed, and what experiences of discipline befell him; but his subsequent achievements at least suggest that Cambridge in the sixteenth century may have afforded more efficient educational influences than our knowledge of its resources and methods can explain. For it is certain that, at an age when our most promising youths are beginning serious study, Bacon's mind was already formed, his habits and modes of research were fixed, the universe of knowledge was an open field before him. Thenceforth he was no man's pupil, but in intellectual independence and solitude he rapidly matured into the supreme scholar of his age.

After registering as a student of law at Gray's Inn, apparently for the purpose of a nominal connection with a profession which might aid his patrons in promoting him at court, Bacon was sent in June, 1576, to France in the train of the British Ambassador, Sir Amyas Paulet; and for nearly three years followed the roving embassy around the great cities of that kingdom. The massacre of St. Bartholomew had taken place four years before, and the boy's recorded observations on the troubled society of France and of Europe show remarkable insight into the character of princes and the sources of political movements. Sir Nicholas had hitherto directed his son's education and associations with the purpose of making him an ornament of the court, and had set aside a fund to provide Francis at the proper time with a handsome estate. But he died suddenly, February 20th, 1579, without giving legal effect to this provision, and the sum designed for the young student was divided equally among the five children, while Francis was excluded from a share in the rest of the family fortune; and was thus called home to England to find himself a poor man.

He made himself a bachelor's home at Gray's Inn, and devoted his energies to the law, with such success that he was soon recognized as one of the most promising members of the profession. In 1584 he entered Parliament for Melcombe Regis in Somersetshire, and two years later sat for Liverpool. During these years the schism between his inner and his outer life continued to widen. Drawing his first breath in the atmosphere of the court, bred in the faith that honor and greatness come from princes' favor, with a native taste for luxury and magnificence which was fostered by delicate health, he steadily looked for advancement through the influence of Burghley and the smiles of the Queen. But Burghley had no sympathy with speculative thought, and distrusted him for his confidences concerning his higher studies, while he probably feared in Bacon a dangerous rival of his own son; so that with expressions of kind interest, he refrained from giving his nephew practical aid. Elizabeth, too, suspected that a young man who knew so many things could not be trusted to know his own business well, and preferred for important professional work others who were lawyers and nothing besides.

Page 149

Thus Bacon appeared to the world as a disappointed and uneasy courtier, struggling to keep up a certain splendor of appearance and associations under a growing load of debt, and servile to a Queen on whose caprice his prospects of a career must depend. His unquestioned power at the bar was exercised only in minor causes; his eloquence and political dexterity found slow recognition in Parliament, where they represented only themselves; and the question whether he would ever be a man of note in the kingdom seemed for twenty-five years to turn upon what the Crown might do for its humble suitor.

Meanwhile this laborious advocate and indefatigable courtier, whose labors at the bar and in attendance upon his great friends were enough to fill the days of two ordinary men, led his real life in secret, unknown to the world, and uncomprehended even by the few in whom he had divined a capacity for great thought, and whom he had selected for his confidants. From his childhood at the university, where he felt the emptiness of the Aristotelian logic, the instrument for attaining truth which traditional learning had consecrated, he had gradually formed the conception of a more fruitful process. He had become convinced that the learning of all past ages was but a poor result of the intellectual capacities and labors which had been employed upon it; that the human mind had never yet been properly used; that the methods hitherto adopted in research were but treadmill work, returning upon itself, or at best could produce but fragmentary and accidental additions to the sum of knowledge. All nature is crammed with truth, he believed, which it concerns man to discover; the intellect of man is constructed for its discovery, and needs but to be purged of errors of every kind, and directed in the most efficient employment of its faculties, to make sure that all the secrets of nature will be revealed, and its powers made tributary to the health, comfort, enjoyment, and progressive improvement of mankind.

This stupendous conception, of a revolution which should transform the world, seems to have taken definite form in Bacon's mind as early as his twenty-fifth year, when he embodied the outline of it in a Latin treatise; which he destroyed in later life, unpublished, as immature, and partly no doubt because he came to recognize in it an unbecoming arrogance of tone, for its title was 'Temporis Partus Maximus' (The Greatest Birth of Time.) But six years later he defines these "vast contemplative ends" in his famous letter to Burghley, asking for preferment which will enable him to prosecute his grand scheme and to employ other minds in aid of it. "For I have taken all knowledge to be my province," he says, "and if I could purge it of two sorts of rovers, whereof the one with frivolous disputations, confutations, and verbosities, the other with blind experiments and auricular traditions and impostures, hath committed so many spoils, I hope I should bring in industrious observations, grounded conclusions, and profitable inventions and discoveries: the best state of that province. This, whether it be curiosity or vain glory, or nature, or (if one take it favorably) *philanthropia* is so fixed in my mind as it cannot be removed."

Page 150

This letter reveals the secret of Bacon's life, and all that we know of him, read in the light of it, forms a consistent and harmonious whole. He was possessed by his vast scheme, for a reformation of the intellectual world, and through it, of the world of human experience, as fully as was ever apostle by his faith. Implicitly believing in his own ability to accomplish it, at least in its grand outlines, and to leave at his death the community of mind at work, by the method and for the purposes which he had defined, with the perfection of all science in full view, he subordinated every other ambition to this; and in seeking and enjoying place, power, and wealth, still regarded them mainly as aids in prosecuting his master purpose, and in introducing it to the world. With this clearly in mind, it is easy to understand his subsequent career. Its external details may be read in any of the score of biographies which writers of all grades of merit and demerit have devoted to him, and there is no space for them here. For our purpose it is necessary to refer only to the principal crises in his public life.

Until the death of Elizabeth, Bacon had no place in the royal service worthy of his abilities as a lawyer. Many who, even in the narrowest professional sense, were far inferior to him, were preferred before him. Yet he obtained a position recognized by all, and second only in legal learning to his lifelong rival and constant adversary, Sir Edward Coke. To-day, it is probable that if the two greatest names in the history of the common law were to be selected by the suffrages of the profession, the great majority would be cast for Coke and Bacon. As a master of the intricacies of precedent and an authority upon the detailed formulas of "the perfection of reason," the former is unrivaled still; but in the comprehensive grasp of the law as a system for the maintenance of social order and the protection of individual rights, Bacon rose far above him. The cherished aim of his professional career was to survey the whole body of the laws of England, to produce a digest of them which should result in a harmonious code, to do away with all that was found obsolete or inconsistent with the principles of the system, and thus to adapt the living, progressive body of the law to the wants of the growing nation. This magnificent plan was beyond the power of any one man, had his life no other task, but he suggested the method and the aim; and while for six generations after these legal giants passed away, the minute, accurate, and profound learning of Coke remained the acknowledged chief storehouse of British traditional jurisprudence, the seventh generation took up the work of revision and reform, and from the time of Bentham and Austin the progress of legal science has been toward codification. The contest between the aggregation of empirical rules and formulated customs which Coke taught as the common law, and the broad, harmonious application of scientific reason to the definition and enforcement of rights, still goes on; but with constant gains on the side of the reformers, all of whom with one consent confess that no general and complete reconstruction of legal doctrine as a science is possible, except upon the lines laid down by Bacon.

Page 151

The most memorable case in which Bacon was employed to represent the Crown during Elizabeth's life was the prosecution of the Earl of Essex for treason. Essex had been Bacon's friend, patron, and benefactor; and as long as the earl remained faithful to the Queen and retained her favor, Bacon served him with ready zeal and splendid efficiency, and showed himself the wisest and most sincere of counselors. When Essex rejected his advice, forfeited the Queen's confidence by the follies from which Bacon had earnestly striven to deter him, and finally plunged into wanton and reckless rebellion, Bacon, with whom loyalty to his sovereign had always been the supreme duty, accepted a retainer from the Crown, and assisted Coke in the prosecution. The crime of Essex was the greatest of which a subject was capable; it lacked no circumstance of aggravation; if the most astounding instance of ingratitude and disloyalty to friendship ever known is to be sought in that age, it will be found in the conduct of Essex to Bacon's royal mistress. Yet writers of eloquence have exhausted their rhetorical powers in denouncing Bacon's faithlessness to his friend. But no impartial reader of the full story in the documents of the time can doubt that throughout these events Bacon did his duty and no more, and that in doing it he not merely made a voluntary sacrifice of his popularity, but a far more painful sacrifice of his personal feelings.

In 1603 James I. came to the throne, and in spite of the efforts of his most trusted ministers to keep Bacon in obscurity, soon discovered in him a man whom he needed. In 1607 he was made Solicitor-General; in 1613 Attorney-General; in March 1617, on the death of Lord Ellesmere, he received the seals as Lord Keeper; and in January following was made Lord Chancellor of England. In July 1618 he was raised to the permanent peerage as Baron Verulam, and in January 1621 received the title of Viscount St. Albans. During these three years he was the first subject in the kingdom in dignity, and ought to have been the first in influence. His advice to the King, and to the Duke of Buckingham who was the King's king, was always judicious. In certain cardinal points of policy, it was of the highest statesmanship; and had it been followed, the history of the Stuart dynasty would have been different, and the Crown and the Parliament would have wrought together for the good and the honor of the nation, at least through a generation to come. But the upstart Buckingham was supreme. He had studied Bacon's strength and weakness, had laid him under great obligations, had at the same time attached him by the strongest tie of friendship to his person, and impressed upon his consciousness the fact that the fate of Bacon was at all times in his hands. The new Chancellor had entered on his great office with a fixed purpose to reform its abuses, to speed and cheapen justice, to free its administration from every influence of wealth and power. In the first three months of

Page 152

service he brought up the large arrears of business, tried every cause, heard every petition, and acquired a splendid reputation as an upright and diligent judge. But Buckingham was his evil angel. He was without sense of the sanctity of the judicial character; and regarded the bench, like every other public office, as an instrument of his own interests and will. On the other hand, to Bacon the voice of Buckingham was the voice of the King, and he had been taught from infancy as the beginning of his political creed that the king can do no wrong. Buckingham began at once to solicit from Bacon favors for his friends and dependants, and the Chancellor was weak enough to listen and to answer him. There is no evidence that in any one instance the favorite asked for the violation of law or the perversion of justice; much less that Bacon would or did accede to such a request. But the Duke demanded for one suitor a speedy hearing, for another a consideration of facts which might not be in evidence, for a third all the favor consistent with law; and Bacon reported to him the result, and how far he had been able to oblige him. This persistent tampering with the source of justice was a disturbing influence in the Chancellor's court, and unquestionably lowered the dignity of his attitude and weakened his judicial conscience.

Notwithstanding this, when the Lord Chancellor opened the Parliament in January, 1621, with a speech in praise of his King and in honor of the nation, he seemed to be at the summit of earthly prosperity. No voice had been lifted to question his purity and worth. He was the friend of the King, one of the chief supports of the throne, a champion indeed of high prerogative, but an orator of power, a writer of fame, whose advancement to the highest dignities had been welcomed by public opinion. Four months later he was a convicted criminal, sentenced for judicial corruption to imprisonment at the King's pleasure, to a fine of £40,000, and to perpetual incapacity for any public employment. Vicissitudes of fortune are commonplaces of history. Many a man once seemingly pinnacled on the top of greatness has "shot from the zenith like a falling star," and become a proverb of the fickleness of fate. Some are torn down by the very traits of mind, passion, or temper, which have raised them: ambition which overleaps itself, rashness which hazards all on chances it cannot control, vast abilities not great enough to achieve the impossible. The plunge of Icarus into the sea, the murder of Caesar, the imprisonment of Coeur de Lion, the abdication of Napoleon, the apprehension as a criminal of Jefferson Davis, each was a startling and impressive contrast to the glory which it followed, yet each was the natural result of causes which lay in the character and life of the sufferer, and made his story a consistent whole. But the pathos of Bacon's fall is the sudden moral ruin of a life which had been built up in honor for sixty years.

Page 153

An intellect of the first rank, which from boyhood to old age had been steadfast in the pursuit of truth and in the noblest services to mankind, which in a feeble body had been sustained in vigor by all the virtues of prudence and self-reverence; a genial nature, winning the affection and admiration of associates, hardly paralleled in the industry with which its energies were devoted to useful work, a soul exceptional among its contemporaries for piety and philanthropy—this man is represented to us by popular writers as having habitually sold justice for money, and as having become in office “the meanest of mankind.”

But this picture, as so often drawn, and as seemingly fixed in the popular mind, is not only impossible, but is demonstrably false. To review all the facts which correct it in detail would lead us far beyond our limits. It must suffice to refer to the great work of Spedding, in which the entire records of the case are found, and which would long ago have made the world just to Bacon’s fame, but that the author’s comment on his own complete and fair record is itself partial and extravagant. But the materials for a final judgment are accessible to all in Spedding’s volumes, and a candid reading of them solves the enigma. Bacon was condemned without a trial, on his own confession, and this confession was consistent with the tenor of his life. Its substance was that he had failed to put a stop effectually to the immemorial custom in his court of receiving presents from suitors, but that he had never deviated from justice in his decrees. There was no instance in which he was accused of yielding to the influence of gifts, or passing judgment for a bribe. No act of his as Chancellor was impeached as illegal, or reversed as corrupt. Suitors complained that they had sent sums of money or valuable presents to his court, and had been disappointed in the result; but no one complained of injustice in a decision. Bacon was a conspicuous member of the royal party; and when the storm of popular fury broke in Parliament upon the court, the King and the ministry abandoned him. He had stood all his life upon the royal favor as the basis of his strength and hope; and when it was gone from under him, he sank helplessly, and refused to attempt a defense. But he still in his humiliation found comfort in the reflection that his ruin would put an end to “anything that is in the likeness of corruption” among the judges. And he wrote, in the hour of his deepest distress, that he had been “the justest Chancellor that hath been in the five changes that have been since Sir Nicholas Bacon’s time.” Nor did any man of his time venture to contradict him, when in later years he summed up his case in the words, “I was the justest judge that was in England these fifty years. But it was the justest censure in Parliament that was these two hundred years.”

Page 154

No revolution of modern times has been more complete than that which the last two centuries have silently wrought in the customary morality of British public life, and in the standards by which it is judged. Under James I. every office of state was held as the private property of its occupant. The highest places in the government were conferred only on condition of large payments to the King. He openly sold the honors and dignities of which he was the source. "The making of a baron," that is, the right to sell to some rich plebeian a patent of nobility, was a common grant to favorites, and was actually bestowed on Bacon, to aid him in maintaining the state of his office. We have the testimony of James himself that all the lawyers, of whom the judges of the realm were made, were "so bred and nursed in corruption that they cannot leave it." But the line between what the King called corruption and that which he and all his ministers practiced openly and habitually, as part of the regular work of government, is dim and hard to define. The mind of the community had not yet firmly grasped the conception of public office as a trust for the public good, and the general opinion which stimulates and sustains the official conscience in holding this trust sacred was still unformed. The courts of justice were the first branch of the government to feel the pressure of public opinion, and to respond to the demand for impersonal and impartial right. But this process had only begun when Bacon, who had never before served as judge, was called to preside in Chancery. The Chancellor's office was a gradual development: originally political and administrative rather than judicial, and with no salary or reward for hearing causes, save the voluntary presents of suitors who asked its interference with the ordinary courts, it step by step became the highest tribunal of the equity which limits and corrects the routine of law, and still the custom of gifts was unchecked. A careful study of Bacon's career shows that in this, as every other branch of thought, his theoretic convictions were in advance of his age; and in his advice to the King and in his inaugural promises as Chancellor, he foreshadows all the principles on which the wisest reformers of the public service now insist. But he failed to apply them with that heroic self-sacrifice which alone would have availed him, and the forces of custom and example continually encroached upon his views of duty. Having through a long life sought advancement and wealth for the purpose of using leisure and independence to carry out his beneficent plans on the largest scale, he eagerly accepted the traditional emoluments of his new position, in the conviction that they would become in his hands the means of vast good to mankind. It was only the public exposure which fully awakened him to a sense of the inconsistency and wrong of his conduct; and then he was himself his severest judge, and made every reparation in his power, by the most unreserved confession, by pointing out the danger to society of such weakness as his own in language to whose effectiveness nothing could be added, and by devoting the remainder of his life to the noblest work for humanity.

Page 155

During the years of Bacon's splendor as a member of the government and as spokesman for the throne, his real life as a thinker, inspired by the loftiest ambition which ever entered the mind of man, that of creating a new and better civilization, was not interrupted. It was probably in 1603 that he wrote his fragmentary 'Prooemium de Interpretatione Naturae,' or 'Preface to a Treatise on Interpreting Nature,' which is the only piece of autobiography he has left us. It was found among his papers after his death; and its candor, dignity, and enthusiasm of tone are in harmony with the imaginative grasp and magnificent suggestiveness of its thought. Commending the original Latin to all who can appreciate its eloquence, we cite the first sentences of it in English:—

"Believing that I was born for the service of mankind, and regarding the care of the Commonwealth as a kind of common property which, like the air and water, belongs to everybody, I set myself to consider in what way mankind might be best served, and what service I was myself best fitted by nature to perform." "Now, among all the benefits that could be conferred upon mankind, I found none so great as the discovery of new arts for the bettering of human life. For I saw that among the rude people of early times, inventors and discoverers were reckoned as gods. It was seen that the works of founders of States, law-givers, tyrant-destroyers, and heroes cover but narrow spaces and endure but for a time; while the work of the inventor, though of less pomp, is felt everywhere and lasts forever. But above all, if a man could, I do not say devise some invention, however useful, but kindle a light in nature—a light which, even in rising, should touch and illuminate the borders of existing knowledge, and spreading further on should bring to light all that is most secret—that man, in my view, would be indeed the benefactor of mankind, the extender of man's empire over nature, the champion of freedom, the conqueror of fate." "For myself, I found that I was fitted for nothing so well as for the study of Truth: as having a mind nimble and versatile enough to discern resemblances in things (the main point), and yet steady enough to distinguish the subtle differences in them; as being endowed with zeal to seek, patience to doubt, love of meditation, slowness of assertion, readiness to reconsider, carefulness to arrange and set in order; and as being a man that affects not the new nor admires the old, but hates all imposture. So I thought my nature had a certain familiarity and kindred with Truth."

During the next two years he applied himself to the composition of the treatise on the 'Advancement of Learning,' the greatest of his English writings, and one which contains the seed-thoughts and outline principles of all his philosophy. From the time of its publication in 1605 to his fall in 1621, he continued to frame the plan of his 'Great Instauration'

Page 156

of human knowledge, and to write out chapters, books, passages, sketches, designed to take their places in it as essential parts. It was to include six great divisions: first, a general survey of existing knowledge; second, a guide to the use of the intellect in research, purging it of sources of error, and furnishing it with the new instrument of inductive logic by which all the laws of nature might be ascertained; third, a structure of the phenomena of nature, included in one hundred and thirty particular branches of natural history, as the materials for the new logic; fourth, a series of types and models of the entire mental process of discovering truth, "selecting various and remarkable instances"; fifth, specimens of the new philosophy, or anticipations of its results, in fragmentary contributions to the sixth and crowning division, which was to set forth the new philosophy in its completeness, comprehending the truths to be discovered by a perfected instrument of reasoning, in interpreting all the phenomena of the world. Well aware that the scheme, especially in its concluding part, was far beyond the power and time of any one man, he yet hoped to be the architect of the final edifice of science, by drawing its plans and making them intelligible, leaving their perfect execution to an intellectual world which could not fail to be moved to its supreme effort by a comprehension of the work before it. The 'Novum Organum,' itself but a fragment of the second division of the 'Instauration,' the key to the use of the intellect in the discovery of truth, was published in Latin at the height of his splendor as Lord Chancellor, in 1620, and is his most memorable achievement in philosophy. It contains a multitude of suggestive thoughts on the whole field of science, but is mainly the exposition of the fallacies by which the intellect is deceived and misled, and from which it must be purged in order to attain final truth, and of the new doctrine of "prerogative instances," or crucial observations and experiments in the work of discovery.

In short, Bacon's entire achievement in science is a plan for an impossible universe of knowledge. As far as he attempted to advance particular sciences by applying his method to their detailed phenomena, he wrought with imperfect knowledge of what had been done, and with cumbrous and usually misdirected efforts to fill the gaps he recognized. In a few instances, by what seems an almost superhuman instinct for truth, rather than the laborious process of investigation which he taught, he anticipated brilliant discoveries of later centuries. For example, he clearly pointed out the necessity of regarding heat as a form of motion in the molecules of matter, and thus foreshadowed, without any conception of the means of proving it, that which, for investigators of the nineteenth century, has proved the most direct way to the secrets of nature. But the testimony of the great teachers of science is unanimous, that Bacon was not a skilled observer

Page 157

of phenomena, nor a discoverer of scientific inductions; that he contributed no important new truth, in the sense of an established law, to any department of knowledge; and that his method of research and reasoning is not, in its essential features, that which is fruitfully pursued by them in extending the boundaries of science, nor was his mind wholly purged of those “idols of the cave,” or forms of personal bias, whose varying forms as hindrances to the “dry light” of sound reason he was the first to expose. He never appreciated the mathematics as the basis of physics, but valued their elements mainly as a mental discipline. Astronomy meant little to him, since he failed to connect it directly with human well-being and improvement; to the system of Copernicus, the beginning of our insight into the heavens, he was hostile, or at least indifferent; and the splendid discoveries successively made by Tycho Brahe, Galileo, and Kepler, and brought to his ears while the ‘Great Instauration’ filled his mind and heart, met with but a feeble welcome with him, or none. Why is it, then, that Bacon’s is the foremost name in the history of English, and perhaps, as many insist, of all modern thought? Why is it that “the Baconian philosophy” is another phrase, in all the languages of Europe, for that splendid development of the study and knowledge of the visible universe which since his time has changed the life of mankind?

A candid answer to these questions will expose an error as wide in the popular estimate of Bacon’s intellectual greatness as that which has prevailed so generally regarding his character. He is called the inventor of inductive reasoning, the reformer of logic, the lawgiver of the world of thought; but he was no one of these. His grasp of the inductive method was defective; his logic was clumsy and impractical; his plan for registering all phenomena and selecting and generalizing from them, making the discovery of truth almost a mechanical process, was worthless. In short, it is not as a philosopher nor as a man of science that Bacon has carved his name in the high places of enduring fame, but rather as a man of letters; as on the whole the greatest writer of the modern world, outside of the province of imaginative art; as the Shakespeare of English prose. Does this seem a paradox to the reader who remembers that Bacon distrusted all modern languages, and thought to make his ‘Advancement of Learning’ “live, and be a citizen of the world,” by giving it a Latin form? That his lifelong ambition was to reconstruct methods of thought, and guide intellect in the way of work serviceable to comfort and happiness? That the books in which his English style appears in its perfection, the ‘History of Henry VII.,’ the ‘Essays,’ and the papers on public affairs, were but incidents and avocations of a life absorbed by a master purpose?

Page 158

But what is literature? It is creative mind, addressing itself in worthy expression to the common receptive mind of mankind. Its note is universality, as distinguished from all that is technical, limited, and narrow. Thought whose interest is as broad as humanity, suitably clothed in the language of real life, and thus fitted for access to the general intelligence, constitutes true literature, to the exclusion of that which, by its nature or by its expression, appeals only to a special class or school. The 'Opus Anglicanum' of Duns Scotus, Newton's 'Principia,' Lavoisier's treatise 'Sur la Combustion,' Kant's 'Kritik der Reinen Vernunft' (Critique of Pure Reason), each made an epoch in some vast domain of knowledge or belief; but none of them is literature. Yet the thoughts they, through a limited and specially trained class of students, introduced to the world, were gradually taken up into the common stock of mankind, and found their broad, effective, complete expression in the literature of after generations. If we apply this test to Bacon's life work, we shall find sufficient justification for honoring him above all special workers in narrower fields, as next to Shakespeare the greatest name in the greatest period of English literature.

It was not as an experimenter, investigator, or technical teacher, but as a thinker and a writer, that he rendered his great service to the world. This consisted essentially in the contribution of two magnificent ideas to the common stock of thought: the idea of the utility of science, as able to subjugate the forces of nature to the use of man; and the idea of continued and boundless progress in the comfort and happiness of the individual life, and in the order and dignity of human society. It has been shown how, from early manhood, he was inspired by the conception of infinite resources in the material world, for the discovery and employment of which the human mind is adapted. He never wearied of pointing out the imperfection and fruitlessness of the methods of inquiry and of invention hitherto in use, and the splendid results which could be rapidly attained if a combined and systematic effort were made to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge. This led him directly to the conception of an improved and advancing civilization; to the utterance, in a thousand varied, impressive, and fascinating forms, of that idea of human progress which is the inspiration, the characteristic, and the hope of the modern world. Bacon was the first of men to grasp these ideas in all their comprehensiveness as feasible purposes, as practical aims; to teach the development of them as the supreme duty and ambition of his contemporaries, and to look forward instead of behind him for the Golden Age. Enforcing and applying these thoughts with a wealth of learning, a keenness of wit, a soundness of judgment, and a suggestiveness of illustration unequalled by any writer before him, he became the greatest literary power of modern times to stimulate minds in every department of life to their noblest efforts and their worthiest achievements.

Page 159

Literature has a twofold aspect: its ideal is pure truth, which is the noblest thought embodied in perfect beauty of form. It is the union of science and art, the final wedding in which are merged the knowledge worthy to be known and the highest imagination presenting it. There is a school calling itself that of pure art, to which substance is nothing and form is everything. Its measure of merit is applied to the manner only; and the meanest of subjects, the most trivial and even the most degraded of ideas or facts, is welcomed to its high places if clothed in a satisfying garb. But this school, though arrogant in the other arts of expression, has not yet been welcomed to the judgment-seat in literature, where indeed it is passing even now to contempt and oblivion. Bacon's instinct was for substance. His strongest passion was for utility. The artistic side of his nature was receptive rather than creative. Splendid passages in the 'Advancement' and 'De Augmentis' show his profound appreciation of all the arts of expression, but show likewise his inability to glorify them above that which they express. In his mind, language is subordinate to thought, and the painting to the picture, just as the frame is to the painting or the binding to the book. He writes always in the grand style. He reminds us of "the large utterance of the early gods." His sentences are weighted with thought, as suggestive as Plato, as condensed as Thucydides. Full of wit, keen in discerning analogies, rich in intellectual ornament, he is yet too concentrated in his attention to the idea to care for the melody of language. He decorates with fruits, not with flowers. For metrical movement, for rhythmic harmony, he has no ear nor sense. Inconceivable as it is that Shakespeare could have written one aphorism of the 'Novum Organum,' it would be far more absurd to imagine Bacon writing a line of the Sonnets. With the loftiest imagination, the liveliest fancy, the keenest sense of precision and appropriateness in words, he lacks the special gift of poetic form, the faculty divine which finds new inspiration in the very limitations of measured language, and whose natural expression is music alike to the ear and to the mind. His powers were cramped by the fetters of metre, and his attempts to versify even rich thought and deep feeling were puerile. But his prose is by far the weightiest, the most lucid, effective, and pleasing of his day. The poet Sprat justly says:—

"He was a man of strong, clear, and powerful imaginations; his genius was searching and inimitable; and of this I need give no other proof than his style itself, which as for the most part it describes men's minds as well as pictures do their bodies, so it did his above all men living."

And Ben Jonson, who knew him well, describes his eloquence in terms which are confirmed by all we know of his Parliamentary career:—

Page 160

“One, though he be excellent and the chief, is not to be imitated alone; for no imitator ever grew up to his author: likeness is always on this side truth. Yet there happened in my time one noble speaker, who was full of gravity in his speaking. His language (when he could spare or pass by a jest) was nobly censorious. No man ever spake more neatly, more rightly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough or look aside from him without loss. He commanded when he spoke, and had his judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end.”

The speeches of Bacon are almost wholly lost, his philosophy is an undeciphered heap of fragments, the ambitions of his life lay in ruins about his dishonored old age; yet his intellect is one of the great moving and still vital forces of the modern world, and he remains, for all ages to come, in the literature which is the final storehouse of the chief treasures of mankind, one of

“The dead yet sceptered sovereigns who still rule
Our spirits from their urns.”

OF TRUTH

From the ‘Essays’

What is Truth? said jesting Pilate; and would not stay for an answer. Certainly there be that delight in giddiness; and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting free-will in thinking, as well as in acting. And though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing wits, which are of the same veins, though there be not so much blood in them as was in those of the ancients. But it is not only the difficulty and labor which men take in finding out of truth, nor again, that when it is found it imposeth upon men’s thoughts, that doth bring lies in favor: but a natural though corrupt love of the lie itself. One of the later school of the Grecians examineth the matter, and is at a stand to think what should be in it, that men should love lies, where neither they make for pleasure as with poets, nor for advantage as with the merchant; but for the lie’s sake. But I cannot tell: this same truth is a naked and open daylight, that doth not show the masks and mummeries and triumphs of the world half so stately and daintily as candle-lights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a pearl, that showeth best by day; but it will not rise to the price of a diamond or carbuncle, that showeth best in varied lights. A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt, that if there were taken out of men’s minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves? One of the fathers, in great severity,



Page 161

called poesy *vinum doemonum*, because it filleth the imagination, and yet it is but with the shadow of a lie. But it is not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie that sinketh in and settleth in it, that doth the hurt; such as we spake of before. But howsoever these things are thus in men's depraved judgments and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth that the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making or wooing of it, the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it, and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it, is the sovereign good of human nature. The first creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense; the last was the light of reason; and his Sabbath work ever since is the illumination of his Spirit.... The poet that beautified the sect that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well:—"It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed upon the sea; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle and the adventures thereof below; but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of Truth" (a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene). "and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below:" so always that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling or pride. Certainly, it is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.

To pass from theological and philosophical truth to the truth of civil business: it will be acknowledged even by those that practice it not, that clear and round dealing is the honor of man's nature, and that mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it. For these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent; which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet. There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious; and therefore Montaigne saith prettily, when he inquired the reason why the word of the lie should be such a disgrace and such an odious charge. Saith he, "If it be well weighed, to say that a man lieth, is as much as to say that he is brave toward God and a coward toward men." For a lie faces God, and shrinks from man. Surely the wickedness of falsehood and breach of faith cannot possibly be so highly expressed, as in that it shall be the last peal to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men; it being foretold, that when Christ cometh, "he shall not find faith upon the earth."

OF REVENGE

From the 'Essays'

Page 162

Revenge is a kind of wild justice; which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out. For as for the first wrong, it doth but offend the law; but the revenge of that wrong putteth the law out of office. Certainly, in taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; but in passing it over, he is superior: for it is a prince's part to pardon, and Solomon, I am sure, saith, "It is the glory of a man to pass by an offense." That which is past is gone and irrevocable, and wise men have enough to do with things present and to come; therefore, they do but trifle with themselves that labor in past matters. There is no man doth a wrong for the wrong's sake; but thereby to purchase himself profit, or pleasure, or honor, or the like. Therefore, why should I be angry with a man for loving himself better than me? And if any man should do wrong merely out of ill-nature, why yet it is but like the thorn or brier, which prick and scratch because they can do no other. The most tolerable sort of revenge is for those wrongs which there is no law to remedy; but then, let a man take heed the revenge be such as there is no law to punish, else a man's enemy is still beforehand, and it is two for one. Some, when they take revenge, are desirous the party should know whence it cometh. This is the more generous; for the delight seemeth to be not so much in doing the hurt as in making the party repent. But base and crafty cowards are like the arrow that flieth in the dark. Cosmus, Duke of Florence, had a desperate saying against perfidious or neglecting friends, as if those wrongs were unpardonable. "You shall read," saith he, "that we are commanded to forgive our enemies; but you never read that we are commanded to forgive our friends." But yet the spirit of Job was in a better tune: "Shall we," saith he, "take good at God's hands, and not be content to take evil also?" And so of friends in a proportion. This is certain, that a man that studieth revenge keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal and do well. Public revenges are for the most part fortunate: as that for the death of Caesar; for the death of Pertinax; for the death of Henry the Third of France; and many more. But in private revenges it is not so. Nay, rather vindictive persons live the life of witches; who, as they are mischievous, so end they infortunate.

OF SIMULATION AND DISSIMULATION

From the 'Essays'

Dissimulation is but a faint kind of policy or wisdom; for it asketh a strong wit and a strong heart to know when to tell truth, and to do it. Therefore it is the weaker sort of politicians that are the great dissemblers.

Page 163

Tacitus saith, "Livia sorted well with the arts of her husband and dissimulation of her son;" attributing arts of policy to Augustus, and dissimulation to Tiberius. And again, when Mucianus encourageth Vespasian to take arms against Vitellius, he saith, "We rise not against the piercing judgment of Augustus, nor the extreme caution or closeness of Tiberius." These properties of arts or policy, and dissimulation or closeness, are indeed habits and faculties several, and to be distinguished. For if a man have that penetration of judgment as he can discern what things are to be laid open, and what to be secreted, and what to be showed at half-lights, and to whom and when, (which indeed are arts of state and arts of life, as Tacitus well calleth them,) to him a habit of dissimulation is a hindrance and a poorness. But if a man cannot obtain to that judgment, then it is left to him generally to be close, and a dissembler. For where a man cannot choose or vary in particulars, there it is good to take the safest and wariest way in general; like the going softly, by one that cannot well see. Certainly the ablest men that ever were, have had all an openness and frankness of dealing, and a name of certainty and veracity: but then they were like horses well managed, for they could tell passing well when to stop or turn; and at such times when they thought the case indeed required dissimulation, if then they used it, it came to pass that the former opinion spread abroad of their good faith and clearness of dealing made them almost invisible.

There be three degrees of this hiding and veiling of a man's self. The first, Closeness, Reservation, and Secrecy; when a man leaveth himself without observation, or without hold to be taken, what he is. The second, Dissimulation, in the negative; when a man lets fall signs and arguments, that he is not that he is. And the third, Simulation, in the affirmative; when a man industriously and expressly feigns and pretends to be that he is not.

For the first of these, Secrecy: it is indeed the virtue of a confessor. And assuredly the secret man heareth many confessions; for who will open himself to a blab or a babler? But if a man be thought secret, it inviteth discovery, as the more close air sucketh in the more open; and as in confession the revealing is not for worldly use, but for the ease of a man's heart, so secret men come to the knowledge of many things in that kind: while men rather discharge their minds than impart their minds. In few words, mysteries are due to secrecy. Besides (to say truth), nakedness is uncomely, as well in mind as body; and it addeth no small reverence to men's manners and actions, if they be not altogether open. As for talkers and futile persons, they are commonly vain and credulous withal; for he that talketh what he knoweth, will also talk what he knoweth not. Therefore set it down, that a habit of secrecy is both politic and moral. And in this part it is good that a man's face give his tongue leave to speak; for the discovery of a man's self by the tracts of his countenance is a great weakness and betraying, by how much it is many times more marked and believed than a man's words.

Page 164

For the second, which is Dissimulation: it followeth many times upon secrecy by a necessity; so that he that will be secret must be a dissembler in some degree. For men are too cunning to suffer a man to keep an indifferent carriage between both, and to be secret, without swaying the balance on either side. They will so beset a man with questions, and draw him on, and pick it out of him, that without an absurd silence, he must show an inclination one way; or if he do not, they will gather as much by his silence as by his speech. As for equivocations, or oraculous speeches, they cannot hold out long. So that no man can be secret, except he give himself a little scope of dissimulation; which is, as it were, but the skirts or train of secrecy.

But for the third degree, which is Simulation and false profession: that I hold more culpable and less politic, except it be in great and rare matters. And therefore a general custom of simulation (which is this last degree) is a vice rising either of a natural falseness or fearfulness, or of a mind that hath some main faults; which because a man must needs disguise, it maketh him practice simulation in other things, lest his hand should be out of use.

The great advantages of simulation and dissimulation are three. First, to lay asleep opposition, and to surprise; for where a man's intentions are published, it is an alarum to call up all that are against them. The second is, to reserve to a man's self a fair retreat; for if a man engage himself by a manifest declaration, he must go through or take a fall. The third is, the better to discover the mind of another; for to him that opens himself men will hardly show themselves adverse, but will fair let him go on, and turn their freedom of speech to freedom of thought. And therefore it is a good shrewd proverb of the Spaniard, "Tell a lie and find a troth;" as if there were no way of discovery but by simulation. There be also three disadvantages to set it even. The first, that simulation and dissimulation commonly carry with them a show of fearfulness; which in any business doth spoil the feathers of round flying up to the mark. The second, that it puzzleth and perplexeth the conceits of many that perhaps would otherwise co-operate with him, and makes a man walk almost alone to his own ends. The third and greatest is, that it depriveth a man of one of the most principal instruments for action; which is trust and belief. The best composition and temperature is, to have openness in fame and opinion; secrecy in habit; dissimulation in seasonable use; and a power to feign if there be no remedy.

OF TRAVEL

From the 'Essays'

Page 165

Travel, in the younger sort, is a part of education; in the elder, a part of experience. He that traveleth into a country before he hath some entrance into the language, goeth to school, and not to travel. That young men travel under some tutor or grave servant, I allow well: so that he be such a one that hath the language, and hath been in the country before; whereby he may be able to tell them what things are worthy to be seen in the country where they go, what acquaintances they are to seek, what exercises or discipline the place yielded. For else young men shall go hooded, and look abroad little. It is a strange thing, that in sea voyages, where there is nothing to be seen but sky and sea, men should make diaries; but in land travel, wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it; as if chance were fitter to be registered than observation. Let diaries therefore be brought in use. The things to be seen and observed are, the courts of princes, specially when they give audience to ambassadors; the courts of justice, while they sit and hear causes; and so of consistories ecclesiastic; the churches and monasteries, with the monuments which are therein extant; the walls and fortifications of cities and towns, and so the havens and harbors; antiquities and ruins; libraries; colleges, disputations, and lectures, where any are; shipping and navies; houses and gardens of state and pleasure, near great cities; armories; arsenals; magazines; exchanges; burses; warehouses; exercises of horsemanship, fencing, training of soldiers, and the like; comedies, such whereunto the better sort of persons do resort; treasures of jewels and robes; cabinets and rarities: and, to conclude, whatsoever is memorable in the places where they go. After all which the tutors or servants ought to make diligent inquiry. As for triumphs, masks, feasts, weddings, funerals, capital executions, and such shows, men need not to be put in mind of them: yet are they not to be neglected. If you will have a young man to put his travel into a little room, and in short time to gather much, this you must do. First, as was said, he must have some entrance into the language before he goeth. Then he must have such a servant or tutor as knoweth the country, as was likewise said. Let him carry with him also some card or book, describing the country where he traveleth, which will be a good key to his inquiry. Let him keep also a diary. Let him not stay long in one city or town; more or less as the place deserveth, but not long: nay, when he stayeth in one city or town, let him change his lodging from one end and part of the town to another; which is a great adamant of acquaintance. Let him sequester himself from the company of his countrymen, and diet in such places where there is good company of the nation where he traveleth. Let him upon his removes from one place to another, procure recommendation to some person of quality residing in the place whither he removeth; that he may use his favor in those things he desireth to see or know. Thus he may abridge his travel with much profit.

Page 166

As for the acquaintance which is to be sought in travel: that which is most of all profitable, is acquaintance with the secretaries and employed men of ambassadors; for so in traveling in one country he shall suck the experience of many. Let him also see and visit eminent persons in all kinds, which are of great name abroad; that he may be able to tell how the life agreeth with the fame. For quarrels, they are with care and discretion to be avoided. They are commonly for mistresses, healths, place, and words. And let a man beware how he keepeth company with choleric and quarrelsome persons; for they will engage him into their own quarrels. When a traveler returneth home, let him not leave the countries where he hath traveled altogether behind him, but maintain a correspondence by letters with those of his acquaintance which are of most worth. And let his travel appear rather in his discourse than in his apparel or gesture; and in his discourse let him be rather advised in his answers, than forward to tell stories; and let it appear that he doth not change his country manners for those of foreign parts; but only prick in some flowers of that he hath learned abroad into the customs of his own country.

OF FRIENDSHIP

From the 'Essays'

It had been hard for him that spake it to have put more truth and untruth together in few words than in that speech, "Whosoever is delighted in solitude is either a wild beast or a god." For it is most true that a natural and secret hatred and aversion toward society in any man hath somewhat of the savage beast; but it is most untrue that it should have any character at all of the divine nature, except it proceed, not out of a pleasure in solitude, but out of a love and desire to sequester a man's self for a higher conversation: such as is found to have been falsely and feignedly in some of the heathen, as Epimenides the Candian, Numa the Roman, Empedocles the Sicilian, and Apollonius of Tyana; and truly and really in divers of the ancient hermits and holy fathers of the Church. But little do men perceive what solitude is, and how far it extendeth. For a crowd is not company; and faces are but a gallery of pictures; and talk but a tinkling cymbal, where there is no love. The Latin adage meeteth with it a little: "Magna civitas, magna solitudo;" because in a great town friends are scattered, so that there is not that fellowship, for the most part, which is in less neighborhoods. But we may go further, and affirm most truly that it is a mere and miserable solitude to want true friends, without which the world is but a wilderness; and even in this sense also of solitude, whosoever in the frame of his nature and affections is unfit for friendship, he taketh it of the beast, and not from humanity.

Page 167

A principal fruit of friendship is the ease and discharge of the fullness and swellings of the heart, which passions of all kinds do cause and induce. We know diseases of stoppings and suffocations are the most dangerous in the body; and it is not much otherwise in the mind. You may take sarza to open the liver, steel to open the spleen, flower of sulphur for the lungs, castoreum for the brain: but no receipt openeth the heart but a true friend; to whom you may impart griefs, joys, fears, hopes, suspicions, counsels, and whatsoever lieth upon the heart to oppress it, in a kind of civil shrift or confession.

It is a strange thing to observe how high a rate great kings and monarchs do set upon this fruit of friendship whereof we speak; so great, as they purchase it many times at the hazard of their own safety and greatness. For princes, in regard of the distance of their fortune from that of their subjects and servants, cannot gather this fruit, except (to make themselves capable thereof) they raise some persons to be as it were companions and almost equals to themselves; which many times sorteth to inconvenience. The modern languages give unto such persons the name of favorites, or privadoes; as if it were matter of grace or conversation. But the Roman name attaineth the true use and cause thereof, naming them “*participes curarum*”; for it is that which tieth the knot. And we see plainly that this hath been done, not by weak and passionate princes only, but by the wisest and most politic that ever reigned; who have oftentimes joined to themselves some of their servants, whom both themselves have called friends, and allowed others likewise to call them in the same manner, using the word which is received between private men.

L. Sylla, when he commanded Rome, raised Pompey (after surnamed the Great) to that height that Pompey vaunted himself for Sylla’s overmatch. For when he had carried the consulship for a friend of his against the pursuit of Sylla, and that Sylla did a little resent thereat, and began to speak great, Pompey turned upon him again, and in effect bade him be quiet; “for that more men adored the sun rising than the sun setting.” With Julius Caesar, Decimus Brutus had obtained that interest, as he set him down in his testament for heir in remainder after his nephew; and this was the man that had power with him to draw him forth to his death. For when Caesar would have discharged the Senate in regard of some ill presages, and specially a dream of Calpurnia, this man lifted him gently by the arm out of his chair, telling him he hoped he would not dismiss the Senate till his wife had dreamt a better dream. And it seemeth his favor was so great as Antonius, in a letter which is recited verbatim in one of Cicero’s Philippics, calleth him “*venefica*”—“witch”; as if he had enchanted Caesar. Augustus raised Agrippa (though of mean birth) to that height as, when he consulted with Maecenas about the marriage

Page 168

of his daughter Julia, Maecenas took the liberty to tell him, “that he must either marry his daughter to Agrippa or take away his life: there was no third way, he had made him so great.” With Tiberius Caesar, Sejanus had ascended to that height as they two were termed and reckoned as a pair of friends. Tiberius in a letter to him saith, “Haec pro amicitia nostra non occultavi” [these things, from our friendship, I have not concealed from you]; and the whole Senate dedicated an altar to Friendship, as to a goddess, in respect of the great dearness of friendship between them two. The like, or more, was between Septimius Severus and Plautianus. For he forced his eldest son to marry the daughter of Plautianus; and would often maintain Plautianus in doing affronts to his son; and did write also, in a letter to the Senate, by these words: “I love the man so well, as I wish he may over-live me.” Now, if these princes had been as a Trajan or a Marcus Aurelius, a man might have thought that this had proceeded of an abundant goodness of nature; but being men so wise, of such strength and severity of mind, and so extreme lovers of themselves, as all these were, it proveth most plainly that they found their own felicity (though as great as ever happened to mortal men) but as an half-piece, except they might have a friend to make it entire: and yet, which is more, they were princes that had wives, sons, nephews; and yet all these could not supply the comfort of friendship.

It is not to be forgotten what Comineus observeth of his first master, Duke Charles the Hardy; namely, that he would communicate his secrets with none, and least of all those secrets which troubled him most. Whereupon he goeth on and saith, that toward his latter time “that closeness did impair and a little perish his understanding.” Surely Comineus mought have made the same judgment also, if it had pleased him, of his second master Louis the Eleventh, whose closeness was indeed his tormentor. The parable of Pythagoras is dark, but true: “Cor ne edito,”—“Eat not the heart.” Certainly, if a man would give it a hard phrase, those that want friends to open themselves unto are cannibals of their own hearts. But one thing is most admirable (wherewith I will conclude this first fruit of friendship), which is, that this communicating of a man’s self to his friend works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in halves. For there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friend, but he joyeth the more; and no man that imparteth his griefs to his friend, but he grieveth the less. So that it is, in truth, of operation upon a man’s mind of like virtue as the alchymists use to attribute to their stone for man’s body; that it worketh all contrary effects, but still to the good and benefit of nature. But yet without praying in aid of alchymists, there is a manifest image of this in the ordinary course of nature: for in bodies, union strengtheneth and cherisheth any natural action, and on the other side, weakeneth and dulleth any violent impression; and even so it is of minds.

Page 169

The second fruit of friendship is healthful and sovereign for the understanding, as the first is for the affections. For friendship maketh indeed a fair day in the affections, from storm and tempests, but it maketh daylight in the understanding, out of darkness and confusion of thoughts. Neither is this to be understood only of faithful counsel, which a man receiveth from his friend; but before you come to that, certain it is that whosoever hath his mind fraught with many thoughts, his wits and understanding do clarify and break up in the communicating and discoursing with another; he tosseth his thoughts more easily; he marshaleth them more orderly; he seeth how they look when they are turned into words; finally, he waxeth wiser than himself; and that more by an hour's discourse than by a day's meditation. It was well said by Themistocles to the King of Persia, "That speech was like cloth of Arras, opened and put abroad; whereby the imagery doth appear in figure: whereas in thoughts they lie but as in packs." Neither is this second fruit of friendship, in opening the understanding, restrained only to such friends as are able to give a man counsel (they indeed are best); but even without that, a man learneth of himself, and bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man were better relate himself to a statue or picture, than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother.

Add now, to make this second fruit of friendship complete, that other point which lieth more open, and falleth within vulgar observation; which is faithful counsel from a friend. Heraclitus saith well in one of his enigmas, "Dry light is ever the best;" and certain it is, that the light that a man receiveth by counsel from another, is drier and purer than that which cometh from his own understanding and judgment; which is ever infused and drenched in his affections and customs. So as there is as much difference between the counsel that a friend giveth, and that a man giveth himself, as there is between the counsel of a friend and of a flatterer; for there is no such flatterer as is a man's self, and there is no such remedy against flattery of a man's self as the liberty of a friend. Counsel is of two sorts: the one concerning manners, the other concerning business. For the first, the best preservative to keep the mind in health is the faithful admonition of a friend. The calling of a man's self to a strict account is a medicine sometimes too piercing and corrosive; reading good books of morality is a little flat and dead; observing our faults in others is sometimes improper for our case: but the best receipt (best I say to work and best to take) is the admonition of a friend. It is a strange thing to behold what gross errors and extreme absurdities many (especially of the greater sort) do commit for want of a friend to tell them of them, to the great damage both of their fame and fortune: for, as

Page 170

St. James saith, they are as men “that look sometimes into a glass, and presently forget their own shape and favor.” As for business, a man may think, if he will, that two eyes see no more than one; or, that a gamester seeth always more than a looker-on; or, that a man in anger is as wise as he that hath said over the four-and-twenty letters; or, that a musket may be shot off as well upon the arm as upon a rest; and such other fond and high imaginations, to think himself all in all: but when all is done, the help of good counsel is that which setteth business straight: and if any man think that he will take counsel, but it shall be by pieces; asking counsel in one business of one man, and in another business of another man, it is well (that is to say, better, perhaps, than if he asked none at all); but he runneth two dangers: one, that he shall not be faithfully counseled; for it is a rare thing, except it be from a perfect and entire friend, to have counsel given, but such as shall be bowed and crooked to some ends which he hath that giveth it: the other, that he shall have counsel given, hurtful and unsafe (though with good meaning), and mixed partly of mischief, and partly of remedy; even as if you would call a physician, that is thought good for the cure of the disease you complain of, but is unacquainted with your body; and therefore may put you in a way for a present cure, but overthroweth your health in some other kind, and so cure the disease and kill the patient: but a friend that is wholly acquainted with a man’s estate will beware, by furthering any present business, how he dasheth upon the other inconvenience. And therefore, rest not upon scattered counsels: they will rather distract and mislead, than settle and direct.

After these two noble fruits of friendship (peace in the affections, and support of the judgment), followeth the last fruit, which is like the pomegranate, full of many kernels; I mean aid, and bearing a part in all actions and occasions. Here the best way to represent to life the manifold use of friendship, is to cast and see how many things there are which a man cannot do himself: and then it will appear that it was a sparing speech of the ancients to say, “that a friend is another himself;” for that a friend is far more than himself. Men have their time, and die many times in desire of some things which they principally take to heart; the bestowing of a child, the finishing of a work, or the like. If a man have a true friend, he may rest almost secure that the care of those things will continue after him; so that a man hath, as it were, two lives in his desires. A man hath a body, and that body is confined to a place; but where friendship is, all offices of life are, as it were, granted to him and his deputy; for he may exercise them by his friend. How many things are there, which a man cannot, with any face or comeliness, say or do himself; A man can scarce allege his own merits with modesty, much less

Page 171

extol them; a man cannot sometimes brook to supplicate, or beg, and a number of the like: but all these things are graceful in a friend's mouth, which are blushing in a man's own. So again, a man's person hath many proper relations which he cannot put off. A man cannot speak to his son but as a father; to his wife but as a husband; to his enemy but upon terms: whereas a friend may speak as the case requires, and not as it sorteth with the person: but to enumerate these things were endless; I have given the rule, where a man cannot fitly play his own part, if he have not a friend he may quit the stage.

DEFECTS OF THE UNIVERSITIES

From 'The Advancement of Learning' (Book ii.)

Amongst so many great foundations of colleges in Europe, I find it strange that they are all dedicated to professions, and none left free to arts and sciences at large. For if men judge that learning should be referred to action, they judge well: but in this they fall into the error described in the ancient fable, in which the other parts of the body did suppose the stomach had been idle, because it neither performed the office of motion, as the limbs do, nor of sense, as the head doth; but yet notwithstanding it is the stomach that digesteth and distributeth to all the rest. So if any man think philosophy and universality to be idle studies, he doth not consider that all professions are from thence served and supplied. And this I take to be a great cause that hath hindered the progression of learning, because these fundamental knowledges have been studied but in passage. For if you will have a tree bear more fruit than it hath used to do, it is not anything you can do to the boughs, but it is the stirring of the earth and putting new mold about the roots that must work it. Neither is it to be forgotten, that this dedicating of foundations and dotations to professory learning hath not only had a malign aspect and influence upon the growth of sciences, but hath also been prejudicial to States and governments. For hence it proceedeth that princes find a solitude in regard of able men to serve them in causes of estate, because there is no education collegiate which is free; where such as were so disposed might give themselves to histories, modern languages, books of policy and civil discourse, and other the like enablements unto service of estate.

And because founders of colleges do plant, and founders of lectures do water, it followeth well in order to speak of the defect which is in public lectures; namely, in the smallness and meanness of the salary or reward which in most places is assigned unto them; whether they be lectures of arts, or of professions. For it is necessary to the progression of sciences that readers be of the most able and sufficient men; as those which are ordained for generating and propagating of sciences, and not for transitory use. This cannot be, except

Page 172

their condition and endowment be such as may content the ablest man to appropriate his whole labor and continue his whole age in that function and attendance; and therefore must have a proportion answerable to that mediocrity or competency of advancement, which may be expected from a profession or the practice of a profession. So as, if you will have sciences flourish, you must observe David's military law, which was, "That those which staid with the carriage should have equal part with those which were in the action"; else will the carriages be ill attended. So readers in sciences are indeed the guardians of the stores and provisions of sciences whence men in active courses are furnished, and therefore ought to have equal entertainment with them; otherwise if the fathers in sciences be of the weakest sort or be ill maintained,

"Et patrum invalidi referent jejunia nati:"

[Weakness of parents will show in feebleness of offspring.]

Another defect I note, wherein I shall need some alchemist to help me, who call upon men to sell their books and to build furnaces; quitting and forsaking Minerva and the Muses as barren virgins, and relying upon Vulcan. But certain it is, that unto the deep, fruitful, and operative study of many sciences, specially natural philosophy and physic, books be not only the instrumentals; wherein also the beneficence of men hath not been altogether wanting. For we see spheres, globes, astrolabes, maps, and the like, have been provided as appurtenances to astronomy and cosmography, as well as books. We see likewise that some places instituted for physic have annexed the commodity of gardens for simples of all sorts, and do likewise command the use of dead bodies for anatomies. But these do respect but a few things. In general, there will hardly be any main proficience in the disclosing of nature, except there be some allowance for expenses about experiments; whether they be experiments appertaining to Vulcanus or Daedalus, furnace or engine, or any other kind. And therefore, as secretaries and spials of princes and states bring in bills for intelligence, so you must allow the spials and intelligencers of nature to bring in their bills; or else you shall be ill advertised.

And if Alexander made such a liberal assignation to Aristotle of treasure for the allowance of hunters, fowlers, fishers, and the like, that he mought compile an history of nature, much better do they deserve it that travail in arts of nature.

Another defect which I note, is an intermission or neglect in those which are governors in universities of consultation, and in princes or superior persons of visitation; to enter into account and consideration, whether the readings, exercises, and other customs appertaining unto learning, anciently begun and since continued, be well instituted or no; and thereupon to ground an amendment or reformation in that which shall be found inconvenient. For it is one of

Page 173

your Majesty's own most wise and princely maxims, "that in all usages and precedents, the times be considered wherein they first began; which if they were weak or ignorant, it derogateth from the authority of the usage, and leaveth it for suspect." And therefore inasmuch as most of the usages and orders of the universities were derived from more obscure times, it is the more requisite they be re-examined. In this kind I will give an instance or two, for example's sake, of things that are the most obvious and familiar. The one is a matter, which, though it be ancient and general, yet I hold to be an error; which is, that scholars in universities come too soon and too unripe to logic and rhetoric, arts fitter for graduates than children and novices. For these two, rightly taken, are the gravest of sciences, being the arts of arts; the one for judgment, the other for ornament. And they be the rules and directions how to set forth and dispose matter: and therefore for minds empty and unfraught with matter, and which have not gathered that which Cicero calleth *sylva* and *supellex*, stuff and variety, to begin with those arts (as if one should learn to weigh or to measure or to paint the wind) doth work but this effect, that the wisdom of those arts, which is great and universal, is almost made contemptible, and is degenerate into childish sophistry and ridiculous affectation. And further, the untimely learning of them hath drawn on by consequence the superficial and unprofitable teaching and writing of them, as fitteth indeed to the capacity of children. Another is a lack I find in the exercises used in the universities, which do make too great a divorce between invention and memory. For their speeches are either premeditate, in *verbis conceptis*, where nothing is left to invention, or merely extemporal, where little is left to memory; whereas in life and action there is least use of either of these, but rather of intermixtures of premeditation and invention, notes and memory. So as the exercise fitteth not the practice, nor the image the life; and it is ever a true rule in exercises, that they be framed as near as may be to the life of practice; for otherwise they do pervert the motions and faculties of the mind, and not prepare them. The truth whereof is not obscure, when scholars come to the practices of professions, or other actions of civil life; which when they set into, this want is soon found by themselves, and sooner by others. But this part, touching the amendment of the institutions and orders of universities, I will conclude with the clause of Caesar's letter to Oppius and Balbus, "Hoc quem admodum fieri possit, nonnulla mihi in mentem veniunt, et multa reperiri possunt: de iis rebus rogo vos ut cogitationem suscipiatis." [How this may be done, some ways come to my mind and many may be devised; I ask you to take these things into consideration.]

Page 174

Another defect which I note ascendeth a little higher than the precedent. For as the proficience of learning consisteth much in the orders and institutions of universities in the same States and kingdoms, so it would be yet more advanced, if there were more intelligence mutual between the universities of Europe than now there is. We see there be many orders and foundations, which though they be divided under several sovereignties and territories, yet they take themselves to have a kind of contract, fraternity, and correspondence one with the other, insomuch as they have Provincials and Generals. And surely as nature createth brotherhood in families, and arts mechanical contract brotherhoods in communalties, and the anointment of God superinduceth a brotherhood in kings and bishops; so in like manner there cannot but be a fraternity in learning and illumination, relating to that paternity which is attributed to God, who is called the Father of illuminations or lights.

The last defect which I will note is, that there hath not been, or very rarely been, any public designation of writers or inquirers concerning such parts of knowledge as may appear not to have been already sufficiently labored or undertaken; unto which point it is an inducement to enter into a view and examination what parts of learning have been prosecuted, and what omitted. For the opinion of plenty is amongst the causes of want, and the great quantity of books maketh a show rather of superfluity than lack; which surcharge nevertheless is not to be remedied by making no more books, but by making more good books, which, as the serpent of Moses, mought devour the serpents of the enchanters.

The removing of all the defects formerly enumerated, except the last, and of the active part also of the last (which is the designation of writers), are *opera basilica* [kings' works]; towards which the endeavors of a private man may be but as an image in a cross-way, that may point at the way, but cannot go it. But the inducing part of the latter (which is the survey of learning) may be set forward by private travail. Wherefore I will now attempt to make a general and faithful perambulation of learning, with an inquiry what parts thereof lie fresh and waste, and not improved and converted by the industry of man; to the end that such a plot made and recorded to memory, may both minister light to any public designation, and also serve to excite voluntary endeavors. Wherein nevertheless my purpose is at this time to note only omissions and deficiencies, and not to make any redargution of errors or incomplete prosecutions. For it is one thing to set forth what ground lieth unmanured, and another thing to correct ill husbandry in that which is manured.

Page 175

In the handling and undertaking of which work I am not ignorant what it is that I do now move and attempt, nor insensible of mine own weakness to sustain my purpose. But my hope is, that if my extreme love to learning carry me too far, I may obtain the excuse of affection; for that "it is not granted to man to love and to be wise." But I know well I can use no other liberty of judgment than I must leave to others; and I, for my part, shall be indifferently glad either to perform myself, or accept from another, that duty of humanity, "Nam qui erranti comiter monstrat viam," etc. [To kindly show the wanderer the path.] I do foresee likewise that of those things which I shall enter and register as deficiencies and omissions, many will conceive and censure that some of them are already done and extant; others to be but curiosities, and things of no great use; and others to be of too great difficulty and almost impossibility to be compassed and effected. But for the two first, I refer myself to the particulars For the last, touching impossibility, I take it those things are to be held possible which may be done by some person, though not by every one; and which may be done by many, though not by any one; and which may be done in the succession of ages, though not within the hour-glass of one man's life; and which may be done by public designation, though not by private endeavor. But notwithstanding, if any man will take to himself rather that of Solomon, "Dicit piger, Leo est in via" [the sluggard says there is a lion in the path], than that of Virgil, "Possunt quia posse videntur" [they can, because they think they can], I shall be content that my labors be esteemed but as the better sort of wishes, for as it asketh some knowledge to demand a question not impertinent, so it requireth some sense to make a wish not absurd.

TO MY LORD TREASURER BURGHLEY

From 'Letters and Life,' by James Spedding

My Lord:

With as much confidence as mine own honest and faithful devotion unto your service and your honorable correspondence unto me and my poor estate can breed in a man, do I commend myself unto your Lordship. I wax now somewhat ancient; one and thirty years is a great deal of sand in the hour-glass. My health, I thank God, I find confirmed; and I do not fear that action shall impair it, because I account my ordinary course of study and meditation to be more painful than most parts of action are. I ever bare a mind (in some middle place that I could discharge) to serve her Majesty; not as a man born under Sol, that loveth honor; nor under Jupiter, that loveth business (for the contemplative planet carrieth me away wholly); but as a man born under an excellent Sovereign, that deserveth the dedication of all men's abilities. Besides, I do not find in myself so much self-love, but that the greater parts of my thoughts are to deserve well (if I were

Page 176

able) of my friends, and namely of your Lordship; who being the Atlas of this commonwealth, the honor of my house, and the second founder of my poor estate, I am tied by all duties, both of a good patriot and of an unworthy kinsman, and of an obliged servant, to employ whatsoever I am to do you service. Again, the meanness of my estate does somewhat move me; for though I cannot excuse myself that I am either prodigal or slothful, yet my health is not to spend, nor my course to get. Lastly, I confess that I have as vast contemplative ends as I have moderate civil ends: for I have taken all knowledge to be my province; and if I could purge it of two sorts of rovers, whereof the one with frivolous disputations, confutations, and verbosities, the other with blind experiments and auricular traditions and impostures, hath committed so many spoils, I hope I should bring in industrious observations, grounded conclusions, and profitable inventions and discoveries; the best state of that province. This, whether it be curiosity, or vain glory, or nature, or (if one take it favorably) *philanthropia*, is so fixed in my mind as it cannot be removed. And I do easily see, that place of any reasonable countenance doth bring commandment of more wits than of a man's own; which is the thing I greatly affect. And for your Lordship, perhaps you shall not find more strength and less encounter in any other. And if your Lordship shall find now, or at any time, that I do seek or affect any place whereunto any that is nearer unto your Lordship shall be concurrent, say then that I am a most dishonest man. And if your Lordship will not carry me on, I will not do as Anaxagoras did, who reduced himself with contemplation unto voluntary poverty: but this I will do; I will sell the inheritance that I have, and purchase some lease of quick revenue, or some office of gain that shall be executed by deputy, and so give over all care of service, and become some sorry book-maker, or a true pioneer in that mine of truth, which (he said) lay so deep. This which I have writ unto your Lordship is rather thoughts than words, being set down without all art, disguising, or reservation. Wherein I have done honor both to your Lordship's wisdom, in judging that that will be best believed of your Lordship which is truest, and to your Lordship's good nature, in retaining nothing from you. And even so I wish your Lordship all happiness, and to myself means and occasion to be added to my faithful desire to do you service. From my lodging at Gray's Inn.

IN PRAISE OF KNOWLEDGE

From 'Letters and Life,' by James Spedding

Silence were the best celebration of that which I mean to commend; for who would not use silence, where silence is not made, and what crier can make silence in such a noise and tumult of vain and popular opinions?

My praise shall be dedicated to the mind itself. The mind is the man and the knowledge of the mind. A man is but what he knoweth. The mind itself is but an accident to

knowledge; for knowledge is a double of that which is; the truth of being and the truth of knowing is all one.

Page 177

Are not the pleasures of the affections greater than the pleasures of the senses? And are not the pleasures of the intellect greater than the pleasures of the affections? Is not knowledge a true and only natural pleasure, whereof there is no satiety? Is it not knowledge that doth alone clear the mind of all perturbation? How many things are there which we imagine not? How many things do we esteem and value otherwise than they are! This ill-proportioned estimation, these vain imaginations, these be the clouds of error that turn into the storms of perturbation. Is there any such happiness as for a man's mind to be raised above the confusion of things, where he may have the prospect of the order of nature and the error of men?

But is this a vein only of delight, and not of discovery? of contentment, and not of benefit? Shall he not as well discern the riches of nature's warehouse, as the benefit of her shop? Is truth ever barren? Shall he not be able thereby to produce worthy effects, and to endow the life of man with infinite commodities?

But shall I make this garland to be put upon a wrong head? Would anybody believe me, if I should verify this upon the knowledge that is now in use? Are we the richer by one poor invention, by reason of all the learning that hath been these many hundred years? The industry of artificers maketh some small improvement of things invented; and chance sometimes in experimenting maketh us to stumble upon somewhat which is new; but all the disputation of the learned never brought to light one effect of nature before unknown. When things are known and found out, then they can descant upon them, they can knit them into certain causes, they can reduce them to their principles. If any instance of experience stand against them, they can range it in order by some distinctions. But all this is but a web of the wit, it can work nothing. I do not doubt but that common notions, which we call reason, and the knitting of them together, which we call logic, are the art of reason and studies. But they rather cast obscurity than gain light to the contemplation of nature. All the philosophy of nature which is now received, is either the philosophy of the Grecians, or that other of the Alchemists. That of the Grecians hath the foundations in words, in ostentation, in confutation, in sects, in schools, in disputations. The Grecians were (as one of themselves saith), "you Grecians, ever children." They knew little antiquity; they knew (except fables) not much above five hundred years before themselves; they knew but a small portion of the world. That of the Alchemists hath the foundation in imposture, in auricular traditions and obscurity; it was catching hold of religion, but the principle of it is, "Populus vult decipi." So that I know no great difference between these great philosophies, but that the one is a loud-crying folly, and the other is a whispering folly. The one is gathered out of a few vulgar

Page 178

observations, and the other out of a few experiments of a furnace. The one never faileth to multiply words, and the other ever faileth to multiply gold. Who would not smile at Aristotle, when he admireth the eternity and invariableness of the heavens, as there were not the like in the bowels of the earth? Those be the confines and borders of these two kingdoms, where the continual alteration and incursion are. The superficies and upper parts of the earth are full of varieties. The superficies and lower part of the heavens (which we call the middle region of the air) is full of variety. There is much spirit in the one part that cannot be brought into mass. There is much massy body in the other place that cannot be refined to spirit. The common air is as the waste ground between the borders. Who would not smile at the astronomers? I mean not these new carmen which drive the earth about, but the ancient astronomers, which feign the moon to be the swiftest of all planets in motion, and the rest in order, the higher the slower; and so are compelled to imagine a double motion; whereas how evident is it, that that which they call a contrary motion is but an abatement of motion. The fixed stars overgo Saturn, and so in them and the rest all is but one motion, and the nearer the earth the slower; a motion also whereof air and water do participate, though much interrupted.

But why do I in a conference of pleasure enter into these great matters, in sort that pretending to know much, I should forget what is seasonable? Pardon me, it was because all [other] things may be endowed and adorned with speeches, but knowledge itself is more beautiful than any apparel of words that can be put upon it.

And let not me seem arrogant, without respect to these great reputed authors. Let me so give every man his due, as I give Time his due, which is to discover truth. Many of these men had greater wits, far above mine own, and so are many in the universities of Europe at this day. But alas, they learn nothing there but to believe: first to believe that others know that which they know not; and after [that] themselves know that which they know not. But indeed facility to believe, impatience to doubt, temerity to answer, glory to know, doubt to contradict, end to gain, sloth to search, seeking things in words, resting in part of nature; these, and the like, have been the things which have forbidden the happy match between the mind of man and the nature of things, and in place thereof have married it to vain notions and blind experiments. And what the posterity and issue of so honorable a match may be, it is not hard to consider. Printing, a gross invention; artillery, a thing that lay not far out of the way; the needle, a thing partly known before; what a change have these three made in the world in these times; the one in state of learning, the other in state of the war, the third in the state of treasure, commodities, and navigation. And

Page 179

those, I say, were but stumbled upon and lighted upon by chance. Therefore, no doubt the sovereignty of man lieth hid in knowledge; wherein many things are reserved, which kings with their treasure cannot buy, nor with their force command; their spials and intelligencers can give no news of them, their seamen and discoverers cannot sail where they grow. Now we govern nature in opinions, but we are thrall unto her in necessity; but if we would be led by her in invention, we should command her in action.

TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR, TOUCHING THE HISTORY OF BRITAIN

From 'Letters and Life,' by James Spedding

It may please your good Lordship:

Some late act of his Majesty, referred to some former speech which I have heard from your Lordship, bred in me a great desire, and by strength of desire a boldness to make an humble proposition to your Lordship, such as in me can be no better than a wish: but if your Lordship should apprehend it, may take some good and worthy effect. The act I speak of, is the order given by his Majesty, as I understand, for the erection of a tomb or monument for our late sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth: wherein I may note much, but this at this time; that as her Majesty did always right to his Highness's hopes, so his Majesty doth in all things right to her memory; a very just and princely retribution. But from this occasion, by a very easy ascent, I passed further, being put in mind, by this Representative of her person, of the more true and more firm Representative, which is of her life and government. For as Statuaes and Pictures are dumb histories, so histories are speaking Pictures. Wherein if my affection be not too great, or my reading too small, I am of this opinion, that if Plutarch were alive to write lives by parallels, it would trouble him for virtue and fortune both to find for her a parallel amongst women. And though she was of the passive sex, yet her government was so active, as, in my simple opinion, it made more impression upon the several states of Europe, than it received from thence. But I confess unto your Lordship I could not stay here, but went a little further into the consideration of the times which have passed since King Henry the 8th; wherein I find the strangest variety that in like number of successions of any hereditary monarchy hath ever been known. The reign of a child; the offer of an usurpation (though it were but as a Diary Ague); the reign of a lady married to a foreign Prince; and the reign of a lady solitary and unmarried. So that as it cometh to pass in massive bodies, that they have certain trepidations and waverings before they fix and settle; so it seemeth that by the providence of God this monarchy, before it was to settle in his Majesty and his generations (in which I hope it is now established for ever), it had

these prelusive changes in these barren princes. Neither could I contain myself here
(as it is easier

Page 180

to produce than to stay a wish), but calling to remembrance the unworthiness of the history of England (in the main continuance thereof), and the partiality and obliquity of that of Scotland, in the latest and largest author that I have seen: I conceived it would be honor for his Majesty, and a work very memorable, if this island of Great Britain, as it is now joined in Monarchy for the ages to come, so were joined in History for the times past; and that one just and complete History were compiled of both nations. And if any man think it may refresh the memory of former discords, he may satisfy himself with the verse, "olim haec meminisse juvabit:" for the case being now altered, it is matter of comfort and gratulation to remember former troubles.

Thus much, if it may please your Lordship, was in the optative mood. It is true that I did look a little in the potential; wherein the hope which I conceived was grounded upon three observations. The first, of the times, which do flourish in learning, both of art and language; which giveth hope not only that it may be done, but that it may be well done. For when good things are undertaken in ill times, it turneth but to loss; as in this very particular we have a fresh example of Polydore Vergile, who being designed to write the English History by K. Henry the 8th (a strange choice to chuse a stranger), and for his better instruction having obtained into his hands many registers and memorials out of the monasteries, did indeed deface and suppress better things than those he did collect and reduce. Secondly, I do see that which all the world seeth in his Majesty, both a wonderful judgment in learning and a singular affection towards learning, and the works of true honor which are of the mind and not of the hand. For there cannot be the like honor sought in the building of galleries, or the planting of elms along highways, and the like manufactures, things rather of magnificence than of magnanimity, as there is in the uniting of states, pacifying of controversies, nourishing and augmenting of learning and arts, and the particular actions appertaining unto these; of which kind Cicero judged truly, when he said to Caesar, "Quantum operibus tuis detrahet vetustas, tantum addet laudibus." And lastly, I called to mind, that your Lordship at sometimes hath been pleased to express unto me a great desire, that something of this nature should be performed; answerably indeed to your other noble and worthy courses and actions, wherein your Lordship sheweth yourself not only an excellent Chancellor and Counselor, but also an exceeding favorer and fosterer of all good learning and virtue, both in men and matters, persons and actions: joining and adding unto the great services towards his Majesty, which have, in small compass of time, been accumulated upon your Lordship, many other deservings both of the Church and Commonwealth and particulars; so as the opinion of so great and wise a man doth seem unto me a good warrant both of

Page 181

the possibility and worth of this matter. But all this while I assure myself, I cannot be mistaken by your Lordship, as if I sought an office or employment for myself. For no man knoweth better than your Lordship, that (if there were in me any faculty thereunto, as I am most unable), yet neither my fortune nor profession would permit it. But because there be so many good painters both for hand and colors, it needeth but encouragement and instructions to give life and light unto it.

So in all humbleness I conclude my presenting to your good Lordship this wish: that if it perish it is but a loss of that which is not. And thus craving pardon that I have taken so much time from your Lordship, I always remain

Your Lps. very humbly and much bounden

FR. BACON.

GRAY'S INN, this 2d of April, 1605.

TO VILLIERS ON HIS PATENT AS VISCOUNT

From 'Letters and Life,' by James Spedding

Sir:

I have sent you now your patent of creation of Lord Blechly of Blechly, and of Viscount Villiers. Blechly is your own, and I like the sound of the name better than Whaddon; but the name will be hid, for you will be called Viscount Villiers. I have put them both in a patent, after the manner of the patents of Earls where baronies are joined; but the chief reason was, because I would avoid double prefaces which had not been fit; nevertheless the ceremony of robing and otherwise must be double.

And now, because I am in the country, I will send you some of my country fruits; which with me are good meditations; which when I am in the city are choked with business.

After that the King shall have watered your new dignities with his bounty of the lands which he intends you, and that some other things concerning your means which are now likewise in intention shall be settled upon you; I do not see but you may think your private fortunes established; and, therefore, it is now time that you should refer your actions chiefly to the good of your sovereign and your country. It is the life of an ox or beast always to eat, and never to exercise; but men are born (and especially Christian men), not to cram in their fortunes, but to exercise their virtues; and yet the other hath been the unworthy, and (thanks be to God) sometimes the unlucky humor of great persons in our times. Neither will your further fortune be the further off: for assure



yourself that fortune is of a woman's nature, that will sooner follow you by slighting than by too much wooing. And in this dedication of yourself to the public, I recommend unto you principally that which I think was never done since I was born; and which not done hath bred almost a wilderness and solitude in the King's service; which is, that you countenance, and encourage, and advance able men and virtuous men, and meriting men in all kinds, degrees, and professions.

Page 182

For in the time of the Cecils, the father and the son, able men were by design and of purpose suppressed; and though of late choice goeth better both in church and commonwealth, yet money, and turn-serving, and cunning canvasses, and importunity prevail too much. And in places of moment rather make able and honest men yours, than advance those that are otherwise because they are yours. As for cunning and corrupt men, you must (I know) sometimes use them; but keep them at a distance; and let it appear that you make use of them, rather than that they lead you. Above all, depend wholly (next to God) upon the King; and be ruled (as hitherto you have been) by his instructions; for that is best for yourself. For the King's care and thoughts concerning you are according to the thoughts of a great King; whereas your thoughts concerning yourself are and ought to be according to the thoughts of a modest man. But let me not weary you. The sum is that you think goodness the best part of greatness; and that you remember whence your rising comes, and make return accordingly.

God ever keep you.

GORHAMBURY, August 12th, 1616

CHARGE TO JUSTICE HUTTON

From 'Letters and Life,' by James Spedding

Mr. Serjeant Hutton:

The King's most excellent Majesty, being duly informed of your learning, integrity, discretion, experience, means, and reputation in your country, hath thought fit not to leave you these talents to be employed upon yourself only, but to call you to serve himself and his people, in the place of one of his Justices of the court of common pleas.

The court where you are to serve, is the local centre and heart of the laws of this realm. Here the subject hath his assurance by fines and recoveries. Here he hath his fixed and invariable remedies by *praecipies* and writs of right. Here Justice opens not by a by-gate of privilege, but by the great gate of the King's original writs out of the Chancery. Here issues process of outlawry; if men will not answer law in this centre of law, they shall be cast out of the circle of law. And therefore it is proper for you by all means with your wisdom and fortitude to maintain the laws of the realm. Wherein, nevertheless, I would not have you head-strong, but heart-strong; and to weigh and remember with yourself, that the twelve Judges of the realm are as the twelve lions under Solomon's throne; they must be lions, but yet lions, under the throne; they must shew their stoutness in elevating and bearing up the throne.



To represent unto you the lines and portraitures of a good judge:—The first is, That you should draw your learning out of your books, not out of your brain.

2. That you should mix well the freedom of your own opinion with the reverence of the opinion of your fellows.
3. That you should continue the studying of your books, and not to spend on upon the old stock.

Page 183

4. That you should fear no man's face, and yet not turn stoutness into bravery.
5. That you should be truly impartial, and not so as men may see affection through fine carriage.
6. That you be a light to jurors to open their eyes, but not a guide to lead them by the noses.
7. That you affect not the opinion of pregnancy and expedition by an impatient and catching hearing of the counselors at the bar.
8. That your speech be with gravity, as one of the sages of the law; and not talkative, nor with impertinent flying out to show learning.
9. That your hands, and the hands of your hands (I mean those about you), be clean, and uncorrupt from gifts, from meddling in titles, and from serving of turns, be they of great ones or small ones.
10. That you contain the jurisdiction of the court within the ancient merestones, without removing the mark.
11. Lastly, That you carry such a hand over your ministers and clerks, as that they may rather be in awe of you, than presume upon you.

These and the like points of the duty of a Judge, I forbear to enlarge; for the longer I have lived with you, the shorter shall my speech be to you; knowing that you come so furnished and prepared with these good virtues, as whatsoever I shall say cannot be new unto you. And therefore I will say no more unto you at this time, but deliver you your patent.

A PRAYER, OR PSALM

From 'Letters and Life,' by James Spedding

Most gracious Lord God, my merciful Father, from my youth up, my Creator, my Redeemer, my Comforter. Thou (O Lord) soundest and searchest the depths and secrets of all hearts; thou knowedgest the upright of heart, thou judgest the hypocrite, thou ponderest men's thoughts and doings as in a balance, thou measurest their intentions as with a line, vanity and crooked ways cannot be hid from thee.



Remember (O Lord) how thy servant hath walked before thee: remember what I have first sought, and what hath been principal in mine intentions. I have loved thy assemblies, I have mourned for the divisions of thy Church, I have delighted in the brightness of thy sanctuary. This vine which thy right hand hath planted in this nation, I have ever prayed unto thee that it might have the first and the latter rain; and that it might stretch her branches to the seas and to the floods. The state and bread of the poor and oppressed have been precious in mine eyes: I have hated all cruelty and hardness of heart: I have (though in a despised weed) procured the good of all men. If any have been mine enemies, I thought not of them; neither hath the sun almost set upon my displeasure; but I have been as a dove, free from superfluity of maliciousness. Thy creatures have been my books, but thy Scriptures much more. I have sought thee in the courts, fields, and gardens, but I have found thee in thy temples.

Page 184

Thousands have been my sins, and ten thousand my transgressions; but thy sanctifications have remained with me, and my heart, through thy grace, hath been an unquenched coal upon thy altar. O Lord, my strength, I have since my youth met with thee in all my ways, by thy fatherly compassions, by thy comfortable chastisements, and by thy most visible providence. As thy favors have increased upon me, so have thy corrections; so as thou hast been alway near me, O Lord; and ever as my worldly blessings were exalted, so secret darts from thee have pierced me; and when I have ascended before men, I have descended in humiliation before thee.

And now when I thought most of peace and honor, thy hand is heavy upon me, and hath humbled me, according to thy former loving-kindness, keeping me still in thy fatherly school, not as a bastard, but as a child. Just are thy judgments upon me for my sins, which are more in number than the sands of the sea, but have no proportion to thy mercies; for what are the sands of the sea, to the sea, earth, heavens? and all these are nothing to thy mercies.

Besides my innumerable sins, I confess before thee, that I am debtor to thee for the gracious talent of thy gifts and graces which I have neither put into a napkin, nor put it (as I ought) to exchangers, where it might have made best profit; but mis-spent it in things for which I was least fit; so as I may truly say, my soul hath been a stranger in the course of my pilgrimage. Be merciful unto me (O Lord) for my Saviour's sake, and receive me unto thy bosom, or guide me in thy ways.

FROM THE 'APOPTHEGMS'

My Lo. of Essex, at the succor of Rhoan, made twenty-four knights, which at that time was a great matter. Divers (7.) of those gentlemen were of weak and small means; which when Queen Elizabeth heard, she said, "My Lo. mought have done well to have built his alms-house before he made his knights."

21. Many men, especially such as affect gravity, have a manner after other men's speech to shake their heads. Sir Lionel Cranfield would say, "That it was as men shake a bottle, to see if there was any wit in their head or no."

33. Bias was sailing, and there fell out a great tempest, and the mariners, that were wicked and dissolute fellows, called upon the gods; but Bias said to them, "Peace, let them not know ye are here."

42. There was a Bishop that was somewhat a delicate person, and bathed twice a day. A friend of his said to him, "My lord, why do you bathe twice a day?" The Bishop answered, "Because I cannot conveniently bathe thrice."

55. Queen Elizabeth was wont to say of her instructions to great officers, "That they were like to garments, strait at the first putting on, but did by and by wear loose enough."

64. Sir Henry Wotton used to say, "That critics are like brushers of noblemen's clothes."

Page 185

66. Mr. Savill was asked by my lord of Essex his opinion touching poets; who answered my lord, "He thought them the best writers, next to those that write prose."

85. One was saying, "That his great-grandfather and grandfather and father died at sea." Said another that heard him, "And I were as you, I would never come at sea." "Why, (saith he) where did your great-grandfather and grandfather and father die?" He answered, "Where but in their beds." Saith the other, "And I were as you, I would never come in bed."

97. Alonso of Arragon was wont to say, in commendation of age, That age appeared to be best in four things: "Old wood best to burn; old wine to drink; old friends to trust; and old authors to read."

119. One of the fathers saith, "That there is but this difference between the death of old men and young men: that old men go to death, and death comes to young men."

TRANSLATION OF THE 137TH PSALM

From 'Works,' Vol. xiv.

Whenas we sat all sad and desolate,
By Babylon upon the river's side,
Eased from the tasks which in our captive state
We were enforced daily to abide,
Our harps we had brought with us to the field,
Some solace to our heavy souls to yield.

But soon we found we failed of our account,
For when our minds some freedom did obtain,
Straightways the memory of Sion Mount
Did cause afresh our wounds to bleed again;
So that with present gifts, and future fears,
Our eyes burst forth into a stream of tears.

As for our harps, since sorrow struck them dumb,
We hanged them on the willow-trees were near;
Yet did our cruel masters to us come,
Asking of us some Hebrew songs to hear:
Taunting us rather in our misery,
Than much delighting in our melody.

Alas (said we) who can once force or frame
His grieved and oppressed heart to sing
The praises of Jehovah's glorious name,



In banishment, under a foreign king?
In Sion is his seat and dwelling-place,
Thence doth he shew the brightness of his face.

Hierusalem, where God his throne hath set,
Shall any hour absent thee from my mind?
Then let my right hand quite her skill forget,
Then let my voice and words no passage find;
Nay, if I do not thee prefer in all
That in the compass of my thoughts can fall.

Remember thou, O Lord, the cruel cry
Of Edom's children, which did ring and sound,
Inciting the Chaldean's cruelty,
"Down with it, down with it, even unto the ground."
In that good day repay it unto them,
When thou shalt visit thy Hierusalem.

And thou, O Babylon, shalt have thy turn
By just revenge, and happy shall he be,
That thy proud walls and towers shall waste and burn,
And as thou didst by us, so do by thee.
Yea, happy he that takes thy children's bones,
And dasheth them against the pavement stones.

Page 186

THE WORLD'S A BUBBLE

From 'Works,' Vol. xiv.

The world's a bubble, and the life of man
less than a span;
In his conception wretched, from the womb
so to the tomb:
Curst from the cradle, and brought up to years
with cares and fears.
Who then to frail mortality shall trust,
But limns the water, or but writes in dust.

Yet since with sorrow here we live opprest,
what life is best?
Courts are but only superficial schools
to dandle fools.
The rural parts are turned into a den
of savage men.
And where's the city from all vice so free,
But may be termed the worst of all the three?

Domestic cares afflict the husband's bed,
or pains his head.
Those that live single take it for a curse,
or do things worse.
Some would have children; those that have them moan,
or wish them gone.
What is it then to have or have no wife,
But single thralldom, or a double strife?

Our own affections still at home to please
is a disease:
To cross the seas to any foreign soil
perils and toil.
Wars with their noise affright us: when they cease,
we are worse in peace.
What then remains, but that we still should cry
Not to be born, or being born to die.

WALTER BAGEHOT

(1826-1877)

BY FORREST MORGAN

Walter Bagehot was born February 3d, 1826, at Langport, Somersetshire, England; and died there March 24th, 1877. He sprang on both sides from, and was reared in, a nest of wealthy bankers and ardent Liberals, steeped in political history and with London country houses where leaders of thought and politics resorted; and his mother's brother-in-law was Dr. Prichard the ethnologist. This heredity, progressive by disposition and conservative by trade, and this entourage, produced naturally enough a mind at once rapid of insight and cautious of judgment, devoted almost equally to business action and intellectual speculation, and on its speculative side turned toward the fields of political history and sociology.

[Illustration: WALTER BAGEHOT]

But there were equally important elements not traceable. His freshness of mental vision, the strikingly novel points of view from which he looked at every subject, was marvelous even in a century so fertile of varied independences: he complained that "the most galling of yokes is the tyranny of your next-door neighbor," the obligation of thinking as he thinks. He had a keen, almost reckless wit and delicious buoyant humor, whose utterances never pall

Page 187

by repetition; few authors so abound in tenaciously quotable phrases and passages of humorous intellectuality. What is rarely found in connection with much humor, he had a sensitive dreaminess of nature, strongly poetic in feeling, whence resulted a large appreciation of the subtler classes of poetry; of which he was an acute and sympathizing critic. As part of this temperament, he had a strong bent toward mysticism,—in one essay he says flatly that “mysticism is true,”—which gave him a rare insight into the religious nature and some obscure problems of religious history; though he was too cool, scientific, and humorous to be a great theologian.

Above all, he had that instinct of selective art, in felicity of words and salience of ideas, which elevates writing into literature; which long after a thought has merged its being and use in those of wider scope, keeps it in separate remembrance and retains for its creator his due of credit through the artistic charm of the shape he gave it.

The result of a mixture of traits popularly thought incompatible, and usually so in reality,—a great relish for the driest business facts and a creative literary gift,—was absolutely unique. Bagehot explains the general sterility of literature as a guide to life by the fact that “so few people who can write know anything;” and began a reform in his own person, by applying all his highest faculties—the best not only of his thought but of his imagination and his literary skill—to the theme of his daily work, banking and business affairs and political economy. There have been many men of letters who were excellent business men and hard bargainers, sometimes indeed merchants or bankers, but they have held their literature as far as possible off the plane of their bread-winning; they have not used it to explain and decorate the latter and made that the motive of art. Bagehot loved business not alone as the born trader loves it, for its profit and its gratification of innate likings,—“business is really pleasanter than pleasure, though it does not look so,” he says in substance,—but as an artist loves a picturesque situation or a journalist a murder; it pleased his literary sense as material for analysis and composition. He had in a high degree that union of the practical and the musing faculties which in its (as yet) highest degree made Shakespeare; but even Shakespeare did not write dramas on how to make theatres pay, or sonnets on real-estate speculation.

Bagehot’s career was determined, as usual, partly by character and partly by circumstances. He graduated at London University in 1848, and studied for and was called to the bar; but his father owned an interest in a rich old provincial bank and a good shipping-business, and instead of the law he joined in their conduct. He had just before, however, passed a few months in France, including the time of Louis Napoleon’s *coup d’etat* in December, 1851; and from Paris he wrote to the London

Page 188

Inquirer (a Unitarian weekly) a remarkable series of letters on that event and its immediate sequents, defending the usurpation vigorously and outlining his political creed, from whose main lines he swerved but little in after life. Waiving the question whether the defense was valid,—and like all first-rate minds, Bagehot is even more instructive when he is wrong than when he is right, because the wrong is sure to be almost right and the truth on its side neglected,—the letters are full of fresh, acute, and even profound ideas, sharp exposition of those primary objects of government which demagogues and buncombe legislators ignore, racy wit, sarcasm, and description (in one passage he rises for a moment into really blood-stirring rhetoric), and proofs of his capacity thus early for reducing the confused cross-currents of daily life to the operation of great embracing laws. No other writing of a youth of twenty-five on such subjects—or almost none—is worth remembering at all for its matter; while this is perennially wholesome and educative, as well as capital reading.

From this on he devoted most of his spare time to literature: that he found so much spare time, and produced so much of a high grade while winning respect as a business manager, proves the excellent quality of his business brain. He was one of the editors of the *National Review*, a very able and readable English quarterly, from its foundation in 1854 to its death in 1863, and wrote for it twenty literary, biographical, and theological papers, which are among his best titles to enduring remembrance, and are full of his choicest flavors, his wealth of thought, fun, poetic sensitiveness, and deep religious feeling of the needs of human nature. Previous to this, he had written some good articles for the *Prospective Review*, and he wrote some afterwards for the *Fortnightly Review* (including the series afterwards gathered into 'Physics and Politics'), and other periodicals.

But his chief industry and most peculiar work was determined by his marriage in 1858 to the daughter of James Wilson, an ex-merchant who had founded the *Economist* as a journal of trade, banking, and investment, and made it prosperous and rather influential. Mr. Wilson was engaging in politics, where he rose to high office and would probably have ended in the Cabinet; but being sent to India to regulate its finances, died there in 1860. Bagehot thereupon took control of the paper, and was the paper until his death in 1877; and the position he gave it was as unique as his own. On banking, finance, taxation, and political economy in general his utterances had such weight that Chancellors of the Exchequer consulted him as to the revenues, and the London business world eagerly studied the paper for guidance. But he went far beyond this, and made it an unexampled force in politics and governmental science, personal to himself. For the first time a great political thinker applied his mind week by week to discussing

Page 189

the problems presented by passing politics, and expounding the drift and meaning of current events in his nation and the others which bore closest on it, as France and America. That he gained such a hearing was due not alone to his immense ability, and to a style carefully modeled on the conversation of business men with each other, but to his cool moderation and evident aloofness from party as party. He dissected each like a man of science: party was to him a tool and not a religion. He gibed at the Tories; but the Tories forgave him because he was half a Tory at heart,—he utterly distrusted popular instincts and was afraid of popular ignorance. He was rarely warm for the actual measures of the Liberals; but the Liberals knew that he intensely despised the pig-headed obstructiveness of the typical Tory, and had no kinship with the blind worshipers of the *status quo*. To natives and foreigners alike for many years the paper was single and invaluable: in it one could find set forth acutely and dispassionately the broad facts and the real purport of all great legislative proposals, free from the rant and mendacity, the fury and distortion, the prejudice and counter-prejudice of the party press.

An outgrowth of his treble position as banker, economic writer, and general litterateur, was his charming book 'Lombard Street.' Most writers know nothing about business, he sets forth, most business men cannot write, therefore most writing about business is either unreadable or untrue: he put all his literary gifts at its service, and produced a book as instructive as a trade manual and more delightful than most novels. Its luminous, easy, half-playful "business talk" is irresistibly captivating. It is a description and analysis of the London money market and its component parts,—the Bank of England, the joint-stock banks, the private banks, and the bill-brokers. It will live, however, as literature and as a picture, not as a banker's guide; as the vividest outline of business London, of the "great commerce" and the fabric of credit which is the basis of modern civilization and of which London is the centre, that the world has ever known.

Previous to this, the most widely known of his works—'The English Constitution,' much used as a text-book—had made a new epoch in political analysis, and placed him among the foremost thinkers and writers of his time. Not only did it revolutionize the accepted mode of viewing that governmental structure, but as a treatise on government in general its novel types of classification are now admitted commonplaces. Besides its main themes, the book is a great store of thought and suggestion on government, society, and human nature,—for as in all his works, he pours on his nominal subject a flood of illumination and analogy from the unlikeliest sources; and a piece of eminently pleasurable reading from end to end. Its basic novelty lay in what seems the most natural of inquiries, but which in fact was left for Bagehot's

Page 190

original mind even to think of,—the actual working of the governmental system in practice, as distinguished from legal theory. The result of this novel analysis was startling: old powers and checks went to the rubbish heap, and a wholly new set of machinery and even new springs of force and life were substituted. He argued that the actual use of the English monarchy is not to do the work of government, but through its roots in the past to gain popular loyalty and support for the real government, which the masses would not obey if they realized its genuine nature; that “it raises the army though it does not win the battle.” He showed that the function of the House of Peers is not as a co-ordinate power with the Commons (which is the real government), but as a revising body and an index of the strength of popular feeling. Constitutional governments he divides into Cabinet, where the people can change the government at any time, and therefore follow its acts and debates eagerly and instructedly; and Presidential, where they can only change it at fixed terms, and are therefore apathetic and ill-informed and care little for speeches which can effect nothing.

Just before ‘Lombard Street’ came his scientific masterpiece, ‘Physics and Politics’; a work which does for human society what the ‘Origin of Species’ does for organic life, expounding its method of progress from very low if not the lowest forms to higher ones. Indeed, one of its main lines is only a special application of Darwin’s “natural selection” to societies, noting the survival of the strongest (which implies in the long run the best developed in all virtues that make for social cohesion) through conflict; but the book is so much more than that, in spite of its heavy debt to all scientific and institutional research, that it remains a first-rate feat of original constructive thought. It is the more striking from its almost ludicrous brevity compared with the novelty, variety, and pregnancy of its ideas. It is scarcely more than a pamphlet; one can read it through in an evening: yet there is hardly any book which is a master-key to so many historical locks, so useful a standard for referring scattered sociological facts to, so clarifying to the mind in the study of early history. The work is strewn with fertile and suggestive observations from many branches of knowledge. Its leading idea of the needs and difficulties of early societies is given in one of the citations.

The unfinished ‘Economic Studies’ are partially a re-survey of the same ground on a more limited scale, and contain in addition a mass of the nicest and shrewdest observations on modern trade and society, full of truth and suggestiveness. All the other books printed under his name are collections either from the Economist or from outside publications.

Page 191

As a thinker, Bagehot's leading positions may be roughly summarized thus: in history, that reasoning from the present to the past is generally wrong and frequently nonsense; in politics, that abstract systems are foolish, that a government which does not benefit its subjects has no rights against one that will, that the masses had much better let the upper ranks do the governing than meddle with it themselves, that all classes are too eager to act without thinking and ought not to attempt so much; in society, that democracy is an evil because it leaves no specially trained upper class to furnish models for refinement. But there is vastly more besides this, and his value lies much more in the mental clarification afforded by his details than in the new principles of action afforded by his generalizations. He leaves men saner, soberer, juster, with a clearer sense of perspective, of real issues, that more than makes up for a slight diminution of zeal.

As pure literature, the most individual trait in his writings sprang from his scorn of mere word-mongering divorced from actual life. "A man ought to have the right of being a Philistine if he chooses," he tells us: "there is a sickly incompleteness in men too fine for the world and too nice to work their way through it." A great man of letters, no one has ever mocked his craft so persistently. A great thinker, he never tired of humorously magnifying the active and belittling the intellectual temperament. Of course it was only half-serious: he admits the force and utility of colossal visionaries like Shelley, constructive scholars like Gibbon, ascetic artists like Milton, even light dreamers like Hartley Coleridge; indeed, intellectually he appreciates all intellectual force, and scorns feeble thought which has the effrontery to show itself, and those who are "cross with the agony of a new idea." But his heart goes out to the unscholarly Cavalier with his dash and his loyalty, to the county member who "hardly reads two books per existence," and even to the rustic who sticks to his old ideas and whom "it takes seven weeks to comprehend an atom of a new one." A petty surface consistency must not be exacted from the miscellaneous utterances of a humorist: all sorts of complementary half-truths are part of his service. His own quite just conception of humor, as meaning merely full vision and balanced judgment, is his best defense: "when a man has attained the deep conception that there is such a thing as nonsense," he says, "you may be sure of him for ever after." At bottom he is thoroughly consistent: holding that the masses should work in contented deference to their intellectual guides, but those guides should qualify themselves by practical experience of life, that poetry is not an amusement for lazy sybarites but the most elevating of spiritual influences, that religions cut the roots of their power by trying to avoid supernaturalism and cultivate intelligibility, and that the animal basis of human life is a screen expressly devised to shut off direct knowledge of God and make character possible.

Page 192

To make his acquaintance first is to enter upon a store of high and fine enjoyment, and of strong and vivifying thought, which one must be either very rich of attainment or very feeble of grasp to find unprofitable or pleasureless.

THE VIRTUES OF STUPIDITY

From 'Letters on the French Coup d'Etat'

I fear you will laugh when I tell you what I conceive to be about the most essential mental quality for a free people whose liberty is to be progressive, permanent, and on a large scale: it is much stupidity. Not to begin by wounding any present susceptibilities, let me take the Roman character; for with one great exception,—I need not say to whom I allude,—they are the great political people of history. Now, is not a certain dullness their most visible characteristic? What is the history of their speculative mind? a blank; what their literature? a copy. They have left not a single discovery in any abstract science, not a single perfect or well-formed work of high imagination. The Greeks, the perfection of human and accomplished genius, bequeathed to mankind the ideal forms of self-idolizing art, the Romans imitated and admired; the Greeks explained the laws of nature, the Romans wondered and despised; the Greeks invented a system of numerals second only to that now in use, the Romans counted to the end of their days with the clumsy apparatus which we still call by their name; the Greeks made a capital and scientific calendar, the Romans began their month when the Pontifex Maximus happened to spy out the new moon. Throughout Latin literature, this is the perpetual puzzle:—Why are we free and they slaves, we praetors and they barbers? why do the stupid people always win and the clever people always lose? I need not say that in real sound stupidity the English are unrivaled: you'll hear more wit and better wit in an Irish street row than would keep Westminster Hall in humor for five weeks.

* * * * *

In fact, what we opprobriously call "stupidity," though not an enlivening quality in common society, is nature's favorite resource for preserving steadiness of conduct and consistency of opinion; it enforces concentration: people who learn slowly, learn only what they must. The best security for people's doing their duty is, that they should not know anything else to do; the best security for fixedness of opinion is, that people should be incapable of comprehending what is to be said on the other side. These valuable truths are no discoveries of mine: they are familiar enough to people whose business it is to know them. Hear what a *douce* and aged attorney says of your peculiarly promising barrister:—"Sharp? Oh, yes! he's too sharp by half. He is not *safe*, not a minute, isn't that young man." I extend this, and advisedly maintain that nations, just as individuals, may be too clever to be practical and not dull enough to be free....

Page 193

And what I call a proper stupidity keeps a man from all the defects of this character: it chains the gifted possessor mainly to his old ideas, it takes him seven weeks to comprehend an atom of a new one; it keeps him from being led away by new theories, for there is nothing which bores him so much; it restrains him within his old pursuits, his well-known habits, his tried expedients, his verified conclusions, his traditional beliefs. He is not tempted to levity or impatience, for he does not see the joke and is thick-skinned to present evils. Inconsistency puts him out: "What I says is this here, as I was a-saying yesterday," is his notion of historical eloquence and habitual discretion. He is very slow indeed to be excited,—his passions, his feelings, and his affections are dull and tardy strong things, falling in a certain known direction, fixed on certain known objects, and for the most part acting in a moderate degree and at a sluggish pace. You always know where to find his mind. Now, this is exactly what (in politics at least) you do not know about a Frenchman.

REVIEW WRITING

From 'The First Edinburgh Reviewers'

Review writing exemplifies the casual character of modern literature: everything about it is temporary and fragmentary. Look at a railway stall: you see books of every color,—blue, yellow, crimson, "ring-streaked, speckled, and spotted,"—on every subject, in every style, of every opinion, with every conceivable difference, celestial or sublunary, maleficent, beneficent—but all small. People take their literature in morsels, as they take sandwiches on a journey....

And the change in appearance of books has been accompanied—has been caused—by a similar change in readers. What a transition from the student of former ages! from a grave man with grave cheeks and a considerate eye, who spends his life in study, has no interest in the outward world, hears nothing of its din and cares nothing for its honors, who would gladly learn and gladly teach, whose whole soul is taken up with a few books of 'Aristotle and his Philosophy,'—to the merchant in the railway, with a head full of sums, an idea that tallow is "up," a conviction that teas are "lively," and a mind reverting perpetually from the little volume which he reads to these mundane topics, to the railway, to the shares, to the buying and bargaining universe. We must not wonder that the outside of books is so different, when the inner nature of those for whom they are written is so changed.

In this transition from ancient writing to modern, the review-like essay and the essay-like review fill a large space. Their small bulk, their slight pretension to systematic completeness,—their avowal, it might be said, of necessary incompleteness,—the facility of changing the subject, of selecting points to attack, of exposing only the best corner for defense, are great temptations. Still greater is the advantage

Page 194

of “our limits.” A real reviewer always spends his first and best pages on the parts of a subject on which he wishes to write, the easy comfortable parts which he knows. The formidable difficulties which he acknowledges, you foresee by a strange fatality that he will only reach two pages before the end; to his great grief, there is no opportunity for discussing them. As a young gentleman at the India House examination wrote “Time up” on nine unfinished papers in succession, so you may occasionally read a whole review, in every article of which the principal difficulty of each successive question is about to be reached at the conclusion. Nor can any one deny that this is the suitable skill, the judicious custom of the craft.

LORD ELDON

From ‘The First Edinburgh Reviewers’

As for Lord Eldon, it is the most difficult thing in the world to believe that there ever was such a man; it only shows how intense historical evidence is, that no one really doubts it. He believed in everything which it is impossible to believe in,—in the danger of Parliamentary Reform, the danger of Catholic Emancipation, the danger of altering the Court of Chancery, the danger of altering the courts of law, the danger of abolishing capital punishment for trivial thefts, the danger of making land-owners pay their debts, the danger of making anything more, the danger of making anything less. It seems as if he maturely thought, “Now, I know the present state of things to be consistent with the existence of John Lord Eldon; but if we begin altering that state, I am sure I do not know that it will be consistent.” As Sir Robert Walpole was against all committees of inquiry on the simple ground, “If they once begin that sort of thing, who knows who will be safe?” so that great Chancellor (still remembered in his own scene) looked pleasantly down from the woolsack, and seemed to observe, “Well, it is a queer thing that I should be here, and here I mean to stay.”

TASTE

From ‘Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning’

There is a most formidable and estimable *insane* taste. The will has great though indirect power over the taste, just as it has over the belief. There are some horrid beliefs from which human nature revolts, from which at first it shrinks, to which at first no effort can force it. But if we fix the mind upon them, they have a power over us, just because of their natural offensiveness. They are like the sight of human blood. Experienced soldiers tell us that at first, men are sickened by the smell and newness of blood, almost to death and fainting; but that as soon as they harden their hearts and

stiffen their minds, as soon as they *will* bear it, then comes an appetite for slaughter, a tendency to gloat on carnage, to love blood (at least for the moment) with a deep, eager love. It is a principle that

Page 195

if we put down a healthy instinctive aversion, nature avenges herself by creating an unhealthy insane attraction. For this reason, the most earnest truth-seeking men fall into the worst delusions. They will not let their mind alone; they force it toward some ugly thing, which a crotchet of argument, a conceit of intellect recommends: and nature punishes their disregard of her warning by subjection to the ugly one, by belief in it. Just so, the most industrious critics get the most admiration. They think it unjust to rest in their instinctive natural horror; they overcome it, and angry nature gives them over to ugly poems and marries them to detestable stanzas.

CAUSES OF THE STERILITY OF LITERATURE

From 'Shakespeare, the Man,' etc.

The reason why so few good books are written is, that so few people that can write know anything. In general, an author has always lived in a room, has read books, has cultivated science, is acquainted with the style and sentiments of the best authors, but he is out of the way of employing his own eyes and ears. He has nothing to hear and nothing to see. His life is a vacuum. The mental habits of Robert Southey, which about a year ago were so extensively praised in the public journals, are the type of literary existence, just as the praise bestowed on them shows the admiration excited by them among literary people. He wrote poetry (as if anybody could) before breakfast; he read during breakfast. He wrote history until dinner; he corrected proof-sheets between dinner and tea; he wrote an essay for the Quarterly afterwards; and after supper, by way of relaxation, composed 'The Doctor'—a lengthy and elaborate jest. Now, what can any one think of such a life?—except how clearly it shows that the habits best fitted for communicating information, formed with the best care, and daily regulated by the best motives, are exactly the habits which are likely to afford a man the least information to communicate. Southey had no events, no experiences. His wife kept house and allowed him pocket-money, just as if he had been a German professor devoted to accents, tobacco, and the dates of Horace's amours....

The critic in the 'Vicar of Wakefield' lays down that you should *always* say that the picture would have been better if the painter had taken more pains; but in the case of the practiced literary man, you should often enough say that the writings would have been much better if the writer had taken less pains. He says he has devoted his life to the subject; the reply is, "Then you have taken the best way to prevent your making anything of it. Instead of reading studiously what Burgersdicius and Aenesidemus said men were, you should have gone out yourself and seen (if you can see) what they are." But there is a whole class of minds which prefer the literary delineation of objects to the actual eyesight of them. Such a man would naturally think literature more instructive than life. Hazlitt said of Mackintosh, "He might like to read an *account* of India; but India

itself, with its burning, shining face, would be a mere blank, an endless waste to him. Persons of this class have no more to say to a matter of fact staring them in the face, without a label in its mouth, than they would to a hippopotamus."...

Page 196

After all, the original way of writing books may turn out to be the best. The first author, it is plain, could not have taken anything from books, since there were no books for him to copy from; he looked at things for himself. Anyhow the modern system fails, for where are the amusing books from voracious students and habitual writers?

Moreover, in general, it will perhaps be found that persons devoted to mere literature commonly become devoted to mere idleness. They wish to produce a great work, but they find they cannot. Having relinquished everything to devote themselves to this, they conclude on trial that this is impossible; they wish to write, but nothing occurs to them: therefore they write nothing and they do nothing. As has been said, they have nothing to do; their life has no events, unless they are very poor; with any decent means of subsistence, they have nothing to rouse them from an indolent and musing dream. A merchant must meet his bills, or he is civilly dead and uncivilly remembered; but a student may know nothing of time, and be too lazy to wind up his watch.

THE SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS

From 'William Cowper'

If there be any truly painful fact about the world now tolerably well established by ample experience and ample records, it is that an intellectual and indolent happiness is wholly denied to the children of men. That most valuable author, Lucretius, who has supplied us and others with an almost inexhaustible supply of metaphors on this topic, ever dwells on the life of his gods with a sad and melancholy feeling that no such life was possible on a crude and cumbersome earth. In general, the two opposing agencies are marriage and lack of money; either of these breaks the lot of literary and refined inaction at once and forever. The first of these, as we have seen, Cowper had escaped; his reserved and negligent reveries were still free, at least from the invasion of affection. To this invasion, indeed, there is commonly requisite the acquiescence or connivance of mortality; but all men are born—not free and equal, as the Americans maintain, but, in the Old World at least—basely subjected to the yoke of coin. It is in vain that in this hemisphere we endeavor after impecuniary fancies. In bold and eager youth we go out on our travels: we visit Baalbec and Paphos and Tadmor and Cythera,—ancient shrines and ancient empires, seats of eager love or gentle inspiration; we wander far and long; we have nothing to do with our fellow-men,—what are we, indeed, to diggers and counters? we wander far, we dream to wander forever—but we dream in vain. A surer force than the subtlest fascination of fancy is in operation; the purse-strings tie us to our kind. Our travel coin runs low, and we must return, away from Tadmor and Baalbec, back to our steady, tedious industry and dull work, to “la vieille Europe” (as Napoleon said), “qui m’ennuie.” It is the same in thought: in vain we seclude ourselves in elegant chambers, in fascinating fancies, in refined reflections.

Page 197

ON EARLY READING

From 'Edward Gibbon'

In school work Gibbon had uncommon difficulties and unusual deficiencies; but these were much more than counterbalanced by a habit which often accompanies a sickly childhood, and is the commencement of a studious life,—the habit of desultory reading. The instructiveness of this is sometimes not comprehended. S. T. Coleridge used to say that he felt a great superiority over those who had not read—and fondly read—fairy tales in their childhood: he thought they wanted a sense which he possessed, the perception, or apperception—we do not know which he used to say it was—of the unity and wholeness of the universe. As to fairy tales, this is a hard saying; but as to desultory reading, it is certainly true. Some people have known a time in life when there was no book they could not read. The fact of its being a book went immensely in its favor. In early life there is an opinion that the obvious thing to do with a horse is to ride it; with a cake, to eat it; with sixpence, to spend it. A few boys carry this further, and think the natural thing to do with a book is to read it. There is an argument from design in the subject: if the book was not meant for that purpose, for what purpose was it meant? Of course, of any understanding of the works so perused there is no question or idea. There is a legend of Bentham, in his earliest childhood, climbing to the height of a huge stool, and sitting there evening after evening, with two candles, engaged in the perusal of Rapin's history; it might as well have been any other book. The doctrine of utility had not then dawned on its immortal teacher; *cui bono* was an idea unknown to him. He would have been ready to read about Egypt, about Spain, about coals in Borneo, the teak-wood in India, the current in the River Mississippi, on natural history or human history, on theology or morals, on the state of the Dark Ages or the state of the Light Ages, on Augustulus or Lord Chatham, on the first century or the seventeenth, on the moon, the millennium, or the whole duty of man. Just then, reading is an end in itself. At that time of life you no more think of a future consequence—of the remote, the very remote possibility of deriving knowledge from the perusal of a book, than you expect so great a result from spinning a peg-top. You spin the top, and you read the book; and these scenes of life are exhausted. In such studies, of all prose, perhaps the best is history: one page is so like another, battle No. 1 is so much on a par with battle No. 2. Truth may be, as they say, stranger than fiction, abstractedly; but in actual books, novels are certainly odder and more astounding than correct history.

Page 198

It will be said, What is the use of this? why not leave the reading of great books till a great age? why plague and perplex childhood with complex facts remote from its experience and inapprehensible by its imagination? The reply is, that though in all great and combined facts there is much which childhood cannot thoroughly imagine, there is also in very many a great deal which can only be truly apprehended for the first time at that age. Youth has a principle of consolidation; we begin with the whole. Small sciences are the labors of our manhood; but the round universe is the plaything of the boy. His fresh mind shoots out vaguely and crudely into the infinite and eternal. Nothing is hid from the depth of it; there are no boundaries to its vague and wandering vision. Early science, it has been said, begins in utter nonsense; it would be truer to say that it starts with boyish fancies. How absurd seem the notions of the first Greeks! Who could believe now that air or water was the principle, the pervading substance, the eternal material of all things? Such affairs will never explain a thick rock. And what a white original for a green and sky-blue world! Yet people disputed in these ages not whether it was either of those substances, but which of them it was. And doubtless there was a great deal, at least in quantity, to be said on both sides. Boys are improved; but some in our own day have asked, "Mamma, I say, what did God make the world of?" and several, who did not venture on speech, have had an idea of some one gray primitive thing, felt a difficulty as to how the red came, and wondered that marble could ever have been the same as moonshine. This is in truth the picture of life. We begin with the infinite and eternal, which we shall never apprehend; and these form a framework, a schedule, a set of co-ordinates to which we refer all which we learn later. At first, like the old Greek, "We look up to the whole sky, and are lost in the one and the all;" in the end we classify and enumerate, learn each star, calculate distances, draw cramped diagrams on the unbounded sky, write a paper on a Cygni and a treatise on e Draconis, map special facts upon the indefinite void, and engrave precise details on the infinite and everlasting. So in history: somehow the whole comes in boyhood, the details later and in manhood. The wonderful series, going far back to the times of old patriarchs with their flocks and herds, the keen-eyed Greek, the stately Roman, the watching Jew, the uncouth Goth, the horrid Hun, the settled picture of the unchanging East, the restless shifting of the rapid West, the rise of the cold and classical civilization, its fall, the rough impetuous Middle Ages, the vague warm picture of ourselves and home,—when did we learn these? Not yesterday nor to-day: but long ago, in the first dawn of reason, in the original flow of fancy. What we learn afterwards are but the accurate littlenesses of the great topic, the dates and tedious facts. Those who begin late learn only these; but the happy first feel the mystic associations and the progress of the whole.

Page 199

However exalted may seem the praises which we have given to loose and unplanned reading, we are not saying that it is the sole ingredient of a good education. Besides this sort of education, which some boys will voluntarily and naturally give themselves, there needs, of course, another and more rigorous kind, which must be impressed upon them from without. The terrible difficulty of early life—the use of pastors and masters really is, that they compel boys to a distinct mastery of that which they do not wish to learn. There is nothing to be said for a preceptor who is not dry. Mr. Carlyle describes, with bitter satire, the fate of one of his heroes who was obliged to acquire whole systems of information in which he, the hero, saw no use, and which he kept, as far as might be, in a vacant corner of his mind. And this is the very point: dry language, tedious mathematics, a thumbled grammar, a detested slate form gradually an interior separate intellect, exact in its information, rigid in its requirements, disciplined in its exercises. The two grow together; the early natural fancy touching the far extremities of the universe, lightly playing with the scheme of all things; the precise, compacted memory slowly accumulating special facts, exact habits, clear and painful conceptions. At last, as it were in a moment, the cloud breaks up, the division sweeps away; we find that in fact these exercises which puzzled us, these languages which we hated, these details which we despised, are the instruments of true thought; are the very keys and openings, the exclusive access to the knowledge which we loved.

THE CAVALIERS. Photogravure from a Painting by F. Vinea.

[Illustration]

THE CAVALIERS

From 'Thomas Babington Macaulay'

What historian has ever estimated the Cavalier character? There is Clarendon, the grave, rhetorical, decorous lawyer, piling words, congealing arguments; very stately, a little grim. There is Hume, the Scotch metaphysician, who has made out the best case for such people as never were, for a Charles who never died, for a Strafford who would never have been attainted; a saving, calculating North-country man, fat, impassive, who lived on eightpence a day. What have these people to do with an enjoying English gentleman? It is easy for a doctrinaire to bear a post-mortem examination,—it is much the same whether he be alive or dead; but not so with those who live during their life, whose essence is existence, whose being is in animation. There seem to be some characters who are not made for history, as there are some who are not made for old age. A Cavalier is always young. The buoyant life arises before us, rich in hope, strong in vigor, irregular in action; men young and ardent, "framed in the prodigality of nature"; open to every enjoyment, alive to every passion, eager, impulsive; brave without discipline, noble without principle; prizing luxury, despising danger; capable of high sentiment, but in each of whom the

Page 200

“Addiction was to courses vain,
His companies unlettered, rude, and shallow,
His hours filled up with riots, banquets, sports,
And never noted in him any study,
Any retirement, any sequestration
From open haunts and popularity.”

We see these men setting forth or assembling to defend their king or church, and we see it without surprise; a rich daring loves danger, a deep excitability likes excitement. If we look around us, we may see what is analogous: some say that the battle of the Alma was won by the “uneducated gentry”; the “uneducated gentry” would be Cavaliers now. The political sentiment is part of the character; the essence of Toryism is enjoyment. Talk of the ways of spreading a wholesome conservatism throughout this country! Give painful lectures, distribute weary tracts (and perhaps this is as well,—you may be able to give an argumentative answer to a few objections, you may diffuse a distinct notion of the dignified dullness of politics); but as far as communicating and establishing your creed are concerned, try a little pleasure. The way to keep up old customs is to enjoy old customs; the way to be satisfied with the present state of things is to enjoy that state of things. Over the “Cavalier” mind this world passes with a thrill of delight; there is an exaltation in a daily event, zest in the “regular thing,” joy at an old feast.

MORALITY AND FEAR

From ‘Bishop Butler’

The moral principle (whatever may be said to the contrary by complacent thinkers) is really and to most men a principle of fear. The delights of a good conscience may be reserved for better things, but few men who know themselves will say that they have often felt them by vivid and actual experience; a sensation of shame, of reproach, of remorse, of sin (to use the word we instinctively shrink from because it expresses the meaning), is what the moral principle really and practically thrusts on most men. Conscience is the condemnation of ourselves; we expect a penalty. As the Greek proverb teaches, “where there is shame there is fear”; where there is the deep and intimate anxiety of guilt,—the feeling which has driven murderers and other than murderers forth to wastes and rocks and stones and tempests,—we see, as it were, in a single complex and indivisible sensation, the pain and sense of guilt and the painful anticipation of its punishment. How to be free from this, is the question; how to get loose from this; how to be rid of the secret tie which binds the strong man and cramps his pride, and makes him angry at the beauty of the universe,—which will not let him go forth like a great animal, like the king of the forest, in the glory of his might, but restrains him with an inner fear and a secret foreboding that if he do but exalt himself he shall be abased, if he do but set forth his own dignity he will offend

Page 201

ONE who will deprive him of it. This, as has often been pointed out, is the source of the bloody rites of heathendom. You are going to battle, you are going out in the bright sun with dancing plumes and glittering spear; your shield shines, and your feathers wave, and your limbs are glad with the consciousness of strength, and your mind is warm with glory and renown; with coming glory and unobtained renown: for who are you to hope for these; who are *you* to go forth proudly against the pride of the sun, with your secret sin and your haunting shame and your real fear? First lie down and abase yourself; strike your back with hard stripes; cut deep with a sharp knife, as if you would eradicate the consciousness; cry aloud; put ashes on your head; bruise yourself with stones,—then perhaps God may pardon you. Or, better still (so runs the incoherent feeling), give him something—your ox, your ass, whole hecatombs if you are rich enough; anything, it is but a chance,—you do not know what will please him; at any rate, what you love best yourself,—that is, most likely, your first-born son. Then, after such gifts and such humiliation, he may be appeased, he may let you off; he may without anger let you go forth, Achilles-like, in the glory of your shield; he may *not* send you home as he would else, the victim of rout and treachery, with broken arms and foul limbs, in weariness and humiliation. Of course, it is not this kind of fanaticism that we impute to a prelate of the English Church; human sacrifices are not respectable, and Achilles was not rector of Stanhope. But though the costume and circumstances of life change, the human heart does not; its feelings remain. The same anxiety, the same consciousness of personal sin which led in barbarous times to what has been described, show themselves in civilized life as well. In this quieter period, their great manifestation is scrupulosity: a care about the ritual of life; an attention to meats and drinks, and “cups and washings.” Being so unworthy as we are, feeling what we feel, abased as we are abased, who shall say that those are beneath us? In ardent, imaginative youth they may seem so; but let a few years come, let them dull the will or contract the heart or stain the mind; then the consequent feeling will be, as all experience shows, not that a ritual is too mean, too low, too degrading for human nature, but that it is a mercy we have to do no more,—that we have only to wash in Jordan, that we have not even to go out into the unknown distance to seek for Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus. We have no right to judge; we cannot decide; we must do what is laid down for us,—we fail daily even in this; we must never cease for a moment in our scrupulous anxiety to omit by no tittle and to exceed by no iota.

THE TYRANNY OF CONVENTION

From ‘Sir Robert Peel’

Page 202

It might be said that this [necessity for newspapers and statesmen of following the crowd] is only one of the results of that tyranny of commonplace which seems to accompany civilization. You may talk of the tyranny of Nero and Tiberius; but the real tyranny is the tyranny of your next-door neighbor. What law is so cruel as the law of doing what he does? What yoke is so galling as the necessity of being like him? What espionage of despotism comes to your door so effectually as the eye of the man who lives at your door? Public opinion is a permeating influence, and it exacts obedience to itself; it requires us to think other men's thoughts, to speak other men's words, to follow other men's habits. Of course, if we do not, no formal ban issues; no corporeal pain, no coarse penalty of a barbarous society is inflicted on the offender; but we are called "eccentric"; there is a gentle murmur of "most unfortunate ideas," "singular young man," "well-intentioned, I dare say; but unsafe, sir, quite unsafe."

Whatever truth there may be in these splenetic observations might be expected to show itself more particularly in the world of politics: people dread to be thought unsafe in proportion as they get their living by being thought to be safe. Those who desire a public career must look to the views of the living public; an immediate exterior influence is essential to the exertion of their faculties. The confidence of others is your *fulcrum*: you cannot—many people wish you could—go into Parliament to represent yourself; you must conform to the opinions of the electors, and they, depend on it, will not be original. In a word, as has been most wisely observed, "under free institutions it is necessary occasionally to defer to the opinions of other people; and as other people are obviously in the wrong, this is a great hindrance to the improvement of our political system and the progress of our species."

HOW TO BE AN INFLUENTIAL POLITICIAN

From 'Bolingbroke'

It is very natural that brilliant and vehement men should depreciate Harley; for he had nothing which they possess, but had everything which they commonly do not possess. He was by nature a moderate man. In that age they called such a man a "trimmer," but they called him ill: such a man does not consciously shift or purposely trim his course, —he firmly believes that he is substantially consistent. "I do not wish in this House," he would say in our age, "to be a party to any extreme course. Mr. Gladstone brings forward a great many things which I cannot understand; I assure you he does. There is more in that bill of his about tobacco than he thinks; I am confident there is. Money is a serious thing, a very serious thing. And I am sorry to say Mr. Disraeli commits the party very much: he avows sentiments which are injudicious; I cannot go along with him, nor can Sir John. He was not taught the catechism; I know he was not."

Page 203

There is a want in him of sound and sober religion,—and Sir John agrees with me,—which would keep him from distressing the clergy, who are very important. Great orators are very well; but as I said, how is the revenue? And the point is, not be led away, and to be moderate, and not to go to an extreme. As soon as it seems very clear, then I begin to doubt. I have been many years in Parliament, and that is my experience.” We may laugh at such speeches, but there have been plenty of them in every English Parliament. A great English divine has been described as always leaving out the principle upon which his arguments rested; even if it was stated to him, he regarded it as far-fetched and extravagant. Any politician who has this temper of mind will always have many followers; and he may be nearly sure that all great measures will be passed more nearly as he wishes them to be passed than as great orators wish. Nine-tenths of mankind are more afraid of violence than of anything else; and inconsistent moderation is always popular, because of all qualities it is most opposite to violence,—most likely to preserve the present safe existence.

CONDITIONS OF CABINET GOVERNMENT

From ‘The English Constitution’

The conditions of fitness are two: first, you must get a good legislature; and next, you must keep it good. And these are by no means so nearly connected as might be thought at first sight. To keep a legislature efficient, it must have a sufficient supply of substantial business: if you employ the best set of men to do nearly nothing, they will quarrel with each other about that nothing; where great questions end, little parties begin. And a very happy community, with few new laws to make, few old bad laws to repeal, and but simple foreign relations to adjust, has great difficulty in employing a legislature,—there is nothing for it to enact and nothing for it to settle. Accordingly, there is great danger that the legislature, being debarred from all other kinds of business, may take to quarreling about its elective business; that controversies as to ministries may occupy all its time, and yet that time be perniciously employed; that a constant succession of feeble administrations, unable to govern and unfit to govern, may be substituted for the proper result of cabinet government, a sufficient body of men long enough in power to evince their sufficiency. The exact amount of non-elective business necessary for a parliament which is to elect the executive cannot, of course, be formally stated,—there are no numbers and no statistics in the theory of constitutions; all we can say is, that a parliament with little business, which is to be as efficient as a parliament with much business, must be in all other respects much better. An indifferent parliament may be much improved by the steadying effect of grave affairs; but a parliament which has no such affairs must be intrinsically excellent, or it will fail utterly.

Page 204

But the difficulty of keeping a good legislature is evidently secondary to the difficulty of first getting it. There are two kinds of nations which can elect a good parliament. The first is a nation in which the mass of the people are intelligent, and in which they are comfortable. Where there is no honest poverty, where education is diffused and political intelligence is common, it is easy for the mass of the people to elect a fair legislature. The ideal is roughly realized in the North American colonies of England, and in the whole free States of the Union: in these countries there is no such thing as honest poverty,—physical comfort, such as the poor cannot imagine here, is there easily attainable by healthy industry; education is diffused much, and is fast spreading,—ignorant emigrants from the Old World often prize the intellectual advantages of which they are themselves destitute, and are annoyed at their inferiority in a place where rudimentary culture is so common. The greatest difficulty of such new communities is commonly geographical: the population is mostly scattered; and where population is sparse, discussion is difficult. But in a country very large as we reckon in Europe, a people really intelligent, really educated, really comfortable, would soon form a good opinion. No one can doubt that the New England States, if they were a separate community, would have an education, a political capacity, and an intelligence such as the numerical majority of no people equally numerous has ever possessed: in a State of this sort, where all the community is fit to choose a sufficient legislature, it is possible, it is almost easy, to create that legislature. If the New England States possessed a cabinet government as a separate nation, they would be as renowned in the world for political sagacity as they now are for diffused happiness.

WHY EARLY SOCIETIES COULD NOT BE FREE

From 'Physics and Politics'

I believe the general description in which Sir John Lubbock sums up his estimate of the savage mind suits the patriarchal mind: "Savages," he says, "have the character of children with the passions and strength of men."...

And this is precisely what we should expect. "An inherited drill," science says, "makes modern nations what they are; their born structure bears the trace of the laws of their fathers:" but the ancient nations came into no such inheritance,—they were the descendants of people who did what was right in their own eyes; they were born to no tutored habits, no preservative bonds, and therefore they were at the mercy of every impulse and blown by every passion....

Page 205

Again, I at least cannot call up to myself the loose conceptions (as they must have been) of morals which then existed. If we set aside all the element derived from law and polity which runs through our current moral notions, I hardly know what we shall have left. The residuum was somehow and in some vague way intelligible to the antepolitical man; but it must have been uncertain, wavering, and unfit to be depended upon. In the best cases it existed much as the vague feeling of beauty now exists in minds sensitive but untaught,—a still small voice of uncertain meaning, an unknown something modifying everything else and higher than anything else, yet in form so indistinct that when you looked for it, it was gone; or if this be thought the delicate fiction of a later fancy, then morality was at least to be found in the wild spasms of “wild justice,” half punishment, half outrage: but anyhow, being unfixed by steady law, it was intermittent, vague, and hard for us to imagine....

To sum up:—*Law*—rigid, definite, concise law—is the primary want of early mankind; that which they need above anything else, that which is requisite before they can gain anything else. But it is their greatest difficulty as well as their first requisite; the thing most out of their reach as well as that most beneficial to them if they reach it. In later ages, many races have gained much of this discipline quickly though painfully,—a loose set of scattered clans has been often and often forced to substantial settlement by a rigid conqueror; the Romans did half the work for above half Europe. But where could the first ages find Romans or a conqueror? men conquer by the power of government, and it was exactly government which then was not. The first ascent of civilization was at a steep gradient, though when now we look down upon it, it seems almost nothing.

How the step from no polity to polity was made, distinct history does not record.... But when once polities were begun, there is no difficulty in explaining why they lasted. Whatever may be said against the principle of “natural selection” in other departments, there is no doubt of its predominance in early human history: the strongest killed out the weakest as they could. And I need not pause to prove that any form of polity is more efficient than none; that an aggregate of families owning even a slippery allegiance to a single head would be sure to have the better of a set of families acknowledging no obedience to any one, but scattering loose about the world and fighting where they stood. Homer’s Cyclops would be powerless against the feeblest band; so far from its being singular that we find no other record of that state of man, so unstable and sure to perish was it that we should rather wonder at even a single vestige lasting down to the age when for picturesqueness it became valuable in poetry.

Page 206

But though the origin of polity is dubious, we are upon the *terra firma* of actual records when we speak of the preservation of polities. Perhaps every young Englishman who comes nowadays to Aristotle or Plato is struck with their conservatism: fresh from the liberal doctrines of the present age, he wonders at finding in those recognized teachers so much contrary teaching. They both, unlike as they are, hold with Xenophon so unlike both, that man is “the hardest of all animals to govern.” Of Plato it might indeed be plausibly said that the adherents of an intuitive philosophy, being “the Tories of speculation,” have commonly been prone to conservatism in government; but Aristotle, the founder of the experience philosophy, ought according to that doctrine to have been a Liberal if any one ever was a Liberal. In fact, both of these men lived when men “had not had time to forget” the difficulties of government: we have forgotten them altogether. We reckon as the basis of our culture upon an amount of order, of tacit obedience, of prescriptive governability, which these philosophers hoped to get as a principal result of their culture; we take without thought as a *datum* what they hunted as a *quaesitum*.

In early times the quantity of government is much more important than its quality. What you want is a comprehensive rule binding men together, making them do much the same things, telling them what to expect of each other,—fashioning them alike and keeping them so: what this rule is, does not matter so much. A good rule is better than a bad one, but any rule is better than none; while, for reasons which a jurist will appreciate, none can be very good. But to gain that rule, what may be called the “impressive” elements of a polity are incomparably more important than its useful elements. How to get the obedience of men, is the hard problem; what you do with that obedience is less critical.

To gain that obedience, the primary condition is the identity—not the union, but the sameness—of what we now call “church” and “state.”... No division of power is then endurable without danger, probably without destruction: the priest must not teach one thing and the king another; king must be priest and prophet king,—the two must say the same because they are the same. The idea of difference between spiritual penalties and legal penalties must never be awakened,—indeed, early Greek thought or early Roman thought would never have comprehended it; there was a kind of rough public opinion, and there were rough—very rough—hands which acted on it. We now talk of “political penalties” and “ecclesiastical prohibition” and “the social censure”; but they were all one then. Nothing is very like those old communities now, but perhaps a trades-union is as near as most things: to work cheap is thought to be a “wicked” thing, and so some Broadhead puts it down.

Page 207

The object of such organizations is to create what may be called a *cake* of custom. All the actions of life are to be submitted to a single rule for a single object,—that gradually created “hereditary drill” which science teaches to be essential, and which the early instinct of men saw to be essential too. That this *regime* forbids free thought is not an evil,—or rather, though an evil, it is the necessary basis for the greatest good; it is necessary for making the mold of civilization and hardening the soft fibre of early man.

BENEFITS OF FREE DISCUSSION IN MODERN TIMES

From ‘Physics and Politics’

In this manner polities of discussion broke up the old bonds of custom which were now strangling mankind, though they had once aided and helped it; but this is only one of the many gifts which those polities have conferred, are conferring, and will confer on mankind. I am not going to write a eulogium on liberty, but I wish to set down three points which have not been sufficiently noticed.

Civilized ages inherit the human nature which was victorious in barbarous ages, and that nature is in many respects not at all suited to civilized circumstances. A main and principal excellence in the early times of the human races is the impulse to action. The problems before men are then plain and simple: the man who works hardest, the man who kills the most deer, the man who catches the most fish—even later on, the man who tends the largest herds or the man who tills the largest field—is the man who succeeds; the nation which is quickest to kill its enemies or which kills most of its enemies is the nation which succeeds. All the inducements of early society tend to foster immediate action, all its penalties fall on the man who pauses; the traditional wisdom of those times was never weary of inculcating that “delays are dangerous,” and that the sluggish man—the man “who roasteth not that which he took in hunting”—will not prosper on the earth, and indeed will very soon perish out of it: and in consequence an inability to stay quiet, an irritable desire to act directly, is one of the most conspicuous failings of mankind.

Pascal said that most of the evils of life arose from “man’s being unable to sit still in a room”; and though I do not go that length, it is certain that we should have been a far wiser race than we are if we had been readier to sit quiet,—we should have known much better the way in which it was best to act when we came to act. The rise of physical science, the first great body of practical truth provable to all men, exemplifies this in the plainest way: if it had not been for quiet people who sat still and studied the sections of the cone, if other quiet people had not sat still and studied the theory of infinitesimals, or other quiet people had not sat still and worked out the doctrine of chances (the most “dreamy moonshine,” as the purely

Page 208

practical mind would consider, of all human pursuits), if “idle star-gazers” had not watched long and carefully the motions of the heavenly bodies,—our modern astronomy would have been impossible, and without our astronomy “our ships, our colonies, our seamen,” all which makes modern life modern life, could not have existed. Ages of sedentary, quiet, thinking people were required before that noisy existence began, and without those pale preliminary students it never could have been brought into being. And nine-tenths of modern science is in this respect the same: it is the produce of men whom their contemporaries thought dreamers, who were laughed at for caring for what did not concern them, who as the proverb went “walked into a well from looking at the stars,” who were believed to be useless if any one could be such. And the conclusion is plain that if there had been more such people, if the world had not laughed at those there were, if rather it had encouraged them, there would have been a great accumulation of proved science ages before there was. It was the irritable activity, the “wish to be doing something,” that prevented it,—most men inherited a nature too eager and too restless to be quiet and find out things: and even worse, with their idle clamor they “disturbed the brooding hen”; they would not let those be quiet who wished to be so, and out of whose calm thought much good might have come forth.

If we consider how much science has done and how much it is doing for mankind, and if the over-activity of men is proved to be the cause why science came so late into the world and is so small and scanty still, that will convince most people that our over-activity is a very great evil; but this is only part and perhaps not the greatest part, of the harm that over-activity does. As I have said, it is inherited from times when life was simple, objects were plain, and quick action generally led to desirable ends: if A kills B before B kills A, then A survives, and the human race is a race of A's. But the issues of life are plain no longer: to act rightly in modern society requires a great deal of previous study, a great deal of assimilated information, a great deal of sharpened imagination; and these prerequisites of sound action require much time, and I was going to say much “lying in the sun,” a long period of “mere passiveness.”

[Argument to show that the same vice of impatience damages war, philanthropy, commerce, and even speculation.]

But it will be said, What has government by discussion to do with these things? will it prevent them, or even mitigate them? It can and does do both, in the very plainest way. If you want to stop instant and immediate action, always make it a condition that the action shall not begin till a considerable number of persons have talked over it and have agreed on it. If those persons be people of different temperaments, different ideas, and different educations, you have an almost infallible security that nothing

Page 209

or almost nothing will be done with excessive rapidity. Each kind of persons will have their spokesman; each spokesman will have his characteristic objection and each his characteristic counter-proposition: and so in the end nothing will probably be done, or at least only the minimum which is plainly urgent. In many cases this delay may be dangerous, in many cases quick action will be preferable; a campaign, as Macaulay well says, cannot be directed by a “debating society,” and many other kinds of action also require a single and absolute general: but for the purpose now in hand—that of preventing hasty action and insuring elaborate consideration—there is no device like a polity of discussion.

The enemies of this object—the people who want to act quickly—see this very distinctly: they are forever explaining that the present is “an age of committees,” that the committees do nothing, that all evaporates in talk. Their great enemy is parliamentary government: they call it, after Mr. Carlyle, the “national palaver”; they add up the hours that are consumed in it and the speeches which are made in it, and they sigh for a time when England might again be ruled, as it once was, by a Cromwell,—that is, when an eager absolute man might do exactly what other eager men wished, and do it immediately. All these invectives are perpetual and many-sided; they come from philosophers each of whom wants some new scheme tried, from philanthropists who want some evil abated, from revolutionists who want some old institution destroyed, from new-eraists who want their new era started forthwith: and they all are distinct admissions that a polity of discussion is the greatest hindrance to the inherited mistake of human nature,—to the desire to act promptly, which in a simple age is so excellent, but which in a later and complex time leads to so much evil.

The same accusation against our age sometimes takes a more general form: it is alleged that our energies are diminishing, that ordinary and average men have not the quick determination nowadays which they used to have when the world was younger, that not only do not committees and parliaments act with rapid decisiveness, but that no one now so acts; and I hope that in fact this is true, for according to me it proves that the hereditary barbaric impulse is decaying and dying out. So far from thinking the quality attributed to us a defect, I wish that those who complain of it were far more right than I much fear they are. Still, certainly, eager and violent action *is* somewhat diminished, though only by a small fraction of what it ought to be; and I believe that this is in great part due, in England at least, to our government by discussion, which has fostered a general intellectual tone, a diffused disposition to weigh evidence, a conviction that much may be said on every side of everything which the elder and more fanatic ages of the world wanted. This is the real reason why

Page 210

our energies seem so much less than those of our fathers. When we have a definite end in view, which we know we want and which we think we know how to obtain, we can act well enough: the campaigns of our soldiers are as energetic as any campaigns ever were; the speculations of our merchants have greater promptitude, greater audacity, greater vigor than any such speculations ever had before. In old times a few ideas got possession of men and communities, but this is happily now possible no longer: we see how incomplete these old ideas were; how almost by chance one seized on one nation and another on another; how often one set of men have persecuted another set for opinions on subjects of which neither, we now perceive, knew anything. It might be well if a greater number of effectual demonstrations existed among mankind: but while no such demonstrations exist, and while the evidence which completely convinces one man seems to another trifling and insufficient, let us recognize the plain position of inevitable doubt; let us not be bigots with a doubt and persecutors without a creed. We are beginning to see this, and we are railed at for so beginning: but it is a great benefit, and it is to the incessant prevalence of detective discussion that our doubts are due; and much of that discussion is due to the long existence of a government requiring constant debates, written and oral.

ORIGIN OF DEPOSIT BANKING

From 'Lombard Street'

In the last century, a favorite subject of literary ingenuity was "conjectural history," as it was then called: upon grounds of probability, a fictitious sketch was made of the possible origin of things existing. If this kind of speculation were now applied to banking, the natural and first idea would be that large systems of deposit banking grew up in the early world just as they grow up now in any large English colony. As soon as any such community becomes rich enough to have much money, and compact enough to be able to lodge its money in single banks, it at once begins so to do. English colonists do not like the risk of keeping their money, and they wish to make an interest on it; they carry from home the idea and the habit of banking, and they take to it as soon as they can in their new world. Conjectural history would be inclined to say that all banking began thus; but such history is rarely of any value,—the basis of it is false. It assumes that what works most easily when established is that which it would be the most easy to establish, and that what seems simplest when familiar would be most easily appreciated by the mind though unfamiliar; but exactly the contrary is true,—many things which seem simple, and which work well when firmly established, are very hard to establish among new people and not very easy to explain to them. Deposit banking is of this sort. Its essence is, that a very large number of persons agree to trust a very few persons, or some one person: banking would not be a profitable trade if bankers were not a small number, and depositors in comparison an immense number.

But to get a great number of persons to do exactly the same thing is always very difficult, and nothing but a very palpable necessity will make them on a sudden begin to do it; and there is no such palpable necessity in banking.

Page 211

If you take a country town in France, even now, you will not find any such system of banking as ours: check-books are unknown, and money kept on running account by bankers is rare: people store their money in a *caisse* at their houses. Steady savings, which are waiting for investment and which are sure not to be soon wanted, may be lodged with bankers; but the common floating cash of the community is kept by the community themselves at home,—they prefer to keep it so, and it would not answer a banker's purpose to make expensive arrangements for keeping it otherwise. If a "branch," such as the National Provincial Bank opens in an English country town, were opened in a corresponding French one, it would not pay its expenses: you could not get any sufficient number of Frenchmen to agree to put their money there.

And so it is in all countries not of British descent, though in various degrees. Deposit banking is a very difficult thing to begin, because people do not like to let their money out of their sight; especially, do not like to let it out of sight without security; still more, cannot all at once agree on any single person to whom they are content to trust it unseen and unsecured. Hypothetical history, which explains the past by what is simplest and commonest in the present, is in banking, as in most things, quite untrue.

The real history is very different. New wants are mostly supplied by adaptation, not by creation or foundation; something having been created to satisfy an extreme want, it is used to satisfy less pressing wants or to supply additional conveniences. On this account, political government, the oldest institution in the world, has been the hardest worked: at the beginning of history, we find it doing everything which society wants done and forbidding everything which society does *not* wish done. In trade, at present, the first commerce in a new place is a general shop, which, beginning with articles of real necessity, comes shortly to supply the oddest accumulation of petty comforts. And the history of banking has been the same: the first banks were not founded for our system of deposit banking, or for anything like it; they were founded for much more pressing reasons, and having been founded, they or copies from them were applied to our modern uses.

[Gives a sketch of banks started as finance companies to make or float government loans, and to give good coin; and sketches their function of remitting money.]

These are all uses other than those of deposit banking, which banks supplied that afterwards became in our English sense deposit banks: by supplying these uses, they gained the credit that afterwards enabled them to gain a living as deposit banks; being trusted for one purpose, they came to be trusted for a purpose quite different,—ultimately far more important, though at first less keenly pressing. But these wants only affect a few persons, and therefore bring the bank under the notice of a few only. The real introductory function which deposit banks at first perform is much more popular; and it is only when they can perform this most popular kind of business that deposit banking ever spreads quickly and extensively.

Page 212

This function is the supply of the paper circulation to the country; and it will be observed that I am not about to overstep my limits and discuss this as a question of currency. In what form the best paper currency can be supplied to a country is a question of economical theory with which I do not meddle here: I am only narrating unquestionable history, not dealing with an argument where every step is disputed; and part of this certain history is, that the best way to diffuse banking in a community is to allow the banker to issue bank notes of small amount that can supersede the metal currency. This amounts to a subsidy to each banker to enable him to keep open a bank till depositors choose to come to it...

The reason why the use of bank paper commonly precedes the habit of making deposits in banks is very plain: it is a far easier habit to establish. In the issue of notes the banker, the person to be most benefited, can do something,—he can pay away his own “promises” in loans, in wages, or in payment of debts,—but in the getting of deposits he is passive; his issues depend on himself, his deposits on the favor of others. And to the public the change is far easier too: to collect a great mass of deposits with the same banker, a great number of persons must agree to do something; but to establish a note circulation, a large number of persons need only *do nothing*,—they receive the banker’s notes in the common course of their business, and they have only *not* to take those notes to the banker for payment. If the public refrain from taking trouble, a paper circulation is immediately in existence. A paper circulation is begun by the banker, and requires no effort on the part of the public,—on the contrary, it needs an effort of the public to be rid of notes once issued; but deposit banking cannot be begun by the banker, and requires a spontaneous and consistent effort in the community: and therefore paper issue is the natural prelude to deposit banking.

JENS BAGGESEN

(1764-1826)

Jens Baggesen was born in the little Danish town Korsøer in 1764, and died in exile in the year 1826. Thus he belonged to two centuries and to two literary periods. He had reached manhood when the French Revolution broke out; he witnessed Napoleon’s rise, his victories, and his fall. He was a full contemporary of Goethe, who survived him only six years; he saw English literature glory in men like Byron and Moore, and lived to hear of Byron’s death in Greece. In his first works he stood a true representative of the culture and literature of the eighteenth century, and was hailed as its exponent by the Danish poet Herman Wessel; towards the end of the century he was acknowledged to be the greatest of living Danish poets. Then with the new age came the Norwegian, Henrik Steffens, with his enthusiastic lectures on German romanticism, calling out the genius of Oehlenschläger, and the eighteenth century was doomed; Baggesen nevertheless greeted Oehlenschläger with sincere admiration, and when the ‘Aladdin’

of that poet appeared, Baggesen sent him his rhymed letter 'From Nureddin-Baggesen to Aladdin-Oehlenschlaeger.'

Page 213

[Illustration: Jens Baggesen.]

Baggesen was the son of poor people, and strangers helped him to his scientific education. When his first works were recognized he became the friend and protege of the Duke of Augustenborg, who provided him with the means for an extended journey through the Continent, during which he met the greatest men of his time. The Duke of Augustenborg meanwhile secured him several positions, which could not hold him for any length of time, nor keep him at home in Denmark. He went abroad a second time to study pedagogics, literature, and philosophy, came home again, wandered forth once more, returned a widower, was for some time director of the National Theatre in Copenhagen; but found no rest, married again, and in 1800 went to France to live. Eleven years later he was professor in Kiel, returning thence to Copenhagen, where meanwhile his fame had been eclipsed by the genius of Oehlenschlaeger. Secure in the knowledge of his powers, Oehlenschlaeger had carelessly published two or three dramatic poems not worthy of his pen, and Baggesen entered on a violent controversy with him in which he stood practically by himself against the entire reading public, whose sympathies were with Oehlenschlaeger. Alone and misunderstood, restless and unhappy, he left Denmark in 1820, never to return. Six years later he died, longing to see his country again, but unable to reach it.

His first poetry was published in 1785, a volume of 'Comic Tales,' which made its mark at once. The following year appeared in quick succession satires, rhymed epistles, and elegies, which, adding to his fame, added also to the purposeless ferment and unrest which had taken possession of him. He considered tragedy his proper field, yet had allowed himself to appear as humorist and satirist.

When the great historic events of the time took place, and over-threw all existing conditions, this inner restlessness drove him to and fro without purpose or will. One day he was enthusiastic over Voss's idyls, the next he was carried away by Robespierre's wildest speeches. One year he adopted Kant's Christian name Immanuel in transport over his works, the next he called the great philosopher "an empty nut, and moreover hard to crack." The romanticism in Denmark as well as in Germany reduced him to a state of utter confusion; but in spite of this he continued a child of the old order, which was already doomed. And with all his unrest and discord he remained nevertheless the champion of "form," "the poet of the graces," as he has been called.

Page 214

This gift of form has given him his literary importance. He built a bridge from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century; and when the new romantic school overstepped its privileges, it was he who called it to order. The most conspicuous act of his literary life was the controversy with Oehlenschlaeger, and the wittiest product of his pen is the reckless criticism of Oehlenschlaeger's opera 'Ludlam's Cave.' Johann Ludvig Heiberg, the greatest analytical critic of whom Denmark can boast, remained Baggesen's ardent admirer; and Heiberg's influential although not always just criticism of Oehlenschlaeger as a poet was no doubt called forth by Baggesen's attack. Some years later Henrik Hertz made Baggesen his subject. In 1830 appeared 'Letters from Ghosts,' poetic epistles from Paradise. Nobody knew that Hertz was the author. It was Baggesen's voice from beyond the grave, Baggesen's criticism upon the literature of 1830. It was one of the wittiest, and in versification one of the best, books in Danish literature.

Baggesen's most important prose work is 'The Labyrinth,' afterwards called 'The Wanderings of a Poet.' It is a poetic description of his journeys, unique in its way, rich in impressions and full of striking remarks, written in a piquant, graceful, and easy style.

As long as Danish literature remains, Baggesen's name will be known; though his writings are not now widely read, and are important chiefly because of their influence on the literary spirit of his own time. His familiar poem 'There was a time when I was very little,' during the controversy with Oehlenschlaeger, was seized upon by Paul Moeller, parodied, and changed into 'There was a time when Jens was much bigger.' Equally well known is his 'Ode to My Country,' with the familiar lines:—

"Alas, in no place is the thorn as tiny,
Alas, in no place blooms as red a rose,
Alas, in no place is there couch as downy
As where we little children found repose."

A COSMOPOLITAN

From 'The Labyrinth'

Forster, a little nervous, alert, and piquant man, with gravity written on his forehead, perspicacity in his eye, and love around his lips, conquered me completely. I spoke to him of everything except his journeys; but the traveler showed himself full of unmistakable humanity. He seemed to me the cosmopolitan spirit personified. It was as if the world were present when I was alone with him.

We talked about his friend Jacobi, about the late King of Prussia, about the literature of Germany, and about the present Pole-high standard of taste. I was much pleased to find in him the art critic I sought. He said that we must admire everything which is good and beautiful, whether it originates West, East, South, or North. The taste of the bee is

the true one. Difference in language and climate, difference of nationality, must not affect

Page 215

my interest in fair and noble things. The unknown repels the animal, but should not repel the human creature. Suppose you say that Voltaire is animal in comparison with Shakespeare or Klopstock, or that they are animal in comparison with him: it is a blunder to demand pears of an apple-tree, as it is ridiculous to throw away the apple because it is not a pear. The entire world of nature teaches us this aesthetic tolerance, and yet we have as little acquired it as we have freedom of conscience. We plant white and red roses in the same bed, but who puts the 'Messiah' and the 'Henriade' on the same shelf? He only who reads neither the one nor the other. True religion worships God; true taste worships the beautiful without regard of person or nation. German? French? Italian? or English? All the same! But nothing mediocre.

I was flushed with pleasure; I gave him my hand. "That may be said of other things than poetry!" I said.—"Of all art!" he answered.—"Of all that is human!" we both concluded.

Deplorable indolence which clothes our mind in the first heavy cloak ready to hand, so that all the sunbeams of the world cannot persuade us to throw it off, much less to assume another! The man who is exclusively a nationalist is a snail forever chained to his house. Psyche had wings given her for a never-ending, eternal flight. We may not imprison her, be the cage ever so large.

He considered that Lessing had wronged the great representative of the French language; and the remark of Claudius, "Voltaire says he weeps, and Shakespeare does weep," appeared to him like the saying, "Much that is new and beautiful has M. Arouet said; but it is a pity that the beautiful is not new and the new not beautiful,"—more witty than true. The English think that Shakespeare, as the Germans think that Lessing, really weeps; the French think the same of Voltaire. But the first weeps for the whole world, it is said, the last only for his own people. What the French call "Le Nord" is, to be sure, rather a large territory, but not the entire world! France calls "whimpering" in one case and "blubbering" in another what we call weeping. The general mistake is that we do not understand the nature of the people and the language, in which and for whom the weeping is done.

We must be English when we read Shakespeare, German when we read Klopstock, French when we read Voltaire. The man whose soul cannot shed its national costume and don that of other nations ought not to read, much less to judge, their masterpieces. He will be looking at the moon by day and at the sun by night, and see the first without lustre and the last not at all.

PHILOSOPHY ON THE HEATH

From 'The Labyrinth'

Page 216

Caillard was a man of experience, taste, and knowledge. He told me the story of his life from beginning to end, he confided to me his principles and his affairs, and I took him to be the happiest man in the world. "I have everything," he said, "all that I have wished for or can wish for: health, riches, domestic peace (being unmarried), a tolerably good conscience, books—and as much sense as I need to enjoy them. I experience only one single want, lack only one single pleasure in this world; but that one is enough to embitter my life and class me with other unfortunates."

I could not guess what might yet be wanting to such a man under such conditions, "It cannot be liberty," I said, "for how can a rich merchant in a free town lack this?"

"No! Heaven save me—I neither would nor could live one single day without liberty."

"You do not happen to be in love with some cruel or unhappy princess?"

"That is still less the case."

"Ah!—now I have it, no doubt—your soul is consumed with a thirst for truth, for a satisfactory answer to the many questions which are but philosophic riddles. You are seeking what so many brave men from Anaxagoras to Spinoza have sought in vain—the corner-stone of philosophy, the foundation of the structure of our ideas."

He assured me that in this respect he was quite at ease. "Then, in spite of your good health, you must be subject to that miserable thing, a cold in the head?" I said.

"Uno minor—Jove, dives
Liber, honoratus, pulcher rex denique regum,
Praecipue sanus—nisi cum pituita molesta est."

—HORACE.

When he denied this too, I gave up trying to solve the meaning of his dark words.

O happiness! of all earthly chimeras thou art the most chimerical! I would rather seek dry figs on the bottom of the sea and fresh ones on this heath,—I would rather seek liberty, or truth itself, or the philosopher's stone, than to run after thee, most deceitful of lights, will-o'-the-wisp of our human life!

I thought that at last I had found a perfectly happy, an enviable man; and now—behold! though I have not the ten-thousandth part of his wealth, though I have not the tenth part of his health, though I may not have a third of his intellect, although I have all the wants which he has not and the one want under which he suffers, yet I would not change places with him!

From this moment he was the object of my sincerest pity. But what did this awful curse prove to be? Listen and tremble!

“Of what use is it all to me?” he said: “coffee, which I love more than all the wines of this earth and more than all the women of this earth, coffee which I love madly—coffee is forbidden me!”

Laugh who lists! Inasmuch as everything in this world, viewed in a certain light, is tragic, it would be excusable to weep: but inasmuch as everything viewed in another light is comic, a little laughter could not be taken amiss; only beware of laughing at the sigh with which my happy man pronounced these words, for it might be that in laughing at him you laugh at yourself, your father, your grandfather, your great-grandfather, your great-great-grandfather, and so on, including your entire family as far back as Adam.

Page 217

If, in laughing at such discontent, you laugh in advance at your son, your son's son's son, and so forth to the last descendant of your entire family, this is a matter which I do not decide. It will depend upon the road humanity chooses to take. If it continues as it is going, some coffee-want or other will forever strew it with thorns.

Had he said, "Chocolate is forbidden me," or tea, or English ale, or madeira, or strawberries, you would have found his misery equally absurd.

The great Alexander is said to have wept because he found no more worlds to conquer. The man who bemoans the loss of a world and the man who bemoans the loss of coffee are to my mind equally unbalanced and equally in need of forgiveness. The desire for a cup of coffee and the desire for a crown, the hankering after the flavor or even the fragrance of the drink and the hankering after fame, are equally mad and equally—human.

If history is to be believed, Adam possessed all the advantages and comforts, all the necessities and luxuries a first man could reasonably demand.... Lord of all living things, and sharing his dominion with his beloved, what did he lack?

Among ten thousand pleasures, the fruit of one single tree was forbidden him. Good-by content and peace! Good-by forever all his bliss!

I acknowledge that I should have yielded to the same temptation; and he who does not see that this fate would have overtaken his entire family, past and to come, may have studied all things from the Milky Way in the sky to the milky way in his kitchen, may have studied all stones, plants, and animals, and all folios and quartos dealing therewith, but never himself or man.

As we do not know the nature of the fruit which Adam could not do without, it may as well have been coffee as any other. That it was pleasant to the eyes means no more than that it was forbidden. Every forbidden thing is pleasant to the eyes.

"Of what use is it all to me?" said Adam, looking around him in Eden, at the rising sun, the blushing hills, the light-green forest, the glorious waterfall, the laden fruit-trees, and, most beautiful of all, the smiling woman—"of what use is it all to me, when I dare not taste this—coffee bean?"

"And of what use is it all to me?" said Mr. Caillard, and looked around him on the Lueneburg heath: "coffee is forbidden me; one single cup of coffee would kill me."

"If it will be any comfort to you," I said, "I may tell you that I am in the same case." "And you do not despair at times?"—"No," I replied, "for it is not my only want. If like you I had everything else in life, I also might despair."

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I WAS VERY LITTLE



There was a time, when I, an urchin slender,
Could hardly boast of having any height.
Oft I recall those days with feelings tender;
With smiles, and yet the tear-drops dim my sight.

Within my tender mother's arms I sported,
I played at horse upon my grandsire's knee;
Sorrow and care and anger, ill-reported,
As little known as gold or Greek, to me.

Page 218

The world was little to my childish thinking,
And innocent of sin and sinful things;
I saw the stars above me flashing, winking—
To fly and catch them, how I longed for wings!

I saw the moon behind the hills declining,
And thought, O were I on yon lofty ground,
I'd learn the truth; for here there's no divining
How large it is, how beautiful, how round!

In wonder, too, I saw God's sun pursuing
His westward course, to ocean's lap of gold;
And yet at morn the East he was renewing
With wide-spread, rosy tints, this artist old.

Then turned my thoughts to God the Father gracious,
Who fashioned me and that great orb on high,
And the night's jewels, decking heaven spacious;
From pole to pole its arch to glorify.

With childish piety my lips repeated
The prayer learned at my pious mother's knee:
Help me remember, Jesus, I entreated,
That I must grow up good and true to Thee!

Then for the household did I make petition,
For kindred, friends, and for the town's folk, last;
The unknown King, the outcast, whose condition
Darkened my childish joy, as he slunk past.

All lost, all vanished, childhood's days so eager!
My peace, my joy with them have fled away;
I've only memory left: possession meagre;
Oh, never may that leave me, Lord, I pray.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY

(1816-)

In Bailey we have a striking instance of the man whose reputation is made suddenly by a single work, which obtains an amazing popularity, and which is presently almost forgotten except as a name. When in 1839 the long poem 'Festus' appeared, its author was an unknown youth, who had hardly reached his majority. Within a few months he was a celebrity. That so dignified and suggestive a performance should have come

from so young a poet was considered a marvel of precocity by the literary world, both English and American.

The author of 'Festus' was born at Basford, Nottinghamshire, England, April 22nd, 1816. Educated at the public schools of Nottingham, and at Glasgow University, he studied law, and at nineteen entered Lincoln's Inn. In 1840 he was admitted to the bar. But his vocation in life appears to have been metaphysical and spiritual rather than legal.

His 'Festus: a Poem,' containing fifty-five episodes or successive scenes,—some thirty-five thousand lines,—was begun in his twentieth year. Three years later it was in the hands of the English reading public. Like Goethe's 'Faust' in pursuing the course of a human soul through influences emanating from the Supreme Good and the Supreme Evil; in having Heaven and the World as its scene; in its inclusion of God and the Devil, the Archangels and Angels, the

Page 219

Powers of Perdition, and withal many earthly types in its action,—it is by no means a mere imitation of the great German. Its plan is wider. It incorporates even more impressive spiritual material than 'Faust' offers. Not only is its mortal hero, Festus, conducted through an amazing pilgrimage, spiritual and redeemed by divine Love, but we have in the poem a conception of close association with Christianity, profound ethical suggestions, a flood of theology and philosophy, metaphysics and science, picturing Good and Evil, love and hate, peace and war, the past, the present, and the future, earth, heaven, and hell, heights and depths, dominions, principalities, and powers, God and man, the whole of being and of not-being,—all in an effort to unmask the last and greatest secrets of Infinity. And more than all this, 'Festus' strives to portray the sufficiency of Divine Love and of the Divine Atonement to dissipate, even to annihilate, Evil. For even Lucifer and the hosts of darkness are restored to purity and to peace among the Sons of God, the Children of Light! The Love of God is set forth as limitless. We have before us the birth of matter at the Almighty's fiat; and we close the work with the salvation and ecstasy—described as decreed from the Beginning—of whatever creature hath been given a spiritual existence, and made a spiritual subject and agency. There is in the doctrine of 'Festus' no such thing as the "Son of Perdition" who shall be an ultimate castaway.

Few English poems have attracted more general notice from all intelligent classes of readers than did 'Festus' on its advent. Orthodoxy was not a little aghast at its theologic suggestions. Criticism of it as a literary production was hampered not a little by religious sensitiveness. The London Literary Gazette said of it:—"It is an extraordinary production, out-Heroding Kant in some of its philosophy, and out-Goetheing Goethe in the introduction of the Three Persons of the Trinity as interlocutors in its wild plot. Most objectionable as it is on this account, it yet contains so many exquisite passages of genuine poetry, that our admiration of the author's genius overpowers the feeling of mortification at its being misapplied, and meddling with such dangerous topics." The advance of liberal ideas within the churches has diminished such criticism, but the work is still a stumbling-block to the less speculative of sectaries.

The poem is far too long, and its scope too vast for even a genius of much higher and riper gifts than Bailey's. It is turgid, untechnical in verse, wordy, and involved. Had Bailey written at fifty instead of at twenty, it might have shown a necessary balance and felicity of style. But, with all these shortcomings, it is not to be relegated to the library of things not worth the time to know, to the list of bulky poetic failures. Its author blossomed and fruited marvelously early; so early and with such unlooked-for fruit that the unthinking

Page 220

world, which first received him with exaggerated honor, presently assailed him with undue dispraise. 'Festus' is not mere solemn and verbose commonplace. Here and there it has passages of great force and even of high beauty. The author's whole heart and brain were poured into it, and neither was a common one. With all its ill-based daring and manifest crudities, it was such a *tour de force* for a lad of twenty as the world seldom sees. Its sluggish current bears along remarkable knowledge, great reflection, and the imagination of a fertile as well as a precocious brain. It is a stream which carries with it things new and old, and serves to stir the mind of the onlooker with unwonted thoughts. Were it but one fourth as long, it would still remain a favorite poem. Even now it has passed through numerous editions, and been but lately republished in sumptuous form after fifty years of life; and in the catalogue of higher metaphysico-religious poetry it will long maintain an honorable place. It is cited here among the books whose fame rather than whose importance *demand* recognition.

FROM 'FESTUS'

LIFE

Festus—Men's callings all Are mean and vain; their wishes more so: oft The man is bettered by his part or place. How slight a chance may raise or sink a soul!

Lucifer—What men call accident is God's own part.
He lets ye work your will—it is his own:
But that ye mean not, know not, do not, he doth.

Festus—What is life worth without a heart to feel The great and lovely harmonies which time And nature change responsive, all writ out By preconcertive hand which swells the strain To divine fulness; feel the poetry, The soothing rhythm of life's fore-ordered lay; The sacredness of things?—for all things are Sacred so far,—the worst of them, as seen By the eye of God, they in the aspect bide Of holiness: nor shall outlaw sin be slain, Though rebel banned, within the sceptre's length; But privileged even for service. Oh! to stand Soul-raptured, on some lofty mountain-thought, And feel the spirit expand into a view Millennial, life-exalting, of a day When earth shall have all leisure for high ends Of social culture; ends a liberal law And common peace of nations, blent with charge Divine, shall win for man, were joy indeed: Nor greatly less, to know what might be now, Worked will for good with power, for one brief hour. But look at these, these individual souls: How sadly men show out of joint with man! There are millions never think a noble thought; But with brute hate of brightness bay a mind Which drives the darkness out of them, like hounds. Throw but a false glare round them, and in shoals They rush upon perdition: that's the race. What charm is in this world-scene to such minds? Blinded by dust? What can they do in heaven, A state of spiritual means and ends? Thus must I

Page 221

doubt—perpetually doubt.*Lucifer*—Who never doubted never half believed. Where doubt, there truth is—'tis her shadow. I Declare unto thee that the past is not. I have looked over all life, yet never seen The age that had been. Why then fear or dream About the future? Nothing but what is, is; Else God were not the Maker that he seems, As constant in creating as in being. Embrace the present. Let the future pass. Plague not thyself about a future. That Only which comes direct from God, his spirit, Is deathless. Nature gravitates without Effort; and so all mortal natures fall Deathwards. All aspiration is a toil; But inspiration cometh from above, And is no labor. The earth's inborn strength Could never lift her up to yon stars, whence She fell; nor human soul, by native worth, Claim heaven as birthright, more than man may call Cloudland his home. The soul's inheritance, Its birth-place, and its death-place, is of earth; Until God maketh earth and soul anew; The one like heaven, the other like himself. So shall the new creation come at once; Sin, the dead branch upon the tree of life Shall be cut off forever; and all souls Concluded in God's boundless amnesty.

Festus—Thou windest and unwindest faith at will.
What am I to believe?

Lucifer— Thou mayest believe
But that thou art forced to.

Festus— Then I feel, perforce,
That instinct of immortal life in me,
Which prompts me to provide for it.

Lucifer— Perhaps. *Festus*—Man hath a knowledge of a time to come— His most important knowledge: the weight lies Nearest the short end; and the world depends Upon what is to be. I would deny The present, if the future. Oh! there is A life to come, or all's a dream.*Lucifer*—And all May be a dream. Thou seest in thine, men, deeds, Clear, moving, full of speech and order; then Why may not all this world be but a dream Of God's? Fear not! Some morning God may waken.*Festus*—I would it were. This life's a mystery. The value of a thought cannot be told; But it is clearly worth a thousand lives Like many men's. And yet men love to live As if mere life were worth their living for. What but perdition will it be to most? Life's more than breath and the quick round of blood; It is a great spirit and a busy heart. The coward and the small in soul scarce do live. One generous feeling—one great thought—one deed Of good, ere night, would make life longer seem Than if each year might number a thousand days, Spent as is this by nations of mankind. We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths; In feelings, not in figures on a dial. We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives Who thinks most—feels the noblest—acts the best. Life's but a means unto an end—that end Beginning,

Page 222

mean, and end to all things—God. The dead have all the glory of the world. Why will we live and not be glorious? We never can be deathless till we die. It is the dead win battles. And the breath Of those who through the world drive like a wedge, Tearing earth's empires up, nears Death so close It dims his well-worn scythe. But no! the brave Die never. Being deathless, they but change Their country's arms for more—their country's heart. Give then the dead their due: it is they who saved us. The rapid and the deep—the fall, the gulph, Have likenesses in feeling and in life. And life, so varied, hath more loveliness In one day than a creeping century Of sameness. But youth loves and lives on change, Till the soul sighs for sameness; which at last Becomes variety, and takes its place. Yet some will last to die out, thought by thought, And power by power, and limb of mind by limb, Like lamps upon a gay device of glass, Till all of soul that's left be dry and dark; Till even the burden of some ninety years Hath crashed into them like a rock; shattered Their system as if ninety suns had rushed To ruin earth—or heaven had rained its stars; Till they become like scrolls, unreadable, Through dust and mold. Can they be cleaned and read? Do human spirits wax and wane like moons? *Lucifer*—The eye dims, and the heart gets old and slow; The lithe limbs stiffen, and the sun-hued locks Thin themselves off, or whitely wither; still, Ages not spirit, even in one point, Immeasurably small; from orb to orb, Rising in radiance ever like the sun Shining upon the thousand lands of earth.

THE PASSING-BELL

Clara—True prophet mayst thou be. But list: that sound
The passing-bell the spirit should solemnize;
For, while on its emancipate path, the soul
Still waves its upward wings, and we still hear
The warning sound, it is known, we well may pray.

Festus—But pray for whom?

Clara—It means not. Pray for all.
Pray for the good man's soul:

He is leaving earth for heaven,
And it soothes us to feel that the best
May be forgiven.

Festus—Pray for the sinful soul: It fleeth, we know not where; But wherever it be let us hope; For God is there. *Clara*—Pray for the rich man's soul: Not all be unjust, nor vain; The wise he consoled; and he saved The poor from pain. *Festus*—Pray for the poor man's soul: The death of this life of ours He hath shook from his feet; he is one Of the heavenly powers.



Pray for the old man's soul:
He hath labored long; through life
It was battle or march. He hath ceased,
Serene, from strife.



Page 223

Clara—Pray for the infant's soul: With its spirit crown unsoiled, He hath won, without war, a realm; Gained all, nor toiled.*Festus*—Pray for the struggling soul: The mists of the straits of death Clear off; in some bright star-isle It anchoreth.

Pray for the soul assured:
Though it wrought in a gloomy mine,
Yet the gems it earned were its own,
That soul's divine.

Clara—Pray for the simple soul: For it loved, and therein was wise; Though itself knew not, but with heaven Confused the skies.*Festus*—Pray for the sage's soul: 'Neath his welkin wide of mind Lay the central thought of God, Thought undefined.

Pray for the souls of all
To our God, that all may be
With forgiveness crowned, and joy
Eternally.

Clara—Hush! for the bell hath ceased; And the spirit's fate is sealed; To the angels known; to man Best unrevealed.

THOUGHTS

FESTUS—Well, farewell, Mr. Student. May you never
Regret those hours which make the mind, if they
Unmake the body; for the sooner we
Are fit to be all mind, the better. Blessed
Is he whose heart is the home of the great dead,
And their great thoughts. Who can mistake great thoughts
They seize upon the mind; arrest and search,
And shake it; bow the tall soul as by wind;
Rush over it like a river over reeds,
Which quaver in the current; turn us cold,
And pale, and voiceless; leaving in the brain
A rocking and a ringing; glorious,
But momentary, madness might it last,
And close the soul with heaven as with a seal!
In lieu of all these things whose loss thou mournest,
If earnestly or not I know not, use
The great and good and true which ever live;
And are all common to pure eyes and true.
Upon the summit of each mountain-thought
Worship thou God, with heaven-uplifted head
And arms horizon-stretched; for deity is seen



From every elevation of the soul.
Study the light; attempt the high; seek out
The soul's bright path; and since the soul is fire,
Of heat intelligential, turn it aye
To the all-Fatherly source of light and life;
Piety purifies the soul to see
Visions, perpetually, of grace and power,
Which, to their sight who in ignorant sin abide,
Are now as e'er incognizable. Obey
Thy genius, for a minister it is
Unto the throne of Fate. Draw towards thy soul,
And centralize, the rays which are around
Of the divinity. Keep thy spirit pure
From worldly taint, by the repellent strength
Of virtue. Think on noble thoughts and deeds,

Page 224

Ever. Count o'er the rosary of truth;
And practice precepts which are proven wise,
It matters not then what thou fearest. Walk
Boldly and wisely in that light thou hast;—
There is a hand above will help thee on.
I am an omnist, and believe in all
Religions; fragments of one golden world
To be relit yet, and take its place in heaven,
Where is the whole, sole truth, in deity.
Meanwhile, his word, his law, writ soulwise here,
Study; its truths love; practice its behests—
They will be with thee when all else have gone.
Mind, body, passion all wear out; not faith
Nor truth. Keep thy heart cool, or rule its heat
To fixed ends; waste it not upon itself.
Not all the agony maybe of the damned
Fused in one pang, vies with that earthquake throb
Which wakens soul from life-waste, to let see
The world rolled by for aye, and we must wait
For our next chance the nigh eternity;
Whether it be in heaven, or elsewhere.

DREAMS

FESTUS—The dead of night: earth seems but seeming;
The soul seems but a something dreaming.
The bird is dreaming in its nest,
Of song, and sky, and loved one's breast;
The lap-dog dreams, as round he lies,
In moonshine, of his mistress's eyes;
The steed is dreaming, in his stall,
Of one long breathless leap and fall;
The hawk hath dreamed him thrice of wings
Wide as the skies he may not cleave;
But waking, feels them clipped, and clings
Mad to the perch 'twere mad to leave:
The child is dreaming of its toys;
The murderer, of calm home joys;
The weak are dreaming endless fears;
The proud of how their pride appears;



The poor enthusiast who dies,
Of his life-dreams the sacrifice,
Sees, as enthusiast only can,
The truth that made him more than man;
And hears once more, in visioned trance,
That voice commanding to advance,
Where wealth is gained—love, wisdom won,
Or deeds of danger dared and done.
The mother dreameth of her child;
The maid of him who hath beguiled;
The youth of her he loves too well;
The good of God; the ill of hell;
Who live of death; of life who die;
The dead of immortality.
The earth is dreaming back her youth;
Hell never dreams, for woe is truth;
And heaven is dreaming o'er her prime,
Long ere the morning stars of time;
And dream of heaven alone can I,
My lovely one, when thou art nigh.

CHORUS OF THE SAVED

From the Conclusion

Page 225

Father of goodness,
Son of love,
Spirit of comfort,
Be with us!
God who hast made us,
God who hast saved,
God who hast judged us,
Thee we praise.
Heaven our spirits,
Hallow our hearts;
Let us have God-light
Endlessly.
Ours is the wide world,
Heaven on heaven;
What have we done, Lord,
Worthy this?
Oh! we have loved thee;
That alone
Maketh our glory,
Duty, meed.
Oh! we have loved thee!
Love we will
Ever, and every
Soul of us.
God of the saved,
God of the tried,
God of the lost ones,
Be with all!
Let us be near thee
Ever and aye;
Oh! let us love thee
Infinite!

JOANNA BAILLIE

(1762-1851)

Joanna Baillie's early childhood was passed at Bothwell, Scotland, where she was born in 1762. Of this time she drew a picture in her well-known birthday lines to her sister:—

“Dear Agnes, gleamed with joy, and dashed with tears, O'er us have glided almost sixty years Since we on Bothwell's bonny braes were seen, By those whose eyes long closed in death have been: Two tiny imps, who scarcely stooped to gather The slender

harebell, or the purple heather; No taller than the foxglove's spiky stem, That dew of morning studs with silvery gem. Then every butterfly that crossed our view With joyful shout was greeted as it flew, And moth and lady-bird and beetle bright In sheeny gold were each a wondrous sight. Then as we paddled barefoot, side by side, Among the sunny shallows of the Clyde, Minnows or spotted par with twinkling fin, Swimming in mazy rings the pool within, A thrill of gladness through our bosoms sent Seen in the power of early wonderment."

[Illustration: JOANNA BAILLIE]

When Joanna was six her father was appointed to the charge of the kirk at Hamilton. Her early growth went on, not in books, but in the fearlessness with which she ran upon the top of walls and parapets of bridges and in all daring. "Look at Miss Jack," said a farmer, as she dashed by: "she sits her horse as if it were a bit of herself." At eleven she could not read well. "'Twas thou," she said in lines to her sister—

"'Twas thou who woo'dst me first to look
Upon the page of printed book,
That thing by me abhorred, and with address
Didst win me from my thoughtless idleness,
When all too old become with bootless haste
In fitful sports the precious time to waste.
Thy love of tale and story was the stroke
At which my dormant fancy first awoke,
And ghosts and witches in my busy brain
Arose in sombre show, a motley train."

Page 226

In 1776 Dr. James Baillie was made Professor of Divinity at Glasgow University. During the two years the family lived in the college atmosphere, Joanna first read 'Comus,' and, led by the delight it awakened, the great epic of Milton. It was here that her vigor and disputatious turn of mind "cast an awe" over her companions. After her father's death she settled, in 1784, with her mother and brother and sister in London.

She had made herself familiar with English literature, and above all she had studied Shakespeare with enthusiasm. Circumscribed now by the brick and mortar of London streets, in exchange for the fair views and liberties of her native fruitlands, Joanna found her first expression in a volume of 'Fugitive Verses,' published in 1790. The book caused so little comment that the words of but one friendly hand are preserved: that the poems were "truly unsophisticated representations of nature."

Joanna's walk was along calm and unhurried ways. She could have had a considerable place in society and the world of "lions" if she had cared. The wife of her uncle and name-father, the anatomist Dr. John Hunter, was no other than the famous Mrs. Anne Hunter, a songwright of genius; her poem 'The Son of Alknomook Shall Never Complain' is one of the classics of English song, and the best rendering of the Indian spirit ever condensed into so small a space. She was also a woman of grace and dignity, a power in London drawing-rooms, and Haydn set songs of hers to music. But the reserved Joanna was tempted to no light triumphs. Eight years later was published her first volume of 'Plays on the Passions.' It contained 'Basil,' a tragedy on love; 'The Trial,' a comedy on the same subject; and 'De Montfort,' a tragedy on hatred.

The thought of essaying dramatic composition had burst upon the author one summer afternoon as she sat sewing with her mother. She had a high moral purpose in her plan of composition, she said in her preface,—that purpose being the ultimate utterance of the drama. Plot and incident she set little value upon, and she rejected the presentation of the most splendid event if it did not appertain to the development of the passion. In other words, what is and was commonly of secondary consideration in the swift passage of dramatic action became in her hands the stated and paramount object. Feeling and passion are *not* precipitated by incident in her drama as in real life. The play 'De Montfort' was presented at Drury Lane Theatre in 1800; but in spite of every effort and the acting of John Kemble and Mrs. Siddons, it had a run of but eleven nights.

In 1802 Miss Baillie published her second volume of 'Plays on the Passions.' It contained a comedy on hatred; 'Ethwald,' a tragedy on ambition; and a comedy on ambition. Her adherence to her old plan brought upon her an attack from Jeffrey in the Edinburgh Review. He claimed that the complexity of the moral nature of man made Joanna's theory false and absurd, that a play was too narrow to show the complete growth of a passion, and that the end of the drama is the entertainment of the audience. He asserted that she imitated and plagiarized Shakespeare; while he admitted her insight into human nature, her grasp of character, and her devotion to her work.

Page 227

About the time of the appearance of this volume, Joanna fixed her residence with her mother and sister, among the lanes and fields of Hampstead, where they continued throughout their lives. The first volume of 'Miscellaneous Plays' came out in 1804. In the preface she stated that her opinions set forth in her first preface were unchanged. But the plays had a freer construction. "Miss Baillie," wrote Jeffrey in his review, "cannot possibly write a tragedy, or an act of a tragedy, without showing genius and exemplifying a more dramatic conception and expression than any of her modern competitor" 'Constantine Palaeologus,' which the volume contained, had the liveliest commendation and popularity, and was several times put upon the stage with spectacular effect.

In the year of the publication of Joanna's 'Miscellaneous Plays,' Sir Walter Scott came to London, and seeking an introduction through a common friend, made the way for a lifelong friendship between the two. He had just brought out 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel.' Miss Baillie was already a famous writer, with fast friends in Lucy Aikin, Mary Berry, Mrs. Siddons, and other workers in art and literature; but the hearty commendation of her countryman, which she is said to have come upon unexpectedly when reading 'Marmion' to a group of friends, she valued beyond other praise. The legend is that she read through the passage firmly to the close, and only lost self-control in her sympathy with the emotion of a friend:—

—"The wild harp that silent hung
By silver Avon's holy shore
Till twice one hundred years rolled o'er,
When she the bold enchantress came,
From the pale willow snatched the treasure,
With fearless hand and heart in flame,
And swept it with a kindred measure;
Till Avon's swans, while rung the grove
With Montfort's hate and Basil's love,
Awakening at the inspired strain,
Deemed their own Shakespeare lived again."

The year 1810 saw 'The Family Legend,' a play founded on a tragic history of the Campbell clan. Scott wrote a prologue and brought out the play in the Edinburgh Theatre. "You have only to imagine," he told the author, "all that you could wish to give success to a play, and your conceptions will still fall short of the complete and decided triumph of 'The Family Legend.'"

The attacks which Jeffrey had made upon her verse were continued when she published, in 1812, her third volume of 'Plays on the Passions.' His voice, however, did not diminish the admiration for the character-drawing with which the book was greeted, or for the lyric outbursts occurring now and then in the dramas.

Joanna's quiet Hampstead life was broken in 1813 by a genial meeting in London with the ambitious Madame de Stael, and again with the vivacious little Irishwoman, Maria Edgeworth. She was keeping her promise of not writing more; but during a visit to Sir Walter in 1820 her imagination was touched by Scotch tales, and she published 'Metrical Legends' the following year. In this vast Abbotsford she finally consented to meet Jeffrey. The plucky little writer and the unshrinking critic at once became friends, and thenceforward Jeffrey never went to London without visiting her in Hampstead.

Page 228

Her moral courage throughout life recalls the physical courage which characterized her youth. She never concealed her religious convictions, and in 1831 she published her ideas in 'A View of the General Tenor of the New Testament Regarding the Nature and Dignity of Jesus Christ.' In 1836, having finally given up the long hope of seeing her plays become popular upon the stage, she prepared a complete edition of her dramas with the addition of three plays never before made public,—'Romiero,' a tragedy, 'The Alienated Manor,' a comedy on jealousy, and 'Henriquez,' a tragedy on remorse. The Edinburgh Review immediately put forth a eulogistic notice of the collected edition, and at last admitted that the reviewer had changed his judgment, and esteemed the author as a dramatist above Byron and Scott.

"May God support both you and me, and give us comfort and consolation when it is most wanted," wrote Miss Baillie to Mary Berry in 1837. "As for myself, I do not wish to be one year younger than I am; and have no desire, were it possible, to begin life again, even under the most honorable circumstances. I have great cause for humble thankfulness, and I am thankful."

In 1840 Jeffrey wrote:—"I have been twice out to Hampstead, and found Joanna Baillie as fresh, natural, and amiable as ever, and as little like a tragic muse." And again in 1842:—"She is marvelous in health and spirit; not a bit deaf, blind, or torpid." About this time she published her last book, a volume of 'Fugitive Verses.'

"A sweeter picture of old age was never seen," wrote Harriet Martineau. "Her figure was small, light, and active; her countenance, in its expression of serenity, harmonized wonderfully with her gay conversation and her cheerful voice. Her eyes were beautiful, dark, bright, and penetrating, with the full innocent gaze of childhood. Her face was altogether comely, and her dress did justice to it. She wore her own silvery hair and a mob cap, with its delicate lace border fitting close around her face. She was well dressed, in handsome dark silks, and her lace caps and collars looked always new. No Quaker was ever neater, while she kept up with the times in her dress as in her habit of mind, as far as became her years. In her whole appearance there was always something for even the passing stranger to admire, and never anything for the most familiar friend to wish otherwise." She died, "without suffering, in the full possession of her faculties," in her ninetieth year, 1851.

Her dramatic and poetical works are collected in one volume (1843). Her Life, with selections from her songs, may be found in 'The Songstress of Scotland,' by Sarah Tytler and J.L. Watson (1871).

WOO'D AND MARRIED AND A'

The bride she is winsome and bonny,
Her hair it is snooded sae sleek,
And faithfu' and kind is her Johnny,



Yet fast fa' the tears on her cheek.
New pearlins are cause of her sorrow,
New pearlins and plenishing too:
The bride that has a' to borrow.
Has e'en right mickle ado.
Woo'd and married and a'!
Woo'd and married and a'!
Isna she very weel aff
To be woo'd and married at a'?

Page 229

Her mither then hastily spak:—
“The lassie is glaikit wi’ pride;
In my pouch I had never a plack
On the day when I was a bride.
E’en tak’ to your wheel and be clever,
And draw out your thread in the sun;
The gear that is gifted, it never
Will last like the gear that is won.
Woo’d and married and a’!
Wi’ havins and tocher sae sma’!
I think ye are very weel aff
To be woo’d and married at a’!”

“Toot, toot!” quo’ her gray-headed faither,
“She’s less o’ a bride than a bairn;
She’s ta’en like a cout frae the heather,
Wi’ sense and discretion to learn.
Half husband, I trow, and half daddy,
As humor inconstantly leans,
The chiel maun be patient and steady
That yokes wi’ a mate in her teens.
A kerchief sae douce and sae neat,
O’er her locks that the wind used to blaw!
I’m baith like to laugh and to greet
When I think o’ her married at a’.”

Then out spak’ the wily bridegroom,
Weel waled were his wordies I ween:—
“I’m rich, though my coffer be toom,
Wi’ the blinks o’ your bonny blue e’en.
I’m prouder o’ thee by my side,
Though thy ruffles or ribbons be few,
Than if Kate o’ the Croft were my bride,
Wi’ purples and pearlins enow.
Dear and dearest of ony!
Ye’re woo’d and buiket and a’!
And do ye think scorn o’ your Johnny,
And grieve to be married at a’?”

She turn’d, and she blush’d, and she smil’d,
And she looket sae bashfully down;
The pride o’ her heart was beguil’d,
And she played wi’ the sleeves o’ her gown;
She twirlet the tag o’ her lace,



And she nippet her bodice sae blue,
Syne blinket sae sweet in his face,
And aff like a maukin she flew.
Woo'd and married and a'!
Wi' Johnny to roose her and a'!
She thinks hersel' very weel aff
To be woo'd and married at a'!

IT WAS ON A MORN WHEN WE WERE THRANG

It was on a morn when we were thrang,
The kirk it croon'd, the cheese was making,
And bannocks on the girdle baking,
When ane at the door chapp't loud and lang.
Yet the auld gudewife, and her mays sae tight,
Of a' this bauld din took sma' notice I ween;
For a chap at the door in braid daylight
Is no like a chap that's heard at e'en.

But the docksy auld laird of the Warlock glen,
Wha waited without, half blate, half cheery,
And langed for a sight o' his winsome deary,
Raised up the latch and cam' crouselly ben.
His coat it was new, and his o'erlay was white,
His mittens and hose were cozie and bien;
But a wooer that comes in braid daylight
Is no like a wooer that comes at e'en.

He greeted the carline and lasses sae braw,
And his bare lyart pow sae smoothly he straikit,
And he looket about, like a body half glaikit,
On bonny sweet Nanny, the youngest of a'.
"Ha, laird!" quo' the carline, "and look ye that way?
Fye, let na' sie fancies bewilder you clean:
An elderlin man, in the noon o' the day,
Should be wiser than youngsters that come at e'en.

Page 230

“Na, na,” quo’ the pawky auld wife, “I trow
You’ll no fash your head wi’ a youthfu’ gilly,
As wild and as skeig as a muirland filly:
Black Madge is far better and fitter for you.”
He hem’d and he haw’d, and he drew in his mouth,
And he squeezed the blue bannet his twa hands between;
For a wooer that comes when the sun’s i’ the south
Is mair landward than woovers that come at e’en.

“Black Madge is sae carefu’”—“What’s that to me?”
“She’s sober and cydent, has sense in her noodle;
She’s douce and respeckit”—“I carena a bodle:
Love winna be guided, and fancy’s free.”
Madge toss’d back her head wi’ a saucy slight,
And Nanny, loud laughing, ran out to the green;
For a wooer that comes when the sun shines bright
Is no like a wooer that comes at e’en.

Then away flung the laird, and loud mutter’d he,
“A’ the daughters of Eve, between Orkney and Tweed O!
Black or fair, young or auld, dame or damsel or widow,
May gang in their pride to the de’il for me!”
But the auld gudewife, and her mays sae tight,
Cared little for a’ his stour banning, I ween;
For a wooer that comes in braid daylight
Is no like a wooer that comes at e’en.

FY, LET US A’ TO THE WEDDING

(An Auld Sang, New Buskit)

Fy, let us a’ to the wedding,
For they will be liting there;
For Jock’s to be married to Maggy,
The lass wi’ the gowden hair.

And there will be jibing and jeering,
And glancing of bonny dark een,
Loud laughing and smooth-gabbit speering
O’ questions baith pawky and keen.

And there will be Bessy the beauty,
Wha raises her cockup sae hie,



And giggles at preachings and duty,—
Guid grant that she gang na' ajee!

And there will be auld Geordie Taunner,
Wha coft a young wife wi' his gowd;
She'll flaunt wi' a silk gown upon her,
But wow! he looks dowie and cow'd.

And brown Tibbey Foulter the Heiress
Will perk at the tap o' the ha',
Encircled wi' suitors, wha's care is
To catch up her gloves when they fa',—

Repeat a' her jokes as they're cleckit,
And haver and glower in her face,
When tocherless mays are negleckit,—
A crying and scandalous case.

And Mysie, wha's claverin' aunty
Wud match her wi' Laurie the Laird,
And learns the young fule to be vaunty,
But neither to spin nor to caird.

And Andrew, wha's granny is yearning
To see him a clerical blade,
Was sent to the college for learning,
And cam' back a coof as he gaed.

Page 231

And there will be auld Widow Martin,
That ca's hersel thritty and twa!
And thraw-gabbit Madge, wha for certain
Was jilted by Hab o' the Shaw.

And Elspy the sewster sae genty,
A pattern of havens and sense.
Will straik on her mittens sae dainty,
And crack wi' Mess John i' the spence.

And Angus, the seer o' ferlies,
That sits on the stane at his door,
And tells about bogles, and mair lies
Than tongue ever utter'd before.

And there will be Bauldy the booster
Sae ready wi' hands and wi' tongue;
Proud Paty and silly Sam Foster,
Wha quarrel wi' auld and wi' young:

And Hugh the town-writer, I'm thinking,
That trades in his lawerly skill,
Will egg on the fighting and drinking
To bring after-grist to his mill;

And Maggy—na, na! we'll be civil,
And let the wee bridie a-be;
A vilipend tongue is the devil,
And ne'er was encouraged by me.

Then fy, let us a' to the wedding,
For they will be lilting there
Frae mony a far-distant ha'ding,
The fun and the feasting to share.

For they will get sheep's head, and haggis,
And browst o' the barley-mow;
E'en he that comes latest, and lag is,
May feast upon dainties enow.

Veal florentines in the o'en baken,
Weel plenish'd wi' raisins and fat;
Beef, mutton, and chuckies, a' taken
Het reeking frae spit and frae pat:



And glasses (I trow 'tis na' said ill),
To drink the young couple good luck,
Weel fill'd wi' a braw beechen ladle
Frae punch-bowl as big as Dumbuck.

And then will come dancing and daffing,
And reelin' and crossin' o' hans,
Till even auld Lucky is laughing,
As back by the aumry she stans.

Sic bobbing and flinging and whirling,
While fiddlers are making their din;
And pipers are droning and skirling
As loud as the roar o' the lin.

Then fy, let us a' to the wedding,
For they will be lilting there,
For Jock's to be married to Maggy,
The lass wi' the gowden hair.

THE WEARY PUND O' TOW

A young gudewife is in my house
And thrifty means to be,
But aye she's runnin' to the town
Some ferlie there to see.
The weary pund, the weary pund, the weary pund o' tow,
I soothly think, ere it be spun, I'll wear a lyart pow.

And when she sets her to her wheel
To draw her threads wi' care,
In comes the chapman wi' his gear,
And she can spin nae mair.
The weary pund, *etc.*

And she, like ony merry may,
At fairs maun still be seen,
At kirkyard preachings near the tent,
At dances on the green.
The weary pund, *etc.*



Page 232

Her dainty ear a fiddle charms,
A bagpipe's her delight,
But for the crooning o' her wheel
She disna care a mite.
The weary pund, *etc.*

You spake, my Kate, of snaw-white webs,
Made o' your linkum twine,
But, ah! I fear our bonny burn
Will ne'er lave web o' thine.
The weary pund, *etc.*

Nay, smile again, my winsome mate;
Sic jeering means nae ill;
Should I gae sarkless to my grave,
I'll lo'e and bless thee still.
The weary pund, *etc.*

FROM 'DE MONTFORT': A TRAGEDY

ACT V—SCENE III

Moonlight. A wild path in a wood, shaded with trees. Enter De Montfort_, with a strong expression of disquiet, mixed with fear, upon his face, looking behind him, and bending his ear to the ground, as if he listened to something._

De Montfort—How hollow groans the earth beneath my tread:
Is there an echo here? Methinks it sounds
As though some heavy footsteps followed me.
I will advance no farther.
Deep settled shadows rest across the path,
And thickly-tangled boughs o'erhang this spot.
O that a tenfold gloom did cover it,
That 'mid the murky darkness I might strike!
As in the wild confusion of a dream,
Things horrid, bloody, terrible do pass,
As though they passed not; nor impress the mind
With the fixed clearness of reality.

[*An owl is heard screaming near him.*]

[*Starting.*] What sound is that?

[*Listens, and the owl cries again.*]



It is the screech-owl's cry.
Foul bird of night! What spirit guides thee here?
Art thou instinctive drawn to scenes of horror?
I've heard of this.
[*Pauses and listens.*]
How those fallen leaves so rustle on the path,
With whispering noise, as though the earth around me
Did utter secret things.
The distant river, too, bears to mine ear
A dismal wailing. O mysterious night!
Thou art not silent; many tongues hast thou.
A distant gathering blast sounds through the wood,
And dark clouds fleetly hasten o'er the sky;
Oh that a storm would rise, a raging storm;
Amidst the roar of warring elements
I'd lift my hand and strike! but this pale light,
The calm distinctness of each stilly thing,
Is terrible.—[*Starting.*] Footsteps, and near me, too!
He comes! he comes! I'll watch him farther on—
I cannot do it here.
[*Exit.*]

Enter Rezenvelt, and continues his way slowly from the bottom of the stage; as he advances to the front, the owl screams, he stops and listens, and the owl screams again.

Page 233

Rezenvelt—Ha! does the night-bird greet me on my way? How much his hooting is in harmony With such a scene as this! I like it well. Oft when a boy, at the still twilight hour, I've leant my back against some knotted oak, And loudly mimicked him, till to my call He answer would return, and through the gloom We friendly converse held. Between me and the star-bespangled sky, Those aged oaks their crossing branches wave, And through them looks the pale and placid moon. How like a crocodile, or winged snake, Yon sailing cloud bears on its dusky length! And now transformed by the passing wind, Methinks it seems a flying Pegasus. Ay, but a shapeless band of blacker hue Comes swiftly after.— A hollow murm'ring wind sounds through the trees; I hear it from afar; this bodes a storm. I must not linger here—

[*A bell heard at some distance.*] The convent bell.
'Tis distant still: it tells their hour of prayer.
It sends a solemn sound upon the breeze,
That, to a fearful, superstitious mind,
In such a scene, would like a death-knell come.
[*Exit.*]

TO MRS. SIDDONS

Gifted of heaven! who hast, in days gone by,
Moved every heart, delighted every eye;
While age and youth, of high and low degree,
In sympathy were joined, beholding thee,
As in the Drama's ever-changing scene
Thou heldst thy splendid state, our tragic queen!
No barriers there thy fair domains confined,
Thy sovereign sway was o'er the human mind;
And in the triumph of that witching hour,
Thy lofty bearing well became thy power.

The impassioned changes of thy beauteous face,
Thy stately form, and high imperial grace;
Thine arms impetuous tossed, thy robe's wide flow,
And the dark tempest gathered on thy brow;
What time thy flashing eye and lip of scorn
Down to the dust thy mimic foes have borne;
Remorseful musings, sunk to deep dejection,
The fixed and yearning looks of strong affection;
The active turmoil a wrought bosom rending,
When pity, love, and honor, are contending;—
They who beheld all this, right well, I ween,
A lovely, grand, and wondrous sight have seen.



Thy varied accents, rapid, fitful, slow,
Loud rage, and fear's snatched whisper, quick and low;
The burst of stifled love, the wail of grief,
And tones of high command, full, solemn, brief;
The change of voice, and emphasis that threw
Light on obscurity, and brought to view
Distinctions nice, when grave or comic mood,
Or mingled humors, terse and new, elude
Common perception, as earth's smallest things
To size and form the vesting hoar-frost brings,
That seemed as if some secret voice, to clear

Page 234

The raveled meaning, whispered in thine ear,
And thou hadst e'en with him communion kept,
Who hath so long in Stratford's chancel slept;
Whose lines, where nature's brightest traces shine,
Alone were worthy deemed of powers like thine;—
They who have heard all this, have proved full well
Of soul-exciting sound the mightiest spell.
But though time's lengthened shadows o'er thee glide,
And pomp of regal state is cast aside,
Think not the glory of thy course is spent,
There's moonlight radiance to thy evening lent,
That to the mental world can never fade,
Till all who saw thee, in the grave are laid.
Thy graceful form still moves in nightly dreams,
And what thou wast, to the lulled sleeper seems;
While feverish fancy oft doth fondly trace
Within her curtained couch thy wondrous face.
Yea; and to many a wight, bereft and lone,
In musing hours, though all to thee unknown,
Soothing his earthly course of good and ill,
With all thy potent charm, thou actest still.
And now in crowded room or rich saloon,
Thy stately presence recognized, how soon
On thee the glance of many an eye is cast,
In grateful memory of pleasures past!
Pleased to behold thee, with becoming grace,
Take, as befits thee well, an honored place;
Where blest by many a heart, long mayst thou stand,
Among the virtuous matrons of our land!

A SCOTCH SONG

The gowan glitters on the sward,
The lavrock's in the sky,
And collie on my plaid keeps ward,
And time is passing by.
Oh no! sad and slow
And lengthened on the ground,
The shadow of our trysting bush
It wears so slowly round!



My sheep-bell tinkles frae the west,
My lambs are bleating near,
But still the sound that I lo'e best,
Alack! I canna' hear.
Oh no! sad and slow,
The shadow lingers still,
And like a lanely ghaist I stand
And croon upon the hill.

I hear below the water roar,
The mill wi' clacking din,
And Lucky scolding frae her door,
To ca' the bairnies in.
Oh no! sad and slow,
These are na' sounds for me,
The shadow of our trysting bush,
It creeps so drearily!

I coft yestreen, frae Chapman Tarn,
A snood of bonny blue,
And promised when our trysting cam',
To tie it round her brow.
Oh no! sad and slow,
The mark it winna' pass;
The shadow of that weary thorn
Is tethered on the grass.

Oh, now I see her on the way,
She's past the witch's knowe,
She's climbing up the Browny's brae,
My heart is in a lowe!
Oh no! 'tis no' so,
'Tis glam'rie I have seen;
The shadow of that hawthorn bush
Will move na' mair till e'en.

My book o' grace I'll try to read,
Though conn'd wi' little skill,
When collie barks I'll raise my head,
And find her on the hill.
Oh no! sad and slow,
The time will ne'er be gane,
The shadow of the trysting bush
Is fixed like ony stane.

Page 235

SONG, 'POVERTY PARTS GOOD COMPANY'

For an old Scotch Air

When my o'erlay was white as the foam o' the lin,
And siller was chinkin my pouches within,
When my lambkins were bleatin on meadow and brae,
As I went to my love in new cleeding sae gay,
Kind was she, and my friends were free,
But poverty parts good company.

How swift passed the minutes and hours of delight,
When piper played cheerly, and crusie burned bright,
And linked in my hand was the maiden sae dear,
As she footed the floor in her holyday gear!
Woe is me; and can it then be,
That poverty parts sic company?

We met at the fair, and we met at the kirk,
We met i' the sunshine, we met i' the mirk;
And the sound o' her voice, and the blinks o' her een,
The cheerin and life of my bosom hae been.
Leaves frae the tree at Martinmass flee,
And poverty parts sweet company.

At bridal and infare I braced me wi' pride,
The broose I hae won, and a kiss o' the bride;
And loud was the laughter good fellows among,
As I uttered my banter or chorused my song;
Dowie and dree are jestin and glee,
When poverty spoils good company.

Wherever I gaed, kindly lasses looked sweet,
And mithers and aunties were unco discreet;
While kebbuck and bicker were set on the board:
But now they pass by me, and never a word!
Sae let it be, for the worldly and slee
Wi' poverty keep nae company.

But the hope of my love is a cure for its smart,
And the spae-wife has tauld me to keep up my heart;
For, wi' my last saxpence, her loof I hae crost,
And the bliss that is fated can never be lost,



Though cruelly we may ilka day see
How poverty parts dear company.

THE KITTEN

Wanton droll, whose harmless play
Beguiles the rustic's closing day,
When, drawn the evening fire about,
Sit aged crone and thoughtless lout,
And child upon his three-foot stool,
Waiting until his supper cool,
And maid whose cheek outblossoms the rose,
As bright the blazing fagot glows,
Who, bending to the friendly light,
Plies her task with busy sleight,
Come, show thy tricks and sportive graces,
Thus circled round with merry faces:
Backward coiled and crouching low,
With glaring eyeballs watch thy foe,
The housewife's spindle whirling round,
Or thread or straw that on the ground
Its shadow throws, by urchin sly
Held out to lure thy roving eye;
Then stealing onward, fiercely spring
Upon the tempting, faithless thing.
Now, wheeling round with bootless skill,
Thy bo-peep tail provokes



Page 236

thee still,

As still beyond thy curving side
Its jetty tip is seen to glide;
Till from thy centre starting far,
Thou sidelong veer'st with rump in air
Erected stiff, and gait awry,
Like madam in her tantrums high;
Though ne'er a madam of them all,
Whose silken kirtle sweeps the hall,
More varied trick and whim displays
To catch the admiring stranger's gaze.
Doth power in measured verses dwell,
All thy vagaries wild to tell?
Ah, no! the start, the jet, the bound,
The giddy scamper round and round,
With leap and toss and high curvet,
And many a whirling somerset,
(Permitted by the modern muse
Expression technical to use)—These
mock the deftest rhymester's skill,
But poor in art, though rich in will.

The featest tumbler, stage bedight,
To thee is but a clumsy wight,
Who every limb and sinew strains
To do what costs thee little pains;
For which, I trow, the gaping crowd
Requite him oft with plaudits loud.

But, stopped the while thy wanton play,
Applauses too thy pains repay:
For then, beneath some urchin's hand
With modest pride thou takest thy stand,
While many a stroke of kindness glides
Along thy back and tabby sides.
Dilated swells thy glossy fur,
And loudly croons thy busy purr,
As, timing well the equal sound,
Thy clutching feet bepat the ground,
And all their harmless claws disclose
Like prickles of an early rose,



While softly from thy whiskered cheek
Thy half-closed eyes peer, mild and meek.

But not alone by cottage fire
Do rustics rude thy feats admire.
The learned sage, whose thoughts explore
The widest range of human lore,
Or with unfettered fancy fly
Through airy heights of poesy,
Pausing smiles with altered air
To see thee climb his elbow-chair,
Or, struggling on the mat below,
Hold warfare with his slippered toe.
The widowed dame or lonely maid,
Who, in the still but cheerless shade
Of home unsocial, spends her age,
And rarely turns a lettered page,
Upon her hearth for thee lets fall
The rounded cork or paper ball,
Nor chides thee on thy wicked watch,
The ends of raveled skein to catch,
But lets thee have thy wayward will,
Perplexing oft her better skill.

E'en he whose mind, of gloomy bent,
In lonely tower or prison pent,
Reviews the coil of former days,
And loathes the world and all its ways,
What time the lamp's unsteady gleam
Hath roused him from his moody dream,
Feels, as thou gambol'st round his seat,
His heart of pride less fiercely beat,
And smiles, a link in thee to find
That joins it still to living kind.

Page 237

Whence hast thou then, thou witless puss!
The magic power to charm us thus?
Is it that in thy glaring eye
And rapid movements we descry—
Whilst we at ease, secure from ill,
The chimney corner snugly fill—
A lion darting on his prey,
A tiger at his ruthless play?
Or is it that in thee we trace,
With all thy varied wanton grace,
An emblem, viewed with kindred eye
Of tricky, restless infancy?
Ah! many a lightly sportive child,
Who hath like thee our wits beguiled,
To dull and sober manhood grown,
With strange recoil our hearts disown.

And so, poor kit! must thou endure,
When thou becom'st a cat demure,
Full many a cuff and angry word,
Chased roughly from the tempting board.
But yet, for that thou hast, I ween,
So oft our favored playmate been,
Soft be the change which thou shalt prove!
When time hath spoiled thee of our love,
Still be thou deemed by housewife fat
A comely, careful, mousing cat,
Whose dish is, for the public good,
Replenished oft with savory food,
Nor, when thy span of life is past,
Be thou to pond or dung-hill cast,
But, gently borne on goodman's spade,
Beneath the decent sod be laid;
And children show with glistening eyes
The place where poor old pussy lies.

HENRY MARTYN BAIRD

(1832-)

That stirring period of the history of France which in certain of its features has been made so familiar by Dumas through the 'Three Musketeers' series and others of his fascinating novels, is that which has been the theme of Dr. Baird in the substantial work

to which so many years of his life have been devoted. It is to the elucidation of one portion only of the history of this period that he has given himself; but although in this, the story of the Huguenots, nominally only a matter of religious belief was involved, it in fact embraced almost the entire internal politics of the nation, and the struggles for supremacy of its ambitious families, as well as the effort to achieve religious freedom.

[Illustration: HENRY M. BAIRD]

In these separate but related works the incidents of the whole Protestant movement have been treated. The first of these, 'The History of the Rise of the Huguenots in France' (1879), carries the story to the time of Henry of Valois (1574), covering the massacre of St. Bartholomew; the second, 'The Huguenots and Henry of Navarre' (1886), covers the Protestant ascendancy and the Edict of Nantes, and ends with the assassination of Henry in 1610; and the third, 'The Huguenots and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes' (1895), completes the main story, and indeed brings the narrative down to a date much later than the title seems to imply.

Page 238

It may be said, perhaps, that Dr. Baird holds a brief for the plaintiff in the case; but his work does not produce the impression of being that of a violently prejudiced, although an interested, writer. He is cool and careful, writing with precision, and avoiding even the effects which the historian may reasonably feel himself entitled to produce, and of which the period naturally offers so many.

Henry Martyn Baird was born in Philadelphia, January 17th, 1832, and was educated at the University of the City of New York and the University of Athens, and at Union and Princeton Theological Seminaries. In 1855 he became a tutor at Princeton; and in the following year he published an interesting volume on 'Modern Greece, a Narrative of Residence and Travel.' In 1859 he was appointed to the chair of Greek Language and Literature in the University of the City of New York.

In addition to the works heretofore named, he is the author of a biography of his father, Robert Baird, D.D.

THE BATTLE OF IVRY

From 'The Huguenots and Henry of Navarre': Charles Scribner's Sons.

The battle began with a furious cannonade from the King's artillery, so prompt that nine rounds of shot had been fired before the enemy were ready to reply, so well directed that great havoc was made in the opposing lines. Next, the light horse of M. de Rosne, upon the extreme right of the Leaguers, made a dash upon Marshal d'Aumont, but were valiantly received. Their example was followed by the German reiters, who threw themselves upon the defenders of the King's artillery and upon the light horse of Aumont, who came to their relief; then, after their customary fashion, wheeled around, expecting to pass easily through the gaps between the friendly corps of Mayenne and Egmont, and to reload their firearms at their leisure in the rear, by way of preparation for a second charge.

Owing to the blunder of Tavannes, however, they met a serried line of horse where they looked for an open field; and the Walloon cavalry found themselves compelled to set their lances in threatening position to ward off the dangerous onset of their retreating allies. Another charge, made by a squadron of the Walloon lancers themselves, was bravely met by Baron Biron. His example was imitated by the Duke of Montpensier farther down the field. Although the one leader was twice wounded, and the other had his horse killed under him, both ultimately succeeded in repulsing the enemy.

It was about this time that the main body of Henry's horse became engaged with the gallant array of cavalry in their front. Mayenne had placed upon the left of his squadron a body of four hundred mounted carabineers. These, advancing first, rode rapidly

toward the King's line, took aim, and discharged their weapons with deadly effect within twenty-five paces. Immediately afterward the main force of eighteen hundred lancers

Page 239

presented themselves. The King had fastened a great white plume to his helmet, and had adorned his horse's head with another, equally conspicuous. "Comrades!" he now exclaimed to those about him, "Comrades! God is for us! There are his enemies and ours! If you lose sight of your standards, rally to my white plume; you will find it on the road to victory and to honor." The Huguenots had knelt after their fashion; again Gabriel d'Amours had offered for them a prayer to the God of battles: but no Joyeuse dreamed of suspecting that they were meditating surrender or flight. The King, with the brave Huguenot minister's prediction of victory still ringing in his ears, plunged into the thickest of the fight, two horses' length ahead of his companions. That moment he forgot that he was King of France and general-in-chief, both in one, and fought as if he were a private soldier. It was indeed a bold venture. True, the enemy, partly because of the confusion induced by the reiters, partly from the rapidity of the King's movements, had lost in some measure the advantage they should have derived from their lances, and were compelled to rely mainly upon their swords, as against the firearms of their opponents. Still, they outnumbered the knights of the King's squadron more than as two to one. No wonder that some of the latter flinched and actually turned back; especially when the standard-bearer of the King, receiving a deadly wound in the face, lost control of his horse, and went riding aimlessly about the field, still grasping the banner in grim desperation. But the greater number emulated the courage of their leader. The white plume kept them in the road to victory and to honor. Yet even this beacon seemed at one moment to fail them. Another cavalier, who had ostentatiously decorated his helmet much after the same fashion as the King, was slain in the hand-to-hand conflict, and some, both of the Huguenots and of their enemies, for a time supposed the great Protestant champion himself to have fallen.

But although fiercely contested, the conflict was not long. The troopers of Mayenne wavered, and finally fled. Henry of Navarre emerged from the confusion, to the great relief of his anxious followers, safe and sound, covered with dust and blood not his own. More than once he had been in great personal peril. On his return from the melee, he halted, with a handful of companions, under the pear-trees indicated beforehand as a rallying-point, when he was descried and attacked by three bands of Walloon horse that had not yet engaged in the fight. Only his own valor and the timely arrival of some of his troops saved the imprudent monarch from death or captivity.

Page 240

The rout of Mayenne's principal corps was quickly followed by the disintegration of his entire army. The Swiss auxiliaries of the League, though compelled to surrender their flags, were, as ancient allies of the crown, admitted to honorable terms of capitulation. To the French, who fell into the King's hands, he was equally clement. Indeed, he spared no efforts to save their lives. But it was otherwise with the German lansquenets. Their treachery at Arques, where they had pretended to come over to the royal side only to turn upon those who had believed their protestations and welcomed them to their ranks, was yet fresh in the memory of all. They received no mercy at the King's hands.

Gathering his available forces together, and strengthened by the accession of old Marshal Biron, who had been compelled, much against his will, to remain a passive spectator while others fought, Henry pursued the remnants of the army of the League many a mile to Mantes and the banks of the Seine. If their defeat by a greatly inferior force had been little to the credit of either the generals or the troops of the League, their precipitate flight was still less decorous. The much-vaunted Flemish lancers distinguished themselves, it was said, by not pausing until they found safety beyond the borders of France; and Mayenne, never renowned for courage, emulated or surpassed them in the eagerness he displayed, on reaching the little town from which the battle took its name, to put as many leagues as possible between himself and his pursuers. "The enemy thus ran away," says the Englishman William Lyly, who was an eye-witness of the battle; "Mayenne to Ivry, where the Walloons and reiters followed so fast that there standing, hasting to draw breath, and not able to speak, he was constrained to draw his sword to strike the flyers to make place for his own flight."

The battle had been a short one. Between ten and eleven o'clock the first attack was made; in less than an hour the army of the League was routed. It had been a glorious action for the King and his old Huguenots, and not less for the loyal Roman Catholics who clung to him. None seemed discontented but old Marshal Biron, who, when he met the King coming out of the fray with battered armor and blunted sword, could not help contrasting the opportunity his Majesty had enjoyed to distinguish himself with his own enforced inactivity, and exclaimed, "Sire, this is not right! You have to-day done what Biron ought to have done, and he has done what the King should have done." But even Biron was unable to deny that the success of the royal arms surpassed all expectation, and deserved to rank among the wonders of history. The preponderance of the enemy in numbers had been great. There was no question that the impetuous attacks of their cavalry upon the left wing of the King were for a time almost successful. The official accounts might conveniently be silent upon the point, but the truth could not be disguised that at the moment

Page 241

Henry plunged into battle a part of his line was grievously shaken, a part was in full retreat, and the prospect was dark enough. Some of his immediate followers, indeed, at this time turned countenance and were disposed to flee, whereupon he recalled them to their duty with the words, "Look this way, in order that if you will not fight, at least you may see me die." But the steady and determined courage of the King, well seconded by soldiers not less brave, turned the tide of battle. "The enemy took flight," says the devout Duplessis Mornay, "terrified rather by God than by men; for it is certain that the one side was not less shaken than the other." And with the flight of the cavalry, Mayenne's infantry, constituting, as has been seen, three-fourths of his entire army, gave up the day as lost, without striking a blow for the cause they had come to support. How many men the army of the League lost in killed and wounded it is difficult to say. The Prince of Parma reported to his master the loss of two hundred and seventy of the Flemish lancers, together with their commander, the Count of Egmont. The historian De Thou estimates the entire number of deaths on the side of the League, including the combatants that fell in the battle and the fugitives drowned at the crossing of the river Eure, by Ivry, at eight hundred. The official account, on the other hand, agrees with Marshal Biron, in stating that of the cavalry alone more than fifteen hundred died, and adds that four hundred were taken prisoners; while Davila swells the total of the slain to the incredible sum of upward of six thousand men.

SIR SAMUEL WHITE BAKER

(1821-1893)

The Northwest Passage, the Pole itself, and the sources of the Nile—how many have struggled through ice and snow, or burned themselves with tropic heat, in the effort to penetrate these secrets of the earth! And how many have left their bones to whiten on the desert or lie hidden beneath icebergs at the end of the search!

Of the fortunate ones who escaped after many perils, Baker was one of the most fortunate. He explored the Blue and the White Nile, discovered at least one of the reservoirs from which flows the great river of Egypt, and lived to tell the tale and to receive due honor, being knighted by the Queen therefor, feted by learned societies, and sent subsequently by the Khedive at the head of a large force with commission to destroy the slave trade. In this he appears to have been successful for a time, but for a time only.

[Illustration: SIR SAMUEL BAKER]

Page 242

Baker was born in London, June 8th, 1821, and died December 30th, 1893. With his brother he established, in 1847, a settlement in the mountains of Ceylon, where he spent several years. His experiences in the far East appear in books entitled 'The Rifle and Hound in Ceylon' and 'Eight Years Wandering in Ceylon.' In 1861, accompanied by his young wife and an escort, he started up the Nile, and three years later, on the 14th of March, 1864, at length reached the cliffs overlooking the Albert Nyanza, being the first European to behold its waters. Like most Englishmen, he was an enthusiastic sportsman, and his manner of life afforded him a great variety of unusual experiences. He visited Cyprus in 1879, after the execution of the convention between England and Turkey, and subsequently he traveled to Syria, India, Japan, and America. He kept voluminous notes of his various journeys, which he utilized in the preparation of numerous volumes:—'The Albert Nyanza'; 'The Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia'; 'Ismaeilia,' a narrative of the expedition under the auspices of the Khedive; 'Cyprus as I Saw It in 1879'; together with 'Wild Beasts and Their Ways,' 'True Tales for My Grandsons,' and a story entitled 'Cast Up by the Sea,' which was for many years a great favorite with the boys of England and America. They are all full of life and incident. One of the most delightful memories of them which readers retain is the figure of his lovely wife, so full of courage, loyalty, buoyancy, and charm. He had that rarest of possibilities, spirit-stirring adventure and home companionship at once.

HUNTING IN ABYSSINIA

From 'The Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia'

On arrival at the camp, I resolved to fire the entire country on the following day, and to push still farther up the course of the Settite to the foot of the mountains, and to return to this camp in about a fortnight, by which time the animals that had been scared away by the fire would have returned. Accordingly, on the following morning, accompanied by a few of the aggageers, I started upon the south bank of the river, and rode for some distance into the interior, to the ground that was entirely covered with high withered grass. We were passing through a mass of kittar thorn bush, almost hidden by the immensely high grass, when, as I was ahead of the party, I came suddenly upon the tracks of rhinoceros; these were so unmistakably recent that I felt sure we were not far from the animals themselves. As I had wished to fire the grass, I was accompanied by my Tokrooris, and my horse-keeper, Mahomet No. 2. It was difficult ground for the men, and still more unfavorable for the horses, as large disjointed masses of stone were concealed in the high grass.

Page 243

We were just speculating as to the position of the rhinoceros, and thinking how uncommonly unpleasant it would be should he obtain our wind, when whiff! whiff! whiff! We heard the sharp whistling snort, with a tremendous rush through the high grass and thorns close to us; and at the same moment two of these determined brutes were upon us in full charge. I never saw such a scrimmage; *saue qui peut!* There was no time for more than one look behind. I dug the spurs into Aggahr's flanks, and clasping him round the neck, I ducked my head down to his shoulder, well protected with my strong hunting cap, and I kept the spurs going as hard as I could ply them, blindly trusting to Providence and my good horse, over big rocks, fallen trees, thick kittar thorns, and grass ten feet high, with the two infernal animals in full chase only a few feet behind me. I heard their abominable whiffing close to me, but so did my horse also, and the good old hunter flew over obstacles that I should have thought impossible, and he dashed straight under the hooked thorn bushes and doubled like a hare. The aggageers were all scattered; Mahomet No. 2 was knocked over by a rhinoceros; all the men were sprawling upon the rocks with their guns, and the party was entirely discomfited. Having passed the kittar thorn, I turned, and seeing that the beasts had gone straight on, I brought Aggahr's head round, and tried to give chase, but it was perfectly impossible; it was only a wonder that the horse had escaped in ground so difficult for riding. Although my clothes were of the strongest and coarsest Arab cotton cloth, which seldom tore, but simply lost a thread when caught in a thorn, I was nearly naked. My blouse was reduced to shreds; as I wore sleeves only half way from the shoulder to the elbow, my naked arms were streaming with blood; fortunately my hunting cap was secured with a chin strap, and still more fortunately I had grasped the horse's neck, otherwise I must have been dragged out of the saddle by the hooked thorns. All the men were cut and bruised, some having fallen upon their heads among the rocks, and others had hurt their legs in falling in their endeavors to escape. Mahomet. No. 2, the horse-keeper, was more frightened than hurt, as he had been knocked down by the shoulder, and not by the horn of the rhinoceros, as the animal had not noticed him: its attention was absorbed by the horse.

I determined to set fire to the whole country immediately, and descending the hill toward the river to obtain a favorable wind, I put my men in a line, extending over about a mile along the river's bed, and they fired the grass in different places. With a loud roar, the flame leaped high in air and rushed forward with astonishing velocity; the grass was as inflammable as tinder, and the strong north wind drove the long line of fire spreading in every direction through the country.

We now crossed to the other side of the river to avoid the flames, and we returned toward the camp. On the way I made a long shot and badly wounded a tetel, but lost it in thick thorns; shortly after, I stalked a nellut (*A. Strepsiceros*), and bagged it with the Fletcher rifle.

Page 244

We arrived early in camp, and on the following day we moved sixteen miles farther up stream, and camped under a tamarind-tree by the side of the river. No European had ever been farther than our last camp, Delladilla, and that spot had only been visited by Johann Schmidt and Florian. In the previous year, my aggageers had sabred some of the Base at this very camping-place; they accordingly requested me to keep a vigilant watch during the night, as they would be very likely to attack us in revenge, unless they had been scared by the rifles and by the size of our party. They advised me not to remain long in this spot, as it would be very dangerous for my wife to be left almost alone during the day, when we were hunting, and that the Base would be certain to espy us from the mountains, and would most probably attack and carry her off when they were assured of our departure. She was not very nervous about this, but she immediately called the dragoman, Mahomet, who knew the use of a gun, and she asked him if he would stand by her in case they were attacked in my absence; the faithful servant replied, "Mahomet fight the Base? No, Missus; Mahomet not fight; if the Base come, Missus fight; Mahomet run away; Mahomet not come all the way from Cairo to get him killed by black fellers; Mahomet will run—Inshallah!" (Please God.)

This frank avowal of his military tactics was very reassuring. There was a high hill of basalt, something resembling a pyramid, within a quarter of a mile of us; I accordingly ordered some of my men every day to ascend this look-out station, and I resolved to burn the high grass at once, so as to destroy all cover for the concealment of an enemy. That evening I very nearly burned our camp; I had several times ordered the men to clear away the dry grass for about thirty yards from our resting-place; this they had neglected to obey. We had been joined a few days before by a party of about a dozen Hamran Arabs, who were hippopotami hunters; thus we mustered very strong, and it would have been the work of about half an hour to have cleared away the grass as I had desired.

The wind was brisk, and blew directly toward our camp, which was backed by the river. I accordingly took a fire-stick, and I told my people to look sharp, as they would not clear away the grass. I walked to the foot of the basalt hill, and fired the grass in several places. In an instant the wind swept the flame and smoke toward the camp. All was confusion; the Arabs had piled the camel-saddles and all their corn and effects in the high grass about twenty yards from the tent; there was no time to remove all these things; therefore, unless they could clear away the grass so as to stop the fire before it should reach the spot, they would be punished for their laziness by losing their property. The fire traveled quicker than I had expected, and, by the time I had hastened to the tent, I found the entire party working frantically; the Arabs were slashing down the grass with their

Page 245

swords, and sweeping it away with their shields, while my Tokrooris were beating it down with long sticks and tearing it from its withered and fortunately tinder-rotten roots, in desperate haste. The flames rushed on, and we already felt the heat, as volumes of smoke enveloped us; I thought it advisable to carry the gunpowder (about 20 lbs.) down to the river, together with the rifles; while my wife and Mahomet dragged the various articles of luggage to the same place of safety. The fire now approached within about sixty yards, and dragging out the iron pins, I let the tent fall to the ground. The Arabs had swept a line like a high-road perfectly clean, and they were still tearing away the grass, when they were suddenly obliged to rush back as the flames arrived.

Almost instantaneously the smoke blew over us, but the fire had expired upon meeting the cleared ground. I now gave them a little lecture upon obedience to orders; and from that day, their first act upon halting for the night was to clear away the grass, lest I should repeat the entertainment. In countries that are covered with dry grass, it should be an invariable rule to clear the ground around the camp before night; hostile natives will frequently fire the grass to windward of a party, or careless servants may leave their pipes upon the ground, which fanned by the wind would quickly create a blaze. That night the mountain afforded a beautiful appearance as the flames ascended the steep sides, and ran flickering up the deep gullies with a brilliant light.

We were standing outside the tent admiring the scene, which perfectly illuminated the neighborhood, when suddenly an apparition of a lion and lioness stood for an instant before us at about fifteen yards distance, and then disappeared over the blackened ground before I had time to snatch a rifle from the tent. No doubt they had been disturbed from the mountain by the fire, and had mistaken their way in the country so recently changed from high grass to black ashes. In this locality I considered it advisable to keep a vigilant watch during the night, and the Arabs were told off for that purpose.

A little before sunrise I accompanied the howartis, or hippopotamus hunters, for a day's sport. There were numbers of hippos in this part of the river, and we were not long before we found a herd. The hunters failed in several attempts to harpoon them, but they succeeded in stalking a crocodile after a most peculiar fashion. This large beast was lying upon a sandbank on the opposite margin of the river, close to a bed of rushes.

The howartis, having studied the wind, ascended for about a quarter of a mile, and then swam across the river, harpoon in hand. The two men reached the opposite bank, beneath which they alternately waded or swam down the stream toward the spot upon which the crocodile was lying. Thus advancing under cover of the steep bank, or floating with the stream in deep places, and crawling like crocodiles across

Page 246

the shallows, the two hunters at length arrived at the bank or rushes, on the other side of which the monster was basking asleep upon the sand. They were now about waist-deep, and they kept close to the rushes with their harpoons raised, ready to cast the moment they should pass the rush bed and come in view of the crocodile. Thus steadily advancing, they had just arrived at the corner within about eight yards of the crocodile, when the creature either saw them, or obtained their wind; in an instant it rushed to the water; at the same moment, the two harpoons were launched with great rapidity by the hunters. One glanced obliquely from the scales; the other stuck fairly in the tough hide, and the iron, detached from the bamboo, held fast, while the ambatch float, running on the surface of the water, marked the course of the reptile beneath.

The hunters chose a convenient place, and recrossed the stream to our side, apparently not heeding the crocodiles more than we should pike when bathing in England. They would not waste their time by securing the crocodile at present, as they wished to kill a hippopotamus; the float would mark the position, and they would be certain to find it later. We accordingly continued our search for hippopotami; these animals appeared to be on the *qui vive*, and, as the hunters once more failed in an attempt, I made a clean shot behind the ear of one, and killed it dead. At length we arrived at a large pool, in which were several sandbanks covered with rushes, and many rocky islands. Among these rocks were a herd of hippopotami, consisting of an old bull and several cows; a young hippo was standing, like an ugly little statue, on a protruding rock, while another infant stood upon its mother's back that listlessly floated on the water.

This was an admirable place for the hunters. They desired me to lie down, and they crept into the jungle out of view of the river; I presently observed them stealthily descending the dry bed about two hundred paces above the spot where the hippos were basking behind the rocks. They entered the river, and swam down the centre of the stream toward the rock. This was highly exciting:—the hippos were quite unconscious of the approaching danger, as, steadily and rapidly, the hunters floated down the strong current; they neared the rock, and both heads disappeared as they purposely sank out of view; in a few seconds later they reappeared at the edge of the rock upon which the young hippo stood. It would be difficult to say which started first, the astonished young hippo into the water, or the harpoons from the hands of the howartis! It was the affair of a moment; the hunters dived directly they had hurled their harpoons, and, swimming for some distance under water, they came to the surface, and hastened to the shore lest an infuriated hippopotamus should follow them. One harpoon had missed; the other had fixed the bull of the herd, at which it had been surely aimed. This was grand

Page 247

sport! The bull was in the greatest fury, and rose to the surface, snorting and blowing in his impotent rage; but as the ambatch float was exceedingly large, and this naturally accompanied his movements, he tried to escape from his imaginary persecutor, and dived constantly, only to find his pertinacious attendant close to him upon regaining the surface. This was not to last long; the howartis were in earnest, and they at once called their party, who, with two of the aggageers, Abou Do and Suleiman, were near at hand; these men arrived with the long ropes that form a portion of the outfit for hippo hunting.

The whole party now halted on the edge of the river, while two men swam across with one end of the long rope. Upon gaining the opposite bank, I observed that a second rope was made fast to the middle of the main line; thus upon our side we held the ends of two ropes, while on the opposite side they had only one; accordingly, the point of junction of the two ropes in the centre formed an acute angle. The object of this was soon practically explained. Two men upon our side now each held a rope, and one of these walked about ten yards before the other. Upon both sides of the river the people now advanced, dragging the rope on the surface of the water until they reached the ambatch float that was swimming to and fro, according to the movements of the hippopotamus below. By a dexterous jerk of the main line, the float was now placed between the two ropes, and it was immediately secured in the acute angle by bringing together the ends of these ropes on our side.

The men on the opposite bank now dropped their line, and our men hauled in upon the ambatch float that was held fast between the ropes. Thus cleverly made sure, we quickly brought a strain upon the hippo, and, although I have had some experience in handling big fish, I never knew one pull so lustily as the amphibious animal that we now alternately coaxed and bullied. He sprang out of the water, gnashed his huge jaws, snorted with tremendous rage, and lashed the river into foam; he then dived, and foolishly approached us beneath the water. We quickly gathered in the slack line, and took a round turn upon a large rock, within a few feet of the river. The hippo now rose to the surface, about ten yards from the hunters, and, jumping half out of the water, he snapped his great jaws together, endeavoring to catch the rope, but at the same instant two harpoons were launched into his side. Disdaining retreat and maddened with rage, the furious animal charged from the depths of the river, and, gaining a footing, he reared his bulky form from the surface, came boldly upon the sandbank, and attacked the hunters open-mouthed. He little knew his enemy; they were not the men to fear a pair of gaping jaws, armed with a deadly array of tusks, but half a dozen lances were hurled at him, some entering his mouth from a distance of five or six paces, at the same time several men threw handfuls

Page 248

of sand into his enormous eyes. This baffled him more than the lances; he crunched the shafts between his powerful jaws like straws, but he was beaten by the sand, and, shaking his huge head, he retreated to the river. During his sally upon the shore, two of the hunters had secured the ropes of the harpoons that had been fastened in his body just before his charge; he was now fixed by three of these deadly instruments, but suddenly one rope gave way, having been bitten through by the enraged beast, who was still beneath the water. Immediately after this he appeared on the surface, and, without a moment's hesitation, he once more charged furiously from the water straight at the hunters, with his huge mouth open to such an extent that he could have accommodated two inside passengers. Suleiman was wild with delight, and springing forward lance in hand, he drove it against the head of the formidable animal, but without effect. At the same time, Abou Do met the hippo sword in hand, reminding me of Perseus slaying the sea-monster that would devour Andromeda, but the sword made a harmless gash, and the lance, already blunted against the rocks, refused to penetrate the tough hide; once more handfuls of sand were pelted upon his face, and again repulsed by this blinding attack, he was forced to retire to his deep hole and wash it from his eyes. Six times during the fight the valiant bull hippo quitted his watery fortress, and charged resolutely at his pursuers; he had broken several of their lances in his jaws, other lances had been hurled, and, falling upon the rocks, they were blunted, and would not penetrate. The fight had continued for three hours, and the sun was about to set, accordingly the hunters begged me to give him the *coup de grace*, as they had hauled him close to the shore, and they feared he would sever the rope with his teeth. I waited for a good opportunity, when he boldly raised his head from water about three yards from the rifle, and a bullet from the little Fletcher between the eyes closed the last act.

THE SOURCES OF THE NILE

From 'The Albert Nyanza'

The name of this village was Parkani. For several days past our guides had told us that we were very near to the lake, and we were now assured that we should reach it on the morrow. I had noticed a lofty range of mountains at an immense distance west, and I had imagined that the lake lay on the other side of this chain; but I was now informed that those mountains formed the western frontier of the M'wootan N'zige, and that the lake was actually within a march of Parkani. I could not believe it possible that we were so near the object of our search. The guide Rabonga now appeared, and declared that if we started early on the following morning we should be able to wash in the lake by noon!

That night I hardly slept. For years I had striven to reach the “sources of the Nile.” In my nightly dreams during that arduous voyage I had always failed, but after so much hard work and perseverance the cup was at my very lips, and I was to drink at the mysterious fountain before another sun should set—at that great reservoir of Nature that ever since creation had baffled all discovery.

Page 249

I had hoped, and prayed, and striven through all kinds of difficulties, in sickness, starvation, and fatigue, to reach that hidden source; and when it had appeared impossible, we had both determined to die upon the road rather than return defeated. Was it possible that it was so near, and that to-morrow we could say, “the work is accomplished”?

The 14th March. The sun had not risen when I was spurring my ox after the guide, who, having been promised a double handful of beads on arrival at the lake, had caught the enthusiasm of the moment. The day broke beautifully clear, and having crossed a deep valley between the hills, we toiled up the opposite slope. I hurried to the summit. The glory of our prize burst suddenly upon me! There, like a sea of quicksilver, lay far beneath the grand expanse of water,—a boundless sea horizon on the south and southwest, glittering in the noonday sun; and on the west at fifty or sixty miles distance blue mountains rose from the bosom of the lake to a height of about 7,000 feet above its level.

It is impossible to describe the triumph of that moment;—here was the reward for all our labor—for the years of tenacity with which we had toiled through Africa. England had won the sources of the Nile! Long before I reached this spot I had arranged to give three cheers with all our men in English style in honor of the discovery, but now that I looked down upon the great inland sea lying nestled in the very heart of Africa, and thought how vainly mankind had sought these sources throughout so many ages, and reflected that I had been the humble instrument permitted to unravel this portion of the great mystery when so many greater than I had failed, I felt too serious to vent my feelings in vain cheers for victory, and I sincerely thanked God for having guided and supported us through all dangers to the good end. I was about 1,500 feet above the lake, and I looked down from the steep granite cliff upon those welcome waters—upon that vast reservoir which nourished Egypt and brought fertility where all was wilderness—upon that great source so long hidden from mankind; that source of bounty and of blessings to millions of human beings; and as one of the greatest objects in nature, I determined to honor it with a great name. As an imperishable memorial of one loved and mourned by our gracious Queen and deplored by every Englishman, I called this great lake “the Albert Nyanza.” The Victoria and the Albert lakes are the two sources of the Nile.

ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR

(1848-)

Page 250

Although the prominence of Arthur James Balfour in English contemporary life is in the main that of a statesman, he has a high place as a critic of philosophy, especially in its relation to religion. During the early part of his life his interests were entirely those of a student. He was born in 1848, a member of the Cecil family, and a nephew of the Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury. His tastes were those of a retired thinker. He cared for literature, music, and philosophy, but very little for the political world; so little that he never read the newspapers. This tendency was increased by his delicate health. When, therefore, as a young man in the neighborhood of thirty, he was made Secretary for Scotland, people laughed. His uncle's choice proved to be a wise one, however; and he later, in 1886, gave his nephew the very important position of Irish Secretary, at a time when some of the ablest and most experienced statesmen had failed. Mr. Balfour won an unexpected success and a wide reputation, and from that time on he developed rapidly into one of the most skillful statesmen of the Conservative party. By tradition and by temperament he is an extreme Tory; and it is in the opposition, as a skillful fencer in debate and a sharp critic of pretentious schemes, that he has been most admired and most feared. However, he is kept from being narrowly confined to the traditional point of view by the philosophic interests and training of his mind, which he has turned into practical fairness. Some of his speeches are most original in suggestion, and all show a literary quality of a high order. His writings on other subjects are also broad, scholarly, and practical. 'A Defense of Philosophic Doubt' is thought by some philosophers to be the ablest work of destructive criticism since Hume. 'The Foundations of Belief' covers somewhat the same ground and in more popular fashion. 'Essays and Addresses' is a collection of papers on literature and sociology.

[Illustration: ARTHUR J. BALFOUR]

THE PLEASURES OF READING

From his Rectorial Address before the University of Glasgow

I confess to have been much perplexed in my search for a topic on which I could say something to which you would have patience to listen, or on which I might find it profitable to speak. One theme however there is, not inappropriate to the place in which I stand, nor I hope unwelcome to the audience which I address. The youngest of you have left behind that period of youth during which it seems inconceivable that any book should afford recreation except a story-book. Many of you are just reaching the period when, at the end of your prescribed curriculum, the whole field and compass of literature lies outspread before you; when, with faculties trained and disciplined, and the edge of curiosity not dulled or worn with use, you may enter at your leisure into the intellectual heritage of the centuries.

Page 251

Now the question of how to read and what to read has of late filled much space in the daily papers, if it cannot strictly speaking be said to have profoundly occupied the public mind. But you need be under no alarm. I am not going to supply you with a new list of the hundred books most worth reading, nor am I about to take the world into my confidence in respect of my “favorite passages from the best authors.” Nor again do I address myself to the professed student, to the fortunate individual with whom literature or science is the business as well as the pleasure of life. I have not the qualifications which would enable me to undertake such a task with the smallest hope of success. My theme is humble, though the audience to whom I desire to speak is large: for I speak to the ordinary reader with ordinary capacities and ordinary leisure, to whom reading is, or ought to be, not a business but a pleasure; and my theme is the enjoyment—not, mark you, the improvement, nor the glory, nor the profit, but the *enjoyment*—which may be derived by such an one from books.

It is perhaps due to the controversial habits engendered by my unfortunate profession, that I find no easier method of making my own view clear than that of contrasting with it what I regard as an erroneous view held by somebody else; and in the present case the doctrine which I shall choose as a foil to my own, is one which has been stated with the utmost force and directness by that brilliant and distinguished writer, Mr. Frederic Harrison. He has, as many of you know, recently given us, in a series of excellent essays, his opinion on the principles which should guide us in the choice of books. Against that part of his treatise which is occupied with specific recommendations of certain authors I have not a word to say. He has resisted all the temptations to eccentricity which so easily beset the modern critic. Every book which he praises deserves his praise, and has long been praised by the world at large. I do not, indeed, hold that the verdict of the world is necessarily binding on the individual conscience. I admit to the full that there is an enormous quantity of hollow devotion, of withered orthodoxy divorced from living faith, in the eternal chorus of praise which goes up from every literary altar to the memory of the immortal dead. Nevertheless every critic is bound to recognize, as Mr. Harrison recognizes, that he must put down to individual peculiarity any difference he may have with the general verdict of the ages; he must feel that mankind are not likely to be in a conspiracy of error as to the kind of literary work which conveys to them the highest literary enjoyment, and that in such cases at least *securus judicat orbis terrarum*.

Page 252

But it is quite possible to hold that any work recommended by Mr. Harrison is worth repeated reading, and yet to reject utterly the theory of study by which these recommendations are prefaced. For Mr. Harrison is a ruthless censor. His *index expurgatorius* includes, so far as I can discover, the whole catalogue of the British Museum, with the exception of a small remnant which might easily be contained in about thirty or forty volumes. The vast remainder he contemplates with feelings apparently not merely of indifference, but of active aversion. He surveys the boundless and ever-increasing waste of books with emotions compounded of disgust and dismay. He is almost tempted to say in his haste that the invention of printing has been an evil one for humanity. In the habits of miscellaneous reading, born of a too easy access to libraries, circulating and other, he sees many soul-destroying tendencies; and his ideal reader would appear to be a gentleman who rejects with a lofty scorn all in history that does not pass for being first-rate in importance, and all in literature that is not admitted to be first-rate in quality.

Now, I am far from denying that this theory is plausible. Of all that has been written, it is certain that the professed student can master but an infinitesimal fraction. Of that fraction the ordinary reader can master but a very small part. What advice, then, can be better than to select for study the few masterpieces that have come down to us, and to treat as non-existent the huge but undistinguished remainder? We are like travelers passing hastily through some ancient city; filled with memorials of many generations and more than one great civilization. Our time is short. Of what may be seen we can only see at best but a trifling fragment. Let us then take care that we waste none of our precious moments upon that which is less than the most excellent. So preaches Mr. Frederic Harrison; and when a doctrine which put thus may seem not only wise but obvious, is further supported by such assertions that habits of miscellaneous reading “close the mind to what is spiritually sustaining” by “stuffing it with what is simply curious,” or that such methods of study are worse than no habits of study at all because they “gorge and enfeeble” the mind by “excess in that which cannot nourish,” I almost feel that in venturing to dissent from it, I may be attacking not merely the teaching of common sense but the inspirations of a high morality.

Yet I am convinced that for most persons the views thus laid down by Mr. Harrison are wrong; and that what he describes, with characteristic vigor, as “an impotent voracity for desultory information,” is in reality a most desirable and a not too common form of mental appetite. I have no sympathy whatever with the horror he expresses at the “incessant accumulation of fresh books.” I am never tempted to regret that Gutenberg was born into the world. I care not at all though the “cataract

Page 253

of printed stuff,” as Mr. Harrison calls it, should flow and still flow on until the catalogues of our libraries should make libraries themselves. I am prepared, indeed, to express sympathy almost amounting to approbation for any one who would check all writing which was *not* intended for the printer. I pay no tribute of grateful admiration to those who have oppressed mankind with the dubious blessing of the penny post. But the ground of the distinction is plain. We are always obliged to read our letters, and are sometimes obliged to answer them. But who obliges us to wade through the piled-up lumber of an ancient library, or to skim more than we like off the frothy foolishness poured forth in ceaseless streams by our circulating libraries? Dead dunces do not importune us; Grub Street does not ask for a reply by return of post. Even their living successors need hurt no one who possesses the very moderate degree of social courage required to make the admission that he has not read the last new novel or the current number of a fashionable magazine.

But this is not the view of Mr. Harrison. To him the position of any one having free access to a large library is fraught with issues so tremendous that, in order adequately to describe it, he has to seek for parallels in two of the most highly-wrought episodes in fiction: the Ancient Mariner, becalmed and thirsting on the tropic ocean; Bunyan’s Christian in the crisis of spiritual conflict. But there is here, surely, some error and some exaggeration. Has miscellaneous reading all the dreadful consequences which Mr. Harrison depicts? Has it any of them? His declaration about the intellect being “gorged and enfeebled” by the absorption of too much information, expresses no doubt with great vigor an analogy, for which there is high authority, between the human mind and the human stomach; but surely it is an analogy which may be pressed too far. I have often heard of the individual whose excellent natural gifts have been so overloaded with huge masses of undigested and indigestible learning that they have had no chance of healthy development. But though I have often heard of this personage, I have never met him, and I believe him to be mythical. It is true, no doubt, that many learned people are dull; but there is no indication whatever that they are dull because they are learned. True dullness is seldom acquired; it is a natural grace, the manifestations of which, however modified by education, remain in substance the same. Fill a dull man to the brim with knowledge, and he will not become less dull, as the enthusiasts for education vainly imagine; but neither will he become duller, as Mr. Harrison appears to suppose. He will remain in essence what he always has been and always must have been. But whereas his dullness would, if left to itself, have been merely vacuous, it may have become, under careful cultivation, pretentious and pedantic.

Page 254

I would further point out to you that while there is no ground in experience for supposing that a keen interest in those facts which Mr. Harrison describes as “merely curious” has any stupefying effect upon the mind, or has any tendency to render it insensible to the higher things of literature and art, there is positive evidence that many of those who have most deeply felt the charm of these higher things have been consumed by that omnivorous appetite for knowledge which excites Mr. Harrison’s especial indignation. Dr. Johnson, for instance, though deaf to some of the most delicate harmonies of verse, was without question a very great critic. Yet in Dr. Johnson’s opinion, literary history, which is for the most part composed of facts which Mr. Harrison would regard as insignificant, about authors whom he would regard as pernicious, was the most delightful of studies. Again, consider the case of Lord Macaulay. Lord Macaulay did everything Mr. Harrison says he ought not to have done. From youth to age he was continuously occupied in “gorging and enfeebling” his intellect, by the unlimited consumption of every species of literature, from the masterpieces of the age of Pericles to the latest rubbish from the circulating library. It is not told of him that his intellect suffered by the process; and though it will hardly be claimed for him that he was a great critic, none will deny that he possessed the keenest susceptibilities for literary excellence in many languages and in every form. If Englishmen and Scotchmen do not satisfy you, I will take a Frenchman. The most accomplished critic whom France has produced is, by general admission, *Ste.-Beuve*. His capacity for appreciating supreme perfection in literature will be disputed by none; yet the great bulk of his vast literary industry was expended upon the lives and writings of authors whose lives Mr. Harrison would desire us to forget, and whose writings almost wring from him the wish that the art of printing had never been discovered.

I am even bold enough to hazard the conjecture (I trust he will forgive me) that Mr. Harrison’s life may be quoted against Mr. Harrison’s theory. I entirely decline to believe, without further evidence, that the writings whose vigor of style and of thought have been the delight of us all are the product of his own system. I hope I do him no wrong, but I cannot help thinking that if we knew the truth, we should find that he followed the practice of those worthy physicians who, after prescribing the most abstemious diet to their patients, may be seen partaking freely, and to all appearances safely, of the most succulent and the most unwholesome of the forbidden dishes.

It has to be noted that Mr. Harrison’s list of the books which deserve perusal would seem to indicate that in his opinion, the pleasures to be derived from literature are chiefly pleasures of the imagination. Poets, dramatists, and novelists form the chief portion of the somewhat meagre fare which is specifically permitted to his disciples. Now, though I have already stated that the list is not one of which any person is likely to assert that it contains books which ought to be excluded, yet, even from the point of view of what may be termed aesthetic enjoyment, the field in which we are allowed to take our pleasures seems to me unduly restricted.

Page 255

Contemporary poetry, for instance, on which Mr. Harrison bestows a good deal of hard language, has and must have, for the generation which produces it, certain qualities not likely to be possessed by any other. Charles Lamb has somewhere declared that a pun loses all its virtues as soon as the momentary quality of the intellectual and social atmosphere in which it was born has changed its character. What is true of this, the humblest effort of verbal art, is true in a different measure and degree of all, even of the highest, forms of literature. To some extent every work requires interpretation to generations who are separated by differences of thought or education from the age in which it was originally produced. That this is so with every book which depends for its interest upon feelings and fashions which have utterly vanished, no one will be disposed, I imagine, to deny. Butler's 'Hudibras,' for instance, which was the delight of a gay and witty society, is to me at least not unfrequently dull. Of some works, no doubt, which made a noise in their day it seems impossible to detect the slightest trace of charm. But this is not the case with 'Hudibras.' Its merits are obvious. That they should have appealed to a generation sick of the reign of the "Saints" is precisely what we should have expected. But to us, who are not sick of the reign of the Saints, they appeal but imperfectly. The attempt to reproduce artificially the frame of mind of those who first read the poem is not only an effort, but is to most people, at all events, an unsuccessful effort. What is true of 'Hudibras' is true also, though in an inconceivably smaller degree, of those great works of imagination which deal with the elemental facts of human character and human passion. Yet even on these, time does, though lightly, lay his hand. Wherever what may be called "historic sympathy" is required, there will be some diminution of the enjoyment which those must have felt who were the poet's contemporaries. We look, so to speak, at the same splendid landscape as they, but distance has made it necessary for us to aid our natural vision with glasses, and some loss of light will thus inevitably be produced, and some inconvenience from the difficulty of truly adjusting the focus. Of all authors, Homer would, I suppose, be thought to suffer least from such drawbacks. But yet in order to listen to Homer's accents with the ears of an ancient Greek, we must be able, among other things, to enter into a view about the gods which is as far removed from what we should describe as religious sentiment, as it is from the frigid ingenuity of those later poets who regarded the deities of Greek mythology as so many wheels in the supernatural machinery with which it pleased them to carry on the action of their pieces. If we are to accept Mr. Herbert Spencer's views as to the progress of our species, changes of sentiment are likely to occur which will even more seriously interfere with the world's delight

Page 256

in the Homeric poems. When human beings become so nicely “adjusted to their environment” that courage and dexterity in battle will have become as useless among civic virtues as an old helmet is among the weapons of war; when fighting gets to be looked upon with the sort of disgust excited in us by cannibalism; and when public opinion shall regard a warrior much in the same light that we regard a hangman,—I do not see how any fragment of that vast and splendid literature which depends for its interest upon deeds of heroism and the joy of battle is to retain its ancient charm.

About these remote contingencies, however, I am glad to think that neither you nor I need trouble our heads; and if I parenthetically allude to them now, it is merely as an illustration of a truth not always sufficiently remembered, and as an excuse for those who find in the genuine, though possibly second-rate, productions of their own age, a charm for which they search in vain among the mighty monuments of the past.

But I leave this train of thought, which has perhaps already taken me too far, in order to point out a more fundamental error, as I think it, which arises from regarding literature solely from this high aesthetic standpoint. The pleasures of imagination, derived from the best literary models, form without doubt the most exquisite portion of the enjoyment which we may extract from books; but they do not, in my opinion, form the largest portion if we take into account mass as well as quality in our calculation. There is the literature which appeals to the imagination or the fancy, some stray specimens of which Mr. Harrison will permit us to peruse; but is there not also the literature which satisfies the curiosity? Is this vast storehouse of pleasure to be thrown hastily aside because many of the facts which it contains are alleged to be insignificant, because the appetite to which they minister is said to be morbid? Consider a little. We are here dealing with one of the strongest intellectual impulses of rational beings. Animals, as a rule, trouble themselves but little about anything unless they want either to eat it or to run away from it. Interest in and wonder at the works of nature and the doings of man are products of civilization, and excite emotions which do not diminish but increase with increasing knowledge and cultivation. Feed them and they grow; minister to them and they will greatly multiply. We hear much indeed of what is called “idle curiosity”; but I am loth to brand any form of curiosity as necessarily idle. Take, for example, one of the most singular, but in this age one of the most universal, forms in which it is accustomed to manifest itself: I mean that of an exhaustive study of the contents of the morning and evening papers. It is certainly remarkable that any person who has nothing to get by it should destroy his eyesight and confuse his brain by a conscientious attempt to master the dull and doubtful details of the European diary daily transmitted

Page 257

to us by “Our Special Correspondent.” But it must be remembered that this is only a somewhat unprofitable exercise of that disinterested love of knowledge which moves men to penetrate the Polar snows, to build up systems of philosophy, or to explore the secrets of the remotest heavens. It has in it the rudiments of infinite and varied delights. It *can* be turned, and it *should* be turned into a curiosity for which nothing that has been done, or thought, or suffered, or believed, no law which governs the world of matter or the world of mind, can be wholly alien or uninteresting.

Truly it is a subject for astonishment that, instead of expanding to the utmost the employment of this pleasure-giving faculty, so many persons should set themselves to work to limit its exercise by all kinds of arbitrary regulations. Some there are, for example, who tell us that the acquisition of knowledge is all very well, but that it must be *useful* knowledge; meaning usually thereby that it must enable a man to get on in a profession, pass an examination, shine in conversation, or obtain a reputation for learning. But even if they mean something higher than this, even if they mean that knowledge to be worth anything must subserve ultimately if not immediately the material or spiritual interests of mankind, the doctrine is one which should be energetically repudiated. I admit, of course, at once, that discoveries the most apparently remote from human concerns have often proved themselves of the utmost commercial or manufacturing value. But they require no such justification for their existence, nor were they striven for with any such object. Navigation is not the final cause of astronomy, nor telegraphy of electro-dynamics, nor dye-works of chemistry. And if it be true that the desire of knowledge for the sake of knowledge was the animating motive of the great men who first wrested her secrets from nature, why should it not also be enough for us, to whom it is not given to discover, but only to learn as best we may what has been discovered by others?

Another maxim, more plausible but equally pernicious, is that superficial knowledge is worse than no knowledge at all. That “a little knowledge is a dangerous thing” is a saying which has now got currency as a proverb stamped in the mint of Pope’s versification; of Pope, who with the most imperfect knowledge of Greek translated Homer, with the most imperfect knowledge of the Elizabethan drama edited Shakespeare, and with the most imperfect knowledge of philosophy wrote the ‘Essay on Man.’ But what is this “little knowledge” which is supposed to be so dangerous? What is it “little” in relation to? If in relation to what there is to know, then all human knowledge is little. If in relation to what actually is known by somebody, then we must condemn as “dangerous” the knowledge which Archimedes possessed of mechanics, or Copernicus of astronomy; for a shilling primer and a few weeks’ study will enable any student

Page 258

to outstrip in mere information some of the greatest teachers of the past. No doubt, that little knowledge which thinks itself to be great may possibly be a dangerous, as it certainly is a most ridiculous thing. We have all suffered under that eminently absurd individual who on the strength of one or two volumes, imperfectly apprehended by himself, and long discredited in the estimation of everyone else, is prepared to supply you on the shortest notice with a dogmatic solution of every problem suggested by this “unintelligible world” or the political variety of the same pernicious genus, whose statecraft consists in the ready application to the most complex question of national interest of some high-sounding commonplace which has done weary duty on a thousand platforms, and which even in its palmiest days was never fit for anything better than a peroration. But in our dislike of the individual, do not let us mistake the diagnosis of his disease. He suffers not from ignorance but from stupidity. Give him learning and you make him not wise, but only more pretentious in his folly.

I say then that so far from a little knowledge being undesirable, a little knowledge is all that on most subjects any of us can hope to attain; and that, as a source not of worldly profit but of personal pleasure, it may be of incalculable value to its possessor. But it will naturally be asked, “How are we to select from among the infinite number of things which may be known, those which it is best worth while for us to know?” We are constantly being told to concern ourselves with learning what is important, and not to waste our energies upon what is insignificant. But what are the marks by which we shall recognize the important, and how is it to be distinguished from the insignificant. A precise and complete answer to this question which shall be true for all men cannot be given. I am considering knowledge, recollect, as it ministers to enjoyment; and from this point of view each unit of information is obviously of importance in proportion as it increases the general sum of enjoyment which we obtain, or expect to obtain, from knowledge. This, of course, makes it impossible to lay down precise rules which shall be an equally sure guide to all sorts and conditions of men; for in this, as in other matters, tastes must differ, and against real difference of taste there is no appeal.

There is, however, one caution which it may be worth your while to keep in view:—Do not be persuaded into applying any general proposition on this subject with a foolish impartiality to every kind of knowledge. There are those who tell you that it is the broad generalities and the far-reaching principles which govern the world, which are alone worthy of your attention. A fact which is not an illustration of a law, in the opinion of these persons appears to lose all its value. Incidents which do not fit into some great generalization, events which are merely picturesque, details which

Page 259

are merely curious, they dismiss as unworthy the interest of a reasoning being. Now, even in science this doctrine in its extreme form does not hold good. The most scientific of men have taken profound interest in the investigation of facts from the determination of which they do not anticipate any material addition to our knowledge of the laws which regulate the Universe. In these matters, I need hardly say that I speak wholly without authority. But I have always been under the impression that an investigation which has cost hundreds of thousands of pounds; which has stirred on three occasions the whole scientific community throughout the civilized world; on which has been expended the utmost skill in the construction of instruments and their application to purposes of research (I refer to the attempts made to determine the distance of the sun by observation of the transit of Venus),—would, even if they had been brought to a successful issue, have furnished mankind with the knowledge of no new astronomical principle. The laws which govern the motions of the solar system, the proportions which the various elements in that system bear to one another, have long been known. The distance of the sun itself is known within limits of error relatively speaking not very considerable. Were the measuring rod we apply to the heavens based on an estimate of the sun's distance from the earth which was wrong by (say) three per cent., it would not to the lay mind seem to affect very materially our view either of the distribution of the heavenly bodies or of their motions. And yet this information, this piece of celestial gossip, would seem to have been the chief astronomical result expected from the successful prosecution of an investigation in which whole nations have interested themselves.

But though no one can, I think, pretend that science does not concern itself, and properly concern itself, with facts which are not to all appearance illustrations of law, it is undoubtedly true that for those who desire to extract the greatest pleasure from science, a knowledge, however elementary, of the leading principles of investigation and the larger laws of nature, is the acquisition most to be desired. To him who is not a specialist, a comprehension of the broad outlines of the universe as it presents itself to his scientific imagination is the thing most worth striving to attain. But when we turn from science to what is rather vaguely called history, the same principles of study do not, I think, altogether apply, and mainly for this reason: that while the recognition of the reign of law is the chief amongst the pleasures imparted by science, our inevitable ignorance makes it the least among the pleasures imparted by history.

Page 260

It is no doubt true that we are surrounded by advisers who tell us that all study of the past is barren, except in so far as it enables us to determine the principles by which the evolution of human societies is governed. How far such an investigation has been up to the present time fruitful in results, it would be unkind to inquire. That it will ever enable us to trace with accuracy the course which States and nations are destined to pursue in the future, or to account in detail for their history in the past, I do not in the least believe. We are borne along like travelers on some unexplored stream. We may know enough of the general configuration of the globe to be sure that we are making our way towards the ocean. We may know enough, by experience or theory, of the laws regulating the flow of liquids, to conjecture how the river will behave under the varying influences to which it may be subject. More than this we cannot know. It will depend largely upon causes which, in relation to any laws which we are even likely to discover may properly be called accidental, whether we are destined sluggishly to drift among fever-stricken swamps, to hurry down perilous rapids, or to glide gently through fair scenes of peaceful cultivation.

But leaving on one side ambitious sociological speculations, and even those more modest but hitherto more successful investigations into the causes which have in particular cases been principally operative in producing great political changes, there are still two modes in which we can derive what I may call “spectacular” enjoyment from the study of history. There is first the pleasure which arises from the contemplation of some great historic drama, or some broad and well-marked phase of social development. The story of the rise, greatness, and decay of a nation is like some vast epic which contains as subsidiary episodes the varied stories of the rise, greatness, and decay of creeds, of parties, and of statesmen. The imagination is moved by the slow unrolling of this great picture of human mutability, as it is moved by the contrasted permanence of the abiding stars. The ceaseless conflict, the strange echoes of long-forgotten controversies, the confusion of purpose, the successes in which lay deep the seeds of future evils, the failures that ultimately divert the otherwise inevitable danger, the heroism which struggles to the last for a cause foredoomed to defeat, the wickedness which sides with right, and the wisdom which huzzas at the triumph of folly,—fate, meanwhile, amidst this turmoil and perplexity, working silently towards the predestined end,—all these form together a subject the contemplation of which need surely never weary.

Page 261

But yet there is another and very different species of enjoyment to be derived from the records of the past, which requires a somewhat different method of study in order that it may be fully tasted. Instead of contemplating as it were from a distance the larger aspects of the human drama, we may elect to move in familiar fellowship amid the scenes and actors of special periods. We may add to the interest we derive from the contemplation of contemporary politics, a similar interest derived from a not less minute, and probably more accurate, knowledge of some comparatively brief passage in the political history of the past. We may extend the social circle in which we move, a circle perhaps narrowed and restricted through circumstances beyond our control, by making intimate acquaintances, perhaps even close friends, among a society long departed, but which, when we have once learnt the trick of it, we may, if it so pleases us, revive.

It is this kind of historical reading which is usually branded as frivolous and useless; and persons who indulge in it often delude themselves into thinking that the real motive of their investigation into bygone scenes and ancient scandals is philosophic interest in an important historical episode, whereas in truth it is not the philosophy which glorifies the details, but the details which make tolerable the philosophy. Consider, for example, the case of the French Revolution. The period from the taking of the Bastille to the fall of Robespierre is about the same as that which very commonly intervenes between two of our general elections. On these comparatively few months, libraries have been written. The incidents of every week are matters of familiar knowledge. The character and the biography of every actor in the drama has been made the subject of minute study; and by common admission there is no more fascinating page in the history of the world. But the interest is not what is commonly called philosophic, it is personal. Because the Revolution is the dominant fact in modern history, therefore people suppose that the doings of this or that provincial lawyer, tossed into temporary eminence and eternal infamy by some freak of the revolutionary wave, or the atrocities committed by this or that mob, half drunk with blood, rhetoric, and alcohol, are of transcendent importance. In truth their interest is great, but their importance is small. What we are concerned to know as students of the philosophy of history is, not the character of each turn and eddy in the great social cataract, but the manner in which the currents of the upper stream drew surely in towards the final plunge, and slowly collected themselves after the catastrophe again, to pursue at a different level their renewed and comparatively tranquil course.

Page 262

Now, if so much of the interest of the French Revolution depends upon our minute knowledge of each passing incident, how much more necessary is such knowledge when we are dealing with the quiet nooks and corners of history; when we are seeking an introduction, let us say, into the literary society of Johnson, or the fashionable society of Walpole. Society, dead or alive, can have no charm without intimacy, and no intimacy without interest in trifles which I fear Mr. Harrison would describe as “merely curious.” If we would feel at our ease in any company, if we wish to find humor in its jokes, and point in its repartees, we must know something of the beliefs and the prejudices of its various members, their loves and their hates, their hopes and their fears, their maladies, their marriages, and their flirtations. If these things are beneath our notice, we shall not be the less qualified to serve our Queen and country, but need make no attempt to extract pleasure from one of the most delightful departments of literature.

That there is such a thing as trifling information I do not of course question; but the frame of mind in which the reader is constantly weighing the exact importance to the universe at large of each circumstance which the author presents to his notice, is not one conducive to the true enjoyment of a picture whose effect depends upon a multitude of slight and seemingly insignificant touches, which impress the mind often without remaining in the memory. The best method of guarding against the danger of reading what is useless is to read only what is interesting; a truth which will seem a paradox to a whole class of readers, fitting objects of our commiseration, who may be often recognized by their habit of asking some adviser for a list of books, and then marking out a scheme of study in the course of which all are to be conscientiously perused. These unfortunate persons apparently read a book principally with the object of getting to the end of it. They reach the word *Finis* with the same sensation of triumph as an Indian feels who strings a fresh scalp to his girdle. They are not happy unless they mark by some definite performance each step in the weary path of self-improvement. To begin a volume and not to finish it would be to deprive themselves of this satisfaction; it would be to lose all the reward of their earlier self-denial by a lapse from virtue at the end. To skip, according to their literary code, is a species of cheating; it is a mode of obtaining credit for erudition on false pretenses; a plan by which the advantages of learning are surreptitiously obtained by those who have not won them by honest toil. But all this is quite wrong. In matters literary, works have no saving efficacy. He has only half learnt the art of reading who has not added to it the even more refined accomplishments of skipping and of skimming; and the first step has hardly been taken in the direction of making literature a pleasure until interest in the subject, and not a desire to spare (so to speak) the author’s feelings, or to accomplish an appointed task, is the prevailing motive of the reader.

Page 263

I have now reached, not indeed the end of my subject, which I have scarcely begun, but the limits inexorably set by the circumstances under which it is treated. Yet I am unwilling to conclude without meeting an objection to my method of dealing with it, which has I am sure been present to the minds of not a few who have been good enough to listen to me with patience. It will be said that I have ignored the higher functions of literature; that I have degraded it from its rightful place, by discussing only certain ways in which it may minister to the entertainment of an idle hour, leaving wholly out of sight its contributions to what Mr. Harrison calls our "spiritual sustenance." Now, this is partly because the first of these topics and not the second was the avowed subject of my address; but it is partly because I am deliberately of opinion that it is the pleasures and not the profits, spiritual or temporal, of literature which most require to be preached in the ear of the ordinary reader. I hold indeed the faith that all such pleasures minister to the development of much that is best in man—mental and moral; but the charm is broken and the object lost if the remote consequence is consciously pursued to the exclusion of the immediate end. It will not, I suppose, be denied that the beauties of nature are at least as well qualified to minister to our higher needs as are the beauties of literature. Yet we do not say we are going to walk to the top of such and such a hill in order to drink in "spiritual sustenance." We say we are going to look at the view. And I am convinced that this, which is the natural and simple way of considering literature as well as nature, is also the true way. The habit of always requiring some reward for knowledge beyond the knowledge itself, be that reward some material prize or be it what is vaguely called self-improvement, is one with which I confess I have little sympathy, fostered though it is by the whole scheme of our modern education. Do not suppose that I desire the impossible. I would not if I could destroy the examination system. But there are times, I confess, when I feel tempted somewhat to vary the prayer of the poet, and to ask whether Heaven has not reserved, in pity to this much-educating generation, some peaceful desert of literature as yet unclaimed by the crammer or the coach; where it might be possible for the student to wander, even perhaps to stray, at his own pleasure without finding every beauty labeled, every difficulty engineered, every nook surveyed, and a professional cicerone standing at every corner to guide each succeeding traveler along the same well-worn round. If such a wish were granted, I would further ask that the domain of knowledge thus "neutralized" should be the literature of our own country. I grant to the full that the systematic study of *some* literature must be a principal element in the education of youth. But why should that literature be our own? Why should we brush off the bloom and freshness

Page 264

from the works to which Englishmen and Scotchmen most naturally turn for refreshment,—namely, those written in their own language? Why should we associate them with the memory of hours spent in weary study; in the effort to remember for purposes of examination what no human being would wish to remember for any other; in the struggle to learn something, not because the learner desires to know it, because he desires some one else to know that he knows it? This is the dark side of the examination system; a system necessary and therefore excellent, but one which does, through the very efficiency and thoroughness of the drill by which it imparts knowledge, to some extent impair the most delicate pleasures by which the acquisition of knowledge should be attended.

How great those pleasures may be, I trust there are many here who can testify. When I compare the position of the reader of to-day with that of his predecessor of the sixteenth century. I am amazed at the ingratitude of those who are tempted even for a moment to regret the invention of printing and the multiplication of books. There is now no mood of mind to which a man may not administer the appropriate nutriment or medicine at the cost of reaching down a volume from his bookshelf. In every department of knowledge infinitely more is known, and what is known is incomparably more accessible, than it was to our ancestors. The lighter forms of literature, good, bad, and indifferent, which have added so vastly to the happiness of mankind, have increased beyond powers of computation; nor do I believe that there is any reason to think that they have elbowed out their more serious and important brethren. It is perfectly possible for a man, not a professed student, and who only gives to reading the leisure hours of a business life, to acquire such a general knowledge of the laws of nature and the facts of history that every great advance made in either department shall be to him both intelligible and interesting; and he may besides have among his familiar friends many a departed worthy whose memory is embalmed in the pages of memoir or biography. All this is ours for the asking. All this we shall ask for, if only it be our happy fortune to love for its own sake the beauty and the knowledge to be gathered from books. And if this be our fortune, the world may be kind or unkind, it may seem to us to be hastening on the wings of enlightenment and progress to an imminent millennium, or it may weigh us down with the sense of insoluble difficulty and irremediable wrong; but whatever else it be, so long as we have good health and a good library, it can hardly be dull.

THE BALLAD

(Popular or Communal)

BY F.B. GUMMERE

Page 265

The popular ballad, as it is understood for the purpose of these selections, is a narrative in lyric form, with no traces of individual authorship, and is preserved mainly by oral tradition. In its earliest stages it was meant to be sung by a crowd, and got its name from the dance to which it furnished the sole musical accompaniment. In these primitive communities the ballad was doubtless chanted by the entire folk, in festivals mainly of a religious character. Explorers still meet something of the sort in savage tribes: and children's games preserve among us some relics of this protoplasmic form of verse-making, in which the single poet or artist was practically unknown, and spontaneous, improvised verses arose out of the occasion itself; in which the whole community took part; and in which the beat of foot—along with the gesture which expressed narrative elements of the song—was inseparable from the words and the melody. This native growth of song, in which the chorus or refrain, the dance of a festal multitude, and the spontaneous nature of the words, were vital conditions, gradually faded away before the advance of cultivated verse and the vigor of production in what one may call poetry of the schools. Very early in the history of the ballad, a demand for more art must have called out or at least emphasized the artist, the poet, who chanted new verses while the throng kept up the refrain or burden. Moreover, as interest was concentrated upon the words or story, people began to feel that both dance and melody were separable if not alien features; and thus they demanded the composed and recited ballad, to the harm and ultimate ruin of that spontaneous song for the festal, dancing crowd. Still, even when artistry had found a footing in ballad verse, it long remained mere agent and mouthpiece for the folk; the communal character of the ballad was maintained in form and matter. Events of interest were sung in almost contemporary and entirely improvised verse; and the resulting ballads, carried over the borders of their community and passed down from generation to generation, served as newspaper to their own times and as chronicle to posterity. It is the kind of song to which Tacitus bears witness as the sole form of history among the early Germans; and it is evident that such a stock of ballads must have furnished considerable raw material to the epic. Ballads, in whatever original shape, went to the making of the English 'Beowulf,' of the German 'Nibelungenlied.' Moreover, a study of dramatic poetry leads one back to similar communal origins. What is loosely called a "chorus,"—originally, as the name implies, a dance—out of which older forms of the drama were developed, could be traced back to identity with primitive forms of the ballad. The purely lyrical ballad, even, the *chanson* of the people, so rare in English but so abundant among other races, is evidently a growth from the same root.

Page 266

If, now, we assume for this root the name of communal poem, and if we bear in mind the dominant importance of the individual, the artist, in advancing stages of poetry, it is easy to understand why for civilized and lettered communities the ballad has ceased to have any vitality whatever. Under modern conditions the making of ballads is a closed account. For our times poetry means something written by a poet, and not something sung more or less spontaneously by a dancing throng. Indeed, paper and ink, the agents of preservation in the case of ordinary verse, are for ballads the agents of destruction. The broadside press of three centuries ago, while it rescued here and there a genuine ballad, poured out a mass of vulgar imitations which not only displaced and destroyed the ballad of oral tradition, but brought contempt upon good and bad alike. Poetry of the people, to which our ballad belongs, is a thing of the past. Even rude and distant communities, like those of Afghanistan, cannot give us the primitive conditions. The communal ballad is rescued, when rescued at all, by the fragile chances of a written copy or of oral tradition; and we are obliged to study it under terms of artistic poetry,—that is, we are forced to take through the eye and the judgment what was meant for the ear and immediate sensation. Poetry *for* the people, however, “popular poetry” in the modern phrase, is a very different affair. Street songs, vulgar rhymes, or even improvisations of the concert-halls, tawdry and sentimental stuff,—these things are sundered by the world’s width from poetry *of* the people, from the folk in verse, whether it echo in a great epos which chants the clash of empires or linger in a ballad of the countryside sung under the village linden. For this ballad is a part of the poetry which comes from the people as a whole, from a homogeneous folk, large or small; while the song of street or concert-hall is deliberately composed for a class, a section, of the community. It would therefore be better to use some other term than “popular” when we wish to specify the ballad of tradition, and so avoid all taint of vulgarity and the trivial. Nor must we go to the other extreme. Those high-born people who figure in traditional ballads—Childe Waters, Lady Maisry, and the rest—do not require us to assume composition in aristocratic circles; for the lower classes of the people in ballad days had no separate literature, and a ballad of the folk belonged to the community as a whole. The same habit of thought, the same standard of action, ruled alike the noble and his meanest retainer. Oral transmission, the test of the ballad, is of course nowhere possible save in such an unlettered community. Since all critics are at one in regard to this homogeneous character of the folk with whom and out of whom these songs had their birth, one is justified in removing all doubt from the phrase by speaking not of the popular ballad but of the communal ballad, the ballad of a community.

Page 267

With regard to the making of a ballad, one must repeat a caution, hinted already, and made doubly important by a vicious tendency in the study of all phases of culture. It is a vital mistake to explain primitive conditions by exact analogy with conditions of modern savagery and barbarism. Certain conclusions, always guarded and cautious to a degree, may indeed be drawn; but it is folly to insist that what now goes on among shunted races, belated detachments in the great march of culture, must have gone on among the dominant and mounting peoples who had reached the same external conditions of life. The homogeneous and unlettered state of the ballad-makers is not to be put on a level with the ignorance of barbarism, nor explained by the analogy of songs among modern savage tribes. Fortunately we have better material. The making of a ballad by a community can be illustrated from a case recorded by Pastor Lyngbye in his invaluable account of life on the Faroe Islands a century ago. Not only had the islanders used from most ancient times their traditional and narrative songs as music for the dance, but they had also maintained the old fashion of making a ballad. In the winter, says Lyngbye, dancing is their chief amusement and is an affair of the entire community. At such a dance, one or more persons begin to sing; then all who are present join in the ballad, or at least in the refrain. As they dance, they show by their gestures and expression that they follow with eagerness the course of the story which they are singing. More than this, the ballad is often a spontaneous product of the occasion. A fisherman, who has had some recent mishap with his boat, is pushed by stalwart comrades into the middle of the throng, while the dancers sing verses about him and his lack of skill,—verses improvised on the spot and with a catching and clamorous refrain. If these verses win favor, says Lyngbye, they are repeated from year to year, with slight additions or corrections, and become a permanent ballad. Bearing in mind the extraordinary readiness to improvise shown even in these days by peasants in every part of Europe, we thus gain some definite notion about the spontaneous and communal elements which went to the making of the best type of primitive verse; for these Faroe islanders were no savages, but simply a homeogeneous and isolated folk which still held to the old ways of communal song.

Critics of the ballad, moreover, agree that it has little or no subjective traits,—an easy inference from the conditions just described. There is no individuality lurking behind the words of the ballad, and above all, no evidence of that individuality in the form of sentiment. Sentiment and individuality are the very essence of modern poetry, and the direct result of individualism in verse. Given a poet, sentiment—and it may be noble and precious enough—is sure to follow. But the ballad, an epic in little, forces one's attention to the object, the scene, the story, and away from the maker.

Page 268

“The king sits in Dumferling town.”

begins one of the noblest of all ballads; while one of the greatest of modern poems opens with something personal and pathetic, key-note to all that follows:—

“My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense ...”

Even when a great poet essays the ballad, either he puts sentiment into it, or else he keeps sentiment out of it by a *tour de force*. Admirable and noble as one must call the conclusion of an artistic ballad such as Tennyson’s ‘Revenge,’ it is altogether different from the conclusion of such a communal ballad as ‘Sir Patrick Spens.’ That subtle quality of the ballad which lies in solution with the story and which—as in ‘Child Maurice’ or ‘Babylon’ or ‘Edward’—compels in us sensations akin to those called out by the sentiment of the poet, is a wholly impersonal if strangely effective quality, far removed from the corresponding elements of the poem of art. At first sight, one might say that Browning’s dramatic lyrics had this impersonal quality. But compare the close of ‘Give a Rouse,’ chorus and all, with the close of ‘Child Maurice,’ that swift and relentless stroke of pure tragedy which called out the enthusiasm of so great a critic as Gray.

The narrative of the communal ballad is full of leaps and omissions; the style is simple to a fault; the diction is spontaneous and free. Assonance frequently takes the place of rhyme, and a word often rhymes with itself. There is a lack of poetic adornment in the style quite as conspicuous as the lack of reflection and moralizing in the matter. Metaphor and simile are rare and when found are for the most part standing phrases common to all the ballads; there is never poetry for poetry’s sake. Iteration is the chief mark of ballad style; and the favorite form of this effective figure is what one may call incremental repetition. The question is repeated with the answer; each increment in a series of related facts has a stanza for itself, identical, save for the new fact, with the other stanzas. ‘Babylon’ furnishes good instances of this progressive iteration. Moreover, the ballad differs from earlier English epics in that it invariably has stanzas and rhyme; of the two forms of stanza, the two-line stanza with a refrain is probably older than the stanza with four or six lines.

This necessary quality of the stanza points to the origin of the ballad in song; but longer ballads, such as those that make up the ‘Gest of Robin Hood,’ an epic in little, were not sung as lyrics or to aid the dance, but were either chanted in a monotonous fashion or else recited outright. Chappell, in his admirable work on old English music (‘Music of the Olden Time,’ ii. 790), names a third class of “characteristic airs of England,”—the “historical and very long ballads, ... invariably of simple construction, usually plaintive.... They were rarely if ever used for dancing.” Most of the longer ballads,

Page 269

however, were doubtless given by one person in a sort of recitative; this is the case with modern ballads of Russia and Servia, where the bystanders now and then join in a chorus. Precisely in the same way ballads were divorced from the dance, originally their vital condition; but in the refrain, which is attached to so many ballads, one finds an element which has survived from those earliest days of communal song.

Of oldest communal poetry no actual ballad has come down to us. Hints and even fragments, however, are pointed out in ancient records, mainly as the material of chronicle or legend. In the Bible (Numbers xxi. 17), where "Israel sang this song," we are not going too far when we regard the fragment as part of a communal ballad. "Spring up, O well: sing ye unto it: the princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the lawgiver, with their staves." Deborah's song has something of the communal note; and when Miriam dances and sings with her maidens, one is reminded of the many ballads made by dancing and singing bands of women in mediaeval Europe,—for instance, the song made in the seventh century to the honor of St. Faro, and "sung by the women as they danced and clapped their hands." The question of ancient Greek ballads, and their relation to the epic, is not to be discussed here; nor can we make more than an allusion to the theory of Niebuhr that the early part of Livy is founded on, old Roman ballads. A popular discussion of this matter may be found in Macaulay's preface to his own 'Lays of Ancient Rome.' The ballads of modern Europe are a survival of older communal poetry, more or less influenced by artistic and individual conditions of authorship, but wholly impersonal, and with an appeal to our interest which seems to come from a throng and not from the solitary poet. Attention was early called to the ballads of Spain; printed at first as broadsides, they were gathered into a volume as early as 1550. On the other hand, ballads were neglected in France until very recent times; for specimens of the French ballad, and for an account of it, the reader should consult Professor Crane's 'Chansons Populaires de France,' New York, 1891. It is with ballads of the Germanic race, however, that we are now concerned. Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, the Faroe Islands; Scotland and England; the Netherlands and Germany: all of these countries offer us admirable specimens of the ballad. Particularly, the great collections of Grundtvig ('Danmarks Gamle Folkeviser') for Denmark, and of Child ('The English and Scottish Popular Ballads') for our own tongue, show how common descent or borrowing connects the individual ballads of these groups. "Almost every Norwegian, Swedish, or Icelandic ballad," says Grundtvig, "is found in a Danish version of Scandinavian ballads; moreover, a larger number can be found in English and Scottish versions than in German or Dutch versions." Again, we find certain national preferences in the character

Page 270

of the ballads which have come down to us. Scandinavia kept the old heroic lays (Kaempeviser); Germany wove them into her epic, as witness the Nibelungen Lay; but England and Scotland have none of them in any shape. So, too, the mythic ballad, scantily represented in English, and practically unknown in Germany, abounds in Scandinavian collections. The Faroe Islands and Norway, as Grundtvig tells us, show the best record for ballads preserved by oral tradition; while noble ladies of Denmark, three or four centuries ago, did high service to ballad literature by making collections in manuscript of the songs current then in the castle as in the cottage.

For England, one is compelled to begin the list of known ballads with the thirteenth century. 'The Battle of Maldon,' composed in the last decade of the tenth century, though spirited enough and full of communal vigor, has no stanzaic structure, follows in metre and style the rules of the Old English epic, and is only a ballad by courtesy; about the ballads used a century or two later by historians of England, we can do nothing but guess; and there is no firm ground under the critic's foot until he comes to the Robin Hood ballads, which Professor Child assigns to the thirteenth century. 'The Battle of Otterburn' (1388) opens a series of ballads based on actual events and stretching into the eighteenth century. Barring the Robin Hood cycle,—an epic constructed from this attractive material lies before us in the famous 'Gest of Robin Hood,' printed as early as 1489,—the chief sources of the collector are the Percy Manuscript, "written just before 1650,"—on which, not without omissions and additions, the bishop based his 'Reliques,' first published in 1765,—and the oral traditions of Scotland, which Professor Child refers to "the last one hundred and thirty years." Information about the individual ballads, their sources, history, literary connections, and above all, their varying texts, must be sought in the noble work of Professor F.J. Child. For present purposes, a word or two of general information must suffice. As to origins, there is a wide range. The church furnished its legend, as in 'St. Stephen'; romance contributed the story of 'Thomas Rymer'; and the light, even cynical *fabliau* is responsible for 'The Boy and the Mantle.' Ballads which occur in many tongues either may have a common origin or else may owe their manifold versions, as in the case of popular tales, to a love of borrowing; and here, of course, we get the hint of wider issues. For the most part, however, a ballad tells some moving story, preferably of fighting and of love. Tragedy is the dominant note; and English ballads of the best type deal with those elements of domestic disaster so familiar in the great dramas of literature, in the story of Orestes, or of Hamlet, or of the Cid. Such are 'Edward,' 'Lord Randal,' 'The Two Brothers,' 'The Two Sisters,' 'Child Maurice,' 'Bewick and Graham,' 'Clerk Colven,' 'Little Musgrave

Page 271

and Lady Barnard,' 'Glasgerion,' and many others. Another group of ballads, represented by the 'Baron of Brackley' and 'Captain Car,' give a faithful picture of the feuds and ceaseless warfare in Scotland and on the border. A few fine ballads—'Sweet William's Ghost,' 'The Wife of Usher's Well'—touch upon the supernatural. Of the romantic ballads, 'Childe Waters' shows us the higher, and 'Young Beichan' the lower, but still sound and communal type. Incipient dramatic tendencies mark 'Edward' and 'Lord Randal'; while, on the other hand, a lyric note almost carries 'Bonnie George Campbell' out of balladry. Finally, it is to be noted that in the 'Nut-Brown Maid,' which many would unhesitatingly refer to this class of poetry, we have no ballad at all, but a dramatic lyric, probably written by a woman, and with a special plea in the background.

[Illustration: Signature: F.B. Gummere]

ROBIN HOOD AND GUY OF GISBORNE[8]

1. When shawes[9] beene sheene[10], and shradds[11] full fayre,
And leeves both large and longe,
It is merry, walking in the fayre forrest,
To heare the small birds' songe.

2. The woodweele[12] sang, and wold not cease,
Amongst the leaves a lyne[13];
And it is by two wight[14] yeomen,
By deare God, that I meane.

* * * * *

3. "Me thought they[15] did me beate and binde,
And tooke my bow me fro;
If I bee Robin alive in this lande,
I'll be wrocken[16] on both them two."

4. "Sweavens[17] are swift, master," quoth John,
"As the wind that blowes ore a hill;
For if it be never soe lowde this night,
To-morrow it may be still."

5. "Buske ye, bowne ye[18], my merry men all,
For John shall go with me;
For I'll goe seeke yond wight yeomen
In greenwood where they bee."



6. They cast on their gowne of greene,
A shooting gone are they,
Until they came to the merry greenwood,
Where they had gladdest bee;
There were they ware of a wight yeoman,
His body leaned to a tree.

7. A sword and a dagger he wore by his side,
Had beene many a man's bane[19],
And he was cladd in his capull-hyde[20],
Topp, and tayle, and mayne.

8. "Stand you still, master," quoth Litle John,
"Under this trusty tree,
And I will goe to yond wight yeoman,
To know his meaning trulye."

9. "A, John, by me thou setts noe store,
And that's a farley[21] thinge;
How offt send I my men before,
And tarry myselfe behinde?"

10. "It is noe cunning a knave to ken,
And a man but heare him speake;
And it were not for bursting of my bowe,
John, I wold thy head breake."

11. But often words they breeden bale,
That parted Robin and John;
John is gone to Barnesdale,
The gates[22] he knowes eche one.

12. And when hee came to Barnesdale,
Great heavinesse there hee hadd;
He found two of his fellowes
Were slaine both in a slade[23],

Page 272

13. And Scarlett a foote flyinge was,
Over stockes and stone,
For the sheriffe with seven score men
Fast after him is gone.

14. "Yet one shoote I'll shoote," sayes Litle John,
"With Crist his might and mayne;
I'll make yond fellow that flyes soe fast
To be both glad and faine."

15. John bent up a good veiwe bow[24],
And fetteled[25] him to shoote;
The bow was made of a tender boughe,
And fell downe to his foote.

16. "Woe worth[26] thee, wicked wood," sayd Litle John,
"That ere thou grew on a tree!
For this day thou art my bale,
My boote[27] when thou shold bee!"

17. This shoote it was but looselye shott,
The arrowe flew in vaine,
And it mett one of the sheriffe's men;
Good William a Trent was slaine.

18. It had beene better for William a Trent
To hange upon a gallowe
Then for to lye in the greenwoode,
There slaine with an arrowe.

19. And it is sayed, when men be mett,
Six can doe more than three:
And they have tane Litle John,
And bound him fast to a tree.

20. "Thou shalt be drawen by dale and downe," quoth the sheriffe[28],
"And hanged hye on a hill:"
"But thou may fayle," quoth Litle John
"If it be Christ's owne will."

21. Let us leave talking of Litle John,
For hee is bound fast to a tree,
And talke of Guy and Robin Hood
In the green woode where they bee.



22. How these two yeomen together they mett,
Under the leaves of lyne,
To see what marchandise they made
Even at that same time.

23. "Good morrow, good fellow," quoth Sir Guy;
"Good morrow, good fellow," quoth hee;
"Methinkes by this bow thou beares in thy hand,
A good archer thou seems to bee."

24. "I am wilfull of my way[29]," quoth Sir Guy,
"And of my morning tyde:"
"I'll lead thee through the wood," quoth Robin,
"Good fellow, I'll be thy guide."

25. "I seeke an outlaw," quoth Sir Guy,
"Men call him Robin Hood;
I had rather meet with him upon a day
Then forty pound of golde."

26. "If you tow mett, it wold be seene whether were better
Afore yee did part awaye;
Let us some other pastime find,
Good fellow, I thee pray."

27. "Let us some other masteryes make,
And we will walke in the woods even;
Wee may chance meet with Robin Hood
At some unsett steven[30]."

28. They cutt them downe the summer shroggs[31]
Which grew both under a bryar,
And sett them three score rood in twinn[32],
To shoote the prickes[33] full neare.

29. "Leade on, good fellow," sayd Sir Guye,
"Leade on, I doe bidd thee:"
"Nay, by my faith," quoth Robin Hood,
"The leader thou shalt bee."

30. The first good shoot that Robin ledd,
Did not shoote an inch the pricke free,
Guy was an archer good enoughe,
But he could neere shoote soe.



Page 273

31. The second shoote Sir Guy shott,
He shott within the garlande[34],
But Robin Hoode shott it better than hee,
For he clove the good pricke-wande.

32. "God's blessing on thy heart!" sayes Guye,
"Goode fellow, thy shooting is goode;
For an thy hart be as good as thy hands,
Thou were better than Robin Hood."

33. "Tell me thy name, good fellow," quoth Guye,
"Under the leaves of lyne."
"Nay, by my faith," quoth good Robin,
"Till thou have told me thine."

34. "I dwell by dale and downe," quoth Guye,
"And I have done many a curst turne;
And he that calles me by my right name,
Calles me Guye of good Gysborne."

35. "My dwelling is in the wood," sayes Robin;
"By thee I set right nought;
My name is Robin Hood of Barnesdale,
A fellow thou hast long sought."

36. He that had neither beene a kithe nor kin
Might have seene a full fayre sight.
To see how together these yeomen went,
With blades both browne and bright.

37. To have seene how these yeomen together fought
Two howers of a summer's day;
It was neither Guy nor Robin Hood
That fettled them to flye away.

38. Robin was reacheles[35] on a roote,
And stumbled at that tyde,
And Guy was quicke and nimble with-all,
And hitt him ore the left side.

39. "Ah, deere Lady!" sayd Robin Hoode,
"Thou art both mother and may[36]!
I thinke it was never man's destinye
To dye before his day."



40. Robin thought on Our Lady deere,
And soone leapt up againe,
And thus he came with an awkwarde[37] stroke;
Good Sir Guy hee has slayne.

41. He tooke Sir Guy's head by the hayre,
And stucked it on his bowe's end:
"Thou has beene traytor all thy life,
Which thing must have an ende."

42. Robin pulled forth an Irish kniffe,
And nicked Sir Guy in the face,
That he was never on[38] a woman borne
Could tell who Sir Guye was.

43. Saies, Lye there, lye there, good Sir Guye,
And with me not wrothe;
If thou have had the worse stroakes at my hand,
Thou shalt have the better cloathe.

44. Robin did off his gowne of greene,
Sir Guye he did it throwe;
And he put on that capull-hyde
That clad him topp to toe.

45. "Tis bowe, the arrowes, and litle horne,
And with me now I'll beare;
For now I will goe to Barnesdale,
To see how my men doe fare."

46. Robin sett Guye's horne to his mouth,
A lowd blast in it he did blow;
That beheard the sheriffe of Nottingham,
As he leaned under a lowe[39].

47. "Hearken! hearken!" sayd the sheriffe,
"I heard noe tydings but good;
For yonder I heare Sir Guye's horne blowe,
For he hath slaine Robin Hoode."

48. "For yonder I heare Sir Guye's horne blowe,
It blowes soe well in tyde,
For yonder conies that wighty yeoman
Cladd in his capull-hyde."



Page 274

49. "Come hither, thou good Sir Guy,
Aske of mee what thou wilt have:"
"I'll none of thy gold," sayes Robin Hood,
"Nor I'll none of it have."

50. "But now I have slaine the master," he sayd,
"Let me goe strike the knave;
This is all the reward I aske,
Nor noe other will I have."

51. "Thou art a madman," said the sheriffe,
"Thou sholdest have had a knight's fee;
Seeing thy asking hath beene soe badd,
Well granted it shall be."

52. But Litle John heard his master speake,
Well he knew that was his steven[40];
"Now shall I be loset," quoth Litle John,
"With Christ's might in heaven."

53. But Robin hee hyed him towards Litle John,
Hee thought hee wold loose him belive;
The sheriffe and all his companye
Fast after him did drive.

54. "Stand abacke! stand abacke!" sayd Robin;
"Why draw you mee soe neere?
It was never the use in our countrie
One's shrift another should heere."

55. But Robin pulled forth an Irysh kniffe,
And losed John hand and foote,
And gave him Sir Guye's bow in his hand,
And bade it be his boote.

56. But John tooke Guye's bow in his hand
(His arrowes were rawstye[41] by the roote);
The sherriffe saw Litle John draw a bow
And fettle him to shoote.

57. Towards his house in Nottingham
He fled full fast away,
And so did all his companye,
Not one behind did stay.



58. But he cold neither soe fast goe,
Nor away soe fast runn,
But Litle John, with an arrow broade,
Did cleave his heart in twinn.

[Footnote 8: This ballad is a good specimen of the Robin Hood Cycle, and is remarkable for its many proverbial and alliterative phrases. A few lines have been lost between stanzas 2 and 3. Gisborne is a “market-town in the West Riding of the County of York, on the borders of Lancashire.” For the probable tune of the ballad, see Chappell’s ‘Popular Music of the Olden Time,’ ii. 397.][Footnote 9: Woods, groves.—This touch of description at the outset is common in our old ballads, as well as in the mediaeval German popular lyric, and may perhaps spring from the old “summer-lays” and chorus of pagan times.]

[Footnote 10: Beautiful; German, *schoen*.]

[Footnote 11: Coppices or openings in a wood.]

[Footnote 12: In some glossaries the woodpecker, but here of course a song-bird,—perhaps, as Chappell suggests, the woodlark.]

[Footnote 13: A, on; *lyne*, lime or linden.]

[Footnote 14: Sturdy, brave.]

[Footnote 15: Robin now tells of a dream in which “they” (=the two “wight yeomen,” who are Guy and, as Professor Child suggests, the Sheriff of Nottingham) maltreat him; and he thus foresees trouble “from two quarters.”]

[Footnote 16: Revenged.]

Page 275

[Footnote 17: Dreams.]

[Footnote 18: Tautological phrase,—“prepare and make ready.”]

[Footnote 19: Murder, destruction.]

[Footnote 20: Horse’s hide.]

[Footnote 21: Strange.]

[Footnote 22: Paths.]

[Footnote 23: Green valley between woods.]

[Footnote 24: Perhaps the yew-bow.]

[Footnote 25: Made ready.]

[Footnote 26: “Woe be to thee.” *Worth* is the old subjunctive present of an exact English equivalent to the modern German *werden*.]

[Footnote 27: Note these alliterative phrases. *Boote*, remedy.]

[Footnote 28: As Percy noted, this “quoth the sheriffe,” was probably added by some explainer. The reader, however, must remember the license of slurring or contracting the syllables of a word, as well as the opposite freedom of expansion. Thus in the second line of stanza 7, *man’s* is to be pronounced *man-es*.]

[Footnote 29: I have lost my way.]

[Footnote 30: At some unappointed time,—by chance.]

[Footnote 31: Stunted shrubs.]

[Footnote 32: Apart.]

[Footnote 33: “*Prickes* seem to have been the long-range targets, *butts* the near.”—Furnivall.]

[Footnote 34: *Garlande*, perhaps “the ring within which the prick was set”; and the *pricke-wande* perhaps a pole or stick. The terms are not easy to understand clearly.]

[Footnote 35: Reckless, careless.]

[Footnote 36: Maiden.]

[Footnote 37: Dangerous, or perhaps simply backward, backhanded.]

[Footnote 38: *On* is frequently used for *of*.]

[Footnote 39: Hillock.]

[Footnote 40: Voice.]

[Footnote 41: Rusty]

THE HUNTING OF THE CHEVIOT

[This is the older and better version of the famous ballad. The younger version was the subject of Addison's papers in the Spectator.]

1. The Percy out of Northumberlande,
and a vowe to God mayd he
That he would hunte in the mountayns
of Cheviot within days thre,
In the magger[42] of doughty Douglas,
and all that ever with him be.
2. The fattiste hartes in all Cheviot
he sayd he would kyll, and cary them away:
"Be my feth," sayd the doughty Douglas agayn,
"I will let[43] that hontyng if that I may."
3. Then the Percy out of Banborowe cam,
with him a myghtee meany[44],
With fifteen hondred archares bold of blood and bone;
they were chosen out of shyars thre.



Page 276

4. This began on a Monday at morn,
in Cheviot the hillys so he;
The chyld may rue that ys unborn,
it was the more pitte.
5. The dryvars thorowe the woodes went,
for to reas the deer;
Bowmen byckarte uppone the bent[45]
with their browd arrows cleare.
6. Then the wyld thorowe the woodes went,
on every syde shear;
Greahondes thorowe the grevis glent[46],
for to kyll their deer.
7. This begane in Cheviot the hyls abone,
yerly on a Monnyn-day;
Be that it drewe to the hour of noon,
a hondred fat hartes ded ther lay.
8. They blewe a mort[47] uppone the bent,
they semblyde on sydis shear;
To the quyrry then the Percy went,
to see the bryttlynge[48] of the deere.
9. He sayd, "It was the Douglas promys
this day to met me hear;
But I wyste he wolde faylle, verament;"
a great oth the Percy swear.
10. At the laste a squyar of Northumberlande
lokyde at his hand full ny;
He was war a the doughtie Douglas commynge,
with him a myghte meany.
11. Both with spear, bylle, and brande,
yt was a myghte sight to se;
Hardyar men, both of hart nor hande,
were not in Cristiante.
12. They were twenty hondred spear-men good,
withoute any fail;
They were borne along be the water a Twyde,
yth bowndes of Tividale.



13. "Leave of the brytlyng of the deer," he said,
"and to your bows look ye tayk good hede;
For never sithe ye were on your mothers borne
had ye never so mickle nede."

14. The doughty Douglas on a stede,
he rode alle his men beforne;
His armor glytteyrde as dyd a glede[49];
a boldar barne was never born.

15. "Tell me whose men ye are," he says,
"or whose men that ye be:
Who gave youe leave to hunte in this Cheviot chays,
in the spyt of myn and of me."

16. The first man that ever him an answer mayd,
yt was the good lord Percy:
"We wyll not tell the whose men we are," he says,
"nor whose men that we be;
But we wyll hounte here in this chays,
in spyt of thyne and of the."

17. "The fattiste hartes in all Cheviot
we have kyld, and cast to carry them away:"
"Be my troth," sayd the doughty Douglas agayn,
"therefor the tone of us shall die this day."

18. Then sayd the doughte Douglas
unto the lord Percy,
"To kyll alle thes giltles men,
alas, it wear great pitte!"

19. "But, Percy, thowe art a lord of lande,
I am a yerle callyd within my contre;
Let all our men uppone a parti stande,
and do the battell of the and of me."

20. "Nowe Cristes curse on his crowne," sayd the lord Percy,
"whosoever thereto says nay;
Be my troth, doughty Douglas," he says,
"thow shalt never se that day."



Page 277

21. "Nethar in Ynglonde, Skottlonde, nor France,
nor for no man of a woman born,
But, and fortune be my chance,
I dar met him, one man for one."

22. Then bespayke a squyar of Northumberlande,
Richard Wytharyngton was his name:
"It shall never be told in Sothe-Ynglonde," he says,
"To Kyng Kerry the Fourth for shame."

23. "I wat youe byn great lordes twa,
I am a poor squyar of lande:
I wylle never se my captayne fyght on a fylde,
and stande my selffe and looke on,
But whylle I may my weppone welde,
I wylle not fayle both hart and hande."

24. That day, that day, that dredfull day!
the first fit here I fynde[50];
And you wyll hear any more a the hountyng a the Cheviot
yet ys ther mor behynde.

25. The Yngglyshe men had their bowys ybent,
ther hartes were good yenoughe;
The first of arrows that they shote off,
seven skore spear-men they sloughe.

26. Yet bides the yerle Douglas upon the bent,
a captayne good yenoughe,
And that was sene verament,
for he wrought hem both wo and wouche.

27. The Douglas partyd his host in thre,
like a chief chieftain of pryde;
With sure spears of myghtty tre,
they cum in on every syde:

28. Throughe our Yngglyshe archery
gave many a wounde fulle wyde;
Many a doughty they garde to dy,
which ganyde them no pryde.

29. The Ynglyshe men let ther bowes be,
and pulde out brandes that were brighte;



It was a heavy syght to se
bryght swordes on basnites lyght.

30. Thorowe ryche male and myneyeple[51],
many sterne they strocke down straight;
Many a freyke[52] that was fulle fre,
there under foot dyd lyght.

31. At last the Douglas and the Percy met,
lyk to captayns of myght and of mayne;
The swapte together tylle they both swat,
with swordes that were of fine milan.

32. These worthy freckys for to fyght,
ther-to they were fulle fayne,
Tylle the bloode out off their basnetes sprete,
as ever dyd hail or rayn.

33. "Yield thee, Percy," sayd the Douglas,
"and i faith I shalle thee brynge
Where thowe shalte have a yerls wagis
of Jamy our Scottish kynge."

34. "Thou shalte have thy ransom fre,
I hight[53] the here this thinge;
For the manfullyste man yet art thou
that ever I conqueryd in fielde fighttynge."

35. "Nay," sayd the lord Percy,
"I tolde it thee beforene,
That I wolde never yeldyde be
to no man of a woman born."

36. With that ther came an arrow hastely,
forthe off a myghtty wane[54];
It hath strekene the yerle Douglas
in at the brest-bane.

37. Thorowe lyvar and lunges bothe
the sharpe arrowe ys gane,
That never after in all his lyfe-days
he spayke mo wordes but ane:
That was, "Fyghte ye, my myrry men, whyllys ye may,
for my lyfe-days ben gane."



Page 278

38. The Percy leanyde on his brande,
and sawe the Douglas de;
He tooke the dead man by the hande,
and said, "Wo ys me for thee!"

39. "To have savyde thy lyfe, I would have partyde with
my landes for years three,
For a better man, of hart nor of hande,
was not in all the north contre."

40. Of all that see a Scottish knyght,
was callyd Sir Hewe the Monggombyrry;
He saw the Douglas to the death was dyght,
he spendyd a spear, a trusti tree.

41. He rode upon a corsiare
throughe a hondred archery;
He never stynttyde nor never blane[55],
till he came to the good lord Percy.

42. He set upon the lorde Percy
a dynte that was full sore;
With a sure spear of a myghtte tree
clean thorow the body he the Percy ber[56],

43. A the tother syde that a man might see
a large cloth-yard and mare;
Two better captayns were not in Cristiante
than that day slain were there.

44. An archer off Northumberlande
saw slain was the lord Percy;
He bore a bende bowe in his hand,
was made of trusti tree;

45. An arrow, that a cloth-yarde was long,
to the harde stele halyde he;
A dynt that was both sad and soar
he set on Sir Hewe the Monggombyrry.

46. The dynt yt was both sad and sore,
that he of Monggombyrry set;
The swane-fethars that his arrowe bar
with his hart-blood they were wet.



47. There was never a freak one foot wolde flee,
but still in stour[57] dyd stand,
Hewyng on eache other, whyle they myghte dree,
with many a balefull brande.

48. This battell begane in Cheviot
an hour before the none,
And when even-songe bell was rang,
the battell was not half done.

49. They took ... on either hande
by the lyght of the mone;
Many hade no strength for to stande,
in Cheviot the hillys abon.

50. Of fifteen hundred archers of Ynglonde
went away but seventy and three;
Of twenty hundred spear-men of Scotlonde,
but even five and fifty.

51. But all were slayne Cheviot within;
they had no strength to stand on by;
The chylde may rue that ys unborne,
it was the more pitte.

52. There was slayne, withe the lord Percy,
Sir John of Agerstone,
Sir Rogar, the hinde Hartly,
Sir Wyllyam, the bold Hearone.

53. Sir George, the worthy Loumle,
a knyghte of great renown,
Sir Raff, the ryche Rugbe,
with dyntes were beaten downe.

54. For Wetharryngton my harte was wo,
that ever he slayne shulde be;
For when both his leggis were hewyn in to,
yet he kneeled and fought on hys knee.

55. There was slayne, with the doughty Douglas,
Sir Hewe the Monggombyrry,
Sir Davy Lwdale, that worthy was,
his sister's son was he.

56. Sir Charles a Murre in that place,
that never a foot wolde fie;

Sir Hewe Maxwelle, a lorde he was,
with the Douglas dyd he die.



Page 279

57. So on the morrowe they mayde them biers
off birch and hasell so gray;
Many widows, with weepyng tears,
came to fetch ther makys[58] away.

58. Tivydale may carpe of care,
Northumberland may mayk great moan,
For two such captayns as slayne were there,
on the March-parti shall never be none.

59. Word ys commen to Eddenburrowe,
to Jamy the Scottische kynge,
That doughty Douglas, lyff-tenant of the Marches,
he lay sleane Cheviot within.

60. His handdes dyd he weal and wryng,
he sayd, "Alas, and woe ys me!
Such an othar captayn Skotland within,"
he sayd, "i-faith should never be."

61. Worde ys commyn to lovely Londone,
till the fourth Harry our kynge.
That lord Percy, leyff-tenante of the Marchis
he lay slayne Cheviot within.

62. "God have merci on his soule," sayde Kyng Harry,
"good lord, yf thy will it be!
I have a hondred captayns in Ynglonde," he sayd,
"as good as ever was he:
But Percy, and I brook my lyfe,
thy deth well quyte shall be."

63. As our noble kynge mayd his avowe,
lyke a noble prince of renown,
For the deth of the lord Percy
he dyd the battle of Hombyll-down:

64. Where syx and thirty Skottishe knyghtes
on a day were beaten down:
Glendale glytteryde on their armor bryght,
over castille, towar, and town.

65. This was the hontynge of the Cheviot,
that tear[59] begane this spurn;



Old men that knowen the grownde well enoughe
call it the battell of Otterburn.

66. At Otterburn begane this spume
upon a Monnynday;
There was the doughty Douglas sleane,
the Percy never went away.

67. There was never a tyme on the Marche-partes
sen the Douglas and the Percy met,
But yt ys meruele and the rede blude ronne not,
as the rain does in the stret.

68. Jesus Christ our bales[60] bete,
and to the bliss us bring!
Thus was the hunting of the Cheviot;
God send us alle good ending!

[Footnote 42: 'Maugre,' in spite of.]

[Footnote 43: Hinder.]

[Footnote 44: Company.]

[Footnote 45: Skirmished on the field.]

[Footnote 46: Ran through the groves.]

[Footnote 47: Blast blown when game is killed.]

[Footnote 48: Quartering, cutting.]

[Footnote 49: Flame.]

[Footnote 50: Perhaps "finish."]

[Footnote 51: "A gauntlet covering hand and forearm."]

[Footnote 52: Man.]

[Footnote 53: Promise.]

[Footnote 54: Meaning uncertain.]

[Footnote 55: Stopped.]

[Footnote 56: Pierced.]

[Footnote 57: Stress of battle.]

[Footnote 58: Mates.]

[Footnote 59: That there (?).]

[Footnote 60: Evils.]

Page 280

JOHNIE COCK

1. Up Johnie raise[61] in a May morning,
 Calld for water to wash his hands,
And he has called for his gude gray hounds
 That lay bound in iron bands, bands,
 That lay bound in iron bands.
2. “Ye’ll busk[62], ye’ll busk my noble dogs,
 Ye’ll busk and make them boun[63],
For I’m going to the Braidscaur hill
 To ding the dun deer down.”
3. Johnie’s mother has gotten word o’ that,
 And care-bed she has ta’en[64]:
“O Johnie, for my benison,
 I beg you’l stay at hame;
For the wine so red, and the well-baken bread,
 My Johnie shall want nane.”
4. “There are seven forsters at Pickeram Side,
 At Pickeram where they dwell,
And for a drop of thy heart’s bluid
 They wad ride the fords of hell.”
5. But Johnie has cast off the black velvet,
 And put on the Lincoln twine,
And he is on the goode greenwood
 As fast as he could gang.
6. Johnie lookit east, and Johnie lookit west,
 And he lookit aneath the sun,
And there he spied the dun deer sleeping
 Aneath a buss o’ whun[65].
7. Johnie shot, and the dun deer lap[66],
 And she lap wondrous wide,
Until they came to the wan water,
 And he stem’d her of her pride.
8. He has ta’en out the little pen-knife,
 ’Twas full three quarters[67] long,
And he has ta’en out of that dun deer
 The liver but and[68] the tongue.



9. They eat of the flesh, and they drank of the blood,
And the blood it was so sweet,
Which caused Johnie and his bloody hounds
To fall in a deep sleep.

10. By then came an old palmer,
And an ill death may he die!
For he's away to Pickeram Side
As fast as he can drie[69].

11. "What news, what news?" says the Seven Forsters,
"What news have ye brought to me?"
"I have no news," the palmer said,
"But what I saw with my eye."

12. "As I came in by Braidisbanks,
And down among the whuns,
The bonniest youngster e'er I saw
Lay sleepin amang his hunds."

13. "The shirt that was upon his back
Was o' the holland fine;
The doublet which was over that
Was o' the Lincoln twine."

14. Up bespake the Seven Forsters,
Up bespake they ane and a':
"O that is Johnie o' Cockleys Well,
And near him we will draw."

15. O the first stroke that they gae him,
They struck him off by the knee,
Then up bespake his sister's son:
"O the next'll gar[70] him die!"

16. "O some they count ye well wight men,
But I do count ye nane;
For you might well ha' waken'd me,
And ask'd gin I wad be ta'en."

Page 281

17. "The wildest wolf as in a' this wood
Wad not ha' done so by me;
She'd ha' wet her foot i' the wan water,
And sprinkled it o'er my brae,
And if that wad not ha' waken'd me,
She wad ha' gone and let me be."

18. "O bows of yew, if ye be true,
In London, where ye were bought,
Fingers five, get up belive^[71],
Manhuid shall fail me nought."

19. He has kill'd the Seven Forsters,
He has kill'd them all but ane,
And that wan scarce to Pickeram Side,
To carry the bode-words hame.

20. "Is there never a [bird] in a' this wood
That will tell what I can say;
That will go to Cockleys Well,
Tell my mither to fetch me away?"

21. There was a [bird] into that wood,
That carried the tidings away,
And many ae^[72] was the well-wight man
At the fetching o' Johnie away.

[Footnote 61: Rose.]

[Footnote 62: Prepare.]

[Footnote 63: Ready.]

[Footnote 64: Has fallen ill with anxiety.]

[Footnote 65: Bush of whin, furze.]

[Footnote 66: Leaped.]

[Footnote 67: Quarter—the fourth part of a yard.]

[Footnote 68: "But and"—as well as.]

[Footnote 69: Bear, endure.]



[Footnote 70: Make, cause.]

[Footnote 71: Quickly.]

[Footnote 72: One.]

SIR PATRICK SPENS

1. The king sits in Dumferling toune,
Drinking the blude-reid wine:
“O whar will I get guid sailor,
To sail this ship of mine?”
2. Up and spak an eldern knight,
Sat at the kings right kne:
“Sir Patrick Spens is the best sailor,
That sails upon the sea.”
3. The king has written a braid letter[73],
And sign’d it wi’ his hand,
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spens,
Was walking on the sand.
4. The first line that Sir Patrick read,
A loud laugh laughed he;
The next line that Sir Patrick read,
The tear blinded his ee.
5. “O wha is this has done this deed,
This ill deed done to me,
To send me out this time o’ the year,
To sail upon the sea!”
6. “Make haste, make haste, my mirry men all,
Our guide ship sails the morne:”
“O say na sae, my master dear,
For I fear a deadlie storme.”
7. “Late, late yestreen I saw the new moone[74],
Wi’ the auld moone in hir arme,
And I fear, I fear, my dear master,
That we will come to harme”
8. O our Scots nobles were right laith
To weet their cork-heeled shoone;
But lang owre a’ the play wer play’d,
Their hats they swam aboone.



Page 282

9. O lang, lang may their ladies sit,
Wi' their fans into their hand,
Or e'er they see Sir Patrick Spens
Cum sailing to the land.

10. O lang, lang may the ladies stand,
Wi' their gold kerns[75] in their hair,
Waiting for their ain dear lords,
For they'll se thame na mair.

11. Half owre, half owre to Aberdour,
It's "fiftie fadom deep,
And their lies guid Sir Patrick Spens,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet."

[Footnote 73: "A *braid letter*, open or patent, in opposition to close rolls."—Percy.]

[Footnote 74: Note that it is the sight of the new moon *late* in the evening which makes a bad omen.]

[Footnote 75: Combs.]

THE BONNY EARL OF MURRAY[76]

1. Ye highlands, and ye Lowlands,
Oh where have you been?
They have slain the Earl of Murray,
And they layd him on the green.

2. "Now wae be to thee, Huntly!
And wherefore did you sae?
I bade you bring him wi' you,
But forbade you him to slay."

3. He was a braw gallant,
And he rid at the ring[77];
And the bonny Earl of Murray,
Oh he might have been a king!

4. He was a braw gallant,
And he play'd at the ba';
And the bonny Earl of Murray
Was the flower amang them a'.



5. He was a braw gallant,
And he play'd at the glove[78];
And the bonny Earl of Murray,
Oh he was the Queen's love!

6. Oh lang will his lady
Look o'er the Castle Down,
E'er she see the Earl of Murray
Come sounding thro the town!

[Footnote 76: James Stewart, Earl of Murray, was killed by the Earl of Huntly's followers, February, 1592. The second stanza is spoken, of course, by the King.]

[Footnote 77: Piercing with the lance a suspended ring, as one rode at full speed, was a favorite sport of the day.]

[Footnote 78: Probably this reference is to the glove worn by knights as a lady's favor.]

MARY HAMILTON

1. Word's gane to the kitchen,
And word's gane to the ha',
That Marie Hamilton has born a bairn
To the highest Stewart of a'.
2. She's tyed it in her apron
And she's thrown it in the sea;
Says, "Sink ye, swim ye, bonny wee babe,
You'll ne'er get mair o' me."
3. Down then cam the auld Queen,
Goud[79] tassels tying her hair:
"O Marie, where's the bonny wee babe
That I heard greet[80] sae sair?"
4. "There was never a babe intill my room,
As little designs to be;
It was but a touch o' my sair side,
Came o'er my fair bodie."
5. "O Marie, put on your robes o' black,
Or else your robes o' brown,
For ye maun gang wi' me the night,
To see fair Edinbro town."



Page 283

6. "I winna put on my robes o' black,
Nor yet my robes o' brown;
But I'll put on my robes o' white,
To shine through Edinbro town."
7. When she gaed up the Cannogate,
She laugh'd loud laughters three;
But when she cam down the Cannogate
The tear blinded her ee.
8. When she gaed up the Parliament stair,
The heel cam aff her shee[81];
And lang or she cam down again
She was condemn'd to dee.
9. When she cam down the Cannogate,
The Cannogate sae free,
Many a ladie look'd o'er her window,
Weeping for this ladie.
10. "Make never meen[82] for me," she says,
"Make never meen for me;
Seek never grace frae a graceless face,
For that ye'll never see."
11. "Bring me a bottle of wine," she says,
"The best that e'er ye hae,
That I may drink to my weil-wishers,
And they may drink to me."
12. "And here's to the jolly sailor lad
That sails upon the faem;
But let not my father nor mother get wit
But that I shall come again."
13. "And here's to the jolly sailor lad
That sails upon the sea;
But let not my father nor mother get wit
O' the death that I maun dee."
14. "Oh little did my mother think,
The day she cradled me,
What lands I was to travel through,
What death I was to dee."



15. "Oh little did my father think,
The day he held up^[83] me,
What lands I was to travel through,
What death I was to dee."

16. "Last night I wash'd the Queen's feet,
And gently laid her down;
And a' the thanks I've gotten the nicht
To be hangd in Edinbro town!"

17. "Last nicht there was four Maries,
The nicht there'll be but three;
There was Marie Seton, and Marie Beton,
And Marie Carmichael, and me."

[Footnote 79: Gold.]

[Footnote 80: Weep.]

[Footnote 81: Shoe.]

[Footnote 82: Moan.]

[Footnote 83: Held up, lifted up, recognized as his lawful child,—a world-wide and ancient ceremony.]

BONNIE GEORGE CAMPBELL

1. High upon Highlands,
and low upon Tay,
Bonnie George Campbell
rade out on a day.
2. Saddled and bridled
and gallant rade he;
Hame cam his guid horse,
but never cam he.
3. Out cam his auld mither
greeting fu' sair,
And out cam his bonnie bride
riving her hair.
4. Saddled and bridled
and booted rade he;
Toom^[84] hame cam the saddle,
but never came he.

5. "My meadow lies green,
and my corn is unshorn,
My barn is to build,
and my babe is unborn."

Page 284

6. Saddled and bridled
and booted rade he;
Toom hame cam the saddle,
but never cam he.

[Footnote 84: Empty.]

BESSIE BELL AND MARY GRAY[85]

1. O Bessie Bell and Mary Gray,
They war twa bonnie lasses!
They biggit[86] a bower on yon burn-brae[87],
And theekit[88] it oer wi rashes.
2. They theekit it oer wi' rashes green,
They theekit it oer wi' heather:
But the pest cam frae the burrows-town,
And slew them baith thegither.
3. They thought to lie in Methven kirk-yard
Amang their noble kin;
But they maun lye in Stronach haugh,
To biek forenent the sin[89].
4. And Bessie Bell and Mary Gray,
They war twa bonnie lasses;
They biggit a bower on yon burn-brae,
And theekit it oer wi' rashes.

THE THREE RAVENS[90]

1. There were three ravens sat on a tree,
Downe a downe, hay down, hay downe[91],
There were three ravens sat on a tree, With a downe.
There were three ravens sat on a tree,
They were as blacke as they might be.
With a downe derrie, derrie, derrie, downe, downe.
2. The one of them said to his mate,
"Where shall we our breakfast take?"
3. "Downe in yonder greene field
There lies a knight slain under his shield."



4. His hounds they lie down at his feete,
So well they can their master keepe[92].

5. His haukes they flie so eagerly,
There's no fowle dare him come nie.

6. Downe there comes a fallow doe,
As great with young as she might goe.

7. She lift up his bloody head,
And kist his wounds that were so red.

8. She got him up upon her backe,
And carried him to earthen lake[93].

9. She buried him before the prime,
She was dead herselfe ere even-song time.

10. God send every gentleman
Such haukes, such hounds, and such a leman[94].

[Footnote 85: Founded on an actual event of the plague, near Perth, in 1645. See the interesting account in Professor Child's 'Ballads,' Part VII, p. 75f.]

[Footnote 86: Built.]

[Footnote 87: A hill sloping down to a brook.]

[Footnote 88: Thatched.]

[Footnote 89: To bake in the rays of the sun.]

[Footnote 90: The counterpart, or perhaps parody, of this ballad, called 'The Twa Corbies,' is better known than the exquisite original.]

[Footnote 91: The refrain, or burden, differs in another version of the ballad.]

[Footnote 92: Guard.]

[Footnote 93: Shroud of earth, burial.]

[Footnote 94: Sweetheart, darling, literally 'dear-one' (liefman). The word had originally no offensive meaning.]



Page 285

LORD RANDAL

1. Where hae ye been, Lord Randal, my son?
O where hae ye been, my handsome young man?
"I hae been to the wild wood; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down."
2. "Where gat ye your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
Where gat ye your dinner, my handsome young man?"
"I din'd wi' my true-love; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down."
3. "What gat ye to your dinner, Lord Randal, my son?
What gat ye to your dinner, my handsome young man?"
"I gat eels boiled in broo[95]; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down."
4. "What became o' your bloodhounds, Lord Randal, my son?
What became' o' your bloodhounds, my handsome young man?"
"O they swell'd and they died; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down."
5. "O I fear you are poison'd, Lord Randal, my son!
O I fear you are poison'd, my handsome young man!"
"O yes! I'm poison'd; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wald lie down[96]."

[Footnote 95: Broth.]

[Footnote 96: Frogs, toads, snakes, and the like were often served for fish, and of course were supposed to act as a poison. One variant has a verse to elaborate this:—

"Where gat she those eels, Lord Randal, my son?
Where gat she those eels, my handsome young man?"
"Neath the bush o' brown bracken; mother, make my bed soon,
For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down."
]

EDWARD[97]

1. "Why dois your brand sae drap wi bluid,
Edward, Edward,
Why dois your brand sae drap wi bluid,
And why sae sad gang yee O?"



“O I hae killed my hauke sae guid,
Mither, mither,
O I hae killed my hauke sae guid,
And I had nae mair hot hee O.”

2. “Your haukis bluid was nevir sae reid,
Edward, Edward,
Your haukis bluid was nevir sae reid,
My deir son I tell thee O.”

“O I hae killed my reid-roan steid,
Mither, mither,
O I hae killed my reid-roan steid,
That erst was sae fair and frie O.”

3. “Your steid was auld, and ye hae gat mair,
Edward, Edward,
Your steid was auld, and ye hae gat mair,
Sum other dule ye drie O[98].”
“O I hae killed my fadir deir,
Mither, mither,
O I hae killed my fadir deir,
Alas, and wae is mee O!”

4. “And whatten penance wul ye drie, for that,
Edward, Edward,
And whatten penance wul ye drie, for that?
My deir son, now tell me O.”
“I’ll set my feit in yonder boat,
Mither, mither,
I’ll set my feit in yonder boat,
And I’ll fare over the sea O.”

Page 286

5. "And what wul ye doe wi' your towers and your ha',
Edward, Edward,
And what wul ye doe wi' your towers and your ha',
That were sae fair to see O?"
"I'll let them stand till they doun fa',
Mither, mither,
I'll let them stand till they doun fa',
For here nevir mair maun I bee O."

6. "And what wul ye leive to your bairns and your wife,
Edward, Edward,
And what wul ye leive to your bairns and your wife,
When ye gang over the sea O?"
"The warldis room; let them beg thrae life,
Mither, mither,
The warldis room; let them beg thrae life,
For them never mair wul I see O."

7. "And what wul ye leive to your ain mither dear,
Edward, Edward,
And what will ye leive to your ain mither dear?
My dear son, now tell me O."
"The curse of hell frae me sall ye beir,
Mither, mither,
The curse of hell frae me sall ye beir,
Sic counsels ye gave to me O."

[Footnote 97: One of the finest of our ballads. It was sent from Scotland to Percy by David Dalrymple.]

[Footnote 98: You suffer some other sorrow.]

THE TWA BROTHERS

1. There were twa brethren in the north,
They went to the school thegither;
The one unto the other said,
"Will you try a warsle^[99] afore?"

2. They warsled up, they warsled down,
Till Sir John fell to the ground,
And there was a knife in Sir Willie's pouch,
Gied him a deadlie wound.



3. "Oh brither dear, take me on your back,
Carry me to yon burn clear,
And wash the blood from off my wound,
And it will bleed nae mair."
4. He took him up upon his back,
Carried him to yon burn clear,
And washed the blood from off his wound,
But aye it bled the mair.
5. "Oh brither dear, take me on your back,
Carry me to yon kirk-yard,
And dig a grave baith wide and deep.
And lay my body there."
6. He's taen him up upon his back,
Carried him to yon kirk-yard,
And dug a grave baith deep and wide,
And laid his body there.
7. "But what will I say to my father dear,
Gin he chance to say, Willie, whar's John?"
"Oh say that he's to England gone,
To buy him a cask of wine."
8. "And what will I say to my mother dear,
Gin she chance to say, Willie, whar's John?"
"Oh say that he's to England gone,
To buy her a new silk gown."
9. "And what will I say to my sister dear,
Gin she chance to say, Willie, whar's John?"
"Oh say that he's to England gone,
To buy her a wedding ring."
10. "But what will I say to her you loe[100] dear,
Gin she cry, Why tarries my John?"
"Oh tell her I lie in Kirk-land fair,
And home again will never come."



Page 287

[Footnote 99: Wrestle.]

[Footnote 100: Love.]

BABYLON; OR THE BONNIE BANKS O' FORDIE

1. There were three ladies lived in a bower,
Eh vow bonnie,
And they went out to pull a flower
On the bonnie banks o' Fordie.
2. They hadna pu'ed a flower but ane,
When up started to them a banisht man.
3. He's ta'en the first sister by her hand,
And he's turned her round and made her stand.
4. "It's whether will ye be a rank robber's wife,
Or will ye die by my wee pen-knife?"
5. "It's I'll not be a rank robber's wife,
But I'll rather die by your wee pen-knife!"
6. He's killed this may, and he's laid her by,
For to bear the red rose company.
7. He's taken the second ane by the hand,
And he's turned her round and made her stand.
8. "It's whether will ye be a rank robber's wife,
Or will ye die by my wee pen-knife?"
9. "I'll not be a rank robber's wife,
But I'll rather die by your wee pen-knife."
10. He's killed this may, and he's laid her by,
For to bear the red rose company.
11. He's taken the youngest ane by the hand,
And he's turned her round and made her stand.
12. Says, "Will ye be a rank robber's wife,
Or will ye die by my wee pen-knife?"



13. "I'll not be a rank robber's wife,
Nor will I die by your wee pen-knife."

14. "For I hae a brother in this wood,
And gin ye kill me, it's he'll kill thee."

15. "What's thy brother's name? Come tell to me."
"My brother's name is Baby Lon."

16. "O sister, sister, what have I done!
O have I done this ill to thee!"

17. "O since I've done this evil deed,
Good sall never be seen o' me."

18. He's taken out his wee pen-knife,
And he's twyned[101] himsel o' his own sweet life.

[Footnote 101: Parted, deprived.]

CHILDE MAURICE[102]

1. Childe Maurice hunted i' the silver wood,
He hunted it round about,
And noebodye that he found therein,
Nor none there was without.

2. He says, "Come hither, thou little foot-page,
That runneth lowlye by my knee,
For thou shalt goe to John Steward's wife
And pray her speake with me."

3. "....

....

I, and greete thou doe that ladye well,
Ever soe well fro me."

4. "And, as it falls, as many times
As knots beene knit on a kell[103],
Or marchant men gone to leeve London
Either to buy ware or sell."

5. "And, as it falles, as many times
As any hart can thinke,
Or schoole-masters are in any schoole-house
Writing with pen and inke:
For if I might, as well as she may,
This night I would with her speake."



6. "And heere I send her a mantle of greene,
As greene as any grasse,
And bid her come to the silver wood,
To hunt with Child Maurice."



Page 288

7. "And there I send her a ring of gold,
A ring of precious stone,
And bid her come to the silver wood,
Let[104] for no kind of man."

8. One while this little boy he yode[105],
Another while he ran,
Until he came to John Steward's hall,
I-wis[106] he never blan[107].

9. And of nurture the child had good,
He ran up hall and bower free,
And when he came to this ladye faire,
Sayes, "God you save and see[108]!"

10. "I am come from Child Maurice,
A message unto thee;
And Child Maurice, he greetes you well,
And ever soe well from me."

11. "And as it falls, as oftentimes
As knots beene knit on a kell,
Or marchant men gone to leeve London
Either for to buy ware or sell."

12. "And as oftentimes he greetes you well
As any hart can thinke,
Or schoolemasters are in any schoole,
Wryting with pen and inke."

13. "And heere he sends a mantle of greene[109],
As greene as any grasse,
And he bids you come to the silver wood,
To hunt with Child Maurice."

14. "And heere he sends you a ring of gold,
A ring of the precious stone;
He prayes you to come to the silver wood,
Let for no kind of man."

15. "Now peace, now peace, thou little foot-page,
For Christes sake, I pray thee!
For if my lord heare one of these words,
Thou must be hanged hye!"



16. John Steward stood under the castle wall,
And he wrote the words everye one,

....

....

17. And he called upon his hors-keeper,
"Make ready you my steede!"
I, and soe he did to his chamberlaine,
"Make ready thou my weede[110]!"

18. And he cast a lease[111] upon his backe,
And he rode to the silver wood,
And there he sought all about,
About the silver wood.

19. And there he found him Child Maurice
Sitting upon a blocke,
With a silver combe in his hand,
Kembing his yellow lockes.

....

20. But then stood up him Child Maurice,
And sayd these words trulye:
"I doe not know your ladye," he said,
"If that I doe her see."

21. He sayes, "How now, how now, Child Maurice?
Alacke, how may this be?
For thou hast sent her love-tokens,
More now then two or three;"

22. "For thou hast sent her a mantle of greene,
As greene as any grasse,
And bade her come to the silver woode
To hunt with Child Maurice."

23. "And thou hast sent her a ring of gold,
A ring of precyous stone,
And bade her come to the silver wood,
Let for no kind of man."

24. "And by my faith, now, Child Maurice,
The tone[112] of us shall dye!"
"Now be my troth," sayd Child Maurice,
"And that shall not be I."

25. But he pulled forth a bright browne[113] sword,
And dried it on the grasse,

And soe fast he smote at John Steward,
I-wisse he never did rest.



Page 289

26. Then he[114] pulled forth his bright browne sword,
And dried it on his sleeve,
And the first good stroke John Stewart stroke,
Child Maurice head he did cleave.

27. And he pricked it on his sword's poynt,
Went singing there beside,
And he rode till he came to that ladye faire,
Whereas this ladye lyed[115].

28. And sayes, "Dost thou know Child Maurice head,
If that thou dost it see?
And lap it soft, and kisse it oft,
For thou lovedst him better than me."

29. But when she looked on Child Maurice head,
She never spake words but three:—
"I never beare no childe but one,
And you have slaine him trulye."

30. Sayes[116], "Wicked be my merrymen all,
I gave meate, drinke, and clothe!
But could they not have holden me
When I was in all that wrath!"

31. "For I have slaine one of the curteousest knights
That ever bestrode a steed,
So[117] have I done one of the fairest ladyes
That ever ware woman's weede!"

[Footnote 102: It is worth while to quote Gray's praise of this ballad:—"I have got the old Scotch ballad on which 'Douglas' [the well-known tragedy by Home] was founded. It is divine.... Aristotle's best rules are observed in a manner which shows the author never had heard of Aristotle."—Letter to Mason, in 'Works,' ed. Gosse, ii. 316.]

[Footnote 103: That is, the page is to greet the lady as many times as there are knots in nets for the hair (*kell*), or merchants going to dear (*leeve*, *lief*) London, or thoughts of the heart, or schoolmasters in all schoolhouses. These multiplied and comparative greetings are common in folk-lore, particularly in German popular lyric.]

[Footnote 104: *Let* (desist) is an infinitive depending on *bid*.]

[Footnote 105: Went, walked.]

[Footnote 106: Certainly.]

[Footnote 107: Stopped.]

[Footnote 108: Protect.]

[Footnote 109: These, of course, are tokens of the Childe's identity.]

[Footnote 110: Clothes.]

[Footnote 111: Leash.]

[Footnote 112: That one = the one. *That* is the old neuter form of the definite article. Cf. *the tother* for *that other*.]

[Footnote 113: *Brown*, used in this way, seems to mean burnished, or glistening, and is found in Anglo-Saxon.]

[Footnote 114: *He*, John Steward.]

[Footnote 115: Lived.]

[Footnote 116: John Steward.]

[Footnote 117: Compare the similar swiftness of tragic development in 'Babylon.'],

THE WIFE OF USHER'S WELL

1. There lived a wife at Usher's Well,
And a wealthy wife was she;
She had three stout and stalwart sons,
And sent them o'er the sea.



Page 290

2. They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely ane,
When word came to the carlin[118] wife
That her three sons were gane.
3. They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely three,
When word came to the carlin wife
That her sons she'd never see.
4. "I wish the wind may never cease,
Nor fashes[119] in the flood,
Till my three sons come hame to me,
In earthly flesh and blood."
5. It fell about the Martinmass[120],
When nights are lang and mirk,
The carlin wife's three sons came hame,
And their hats were o' the birk[121].
6. It neither grew in syke[122] nor ditch,
Nor yet in ony sheugh[123],
But at the gates o' Paradise,
That birk grew fair eneugh.

* * * * *

7. "Blow up the fire, my maidens!
Bring water from the well!
For a' my house shall feast this night,
Since my three sons are well."
8. And she has made to them a bed,
She's made it large and wide,
And she's ta'en her mantle her about,
Sat down at the bed-side.

* * * * *

9. Up then crew the red, red cock[124],
And up and crew the gray;
The eldest to the youngest said,
"Tis time we were away."



10. The cock he hadna craw'd but once,
And clapp'd his wing at a',
When the youngest to the eldest said,
"Brother, we must awa'."

11. "The cock doth craw, the day doth daw.
The channerin[125] worm doth chide;
Gin we be mist out o' our place,
A sair pain we maun bide."

12. "Fare ye weel, my mother dear!
Fareweel to barn and byre!
And fare ye weel, the bonny lass
That kindles my mother's fire!"

[Footnote 118: Old woman.]

[Footnote 119: Lockhart's clever emendation for the *fishes*
of the Ms. *Fashes* = disturbances, storms.]

[Footnote 120: November 11th. Another version gives the time
as "the hallow days of Yule."]

[Footnote 121: Birch.]

[Footnote 122: Marsh.]

[Footnote 123: Furrow, ditch.]

[Footnote 124: In folk-lore, the break of day is announced to demons and ghosts by
three cocks,—usually a white, a red, and a black; but the colors, and even the numbers,
vary. At the third crow, the ghosts must vanish. This applies to guilty and innocent
alike; of course, the sons are "spirits of health."]

[Footnote 125: Fretting.]

SWEET WILLIAM'S GHOST

1. Whan bells war rung, an mass was sung,
A wat[126] a' man to bed were gone,
Clark Sanders came to Margret's window,
With mony a sad sigh and groan.

Page 291

2. "Are ye sleeping, Margret," he says,
"Or are ye waking, presentlie?
Give me my faith and trouth again,
A wat, true-love, I gied to thee."
3. "Your faith and trouth ye's never get,
Nor our true love shall never twin[127],
Till ye come with me in my bower,
And kiss me both cheek and chin."
4. "My mouth it is full cold, Margret,
It has the smell now of the ground;
And if I kiss thy comely mouth,
Thy life-days will not be long."
5. "Cocks are crowing a merry mid-larf[128],
I wat the wild fule boded day;
Give me my faith and trouth again,
And let me fare me on my way."
6. "Thy faith and trouth thou shall na get,
Nor our true love shall never twin,
Till ye tell me what comes of women
A wat that dy's in strong traveling[129]."
7. "Their beds are made in the heavens high,
Down at the foot of our good Lord's knee,
Well set about wi' gilly-flowers,
A wat sweet company for to see."
8. "O cocks are crowing a merry mid-larf,
A wat the wild fule boded day;
The salms of Heaven will be sung,
And ere now I'll be missed away."
9. Up she has taen a bright long wand,
And she has straked her trouth thereon[130];
She has given it him out at the shot-window,
Wi mony a sad sigh and heavy groan.
10. "I thank you, Margret, I thank you, Margret,
And I thank you heartilie;
Gin ever the dead come for the quick,
Be sure, Margret, I'll come again for thee."



11. It's hose and shoon an gound[131] alane
She clame the wall and followed him,
Until she came to a green forest,
On this she lost the sight of him.

12. "Is there any room at your head, Sanders?
Is there any room at your feet?
Or any room at your twa sides?
Where fain, fain woud I sleep."

13. "There is nae room at my head, Margret,
There is nae room at my feet;
There is room at my twa sides,
For ladys for to sleep."

14. "Cold meal[132] is my covering owre,
But an[133] my winding sheet:
My bed it is full low, I say,
Among hungry worms I sleep."

15. "Cold meal is my covering owre,
But an my winding sheet:
The dew it falls nae sooner down
Than ay it is full weet."

[Footnote 126: "I wot," "I know," = truly, in sooth. The same
in 5-2, 6-4, 7-4, 8-2.]

[Footnote 127: Part, separate. She does not yet know he is
dead.]

[Footnote 128: Probably the distorted name of a town; a =
in. "Cocks are crowing in merry—, and the wild-fowl announce
the dawn."]

[Footnote 129: That die in childbirth.]

Page 292

[Footnote 130: Margaret thus gives him back his troth-plight by “stroking” it upon the wand, much as savages and peasants believe they can rid themselves of a disease by rubbing the affected part with a stick or pebble and flinging the latter into the road.]

[Footnote 131: Gown.]

[Footnote 132: Mold, earth.]

[Footnote 133: But and==also.]

HONORE DE BALZAC

(1799-1850)

BY WILLIAM P. TRENT

Honore de Balzac, by common consent the greatest of French novelists and to many of his admirers the greatest of all writers of prose fiction, was born at Tours, May 16th, 1799. Neither his family nor his place of birth counts for much in his artistic development; but his sister Laure, afterwards Madame Surville,—to whom we owe a charming sketch of her brother and many of his most delightful letters,—made him her hero through life, and gave him a sympathy that was better than any merely literary environment. He was a sensitive child, little comprehended by his parents or teachers, which probably accounts for the fact that few writers have so well described the feelings of children so situated [See ‘Le lys dans la vallee’ (The Lily in the Valley) and ‘Louis Lambert’]. He was not a good student, but undermined his health by desultory though enormous reading and by writing a precocious Treatise on the Will, which an irate master burned and the future novelist afterwards naively deplored. When brought home to recuperate, he turned from books to nature, and the effects of the beautiful landscape of Touraine upon his imagination are to be found throughout his writings, in passages of description worthy of a nature-worshiper like Senancour himself. About this time a vague desire for fame seems to have seized him,—a desire destined to grow into an almost morbid passion; and it was a kindly Providence that soon after (1814) led his family to quit the stagnant provinces for that nursery of ambition, Paris. Here he studied under new masters, heard lectures at the Sorbonne, read in the libraries, and finally, at the desire of his practical father, took a three years’ course in law.

[Illustration: HON. DE BALZAC.]

He was now at the parting of the ways, and he chose the one nearest his heart. After much discussion, it was settled that he should not be obliged to return to the provinces with his family, or to enter upon the regular practice of law, but that he might try his luck as a writer on an allowance purposely fixed low enough to test his constancy and

endurance. Two years was the period of probation allotted, during which time Balzac read still more widely and walked the streets studying the characters he met, all the while endeavoring to grind out verses for a tragedy on Cromwell. This, when completed, was promptly and justly damned by his family, and he was temporarily

Page 293

forced to retire from Paris. He did not give up his aspirations, however, and before long he was back in his attic, this time supporting himself by his pen. Novels, not tragedies, were what the public most wanted, so he labored indefatigably to supply their needs and his own necessities; not relinquishing, however, the hope that he might some day watch the performance of one of his own plays. His perseverance was destined to be rewarded, for he lived to write five dramas which fill a volume of his collected works; but only one, the posthumous comedy 'Mercadet', was even fairly successful. Yet that Balzac had dramatic genius his matured novels abundantly prove.

The ten romances, however, that he wrote for cheap booksellers between 1822 and 1829 displayed so little genius of any sort that he was afterwards unwilling to cover their deficiencies with his great name. They have been collected as youthful works ('Oeuvres de jeunesse'), and are useful to a complete understanding of the evolution of their author's genius; but they are rarely read even by his most devoted admirers. They served, however, to enable him to get through his long and heart-rending period of apprenticeship, and they taught him how to express himself; for this born novelist was not a born writer and had to labor painfully to acquire a style which only at rare moments quite fitted itself to the subject he had in hand.

Much more interesting than these early sensational romances were the letters he wrote to his sister Laure, in which he grew eloquent over his ambition and gave himself needed practice in describing the characters with whom he came in contact. But he had not the means to wait quietly and ripen, so he embarked in a publishing business which brought him into debt. Then, to make up his losses, he became partner in a printing enterprise which failed in 1827, leaving him still more embarrassed financially, but endowed with a fund of experience which he turned to rich account as a novelist. Henceforth the sordid world of debt, bankruptcy, usury, and speculation had no mystery for him, and he laid it bare in novel after novel, utilizing also the knowledge he had gained of the law, and even pressing into service the technicalities of the printing office [See 'Illusions perdues' (Lost Illusions)]. But now at the age of twenty-eight he had over 100,000 francs to pay, and had written nothing better than some cheap stories; the task of wiping out his debts by his writings seemed therefore a more hopeless one than Scott's. Nothing daunted, however, he set to work, and the year that followed his second failure in business saw the composition of the first novel he was willing to acknowledge, 'Les Chouans.' This romance of Brittany in 1799 deserved the praise it received from press and public, in spite of its badly jointed plot and overdrawn characters. It still appeals to many readers, and is important to the 'Comedie humaine' as being the only novel of the "Military Scenes."

Page 294

The 'Physiology of Marriage' followed quickly (1829-30), and despite a certain pruriency of imagination, displayed considerable powers of analysis, powers destined shortly to distinguish a story which ranks high among its author's works, 'La Maison du chat-qui-pelote' (1830). This delightful novelette, the queer title of which is nearly equivalent to 'At the Sign of the Cat and the Racket,' showed in its treatment of the heroine's unhappy passion the intuition and penetration of the born psychologist, and in its admirable description of bourgeois life the pictorial genius of the genuine realist. In other words the youthful romancer was merged once for all in the matured novelist. The years of waiting and observation had done their work, and along the streets of Paris now walked the most profound analyst of human character that had scrutinized society since the days when William Shakespeare, fresh from Stratford, trod the streets and lanes of Elizabethan London.

The year 1830 marks the beginning not merely of Balzac's success as the greatest of modern realists, but also of his marvelous literary activity. Novel after novel is begun before its predecessor is finished; short stories of almost perfect workmanship are completed; sketches are dashed off that will one day find their appropriate place in larger compositions, as yet existing only in the brain of the master. Nor is it merely a question of individual works: novels and stories are to form different series,—'Scenes from Private Life,' 'Philosophical Novels and Tales,'—which are themselves destined to merge into 'Studies of Manners in the Nineteenth Century,' and finally into the 'Comedie humaine' itself. Yet it was more than a swarm of stories that was buzzing in his head; it was a swarm of individuals often more truly alive to him than the friends with whom he loved to converse about them. And just because he knew these people of his brain, just because he entered into the least details of their daily lives, Balzac was destined to become much more than a mere philosopher or student of society; to wit, a creator of characters, endowed with that "absolute dramatic vision" which distinguishes Homer and Shakespeare and Chaucer. But because he was also something of a philosopher and student of sociology, he conceived the stupendous idea of linking these characters with one another and with their several environments, in order that he might make himself not merely the historian but also the creator of an entire society. In other words, conservative though he was, Balzac had the audacity to range himself by the side of Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, and to espouse the cause of evolution even in its infancy. The great ideas of the mutability of species and of the influence of environment and heredity were, he thought, as applicable to sociology as to zoology, and as applicable to fiction as to either. So he meditated the 'Comedie humaine' for several years before he announced it in 1842, and from being almost the rival of Saint-Hilaire he became almost the anticipator of Darwin.

Page 295

But this idea of evolution was itself due to the evolution of his genius, to which many various elements contributed: his friendships and enmities with contemporary authors, his intimacies with women of refinement and fashion, his business struggles with creditors and publishers, his frequent journeys to the provinces and foreign countries; and finally his grandiose schemes to surround himself with luxury and the paraphernalia of power, not so much for his own sake as for the sake of her whose least smile was a delight and an inspiration. About each of these topics an interesting chapter might be written, but here a few words must suffice.

After his position as an author was more or less assured, Balzac's relations with the leaders of his craft—such as Victor Hugo, Theophile Gautier, and George Sand—were on the whole cordial. He had trouble with Sainte-Beuve, however, and often felt that his brother-writers begrudged his success. His constant attacks on contemporary journalists, and his egotistic and erratic manners naturally prejudiced the critics, so that even the marvelous romance entitled 'La Peau de chagrin' (The Magic Skin: 1831),—a work of superb genius,—speedily followed as it was by 'Eugenie Grandet' and 'Le Pere Goriot,' did not win him cordial recognition. One or two of his friendships, however, gave him a knowledge of higher social circles than he was by birth entitled to, a fact which should be remembered in face of the charge that he did not know high life, although it is of course true that a writer like Balzac, possessing the intuition of genius, need not frequent salons or live in hovels in order to describe them with absolute verisimilitude.

With regard to Balzac's debts, the fact should be noted that he might have paid them off more easily and speedily had he been more prudent. He cut into the profits of his books by the costly changes he was always making in his proof-sheets,—changes which the artist felt to be necessary, but against which the publishers naturally protested. In reality he wrote his books on his proof-sheets, for he would cut and hack the original version and make new insertions until he drove his printers wild. Indeed, composition never became easy to him, although under a sudden inspiration he could sometimes dash off page after page while other men slept. He had, too, his affectations; he must even have a special and peculiar garb in which to write. All these eccentricities and his outside distractions and ambitions, as well as his noble and pathetic love affair, entered into the warp and woof of his work with effects that can easily be detected by the careful student, who should remember, however, that the master's foibles and peculiarities never for one moment set him outside the small circle of the men of supreme genius. He belongs to them by virtue of his tremendous grasp of life in its totality, his superhuman force of execution and the inevitableness of his art at its best.

Page 296

The decade from 1830 to 1840 is the most prolific period of Balzac's genius in the creation of individual works; that from 1840 to 1850 is his great period of philosophical co-ordination and arrangement. In the first he hewed out materials for his house; in the second he put them together. This statement is of course relatively true only, for we owe to the second decade three of his greatest masterpieces: 'Splendeurs et miseres des courtisanes,' and 'La Cousine Bette' and 'Le Cousin Pons,' collectively known as 'Les Parents pauvres' (Poor Relations). And what a period of masterful literary activity the first decade presents! For the year 1830 alone the Vicomte de Spoelberch de Lovenjoul gives seventy-one entries, many of slight importance, but some familiar to every student of modern literature, such as 'El Verdugo,' 'La Maison du chat-qui-pelote,' 'Gobseck,' 'Adieu,' 'Une Passion dans le desert' (A Passion in the Desert), 'Un Episode sous la Terreur' (An Episode of the Terror). For 1831 there are seventy-six entries, among them such masterpieces as 'Le Reequisitionnaire' (The Conscript), 'Les Proscrits' (The Outlaws), 'La Peau de chagrin,' and 'Jesus-Christ en Flandre.' In 1832 the number of entries falls to thirty-six, but among them are 'Le Colonel Chabert,' 'Le Cure de Tours' (The Priest of Tours), 'La Grande Breteche,' 'Louis Lambert,' and 'Les Marana.' After this year there are fewer short stories. In 1833 we have 'Le Medecin de campagne' (The Country Doctor), and 'Eugenie Grandet,' with parts of the 'Histoire des treize' (Story of the Thirteen), and of the 'Contes drolatiques' (Droll Tales). The next year gives us 'La Recherche de l'absolu' (Search for the Absolute) and 'Le Pere Goriot' (Old Goriot) and during the next six there were no less than a dozen masterpieces. Such a decade of accomplishment is little short of miraculous, and the work was done under stress of anxieties that would have crushed any normal man.

But anxieties and labors were lightened by a friendship which was an inspiration long before it ripened into love, and were rendered bearable both by Balzac's confidence in himself and by his ever nearer view of the goal he had set himself. The task before him was as stupendous as that which Comte had undertaken, and required not merely the planning and writing of new works but the utilization of all that he had previously written. Untiring labor had to be devoted to this manipulation of old material, for practically the great output of the five years 1829-1834 was to be co-ordinated internally, story being brought into relation with story and character with character. This meant the creation and management of an immense number of personages, the careful investigation of the various localities which served for environments, and the profound study of complicated social and political problems. No wonder, then, that the second decade of his maturity shows a falling off in abundance, though not in intensity of creative power; and that the gradual breaking down of his health, under the strain of his ceaseless efforts and of his abnormal habits of life, made itself more and more felt in the years that followed the great preface which in 1842 set forth the splendid design of the 'Comedie humaine.'

Page 297

This preface, one of the most important documents in literary history, must be carefully studied by all who would comprehend Balzac in his entirety. It cannot be too often repeated that Balzac's scientific and historical aspirations are important only in so far as they caused him to take a great step forward in the development of his art. The nearer the artist comes to reproducing for us life in its totality, the higher the rank we assign him among his fellows. Tried by this canon, Balzac is supreme. His interweaving of characters and events through a series of volumes gives a verisimilitude to his work unrivaled in prose fiction, and paralleled only in the work of the world-poets. In other words, his use of co-ordination upon a vast scale makes up for his lack of delicacy and sureness of touch, as compared with what Shakespeare and Homer and Chaucer have taught us to look for. Hence he is with them even if not of them.

This great claim can be made for the Balzac of the 'Comedie humaine' only; it could not be made for the Balzac of any one masterpiece like 'Le Pere Goriot,' or even for the Balzac of all the masterpieces taken in lump and without co-ordination. Balzac by co-ordination has in spite of his limitations given us a world, just as Shakespeare and Homer have done; and so Taine was profoundly right when he put him in the same category with the greatest of all writers. When, however, he added St. Simon to Shakespeare, and proclaimed that with them Balzac was the greatest storehouse of documents that we have on human nature, he was guilty not merely of confounding *genres* of art, but also of laying stress on the philosophic rather than on the artistic side of fiction. Balzac does make himself a great storehouse of documents on human nature, but he also does something far more important, he sets before us a world of living men and women.

To have brought this world into existence, to have given it order in the midst of complexity, and that in spite of the fact that death overtook him before he could complete his work, would have been sufficient to occupy a decade of any other man's life; but he, though harassed with illness and with hopes of love and ambition deferred, was strong enough to do more. The year 1840 saw the appearance of 'Pierrette,' and the establishment of the ill-fated 'Revue parisienne.' The following year saw 'Ursule Mirouet,' and until 1848 the stream of great works is practically unbroken. The 'Splendeurs et miseres' and the 'Parents pauvres' have been named already, but to these must be added 'Un Menage de garcon' (A Bachelor's House-keeping), 'Modeste Mignon,' and 'Les Paysans' (The Peasants). The three following years added nothing to his work and closed his life, but they brought him his crowning happiness. On March 14th, 1850, he was married to *Mme. Hanska*, at Berditchef; on August 18th, 1850, he died at Paris.

Page 298

Madame Evelina de Hanska came into Balzac's life about 1833, just after he had shaken off the unfortunate influence of the Duchesse de Castries. The young Polish countess was much impressed, we are told, by reading the 'Scenes de la vie privee' (Scenes of Private Life), and was somewhat perplexed and worried by Balzac's apparent change of method in 'La Peau de chagrin.' She wrote to him over the signature "L'Etrangere" (A Foreigner), and he answered in a series of letters recently published in the *Revue de Paris*. Not long after the opening of this correspondence the two met, and a firm friendship was cemented between them. The lady was about thirty, and married to a Russian gentleman of large fortune, to whom she had given an only daughter. She was in the habit of traveling about Europe to carry on this daughter's education, and Balzac made it his pleasure and duty to see her whenever he could, sometimes journeying as far as Vienna. In the interim he would write her letters which possess great charm and importance to the student of his life. The husband made no objection to the intimacy, trusting both to his wife and to Balzac; but for some time before the death of the aged nobleman, Balzac seems to have distrusted himself and to have held slightly aloof from the woman whom he was destined finally to love with all the fervor of his nature. Madame Hanska became free in the winter of 1842-3, and the next summer Balzac visited St. Petersburg to see her. His love soon became an absorbing passion, but consideration for her daughter's future withheld the lady's consent to a betrothal till 1846. It was a period of weary waiting, in which our sympathies are all on one side; for if ever a man deserved to be happy in a woman's love, it was Balzac. His happiness came, but almost too late to be enjoyed. His last two years, which he spent in Poland with Madame de Hanska, were oppressed by illness, and he returned to his beloved Paris only to die. The struggle of thirty years was over, and although his immense genius was not yet fully recognized, his greatest contemporary, Victor Hugo, was magnanimous enough to exclaim on hearing that he was dying, "Europe is on the point of losing a great mind." Balzac's disciples feel that Europe really lost its greatest writer since Shakespeare.

In the definitive edition of Balzac's writings in twenty-four volumes, seventeen are occupied by the various divisions of the 'Comedie humaine.' The plays take up one volume; and the correspondence, not including of course the letters to "L'Etrangere," another; the 'Contes drolatiques' make still another; and finally we have four volumes filled with sketches, tales, reviews, and historical and political articles left uncollected by their author.

Page 299

The 'Contes' are thirty in number, divided into "dixains," each with its appropriate prologue and epilogue. They purport to have been collected in the abbeys of Touraine, and set forth by the Sieur de Balzac for the delight of Pantagruelists and none others. Not merely the spirit but the very language of Rabelais is caught with remarkable verve and fidelity, so that from the point of view of style Balzac has never done better work. A book which holds by Rabelais on the one hand and by the Queen of Navarre on the other is not likely, however, to appeal to that part of the English and American reading public that expurgates its Chaucer, and blushes at the mention of Fielding and Smollett. Such readers will do well to avoid the 'Contes drolatiques;' although, like 'Don Juan,' they contain a great deal of what was best in their author, of his frank, ebullient, sensuous nature, lighted up here at least by a genuine if scarcely delicate humor. Of direct suggestion of vice Balzac was, naturally, as incapable as he was of smug puritanism; but it must be confessed that as a *raconteur* his proper audience, now that the monastic orders have passed away, would be a group of middle-aged club-men.

The 'Comedie humaine' is divided into three main sections: first and most important, the 'Etudes de moeurs' (Studies of Manners), second the 'Etudes philosophiques' (Philosophic Studies), and finally the 'Etudes analytiques' (Analytic Studies). These divisions, as M. Barriere points out in his 'L'Oeuvre de H. de Balzac' (The Work of Balzac), were intended to bear to one another the relations that moral science, psychology, and metaphysics do to one another with regard to the life of man, whether as an individual or as a member of society. No single division was left complete at the author's death; but enough was finished and put together to give us the sense of moving in a living, breathing world, no matter where we make our entry. This, as we have insisted, is the real secret of his greatness. To think, for example, that the importance of 'Seraphita' lies in the fact that it gives Balzac's view of Swedenborgianism, or that the importance of 'Louis Lambert' lies in its author's queer theories about the human will, is entirely to misapprehend his true position in the world of literature. His mysticism, his psychology, his theories of economics, his reactionary devotion to monarchy, and his idealization of the Church of Rome, may or may not appeal to us, and have certainly nothing that is eternal or inevitable about them; but in his knowledge of the human mind and heart he is as inevitable and eternal as any writer has ever been, save only Shakespeare and Homer.

Page 300

The 'Etudes de moeurs' were systematically divided by their author into 'Scenes of Private Life,' 'Scenes of Provincial Life,' 'Scenes of Country Life,' 'Scenes of Parisian Life,' 'Scenes of Political Life,' and 'Scenes of Military Life,'—the last three divisions representing more or less exceptional phases of existence. The group relating to Paris is by far the most important and powerful, but the provincial stories show almost as fine workmanship, and furnish not a few of the well-known masterpieces. Less interesting, though still important, are the 'Scenes of Private Life,' which consist of twenty-four novels, novelettes, and tales, under the following titles: 'Beatrix,' 'Albert Savarus,' 'La Fausse maitresse' (The False Mistress), 'Le Message' (The Message), 'La Grande Breteche,' 'Etude de femme' (Study of Woman), 'Autre etude de femme' (Another Story of Woman), 'Madame Firmiani,' 'Modeste Mignon,' 'Un Debut dans la vie' (An Entrance upon Life), 'Pierre Grassou,' 'Memoires de deux jeunes mariees' (Recollections of a Young Couple), 'La Maison du chat-qui-pelote,' 'Le Bal de Sceaux' (The Ball of Sceaux), 'Le Contrat de mariage' (The Marriage Contract), 'La Vendetta,' 'La Paix du menage' (Household Peace), 'Une Double famille' (A Double Family), 'Une Fille d'Eve' (A Daughter of Eve), 'Honorine,' 'La Femme abandonnee' (The Abandoned Wife), 'La Grenadiere,' 'La Femme de trente ans' (The Woman of Thirty).

Of all these stories, hardly one shows genuine greatness except the powerful tragic tale 'La Grande Breteche,' which was subsequently incorporated in 'Autre etude de femme.' This story of a jealous husband's walling up his wife's lover in a closet of her chamber is as dramatic a piece of writing as Balzac ever did, and is almost if not quite as perfect a short story as any that has since been written in France. 'La Maison du chat-qui-pelote' has been mentioned already on account of its importance in the evolution of Balzac's realism, but while a delightful novelette, it is hardly great, its charm coming rather from its descriptions of bourgeois life than from the working out of its central theme, the infelicity of a young wife married to an unfaithful artist. 'Modeste Mignon' is interesting, and more romantic than Balzac's later works were wont to be; but while it may be safely recommended to the average novel-reader, few admirers of its author would wish to have it taken as a sample of their master. 'Beatrix' is a powerful story in its delineation of the weakness of the young Breton nobleman, Calyste du Guenie. It derives a factitious interest from the fact that George Sand is depicted in 'Camille Maupin,' the *nom de plume* of Mlle. des Touches, and perhaps Balzac himself in Claude Vignon, the critic. Less factitious is the interest derived from Balzac's admirable delineation of a doting mother and aunt, and from his realistic handling of one of the cleverest of his ladies of light reputation, Madame Schontz; his studies of such characters

Page 301

of the *demi-monde*—especially of the wonderful Esther of the 'Splendeurs et miseres'—serving plainly, by the way, as a point of departure for Dumas *films*. Yet 'Beatrix' is an able rather than a truly great book, for it neither elevates nor delights us. In fact, all the stories in this series are interesting rather than truly great; but all display Balzac's remarkable analytic powers. Love, false or true, is of course their main theme; wrought out to a happy issue in 'La Bourse,' a charming tale, or to a death of despair in 'La Grenadiere' The childless young married woman is contrasted with her more fortunate friend surrounded by little ones ('Memoires de deux jeunes mariees'), the heartless coquette flirts once too often ('Le Bal de Sceaux'), the eligible young man is taken in by a scheming mother ('Le Contrat du mariage'), the deserted husband labors to win back his wife ('Honorine'), the tempted wife learns at last the real nature of her peril ('Une Fille d'Eve'); in short, lovers and mistresses, husbands and wives, make us participants of all the joys and sorrows that form a miniature world within the four walls of every house.

The 'Scenes of Provincial Life' number only ten stories, but nearly all of them are masterpieces. They are 'Eugenie Grandet,' 'Le Lys dans la vallee,' 'Ursule Mirouet,' 'Pierrette,' 'Le Cure de Tours,' 'La Rabouilleuse,' 'La Vielle fille' (The Old Maid), 'Le Cabinet des antiques' (The Cabinet of Antiques), 'L'Illustre Gaudissart' (The Illustrious Gaudissart), and 'La Muse du departement' (The Departmental Muse). Of these 'Eugenie Grandet' is of course easily first in interest, pathos, and power. The character of old Grandet, the miserly father, is presented to us with Shakespearean vividness, although Eugenie herself has, less than the Shakespearean charm. Any lesser artist would have made the tyrant himself and his yielding wife and daughters seem caricatures rather than living people. It is only the Shakespeares and Balzacs who are able to make their Shylocks and Iagos, their Grandets and Philippe Brideaus, monsters and human beings at one and the same time. It is only the greater artists, too, who can bring out all the pathos inherent in the subjection of two gentle women to a tyrant in their own household. But it is Balzac the inimitable alone who can portray fully the life of the provinces, its banality, its meanness, its watchful selfishness, and yet save us through the perfection of his art from the degradation which results from contact with low and sordid life. The reader who rises unaffected from a perusal of 'Eugenie Grandet' would be unmoved by the grief of Priam in the tent of Achilles, or of Othello in the death-chamber of Desdemona.

Page 302

'Le Lys dans la vallee' has been pronounced by an able French critic to be the worst novel he knows; but as a study of more or less ethereal and slightly morbid love it is characterized by remarkable power. Its heroine, Madame Mortsau, tied to a nearly insane husband and pursued by a sentimental lover, undergoes tortures of conscience through an agonizing sense of half-failure in her duty. Balzac himself used to cite her when he was charged with not being able to draw a pure woman; but he has created nobler types. The other stories of the group are also decidedly more interesting. The distress of the abbe Birotteau over his landlady's treatment, and the intrigues of the abbe Troubert ('Le Cure de Tours') absorb us as completely as the career of Caesar himself in Mommsen's famous chapter. The woes of the little orphan subjected to the tyranny of her selfish aunt and uncle ('Pierrette'), the struggles of the rapacious heirs for the Mirouet fortune ('Ursule Mirouet,') a story which gives us one of Balzac's purest women, treats interestingly of mesmerism (and may be read without fear by the young), the siege of *Mlle. Cormon's* mature affections by her two adroit suitors ('Une Vielle fille'), the intrigues against the peace of the d'Esgrignons and the sublime devotion to their interests of the notary Chesnel ('Le Cabinet des antiques'), and finally the ignoble passions that fought themselves out around the senile Jean Jacques Rouget, under the direction of the diabolical ex-soldier Philippe Brideau ('La Rabouilleuse,' sometimes entitled 'Un Menage de Garcon'), form the absorbing central themes of a group of novels—or rather stories, for few of them attain considerable length—unrivalled in the annals of realistic fiction.

The 'Scenes of Country Life,' comprising 'Les Paysans,' 'Le Medecin de campagne,' and 'Le Cure de village' (The Village Priest), take high rank among their author's works. Where Balzac might have been crudely naturalistic, he has preferred to be either realistic as in the first named admirable novel, or idealistic as in the two latter. Hence he has created characters like the country physician, Doctor Benassis, almost as great a boon to the world of readers as that philanthropist himself was to the little village of his adoption. If Madame Graslin of 'Le Cure de village' fails to reach the height of Benassis, her career has at least a sensational interest which his lacked; and the country curate, the good abbe Bonnet, surely makes up for her lack on the ideal side. This story, by the way, is important for the light it throws on the workings of the Roman Church among the common people; and the description of Madame Graslin's death is one of Balzac's most effective pieces of writing.

Page 303

We are now brought to the 'Parisian Scenes,' and with the exception of 'Eugenie Grandet,' to the best-known masterpieces. There are twenty titles; but as two of these are collective in character, the number of novels and stories amounts to twenty-four, as follows:—'Le Pere Goriot,' 'Illusions perdues,' 'Splendeurs et miseres des courtisanes,' 'Les Secrets de la princesse de Cadignan' (The Secrets of the Princess of Cadignan), 'Histoire des treize' [containing 'Ferragus,' 'La Duchesse de Langeais,' and 'La Fille aux yeux d'or' (The Girl with the Golden Eyes)], 'Sarrasine,' 'Le Colonel Chabert,' 'L'Interdiction' (The Interdiction), 'Les Parents pauvres' (Poor Relations, including 'La Cousine Bette' and 'Le Cousin Pons'), 'La Messe de l'athee' (The Atheist's Mass), 'Facino Cane,' 'Gobseck,' 'La Maison Nucingen,' 'Un Prince de la Boheme' (A Prince of Bohemia), 'Esquisse d'homme d'affaires' (Sketch of a Business man), 'Gaudissart II.' 'Les Comediens sans le savoir' (The Unconscious Humorists), 'Les Employes' (The Employees), 'Histoire de Cesar Birotteau,' and 'Les Petits bourgeois' (Little Bourgeois). Of these twenty-four titles six belong to novels, five of which are of great power, nine to novelettes and short stories too admirable to be passed over without notice, eight to novelettes and stories of interest and value which need not, however, detain us, and one, 'Les Petits bourgeois,' to a novel of much promise unfortunately left incomplete. 'Les Secrets de la princesse de Cadignan' is remarkable chiefly as a study of the blind passion that often overtakes a man of letters. Daniel d'Arthez, the author, a fine character and a favorite with Balzac, succumbs to the wiles of the Princess of Cadignan (formerly the dashing and fascinating Duchesse de Maufrigneuse) and is happy in his subjection. The 'Histoire des treize' contains three novelettes, linked together through the fact that in each a band of thirteen young men, sworn to assist one another in conquering society, play an important part. This volume is the most frankly sensational of Balzac's works. 'La Duchesse de Langeais' however, is more than sensational: it gives perhaps Balzac's best description of the Faubourg St. Germain and one of his ablest analyses of feminine character, while in the description of General Montriveau's recognition of the Duchess in the Spanish convent the novelist's dramatic power is seen at its highest. 'La Fille aux yeux d'or,' which concludes the volume devoted to the mysterious brotherhood, may be considered, with 'Sarrasine,' one of the dark closets of the great building known as the 'Comedie humaine.' Both stories deal with unnatural passions, and the first is one of Balzac's most effective compositions. For sheer voluptuousness of style there is little in literature to parallel the description of the boudoir of the uncanny heroine. Very different from these stories is 'Le Colonel Chabert,' the record of the misfortunes of one of Napoleon's heroic

Page 304

soldiers, who after untold hardships returns to France to find his wife married a second time and determined to deny his existence. The law is invoked, but the treachery of the wife induces the noble old man to put an end to the proceedings, after which he sinks into an indigent and pathetic senility. Balzac has never drawn a more heart-moving figure, nor has he ever sounded more thoroughly the depths of human selfishness. But the description of the battle of Eylau and of Chabert's sufferings in retreat would alone suffice to make the story memorable. 'L'Interdiction' is the proper pendant to the history of this unfortunate soldier. In it another husband, the Marquis d'Espard, suffers from the selfishness of his wife, one of the worst characters in the range of Balzac's fiction. That she may keep him from alienating his property to discharge a moral obligation she endeavors to prove him insane. The legal complications which ensue bring forward one of Balzac's great figures, the judge of instruction, Popinot; but to appreciate him the reader must go to the marvelous book itself. 'Gobseck' is a study of a Parisian usurer, almost worthy of a place beside the description of old Grandet; while 'Les Employes' is a realistic study of bureaucratic life, which, besides showing a wonderful familiarity with the details of a world of which Balzac had little personal experience, contains several admirably drawn characters and a sufficient amount of incident. But it is time to leave these sketches and novels in miniature, and to pass by the less important 'Scenes' of this fascinating Parisian life, in order to consider in some detail the five novels of consummate power.

First of these in date of composition, and in popular estimation at least among English readers, comes, 'Le Pere Goriot.' It is certainly trite to call the book a French "Lear," but the expression emphasizes the supreme artistic power that could treat the *motif* of one of Shakespeare's plays in a manner that never forces a disadvantageous comparison with the great tragedy. The retired vermicelli-maker is not as grand a figure as the doting King of Britain, but he is as real. The French daughters, Anastasie, Countess de Restaud, and Delphine, Baroness de Nucingen, are not such types of savage wickedness as Regan and Goneril, but they fit the nineteenth century as well as the British princesses did their more barbarous day. Yet there is no Cordelia in 'Le Pere Goriot,' for the pale Victorine Taillefer cannot fill the place of that noblest of daughters. This is but to say that Balzac's bourgeois tragedy lacks that element of the noble that every great poetic tragedy must have. The self-immolation of old Goriot to the cold-hearted ambitions of his daughters is not noble, but his parental passion touches the infinite, and so proves the essential kinship of his creator with the creator of Lear. This touch of the infinite, as in 'Eugenie Grandet,' lifts the book up from the level of a merely masterly study of characters

Page 305

or a merely powerful novel to that of the supreme masterpieces of human genius. The marvelously lifelike description of the vulgar Parisian boarding-house, the fascinating delineation of the character of that king of convicts, Vautrin, and the fine analysis of the ambitions of Rastignac (who comes nearer perhaps to being *the* hero of the 'Comedie humaine' than any other of its characters, and is here presented to us at the threshold of his successful career) remain in the memory of every reader, but would never alone have sufficed to make Balzac's name worthy of immortality. The infinite quality of Goriot's passion would, however, have conferred this honor on his creator had he never written another book.

'Illusions perdues' and 'Splendeurs et miseres des courtisanes' might almost be regarded as one novel in seven parts. More than any other of his works they show the sun of Balzac's genius at its meridian. Nowhere else does he give us plots so absorbing, nowhere else does he bring us so completely in contact with the world his imagination has peopled. The first novel devotes two of its parts to the provinces and one to Paris. The provincial stories centre around two brothers-in-law, David Sechard and Lucien de Rubempre, types of the practical and the artistic intellect respectively. David, after struggling for fame and fortune, succumbs and finds his recompense in the love of his wife Eve, Lucien's sister, one of Balzac's noble women. Lucien, on the other hand, after some provincial successes as a poet, tries the great world of Paris, yields to its temptations, fails ignominiously, and attempts suicide, but is rescued by the great Vautrin, who has escaped from prison and is about to renew his war on society disguised as a Spanish priest. Vautrin has conceived the idea that as he can take no part in society, he will have a representative in it and taste its pleasures through him. Lucien accepts this disgraceful position and plunges once more into the vortex, supported by the strong arm of the king of the convicts. His career and that of his patron form the subject of the four parts of the 'Splendeurs et miseres' and are too complicated to be described here. Suffice it to say that probably nowhere else in fiction are the novel of character and the novel of incident so splendidly combined; and certainly nowhere else in the range of his work does Balzac so fully display all his master qualities. That the story is sensational cannot be denied, but it is at least worthy of being called the Iliad of Crime. Nemesis waits upon both Lucien and Vautrin, and upon the poor courtesan Esther whom they entrap in their toils, and when the two former are at last in custody, Lucien commits suicide. Vautrin baffles his acute judge in a wonderful interview; but with his cherished hope cut short by Lucien's death, finally gives up the struggle. Here the novel might have ended; yet Balzac adds a fourth part, in order to complete the career of Vautrin. The famous convict is transformed into a government spy, and engages to use his immense power against his former comrades and in defense of the society he has hitherto warred upon. The artistic propriety of this transformation may be questioned, but not the power and interest of the novel of which it is the finishing touch.

Page 306

Many readers would put the companion novels 'La Cousine Bette' and 'Le Cousin Pons' at the head of Balzac's works. They have not the infinite pathos of 'Le Pere Goriot,' or the superb construction of the first three parts of the 'Splendeurs et miseres,' but for sheer strength the former at least is unsurpassed in fiction. Never before or since have the effects of vice in dragging down a man below the level of the lowest brute been so portrayed as in Baron Hulot; never before or since has female depravity been so illustrated as in the diabolical career of Valerie Marneffe, probably the worst woman in fiction. As for Cousine Bette herself, and her power to breed mischief and crime, it suffices to say that she is worthy of a place beside the two chief characters.

'Le Cousin Pons' is a very different book; one which, though pathetic in the extreme, may be safely recommended to the youngest reader. The hero who gives his name to the story is an old musician who has worn out his welcome among his relations, but who becomes an object of interest to them when they learn that his collection of bric-a-brac is valuable and that he is about to die. The intrigues that circulate around this collection and the childlike German, Schmucke, to whom Pons has bequeathed it, are described as only the author of 'Le Cure de Tours' could have succeeded in doing; but the book contains also an almost perfect description of the ideal friendship existing between Pons and Schmucke. One remembers them longer than one does Frazier, the scoundrelly advocate who cheats poor Schmucke; a fact which should be cited against those who urge that Balzac is at home with his vicious characters only.

The last novel of this group, 'Cesar Birotteau,' is the least powerful, though not perhaps the least popular. It is an excellent study of bourgeois life, and therefore fills an important place in the scheme of the 'Comedy,' describing as it does the spreading ambitions of a rich but stupid perfumer, and containing an admirable study of bankruptcy. It may be dismissed with the remark that around the innocent Caesar surge most of the scoundrels that figure in the 'Comedie humaine,' and with the regret that it should have been completed while the far more powerful 'Les Petits bourgeois' was left unfinished.

We now come to the concluding parts of the 'Etudes de moeurs.' the 'Scenes' describing Political and Military Life. In the first group are five novels and stories: 'L'Envers de l'histoire contemporaine' (The Under Side of Contemporary History, a fine story, but rather social than political), 'Une Tenebreuse affaire' (A Shady Affair), 'Un Episode sous la Terreur,' 'Z. Marcas,' and 'Le Depute d'Arcis' (The Deputy of Arcis). Of these the 'Episode' is probably the most admirable, although 'Z. Marcas' has not a little strength. The 'Depute,' like 'Les Petits bourgeois,' was continued by M. Charles Rabou and a considerable part of it is not Balzac's; a fact which is to be regretted,

Page 307

since practically it is the only one of these stories that touches actual politics as the term is usually understood. The military scenes are only two in number, 'Les Chouans' and 'Une Passion dans le desert.' The former of these has been sufficiently described already; the latter is one of the best known of the short stories, but rather deserves a place beside 'La Fille aux yeux d'or.' Indeed, for Balzac's best military scenes we must go to 'Le Colonel Chabert' or to 'Adieu.'

We now pass to those subterranean chambers of the great structure we are exploring, the 'Etudes philosophiques.' They are twenty in number, four being novels, one a composite volume of tales, and the rest stories. The titles run as follows:—'La Peau de chagrin,' 'L'Elixir de longue vie' (The Elixir of Life), 'Melmoth reconcilie,' 'Le Chef-d'oeuvre inconnu' (The Anonymous Masterpiece), 'Gambara,' 'Massimila Doni,' 'Le Requisitionnaire,' 'Adieu,' 'El Verdugo,' 'Les Marana,' 'L'Auberge rouge' (The Red Inn), 'Un Drame au bord de la mer' (A Seaside Drama), 'L'Enfant maudit' (A Child Accursed) 'Maitre Cornelius' (Master Cornelius), 'Sur Catherine de Medicis,' 'La Recherche de l'absolu,' 'Louis Lambert,' 'Seraphita,' 'Les Proscrits,' and 'Jesus-Christ en Flandre.'

Of the novels, 'La Peau de chagrin' is easily first. Its central theme is the world-old conflict between the infinite desires and the finite powers of man. The hero, Raphael, is hardly, as M. Barriere asserts, on a level with Hamlet, Faust, and Manfred, but the struggle of his infinite and his finite natures is almost as intensely interesting as the similar struggles in them. The introduction of the talisman, the wild ass's skin that accomplishes all the wishes of its owner, but on condition that it is to shrink away in proportion to the intensity of those wishes, and that when it disappears the owner's life is to end, gave to the story a weird interest not altogether, perhaps, in keeping with its realistic setting, and certainly forcing a disastrous comparison with the three great poems named. But when all allowances are made, one is forced to conclude that 'La Peau de chagrin' is a novel of extraordinary power and absorbing interest; and that its description of its hero's dissipations in the libertine circles of Paris, and its portrayal of the sublime devotion of the heroine Pauline for her slowly perishing lover, are scarcely to be paralleled in literature. Far less powerful are the short stories on similar themes, entitled 'L'Elixir de longue vie,' and 'Melmoth reconcilie' (Melmoth Reconciled), which give us Balzac's rehandling of the Don Juan of Moliere and Byron, and the Melmoth of Maturin.

Page 308

Below the 'Peau de chagrin,' but still among its author's best novels, should be placed 'La Recherche de l'absolu,' which, as its title implies, describes the efforts of a chemist to "prove by chemical analysis the unity of composition of matter." In the pursuit of his philosophic will-o'-the-wisp, Balthazar Claes loses his fortune and sacrifices his noble wife and children. His madness serves, however, to bring into relief the splendid qualities of these latter; and it is just here, in its human rather than in its philosophic bearings, that the story rises to real greatness. Marguerite Claes, the daughter, is a noble heroine; and if one wishes to see how Balzac's characters and ideas suffer when treated by another though an able hand, one has but to read in conjunction with this novel the 'Maitre Guerin' of the distinguished dramatist Emile Augier. A proper pendant to this history of a noble genius perverted is 'La Confidence des Ruggieri,' the second part of that remarkable composite 'Sur Catherine de Medicis,' a book which in spite of its mixture of history, fiction, and speculative politics is one of the most suggestive of Balzac's minor productions.

Concerning 'Seraphita' and 'Louis Lambert,' the remaining novels of this series, certain noted mystics assert that they contain the essence of Balzac's genius, and at least suggest the secret of the universe. Perhaps an ordinary critic may content himself with saying that both books are remarkable proofs of their author's power, and that the former is notable for its marvelous descriptions of Norwegian scenery.

Of the lesser members of the philosophic group, nearly all are admirable in their kind and degree. 'Le Chef-d'oeuvre inconnu' and 'Gambara' treat of the pains of the artistic life and temperament. 'Massimila Doni,' like 'Gambara,' treats of music, but also gives a brilliant picture of Venetian life. 'Le requisitionnaire,' perhaps the best of Balzac's short stories, deals with the phenomenon of second sight, as 'Adieu' does with that of mental alienation caused by a sudden shock. 'Les Marana' is an absorbing study of the effects of heredity; 'L'Auberge rouge' is an analysis of remorse, as is also 'Un Drame au bord de la mer'; while 'L'Enfant maudit' is an analysis of the effects of extreme sensibility, especially as manifested in the passion of poetic love. Finally, 'Maitre Cornelius' is a study of avarice, in which is set a remarkable portrait of Louis XI.; 'Les Proscrits' is a masterly sketch of the exile of Dante at Paris; and 'Jesus-Christ en Flandre' is an exquisite allegory, the most delicate flower, perhaps, of Balzac's genius.

Page 309

It remains only to say a few words about the third division of the 'Comedie humaine,' viz., the 'Etudes analytiques.' Only two members of the series, the 'Physiologie du mariage' and the 'Petites miseres de la vie conjugale,' were ever completed, and they are not great enough to make us regret the loss of the 'Pathology of Social Life' and the other unwritten volumes. For the two books we have are neither novels nor profound studies, neither great fiction nor great psychology. That they are worth reading for their suggestiveness with regard to such important subjects as marriage and conjugal life goes without saying, since they are Balzac's; but that they add greatly to his reputation, not even his most ardent admirer would be hardy enough to affirm.

And now in conclusion, what can one say about this great writer that will not fall far short of his deserts? Plainly, nothing, yet a few points may be accentuated with profit. We should notice in the first place that Balzac has consciously tried almost every form of prose fiction, and has been nearly always splendidly successful. In analytic studies of high, middle, and low life he has not his superior. In the novel of intrigue and sensation he is easily a master, while he succeeds at least fairly in a form of fiction at just the opposite pole from this, to wit, the idyl ('Le Lys dans la vallee'). In character sketches of extreme types, like 'Gobseck,' his supremacy has long been recognized, and he is almost as powerful when he enters the world of mysticism, whither so few of us can follow him. As a writer of novelettes he is unrivaled and some of his short stories are worthy to rank with the best that his followers have produced. In the extensive use of dialect he was a pioneer; in romance he has 'La Peau de chagrin' and 'La Recherche de l'absolu' to his credit; while some of the work in the tales connected with the name of Catherine de Medici shows what he could have done in historical fiction had he continued to follow Scott. And what is true of the form of his fiction is true of its elements. Tragedy, comedy, melodrama are all within his reach; he can call up tears and shudders, laughter and smiles at will. He knows the whole range of human emotions, and he dares to penetrate into the arcana of passions almost too terrible or loathsome for literature to touch.

In style, in the larger sense of the word, he is almost equally supreme. He is the father of modern realism and remains its greatest exponent. He retains always some of the good elements of romance,—that is to say, he sees the thing as it ought to be,—and he avoids the pitfalls of naturalism, being a painter and not a photographer. In other words, like all truly great writers he never forgets his ideals; but he is too impartial to his characters and has too fast a grip on life to fall into the unrealities of sentimentalism. It is true that he lacked the spontaneity that characterized his great forerunner,

Page 310

Shakespeare, and his great contemporary, George Sand; but this loss was made up by the inevitable and impersonal character of his work when once his genius was thoroughly aroused to action. His laborious method of describing by an accumulation of details postponed the play of his powers, which are at their height in the action of his characters; yet sooner or later the inert masses of his composition were fused into a burning whole. But if Balzac is primarily a dramatist in the creation and manipulation of his characters, he is also a supreme painter in his presentation of scenes. And what characters and what scenes has he not set before us! Over two thousand personages move through the 'Comedie humaine,' whose biographies MM. Cerfberr and Christophe have collected for us in their admirable 'Repertoire de la comedie humaine,' and whose chief types M. Paul Flat has described in the first series of his 'Essais sur Balzac.' Some of these personages are of course shadowy; but an amazingly large number live for us as truly as Shakespeare's heroes and heroines do. Nor will any one who has trod the streets of Balzac's Paris, or spent the summer with him at the chateau des Aigues ('Les Paysans'), or in the beautiful valleys of Touraine, ever forget the master's pictures.

Yet the Balzac who with intangible materials created living and breathing men and women and unfading scenes, has been accused of vitiating the French language and has been denied the possession of verbal style. On this point French critics must give the final verdict; but a foreigner may cite Taine's defense of that style, and maintain that most of the liberties taken by Balzac with his native language were forced on him by the novel and far-reaching character of his work. Nor should it be forgotten that he was capable at times of almost perfect passages of description, and that he rarely confounded, as novelists are too apt to do, the provinces of poetry and prose.

But one might write a hundred essays on Balzac and not exhaust him. One might write a volume on his women, a volume to refute the charge that his bad men are better drawn than his good, a volume to discuss Mr. Henry James's epigrammatic declaration that a five-franc piece may be fairly called the protagonist of the 'Comedie humaine.' In short one might go on defending and praising and even criticizing Balzac for a lifetime, and be little further advanced than when one began; for to criticize Balzac, is it not to criticize life itself?

[Illustration: Signature W.P. Trent]

THE MEETING IN THE CONVENT

From 'The Duchess of Langeais'

I

Page 311

In a Spanish town on an island of the Mediterranean there is a convent of the Barefooted Carmelites, where the rule of the Order instituted by Saint Theresa is still kept with the primitive rigor of the reformation brought about by that illustrious woman. Extraordinary as this fact may seem, it is true. Though the monasteries of the Peninsula and those of the Continent were nearly all destroyed or broken up by the outburst of the French Revolution and the turmoil of the Napoleonic wars, yet on this island, protected by the British fleets, the wealthy convent and its peaceful inmates were sheltered from the dangers of change and general spoliation. The storms from all quarters which shook the first fifteen years of the nineteenth century subsided ere they reached this lonely rock near the coast of Andalusia. If the name of the great Emperor echoed fitfully upon its shores, it may be doubted whether the fantastic march of his glory or the flaming majesty of his meteoric life ever reached the comprehension of those saintly women kneeling in their distant cloister.

A conventual rigor, which was never relaxed, gave to this haven a special place in the thoughts and history of the Catholic world. The purity of its rule drew to its shelter from different parts of Europe sad women, whose souls, deprived of human ties, longed for the death in life which they found here in the bosom of God. No other convent was so fitted to wean the heart and teach it that aloofness from the things of this world which the religious life imperatively demands. On the Continent may be found a number of such Houses, nobly planned to meet the wants of their sacred purpose. Some are buried in the depths of solitary valleys; others hang, as it were, in mid-air above the hills, clinging to the mountain slopes or projecting from the verge of precipices. On all sides man has sought out the poesy of the infinite, the solemnity of silence: he has sought God; and on the mountain-tops, in the abysmal depths, among the caverned cliffs he has found Him. Yet nowhere as on this European islet, half African though it be, can he find such differing harmonies all blending to lift the soul and quell its springs of anguish; to cool its fevers, and give to the sorrows of life a bed of rest.

The monastery is built at the extremity of the island at its highest part, where the rock by some convulsion of Nature has been rent sharply down to the sea, and presents at all points keen angles and edges, slightly eaten away at the water-line by the action of the waves, but insurmountable to all approach. The rock is also protected from assault by dangerous reefs running far out from its base, over which frolic the blue waters of the Mediterranean. It is only from the sea that the visitor can perceive the four principal parts of the square structure, which adheres minutely as to shape, height, and the piercing of its windows to the prescribed laws of monastic architecture.

Page 312

On the side towards the town the church hides the massive lines of the cloister, whose roof is covered with large tiles to protect it from winds and storms, and also from the fierce heat of the sun. The church, the gift of a Spanish family, looks down upon the town and crowns it. Its bold yet elegant facade gives a noble aspect to the little maritime city. Is it not a picture of terrestrial sublimity? See the tiny town with clustering roofs, rising like an amphitheatre from the picturesque port upward to the noble Gothic frontal of the church, from which spring the slender shafts of the bell-towers with their pointed finials: religion dominating life: offering to man the end and the way of living,—image of a thought altogether Spanish. Place this scene upon the bosom of the Mediterranean beneath an ardent sky; plant it with palms whose waving fronds mingle their green life with the sculptured leafage of the immutable architecture; look at the white fringes of the sea as it runs up the reef and they sparkle upon the sapphire of its wave; see the galleries and the terraces built upon the roofs of houses, where the inhabitants come at eve to breathe the flower-scented air as it rises through the tree-tops from their little gardens. Below, in the harbor, are the white sails. The serenity of night is coming on; listen to the notes of the organ, the chant of evening orisons, the echoing bells of the ships at sea: on all sides sound and peace,—oftenest peace.

Within the church are three naves, dark and mysterious. The fury of the winds evidently forbade the architect to build out lateral buttresses, such as adorn all other cathedrals, and between which little chapels are usually constructed. Thus the strong walls which flank the lesser naves shed no light into the building. Outside, their gray masses are shored up from point to point by enormous beams. The great nave and its two small lateral galleries are lighted solely by the rose-window of stained glass, which pierces with miraculous art the wall above the great portal, whose fortunate exposure permits a wealth of tracery and dentellated stone-work belonging to that order of architecture miscalled Gothic.

The greater part of the three naves is given up to the inhabitants of the town who come to hear Mass and the Offices of the Church. In front of the choir is a latticed screen, within which brown curtains hang in ample folds, slightly parted in the middle to give a limited view of the altar and the officiating priest. The screen is divided at intervals by pillars that hold up a gallery within the choir which contains the organ. This construction, in harmony with the rest of the building, continues, in sculptured wood, the little columns of the lateral galleries which are supported by the pillars of the great nave. Thus it is impossible for the boldest curiosity, if any such should dare to mount the narrow balustrade of these galleries, to see farther into the choir than the octagonal stained windows which pierce the apse behind the high altar.

Page 313

At the time of the French expedition into Spain for the purpose of re-establishing the authority of Ferdinand VII., and after the fall of Cadiz, a French general who was sent to the island to obtain its recognition of the royal government prolonged his stay upon it that he might reconnoitre the convent and gain, if possible, admittance there. The enterprise was a delicate one. But a man of passion,—a man whose life had been, so to speak, a series of poems in action, who had lived romances instead of writing them; above all a man of deeds,—might well be tempted by a project apparently so impossible. To open for himself legally the gates of a convent of women! The Pope and the Metropolitan Archbishop would scarcely sanction it. Should he use force or artifice? In case of failure was he not certain to lose his station and his military future, besides missing his aim? The Duc d'Angouleme was still in Spain; and of all the indiscretions which an officer in favor with the commander-in-chief could commit, this alone would be punished without pity. The general had solicited his present mission for the purpose of following up a secret hope, albeit no hope was ever so despairing. This last effort, however, was a matter of conscience. The house of these Barefooted Carmelites was the only Spanish convent which had escaped his search. While crossing from the mainland, a voyage which took less than an hour, a strong presentiment of success had seized his heart. Since then, although he had seen nothing of the convent but its walls, nothing of the nuns, not so much as their brown habit; though he had heard only the echoes of their chanted liturgies,—he had gathered from those walls and from these chants faint indications that seemed to justify his fragile hope. Slight as the auguries thus capriciously awakened might be, no human passion was ever more violently roused than the curiosity of this French general. To the heart there are no insignificant events; it magnifies all things; it puts in the same balance the fall of an empire and the fall of a woman's glove,—and oftentimes the glove outweighs the empire. But let us give the facts in their actual simplicity: after the facts will come the feelings.

An hour after the expedition had landed on the island the royal authority was re-established. A few Spaniards who had taken refuge there after the fall of Cadiz embarked on a vessel which the general allowed them to charter for their voyage to London. There was thus neither resistance nor reaction. This little insular restoration could not, however, be accomplished without a Mass, at which both companies of the troops were ordered to be present. Not knowing the rigor of the Carmelite rule, the general hoped to gain in the church some information about the nuns who were immured in the convent, one of whom might be a being dearer to him than life, more precious even than honor. His hopes were at first cruelly disappointed. Mass was celebrated with the utmost pomp. In honor of this solemn occasion the curtains which habitually hid the choir were drawn aside, and gave to view the rich ornaments, the priceless pictures, and the shrines incrusting with jewels whose brilliancy surpassed that of the votive offerings fastened by the mariners of the port to the pillars of the great nave. The nuns, however, had retired to the seclusion of the organ gallery.

Page 314

Yet in spite of this check, and while the Mass of thanksgiving was being sung, suddenly and secretly the drama widened into an interest as profound as any that ever moved the heart of man. The Sister who played the organ roused an enthusiasm so vivid that not one soldier present regretted the order which had brought him to the church. The men listened to the music with pleasure; the officers were carried away by it. As for the general, he remained to all appearance calm and cold: the feelings with which he heard the notes given forth by the nun are among the small number of earthly things whose expression is withheld from impotent human speech, but which—like death, like God, like eternity—can be perceived only at their slender point of contact with the heart of man. By a strange chance the music of the organ seemed to be that of Rossini,—a composer who more than any other has carried human passion into the art of music, and whose works by their number and extent will some day inspire an Homeric respect. From among the scores of this fine genius the nun seemed to have chiefly studied that of Moses in Egypt; doubtless because the feelings of sacred music are there carried to the highest pitch. Perhaps these two souls—one so gloriously European, the other unknown—had met together in some intuitive perception of the same poetic thought. This idea occurred to two officers now present, true *dilettanti*, who no doubt keenly regretted the Theatre Favart in their Spanish exile. At last, at the Te Deum, it was impossible not to recognize a French soul in the character which the music suddenly took on. The triumph of his Most Christian Majesty evidently roused to joy the heart of that cloistered nun. Surely she was a Frenchwoman. Presently the patriotic spirit burst forth, sparkling like a jet of light through the antiphonals of the organ, as the Sister recalled melodies breathing the delicacy of Parisian taste, and blended them with vague memories of our national anthems. Spanish hands could not have put into this graceful homage paid to victorious arms the fire that thus betrayed the origin of the musician.

“France is everywhere!” said a soldier.

The general left the church during the Te Deum; it was impossible for him to listen to it. The notes of the musician revealed to him a woman loved to madness; who had buried herself so deeply in the heart of religion, hid herself so carefully away from the sight of the world, that up to this time she had escaped the keen search of men armed not only with immense power, but with great sagacity and intelligence. The hopes which had wakened in the general's heart seemed justified as he listened to the vague echo of a tender and melancholy air, 'La Fleuve du Tage,'—a ballad whose prelude he had often heard in Paris in the boudoir of the woman he loved, and which this nun now used to express, amid the joys of the conquerors, the suffering of an exiled heart. Terrible moment! to long for the resurrection of a lost love; to find that love—still lost; to meet it mysteriously after five years in which passion, exasperated by the void, had been intensified by the useless efforts made to satisfy it.

Page 315

Who is there that has not, once at least in his life, upturned everything about him, his papers and his receptacles, taxing his memory impatiently as he seeks some precious lost object; and then felt the ineffable pleasure of finding it after days consumed in the search, after hoping and despairing of its recovery,—spending upon some trifle an excitement of mind almost amounting to a passion? Well, stretch this fury of search through five long years; put a woman, a heart, a love in the place of the insignificant trifle; lift the passion into the highest realms of feeling; and then picture to yourself an ardent man, a man with the heart of lion and the front of Jove, one of those men who command, and communicate to those about them, respectful terror,—you will then understand the abrupt departure of the general during the *Te Deum*, at the moment when the prelude of an air, once heard in Paris with delight under gilded ceilings, vibrated through the dark naves of the church by the sea.

He went down the hilly street which led up to the convent, without pausing until the sonorous echoes of the organ could no longer reach his ear. Unable to think of anything but of the love that like a volcanic eruption rent his heart, the French general only perceived that the *Te Deum* was ended when the Spanish contingent poured from the church. He felt that his conduct and appearance were open to ridicule, and he hastily resumed his place at the head of the cavalcade, explaining to the *alcalde* and to the governor of the town that a sudden indisposition had obliged him to come out into the air. Then it suddenly occurred to him to use the pretext thus hastily given, as a means of prolonging his stay on the island. Excusing himself on the score of increased illness, he declined to preside at the banquet given by the authorities of the island to the French officers, and took to his bed, after writing to the major-general that a passing illness compelled him to turn over his command to the colonel. This commonplace artifice, natural as it was, left him free from all duties and able to seek the fulfilment of his hopes. Like a man essentially Catholic and monarchical, he inquired the hours of the various services, and showed the utmost interest in the duties of religion,—a piety which in Spain excited no surprise.

II

The following day, while the soldiers were embarking, the general went up to the convent to be present at vespers. He found the church deserted by the townspeople, who in spite of their natural devotion were attracted to the port by the embarkation of the troops. The Frenchman, glad to find himself alone in the church, took pains to make the clink of his spurs resound through the vaulted roof; he walked noisily, and coughed, and spoke aloud to himself, hoping to inform the nuns, but especially the Sister at the organ, that if the French soldiers were departing, one at least remained behind. Was this singular

Page 316

method of communication heard and understood? The general believed it was. In the Magnificat the organ seemed to give an answer which came to him in the vibrations of the air. The soul of the nun floated towards him on the wings of the notes she touched, quivering with the movements of the sound. The music burst forth with power; it glorified the church. This hymn of joy, consecrated by the sublime liturgy of Roman Christianity to the uplifting of the soul in presence of the splendors of the ever-living God, became the utterance of a heart terrified at its own happiness in presence of the splendors of a perishable love, which still lived, and came to move it once more beyond the tomb where this woman had buried herself, to rise again the bride of Christ.

The organ is beyond all question the finest, the most daring, the most magnificent of the instruments created by human genius. It is an orchestra in itself, from which a practiced hand may demand all things; for it expresses all things. Is it not, as it were, a coign of vantage, where the soul may poise itself ere it springs into space, bearing, as it flies, the listening mind through a thousand scenes of life towards the infinite which parts earth from heaven? The longer a poet listens to its gigantic harmonies, the more fully will he comprehend that between kneeling humanity and the God hidden by the dazzling rays of the Holy of Holies, the hundred voices of terrestrial choirs can alone bridge the vast distance and interpret to Heaven the prayers of men in all the omnipotence of their desires, in the diversities of their woe, with the tints of their meditations and their ecstasies, with the impetuous spring of their repentance, and the thousand imaginations of their manifold beliefs. Yes! beneath these soaring vaults the harmonies born of the genius of sacred things find a yet unheard-of grandeur, which adorns and strengthens them. Here the dim light, the deep silence, the voices alternating with the solemn tones of the organ, seem like a veil through which the luminous attributes of God himself pierce and radiate. Yet all these sacred riches now seem flung like a grain of incense on the frail altar of an earthly love, in presence of the eternal throne of a jealous and avenging Deity. The joy of the nun had not the gravity which properly belongs to the solemnity of the Magnificat. She gave to the music rich and graceful modulations, whose rhythms breathed of human gayety; her measures ran into the brilliant cadences of a great singer striving to express her love, and the notes rose buoyantly like the carol of a bird by the side of its mate. At moments she darted back into the past, as if to sport there or to weep there for an instant. Her changing moods had something discomposed about them, like the agitations of a happy woman rejoicing at the return of her lover. Then, as these supple strains of passionate emotion ceased, the soul that spoke returned upon itself; the musician passed from the major to

Page 317

the minor key, and told her hearer the story of her present. She revealed to him her long melancholy, the slow malady of her moral being,—every day a feeling crushed, every night a thought subdued, hour by hour a heart burning down to ashes. After soft modulations the music took on slowly, tint by tint, the hue of deepest sadness. Soon it poured forth in echoing torrents the well-springs of grief, till suddenly the higher notes struck clear like the voice of angels, as if to tell to her lost love—lost, but not forgotten—that the reunion of their souls must be in heaven, and only there: hope most precious! Then came the Amen. In that no joy, no tears, nor sadness, nor regrets, but a return to God. The last chord that sounded was grave, solemn, terrible. The musician revealed the nun in the garb of her vocation; and as the thunder of the basses rolled away, causing the hearer to shudder through his whole being, she seemed to sink into the tomb from which for a brief moment she had risen. As the echoes slowly ceased to vibrate along the vaulted roofs, the church, made luminous by the music, fell suddenly into profound obscurity.

The general, carried away by the course of this powerful genius, had followed her, step by step, along her way. He comprehended in their full meaning the pictures that gleamed through that burning symphony; for him those chords told all. For him, as for the Sister, this poem of sound was the future, the past, the present. Music, even the music of an opera, is it not to tender and poetic souls, to wounded and suffering hearts, a text which they interpret as their memories need? If the heart of a poet must be given to a musician, must not poetry and love be listeners ere the great musical works of art are understood? Religion, love, and music: are they not the triple expression of one fact, the need of expansion, the need of touching with their own infinite the infinite beyond them, which is in the fibre of all noble souls? These three forms of poesy end in God, who alone can unwind the knot of earthly emotion. Thus this holy human trinity joins itself to the holiness of God, of whom we make to ourselves no conception unless we surround him by the fires of love and the golden cymbals of music and light and harmony.

The French general divined that on this desert rock, surrounded by the surging seas, the nun had cherished music to free her soul of the excess of passion that consumed it. Did she offer her love as a homage to God? Did the love triumph over the vows she had made to Him? Questions difficult to answer. But, beyond all doubt, the lover had found in a heart dead to the world a love as passionate as that which burned within his own.

Page 318

When vespers ended he returned to the house of the alcalde, where he was quartered. Giving himself over, a willing prey, to the delights of a success long expected, laboriously sought, his mind at first could dwell on nothing else,—he was still loved. Solitude had nourished the love of that heart, just as his own had thriven on the barriers, successively surmounted, which this woman had placed between herself and him. This ecstasy of the spirit had its natural duration; then came the desire to see this woman, to withdraw her from God, to win her back to himself,—a bold project, welcome to a bold man. After the evening repast, he retired to his room to escape questions and think in peace, and remained plunged in deep meditation throughout the night. He rose early and went to Mass. He placed himself close to the latticed screen, his brow touching the brown curtain. He longed to rend it away; but he was not alone, his host had accompanied him, and the least imprudence might compromise the future of his love and ruin his new-found hopes. The organ was played, but not by the same hand; the musician of the last two days was absent from its key-board. All was chill and pale to the general. Was his mistress worn out by the emotions which had wellnigh broken down his own vigorous heart? Had she so truly shared and comprehended his faithful and eager love that she now lay exhausted and dying in her cell? At the moment when such thoughts as these rose in the general's mind, he heard beside him the voice beloved; he knew the clear ring of its tones. The voice, slightly changed by a tremor which gave it the timid grace and modesty of a young girl, detached itself from the volume of song, like the voice of a prima donna in the harmonies of her final notes. It gave to the ear an impression like the effect to the eye of a fillet of silver or gold threading a dark frieze. It was indeed she! Still Parisian, she had not lost her gracious charm, though she had forsaken the coronet and adornments of the world for the frontlet and serge of a Carmelite. Having revealed her love the night before in the praises addressed to the Lord of all, she seemed now to say to her lover:—"Yes, it is I: I am here. I love forever; yet I am aloof from love. Thou shalt hear me; my soul shall enfold thee; but I must stay beneath the brown shroud of this choir, from which no power can tear me. Thou canst not see me."

"It is she!" whispered the general to himself, as he raised his head and withdrew his hands from his face; for he had not been able to bear erect the storm of feeling that shook his heart as the voice vibrated through the arches and blended with the murmur of the waves. A storm raged without, yet peace was within the sanctuary. The rich voice still caressed the ear, and fell like balm upon the parched heart of the lover; it flowered in the air about him, from which he breathed the emanations of her spirit exhaling her love through the aspirations of its prayer.

Page 319

The alcalde came to rejoin his guest, and found him bathed in tears at the elevation of the Host which was chanted by the nun. Surprised to find such devotion in a French officer, he invited the confessor of the convent to join them at supper, and informed the general, to whom no news had ever given such pleasure, of what he had done. During the supper the general made the confessor the object of much attention, and thus confirmed the Spaniards in the high opinion they had formed of his piety. He inquired with grave interest the number of the nuns, and asked details about the revenues of the convent and its wealth, with the air of a man who politely wished to choose topics which occupied the mind of the good old priest. Then he inquired about the life led by the sisters. Could they go out? Could they see friends?

“Senhor,” said the venerable priest, “the rule is severe. If the permission of our Holy Father must be obtained before a woman can enter a house of Saint Bruno [the Chartreux] the like rule exists here. It is impossible for any man to enter a convent of the Bare-footed Carmelites, unless he is a priest delegated by the archbishop for duty in the House. No nun can go out. It is true, however, that the Great Saint, Mother Theresa, did frequently leave her cell. A Mother-superior can alone, under authority of the archbishop, permit a nun to see her friends, especially in case of illness. As this convent is one of the chief Houses of the Order, it has a Mother-superior residing in it. We have several foreigners,—among them a Frenchwoman, Sister Theresa, the one who directs the music in the chapel.”

“Ah!” said the general, feigning surprise: “she must have been gratified by the triumph of the House of Bourbon?”

“I told them the object of the Mass; they are always rather curious.”

“Perhaps Sister Theresa has some interests in France; she might be glad to receive some news, or ask some questions?”

“I think not; or she would have spoken to me.”

“As a compatriot,” said the general, “I should be curious to see—that is, if it were possible, if the superior would consent, if—”

“At the grating, even in the presence of the reverend Mother, an interview would be absolutely impossible for any ordinary man, no matter who he was; but in favor of a liberator of a Catholic throne and our holy religion, possibly, in spite of the rigid rule of our Mother Theresa, the rule might be relaxed,” said the confessor. “I will speak about it.”

“How old is Sister Theresa?” asked the lover, who dared not question the priest about the beauty of the nun.

“She is no longer of any age,” said the good old man, with a simplicity which made the general shudder.

III

The next day, before the *siesta*, the confessor came to tell the general that Sister Theresa and the Mother-superior consented to receive him at the grating that evening before the hour of vespers. After the *siesta*, during which the Frenchman had whiled away the time by walking round the port in the fierce heat of the sun, the priest came to show him the way into the convent.

Page 320

He was guided through a gallery which ran the length of the cemetery, where fountains and trees and numerous arcades gave a cool freshness in keeping with that still and silent spot. When they reached the end of this long gallery, the priest led his companion into a parlor, divided in the middle by a grating covered with a brown curtain. On the side which we must call public, and where the confessor left the general, there was a wooden bench along one side of the wall; some chairs, also of wood, were near the grating. The ceiling was of wood, crossed by heavy beams of the evergreen oak, without ornament. Daylight came from two windows in the division set apart for the nuns, and was absorbed by the brown tones of the room; so that it barely showed the picture of the great black Christ, and those of Saint Theresa and the Blessed Virgin, which hung on the dark panels of the walls.

The feelings of the general turned, in spite of their violence, to a tone of melancholy. He grew calm in these calm precincts. Something mighty as the grave seized him beneath these chilling rafters. Was it not the eternal silence, the deep peace, the near presence of the infinite? Through the stillness came the fixed thought of the cloister,—that thought which glides through the air in the half-lights, and is in all things,—the thought unchangeable; nowhere seen, which yet grows vast to the imagination; the all-comprising phrase, *the peace of God*. It enters there, with living power, into the least religious heart. Convents of men are not easily conceivable; man seems feeble and unmanly in them. He is born to act, to fulfil a life of toil; and he escapes it in his cell. But in a monastery of women what strength to endure, and yet what touching weakness! A man may be pushed by a thousand sentiments into the depths of an abbey; he flings himself into them as from a precipice. But the woman is drawn only by one feeling; she does not unsex herself,—she espouses holiness. You may say to the man, Why did you not struggle? but to the cloistered woman life is a struggle still.

The general found in this mute parlor of the seagirt convent memories of himself. Love seldom reaches upward to solemnity; but love in the bosom of God,—is there nothing solemn there? Yes, more than a man has the right to hope for in this nineteenth century, with our manners and our customs what they are.

The general's soul was one on which such impressions act. His nature was noble enough to forget self-interest, honors, Spain, the world, or Paris, and rise to the heights of feeling roused by this unspeakable termination of his long pursuit. What could be more tragic? How many emotions held these lovers, reunited at last on this granite ledge far out at sea, yet separated by an idea, an impassable barrier. Look at this man, saying to himself, "Can I triumph over God in that heart?"

Page 321

A slight noise made him quiver. The brown curtain was drawn back; he saw in the half-light a woman standing, but her face was hidden from him by the projection of a veil, which lay in many folds upon her head. According to the rule of the Order she was clothed in the brown garb whose color has become proverbial. The general could not see the naked feet, which would have told him the frightful emaciation of her body; yet through the thick folds of the coarse robe that swathed her, his heart divined that tears and prayers and passion and solitude had wasted her away.

The chill hand of a woman, doubtless the Mother-superior, held back the curtain, and the general, examining this unwelcome witness of the interview, encountered the deep grave eyes of an old nun, very aged, whose clear, even youthful, glance belied the wrinkles that furrowed her pale face.

"Madame la duchesse," he said, in a voice shaken by emotion, to the Sister, who bowed her head, "does your companion understand French?"

"There is no duchess here," replied the nun. "You are in presence of Sister Theresa. The woman whom you call my companion is my Mother in God, my superior here below."

These words, humbly uttered by a voice that once harmonized with the luxury and elegance in which this woman had lived queen of the world of Paris, that fell from lips whose language had been of old so gay, so mocking, struck the general as if with an electric shock.

"My holy Mother speaks only Latin and Spanish," she added.

"I understand neither. Dear Antoinette, make her my excuses."

As she heard her name softly uttered by a man once so hard to her, the nun was shaken by emotion, betrayed only by the light quivering of her veil, on which the light now fully fell.

"My brother," she said, passing her sleeve beneath her veil, perhaps to wipe her eyes, "my name is Sister Theresa."

Then she turned to the Mother, and said to her in Spanish a few words which the general plainly heard. He knew enough of the language to understand it, perhaps to speak it. "My dear Mother, this gentleman presents to you his respects, and begs you to excuse him for not laying them himself at your feet; but he knows neither of the languages which you speak."

The old woman slowly bowed her head; her countenance took an expression of angelic sweetness, tempered, nevertheless, by the consciousness of her power and dignity.

“You know this gentleman?” she asked, with a piercing glance at the Sister.

“Yes, my Mother.”

“Retire to your cell, my daughter,” said the Superior in a tone of authority.

The general hastily withdrew to the shelter of the curtain, lest his face should betray the anguish these words cost him; but he fancied that the penetrating eyes of the Superior followed him even into the shadow. This woman, arbiter of the frail and fleeting joy he had won at such cost, made him afraid; he trembled, he whom a triple range of cannon could not shake.

Page 322

The duchess walked to the door, but there she turned. "My Mother," she said, in a voice horribly calm, "this Frenchman is one of my brothers."

"Remain, therefore, my daughter," said the old woman, after a pause.

The jesuitism of this answer revealed such love and such regret, that a man of less firmness than the general would have betrayed his joy in the midst of a peril so novel to him. But what value could there be in the words, looks, gestures of a love that must be hidden from the eyes of a lynx, the claws of a tiger? The Sister came back.

"You see, my brother," she said, "what I have dared to do that I might for one moment speak to you of your salvation, and tell you of the prayers which day by day my soul offers to heaven on your behalf. I have committed a mortal sin,—I have lied. How many days of penitence to wash out that lie! But I shall suffer for you. You know not, my brother, the joy of loving in heaven, of daring to avow affections that religion has purified, that have risen to the highest regions, that at last we know and feel with the soul alone. If the doctrines—if the spirit of the saint to whom we owe this refuge had not lifted me above the anguish of earth to a world, not indeed where she is, but far above my lower life, I could not have seen you now. But I can see you, I can hear you, and remain calm."

"Antoinette," said the general, interrupting these words, "suffer me to see you—you, whom I love passionately, to madness, as you once would have had me love you."

"Do not call me Antoinette, I implore you: memories of the past do me harm. See in me only the Sister Theresa, a creature trusting all to the divine pity. And," she added, after a pause, "subdue yourself, my brother. Our Mother would separate us instantly if your face betrayed earthly passions, or your eyes shed tears."

The general bowed his head, as if to collect himself; when he again lifted his eyes to the grating he saw between two bars the pale, emaciated, but still ardent face of the nun. Her complexion, where once had bloomed the loveliness of youth,—where once there shone the happy contrast of a pure, clear whiteness with the colors of a Bengal rose,—now had the tints of a porcelain cup through which a feeble light showed faintly. The beautiful hair of which this woman was once so proud was shaven; a white band bound her brows and was wrapped around her face. Her eyes, circled with dark shadows due to the austerities of her life, glanced at moments with a feverish light, of which their habitual calm was but the mask. In a word, of this woman nothing remained but her soul.

Page 323

"Ah! you will leave this tomb—you, who are my life! You belonged to me; you were not free to give yourself—not even to God. Did you not promise to sacrifice all to the least of my commands? Will you now think me worthy to claim that promise, if I tell you what I have done for your sake? I have sought you through the whole world. For five years you have been the thought of every instant, the occupation of every hour, of my life. My friends—friends all-powerful as you know—have helped me to search the convents of France, Spain, Italy, Sicily, America. My love has deepened with every fruitless search. Many a long journey I have taken on a false hope. I have spent my life and the strong beatings of my heart about the walls of cloisters. I will not speak to you of a fidelity unlimited. What is it?—nothing compared to the infinitude of my love! If in other days your remorse was real, you cannot hesitate to follow me now."

"You forget that I am not free."

"The duke is dead," he said hastily.

Sister Theresa colored. "May Heaven receive him!" she said, with quick emotion: "he was generous to me. But I did not speak of those ties: one of my faults was my willingness to break them without scruple for you."

"You speak of your vows," cried the general, frowning. "I little thought that anything would weigh in your heart against our love. But do not fear, Antoinette; I will obtain a brief from the Holy Father which will absolve your vows. I will go to Rome; I will petition every earthly power; if God himself came down from heaven I—"

"Do not blaspheme!"

"Do not fear how God would see it! Ah! I wish I were as sure that you will leave these walls with me; that to-night—to-night, you would embark at the feet of these rocks. Let us go to find happiness! I know not where—at the ends of the earth! With me you will come back to life, to health—in the shelter of my love!"

"Do not say these things," replied the Sister; "you do not know what you now are to me. I love you better than I once loved you. I pray to God for you daily. I see you no longer with the eyes of my body. If you but knew, Armand, the joy of being able, without shame, to spend myself upon a pure love which God protects! You do not know the joy I have in calling down the blessings of heaven upon your head. I never pray for myself: God will do with me according to his will. But you—at the price of my eternity I would win the assurance that you are happy in this world, that you will be happy in another throughout the ages. My life eternal is all that misfortunes have left me to give you. I have grown old in grief; I am no longer young or beautiful. Ah! you would despise a nun who returned to be a woman; no sentiment, not even maternal love, could absolve her. What could you say to me that would shake the unnumbered reflections my heart has

made in five long years,—and which have changed it, hollowed it, withered it? Ah! I should have given something less sad to God!"

Page 324

"What can I say to you, dear Antoinette? I will say that I love you; that affection, love, true love, the joy of living in a heart all ours,—wholly ours, without one reservation,—is so rare, so difficult to find, that I once doubted you; I put you to cruel tests. But to-day I love and trust you with all the powers of my soul. If you will follow me I will listen throughout life to no voice but thine. I will look on no face—"

"Silence, Armand! you shorten the sole moments which are given to us to see each other here below."

"Antoinette! will you follow me?"

"I never leave you. I live in your heart—but with another power than that of earthly pleasure, or vanity, or selfish joy. I live here for you, pale and faded, in the bosom of God. If God is just, you will be happy."

"Phrases! you give me phrases! But if I will to have you pale and faded,—if I cannot be happy unless you are with me? What! will you forever place duties before my love? Shall I never be above all things else in your heart? In the past you put the world, or self—I know not what—above me; to-day it is God, it is my salvation. In this Sister Theresa I recognize the duchess; ignorant of the joys of love, unfeeling beneath a pretense of tenderness! You do not love me! you never loved me!—"

"Oh, my brother!—"

"You will not leave this tomb. You love my soul, you say: well! you shall destroy it forever and ever. I will kill myself—"

"My Mother!" cried the nun, "I have lied to you; this man is my lover."

The curtain fell. The general, stunned, heard the doors close with violence.

"She loves me still!" he cried, comprehending all that was revealed in the cry of the nun. "I will find means to carry her away!"

He left the island immediately, and returned to France.

Translation copyrighted by Roberts Brothers.

'AN EPISODE UNDER THE TERROR'

On the 22d of January, 1793, towards eight o'clock in the evening, an old gentlewoman came down the sharp declivity of the Faubourg Saint-Martin, which ends near the church of Saint-Laurent in Paris. Snow had fallen throughout the day, so that footfalls could be scarcely heard. The streets were deserted. The natural fear inspired by such stillness was deepened by the terror to which all France was then a prey.



The old lady had met no one. Her failing sight hindered her from perceiving in the distance a few pedestrians, sparsely scattered like shadows, along the broad road of the faubourg. She was walking bravely through the solitude as if her age were a talisman to guard her from danger; but after passing the Rue des Morts she fancied that she heard the firm, heavy tread of a man coming behind her. The thought seized her mind that she had been listening to it unconsciously for some time. Terrified at the idea of being followed, she tried to walk faster to reach a lighted shop-window, and settle the doubt which

Page 325

thus assailed her. When well beyond the horizontal rays of light thrown across the pavement, she turned abruptly and saw a human form looming through the fog. The indistinct glimpse was enough. She staggered for an instant under the weight of terror, for she no longer doubted that this unknown man had tracked her, step by step, from her home. The hope of escaping such a spy lent strength to her feeble limbs. Incapable of reasoning, she quickened her steps to a run, as if it were possible to escape a man necessarily more agile than she. After running for a few minutes, she reached the shop of a pastry-cook, entered it, and fell, rather than sat, down on a chair which stood before the counter.

As she lifted the creaking latch of the door, a young woman, who was at work on a piece of embroidery, looked up and recognized through the glass panes the antiquated mantle of purple silk which wrapped the old lady, and hastened to pull open a drawer, as if to take from thence something that she had to give her. The action and the expression of the young woman not only implied a wish to get rid of the stranger, as of some one most unwelcome, but she let fall an exclamation of impatience at finding the drawer empty. Then, without looking at the lady, she came rapidly from behind the counter, and went towards the back-shop to call her husband, who appeared at once.

“Where have you put —— ——?” she asked him, mysteriously, calling his attention to the old lady by a glance, and not concluding her sentence.

Although the pastry-cook could see nothing but the enormous black-silk hood circled with purple ribbons which the stranger wore, he disappeared, with a glance at his wife which seemed to say, “Do you suppose I should leave *that* on your counter?”

Surprised at the silence and immobility of her customer, the wife came forward, and was seized with a sudden movement of compassion as well as of curiosity when she looked at her. Though the complexion of the old gentlewoman was naturally livid, like that of a person vowed to secret austerities, it was easy to see that some recent alarm had spread an unusual paleness over her features. Her head-covering was so arranged as to hide the hair, whitened no doubt by age, for the cleanly collar of her dress proved that she wore no powder. The concealment of this natural adornment gave to her countenance a sort of conventual severity; but its features were grave and noble. In former days the habits and manners of people of quality were so different from those of all other classes that it was easy to distinguish persons of noble birth. The young shop-woman felt certain, therefore, that the stranger was a *ci-devant*, and one who had probably belonged to the court.

“Madame?” she said, with involuntary respect, forgetting that the title was proscribed.



The old lady made no answer. Her eyes were fixed on the glass of the shop-window, as if some alarming object were painted upon it.

Page 326

"What is the matter, *citoyenne*?" asked the master of the establishment, re-entering, and drawing the attention of his customer to a little cardboard box covered with blue paper, which he held out to her.

"It is nothing, nothing, my friends," she answered in a gentle voice, as she raised her eyes to give the man a thankful look. Seeing a phrygian cap upon his head, a cry escaped her:—"Ah! it is you who have betrayed me!"

The young woman and her husband replied by a deprecating gesture of horror which caused the unknown lady to blush, either for her harsh suspicion or from the relief of feeling it unjust.

"Excuse me," she said, with childlike sweetness. Then taking a gold *louis* from her pocket, she offered it to the pastry-cook. "Here is the sum we agreed upon," she added.

There is a poverty which poor people quickly divine. The shopkeeper and his wife looked at each other with a glance at the old lady that conveyed a mutual thought. The *louis* was doubtless her last. The hands of the poor woman trembled as she offered it, and her eyes rested upon it sadly, yet not with avarice. She seemed to feel the full extent of her sacrifice. Hunger and want were traced upon her features in lines as legible as those of timidity and ascetic habits. Her clothing showed vestiges of luxury. It was of silk, well-worn; the mantle was clean, though faded; the laces carefully darned; in short, here were the rags of opulence. The two shopkeepers, divided between pity and self-interest, began to soothe their conscience with words:—

"*Citoyenne*, you seem very feeble—"

"Would Madame like to take something?" asked the wife, cutting short her husband's speech.

"We have some very good broth," he added.

"It is so cold, perhaps Madame is chilled by her walk; but you can rest here and warm yourself."

"The devil is not so black as he is painted," cried the husband.

Won by the kind tone of these words, the old lady admitted that she had been followed by a man and was afraid of going home alone.

"Is that all?" said the man with the phrygian cap. "Wait for me, *citoyenne*."

He gave the *louis* to his wife. Then moved by a species of gratitude which slips into the shopkeeping soul when its owner receives an exorbitant price for an article of little value, he went to put on his uniform as a National guard, took his hat, slung on his



sabre, and reappeared under arms. But the wife meantime had reflected. Reflection, as often happens in many hearts, had closed the open hand of her benevolence. Uneasy, and alarmed lest her husband should be mixed up in some dangerous affair, she pulled him by the flap of his coat, intending to stop him; but the worthy man, obeying the impulse of charity, promptly offered to escort the poor lady to her home.

"It seems that the man who has given her this fright is prowling outside," said his wife nervously.

Page 327

"I am afraid he is," said the old lady, with much simplicity.

"Suppose he should be a spy. Perhaps it is a conspiracy. Don't go. Take back the box." These words, whispered in the pastry-cook's ear by the wife of his bosom, chilled the sudden compassion that had warmed him.

"Well, well, I will just say two words to the man and get rid of him," he said, opening the door and hurrying out.

The old gentlewoman, passive as a child and half paralyzed with fear, sat down again. The shopkeeper almost instantly reappeared; but his face, red by nature and still further scorched by the fires of his bakery, had suddenly turned pale, and he was in the grasp of such terror that his legs shook and his eyes were like those of a drunken man.

"Miserable aristocrat!" he cried, furiously, "do you want to cut off our heads? Go out from here; let me see your heels, and don't dare to come back; don't expect me to supply you with the means of conspiracy!"

So saying, the pastry-cook endeavored to get back the little box which the old lady had already slipped into one of her pockets. Hardly had the bold hands of the shopkeeper touched her clothing, than, preferring to encounter danger with no protection but that of God rather than lose the thing she had come to buy, she recovered the agility of youth, and sprang to the door, through which she disappeared abruptly, leaving the husband and wife amazed and trembling.

As soon as the poor lady found herself alone in the street she began to walk rapidly; but her strength soon gave way, for she once more heard the snow creaking under the footsteps of the spy as he trod heavily upon it. She was obliged to stop short: the man stopped also. She dared not speak to him, nor even look at him; either because of her terror, or from some lack of natural intelligence. Presently she continued her walk slowly; the man measured his step by hers, and kept at the same distance behind her; he seemed to move like her shadow. Nine o'clock struck as the silent couple repassed the church of Saint-Laurent. It is the nature of all souls, even the weakest, to fall back into quietude after moments of violent agitation; for manifold as our feelings may be, our bodily powers are limited. Thus the old lady, receiving no injury from her apparent persecutor, began to think that he might be a secret friend watching to protect her. She gathered up in her mind the circumstances attending other apparitions of the mysterious stranger as if to find plausible grounds for this consoling opinion, and took pleasure in crediting him with good rather than sinister intentions. Forgetting the terror he had inspired in the pastry-cook, she walked on with a firmer step towards the upper part of the Faubourg Saint-Martin.

Page 328

At the end of half an hour she reached a house standing close to the junction of the chief street of the faubourg with the street leading out to the Barriere de Pantin. The place is to this day one of the loneliest in Paris. The north wind blowing from Belleville and the Buttes Chaumont whistled among the houses, or rather cottages, scattered through the sparsely inhabited little valley, where the inclosures are fenced with walls built of mud and refuse bones. This dismal region seems the natural home of poverty and despair. The man who was intent on following the poor creature who had had the courage to thread these dark and silent streets seemed struck with the spectacle they offered. He stopped as if reflecting, and stood in a hesitating attitude, dimly visible by a street lantern whose flickering light scarcely pierced the fog. Fear gave eyes to the old gentlewoman, who now fancied that she saw something sinister in the features of this unknown man. All her terrors revived, and profiting by the curious hesitation that had seized him, she glided like a shadow to the doorway of the solitary dwelling, touched a spring, and disappeared with phantasmagoric rapidity.

The man, standing motionless, gazed at the house, which was, as it were, a type of the wretched buildings of the neighborhood. The tottering hovel, built of porous stone in rough blocks, was coated with yellow plaster much cracked, and looked ready to fall before a gust of wind. The roof, of brown tiles covered with moss, had sunk in several places, and gave the impression that the weight of snow might break it down at any moment. Each story had three windows whose frames, rotted by dampness and shrunken by the heat of the sun, told that the outer cold penetrated to the chambers. The lonely house seemed like an ancient tower that time had forgotten to destroy. A faint light gleamed from the garret windows, which were irregularly cut in the roof; but the rest of the house was in complete obscurity. The old woman went up the rough and clumsy stairs with difficulty, holding fast to a rope which took the place of baluster. She knocked furtively at the door of a lodging under the roof, and sat hastily down on a chair which an old man offered her.

“Hide! hide yourself!” she cried. “Though we go out so seldom, our errands are known, our steps are watched—”

“What has happened?” asked another old woman sitting near the fire.

“The man who has hung about the house since yesterday followed me to-night.”

At these words the occupants of the hovel looked at each other with terror in their faces. The old man was the least moved of the three, possibly because he was the one in greatest danger. Under the pressure of misfortune or the yoke of persecution a man of courage begins, as it were, by preparing for the sacrifice of himself: he looks upon his days as so many victories won from fate. The eyes of the two women, fixed upon the old man, showed plainly that he alone was the object of their extreme anxiety.

Page 329

"Why distrust God, my sisters?" he said, in a hollow but impressive voice. "We chanted praises to his name amid the cries of victims and assassins at the convent. If it pleased him to save me from that butchery, it was doubtless for some destiny which I shall accept without a murmur. God protects his own, and disposes of them according to his will. It is of you, not of me, that we should think."

"No," said one of the women: "what is our life in comparison with that of a priest?"

"Ever since the day when I found myself outside of the Abbaye des Chelles," said the nun beside the fire, "I have given myself up for dead."

"Here," said the one who had just come in, holding out the little box to the priest, "here are the sacramental wafers—Listen!" she cried, interrupting herself. "I hear some one on the stairs."

At these words all three listened intently. The noise ceased.

"Do not be frightened," said the priest, "even if some one asks to enter. A person on whose fidelity we can safely rely has taken measures to cross the frontier, and he will soon call here for letters which I have written to the Duc de Langeais and the Marquis de Beauseant, advising them as to the measures they must take to get you out of this dreadful country, and save you from the misery or the death you would otherwise undergo here."

"Shall you not follow us?" said the two nuns softly, but in a tone of despair.

"My place is near the victims," said the priest, simply.

The nuns were silent, looking at him with devout admiration.

"Sister Martha," he said, addressing the nun who had fetched the wafers, "this messenger must answer '*Fiat voluntas*' to the word '*Hosanna*.'"

"There is some one on the stairway," exclaimed the other nun, hastily opening a hiding-place burrowed at the edge of the roof.

This time it was easy to hear the steps of a man sounding through the deep silence on the rough stairs, which were caked with patches of hardened mud. The priest slid with difficulty into a narrow hiding-place, and the nuns hastily threw articles of apparel over him.

"You can shut me in, Sister Agatha," he said, in a smothered voice.

He was scarcely hidden when three knocks upon the door made the sisters tremble and consult each other with their eyes, for they dared not speak. Forty years' separation

from the world had made them like plants of a hot-house which wilt when brought into the outer air. Accustomed to the life of a convent, they could not conceive of any other; and when one morning their bars and gratings were flung down, they had shuddered at finding themselves free. It is easy to imagine the species of imbecility which the events of the Revolution, enacted before their eyes, had produced in these innocent souls. Quite incapable of harmonizing their conventual ideas with the exigencies of ordinary life, not even comprehending their own situation, they were like children who had always been cared for, and who now, torn from their maternal providence, had taken to prayers as other children take to tears. So it happened that in presence of immediate danger they were dumb and passive, and could think of no other defence than Christian resignation.

Page 330

The man who sought to enter interpreted their silence as he pleased; he suddenly opened the door and showed himself. The two nuns trembled when they recognized the individual who for some days had watched the house and seemed to make inquiries about its inmates. They stood quite still and looked at him with uneasy curiosity, like the children of savages examining a being of another sphere. The stranger was very tall and stout, but nothing in his manner or appearance denoted that he was a bad man. He copied the immobility of the sisters and stood motionless, letting his eye rove slowly round the room.

Two bundles of straw placed on two planks served as beds for the nuns. A table was in the middle of the room; upon it a copper candlestick, a few plates, three knives, and a round loaf of bread. The fire on the hearth was very low, and a few sticks of wood piled in a corner of the room testified to the poverty of the occupants. The walls, once covered with a coat of paint now much defaced, showed the wretched condition of the roof through which the rain had trickled, making a network of brown stains. A sacred relic, saved no doubt from the pillage of the Abbaye des Chelles, adorned the mantelshelf of the chimney. Three chairs, two coffers, and a broken chest of drawers completed the furniture of the room. A doorway cut near the fireplace showed there was probably an inner chamber.

The inventory of this poor cell was soon made by the individual who had presented himself under such alarming auspices. An expression of pity crossed his features, and as he threw a kind glance upon the frightened women he seemed as much embarrassed as they. The strange silence in which they all three stood and faced each other lasted but a moment; for the stranger seemed to guess the moral weakness and inexperience of the poor helpless creatures, and he said, in a voice which he strove to render gentle, "I have not come as an enemy, *citoyennes*."

Then he paused, but resumed:—"My sisters, if harm should ever happen to you, be sure that I shall not have contributed to it. I have come to ask a favor of you."

They still kept silence.

"If I ask too much—if I annoy you—I will go away; but believe me, I am heartily devoted to you, and if there is any service that I could render you, you may employ me without fear. I, and I alone, perhaps, am above law—since there is no longer a king."

The ring of truth in these words induced Sister Agatha, a nun belonging to the ducal house of Langeais, and whose manners indicated that she had once lived amid the festivities of life and breathed the air of courts, to point to a chair as if she asked their guest to be seated. The unknown gave vent to an expression of joy, mingled with melancholy, as he understood this gesture. He waited respectfully till the sisters were seated, and then obeyed it.

“You have given shelter,” he said, “to a venerable priest not sworn in by the Republic, who escaped miraculously from the massacre at the Convent of the Carmelites.”

Page 331

"*Hosanna*," said Sister Agatha, suddenly interrupting the stranger, and looking at him with anxious curiosity.

"That is not his name, I think," he answered.

"But, Monsieur, we have no priest here," cried Sister Martha, hastily, "and—"

"Then you should take better precautions," said the unknown gently, stretching his arm to the table and picking up a breviary. "I do not think you understand Latin, and—"

He stopped short, for the extreme distress painted on the faces of the poor nuns made him fear he had gone too far; they trembled violently, and their eyes filled with tears.

"Do not fear," he said; "I know the name of your guest, and yours also. During the last three days I have learned your poverty, and your great devotion to the venerable Abbe of—"

"Hush!" exclaimed Sister Agatha, ingenuously putting a finger on her lip.

"You see, my sisters, that if I had the horrible design of betraying you, I might have accomplished it again and again."

As he uttered these words the priest emerged from his prison and appeared in the middle of the room.

"I cannot believe, Monsieur," he said courteously, "that you are one of our persecutors. I trust you. What is it you desire of me?"

The saintly confidence of the old man, and the nobility of mind imprinted on his countenance, might have disarmed even an assassin. He who thus mysteriously agitated this home of penury and resignation stood contemplating the group before him; then he addressed the priest in a trustful tone, with these words:—

"My father, I came to ask you to celebrate a mass for the repose of the soul—of—of a sacred being whose body can never lie in holy ground."

The priest involuntarily shuddered. The nuns, not as yet understanding who it was of whom the unknown man had spoken, stood with their necks stretched and their faces turned towards the speakers, in an attitude of eager curiosity. The ecclesiastic looked intently at the stranger; unequivocal anxiety was marked on every feature, and his eyes offered an earnest and even ardent prayer.

"Yes," said the priest at length. "Return here at midnight, and I shall be ready to celebrate the only funeral service that we are able to offer in expiation of the crime of which you speak."

The unknown shivered; a joy both sweet and solemn seemed to rise in his soul above some secret grief. Respectfully saluting the priest and the two saintly women, he disappeared with a mute gratitude which these generous souls knew well how to interpret.

Page 332

Two hours later the stranger returned, knocked cautiously at the door of the garret, and was admitted by Mademoiselle de Langeais, who led him to the inner chamber of the humble refuge, where all was in readiness for the ceremony. Between two flues of the chimney the nuns had placed the old chest of drawers, whose broken edges were concealed by a magnificent altar-cloth of green moire. A large ebony and ivory crucifix hanging on the discolored wall stood out in strong relief from the surrounding bareness, and necessarily caught the eye. Four slender little tapers, which the sisters had contrived to fasten to the altar with sealing-wax, threw a pale glimmer dimly reflected by the yellow wall. These feeble rays scarcely lit up the rest of the chamber, but as their light fell upon the sacred objects it seemed a halo falling from heaven upon the bare and undecorated altar.

The floor was damp. The attic roof, which sloped sharply on both sides of the room, was full of chinks through which the wind penetrated. Nothing could be less stately, yet nothing was ever more solemn than this lugubrious ceremony. Silence so deep that some far-distant cry could have pierced it, lent a sombre majesty to the nocturnal scene. The grandeur of the occasion contrasted vividly with the poverty of its circumstances, and roused a feeling of religious terror. On either side of the altar the old nuns, kneeling on the tiled floor and taking no thought of its mortal dampness, were praying in concert with the priest, who, robed in his pontifical vestments, placed upon the altar a golden chalice incrustated with precious stones,—a sacred vessel rescued, no doubt, from the pillage of the Abbaye des Chelles. Close to this vase, which was a gift of royal munificence, the bread and wine of the consecrated sacrifice were contained in two glass tumblers scarcely worthy of the meanest tavern. In default of a missal the priest had placed his breviary on a corner of the altar. A common earthenware platter was provided for the washing of those innocent hands, pure and unspotted with blood. All was majestic and yet paltry; poor but noble; profane and holy in one.

The unknown man knelt piously between the sisters. Suddenly, as he caught sight of the crape upon the chalice and the crucifix,—for in default of other means of proclaiming the object of this funeral rite the priest had put God himself into mourning,—the mysterious visitant was seized by some all-powerful recollection, and drops of sweat gathered on his brow. The four silent actors in this scene looked at each other with mysterious sympathy; their souls, acting one upon another, communicated to each the feelings of all, blending them into the one emotion of religious pity. It seemed as though their thought had evoked from the dead the sacred martyr whose body was devoured by quicklime, but whose shade rose up before them in royal majesty. They were celebrating a funeral Mass without the remains of the deceased. Beneath

Page 333

these rafters and disjointed laths four Christian souls were interceding with God for a king of France, and making his burial without a coffin. It was the purest of all devotions; an act of wonderful loyalty accomplished without one thought of self. Doubtless in the eyes of God it was the cup of cold water that weighed in the balance against many virtues. The whole of monarchy was there in the prayers of the priest and the two poor women; but also it may have been that the Revolution was present likewise, in the person of the strange being whose face betrayed the remorse that led him to make this solemn offering of a vast repentance.

Instead of pronouncing the Latin words, “Introibo ad altare Dei” *etc.*, the priest, with divine intuition, glanced at his three assistants, who represented all Christian France, and said, in words which effaced the penury and meanness of the hovel, “We enter now into the sanctuary of God.”

At these words, uttered with penetrating unction, a solemn awe seized the participants. Beneath the dome of St. Peter’s in Rome, God had never seemed more majestic to man than he did now in this refuge of poverty and to the eyes of these Christians,—so true is it that between man and God all mediation is unneeded, for his glory descends from himself alone. The fervent piety of the nameless man was unfeigned, and the feeling that held these four servants of God and the king was unanimous. The sacred words echoed like celestial music amid the silence. There was a moment when the unknown broke down and wept: it was at the Pater Noster, to which the priest added a Latin clause which the stranger doubtless comprehended and applied,—“Et remitte scelus regicidis sicut Ludovicus eis remisit semetipso” (And forgive the regicides even as Louis XVI. himself forgave them). The two nuns saw the tears coursing down the manly cheeks of their visitant, and dropping fast on the tiled floor.

The Office of the Dead was recited. The “Domine salvum fac regem,” sung in low tones, touched the hearts of these faithful royalists as they thought of the infant king, now captive in the hands of his enemies, for whom this prayer was offered. The unknown shuddered; perhaps he feared an impending crime in which he would be called to take an unwilling part.

When the service was over, the priest made a sign to the nuns, who withdrew to the outer room. As soon as he was alone with the unknown, the old man went up to him with gentle sadness of manner, and said in the tone of a father,—

“My son, if you have steeped your hands in the blood of the martyr king, confess yourself to me. There is no crime which, in the eyes of God, is not washed out by a repentance as deep and sincere as yours appears to be.”

At the first words of the ecclesiastic an involuntary motion of terror escaped the stranger; but he quickly recovered himself, and looked at the astonished priest with calm assurance.

Page 334

"My father," he said, in a voice that nevertheless trembled, "no one is more innocent than I of the blood shed—"

"I believe it!" said the priest.

He paused a moment, during which he examined afresh his penitent; then, persisting in the belief that he was one of those timid members of the Assembly who sacrificed the inviolate and sacred head to save their own, he resumed in a grave voice:—

"Reflect, my son, that something more than taking no part in that great crime is needed to absolve from guilt. Those who kept their sword in the scabbard when they might have defended their king have a heavy account to render to the King of kings. Oh, yes," added the venerable man, moving his head from right to left with an expressive motion; "yes, heavy, indeed! for, standing idle, they made themselves the accomplices of a horrible transgression."

"Do you believe," asked the stranger, in a surprised tone, "that even an indirect participation will be punished? The soldier ordered to form the line—do you think he was guilty?"

The priest hesitated. Glad of the dilemma that placed this puritan of royalty between the dogma of passive obedience, which according to the partisans of monarchy should dominate the military system, and the other dogma, equally imperative, which consecrates the person of the king, the stranger hastened to accept the hesitation of the priest as a solution of the doubts that seemed to trouble him. Then, so as not to allow the old Jansenist time for further reflection, he said quickly:—

"I should blush to offer you any fee whatever in acknowledgment of the funeral service you have just celebrated for the repose of the king's soul and for the discharge of my conscience. We can only pay for inestimable things by offerings which are likewise beyond all price. Deign to accept, Monsieur, the gift which I now make to you of a holy relic; the day may come when you will know its value."

As he said these words he gave the ecclesiastic a little box of light weight. The priest took it as it were involuntarily; for the solemn tone in which the words were uttered, and the awe with which the stranger held the box, struck him with fresh amazement. They re-entered the outer room, where the two nuns were waiting for them.

"You are living," said the unknown, "in a house whose owner, Mucius Scaevola, the plasterer who lives on the first floor, is noted in the Section for his patriotism. He is, however, secretly attached to the Bourbons. He was formerly huntsman to Monseigneur the Prince de Conti, to whom he owes everything. As long as you stay in this house you are in greater safety than you can be in any other part of France. Remain here. Pious souls will watch over you and supply your wants; and you can

await without danger the coming of better days. A year hence, on the 21st of January” (as he uttered these last words he could not repress an involuntary shudder), “I shall return to celebrate once more the Mass of expiation—”

Page 335

He could not end the sentence. Bowing to the silent occupants of the garret, he cast a last look upon the signs of their poverty and disappeared.

To the two simple-minded women this event had all the interest of a romance. As soon as the venerable abbe told them of the mysterious gift so solemnly offered by the stranger, they placed the box upon the table, and the three anxious faces, faintly lighted by a tallow-candle, betrayed an indescribable curiosity. Mademoiselle de Langeais opened the box and took from it a handkerchief of extreme fineness, stained with sweat. As she unfolded it they saw dark stains.

"That is blood!" exclaimed the priest.

"It is marked with the royal crown!" cried the other nun.

The sisters let fall the precious relic with gestures of horror. To these ingenuous souls the mystery that wrapped their unknown visitor became inexplicable, and the priest from that day forth forbade himself to search for its solution.

The three prisoners soon perceived that, in spite of the Terror, a powerful arm was stretched over them. First, they received firewood and provisions; next, the sisters guessed that a woman was associated with their protector, for linen and clothing came to them mysteriously, and enabled them to go out without danger of observation from the aristocratic fashion of the only garments they had been able to secure; finally, Mucius Scaevola brought them certificates of citizenship. Advice as to the necessary means of insuring the safety of the venerable priest often came to them from unexpected quarters, and proved so singularly opportune that it was quite evident it could only have been given by some one in possession of state secrets. In spite of the famine which then afflicted Paris, they found daily at the door of their hovel rations of white bread, laid there by invisible hands. They thought they recognized in Mucius Scaevola the agent of these mysterious benefactions, which were always timely and intelligent; but the noble occupants of the poor garret had no doubt whatever that the unknown individual who had celebrated the midnight Mass on the 22d of January, 1793, was their secret protector. They added to their daily prayers a special prayer for him; night and day these pious hearts made supplication for his happiness, his prosperity, his redemption. They prayed that God would keep his feet from snares and save him from his enemies, and grant him a long and peaceful life.

Their gratitude, renewed as it were daily, was necessarily mingled with curiosity that grew keener day by day. The circumstances attending the appearance of the stranger were a ceaseless topic of conversation and of endless conjecture, and soon became a benefit of a special kind, from the occupation and distraction of mind which was thus produced. They resolved that the stranger should not be allowed to escape the expression of their gratitude when he came to commemorate the next sad anniversary of the death of Louis XVI.

Page 336

That night, so impatiently awaited, came at length. At midnight the heavy steps resounded up the wooden stairway. The room was prepared for the service; the altar was dressed. This time the sisters opened the door and hastened to light the entrance. Mademoiselle de Langeais even went down a few stairs that she might catch the first glimpse of their benefactor.

"Come!" she said, in a trembling and affectionate voice. "Come, you are expected!"

The man raised his head, gave the nun a gloomy look, and made no answer. She felt as though an icy garment had fallen upon her, and she kept silence. At his aspect gratitude and curiosity died within their hearts. He may have been less cold, less taciturn, less terrible than he seemed to these poor souls, whose own emotions led them to expect a flow of friendship from his. They saw that this mysterious being was resolved to remain a stranger to them, and they acquiesced with resignation. But the priest fancied he saw a smile, quickly repressed, upon the stranger's lip as he saw the preparations made to receive him. He heard the Mass and prayed, but immediately disappeared, refusing in a few courteous words the invitation given by Mademoiselle de Langeais to remain and partake of the humble collation they had prepared for him.

After the 9th Thermidor the nuns and the Abbe de Marolles were able to go about Paris without incurring any danger. The first visit of the old priest was to a perfumery at the sign of the "Queen of Flowers," kept by the citizen and *citoyenne* Ragon, formerly perfumers to the Court, well known for their faithfulness to the royal family, and employed by the Vendeens as a channel of communication with the princes and royal committees in Paris. The abbe, dressed as the times required, was leaving the doorstep of the shop, situated between the church of Saint-Roch and the Rue des Fondeurs, when a great crowd coming down the Rue Saint-Honore hindered him from advancing.

"What is it?" he asked of Madame Ragon.

"Oh, nothing!" she answered. "It is the cart and the executioner going to the Place Louis XV. Ah, we saw enough of that last year! but now, four days after the anniversary of the 21st of January, we can look at the horrid procession without distress."

"Why so?" asked the abbe. "What you say is not Christian."

"But this is the execution of the accomplices of Robespierre. They have fought it off as long as they could, but now they are going in their turn where they have sent so many innocent people."

The crowd which filled the Rue Saint-Honore passed on like a wave. Above the sea of heads the Abbe de Marolles, yielding to an impulse, saw, standing erect in the cart, the

stranger who three days before had assisted for the second time in the Mass of commemoration.

“Who is that?” he asked; “the one standing—”

“That is the executioner,” answered Monsieur Ragon, calling the man by his monarchical name.

Page 337

"Help! help!" cried Madame Ragon. "Monsieur l'Abbe is fainting!"

She caught up a flask of vinegar and brought him quickly back to consciousness.

"He must have given me," said the old priest, "the handkerchief with which the king wiped his brow as he went to his martyrdom. Poor man! that steel knife had a heart when all France had none!"

The perfumers thought the words of the priest were an effect of delirium.

Translation copyrighted by Roberts Brothers.

A PASSION IN THE DESERT

"The sight was fearful!" she exclaimed, as we left the menagerie of Monsieur Martin.

She had been watching that daring speculator as he went through his wonderful performance in the den of the hyena.

"How is it possible," she continued, "to tame those animals so as to be certain that he can trust them?"

"You think it a problem," I answered, interrupting her, "and yet it is a natural fact."

"Oh!" she cried, an incredulous smile flickering on her lip.

"Do you think that beasts are devoid of passions?" I asked. "Let me assure you that we teach them all the vices and virtues of our own state of civilization."

She looked at me in amazement.

"The first time I saw Monsieur Martin," I added, "I exclaimed, as you do, with surprise. I happened to be sitting beside an old soldier whose right leg was amputated, and whose appearance had attracted my notice as I entered the building. His face, stamped with the scars of battle, wore the undaunted look of a veteran of the wars of Napoleon. Moreover, the old hero had a frank and joyous manner which attracts me wherever I meet it. He was doubtless one of those old campaigners whom nothing can surprise, who find something to laugh at in the last contortions of a comrade, and will bury a friend or rifle his body gayly; challenging bullets with indifference; making short shrift for themselves or others; and fraternizing, as a usual thing, with the devil. After looking very attentively at the proprietor of the menagerie as he entered the den, my companion curled his lip with that expression of satirical contempt which well-informed men sometimes put on to mark the difference between themselves and dupes. As I uttered



my exclamation of surprise at the coolness and courage of Monsieur Martin, the old soldier smiled, shook his head, and said with a knowing glance, 'An old story!'

"How do you mean an old story?' I asked. 'If you could explain the secret of this mysterious power, I should be greatly obliged to you.'

"After a while, during which we became better acquainted, we went to dine at the first cafe we could find after leaving the menagerie. A bottle of champagne with our dessert brightened the old man's recollections and made them singularly vivid. He related to me a circumstance in his early history which proved that he had ample cause to pronounce Monsieur Martin's performance 'an old story.'"

Page 338

When we reached her house, she was so persuasive and captivating, and made me so many pretty promises, that I consented to write down for her benefit the story told me by the old hero. On the following day I sent her this episode of a historical epic, which might be entitled, 'The French in Egypt.'

* * * * *

At the time of General Desaix's expedition to Upper Egypt a Provencal soldier, who had fallen into the hands of the Maugrabins, was marched by those tireless Arabs across the desert which lies beyond the cataracts of the Nile. To put sufficient distance between themselves and the French army, the Maugrabins made a forced march and did not halt until after nightfall. They then camped about a well shaded with palm-trees, near which they had previously buried a stock of provisions. Not dreaming that the thought of escape could enter their captive's mind, they merely bound his wrists, and lay down to sleep themselves, after eating a few dates and giving their horses a feed of barley. When the bold Provencal saw his enemies too soundly asleep to watch him, he used his teeth to pick up a scimitar, with which, steadying the blade by means of his knees, he contrived to cut through the cord which bound his hands, and thus recovered his liberty. He at once seized a carbine and a poniard, took the precaution to lay in a supply of dates, a small bag of barley, some powder and ball, buckled on the scimitar, mounted one of the horses, and spurred him in the direction where he supposed the French army to be. Impatient to meet the outposts, he pressed the horse, which was already wearied, so severely that the poor animal fell dead with his flanks torn, leaving the Frenchman alone in the midst of the desert.

After marching for a long time through the sand with the dogged courage of an escaping galley-slave, the soldier was forced to halt, as darkness drew on: for his utter weariness compelled him to rest, though the exquisite sky of an eastern night might well have tempted him to continue the journey. Happily he had reached a slight elevation, at the top of which a few palm-trees shot upward, whose leafage, seen from a long distance against the sky, had helped to sustain his hopes. His fatigue was so great that he threw himself down on a block of granite, cut by Nature into the shape of a camp-bed, and slept heavily, without taking the least precaution to protect himself while asleep. He accepted the loss of his life as inevitable, and his last waking thought was one of regret for having left the Maugrabins, whose nomad life began to charm him now that he was far away from them and from every other hope of succor.

Page 339

He was awakened by the sun, whose pitiless beams falling vertically upon the granite rock produced an intolerable heat. The Provençal had ignorantly flung himself down in a contrary direction to the shadows thrown by the verdant and majestic fronds of the palm-trees. He gazed at these solitary monarchs and shuddered. They recalled to his mind the graceful shafts, crowned with long weaving leaves, which distinguish the Saracenic columns of the cathedral of Arles. The thought overcame him, and when, after counting the trees, he threw his eyes upon the scene around him, an agony of despair convulsed his soul. He saw a limitless ocean. The sombre sands of the desert stretched out till lost to sight in all directions; they glittered with dark lustre like a steel blade shining in the sun. He could not tell if it were an ocean or a chain of lakes that lay mirrored before him. A hot vapor swept in waves above the surface of this heaving continent. The sky had the Oriental glow of translucent purity, which disappoints because it leaves nothing for the imagination to desire. The heavens and the earth were both on fire. Silence added its awful and desolate majesty. Infinitude, immensity pressed down upon the soul on every side; not a cloud in the sky, not a breath in the air, not a rift on the breast of the sand, which was ruffled only with little ridges scarcely rising above its surface. Far as the eye could reach the horizon fell away into space, marked by a slender line, slim as the edge of a sabre,—like as in summer seas a thread of light parts this earth from the heaven it meets.

The Provençal clasped the trunk of a palm-tree as if it were the body of a friend. Sheltered from the sun by its straight and slender shadow, he wept; and presently sitting down he remained motionless, contemplating with awful dread the implacable Nature stretched out before him. He cried aloud, as if to tempt the solitude to answer him. His voice, lost in the hollows of the hillock, sounded afar with a thin resonance that returned no echo; the echo came from the soldier's heart. He was twenty-two years old, and he loaded his carbine.

"Time enough!" he muttered, as he put the liberating weapon on the sand beneath him.

Gazing by turns at the burnished blackness of the sand and the blue expanse of the sky, the soldier dreamed of France. He smelt in fancy the gutters of Paris; he remembered the towns through which he had passed, the faces of his comrades, and the most trifling incidents of his life. His southern imagination saw the pebbles of his own Provence in the undulating play of the heated air, as it seemed to roughen the far-reaching surface of the desert. Dreading the dangers of this cruel mirage, he went down the little hill on the side opposite to that by which he had gone up the night before. His joy was great when he discovered a natural grotto, formed by the immense blocks of granite which made a foundation

Page 340

for the rising ground. The remnants of a mat showed that the place had once been inhabited, and close to the entrance were a few palm-trees loaded with fruit. The instinct which binds men to life woke in his heart. He now hoped to live until some Maugrabin should pass that way; possibly he might even hear the roar of cannon, for Bonaparte was at that time overrunning Egypt. Encouraged by these thoughts, the Frenchman shook down a cluster of the ripe fruit under the weight of which the palms were bending; and as he tasted this unhopd-for manna, he thanked the former inhabitant of the grotto for the cultivation of the trees, which the rich and luscious flesh of the fruit amply attested. Like a true Provençal, he passed from the gloom of despair to a joy that was half insane. He ran back to the top of the hill, and busied himself for the rest of the day in cutting down one of the sterile trees which had been his shelter the night before.

Some vague recollection made him think of the wild beasts of the desert, and foreseeing that they would come to drink at a spring which bubbled through the sand at the foot of the rock, he resolved to protect his hermitage by felling a tree across the entrance. Notwithstanding his eagerness, and the strength which the fear of being attacked while asleep gave to his muscles, he was unable to cut the palm-tree in pieces during the day; but he succeeded in bringing it down. Towards evening the king of the desert fell; and the noise of his fall, echoing far, was like a moan from the breast of Solitude. The soldier shuddered, as though he had heard a voice predicting evil. But, like an heir who does not long mourn a parent, he stripped from the beautiful tree the arching green fronds—its poetical adornment—and made a bed of them in his refuge. Then, tired with his work and by the heat of the day, he fell asleep beneath the red vault of the grotto.

In the middle of the night his sleep was broken by a strange noise. He sat up; the deep silence that reigned everywhere enabled him to hear the alternating rhythm of a respiration whose savage vigor could not belong to a human being. A terrible fear, increased by the darkness, by the silence, by the rush of his waking fancies, numbed his heart. He felt the contraction of his hair, which rose on end as his eyes, dilating to their full strength, beheld through the darkness two faint amber lights. At first he thought them an optical delusion; but by degrees the clearness of the night enabled him to distinguish objects in the grotto, and he saw, within two feet of him, an enormous animal lying at rest.

Page 341

Was it a lion? Was it a tiger? Was it a crocodile? The Provencal had not enough education to know in what sub-species he ought to class the intruder; but his terror was all the greater because his ignorance made it vague. He endured the cruel trial of listening, of striving to catch the peculiarities of this breathing without losing one of its inflections, and without daring to make the slightest movement. A strong odor, like that exhaled by foxes, only far more pungent and penetrating, filled the grotto. When the soldier had tasted it, so to speak, by the nose, his fear became terror; he could no longer doubt the nature of the terrible companion whose royal lair he had taken for a bivouac. Before long, the reflection of the moon, as it sank to the horizon, lighted up the den and gleamed upon the shining, spotted skin of a panther.

The lion of Egypt lay asleep, curled up like a dog, the peaceable possessor of a kennel at the gate of a mansion; its eyes, which had opened for a moment, were now closed; its head was turned towards the Frenchman. A hundred conflicting thoughts rushed through the mind of the panther's prisoner. Should he kill it with a shot from his musket? But ere the thought was formed, he saw there was no room to take aim; the muzzle would have gone beyond the animal. Suppose he were to wake it? The fear kept him motionless. As he heard the beating of his heart through the dead silence, he cursed the strong pulsations of his vigorous blood, lest they should disturb the sleep which gave him time to think and plan for safety. Twice he put his hand on his scimitar, with the idea of striking off the head of his enemy; but the difficulty of cutting through the close-haired skin made him renounce the bold attempt. Suppose he missed his aim? It would, he knew, be certain death. He preferred the chances of a struggle, and resolved to await the dawn. It was not long in coming. As daylight broke, the Frenchman was able to examine the animal. Its muzzle was stained with blood. "It has eaten a good meal," thought he, not caring whether the feast were human flesh or not; "it will not be hungry when it wakes."

It was a female. The fur on the belly and on the thighs was of sparkling whiteness. Several little spots like velvet made pretty bracelets round her paws. The muscular tail was also white, but it terminated with black rings. The fur of the back, yellow as dead gold and very soft and glossy, bore the characteristic spots, shaded like a full-blown rose, which distinguish the panther from all other species of *felis*. This terrible hostess lay tranquilly snoring, in an attitude as easy and graceful as that of a cat on the cushions of an ottoman. Her bloody paws, sinewy and well-armed, were stretched beyond her head, which lay upon them; and from her muzzle projected a few straight hairs called whiskers, which shimmered in the early light like silver wires.

Page 342

If he had seen her lying thus imprisoned in a cage, the Provencal would have admired the creature's grace, and the strong contrasts of vivid color which gave to her robe an imperial splendor; but as it was, his sight was jaundiced by sinister forebodings. The presence of the panther, though she was still asleep, had the same effect upon his mind as the magnetic eyes of a snake produce, we are told, upon the nightingale. The soldier's courage oozed away in presence of this silent peril, though he was a man who gathered nerve before the mouths of cannon belching grape-shot. And yet, ere long, a bold thought entered his mind, and checked the cold sweat which was rolling from his brow. Roused to action, as some men are when, driven face to face with death, they defy it and offer themselves to their doom, he saw a tragedy before him, and he resolved to play his part with honor to the last.

"Yesterday," he said, "the Arabs might have killed me."

Regarding himself as dead, he waited bravely, but with anxious curiosity, for the waking of his enemy. When the sun rose, the panther suddenly opened her eyes; then she stretched her paws violently, as if to unlimber them from the cramp of their position. Presently she yawned and showed the frightful armament of her teeth, and her cloven tongue, rough as a grater.

"She is like a dainty woman," thought the Frenchman, watching her as she rolled and turned on her side with an easy and coquettish movement. She licked the blood from her paws, and rubbed her head with a reiterated movement full of grace.

"Well done! dress yourself prettily, my little woman," said the Frenchman, who recovered his gayety as soon as he had recovered his courage. "We are going to bid each other good-morning;" and he felt for the short poniard which he had taken from the Maugrabins.

At this instant the panther turned her head towards the Frenchman and looked at him fixedly, without moving. The rigidity of her metallic eyes and their insupportable clearness made the Provencal shudder. The beast moved towards him; he looked at her caressingly, with a soothing glance by which he hoped to magnetize her. He let her come quite close to him before he stirred; then with a touch as gentle and loving as he might have used to a pretty woman, he slid his hand along her spine from the head to the flanks, scratching with his nails the flexible vertebrae which divide the yellow back of a panther. The creature drew up her tail voluptuously, her eyes softened, and when for the third time the Frenchman bestowed this self-interested caress, she gave vent to a purr like that with which a cat expresses pleasure: but it issued from a throat so deep and powerful that the sound echoed through the grotto like the last chords of an organ rolling along the roof of a church. The Provencal, perceiving the value of his caresses, redoubled them until they had completely soothed and lulled the imperious courtesan.

Page 343

When he felt that he had subdued the ferocity of his capricious companion, whose hunger had so fortunately been appeased the night before, he rose to leave the grotto. The panther let him go; but as soon as he reached the top of the little hill she bounded after him with the lightness of a bird hopping from branch to branch, and rubbed against his legs, arching her back with the gesture of a domestic cat. Then looking at her guest with an eye that was growing less inflexible, she uttered the savage cry which naturalists liken to the noise of a saw.

“My lady is exacting,” cried the Frenchman, smiling. He began to play with her ears and stroke her belly, and at last he scratched her head firmly with his nails. Encouraged by success, he tickled her skull with the point of his dagger, looking for the right spot where to stab her; but the hardness of the bone made him pause, dreading failure.

The sultana of the desert acknowledged the talents of her slave by lifting her head and swaying her neck to his caresses, betraying satisfaction by the tranquillity of her relaxed attitude. The Frenchman suddenly perceived that he could assassinate the fierce princess at a blow, if he struck her in the throat; and he had raised the weapon, when the panther, surfeited perhaps with his caresses, threw herself gracefully at his feet, glancing up at him with a look in which, despite her natural ferocity, a flicker of kindness could be seen. The poor Provencal, frustrated for the moment, ate his dates as he leaned against a palm-tree, casting from time to time an interrogating eye across the desert in the hope of discerning rescue from afar, and then lowering it upon his terrible companion, to watch the chances of her uncertain clemency. Each time that he threw away a date-stone the panther eyed the spot where it fell with an expression of keen distrust; and she examined the Frenchman with what might be called commercial prudence. The examination, however, seemed favorable, for when the man had finished his meagre meal she licked his shoes and wiped off the dust, which was caked into the folds of the leather, with her rough and powerful tongue.

“How will it be when she is hungry?” thought the Provencal. In spite of the shudder which this reflection cost him, his attention was attracted by the symmetrical proportions of the animal, and he began to measure them with his eye. She was three feet in height to the shoulder, and four feet long, not including the tail. That powerful weapon, which was round as a club, measured three feet. The head, as large as that of a lioness, was remarkable for an expression of crafty intelligence; the cold cruelty of a tiger was its ruling trait, and yet it bore a vague resemblance to the face of an artful woman. As the soldier watched her, the countenance of this solitary queen shone with savage gayety like that of Nero in his cups: she had slaked her thirst for blood, and now wished for play. The Frenchman

Page 344

tried to come and go, and accustomed her to his movements. The panther left him free, as if contented to follow him with her eyes, seeming, however, less like a faithful dog watching his master's movements with affection, than a huge Angora cat uneasy and suspicious of them. A few steps brought him to the spring, where he saw the carcass of his horse, which the panther had evidently carried there. Only two-thirds was eaten. The sight reassured the Frenchman; for it explained the absence of his terrible companion and the forbearance which she had shown to him while asleep.

This first good luck encouraged the reckless soldier as he thought of the future. The wild idea of making a home with the panther until some chance of escape occurred entered his mind, and he resolved to try every means of taming her and of turning her good-will to account. With these thoughts he returned to her side, and noticed joyfully that she moved her tail with an almost imperceptible motion. He sat down beside her fearlessly, and they began to play with each other. He held her paws and her muzzle, twisted her ears, threw her over on her back, and stroked her soft warm flanks. She allowed him to do so; and when he began to smooth the fur of her paws, she carefully drew in her murderous claws, which were sharp and curved like a Damascus blade. The Frenchman kept one hand on his dagger, again watching his opportunity to plunge it into the belly of the too-confiding beast; but the fear that she might strangle him in her last convulsions once more stayed his hand. Moreover, he felt in his heart a foreboding of a remorse which warned him not to destroy a hitherto inoffensive creature. He even fancied that he had found a friend in the limitless desert. His mind turned back, involuntarily, to his first mistress, whom he had named in derision "Mignonne," because her jealousy was so furious that throughout the whole period of their intercourse he lived in dread of the knife with which she threatened him. This recollection of his youth suggested the idea of teaching the young panther, whose soft agility and grace he now admired with less terror, to answer to the caressing name. Towards evening he had grown so familiar with his perilous position that he was half in love with its dangers, and his companion was so far tamed that she had caught the habit of turning to him when he called, in falsetto tones, "Mignonne!"

As the sun went down Mignonne uttered at intervals a prolonged, deep, melancholy cry.

"She is well brought up," thought the gay soldier. "She says her prayers." But the jest only came into his mind as he watched the peaceful attitude of his comrade.

"Come, my pretty blonde, I will let you go to bed first," he said, relying on the activity of his legs to get away as soon as she fell asleep, and trusting to find some other resting-place for the night. He waited anxiously for the right moment, and when it came he started vigorously in the direction of the Nile. But he had scarcely marched for half an hour through the sand before he heard the panther bounding after him, giving at intervals the saw-like cry which was more terrible to hear than the thud of her bounds.



Page 345

"Well, well!" he cried, "she must have fallen in love with me! Perhaps she has never met any one else. It is flattering to be her first love."

So thinking, he fell into one of the treacherous quicksands which deceive the inexperienced traveler in the desert, and from which there is seldom any escape. He felt he was sinking, and he uttered a cry of despair. The panther seized him by the collar with her teeth, and sprang vigorously backward, drawing him, like magic, from the sucking sand.

"Ah, Mignonne!" cried the soldier, kissing her with enthusiasm, "we belong to each other now,—for life, for death! But play me no tricks," he added, as he turned back the way he came.

From that moment the desert was, as it were, peopled for him. It held a being to whom he could talk, and whose ferocity was now lulled into gentleness, although he could scarcely explain to himself the reasons for this extraordinary friendship. His anxiety to keep awake and on his guard succumbed to excessive weariness both of body and mind, and throwing himself down on the floor of the grotto he slept soundly. At his waking Mignonne was gone. He mounted the little hill to scan the horizon, and perceived her in the far distance returning with the long bounds peculiar to these animals, who are prevented from running by the extreme flexibility of their spinal column.

Mignonne came home with bloody jaws, and received the tribute of caresses which her slave hastened to pay, all the while manifesting her pleasure by reiterated purring.

Her eyes, now soft and gentle, rested kindly on the Provencal, who spoke to her lovingly as he would to a domestic animal.

"Ah! Mademoiselle,—for you are an honest girl, are you not? You like to be petted, don't you? Are you not ashamed of yourself? You have been eating a Maugrabin. Well, well! they are animals like the rest of you. But you are not to craunch up a Frenchman; remember that! If you do, I will not love you."

She played like a young dog with her master, and let him roll her over and pat and stroke her, and sometimes she would coax him to play by laying a paw upon his knee with a pretty soliciting gesture.

Several days passed rapidly. This strange companionship revealed to the Provencal the sublime beauties of the desert. The alternations of hope and fear, the sufficiency of food, the presence of a creature who occupied his thoughts,—all this kept his mind alert, yet free: it was a life full of strange contrasts. Solitude revealed to him her secrets, and wrapped him with her charm. In the rising and the setting of the sun he saw splendors unknown to the world of men. He quivered as he listened to the soft



whirring of the wings of a bird,—rare visitant!—or watched the blending of the fleeting clouds,—those changeful and many-tinted voyagers. In the waking hours of the night he studied the play of the moon upon the sandy ocean,

Page 346

where the strong simoom had rippled the surface into waves and ever-varying undulations. He lived in the Eastern day; he worshiped its marvelous glory. He rejoiced in the grandeur of the storms when they rolled across the vast plain, and tossed the sand upward till it looked like a dry red fog or a solid death-dealing vapor; and as the night came on he welcomed it with ecstasy, grateful for the blessed coolness of the light of the stars. His ears listened to the music of the skies. Solitude taught him the treasures of meditation. He spent hours in recalling trifles, and in comparing his past life with the weird present.

He grew fondly attached to his panther; for he was a man who needed an affection. Whether it were that his own will, magnetically strong, had modified the nature of his savage princess, or that the wars then raging in the desert had provided her with an ample supply of food, it is certain that she showed no sign of attacking him, and became so tame that he soon felt no fear of her. He spent much of his time in sleeping; though with his mind awake, like a spider in its web, lest he should miss some deliverance that might chance to cross the sandy sphere marked out by the horizon. He had made his shirt into a banner and tied it to the top of a palm-tree which he had stripped of its leafage. Taking counsel of necessity, he kept the flag extended by fastening the corners with twigs and wedges; for the fitful wind might have failed to wave it at the moment when the longed-for succor came in sight.

Nevertheless, there were long hours of gloom when hope forsook him; and then he played with his panther. He learned to know the different inflections of her voice and the meanings of her expressive glance; he studied the variegation of the spots which shaded the dead gold of her robe. Mignonne no longer growled when he caught the tuft of her dangerous tail and counted the black and white rings which glittered in the sunlight like a cluster of precious stones. He delighted in the soft lines of her lithe body, the whiteness of her belly, the grace of her charming head: but above all he loved to watch her as she gamboled at play. The agility and youthfulness of her movements were a constantly fresh surprise to him. He admired the suppleness of the flexible body as she bounded, crept, and glided, or clung to the trunk of palm-trees, or rolled over and over, crouching sometimes to the ground, and gathering herself together as she made ready for her vigorous spring. Yet, however vigorous the bound, however slippery the granite block on which she landed, she would stop short, motionless, at the one word "Mignonne."

One day, under a dazzling sun, a large bird hovered in the sky. The Provencal left his panther to watch the new guest. After a moment's pause the neglected sultana uttered a low growl.

“The devil take me! I believe she is jealous!” exclaimed the soldier, observing the rigid look which once more appeared in her metallic eyes. “The soul of Sophronie has got into her body!”

Page 347

The eagle disappeared in ether, and the Frenchman, recalled by the panther's displeasure, admired afresh her rounded flanks and the perfect grace of her attitude. She was as pretty as a woman. The blonde brightness of her robe shaded, with delicate gradations, to the dead-white tones of her furry thighs; the vivid sunshine brought out the brilliancy of this living gold and its variegated brown spots with indescribable lustre. The panther and the Provencal gazed at each other with human comprehension. She trembled with delight—the coquettish creature!—as she felt the nails of her friend scratching the strong bones of her skull. Her eyes glittered like flashes of lightning, and then she closed them tightly.

“She has a soul!” cried the soldier, watching the tranquil repose of this sovereign of the desert, golden as the sands, white as their pulsing light, solitary and burning as they.

* * * * *

“Well,” she said, “I have read your defense of the beasts. But tell me what was the end of this friendship between two beings so formed to understand each other?”

“Ah, exactly,” I replied. “It ended as all great passions end,—by a misunderstanding. Both sides imagine treachery, pride prevents an explanation, and the rupture comes about through obstinacy.”

“Yes,” she said, “and sometimes a word, a look, an exclamation suffices. But tell me the end of the story.”

“That is difficult,” I answered. “But I will give it to you in the words of the old veteran, as he finished the bottle of champagne and exclaimed:—

“‘I don’t know how I could have hurt her, but she suddenly turned upon me as if in fury, and seized my thigh with her sharp teeth; and yet (as I afterwards remembered) not cruelly. I thought she meant to devour me, and I plunged my dagger into her throat. She rolled over with a cry that froze my soul; she looked at me in her death struggle, but without anger. I would have given all the world—my cross, which I had not then gained, all, everything—to have brought her back to life. It was as if I had murdered a friend, a human being. When the soldiers who saw my flag came to my rescue they found me weeping. Monsieur,’ he resumed, after a moment’s silence, ‘I went through the wars in Germany, Spain, Russia, France; I have marched my carcass well-nigh over all the world; but I have seen nothing comparable to the desert. Ah, it is grand! glorious!’

“‘What were your feelings there?’ I asked.

“‘They cannot be told, young man. Besides, I do not always regret my panther and my palm-tree oasis: I must be very sad for that. But I will tell you this: in the desert there is all—and yet nothing.’



“Stay!—explain that.’

“Well, then,’ he said, with a gesture of impatience, ‘God is there, and man is not.’”

FROM ‘THE COUNTRY DOCTOR’

Page 348

THE NAPOLEON OF THE PEOPLE

"Let us go to my barn," said the doctor, taking Genestas by the arm, after saying good-night to the curate and his other guests. "And there, Captain Bluteau, you will hear about Napoleon. We shall find a few old cronies who will set Goguelat, the postman, to declaiming about the people's god. Nicolle, my stable-man, was to put a ladder by which we can get into the hay-loft through a window, and find a place where we can see and hear all that goes on. A *veillee* is worth the trouble, believe me. Come, it isn't the first time I've hidden in the hay to hear the tale of a soldier or some peasant yarn. But we must hide; if these poor people see a stranger they are constrained at once, and are no longer their natural selves."

"Eh! my dear host," said Genestas, "haven't I often pretended to sleep, that I might listen to my troopers round a bivouac? I never laughed more heartily in the Paris theatres than I did at an account of the retreat from Moscow, told in fun, by an old sergeant to a lot of recruits who were afraid of war. He declared the French army slept in sheets, and drank its wine well-iced; that the dead stood still in the roads; Russia was white, they curried the horses with their teeth; those who liked to skate had lots of fun, and those who fancied frozen puddings ate their fill; the women were usually cold, and the only thing that was really disagreeable was the want of hot water to shave with: in short, he recounted such absurdities that an old quarter-master, who had had his nose frozen off and was known by the name Nez-restant, laughed himself."

"Hush," said Benassis, "here we are: I'll go first; follow me."

The pair mounted the ladder and crouched in the hay, without being seen or heard by the people below, and placed themselves at ease, so that they could see and hear all that went on. The women were sitting in groups round the three or four candles that stood on the tables. Some were sewing, some knitting; several sat idle, their necks stretched out and their heads and eyes turned to an old peasant who was telling a story. Most of the men were standing, or lying on bales of hay. These groups, all perfectly silent, were scarcely visible in the flickering glimmer of the tallow-candles encircled by glass bowls full of water, which concentrated the light in rays upon the women at work about the tables. The size of the barn, whose roof was dark and sombre, still further obscured the rays of light, which touched the heads with unequal color, and brought out picturesque effects of light and shade. Here, the brown forehead and the clear eyes of an eager little peasant-girl shone forth; there, the rough brows of a few old men were sharply defined by a luminous band, which made fantastic shapes of their worn and discolored garments. These various listeners, so diverse in their attitudes, all expressed on their motionless features the absolute abandonment of their intelligence to the narrator. It was a curious picture, illustrating the enormous influence exercised over every class of mind by poetry. In exacting from a story-teller the marvelous that must still be simple, or the impossible that is almost believable, the peasant proves himself to be a true lover of the purest poetry.

Page 349

"Come, Monsieur Goguelat," said the game-keeper, "tell us about the Emperor."

"The evening is half over," said the postman, "and I don't like to shorten the victories."

"Never mind; go on! You've told them so many times we know them all by heart; but it is always a pleasure to hear them again."

"Yes! tell us about the Emperor," cried many voices together.

"Since you wish it," replied Goguelat. "But you'll see it isn't worth much when I have to tell it on the double-quick, charge! I'd rather tell about a battle. Shall I tell about Champ-Aubert, where we used up all the cartridges and spitted the enemy on our bayonets?"

"No! no! the Emperor! the Emperor!"

The veteran rose from his bale of hay and cast upon the assemblage that black look laden with miseries, emergencies, and sufferings, which distinguishes the faces of old soldiers. He seized his jacket by the two front flaps, raised them as if about to pack the knapsack which formerly held his clothes, his shoes, and all his fortune; then he threw the weight of his body on his left leg, advanced the right, and yielded with a good grace to the demands of the company. After pushing his gray hair to one side to show his forehead, he raised his head towards heaven that he might, as it were, put himself on the level of the gigantic history he was about to relate.

"You see, my friends, Napoleon was born in Corsica, a French island, warmed by the sun of Italy, where it is like a furnace, and where the people kill each other, from father to son, all about nothing: that's a way they have. To begin with the marvel of the thing, —his mother, who was the handsomest woman of her time, and a knowing one, bethought herself of dedicating him to God, so that he might escape the dangers of his childhood and future life; for she had dreamed that the world was set on fire the day he was born. And indeed it was a prophecy! So she asked God to protect him, on condition that Napoleon should restore His holy religion, which was then cast to the ground. Well, that was agreed upon, and we shall see what came of it.

"Follow me closely, and tell me if what you hear is in the nature of man.

"Sure and certain it is that none but a man who conceived the idea of making a compact with God could have passed unhurt through the enemy's lines, through cannon-balls, and discharges of grape-shot that swept the rest of us off like flies, and always respected his head. I had a proof of that—I myself—at Eylau. I see him now, as he rode up a height, took his field glass, looked at the battle, and said, 'A11 goes well.' One of those plumed busy-bodies, who plagued him considerably and followed him everywhere, even to his meals, so they said, thought to play the wag, and took the



Emperor's place as he rode away. Ho! in a twinkling, head and plume were off! You must understand that Napoleon had promised to keep the secret of his compact all

Page 350

to himself. That's why all those who followed him, even his nearest friends, fell like nuts,—Duroc, Bessieres, Lannes,—all strong as steel bars, though *he* could bend them as he pleased. Besides,—to prove he was the child of God, and made to be the father of soldiers,—was he ever known to be lieutenant or captain? no, no; commander-in-chief from the start. He didn't look to be more than twenty-four years of age when he was an old general at the taking of Toulon, where he first began to show the others that they knew nothing about manoeuvring cannon.

“After that, down came our slip of a general to command the grand army of Italy, which hadn't bread nor munitions, nor shoes, nor coats,—a poor army, as naked as a worm. ‘My friends,’ said he, ‘here we are together. Get it into your pates that fifteen days from now you will be conquerors,—new clothes, good gaiters, famous shoes, and every man with a great-coat; but, my children, to get these things you must march to Milan where they are.’ And we marched. France, crushed as flat as a bedbug, straightened up. We were thirty thousand barefeet against eighty thousand Austrian bullies, all fine men, well set up. I see 'em now! But Napoleon—he was then only Bonaparte—he knew how to put the courage into us! We marched by night, and we marched by day; we slapped their faces at Montenotte, we thrashed 'em at Rivoli, Lodi, Arcole, Millesimo, and we never let 'em up. A soldier gets the taste of conquest. So Napoleon whirled round those Austrian generals, who didn't know where to poke themselves to get out of his way, and he pelted 'em well,—nipped off ten thousand men at a blow sometimes, by getting round them with fifteen hundred Frenchmen, and then he gleaned as he pleased. He took their cannon, their supplies, their money, their munitions, in short, all they had that was good to take. He fought them and beat them on the mountains, he drove them into the rivers and seas, he bit 'em in the air, he devoured 'em on the ground, and he lashed 'em everywhere. Hey! the grand army feathered itself well; for, d'ye see, the Emperor, who was also a wit, called up the inhabitants and told them he was there to deliver them. So after that the natives lodged and cherished us; the women too, and very judicious they were. Now here's the end of it. In Ventose, '96,—in those times that was the month of March of to-day,—we lay cuddled in a corner of Savoy with the marmots; and yet, before that campaign was over, we were masters of Italy, just as Napoleon had predicted; and by the following March—in a single year and two campaigns—he had brought us within sight of Vienna. 'Twas a clean sweep. We devoured their armies, one after the other, and made an end of four Austrian generals. One old fellow, with white hair, was roasted like a rat in the straw at Mantua. Kings begged for mercy on their knees! Peace was won.

“Could a *man* have done that? No; God helped him, to a certainty!

Page 351

“He divided himself up like the loaves in the Gospel, commanded the battle by day, planned it by night; going and coming, for the sentinels saw him,—never eating, never sleeping. So, seeing these prodigies, the soldiers adopted him for their father. Forward, march! Then those others, the rulers in Paris, seeing this, said to themselves:—‘Here’s a bold one that seems to get his orders from the skies; he’s likely to put his paw on France. We must let him loose on Asia; we will send him to America, perhaps that will satisfy him.’ But ’twas *written above* for him, as it was for Jesus Christ. The command went forth that he should go to Egypt. See again his resemblance to the Son of God. But that’s not all. He called together his best veterans, his fire-eaters, the ones he had particularly put the devil into, and he said to them like this:—‘My friends, they have given us Egypt to chew up, just to keep us busy, but we’ll swallow it whole in a couple of campaigns, as we did Italy. The common soldiers shall be princes and have the land for their own. Forward, march!’ ‘Forward, march!’ cried the sergeants, and there we were at Toulon, road to Egypt. At that time the English had all their ships in the sea; but when we embarked Napoleon said, ‘They won’t see us. It is just as well that you should know from this time forth that your general has got his star in the sky, which guides and protects us.’ What was said was done. Passing over the sea, we took Malta like an orange, just to quench his thirst for victory; for he was a man who couldn’t live and do nothing.

“So here we are in Egypt. Good. Once here, other orders. The Egyptians, d’ye see, are men who, ever since the earth was, have had giants for sovereigns, and armies as numerous as ants; for, you must understand, that’s the land of genii and crocodiles, where they’ve built pyramids as big as our mountains, and buried their kings under them to keep them fresh,—an idea that pleased ’em mightily. So then, after we disembarked, the Little Corporal said to us, ‘My children, the country you are going to conquer has a lot of gods that you must respect; because Frenchmen ought to be friends with everybody, and fight the nations without vexing the inhabitants. Get it into your skulls that you are not to touch anything at first, for it is all going to be yours soon. Forward, march!’ So far, so good. But all those people of Africa, to whom Napoleon was foretold under the name of Kebir-Bonaberdis,—a word of their lingo that means ‘the sultan fires,’—were afraid as the devil of him. So the Grand Turk, and Asia, and Africa, had recourse to magic. They sent us a demon, named the Mahdi, supposed to have descended from heaven on a white horse, which, like its master, was bullet-proof; and both of them lived on air, without food to support them. There are some that say they saw them; but I can’t give you any reasons to make you certain about that. The rulers of Arabia and the Mamelukes tried to make their troopers believe that the Mahdi could keep them from perishing in battle; and they pretended he was an angel sent from heaven to fight Napoleon and get back Solomon’s seal. Solomon’s seal was part of their paraphernalia which they vowed our General had stolen. You must understand that we’d given ’em a good many wry faces, in spite of what he had said to us.

Page 352

“Now, tell me how they knew that Napoleon had a pact with God? Was that natural, d’ye think?”

“They held to it in their minds that Napoleon commanded the genii, and could pass hither and thither in the twinkling of an eye, like a bird. The fact is, he was everywhere. At last, it came to his carrying off a queen, beautiful as the dawn, for whom he had offered all his treasure, and diamonds as big as pigeons’ eggs,—a bargain which the Mameluke to whom she particularly belonged positively refused, although he had several others. Such matters, when they come to that pass, can’t be settled without a great many battles; and, indeed, there was no scarcity of battles; there was fighting enough to please everybody. We were in line at Alexandria, at Gizeh, and before the Pyramids; we marched in the sun and through the sand, where some, who had the dazzles, saw water that they couldn’t drink, and shade where their flesh was roasted. But we made short work of the Mamelukes; and everybody else yielded at the voice of Napoleon, who took possession of Upper and Lower Egypt, Arabia, and even the capitals of kingdoms that were no more, where there were thousand of statues and all the plagues of Egypt, more particularly lizards,—a mammoth of a country where everybody could take his acres of land for as little as he pleased. Well, while Napoleon was busy with his affairs inland,—where he had it in his head to do fine things,—the English burned his fleet at Aboukir; for they were always looking about them to annoy us. But Napoleon, who had the respect of the East and of the West, whom the Pope called his son, and the cousin of Mohammed called ‘his dear father,’ resolved to punish England, and get hold of India in exchange for his fleet. He was just about to take us across the Red Sea into Asia, a country where there are diamonds and gold to pay the soldiers and palaces for bivouacs, when the Mahdi made a treaty with the Plague, and sent it down to hinder our victories. Halt! The army to a man defiled at that parade; and few there were who came back on their feet. Dying soldiers couldn’t take Saint-Jean d’Acre, though they rushed at it three times with generous and martial obstinacy. The Plague was the strongest. No saying to that enemy, ‘My good friend.’ Every soldier lay ill. Napoleon alone was fresh as a rose, and the whole army saw him drinking in pestilence without its doing him a bit of harm.

“Ha! my friends! will you tell me that *that’s* in the nature of a mere man?”

“The Mamelukes knowing we were all in the ambulances, thought they could stop the way; but that sort of joke wouldn’t do with Napoleon. So he said to his demons, his veterans, those that had the toughest hide, ‘Go, clear me the way.’ Junot, a sabre of the first cut, and his particular friend, took a thousand men, no more, and ripped up the army of the pacha who had had the presumption to put himself in the way. After that, we came back to headquarters

Page 353

at Cairo. Now, here's another side of the story. Napoleon absent, France was letting herself be ruined by the rulers in Paris, who kept back the pay of the soldiers of the other armies, and their clothing, and their rations; left them to die of hunger, and expected them to lay down the law to the universe without taking any trouble to help them. Idiots! who amused themselves by chattering, instead of putting their own hands in the dough. Well, that's how it happened that our armies were beaten, and the frontiers of France were encroached upon: THE MAN was not there. Now observe, I say *man* because that's what they called him; but 'twas nonsense, for he had a star and all its belongings; it was we who were only men. He taught history to France after his famous battle of Aboukir, where, without losing more than three hundred men, and with a single division, he vanquished the grand army of the Turk, seventy-five thousand strong, and hustled more than half of it into the sea, r-r-rah!

"That was his last thunder-clap in Egypt. He said to himself, seeing the way things were going in Paris, 'I am the savior of France. I know it, and I must go.' But, understand me, the army didn't know he was going, or they'd have kept him by force and made him Emperor of the East. So now we were sad; for He was gone who was all our joy. He left the command to Kleber, a big mastiff, who came off duty at Cairo, assassinated by an Egyptian, whom they put to death by impaling him on a bayonet; that's the way they guillotine people down there. But it makes 'em suffer so much that a soldier had pity on the criminal and gave him his canteen; and then, as soon as the Egyptian had drunk his fill, he gave up the ghost with all the pleasure in life. But that's a trifle we couldn't laugh at then. Napoleon embarked in a cockleshell, a little skiff that was nothing at all, though 'twas called 'Fortune'; and in a twinkling, under the nose of England, who was blockading him with ships of the line, frigates, and anything that could hoist a sail, he crossed over, and there he was in France. For he always had the power, mind you, of crossing the seas at one straddle.

"Was that a human man? Bah!

"So, one minute he is at Frejus, the next in Paris. There, they all adore him; but he summons the government. 'What have you done with my children, the soldiers?' he says to the lawyers. 'You're a mob of rascally scribblers; you are making France a mess of pottage, and snapping your fingers at what people think of you. It won't do; and I speak the opinion of everybody.' So, on that, they wanted to battle with him and kill him—click! he had 'em locked up in barracks, or flying out of windows, or drafted among his followers, where they were as mute as fishes, and as pliable as a quid of tobacco. After that stroke—consul! And then, as it was not for him to doubt the Supreme Being, he fulfilled his promise to the good God, who, you see, had kept

Page 354

His word to him. He gave Him back his churches, and re-established His religion; the bells rang for God and for him: and lo! everybody was pleased: *primo*, the priests, whom he saved from being harassed; *secundo*, the bourgeois, who thought only of their trade, and no longer had to fear the *rapiamus* of the law, which had got to be unjust; *tertio*, the nobles, for he forbade they should be killed, as, unfortunately, the people had got the habit of doing.

“But he still had the Enemy to wipe out; and he wasn’t the man to go to sleep at a mess-table, because, d’ye see, his eye looked over the whole earth as if it were no bigger than a man’s head. So then he appeared in Italy, like as though he had stuck his head through the window. One glance was enough. The Austrians were swallowed up at Marengo like so many gudgeons by a whale! Ouf! The French eagles sang their paeans so loud that all the world heard them—and it sufficed! ‘We won’t play that game any more,’ said the German. ‘Enough, enough!’ said all the rest.

“To sum up: Europe backed down, England knocked under. General peace; and the kings and the people made believe kiss each other. That’s the time when the Emperor invented the Legion of Honor—and a fine thing, too. ‘In France’—this is what he said at Boulogne before the whole army—‘every man is brave. So the citizen who does a fine action shall be sister to the soldier, and the soldier shall be his brother, and the two shall be one under the flag of honor.’

“We, who were down in Egypt, now came home. All was changed! He left us general, and hey! in a twinkling we found him EMPEROR. France gave herself to him, like a fine girl to a lancer. When it was done—to the satisfaction of all, as you may say—a sacred ceremony took place, the like of which was never seen under the canopy of the skies. The Pope and the cardinals, in their red and gold vestments, crossed the Alps expressly to crown him before the army and the people, who clapped their hands. There is one thing that I should do very wrong not to tell you. In Egypt, in the desert close to Syria, the RED MAN came to him on the Mount of Moses, and said, ‘All is well.’ Then, at Marengo, the night before the victory, the same Red Man appeared before him for the second time, standing erect and saying, ‘Thou shalt see the world at thy feet; thou shalt be Emperor of France, King of Italy, master of Holland, sovereign of Spain, Portugal, and the Illyrian provinces, protector of Germany, savior of Poland, first eagle of the Legion of Honor—all.’ This Red Man, you understand, was his genius, his spirit,—a sort of satellite who served him, as some say, to communicate with his star. I never really believed that. But the Red Man himself is a true fact. Napoleon spoke of him, and said he came to him in troubled moments, and lived in the palace of the Tuileries under the roof. So, on the day of the coronation, Napoleon saw him for the third time; and they were in consultation over many things.

Page 355

“After that, Napoleon went to Milan to be crowned king of Italy, and there the grand triumph of the soldier began. Every man who could write was made an officer. Down came pensions; it rained duchies; treasures poured in for the staff which didn’t cost France a penny; and the Legion of Honor provided incomes for the private soldiers,—of which I receive mine to this day. So here were the armies maintained as never before on this earth. But besides that, the Emperor, knowing that he was to be the emperor of the whole world, bethought him of the bourgeois, and to please them he built fairy monuments, after their own ideas, in places where you’d never think to find any. For instance, suppose you were coming back from Spain and going to Berlin—well, you’d find triumphal arches along the way, with common soldiers sculptured on the stone, every bit the same as generals. In two or three years, and without imposing taxes on any of you, Napoleon filled his vaults with gold, built palaces, made bridges, roads, scholars, fetes, laws, vessels, harbors, and spent millions upon millions,—such enormous sums that he could, so they tell me, have paved France from end to end with five-franc pieces, if he had had a mind to.

“Now, when he sat at ease on his throne, and was master of all, so that Europe waited his permission to do his bidding, he remembered his four brothers and his three sisters, and he said to us, as it might be in conversation, in an order of the day, ‘My children, is it right that the blood relations of your Emperor should be begging their bread? No. I wish to see them in splendor like myself. It becomes, therefore, absolutely necessary to conquer a kingdom for each of them,—to the end that Frenchmen may be masters over all lands, that the soldiers of the Guard shall make the whole earth tremble, that France may spit where she likes, and that all the nations shall say to her, as it is written on my copper coins, ‘*God protects you!*’ ‘Agreed,’ cried the army. ‘We’ll go fish for thy kingdoms with our bayonets.’ Ha! there was no backing down, don’t you see! If he had taken it into his head to conquer the moon, we should have made ready, packed knapsacks, and clambered up; happily, he didn’t think of it. The kings of the countries, who liked their comfortable thrones, were naturally loathe to budge, and had to have their ears pulled; so then—Forward, march! We did march; we got there; and the earth once more trembled to its centre. Hey! the men and the shoes he used up in those days! The enemy dealt us such blows that none but the grand army could have stood the fatigue of it. But you are not ignorant that a Frenchman is born a philosopher, and knows that a little sooner, or a little later, he has got to die. So we were ready to die without a word, for we liked to see the Emperor doing *that* on the geographies.”

Here the narrator nimbly described a circle with his foot on the floor of the barn.

Page 356

“And Napoleon said, ‘There, that’s to be a kingdom.’ And a kingdom it was. Ha! the good times! The colonels were generals; the generals, marshals; and the marshals, kings. There’s one of ’em still on his throne, to prove it to Europe; but he’s a Gascon and a traitor to France for keeping that crown; and he doesn’t blush for shame as he ought to do, because crowns, don’t you see, are made of gold. I who am speaking to you, I have seen, in Paris, eleven kings and a mob of princes surrounding Napoleon like the rays of the sun. You understand, of course, that every soldier had the chance to mount a throne, provided always he had the merit; so a corporal of the Guard was a sight to be looked at as he walked along, for each man had his share in the victory, and ’twas plainly set forth in the bulletin. What victories they were! Austerlitz, where the army manoeuvred as if on parade; Eylau, where we drowned the Russians in a lake, as though Napoleon had blown them into it with the breath of his mouth; Wagram, where the army fought for three days without grumbling. We won as many battles as there are saints in the calendar. It was proved then beyond a doubt, that Napoleon had the sword of God in his scabbard. The soldiers were his friends; he made them his children; he looked after us; he saw that we had shoes, and shirts, and great-coats, and bread, and cartridges; but he always kept up his majesty; for, don’t you see, ’twas his business to reign. No matter for that, however; a sergeant, and even a common soldier could say to him, ‘My Emperor,’ just as you say to me sometimes, ‘My good friend.’ He gave us an answer if we appealed to him; he slept in the snow like the rest of us; and indeed, he had almost the air of a human man. I who speak to you, I have seen him with his feet among the grapeshot, and no more uneasy than you are now,—standing steady, looking through his field glass, and minding his business. ’Twas that kept the rest of us quiet. I don’t know how he did it, but when he spoke he made our hearts burn within us; and to show him we were his children, incapable of balking, didn’t we rush at the mouths of the rascally cannon, that belched and vomited shot and shell without so much as saying, ‘Look out!’ Why! the dying must needs raise their heads to salute him and cry, ‘LONG LIVE THE EMPEROR!’

“I ask you, was that natural? would they have done that for a human man?

“Well, after he had settled the world, the Empress Josephine, his wife, a good woman all the same, managed matters so that she did not bear him any children, and he was obliged to give her up, though he loved her considerably. But, you see, he had to have little ones for reasons of state. Hearing of this, all the sovereigns of Europe quarreled as to which of them should give him a wife. And he married, so they told us, an Austrian archduchess, daughter of Caesar, an ancient man about whom people talk a good deal, and not in France only,—where

Page 357

any one will tell you what he did,—but in Europe. It is all true, for I myself who address you at this moment, I have been on the Danube, and have seen the remains of a bridge built by that man, who, it seems, was a relation of Napoleon in Rome, and that's how the Emperor got the inheritance of that city for his son. So after the marriage, which was a fete for the whole world, and in honor of which he released the people of ten years' taxes,—which they had to pay all the same, however, because the assessors didn't take account of what he said,—his wife had a little one, who was King of Rome. Now, there's a thing that had never been seen on this earth; never before was a child born a king with his father living. On that day a balloon went up in Paris to tell the news to Rome, and that balloon made the journey in one day!

“Now, is there any man among you who will stand up and declare to me that all that was human? No; it was *written above*; and may the scurvy seize them who deny that he was sent by God himself for the triumph of France!

“Well, here's the Emperor of Russia, that used to be his friend, he gets angry because Napoleon didn't marry a Russian; so he joins with the English, our enemies,—to whom our Emperor always wanted to say a couple of words in their burrows, only he was prevented. Napoleon gets angry too; an end had to be put to such doings; so he says to us:—‘Soldiers! you have been masters of every capital in Europe, except Moscow, which is now the ally of England. To conquer England, and India which belongs to the English, it becomes our peremptory duty to go to Moscow.’ Then he assembled the greatest army that ever trailed its gaiters over the globe; and so marvelously in hand it was that he reviewed a million of men in one day. ‘Hourra! cried the Russians. Down came all Russia and those animals of Cossacks in a flock. ‘Twas nation against nation, a general hurly-burly, and beware who could; ‘Asia against Europe,’ as the Red Man had foretold to Napoleon. ‘Enough,’ cried the Emperor, ‘I’ll be ready.’

“So now, sure enough, came all the kings, as the Red Man had said, to lick Napoleon's hand! Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, Poland, Italy, every one of them were with us, flattering us; ah, it was fine! The eagles never cawed so loud as at those parades, perched high above the banners of all Europe. The Poles were bursting with joy, because Napoleon was going to release them; and that's why France and Poland are brothers to this day. ‘Russia is ours,’ cried the army. We plunged into it well supplied; we marched and we marched,—no Russians. At last we found the brutes entrenched on the banks of the Moskova. That's where I won my cross, and I've got the right to say it was a damnable battle. This was how it came about. The Emperor was anxious. He had seen the Red Man, who said to him, ‘My son, you are going too fast for your feet; you will lack men; friends will betray you.’ So the

Page 358

Emperor offered peace. But before signing, 'Let us drub those Russians!' he said to us. 'Done!' cried the army. 'Forward, march!' said the sergeants. My clothes were in rags, my shoes worn out, from trudging along those roads, which are very uncomfortable ones; but no matter! I said to myself, 'As it's the last of our earthquakings, I'll go into it, tooth and nail!' We were drawn up in line before the great ravine,—front seats, as 'twere. Signal given; and seven hundred pieces of artillery began a conversation that would bring the blood from your ears. Then—must do justice to one's enemies—the Russians let themselves be killed like Frenchmen; they wouldn't give way; we couldn't advance. 'Forward,' some one cried, 'here comes the Emperor!' True enough; he passed at a gallop, waving his hand to let us know we must take the redoubt. He inspired us; on we ran, I was the first in the ravine. Ha! my God! how the lieutenants fell, and the colonels, and the soldiers! No matter! all the more shoes for those that had none, and epaulets for the clever ones who knew how to read. 'Victory!' cried the whole line; 'Victory!'—and, would you believe it? a thing never seen before, there lay twenty-five thousand Frenchmen on the ground. 'Twas like mowing down a wheat-field; only in place of the ears of wheat put the heads of men! We were sobered by this time,—those who were left alive. The MAN rode up; we made a circle round him. Ha! he knew how to cajole his children; he could be amiable when he liked, and feed 'em with words when their stomachs were ravenous with the hunger of wolves. Flatterer! he distributed the crosses himself, he uncovered to the dead, and then he cried to us, 'On! to Moscow!' 'To Moscow!' answered the army.

"We took Moscow. Would you believe it? the Russians burned their own city! 'Twas a haystack six miles square, and it blazed for two days. The buildings crashed like slates, and showers of melted iron and lead rained down upon us, which was naturally horrible. I may say to you plainly, it was like a flash of lightning on our disasters. The Emperor said, 'We have done enough; my soldiers shall rest here.' So we rested awhile, just to get the breath into our bodies and the flesh on our bones, for we were really tired. We took possession of the golden cross that was on the Kremlin; and every soldier brought away with him a small fortune. But out there the winter sets in a month earlier,—a thing those fools of science didn't properly explain. So, coming back, the cold nipped us. No longer an army—do you hear me?—no longer any generals, no longer any sergeants even. 'Twas the reign of wretchedness and hunger,—a reign of equality at last. No one thought of anything but to see France once more; no one stooped to pick up his gun or his money if he dropped them; each man followed his nose, and went as he pleased without caring for glory. The weather was so bad the Emperor couldn't see his star; there was something between him and the skies. Poor man! it made him ill to see his eagles flying away from victory. Ah! 'twas a mortal blow, you may believe me.

Page 359

“Well, we got to the Beresina. My friends, I can affirm to you by all that is most sacred, by my honor, that since mankind came into the world, never, never, was there seen such a fricassee of an army—guns, carriages, artillery wagons—in the midst of such snows, under such relentless skies! The muzzles of the muskets burned our hands if we touched them, the iron was so cold. It was there that the army was saved by the pontoniers, who were firm at their post; and there that Gondrin—sole survivor of the men who were bold enough to go into the water and build the bridges by which the army crossed—that Gondrin, here present, admirably conducted himself, and saved us from the Russians, who, I must tell you, still respected the grand army, remembering its victories. And,” he added, pointing to Gondrin, who was gazing at him with the peculiar attention of a deaf man, “Gondrin is a finished soldier, a soldier who is honor itself, and he merits your highest esteem.”

“I saw the Emperor,” he resumed, “standing by the bridge, motionless, not feeling the cold—was that human? He looked at the destruction of his treasure, his friends, his old Egyptians. Bah! all that passed him, women, army wagons, artillery, all were shattered, destroyed, ruined. The bravest carried the eagles; for the eagles, d’ye see, were France, the nation, all of you! they were the civil and the military honor that must be kept pure; could their heads be lowered because of the cold? It was only near the Emperor that we warmed ourselves, because when he was in danger we ran, frozen as we were—we, who wouldn’t have stretched a hand to save a friend. They told us he wept at night over his poor family of soldiers. Ah! none but he and Frenchmen could have got themselves out of that business.

“We did get out, but with losses, great losses, as I tell you. The Allies captured our provisions. Men began to betray him, as the Red Man predicted. Those chatterers in Paris, who had held their tongues after the Imperial Guard was formed, now thought he was dead; so they hoodwinked the prefect of police, and hatched a conspiracy to overthrow the empire. He heard of it; it worried him. He left us, saying: ‘Adieu, my children; guard the outposts; I shall return to you.’ Bah! without him nothing went right; the generals lost their heads; the marshals talked nonsense and committed follies; but that was not surprising, for Napoleon, who was kind, had fed ’em on gold; they had got as fat as lard, and wouldn’t stir; some stayed in camp when they ought to have been warming the backs of the enemy who was between us and France.

“But the Emperor came back, and he brought recruits, famous recruits; he changed their backbone and made ’em dogs of war, fit to set their teeth into anything; and he brought a guard of honor, a fine body indeed!—all bourgeois, who melted away like butter on a gridiron.

Page 360

“Well, spite of our stern bearing, here's everything going against us; and yet the army did prodigies of valor. Then came battles on the mountains, nations against nations,—Dresden, Lutzen, Bautzen. Remember these days, all of you, for 'twas then that Frenchmen were so particularly heroic that a good grenadier only lasted six months. We triumphed always; yet there were those English, in our rear, rousing revolts against us with their lies! No matter, we cut our way home through the whole pack of the nations. Wherever the Emperor showed himself we followed him; for if, by sea or land, he gave us the word ‘Go!’ we went. At last, we were in France; and many a poor foot-soldier felt the air of his own country restore his soul to satisfaction, spite of the wintry weather. I can say for myself that it refreshed my life. Well, next, our business was to defend France, our country, our beautiful France, against all Europe, which resented our having laid down the law to the Russians, and pushed them back into their dens, so that they couldn't eat us up alive, as northern nations, who are dainty and like southern flesh, have a habit of doing,—at least, so I've heard some generals say. Then the Emperor saw his own father-in-law, his friends whom he had made kings, and the scoundrels to whom he had given back their thrones, all against him. Even Frenchmen, and allies in our own ranks, turned against us under secret orders, as at the battle of Leipsic. Would common soldiers have been capable of such wickedness? Three times a day men were false to their word,—and they called themselves princes!

“So, then, France was invaded. Wherever the Emperor showed his lion face, the enemy retreated; and he did more prodigies in defending France than ever he had done in conquering Italy, the East, Spain, Europe, and Russia. He meant to bury every invader under the sod, and teach 'em to respect the soil of France. So he let them get to Paris, that he might swallow them at a mouthful, and rise to the height of his genius in a battle greater than all the rest,—a mother-battle, as 'twere. But there, there! the Parisians were afraid for their twopenny skins, and their trumpery shops; they opened the gates. Then the Ragusades began, and happiness ended. The Empress was fooled, and the white banner flaunted from the windows. The generals whom he had made his nearest friends abandoned him for the Bourbons,—a set of people no one had heard tell of. The Emperor bade us farewell at Fontainebleau:—‘Soldiers!’—I can hear him now; we wept like children; the flags and the eagles were lowered as if for a funeral: it was, I may well say it to you, it was the funeral of the Empire; her dapper armies were nothing now but skeletons. So he said to us, standing there on the portico of his palace:—‘My soldiers! we are vanquished by treachery; but we shall meet in heaven, the country of the brave. Defend my child, whom I commit to you. Long live Napoleon II!’ He meant to die, that no man should look upon Napoleon vanquished; he took poison, enough to have killed a regiment, because, like Jesus Christ before his Passion, he thought himself abandoned of God and his talisman. But the poison did not hurt him.

Page 361

“See again! he found he was immortal.

“Sure of himself, knowing he must ever be THE EMPEROR, he went for a while to an island to study out the nature of these others, who, you may be sure, committed follies without end. Whilst he bided his time down there, the Chinese, and the wild men on the coast of Africa, and the Barbary States, and others who are not at all accommodating, knew so well he was more than man that they respected his tent, saying to touch it would be to offend God. Thus, d’ye see, when these others turned him from the doors of his own France, he still reigned over the whole world. Before long he embarked in the same little cockleshell of a boat he had had in Egypt, sailed round the beard of the English, set foot in France, and France acclaimed him. The sacred cuckoo flew from spire to spire; all France cried out with one voice, ‘LONG LIVE THE EMPEROR!’ In this region, here, the enthusiasm for that wonder of the ages was, I may say, solid. Dauphine behaved well; and I am particularly pleased to know that her people wept when they saw, once more, the gray overcoat. March first it was, when Napoleon landed with two hundred men to conquer that kingdom of France and of Navarre, which on the twentieth of the same month was again the French Empire. On that day our MAN was in Paris; he had made a clean sweep, recovered his dear France, and gathered his veterans together by saying no more than three words, ‘I am here.’

“‘Twas the greatest miracle God had yet done! Before *him*, did ever man recover an empire by showing his hat? And these others, who thought they had subdued France! Not they! At sight of the eagles, a national army sprang up, and we marched to Waterloo. There, the Guard died at one blow. Napoleon, in despair, threw himself three times before the cannon of the enemy without obtaining death. We saw that. The battle was lost. That night the Emperor called his old soldiers to him; on the field soaked with our blood he burned his banner and his eagles,—his poor eagles, ever victorious, who cried ‘Forward’ in the battles, and had flown the length and breadth of Europe, *they* were saved the infamy of belonging to the enemy: all the treasures of England couldn’t get her a tail-feather of them. No more eagles!—the rest is well known. The Red Man went over to the Bourbons, like the scoundrel that he is. France is crushed; the soldier is nothing; they deprive him of his dues; they discharge him to make room for broken-down nobles—ah, ’tis pitiable! They seized Napoleon by treachery; the English nailed him on a desert island in mid-ocean on a rock raised ten thousand feet above the earth; and there he is, and will be, till the Red Man gives him back his power for the happiness of France. These others say he’s dead. Ha, dead! ’Tis easy to see they don’t know Him. They tell that fib to catch the people, and feel safe in their hovel of a government. Listen! the truth at the bottom

Page 362

of it all is that his friends have left him alone on the desert island to fulfil a prophecy, for I forgot to say that his name, Napoleon, means 'lion of the desert.' Now this that I tell you is true as the Gospel. All other tales that you hear about the Emperor are follies without common-sense; because, d'ye see, God never gave to child of woman born the right to stamp his name in red as *he* did, on the earth, which forever shall remember him! Long live Napoleon, the father of his people and of the soldier!"

"Long live General Eble!" cried the pontonier.

"How happened it you were not killed in the ravine at Moskova?" asked a peasant woman.

"How do I know? We went in a regiment, we came out a hundred foot-soldiers; none but the lines were capable of taking that redoubt: the infantry, d'ye see, that's the real army."

"And the cavalry! what of that?" cried Genastas, letting himself roll from the top of the hay, and appearing to us with a suddenness which made the bravest utter a cry of terror. "Eh! my old veteran, you forget the red lancers of Poniatowski, the cuirassiers, the dragoons! they that shook the earth when Napoleon, impatient that the victory was delayed, said to Murat, 'Sire, cut them in two.' Ha, we were off! first at a trot, then at a gallop, 'one, two,' and the enemy's line was cut in halves like an apple with a knife. A charge of cavalry, my old hero! why, 'tis a column of cannon balls!"

"How about the pontoniers?" cried Gondrin.

"My children," said Genastas, becoming suddenly quite ashamed of his sortie when he saw himself in the midst of a silent and bewildered group, "there are no spies here,—see, take this and drink to the Little Corporal."

"LONG LIVE THE EMPEROR!" cried all the people present, with one voice.

"Hush, my children!" said the officer, struggling to control his emotion. "Hush! *he is dead*. He died saying, 'Glory, France, and battle.' My friends, he had to die, he! but his memory—never!"

Goguelat made a gesture of disbelief; then he said in a low voice to those nearest, "The officer is still in the service, and he's told to tell the people the Emperor is dead. We mustn't be angry with him, because, d'ye see, a soldier has to obey orders."

As Genastas left the barn he heard the Fosseuse say, "That officer is a friend of the Emperor and of Monsieur Benassis." On that, all the people rushed to the door to get another sight of him, and by the light of the moon they saw the doctor take his arm.

"I committed a great folly," said Genestas. "Let us get home quickly. Those eagles—the cannon—the campaigns! I no longer knew where I was."

"What do you think of my Goguelat?" asked Benassis.

"Monsieur, so long as such tales are told, France will carry in her entrails the fourteen armies of the Republic, and may at any time renew the conversation of cannon with all Europe. That's my opinion."

Page 363

GEORGE BANCROFT

(1800-1891)

BY AUSTIN SCOTT

The life of George Bancroft was nearly conterminous with the nineteenth century. He was born at Worcester, Mass., October 3d, 1800, and died at Washington, D.C., January 17th, 1891. But it was not merely the stretch of his years that identified him with this century. In some respects he represented his time as no other of its men. He came into touch with many widely differing elements which made up its life and character. He spent most of his life in cities, but never lost the sense for country sights and sounds which central Massachusetts gave him in Worcester, his birthplace, and in Northampton, where he taught school. The home into which he was born offered him from his infancy a rich possession. His father was a Unitarian clergyman who wrote a 'Life of Washington' that was received with favor; thus things concerning God and country were his patrimony. Not without significance was a word of his mother which he recalled in his latest years, "My son, I do not wish you to become a rich man, but I would have you be an affluent man: *ad fluo*, always a little more coming in than going out."

To the advantages of his boyhood home and of Harvard College, to which he went as a lad of thirteen, the eager young student added the opportunity, then uncommon, of a systematic course of study in German, and won the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Goettingen in 1820. He had in a marked degree the characteristics of his countrymen, versatility and adaptability. Giving up an early purpose of fitting himself for the pulpit, he taught in Harvard, and helped to found a school of an advanced type at Northampton. Meantime he published a volume of verse, and found out that the passionate love of poetry which lasted through his life was not creative. At Northampton he published in 1828 a translation in two volumes of Heeren's 'History of the Political System of Europe,' and also edited two editions of a Latin Reader; but the duties of a schoolmaster's life were early thrown aside, and he could not be persuaded to resume them later when the headship of an important educational institution was offered to him. Together with the one great pursuit of his life, to which he remained true for sixty years, he delighted in the activities of a politician, the duties of a statesman, and the occupations of a man of affairs and of the world.

[Illustration: GEORGE BANCROFT.]

Bancroft received a large but insufficient vote as the Democratic candidate for the Governorship of Massachusetts, and for a time he held the office of Collector of the port of Boston. As Secretary of the Navy in the Cabinet of Polk, he rendered to his country

two distinct services of great value: he founded the Naval School at Annapolis, and by his prompt orders to the American commander in the Pacific waters he

Page 364

secured the acquisition of California for the United States. The special abilities he displayed in the Cabinet were such, so Polk thought, as to lead to his appointment as Minister to England in 1846. He was a diplomat of no mean order. President Johnson appointed him Minister to Germany in 1867, and Grant retained him at that post until 1874, as long as Bancroft desired it. During his stay there he concluded just naturalization treaties with Germany, and in a masterly way won from the Emperor, William I., as arbitrator, judgment in favor of the United States's claim over that of Great Britain in the Northwestern boundary dispute.

Always holding fast his one cherished object,—that of worthily writing the history of the United States,—Bancroft did not deny himself the pleasure of roaming in other fields. He wrote frequently on current topics, on literary, historical, and political subjects. His eulogies of Jackson and of Lincoln, pronounced before Congress, entitle him to the rank of an orator. He was very fond of studies in metaphysics, and Trendelenburg, the eminent German philosopher, said of him, “Bancroft knows Kant through and through.”

His home—whether in Boston, or in New York where he spent the middle portion of his life, or in Washington his abode for the last sixteen years, or during his residence abroad—was the scene of the occupations and delights which the highest culture craves. He was gladly welcomed to the inner circle of the finest minds of Germany, and the tribute of the German men of learning was unfeigned and universal when he quitted the country in 1874. Many of the best men of England and of France were among his warm friends. At his table were gathered from time to time some of the world's greatest thinkers,—men of science, soldiers, statesmen and men of affairs. Fond as he was of social joys, it was his daily pleasure to mount his horse and alone, or with a single companion, to ride where nature in her shy or in her exuberant mood inspired. One day, after he was eighty years old, he rode on his young, blooded Kentucky horse along the Virginia bank of the Potomac for more than thirty-six miles. He could be seen every day among the perfect roses of his garden at “Roseclyffe,” his Newport summer-home, often full of thought, at other times in wellnigh boisterous glee, always giving unstinted care and expense to the queen of flowers. The books in which he kept the record of the rose garden were almost as elaborate as those in which were entered the facts and fancies out of which his History grew. His home life was charming. By a careful use of opportunities and of his means he became an “affluent” man. He was twice married: both times a new source of refined domestic happiness long blessed his home, and new means for enlarged comfort and hospitality were added to his own. Two sons, children of his first wife, survived him.

Page 365

Some of Bancroft's characteristics were not unlike those of Jefferson. A constant tendency to idealize called up in him at times a feeling verging on impatience with the facts or the men that stood in the way of a theory or the accomplishment of a personal desire. He had a keen perception of an underlying or a final truth and professed warm love for it, whether in the large range of history or in the nexus of current politics: any one taking a different point of view at times was led to think that his facts, as he stated them, lay crosswise, and might therefore find the perspective out of drawing, but could not rightly impugn his good faith.

Although a genuine lover of his race and a believer in Democracy, he was not always ready to put implicit trust in the individual as being capable of exercising a wise judgment and the power of true self-direction. For man he avowed a perfect respect; among men his bearing showed now and then a trace of condescension. In controversies over disputed points of history—and he had many such—he meant to be fair and to anticipate the final verdict of truth, but overwhelming evidence was necessary to convince him that his judgment, formed after painstaking research, could be wrong. His ample love of justice, however, is proved by his passionate appreciation of the character of Washington, by his unswerving devotion to the conception of our national unity, both in its historical development and at the moment when it was imperiled by civil war, and by his hatred of slavery and of false financial policies. He took pleasure in giving generously, but always judiciously and without ostentation. On one occasion he, with a few of his friends, paid off the debt from the house of an eminent scholar; on another, he helped to rebuild for a great thinker the home which had been burned. At Harvard, more than fifty years after his graduation, he founded a traveling scholarship and named it in honor of the president of his college days.

As to the manner of his work, Bancroft laid large plans and gave to the details of their execution unwearied zeal. The scope of the 'History of the United States' as he planned it was admirable. In carrying it out he was persistent in acquiring materials, sparing no pains in his research at home and abroad, and no cost in securing original papers or exact copies and transcripts from the archives of England and France, Spain and Holland and Germany, from public libraries and from individuals; he fished in all waters and drew fish of all sorts into his net. He took great pains, and the secretaries whom he employed to aid him in his work were instructed likewise to take great pains, not only to enter facts in the reference books in their chronological order, but to make all possible cross-references to related facts. The books of his library, which was large and rich in treasures, he used as tools, and many of them were filled with cross references. In the fly-leaves of the books he read he made note with a word and the cited page of what the printed pages contained of interest to him or of value in his work.

Page 366

His mind was one of quick perceptions within a wide range, and always alert to grasp an idea in its manifold relations. It is remarkable, therefore, that he was very laborious in his method of work. He often struggled long with a thought for intellectual mastery. In giving it expression, his habit was to dictate rapidly and with enthusiasm and at great length, but he usually selected the final form after repeated efforts. His first draft of a chapter was revised again and again and condensed. One of his early volumes in its first manuscript form was eight times as long as when finally published. He had another striking habit, that of writing by topics rather than in strict chronological order, so that a chapter which was to find its place late in the volume was often completed before one which was to precede it. Partly by nature and perhaps partly by this practice, he had the power to carry on simultaneously several trains of thought. When preparing one of his public orations, it was remarked by one of his household that after an evening spent over a trifling game of bezique, the next morning found him well advanced beyond the point where the work had been seemingly laid down. He had the faculty of buoying a thought, knowing just where to take it up after an interruption and deftly splicing it in continuous line, sometimes after a long interval. When about to begin the preparation of the argument which was to sustain triumphantly the claim of the United States in the boundary question, he wrote from Berlin for copies of documents filed in the office of the Navy Department, which he remembered were there five-and-twenty years before.

The 'History of the United States from the Discovery of America to the Inauguration of Washington' is treated by Bancroft in three parts. The first, Colonial History from 1492 to 1748, occupies more than one fourth of his pages. The second part, the American Revolution, 1748 to 1782, claims more than one half of the entire work, and is divided into four epochs:—the first, 1748-1763, is entitled 'The Overthrow of the European Colonial System'; the second, 1763-1774, 'How Great Britain Estranged America'; the third, 1774-1776, 'America Declares Itself Independent'; the fourth, 1776-1782, 'The Independence of America is Acknowledged.' The last part, 'The History of the Formation of the Constitution,' 1782-1789, though published as a separate work, is essentially a continuation of the History proper, of which it forms in bulk rather more than one tenth.

If his services as a historian are to be judged by any one portion of his work rather than by another, the history of the formation of the Constitution affords the best test. In that the preceding work comes to fruition; the time of its writing, after the Civil War and the consequent settling of the one vexing question by the abolition of sectionalism, and when he was in the fullness of the experience of his own ripe years, was most opportune. Bancroft was equal

Page 367

to his opportunity. He does not teach us that the Constitution is the result of superhuman wisdom, nor on the other hand does he admit, as John Adams asserted, that however excellent, the Constitution was wrung “from the grinding necessity of a reluctant people.” He does not fail to point out the critical nature of the four years prior to the meeting of the Federal Convention; but he discerns that whatever occasions, whether transitory or for the time of “steady and commanding influence,” may help or hinder the formation of the now perfect union, its true cause was “an indwelling necessity” in the people to “form above the States a common constitution for the whole.”

Recognizing the fact that the primary cause for the true union was remote in origin and deep and persistent, Bancroft gives a retrospect of the steps toward union from the founding of the colonies to the close of the war for independence. Thenceforward, suggestions as to method or form of amending the Articles of Confederation, whether made by individuals, or State Legislatures, or by Congress, were in his view helps indeed to promote the movement; but they were first of all so many proofs that despite all the contrary wayward surface indications, the strong current was flowing independently toward the just and perfect union. Having acknowledged this fundamental fact of the critical years between Yorktown and the Constitution, the historian is free to give just and discriminating praise to all who shared at that time in redeeming the political hope of mankind, to give due but not exclusive honor to Washington and Thomas Paine, to Madison and Hamilton and their co-worthies.

The many attempts, isolated or systematic, during the period from 1781-1786, to reform the Articles of Confederation, were happily futile; but they were essential in the training of the people in the consciousness of the nature of the work for which they are responsible. The balances must come slowly to a poise. Not merely union strong and for a time effective, was needed, but union of a certain and unprecedented sort: one in which the true pledge of permanency for a continental republic was to be found in the federative principle, by which the highest activities of nation and of State were conditioned each by the welfare of the other. The people rightly felt, too, that a Congress of one house would be inadequate and dangerous. They waited in the midst of risks for the proper hour, and then, not reluctantly but resolutely, adopted the Constitution as a promising experiment in government.

Bancroft's treatment of the evolution of the second great organic act of this time—the Northwestern ordinance—is no less just and true to the facts. For two generations men had snatched at the laurels due to the creator of that matchless piece of legislation; to award them now to Jefferson, now to Nathan Dane, now to Rufus King, now to Manasseh Cutler. Bancroft calmly and clearly shows how the great law grew with the kindly aid and watchful care of these men and of others.

Page 368

The deliberations of the Federal Constitution are adequately recorded; and he gives fair relative recognition to the work and words of individuals, and the actions of State delegations in making the great adjustments between nation and States, between large and small and slave and free States. From his account we infer that the New Jersey plan was intended by its authors only for temporary use in securing equality for the States in one essential part of the government, while the men from Connecticut receive credit for the compromise which reconciled nationality with true State rights. Further to be noticed are the results of the exhaustive study which Bancroft gave to the matter of paper money, and to the meaning of the clause prohibiting the States from impairing the obligation of contracts. He devotes nearly one hundred pages to 'The People of the States in Judgment on the Constitution,' and rightly; for it is the final act of the separate States, and by it their individual wills are merged in the will of the people, which is one, though still politically distributed and active within State lines. His summary of the main principles of the Constitution is excellent; and he concludes with a worthy sketch of the organization of the first Congress under the Constitution, and of the inauguration of Washington as President.

In this last portion of the 'History,' while all of his merits as a historian are not conspicuous, neither are some of his chief defects. Here the tendency to philosophize, to marshal stately sentences, and to be discursive, is not so marked.

The first volume of Bancroft's 'History of the United States' was published in 1834, when the democratic spirit was finding its first full expression under Jackson, and when John Marshall was finishing his mighty task of revealing to the people of the United States the strength that lay in their organic law. As he put forth volume after volume at irregular intervals for fifty years, he in a measure continued this work of bringing to the exultant consciousness of the people the value of their possession of a continent of liberty and the realization of their responsibility. In the course of another generation, portions of this 'History of the United States' may begin to grow antiquated, though the most brilliant of contemporary journalists quite recently placed it among the ten books indispensable to every American; but time cannot take away Bancroft's good part in producing influences, which, however they may vary in form and force, will last throughout the nation's life.

[Illustration: Signature: Austin Scott]

THE BEGINNINGS OF VIRGINIA

From 'History of the United States'

Page 369

The period of success in planting Virginia had arrived; yet not till changes in European politics and society had molded the forms of colonization. The Reformation had broken the harmony of religious opinion; and differences in the Church began to constitute the basis of political parties. After the East Indies had been reached by doubling the southern promontory of Africa, the great commerce of the world was carried upon the ocean. The art of printing had been perfected and diffused; and the press spread intelligence and multiplied the facilities of instruction. The feudal institutions, which had been reared in the middle ages, were already undermined by the current of time and events, and, swaying from their base, threatened to fall. Productive industry had built up the fortunes and extended the influence of the active classes; while habits of indolence and expense had impaired the estates and diminished the power of the nobility. These changes produced corresponding results in the institutions which were to rise in America.

A revolution had equally occurred in the purposes for which voyages were undertaken. The hope of Columbus, as he sailed to the west, had been the discovery of a new passage to the East Indies. The passion for gold next became the prevailing motive. Then the islands and countries near the equator were made the tropical gardens of the Europeans. At last, the higher design was matured: to plant permanent Christian colonies; to establish for the oppressed and the enterprising places of refuge and abode; to found states in a temperate clime, with all the elements of independent existence.

In the imperfect condition of industry, a redundant population had existed in England even before the peace with Spain, which threw out of employment the gallant men who had served under Elizabeth by sea and land, and left them no option but to engage as mercenaries in the quarrels of strangers, or incur the hazards of "seeking a New World." The minds of many persons of intelligence and rank were directed to Virginia. The brave and ingenious Gosnold, who had himself witnessed the fertility of the western soil, long solicited the concurrence of his friends for the establishment of a colony, and at last prevailed with Edward Maria Wingfield, a merchant of the west of England, Robert Hunt, a clergyman of fortitude and modest worth, and John Smith, an adventurer of rarest qualities, to risk their lives and hopes of fortune in an expedition. For more than a year this little company revolved the project of a plantation. At the same time Sir Ferdinando Gorges was gathering information of the native Americans, whom he had received from Waymouth, and whose descriptions of the country, joined to the favorable views which he had already imbibed, filled him with the strongest desire of becoming a proprietary of domains beyond the Atlantic. Gorges was a man of wealth, rank and influence; he readily persuaded Sir John Popham, Lord Chief Justice

Page 370

of England, to share his intentions. Nor had the assigns of Raleigh become indifferent to "western planting"; which the most distinguished of them all, "industrious Hakluyt," the historian of maritime enterprise, still promoted by his personal exertions, his weight of character, and his invincible zeal. Possessed of whatever information could be derived from foreign sources and a correspondence with eminent navigators of his times, and anxiously watching the progress of Englishmen in the West, his extensive knowledge made him a counselor in every colonial enterprise.

The King of England, too timid to be active, yet too vain to be indifferent, favored the design of enlarging his dominions. He had attempted in Scotland the introduction of the arts of life among the Highlanders and the Western Isles, by the establishment of colonies; and the Scottish plantations which he founded in the northern counties of Ireland contributed to the affluence and the security of that island. When, therefore, a company of men of business and men of rank, formed by the experience of Gosnold, the enthusiasm of Smith, the perseverance of Hakluyt, the influence of Popham and Gorges, applied to James I. for leave "to deduce a colony into Virginia," the monarch, on the tenth of April, 1606, readily set his seal to an ample patent.

The first colonial charter, under which the English were planted in America, deserves careful consideration.

Appleton and Company, New York.

MEN AND GOVERNMENT IN EARLY MASSACHUSETTS

From 'History of the United States'

These better auspices, and the invitations of Winthrop, won new emigrants from Europe. During the long summer voyage of the two hundred passengers who freighted the Griffin, three sermons a day beguiled their weariness. Among them was Haynes, a man of very large estate, and larger affections; of a "heavenly" mind, and a spotless life; of rare sagacity, and accurate but unassuming judgment; by nature tolerant, ever a friend to freedom, ever conciliating peace; an able legislator; dear to the people by his benevolent virtues and his disinterested conduct. Then also came the most revered spiritual teachers of two commonwealths: the acute and subtle Cotton, the son of a Puritan lawyer; eminent in Cambridge as a scholar; quick in the nice perception of distinctions, and pliant in dialects; in manner persuasive rather than commanding; skilled in the fathers and the schoolmen, but finding all their wisdom compactly stored in Calvin; deeply devout by nature as well as habit from childhood; hating heresy and still precipitately eager to prevent evil actions by suppressing ill opinions, yet verging toward

a progress in truth and in religious freedom; an avowed enemy to democracy, which he feared as the blind despotism of animal instincts in the multitude, yet opposing hereditary power in all its forms; desiring a government of moral opinion, according to the laws

Page 371

of universal equity, and claiming “the ultimate resolution for the whole body of the people:” and Hooker, of vast endowments, a strong will and an energetic mind; ingenuous in his temper, and open in his professions; trained to benevolence by the discipline of affliction; versed in tolerance by his refuge in Holland; choleric, yet gentle in his affections; firm in his faith, yet readily yielding to the power of reason; the peer of the reformers, without their harshness; the devoted apostle to the humble and the poor, severe toward the proud, mild in his soothings of a wounded spirit, glowing with the raptures of devotion, and kindling with the messages of redeeming love; his eye, voice, gesture, and whole frame animate with the living vigor of heart-felt religion; public-spirited and lavishly charitable; and, “though persecutions and banishments had awaited him as one wave follows another,” ever serenely blessed with “a glorious peace of soul”; fixed in his trust in Providence, and in his adhesion to that cause of advancing civilization, which he cherished always, even while it remained to him a mystery. This was he whom, for his abilities and services, his contemporaries placed “in the first rank” of men; praising him as “the one rich pearl, with which Europe more than repaid America for the treasures from her coast.” The people to whom Hooker ministered had preceded him; as he landed they crowded about him with their welcome. “Now I live,” exclaimed he, as with open arms he embraced them, “now I live if ye stand fast in the Lord.”

Thus recruited, the little band in Massachusetts grew more jealous of its liberties. “The prophets in exile see the true forms of the house.” By a common impulse, the freemen of the towns chose deputies to consider in advance the duties of the general court. The charter plainly gave legislative power to the whole body of the freemen; if it allowed representatives, thought Winthrop, it was only by inference; and, as the whole people could not always assemble, the chief power, it was argued, lay necessarily with the assistants.

Far different was the reasoning of the people. To check the democratic tendency, Cotton, on the election day, preached to the assembled freemen against rotation in office. The right of an honest magistrate to his place was like that of a proprietor to his freehold. But the electors, now between three and four hundred in number, were bent on exercising “their absolute power,” and, reversing the decision of the pulpit, chose a new governor and deputy. The mode of taking the votes was at the same time reformed; and, instead of the erection of hands, the ballot-box was introduced. Thus “the people established a reformation of such things as they judged to be amiss in the government.”

It was further decreed that the whole body of the freemen should be convened only for the election of the magistrates: to these, with deputies to be chosen by the several towns, the powers of legislation and appointment were henceforward intrusted. The trading corporation was unconsciously become a representative democracy.

Page 372

The law against arbitrary taxation followed. None but the immediate representatives of the people might dispose of lands or raise money. Thus early did Massachusetts echo the voice of Virginia, like deep calling unto deep. The state was filled with the hum of village politicians; "the freemen of every town in the Bay were busy in inquiring into their liberties and privileges." With the exception of the principle of universal suffrage, now so happily established, the representative democracy was as perfect two centuries ago as it is to-day. Even the magistrates, who acted as judges, held their office by the annual popular choice. "Elections cannot be safe there long," said the lawyer Lechford. The same prediction has been made these two hundred years. The public mind, ever in perpetual agitation, is still easily shaken, even by slight and transient impulses; but, after all vibrations, it follows the laws of the moral world, and safely recovers its balance.

Appleton and Company, New York.

KING PHILIP'S WAR

From 'History of the United States'

Thus was Philip hurried into "his rebellion"; and he is reported to have wept as he heard that a white man's blood had been shed. He had kept his men about him in arms, and had welcomed every stranger; and yet, against his judgment and his will, he was involved in war. For what prospect had he of success? The English were united; the Indians had no alliance: the English made a common cause; half the Indians were allies of the English, or were quiet spectators of the fight: the English had guns enough; but few of the Indians were well armed, and they could get no new supplies: the English had towns for their shelter and safe retreat; the miserable wigwams of the natives were defenseless: the English had sure supplies of food; the Indians might easily lose their precarious stores. Frenzy prompted their rising. They rose without hope, and they fought without mercy. For them as a nation, there was no to-morrow.

The minds of the English were appalled by the horrors of the impending conflict, and superstition indulged in its wild inventions. At the time of the eclipse of the moon, you might have seen the figure of an Indian scalp imprinted on the centre of its disk. The perfect form of an Indian bow appeared in the sky. The sighing of the wind was like the whistling of bullets. Some heard invisible troops of horses gallop through the air, while others found the prophecy of calamities in the howling of the wolves.

At the very beginning of danger the colonists exerted their wonted energy. Volunteers from Massachusetts joined the troops from Plymouth; and, within a week from the commencement of hostilities, the insulated Pokanokets were driven from Mount Hope, and in less than a month Philip was a fugitive among the Nipmucks, the interior tribes of Massachusetts. The little army of the colonists then entered the territory of

Page 373

the Narragansetts, and from the reluctant tribe extorted a treaty of neutrality, with a promise to deliver up every hostile Indian. Victory seemed promptly assured. But it was only the commencement of horrors. Canonchet, the chief sachem of the Narragansetts, was the son of Miantonomoh; and could he forget his father's wrongs? Desolation extended along the whole frontier. Banished from his patrimony, where the pilgrims found a friend, and from his cabin, which had sheltered the exiles, Philip, with his warriors, spread through the country, awakening their brethren to a warfare of extermination.

The war, on the part of the Indians, was one of ambushes and surprises. They never once met the English in open field; but always, even if eightfold in numbers, fled timorously before infantry. They were secret as beasts of prey, skillful marksmen, and in part provided with firearms, fleet of foot, conversant with all the paths of the forest, patient of fatigue, and mad with a passion for rapine, vengeance, and destruction, retreating into swamps for their fastnesses, or hiding in the greenwood thickets, where the leaves muffled the eyes of the pursuer. By the rapidity of their descent, they seemed omnipresent among the scattered villages, which they ravished like a passing storm; and for a full year they kept all New England in a state of terror and excitement. The exploring party was waylaid and cut off, and the mangled carcasses and disjointed limbs of the dead were hung upon the trees. The laborer in the field, the reapers as they sallied forth to the harvest, men as they went to mill, the shepherd's boy among the sheep, were shot down by skulking foes, whose approach was invisible. Who can tell the heavy hours of woman? The mother, if left alone in the house, feared the tomahawk for herself and children; on the sudden attack, the husband would fly with one child, the wife with another, and, perhaps, one only escape; the village cavalcade, making its way to meeting on Sunday in files on horseback, the farmer holding the bridle in one hand and a child in the other, his wife seated on a pillion behind him, it may be with a child in her lap, as was the fashion in those days, could not proceed safely; but, at the moment when least expected, bullets would whizz among them, sent from an unseen enemy by the wayside. The forest that protected the ambush of the Indians secured their retreat.

D. Appleton and Company, New York.

THE NEW NETHERLAND

From 'History of the United States'

During the absence of Stuyvesant from Manhattan, the warriors of the neighboring Algonkin tribes, never reposing confidence in the Dutch, made a desperate assault on the colony. In sixty-four canoes they appeared before the town, and ravaged the

adjacent country. The return of the expedition restored confidence. The captives were ransomed, and industry repaired its losses. The Dutch seemed to have

Page 374

firmly established their power, and promised themselves happier years. New Netherland consoled them for the loss of Brazil. They exulted in the possession of an admirable territory, that needed no embankments against the ocean. They were proud of its vast extent,—from New England to Maryland, from the sea to the Great River of Canada, and the remote Northwestern wilderness. They sounded with exultation the channel of the deep stream, which was no longer shared with the Swedes; they counted with delight its many lovely runs of water, on which the beavers built their villages; and the great travelers who had visited every continent, as they ascended the Delaware, declared it one of the noblest rivers in the world, with banks more inviting than the lands on the Amazon.

Meantime, the country near the Hudson gained by increasing emigration. Manhattan was already the chosen abode of merchants; and the policy of the government invited them by its good-will. If Stuyvesant sometimes displayed the rash despotism of a soldier, he was sure to be reproved by his employers. Did he change the rate of duties arbitrarily, the directors, sensitive to commercial honor, charged him “to keep every contract inviolate.” Did he tamper with the currency by raising the nominal value of foreign coin, the measure was rebuked as dishonest. Did he attempt to fix the price of labor by arbitrary rules, this also was condemned as unwise and impracticable. Did he interfere with the merchants by inspecting their accounts, the deed was censured as without precedent “in Christendom”; and he was ordered to “treat the merchants with kindness, lest they return, and the country be depopulated.” Did his zeal for Calvinism lead him to persecute Lutherans, he was chid for his bigotry. Did his hatred of “the abominable sect of Quakers” imprison and afterward exile the blameless Bowne, “let every peaceful citizen,” wrote the directors, “enjoy freedom of conscience; this maxim has made our city the asylum for fugitives from every land; tread in its steps, and you shall be blessed.”

Private worship was therefore allowed to every religion. Opinion, if not yet enfranchised, was already tolerated. The people of Palestine, from the destruction of their temple an outcast and a wandering race, were allured by the traffic and the condition of the New World; and not the Saxon and Celtic races only, the children of the bondmen that broke from slavery in Egypt, the posterity of those who had wandered in Arabia, and worshiped near Calvary, found a home, liberty, and a burial place on the island of Manhattan.

The emigrants from Holland were themselves of the most various lineage; for Holland had long been the gathering-place of the unfortunate. Could we trace the descent of the emigrants from the Low Countries to New Netherland, we should be carried not only to the banks of the Rhine and the borders of the German Sea, but to the Protestants who escaped from France after the massacre of Bartholomew’s Eve, and to those earlier inquirers who were swayed by the voice of Huss in the heart of Bohemia. New

York was always a city of the world. Its settlers were relics of the first fruits of the Reformation, chosen from the Belgic provinces and England, from France and Bohemia, from Germany and Switzerland, from Piedmont and the Italian Alps.

Page 375

The religious sects, which, in the middle ages, had been fostered by the municipal liberties of the south of France, were the harbingers of modern freedom, and had therefore been sacrificed to the inexorable feudalism of the north. After a bloody conflict, the plebeian reformers, crushed by the merciless leaders of the military aristocracy, escaped to the highlands that divide France and Italy. Preserving the discipline of a benevolent, ascetic morality, with the simplicity of a spiritual worship,

“When all our fathers worshiped stocks and stones,”

it was found, on the progress of the Reformation, that they had by three centuries anticipated Luther and Calvin. The hurricane of persecution, which was to have swept Protestantism from the earth, did not spare their seclusion; mothers with infants were rolled down the rocks, and the bones of martyrs scattered on the Alpine mountains. The city of Amsterdam offered the fugitive Waldenses a free passage to America, and a welcome was prepared in New Netherland for the few who were willing to emigrate.

The persecuted of every creed and every clime were invited to the colony. When the Protestant churches in Rochelle were razed, the Calvinists of that city were gladly admitted; and the French Protestants came in such numbers that the public documents were sometimes issued in French as well as in Dutch and English. Troops of orphans were shipped for the milder destinies of the New World; a free passage was offered to mechanics; for “population was known to be the bulwark of every State.” The government of New Netherland had formed just ideas of the fit materials for building a commonwealth; they desired “farmers and laborers, foreigners and exiles, men inured to toil and penury.” The colony increased; children swarmed in every village; the advent of the year and the month of May were welcomed with noisy frolics; new modes of activity were devised; lumber was shipped to France; the whale pursued off the coast; the vine, the mulberry, planted; flocks of sheep as well as cattle were multiplied; and tile, so long imported from Holland, began to be manufactured near Fort Orange. New Amsterdam could, in a few years, boast of stately buildings, and almost vied with Boston. “This happily situated province,” said its inhabitants, “may become the granary of our fatherland; should our Netherlands be wasted by grievous wars, it will offer our countrymen a safe retreat; by God’s blessing, we shall in a few years become a mighty people.”

Thus did various nations of the Caucasian race assist in colonizing our central states.

D. Appleton and Company, New York.

FRANKLIN

From ‘History of the United States’

Page 376

Franklin looked quietly and deeply into the secrets of nature. His clear understanding was never perverted by passion, nor corrupted by the pride of theory. The son of a rigid Calvinist, the grandson of a tolerant Quaker, he had from boyhood been familiar not only with theological subtilities, but with a catholic respect for freedom of mind. Skeptical of tradition as the basis of faith, he respected reason rather than authority; and, after a momentary lapse into fatalism, he gained with increasing years an increasing trust in the overruling providence of God. Adhering to none of all the religions in the colonies, he yet devoutly, though without form, adhered to religion. But though famous as a disputant, and having a natural aptitude for metaphysics, he obeyed the tendency of his age, and sought by observation to win an insight into the mysteries of being. The best observers praise his method most. He so sincerely loved truth, that in his pursuit of her she met him half-way. Without prejudice and without bias, he discerned intuitively the identity of the laws of nature with those of which humanity is conscious; so that his mind was like a mirror, in which the universe, as it reflected itself, revealed her laws. His morality, repudiating ascetic severities and the system which enjoins them, was indulgent to appetites of which he abhorred the sway; but his affections were of a calm intensity: in all his career, the love of man held the mastery over personal interest. He had not the imagination which inspires the bard or kindles the orator; but an exquisite propriety, parsimonious of ornament, gave ease, correctness, and graceful simplicity even to his most careless writings. In life, also, his tastes were delicate. Indifferent to the pleasures of the table, he relished the delights of music and harmony, of which he enlarged the instruments. His blandness of temper, his modesty, the benignity of his manners, made him the favorite of intelligent society; and, with healthy cheerfulness, he derived pleasure from books, from philosophy, from conversation,—now administering consolation to the sorrower, now indulging in light-hearted gayety. In his intercourse, the universality of his perceptions bore, perhaps, the character of humor; but, while he clearly discerned the contrast between the grandeur of the universe and the feebleness of man, a serene benevolence saved him from contempt of his race or disgust at its toils. To superficial observers, he might have seemed as an alien from speculative truth, limiting himself to the world of the senses; and yet, in study, and among men, his mind always sought to discover and apply the general principles by which nature and affairs are controlled,—now deducing from the theory of caloric improvements in fireplaces and lanterns, and now advancing human freedom by firm inductions from the inalienable rights of man. Never professing enthusiasm, never making a parade of sentiment, his practical wisdom was sometimes mistaken for the offspring

Page 377

of selfish prudence; yet his hope was steadfast, like that hope which rests on the Rock of Ages, and his conduct was as unerring as though the light that led him was a light from heaven. He never anticipated action by theories of self-sacrificing virtue; and yet, in the moments of intense activity, he from the abodes of ideal truth brought down and applied to the affairs of life the principles of goodness, as unostentatiously as became the man who with a kite and hempen string drew lightning from the skies. He separated himself so little from his age that he has been called the representative of materialism; and yet, when he thought on religion, his mind passed beyond reliance on sects to faith in God; when he wrote on politics, he founded freedom on principles that know no change; when he turned an observing eye on nature, he passed from the effect to the cause, from individual appearances to universal laws; when he reflected on history, his philosophic mind found gladness and repose in the clear anticipation of the progress of humanity.

End of Volume III.