

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 14, No. 84, October, 1864 eBook

The Atlantic Monthly, Volume 14, No. 84, October, 1864

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THE

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A magazine of literature, art, and politics.

Vol. XIV.—October, 1864.—No. LXXXIV.

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* * * * *

A night in the water.

That was a pleasant life on picquet, in the delicious early summer of the South, and among the endless flowery forests of that blossoming isle. In the retrospect, I seem to see myself adrift upon a horse's back amid a sea of roses. The various outposts were within a five-mile radius, and it was one long, delightful gallop, day and night. I have a faint impression that the moon shone steadily every night for two months; and yet I remember certain periods of such dense darkness that in riding through the wood-paths it was really unsafe to go beyond a walk, for fear of branches above and roots below; and one of my officers was once shot at by a Rebel scout who stood unperceived at his horse's bridle.



We lived in a dilapidated plantation-house, the walls scrawled with capital charcoal-sketches by R., of the New Hampshire Fourth, with a good map of the island and its paths by C. of the First Massachusetts Cavalry; there was a tangled garden, full of neglected roses and camellias, and we filled the great fireplace with magnolias by day and with logs by night; I slept on a sort of shelf in the corner, bequeathed to me by Major F., my jovial predecessor,—and if I waked up at any time, I could put my head through the broken window, arouse my orderly, and ride off to see if I could catch a picquet asleep. I spell the word with a *q*, because such was the highest authority, in that Department at least, and they used to say at post head-quarters that so soon as the officer in command of the outposts grew negligent, and was guilty of a *k*, he was instantly ordered in.

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To those doing outpost-duty on an island, however large, the main-land has all the fascination of forbidden fruit, and on a scale bounded only by the horizon. Emerson says that every house looks ideal until we enter it,—and it is certainly so, if it be just the other side of the hostile lines. Every grove in that blue distance appears enchanted ground, and yonder loitering gray-back, leading his horse to water in the farthest distance, makes one thrill with a desire to hail him, to shoot at him, to capture him, to do anything to bridge this inexorable dumb space that lies between. A boyish feeling, no doubt, and one that time diminishes, without effacing; yet it is a feeling which lies at the bottom of many rash actions in war, and of some brilliant ones. For one, I could never quite outgrow it, though restricted by duty from doing many foolish things in consequence, and also restrained by reverence for certain confidential advisers whom I had always at hand, and who considered it their mission to keep me always on short rations of personal adventure. Indeed, most of that sort of entertainment in the army devolves upon scouts detailed for the purpose, volunteer aides-de-camp and newspaper-reporters,—other officers being expected to be about business more prosaic.

All the excitements of war are quadrupled by darkness; and as I rode along our outer lines at night, and watched the glimmering flames which at regular intervals starred the opposite river-shore, the longing was irresistible to cross the barrier of dusk, and see whether it were men or ghosts who hovered round those dying embers. I had yielded to these impulses in boat-adventures by night,—for it was a part of my instructions to obtain all possible information about the Rebel outposts,—and fascinating indeed it was to glide along, noiselessly paddling, with a dusky guide, through the endless intricacies of those Southern marshes, scaring the reed-birds, which wailed and fled away into the darkness, and penetrating several miles into the interior, between hostile fires, where discovery might be death. Yet there were drawbacks as to these enterprises, since it is not easy for a boat to cross still water, even on the darkest night, without being seen by watchful eyes; and, moreover, the extremes of high and low tide transform so completely the whole condition of those rivers that it needs very nice calculation to do one's work at precisely the right time. To vary the experiment, I had often thought of trying a personal reconnoissance by swimming, at a certain point, whenever circumstances should make it an object.



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The opportunity at last arrived, and I shall never forget the glee with which, after several postponements, I finally rode forth, a little before midnight, on a night which seemed made for the purpose. I had, of course, kept my own secret, and was entirely alone. The great Southern fire-flies were out, not haunting the low ground merely, like ours, but rising to the loftiest tree-tops with weird illumination, and anon hovering so low that my horse often stepped the higher to avoid them. The dewy Cherokee roses brushed my face, the solemn "Chuck-will's-widow" croaked her incantation, and the rabbits raced phantom-like across the shadowy road. Slowly in the darkness I followed the well-known path to the spot where our most advanced outposts were stationed, holding a causeway which thrust itself far out across the separating river,—thus fronting a similar causeway on the other side, while a channel of perhaps three hundred yards, once traversed by a ferry-boat, rolled between. At low tide this channel was the whole river, with broad, oozy marshes on each side; at high tide the marshes were submerged, and the stream was a mile wide. This was the point which I had selected. To ascertain the numbers and position of the picquet on the opposite causeway was my first object, as it was a matter on which no two of our officers agreed.

To this point, therefore, I rode, and dismounting, after being duly challenged by the sentinel at the causeway-head, walked down the long and lonely path. The tide was well up, though still on the flood, as I desired; and each visible tuft of marsh-grass might, but for its motionlessness, have been a prowling boat. Dark as the night had appeared, the water was pale, smooth, and phosphorescent, and I remember that the phrase "wan water," so familiar in the Scottish ballads, struck me just then as peculiarly appropriate. A gentle breeze, from which I had hoped for a ripple, had utterly died away, and it was a warm, breathless Southern night. There was no sound but the faint swash of the coming tide, the noises of the reed-birds in the marshes, and the occasional leap of a fish; and it seemed to my over-strained ear as if every footstep of my own must be heard for miles. However, I could have no more postponements, and the thing must be tried now or never.

Reaching the farther end of the causeway, I found my men couched, like black statues, behind the slight earthwork there constructed. I expected that my proposed immersion would rather bewilder them, but knew that they would say nothing, as usual. As for the lieutenant on that post, he was a steady, matter-of-fact, perfectly disciplined Englishman, who wore a Crimean medal, and never asked a superfluous question in his life. If I had casually remarked to him, "Mr. Hooker, the General has ordered me on a brief personal reconnaissance to the Planet Jupiter, and I wish you to take care of my watch, lest it should be damaged by the Precession of the Equinoxes," he would have responded with a brief "All right, Sir," and a quick military gesture, and have put the thing in his pocket. As it was, I simply gave him the watch, and remarked that I was going to take a swim.



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I do not remember ever to have experienced a greater sense of exhilaration than when I slipped noiselessly into the placid water, and struck out into the smooth, eddying current for the opposite shore. The night was so still and lovely, my black statues looked so dream-like at their posts behind the low earthwork, the opposite arm of the causeway stretched so invitingly from the Rebel main, the horizon glimmered so low around me,—for it always appears lower to a swimmer than even to an oarsman,—that I seemed floating in some concave globe, some magic crystal, of which I was the enchanted centre. With each little ripple of my steady progress all things hovered and changed; the stars danced and nodded above; where the stars ended, the great Southern fire-flies began; and closer than the fire-flies, there clung round me a halo of phosphorescent sparkles from the soft salt water.

Had I told any one of my purpose, I should have had warnings and remonstrances enough. The few negroes who did not believe in alligators believed in sharks; the skeptics as to sharks were orthodox in respect to alligators; while those who rejected both had private prejudices as to snapping-turtles. The surgeon would have threatened intermittent fever, the first assistant rheumatism, and the second assistant congestive chills; non-swimmers would have predicted exhaustion, and swimmers cramp; and all this before coming within bullet-range of any hospitalities on the other shore. But I knew the folly of most alarms about reptiles and fishes; man's imagination peoples the water with many things which do not belong there, or prefer to keep out of his way, if they do; fevers and congestions were the surgeon's business, and I always kept people to their own department; cramp and exhaustion were dangers I could measure, as I had often done; bullets were a more substantial danger, and I must take the chance,—if a loon could dive at the flash, why not I? If I were once ashore, I should have to cope with the Rebels on their own ground, which they knew better than I; but the water was my ground, where I, too, had been at home from boyhood.

I swam as swiftly and softly as I could, although it seemed as if water never had been so still before. It appeared impossible that anything uncanny should hide beneath that lovely mirror; and yet when some floating wisp of reeds suddenly coiled itself around my neck, or some unknown thing, drifting deeper, coldly touched my foot, it gave that undefinable sense of shudder which every swimmer knows, and which especially appeals to the imagination by night. Sometimes a slight sip of brackish water would enter my lips,—for I naturally tried to swim as low as possible,—and then would follow a slight gasping and contest against choking, such as seemed to me a perfect convulsion; for I suppose the tendency to choke and sneeze is always enhanced by the circumstance that one's life may depend on keeping still, just as yawning

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becomes irresistible where to yawn would be social ruin, and just as one is sure to sleep in church, if one sits in a conspicuous pew. At other times, some unguarded motion would create a splashing which seemed, in the tension of my senses, to be loud enough to be heard at Richmond, although it really mattered not, since there are fishes in those rivers which make as much noise on special occasions as if they were misguided young whales.

As I drew near the opposite shore, the dark causeway projected more and more distinctly, to my fancy at least, and I swam more softly still, utterly uncertain as to how far, in the stillness of air and water, my phosphorescent course could be traced by eye or ear. A slight ripple would have saved me from observation, I was more than ever sure, and I would have whistled for a fair wind as eagerly as any sailor, but that my breath was worth more than anything it was likely to bring. The water became smoother and smoother, and nothing broke the dim surface except a few clomps of rushes and my unfortunate head. The outside of this member gradually assumed to its inside a gigantic magnitude; it had always annoyed me at the hatter's from a merely animal bigness, with no commensurate contents to show for it, and now I detested it more than ever. A physical fooling of turgescence and congestion in that region, such as swimmers often feel, probably increased the impression. I thought with envy of the Aztec children, of the headless horseman of Sleepy Hollow, of Saint Somebody with his head tucked under his arm. Plotinus was less ashamed of his whole body than I of this inconsiderate and stupid appendage. To be sure, I might swim for a certain distance under water. But that accomplishment I had reserved for a retreat, for I knew that the longer I stayed down the more surely I should have to snort like a walrus when I came up again, and to approach an enemy with such a demonstration was not to be thought of.

Suddenly a dog barked. We had certain information that a pack of hounds was kept at a Rebel station a few miles off, on purpose to hunt runaways, and I had heard from the negroes almost fabulous accounts of the instinct of these animals. I knew, that, although water baffled their scent, they yet could recognize in some manner the approach of any person across water as readily as by land; and of the vigilance of all dogs by night every traveller among Southern plantations has ample demonstration. I was now so near that I could dimly see the figures of men moving to and fro upon the end of the causeway, and could hear the dull knock, when one struck his foot against a piece of timber.



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As my first object was to ascertain whether there were sentinels at that time at that precise point, I saw that I was approaching the end of my experiment. Could I have once reached the causeway unnoticed, I could have lurked in the water beneath its projecting timbers, and perhaps made my way along the main shore, as I had known fugitive slaves to do, while coming from that side. Or had there been any ripple on the water, to confuse the aroused and watchful eyes, I could have made a circuit and approached the causeway at another point, though I had already satisfied myself that there was only a narrow channel on each side of it, even at high tide, and not, as on our side, a broad expanse of water. Indeed, this knowledge alone was worth all the trouble I had taken, and to attempt much more than this, in the face of a curiosity already roused, would have been a waste of future opportunities. I could try again, with the benefit of this new knowledge, on a point where the statements of the negroes had always been contradictory.

Resolving, however, to continue the observation a very little longer, since the water felt much warmer than I had expected, and there was no sense of chill or fatigue, I grasped at some wisps of straw or rushes that floated near, gathering them round my face a little, and then, drifting nearer the wharf in what seemed a sort of eddy, was able, without creating further alarm, to make some additional observations on points which it is not best now to particularize. Then, turning my back upon the mysterious shore which had thus far lured me, I sank softly below the surface and swam as far as I could under water.

During this unseen retreat, I heard, of course, all manner of gurglings and hollow reverberations, and could fancy as many rifle-shots as I pleased. But on rising to the surface all seemed quiet, and even I did not create as much noise as I should have expected. I was now at a safe distance, since they were always chary of showing their boats, and they would hardly take personally to the water. What with absorbed attention first, and this submersion afterwards, I had lost all my bearings but the stars, having been long out of sight of my original point of departure. However, the difficulties of the return were nothing; making a slight allowance for the flood-tide, which could not yet have turned, I should soon regain the place I had left. So I struck out freshly against the smooth water, feeling just a little stiffened by the exertion, and with an occasional chill running up the back of the neck, but with no nips from sharks, no nudges from alligators, and not a symptom of fever-and-ague.



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Time I could not, of course, measure,—one never can, in a novel position; but, after a reasonable amount of swimming, I began to look, with a natural interest, for the pier which I had quitted. I noticed, with some solicitude, that the woods along the friendly shore made one continuous shadow, and that the line of low bushes on the long causeway could scarcely be relieved against them, yet I knew where they ought to be, and the more doubtful I felt about it, the more I put down my doubts, as if they were unreasonable children. One can scarcely conceive of the alteration made in familiar objects by bringing the eye as low as the horizon, especially by night; to distinguish foreshortening is impossible, and every low near object is equivalent to one higher and more remote. Still I had the stars; and soon my eye, more practised, was enabled to select one precise line of bushes as that which marked the causeway, and for which I must direct my course.

As I swam steadily, but with some sense of fatigue, towards this phantom-line, I found it difficult to keep my faith steady and my progress true; everything appeared to shift and waver, in the uncertain light. The distant trees seemed not trees, but bushes, and the bushes seemed not exactly bushes, but might, after all, be distant trees. Could I be so confident, that, out of all that low stretch of shore, I could select the one precise point where the friendly causeway stretched its long arm to receive me from the water? How easily (some tempter whispered at my ear) might one swerve a little, on either side, and be compelled to flounder over half a mile of oozy marsh on an ebbing tide, before reaching our own shore and that hospitable volley of bullets with which it would probably greet me! Had I not already (thus the tempter continued) been swimming rather unaccountably far, supposing me on a straight track for that inviting spot where my sentinels and my drapery were awaiting my return?

Suddenly I felt a sensation as of fine ribbons drawn softly across my person, and I found myself among some rushes. But what business had rushes there, or I among them? I knew that there was not a solitary spot of shoal in the deep channel where I supposed myself swimming, and it was plain in an instant that I had somehow missed my course, and must be getting among the marshes. I felt confident, to be sure, that I could not have widely erred, but was guiding my course for the proper side of the river. But whether I had drifted above or below the causeway I had not the slightest clue to tell.

I pushed steadily forward, with some increasing sense of lassitude, passing one marshy islet after another, all seeming strangely out of place, and sometimes just reaching with my foot a soft tremulous shoal which gave scarce the shadow of a support, though even that shadow rested my feet. At one of these moments of stillness, it suddenly occurred to my perception (what nothing but this slight contact could have assured



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me, in the darkness) that I was in a powerful current, and that this current set *the wrong way*. Instantly a flood of new intelligence came. Either I had unconsciously turned and was rapidly nearing the Rebel shore,—a suspicion which a glance at the stars corrected,—or else it was the tide itself which had turned, and which was sweeping me down the river with all its force, and was also sucking away at every moment the narrowing water from that treacherous expanse of mud out of whose horrible miry embrace I had lately helped to rescue a shipwrecked crew. Either alternative was rather formidable. I can distinctly remember that for about one half-minute the whole vast universe appeared to swim in the same watery uncertainty in which I floated. I began to doubt everything, to distrust the stars, the line of low bushes for which I was wearily striving, the very land on which they grew, if such visionary tiring could be rooted anywhere. Doubts trembled in my mind like the weltering water, and that awful sensation of *having one's feet unsupported*, which benumbs the spent swimmer's heart, seemed to clutch at mine, though not yet to enter it. I was more absorbed in that singular sensation of nightmare, such as one may feel equally when lost by land or by water, as if one's own position were all right, but the place looked for had somehow been preternaturally abolished out of the universe. At best, might not a man in the water lose all his power of direction, and so move in an endless circle until he sank exhausted? It required a deliberate and conscious effort to keep my brain quite cool. I have not the reputation of being of an excitable temperament, but the contrary; yet I could at that moment see my way to a condition in which one might become insane in an instant. It was as if a fissure opened somewhere, and I saw my way into a mad-house; then it closed, and everything went on as before. Once in my life I had obtained a slight glimpse of the same sensation, and then too, strangely enough, while swimming,—in the mightiest ocean-surge into which I had ever dared plunge my mortal body. Keats hints at the same sudden emotion, in a wild poem written among the Scottish mountains. It was not the distinctive sensation which drowning men are said to have, that spasmodic passing in review of one's whole personal history. I had no well-defined anxiety, felt no fear, was moved to no prayer, did not give a thought to home or friends; only it swept over me, as with a sudden tempest, that, if I meant to get back to my own camp, I must keep my wits about me. I must not dwell on any other alternative, any more than a boy who climbs a precipice must look down. Imagination had no business here. That way madness lay. There was a shore somewhere before me, and I must get to it, by the ordinary means, before the ebb laid bare the flats, or swept me below the lower bends of the stream. That was all.



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Suddenly a light gleamed for an instant before me, as if from a house in a grove of great trees upon a bank; and I knew that it came from the window of a ruined plantation-building, where our most advanced outposts had their head-quarters. The flash revealed to me every point of the situation. I saw at once where I was, and how I got there: that the tide had turned while I was swimming, and with a much briefer interval of slack-water than I had been led to suppose,—that I had been swept a good way downstream, and was far beyond all possibility of regaining the point I had left. Could I, however, retain my strength to swim one or two hundred yards farther, of which I had no doubt, and if the water did not ebb too rapidly, of which I had more fear, then I was quite safe. Every stroke took me more and more out of the power of the current, and there might even be an eddy. I could not afford to be carried down much farther, for there the channel made a sweep toward the wrong side of the river; but there was now no reason why this should happen. I could dismiss all fear, indeed, except that of being fired upon by our own sentinels, many of whom were then new recruits, and with the usual disposition to shoot first and investigate afterwards.

I found myself swimming in shallow and shallower water, and the flats seemed almost bare when I neared the shore, where the great gnarled branches of the live-oaks hung far over the muddy bank. Floating on my back for noiselessness, I paddled rapidly in with my hands, expecting momentarily to hear the challenge of the picquet, and the ominous click so likely to follow. I knew that some one should be pacing to and fro, along that beat, but could not tell at what point he might be at that precise moment. Besides, there was a faint possibility that some chatty corporal might have carried the news of my bath thus far along the line, and they might be partially prepared for this unexpected visitor. Suddenly, like another flash, came the quick, quaint challenge,—

“Halt! Who’s go dar?”

“F-f-friend with the c-c-countersign,” retorted I, with chilly, but conciliatory energy, rising at full length out of the shallow water, to show myself a man and a brother.

“Ac-vance, friend, and give de countersign,” responded the literal soldier, who at such a time would have accosted a spirit of light or goblin damned with no other formula.

I advanced and gave it, he recognizing my voice at once. And then and there, as I stood, a dripping ghost, beneath the trees before him, the unconscionable fellow, wishing to exhaust upon me the utmost resources of military hospitality, deliberately *presented arms*.



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Now a soldier on picquet, or at night, usually presents arms to nobody; but a sentinel on camp-guard by day is expected to perform that ceremony to anything in human shape that has two rows of buttons. Here was a human shape, but so utterly buttonless that it exhibited not even a rag to which a button could by any earthly possibility be appended, buttonless even potentially; and my blameless Ethiopian presented arms to even this. Where, then, are the theories of Carlyle, the axioms of "Sartor Resartus," the inability of humanity to conceive "a naked Duke of Windlestraw addressing a naked House of Lords?" Cautioning my adherent, however, as to the proprieties suitable for such occasions thenceforward, I left him watching the river with renewed vigilance, and awaiting the next merman who should report himself.

Finding my way to the building, I hunted up a sergeant and a blanket, got a fire kindled in the dismantled chimney, and sat before it in my single garment, like a moist, but undismayed Choctaw, until my horse and clothing could be brought round from the Causeway. It seemed strange that the morning had not yet dawned, after the uncounted periods that must have elapsed; but when my wardrobe arrived, I looked at my watch and found that my night in the water had lasted precisely one hour.

Galloping home, I turned in with alacrity, and without a drop of whiskey, and waked a few hours after in excellent condition. The rapid changes of which that Department has seen so many—and, perhaps, to so little purpose—soon transferred us to a different scene. I have been on other scouts since then, and by various processes, but never with a zest so novel as was afforded by that night's experience. The thing soon got wind in the regiment, and led to only one ill consequence, so far as I know. It rather suppressed a way I had of lecturing the officers on the importance of reducing their personal baggage to a minimum. They got a trick of congratulating me, very respectfully, on the thoroughness with which I had once conformed my practice to my precepts.

* * * * *

On A late vendue.

The red flag—not the red flag of the loathed and deadly pestilence that has destroyed so many lives and disfigured so many fair and so many manly countenances, but (in some circumstances) the scarcely less ominous flag of the auctioneer—has been displayed from the handsome and substantial red-brick house in Kensington-Place Gardens, London, in which Thackeray lately lived, and in which he wrote the opening chapters of his last and never-to-be-completed work, which we are all reading with mingled pleasure and regret.



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I rejoice to see the flags and pennants gracefully waving from the masts of the outward or the inward bound ship; to see our beautiful national ensign,—the ensign that is destined sooner or later, so all loyal and patriotic men and women hope and believe, triumphantly to float over the largest, the freest, the happiest, the most prosperous country in the whole wide world,—to see the stars and stripes fluttering in the breeze from the city flag-staff and the village liberty-pole; to see the dancing banners and the fluttering pennons of a regiment of brave and stalwart men marching in all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of war to the defence of their country in this her hour of danger and of need. As a child, I loved to see the colors of the holiday-soldiers flapping in the wind and flaunting in the sun on “muster-day.” Nay, was not an uncle of mine (he is an old man now, and is fond of bragging of the brave days of old, when he was a gay and gallant sunshine-soldier) the standard-bearer of a once famous company of fair-weather soldiers?—dead now, most of them, and their

“bones are dust,
And their good swords rust”;

—and did not this daring and heroic uncle of mine, while bravely upbearing his gorgeous silken banner (a gift of the beautiful and all-accomplished ladies of Seaport) in a well-contested sham fight, receive, from the accidental discharge of a field-piece, an honorable and soldier-like wound, and of which he ever after boasted louder, and took more pride in, than the bravest veteran in Grant’s gallant army of the scars and injuries received at the siege of Vicksburg? And no wonder at that, perhaps. For you will find hundreds who have been cut by the sword or pierced by the bullet of a Rebel, to one who has been ever so slightly wounded upon a holiday training-field.

But I never could, and I never shall, abide the sight of the red and ruthless flag of the vendue-master. ’Tis a signal that death is still busy, and that to many the love of money is greater than the love of friends and of those nearer and dearer than friends,—that fortune is fickle and that prosperity has fled,—that humbugs and sharpers are alive and active. ’Tis a reminder—and therefore may have its use in the world—of our mortality, an admonisher of our pride, a represser of our love of greed and gain. ’Tis evidently an invention of Satan’s, this selling by vendue; and perhaps the first auction was that by which Cain sold the house and furniture of his brother Abel, then lately deceased. If there were no such thing in the world as death and misfortune and humbug, that bit of blood-colored bunting would be but seldom flaunting in the wind.



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Charles Lamb counsels those who would enjoy true peace and quiet to retire into a Quaker meeting; and if our sentimental readers (and for such only is this paper written) would find wherewithal to feed and pamper their melancholy, let them follow the mercenary flags, and become haunters of auctions,—let them attend the sales of the effects of their deceased friends and acquaintances,—let them see A's favorite horse, or B's favorite country-seat, or C's favorite books and pictures knocked down, amid the laughter of the crowd and the smart sayings and witty retorts of the auctioneer, to the highest bidder,—and they will be sadder, if not wiser, men than they were before. Such scenes should have more effect on them than all the fine sermons on the vanities and nothings of life ever preached. Sir Richard Steele, in his beautiful paper, in the "Tatler," on "The Death of Friends," says, in speaking of his mother's sorrow for his father's death, there was a dignity in her grief amidst all the wildness of her transport that made pity the weakness of his heart ever since; and perhaps it is owing to the impressions I received at the first auction I ever attended that I am now an inveterate sentimentalist.

How well I remember that auction! Looking back "through the dim posterns of the mind" into the far-off days of my childhood, I see, among other things, the large and comfortable mansion—it was the home of plenty and the temple of hospitality—in which I passed some of the goldenest hours of my boyhood. But the finest play has an end, and the sweetest feasts and the merriest pastimes do not last forever. Very suddenly, indeed, did my visits to that happy home cease. For my good friends of the "great house"—the dearest old lady and the kindest and merriest old gentleman that ever patted a little boy on the head—were both seized (oh, woe the day!) by a terrible disease, and died in spite of all that the great doctor from Boston did to cure them. The last time I entered the dear old house was on a beautiful balmy summer morning; the birds were singing as I have never heard them sing since, and all Nature seemed as glad and exultant as if death, misfortune, and auctioneers were banished from the world. I found there, in place of the late kind host and hostess, a crowd—so they seemed to me—of rude and coarse-minded people; and I saw the hateful red flag of the auctioneer hanging over the door.

An eagle in a dove-cot, a fox in a barn-yard, a wolf among sheep, is mild, merciful, and humane, when compared with the flock of human vultures that had invaded this once happy residence, and were greedily stripping it of all that the taste and the wealth of its late occupants had furnished it with. Should I live to be a thousand years old, I do not think I should forget the unladylike proceedings of sundry old women at that auction. With what a free and contemptuous manner they examined the fine old furniture, and handled the fine old china, and coolly rummaged and ransacked every nook and corner, and peeped and pried into every box, chest, and closet that was not locked! And their tongues, you may be sure, were not idle the while!

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The auctioneer was a little dried-up mummy of a man, the ugliness of whose countenance was, as it were, emphasized by a disagreeable leer which would ever and anon deepen into a broad grin; this man, with his dreary jokes and vapid small-talk, was equally repulsive to me.

Oh, the tap of his little hammer did knock against my very heart!

Of all the hammers in this busy and hammering world, from the huge forge-hammer with which the brawny blacksmith deals telling blows upon the glowing iron and beats it into shape, to the tiny hammer that the watchmaker so deftly handles, the ivory-headed, ebony-handled instrument of the auctioneer is the most potent. From the day it was first upraised by the original auctioneer—the nameless and unknown founder of a mighty line of auctioneers—over the chattels of some unfortunate mortal, to the present time, when the red flag is constantly waving in all the great cities and towns of the world, what an immense amount of property of all kinds and descriptions has come under that little instrument! At its fall the ancestral acres of how many spendthrift heirs have passed away from their families forever into the hands of wealthy plebeian parvenus! By a few strokes Dives's splendid mansion, and Croesus's magnificent country-seat, and Phaeton's famous fast horses become the property of others. At its tap human beings have been sold into worse than Egyptian bondage.

Horace Walpole confidently hoped that his famous collection of *virtu* would be the envy and admiration of the relic-mongers and the curiosity-seekers of two or three hundred years hence; but he had not been dead fifty years before the red flag was waving over Strawberry Hill, and it was not taken down till the villa had been despoiled of all the curious and costly toys and bawbles with which it was packed and crammed. At each stroke of the hammer,—and for four-and-twenty days the quaint Gothic mansion resounded with the “Going, going, gone” of the auctioneer,—at every stroke of the hammer Walpole must have turned uneasily in his grave; for at every stroke of that fatal implement some beautiful miniature, or rare engraving, or fine painting, or precious old coin, or beloved old vase, or bit of curious old armor, or equally curious relic of the olden time, passed into the possession of some unknown person or other.

And the Duke of Roxburghe's magnificent collection of rare, curious, and valuable books, in the gathering of which he spent a goodly portion of his life, and evinced the policy and finesse of the most wily statesman and the shrewdness and cunning of a Jew money-lender, was soon after his decease scattered, by the hammer of Evans, over England and the Continent. A circumstantial history of this memorable sale was written by Dibdin the bibliomaniac.



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I do not, however, grieve much—indeed, to state the precise truth, I do not grieve at all—at the dismantling of Strawberry Hill, or at the sale of the Roxburghe library; but at the vendition of Samuel Johnson’s dusty and dearly loved books (they were sold by Mr. Christie, “at his Great Room in Pall-Mall,” on Wednesday, February 16, 1785) I own to being a trifle sad and sentimental. For Walpole, with all his cleverness, is a man one cannot love; and as for the bibliographical Duke, he evidently thought more of a rare edition or a unique copy than of all the charms of wit, poetry, or eloquence. I suspect that a splendid binding would please him more than a splendid passage. Whereas Johnson (he was never without a book in his pocket to read at by-times when he had nothing else to do) had a scholar’s love for books, and liked them for what they contained, and not merely because they were rare and costly.

Neither can I think unmoved of the dispersion “under the hammer” of the fine library at Greta Hall, which Southey had taken so much pains and pleasure in collecting, and which was, as his son has observed, the pride of his eyes and the joy of his heart,—a library which contained many a “monarch folio,” and many a fine old quarto, and thousands of small, but precious volumes of ancient lore, and which was particularly rich in rare old Spanish and Portuguese books. Many of the old volumes in this library had seen such hard service, and had been so roughly handled by former owners, that they were in a very ragged condition when they came into Southey’s possession; and as he could not afford to have them equipped in serviceable leather, his daughters and female friends comfortably and neatly clothed them in colored cotton prints. The twelve or fourteen hundred volumes thus bound filled an entire room, which the poet designated as the “Cottonian Library.” I saw, a year or two ago, among the costly and valuable works upon the shelves of a Boston bookstore, two or three volumes of this “Cottonian Library.” They are not there now. Perhaps the lucky purchaser of them may be a reader of this article. If so, let me congratulate him upon possessing such rare and interesting memorials of the famous and immortal biographer of Doctor Daniel Dove of Doncaster.

And sure I am that no gentle reader can contemplate the fate of Charles Lamb’s library without becoming a prey to

“Mild-eyed melancholy.”

Elia’s books,—his “midnight darlings,” his “folios,” his “huge Switzer-like tomes of choice and massy divinity,” his “kind-hearted play-books,” his book of “Songs and Posies,” his rare old treatises, and quaint and curious tractates,—the rich gleanings from the old London book-stalls by one who knew a good book, as Falstaff knew the Prince, by instinct,—books that had been the solace and delight of his life, the inspirers and prompters of his best and noblest thoughts, the food of his mind, and the nourishers of his fancies, ideas, and



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feelings,—these books, with the exception of those retained by some of Elia's personal friends, were, after Mary Lamb's death, purchased by an enterprising New-York bookseller, and shipped to America, where Lamb has ever had more readers and truer appreciators than in England. The arrival in New York of his "shivering folios" created quite a sensation among the Cisatlantic admirers of "the gentle Elia." The lovers of rare old books and the lovers of Charles Lamb jostled each other in the way to Bartlett and Welford's shop, where the treasures (having escaped the perils of the sea) were safely housed, and where a crowd of *literati* was constantly engaged in examining them.

The sale was attended by a goodly company of book-collectors and book-readers. All the works brought fair prices, and were purchased by (or for) persons in various parts of the country. Among the bidders were (I am told) Geoffrey Crayon,—Mr. Sparrowgrass,—Clark, of the "Knickerbocker" magazine,—that lover of the angle and true disciple of Izaak Walton, the late Rev. Dr. Bethune,—Burton, the comedian,—and other well-known authors, actors, and divines. The black-letter Chaucer—Speght's edition, folio, London, 1598,—the identical copy spoken of by Elia in his letter to Ainsworth, the novelist—was knocked down to Burton for twenty-five dollars. I know not who was the fortunate purchaser of "The Works of Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle,"—an especial favorite of Lamb's. Neither do I know the name of the buyer of "The Works of Michael Drayton." They brought twenty-eight dollars. A number of volumes (one of them my correspondent opines was "The Dunciad," *variorum* edition) were bought by an enthusiastic lover of Elia who came all the way from St. Louis on purpose to attend this auction. The English nation should have purchased Lamb's library. But instead of comfortably filling an alcove or two in the British Museum, it crossed the Atlantic and was widely scattered over the United States of America. Will it ever be brought together again? Ah, me! such things do not happen in the annals of books.

'Tis no wonder that the old blind scholar, Bardo de' Bardi, in George Eliot's grand story of "Romola," knowing as he did the usual fate of private libraries, manifested a constant fear that his noble collection of books would be merged in some other library after his death. Every generous soul must heartily despise Tito Melema for basely disposing of Bardo's library for lucre. There are plenty of good people, however, who would uphold him in that transaction. Indeed, do not most of us with unseemly haste and unnatural greed dispose of the effects of our deceased friends and relations? The funeral is hardly over before we begin to get ready for the auction. "I preserve," says Montaigne, "a bit of writing, a seal, a prayer-book, a particular sword, that has been used by my friends and predecessors, and have *not* thrown the long staves my father carried in his hand out of my closet." If the essayist lived in these days, and followed the customs that now obtain, he would send the sword and the staves, along with the other useless and (to him) worthless tokens and remembrancers of the dead and gone Montaignes, to the auction-room, and cheerfully pocket the money they brought.



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Thackeray had been dead but a few weeks when a scene similar to the one he has so truthfully described in the seventeenth chapter of "Vanity Fair" occurred at his own late residence. The voice of "Mr. Hammerdown" was heard in the house, and the rooms were filled with a motley crowd of auction-haunters and relic-hunters, (among whom, of course, were Mr. Davids and Mr. Moses,)—a rabble-rout of thoughtless and unfeeling men and women, eager to get an "inside view" of the home of the great satirist. The wine in his cellars,—the pictures upon his walls,—the books in his library,—the old "cane-bottomed chair" in which he sat while writing many of his best works, and which he has immortalized in a fine ballad,—the gifts of kind friends, liberal publishers, and admiring readers,—yea, his house itself, and the land it stands on,—passed under the hammer of the auctioneer. O good white head, low lying in the dust of Kensal Green! it matters little to thee now what becomes of the red brick mansion built so lovingly in the style of Queen Anne's time, and filled with such admirable taste from cellar to roof; but many a pilgrim from these shores will step aside from the roar of London and pay a tribute of remembrance to the house where lived and died the author of "Henry Esmond" and "Vanity Fair."

* * * * *

The ride to camp.

When all the leaves were red or brown,
Or golden as the summer sun,
And now and then came flickering down
Upon the grasses hoar and dun,
Through which the first faint breath of frost
Had as a scorching vapor run,
I rode, in solemn fancies lost,
To join my troop, whose low tents shone
Far vanward to our camping host.
Thus as I slowly journeyed on,
I was made suddenly aware
That I no longer rode alone.
Whence came that strange, incongruous pair?
Whether to make their presence plain
To mortal eyes from earth or air
The essence of these spirits twain
Had clad itself in human guise,
As in a robe, is question vain.
I hardly dared to turn my eyes,
So faint my heart beat; and my blood,
Checked and bewildered with surprise,
Within its aching channels stood,
And all the soldier in my heart



Scarce mustered common hardihood.
But as I paused, with lips apart,
Strong shame, as with a sturdy arm,
Shook me, and made my spirit start,
And all my stagnant life grew warm;
Till, with my new-found courage wild,
Out of my mouth there burst a storm
Of song, as if I thus beguiled
My way with careless melody:
Whereat the silent figures smiled.
Then from a haughty, asking eye
I scanned the uninvited pair,
And waited sternly for reply.

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One shape was more than mortal fair;
He seemed embodied out of light;
The sunbeams rippled through his hair;
His cheeks were of the color bright
That dyes young evening, and his eyes
Glowed like twin planets, that to sight
Increase in lustre and in size,
The more intent and long our gaze.
Full on the future's pain and prize,
Half seen through hanging cloud and haze,
His steady, far, and yearning look
Blazed forth beneath his crown of bays.
His radiant vesture, as it shook,
Dripped with great drops of golden dew;
And at each step his white steed took,
The sparks beneath his hoof-prints flew,
As if a half-cooled lava-flood
He trod, each firm step breaking through.
This figure seemed so wholly good,
That as a moth which reels in light,
Unknown till then, nor understood,
My dazzled soul swam; and I might
Have swooned, and in that presence died,
From the mere splendor of the sight,
Had not his lips, serene with pride
And cold, cruel purpose, made me swerve
From aught their fierce curl might deride.
A clarion of a single curve
Hung at his side by slender bands;
And when he blew, with faintest nerve,
Life burst throughout those lonely lands;
Graves yawned to hear, Time stood aghast,
The whole world rose and clapped its hands.
Then on the other shape I cast
My eyes. I know not how or why
He held my spellbound vision fast.
Instinctive terror bade me fly,
But curious wonder checked my will.
The mysteries of his awful eye,
So dull, so deep, so dark, so chill,



And the calm pity of his brow
And massive features hard and still,
Lovely, but threatening, and the bow
Of his sad neck, as if he told
Earth's graves and sorrows as they grow,
Cast me in musings manifold
Before his pale, unanswering face.
A thousand winters might have rolled
Above his head. I saw no trace
Of youth or age, of time or change,
Upon his fixed immortal grace.
A smell of new-turned mould, a strange,
Dank, earthen odor from him blew,
Cold as the icy winds that range
The moving hills which sailors view
Floating around the Northern Pole,
With horrors to the shivering crew.
His garments, black as mined coal,
Cast midnight shadows on his way;
And as his black steed softly stole,
Cat-like and stealthy, jocund day
Died out before him, and the grass,
Then sear and tawny, turned to gray.
The hardy flowers that will not pass
For the shrewd autumn's chilling rain
Closed their bright eyelids, and, alas!

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No summer opened them again.
The strong trees shuddered at his touch,
And shook their foliage to the plain.
A sheaf of darts was in his clutch;
And wheresoe'er he turned the head
Of any dart, its power was such
That Nature quailed with mortal dread,
And crippling pain and foul disease
For sorrowing leagues around him spread.
Whene'er he cast o'er lands and seas
That fatal shaft, there rose a groan;
And borne along on every breeze
Came up the church-bell's solemn tone,
And cries that swept o'er open graves,
And equal sobs from cot and throne.
Against the winds she tasks and braves,
The tall ship paused, the sailors sighed,
And something white slid in the waves.
One lamentation, far and wide,
Followed behind that flying dart.
Things soulless and immortal died,
As if they filled the self-same part;
The flower, the girl, the oak, the man,
Made the same dust from pith or heart,
Then spoke I, calmly as one can
Who with his purpose curbs his fear,
And thus to both my question ran:—
"What two are ye who cross me here,
Upon these desolated lands,
Whose open fields lie waste and drear
Beneath the tramlings of the bands
Which two great armies send abroad,
With swords and torches in their hands?"
To which the bright one, as a god
Who slowly speaks the words of fate,
Towards his dark comrade gave a nod,
And answered:—"I anticipate
The thought that is your own reply.
You know him, or the fear and hate
Upon your pallid features lie.



Therefore I need not call him Death:
But answer, soldier, who am I?"
Thereat, with all his gathered breath,
He blew his clarion; and there came,
From life above and life beneath,
Pale forms of vapor and of flame,
Dim likenesses of men who rose
Above their fellows by a name.
There curved the Roman's eagle-nose,
The Greek's fair brows, the Persian's beard,
The Punic plume, the Norman bows;
There the Crusader's lance was reared;
And there, in formal coat and vest,
Stood modern chiefs; and one appeared,
Whose arms were folded on his breast,
And his round forehead bowed in thought,
Who shone supreme above the rest.
Again the bright one quickly caught
His words up, as the martial line
Before my eyes dissolved to nought:—
"Soldier, these heroes all are mine;
And I am Glory!" As a tomb
That groans on opening, "Say, were thine,"
Cried the dark figure. "I consume
Thee and thy splendors utterly.
More names have faded in my gloom

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Than chronicles or poesy
Have kept alive for babbling earth
To boast of in despite of me.”
The other cried, in scornful mirth,
“Of all that was or is thou curse,
Thou dost o’errate thy frightful worth!
Between the cradle and the hearse,
What one of mine has lived unknown,
Whether through triumph or reverse?
For them the regal jewels shone,
For them the battled line was spread;
Victorious or overthrown,
My splendor on their path was shed.
They lived their life, they ruled their day:
I hold no commerce with the dead.
Mistake me not, and falsely say,
‘Lo, this is slow, laborious Fame,
Who cares for what has passed away,’—
My twin-born brother, meek and tame,
Who troops along with crippled Time,
And shrinks at every cry of shame,
And halts at every stain and crime;
While I, through tears and blood and guilt,
Stride on, remorseless and sublime.
War with his offspring as thou wilt;
Lay thy cold lips against their cheek.
The poison or the dagger-hilt
Is what my desperate children seek.
Their dust is rubbish on the hills;
Beyond the grave they would not speak.
Shall man surround his days with ills,
And live as if his only care
Were how to die, while full life thrills
His bounding blood? To plan and dare,
To use life is life’s proper end:
Let death come when it will, and where!”—
“You prattle on, as babes that spend
Their morning half within the brink
Of the bright heaven from which they wend;
But what I am you dare not think.



Thick, brooding shadow round me lies;
You stare till terror makes you wink;
I go not, though you shut your eyes.
Unclose again the loathful lid,
And lo, I sit beneath the skies,
As Sphinx beside the pyramid!"
So Death, with solemn rise and fall
Of voice, his sombre mind undid.
He paused; resuming,—“I am all;
I am the refuge and the rest;
The heart aches not beneath my pall.
O soldier, thou art young, unpresse'd
By snarling grief's increasing swarm;
While joy is dancing in thy breast,
Fly from the future's fated harm;
Rush where the fronts of battle meet,
And let me take thee on my arm!"
Said Glory,—“Warrior, fear deceit,
Where Death gives counsel. Run thy race;
Bring the world cringing to thy feet!
Surely no better time nor place
Than this, where all the Nation calls
For help, and weakness and disgrace
Lag in her tents and council-halls,
And down on aching heart and brain
Blow after blow unbroken falls.
Her strength flows out through



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every vein;

Mere time consumes her to the core;
Her stubborn pride becomes her bane.
In vain she names her children o'er;
They fail her in her hour of need;
She mourns at desperation's door.
Be thine the hand to do the deed,
To seize the sword, to mount the throne,
And wear the purple as thy meed!
No heart shall grudge it; not a groan
Shall shame thee. Ponder what it were
To save a land thus twice thy own!"
Use gave a more familiar air
To my companions; and I spoke
My heart out to the ethereal pair:—
"When in her wrath the Nation broke
Her easy rest of love and peace,
I was the latest who awoke.
I sighed at passion's mad increase.
I strained the traitors to my heart.
I said, 'We vex them; let us cease.'
I would not play the common part.
Tamely I heard the Southrons' brag:
I said, 'Their wrongs have made them smart.'
At length they struck our ancient flag,—
Their flag as ours, the traitors damned!—
And braved it with their patchwork-rag.
I rose, when other men had calmed
Their anger in the marching throng;
I rose, as might a corpse embalmed,
Who hears God's mandate, 'Right my wrong!'
I rose and set me to His deed,
With His great Spirit fixed and strong.
I swear, that, when I drew this sword,
And joined the ranks, and sought the strife,
I drew it in Thy name, O Lord!
I drew against my brother's life,
Even as Abraham on his child
Drew slowly forth his priestly knife.
No thought of selfish ends defiled
The holy fire that burned in me;
No gnawing care was thus beguiled.



My children clustered at my knee;
Upon my braided soldier's coat
My wife looked,—ah, so wearily!—
It made her tender blue eyes float.
And when my wheeling rowels rang,
Or on the floor my sabre smote,
The sound went through her like a pang.
I saw this; and the days to come
Forewarned me with an iron clang,
That drowned the music of the drum,
That made the rousing bugle faint;
And yet I sternly left my home,—
Haply to fall by noisome taint
Of foul disease, without a deed
To sound in rhyme or shine in paint;
But, oh, at least, to drop a seed,
Humble, but faithful to the last,
Sown by my Country in her need!
O Death, come to me, slow or fast;
I'll do my duty while I may!
Though sorrow burdens every blast,
And want and hardship on me lay
Their bony gripes, my life is pledged,
And to my Country given away!
Nor feel I any hope, new-fledged,
Arise, strong



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Glory, at thy voice.

Our sword the people's will has edged,
Our rule stands on the people's choice.
This land would mourn beneath a crown,
Where born slaves only could rejoice.
How should the Nation keep it down?
What would a despot's fortunes be,
After his days of strength had flown,
Amidst this people, proud and free,
Whose histories from such sources run?
The thought is its own mockery.
I pity the audacious one
Who may ascend that thorny throne,
And bide a single setting sun.
Day dies; my shadow's length has grown;
The sun is sliding down the west.
That trumpet in my camp was blown.
From yonder high and wooded crest
I shall behold my squadron's camp,
Prepared to sleep its guarded rest
In the low, misty, poisoned damp
That wears the strength, and saps the heart,
And drains the surgeon's watching lamp.
Hence, phantoms! in God's peace depart!
I was not fashioned for your will:
I scorn the trump, and brave the dart!"
They grinned defiance, lingering still.
"I charge ye quit me, in His name
Who bore His cross against the hill!—
By Him who died a death of shame,
That I might live, and ye might die,—
By Christ the Martyr!"—As a flame
Leaps sideways when the wind is high,
The bright one bounded from my side,
At that dread name, without reply;
And Death drew in his mantle wide,
And shuddered, and grew ghastly pale,
As if his dart had pricked his side.
There came a breath, a lonely wail,
Out of the silence o'er the land;
Whether from souls of bliss or bale,
What mortal brain may understand?



Only I marked the phantoms went
Closely together, hand in hand,
As if upon one errand bent.

* * * * *

The true story of Luigi.

A white dove flew down into the market-place one summer morning, and, undisturbed among all the wheels and hoofs, followed the footsteps of Luigi.

He carried in one hand a sunflower, and thoughtlessly, while it hung there, with nervous fingers scattered the seeds as he went his way. So that the dove cooed in her little swelling throat, gathered what Luigi spilled, and, startled at last by a frisking hound, flew up and alighted on the tray which Luigi's other hand poised airily on his head, and was borne along with all the company of fair white things there in the sunshine.

The street-urchins warned Luigi of the intruder among his wares, and then, slyly putting up his hand, the boy tossed the seeds in a shower about the tray. Off flew the dove, and back with the returning gust she fluttered, and, pausing only to catch her seed, she came and went, wheeling in flashing circles round his head as he pursued his path.



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It was at the pretty picture he thus presented, as, having left the market-place, he came upon the higher streets of the town, that a lady, looking from her window, made exclaim. The kind face, the pleasant voice, attracted him; in a moment after, while she was yet thinking of it, the door was pushed partly open, a dark boy, smiling, appeared, followed by the unslung tray, and a voice like a flute said,—

“*Sono io*,—it is I. Will the lady buy?”

And then the image-vender showed his wares.

The lady chattered with him a moment, and at its close he was evidently paying no attention to what she said, but was listening to a voice from the adjoining room, the clear voice of a girl singing her Italian exercises.

His face was in a glow, he bent to catch the words with signalling finger and glittering eyes; it was plainly neither the deftly sweet accompaniment nor the melody that charmed him, but the language: the language was his own.

With the cadence of the measure the sound was broken capriciously, the book had been thrown down, and the singer herself stood balancing in the doorway between the rooms, a hand on either side,—still lightly trilling her scales, smiling, beaming, blue-eyed, rosy. The sunbeam that entered behind the shade swinging in the wind fell upon the beautiful masses of her light-brown hair, and illumined all the shifting color that played with such delicate suffusion upon her cheek and chin; her face was a deep, innocent smile of joy; she would have been dazzling but for the blushes that seemed to go and come with her breath and make her human; and so much did she embody one's ideal of the first woman that no one wondered when all called her Eve, although her name was Rosamond, and she was the Rose of the World.

Directly Eve saw the boy kneeling there over his tray, the cast suspended in his hand, as he leaned intently forward with the rich carmine deepening the golden tint of his brow and with that yellow fire in his wine-dark eyes, she ceased singing, and, not hesitating to mimic the well-known call, cried,—

“Images?”

Then Luigi remembered where he was, and answered the question asked five minutes since.

“Signora, seven shillings.”

“That is reasonable, now,” said the lady. “I will have it for that sum. Do you cast these things yourself?”

“My master and I.”



“Have you been long here?”

“Alas! much, much time,” said he, with melancholy earnestness.

“And from what part of Italy did you come?” she kindly asked.

“*Vengo da Roma*” replied the boy, drawing himself up proudly.

“The Roman peasant is a prince, mamma,” said Eve quickly, in an undertone.

Luigi glanced up instantly and smiled, and offered to her a little plaster cherub, silver-gilt, just spreading wings for flight.

“It is for her,” said he, with an appealing look at the mother. “For her,—*la principessina*. I myself made it.”



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No one perceived his adroit under-meaning; but Eva bethought herself of her school-phrases, and venturously selected one.

“E grazioso!” said she.

Luigi’s face kindled anew; it seemed as if the sound of his native tongue were like some magic wand that called the blind blood to his cheek or drove it into the pools of his heart; the smile broke all over his face as light dances on burnished gold; he turned to her boldly with outstretched hands, like some one asking an alms.

“Give to me a song,” he said.

“Volontieri” quoth Eve, in hesitating accent, and flitted back to her piano. Without a thought, he followed.

It was a little song of flowers and sunshine that Eve began to carol over the carolling keys; the words fell into the sweetness of the air, that seemed laden with the morning murmur of bees and blossoms; it was but a verse or two, with a refrain that went repeating all the honeyed burden, till Luigi’s face fairly burned with pleasure, where he stood at timid distance in the doorway.

“Cio mi fa bene! That does me good!” cried he, as she rose. “Ah, Signorina, I am happy here!”

Then he turned and found the elder lady counting out his money. He received the seven shillings quietly, as his due; but when she would have paid him for the cherub, he pushed the silver swiftly back.

“It is a gift!” said he, with spirit.

“No, no,” said Eve. “I should like it, but I must pay for it. You will be so kind as to take the price?” she asked, her hand extended, and a winning grace irradiating all her changing rosy countenance.

A shadow fell over the boy’s face, like that of a cloud skimming down a sunny landscape.

“A Lei non posso dar un rifiuto,” said he, meeting her shining eyes; and he gravely gathered the money and slung his tray.

As he raised it, Eve laid along its side a branch of unsullied day-lilies that had been filling the room with their heavy fragrance. The image-boy interested her; he was a visible creature of those foreign fairy-shores of which she had dreamed; that she did anything but show kindness to a vagrant whom she would not see again never crossed her mind; perhaps, too, she liked that Italy, in his person, should admire her,—that was



pardonable. But, at the action, the shadow swept away from the boy's face again, all his lights and darks came flashing out, eyes and teeth and color sparkling in his smile, like sunshine after rain; he made his low obeisance, poised the tray upon his head, and, with a wave of his hand, went out.

"*A rivederla!*" he called back to her from the door, and was gone.

And soon far down the street they heard his musical cry again; and perhaps the little distant dove, who had forsaken him on entrance, also caught the sound, and was reminded by it, as he pecked along the dusty thoroughfare, of some remote and pleasant memory of morning and the market-place.



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* * * * *

It was a week afterward, that, as Eve and her mother loitered over luncheon, the door again softly opened, and they saw Luigi standing erect on the threshold, and holding with both hands above the brightly bronzed face a tall, slender, white jar of ancient and exquisite shape, carefully painted, and having a glass suspended within, lest any water it might receive should penetrate the porous plaster.

He did not look at Eve, but marched to her mother, and deposited it upon the floor at her feet.

“For the Signora’s lilies,” said he.

And remembering the silver pieces of the week before, and fearing lest she should really grieve him, the Signora perforce accepted it with admiring words; while Eve ran to fill it from the garden, into which abode of bliss—as gardens always are—the long casement of the music-room opened. Luigi hesitated, his hand upon the door, wistful wishes in his face; then he cast a smiling, deprecating glance at the mother, lightly crossed the floor, was over the sill, and stood beside Eve in the walk.

To right and left the long, straight stems rose in rank, and bore their floral crown of listening lilies, calm, majestic, pure, and only stirring now and then when the wind shook a waft of gold-dust down the shining leaf, or rifled the inmost heart of its delicious wealth of odor; on either side of the path the snowy bloom lay like a fallen cloud.

“It is a company of angels,” said Luigi, brokenly, “a cloud of seraphs with their gold harps! If they should sing,” hazarded he, “it would be the song the Signorina gave me, —alas, it is long since!”

“It is a week,” said she, laughing and lingering.

“Eve!” came a warning voice.

“That is the Signorina’s name?” questioned Luigi, as he bent to help her cut the stems.

“Eve,—yes, they call me so.”

“Certainly I had not thought it,” he repeated to himself.

“Why, what did you suppose it was?” she heedlessly asked.

“*Luigia!*” said he. And his low, rapt tone was indescribably simple, sweet, and intense.

Eve did not know what the boy himself was called.



“I wish it were,” said she. “That is a pleasant sound.”

And rising with her armful, she went in and heaped the jar with honor, while Luigi, pleased and proud, lifted it to the level of the black-walnut bracket.

“Signora, behold what is beautiful!” said he, stepping back.

The Signora looked at the lilies, but Luigi looked at Eve.

They had lunched. Eve went into the other room to her exercises. Her mother poured out a glass of wine for the unbidden guest. He repulsed it with an angry eye and a disdainful gesture. But then there rose the sound of Eve’s voice just beyond;—while he stayed, he could listen. With sudden change from frown to smile, he stepped forward and took the plate.



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“To the Signora’s health,” said he, with a courtesy that sat well on the supple shape and the dark beauty of the boy, whose homely garb, whose poverty, and whose profession seemed only the disguise of some young prince,—and sipped the wine, and broke the fine, white bread, while his cheek was scarlet with delight at recurrence of the familiar sounds, even though in such simple phrase.

“That is a proud boy,” said Eve’s mother, when he had gone, and she paused a moment to see how Eve went on. “He urges no one.”

“Italy is full of its troubles, *mia madre*. He is the exile of a noble family,—no other beggar would be so haughty,” looked up and answered Eve, laughing between her bars. “Mamma, what different beings different meridians make!” she exclaimed, dropping her music. “Is he so sweet and lofty and fiery because he has lived in the shadow of old temples,—because, if he stumbled over a pebble in the street, it was the marble fragment of a goddess,—because the clay of which he is made has so many times been moulded into heroes?”

“Are there no further fancies with which you can invest an image-vender?”

“But he is unique. Did you ever see any one like him? Daily beauty has made him beautiful. Is that what the Doctor means, when he says a Corinthian pillar in the market-place would educate a generation better than a pulpit would?”

“They have both in Rome,” said her mother, with meaning.

“And, in spite of them, perhaps our hero cannot spell! Yet he is more accomplished than we, mamma. He speaks Italian beautifully,” said she, with *espieglerie*.

“But hardly Tuscan.”

“Silver speech for all that. I have reached the end of my idioms, though. I always said school was good for something, if one could only find it out,” she archly cried, her little fingers running in arpeggios up the keys. “To think he understood them so! Then Dante’s women would.”

“Heaven forbid!”

“How his face glows at them,—like a light behind a mask! It is quite the opera, when he comes. I will sing to him an aria, and then it will make a scene.”

“You are a madcap. What do you want a scene for?”

“Spice. When my voice fills his handsome eyes with tears, he makes me an artist; when he turns upon you in that sudden, ardent air, he brings a sting of foreign fire into this quiet summer noon.”



“Amuse yourself sparingly with other people’s emotions, Eve.”

“Especially when they are suave as olive-oil, pungent as cherry-cordial, and ready to blaze with a spark, you know. Ah, it is all as interesting to me as when the little sweep last year looked out from the chimney-top and made the whole sky brim over with his wild music.”

Here a clock chimed silverly from below.

“There is the half-hour striking, and you have lost all this time,” said the caressing mother, her fingers lost in the bright locks she lifted.



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“Never mind, mother mine,” said she, turning in elfish mood to brush her lips across the frustrated fingers. “Art is long, if time is fleeting,” she sang to the measure of her *Non piu mesta*, beginning again to shower its diamonds about till all the air seemed bright with her young and sparkling voice.

* * * * *

Summer days are never too long for the fortunes of health and happiness, and at the sunset following this same morning Eve leaned from the casement, watching the retiring rays as if she fain would pursue. A tender after-glow impurpled all the heaven like a remembered passion, and bathed field and fallow in its bloom. It gave to her a kind of aureole, as if her beauty shed a lustre round her. The window where she leaned was separated from the street only by a narrow inclosure, where grew a single sumach, whose stem went straight and bare to the eaves, and there branched out, like the picture of a palm-tree, in tossing plumes. Blossoming honeysuckles wreathed this stem and sweetened every breath.

A figure came sauntering down the street, an upright and pliant form, laden with green boughs. It was Luigi, with whom it had been a holiday, and who, roaming in the woods, had come across a wild stock on whose rude flavor the kindly freak of some wayfarer had grafted that of pulpy wax-heart cherries, tart ruddiness and sugared snow. Pausing before Eve, he gazed at her lingeringly, then sprang half-way up the adjacent door-steps, and proffered her his fragrant freight. Eve deliberated for a moment, but the fruit was tempting, the act would be kind. As he stood there, he wore a certain humility, and yet a certain assurance,—the lover’s complicate timidity, that seems to say he will defend her against all the world, for there is nothing in the world he fears except herself. Eve bent and broke a little spray of the nearest branch.

“They are all for you,” pleaded he,—“all.”

“I have enough,” said Eve.

“I brought them for the Signorina from the wood. Behold! the tints are hers. The cream upon Madonna’s shoulder,—here; the soft red flame upon her cheek is there.”

“Ah! I thank you,” said Eve. “Good night.”

“*Scusi*,—I beg that the Signorina take them.”

“No, no,” answered Eve, obliged to speak, and, hanging on her foot, half turned away, a moment before flight; “why should I rob you so?”

“It is not take,—but give! Why? Only that to me you are so kind. *O quanta bonta!* You speak the speech I love. You sing its songs. I was a wanderer. *Io era solo.* Alone and sad. But since I heard your voice, I am at home again, and life is sweet!”



And suddenly and dexterously he flung the boughs past her in at the open window, laughed at his success till the teeth flashed again in his dusky face, kissed both his hands and ran down the steps, singing in a ringing recitative something where the *bella bellas* echoed and reechoed each other through the evening as far as they could be heard at all.



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Eve smiled to herself, gathered up the scattered boughs, and went into the lighted room behind, where her gay companions clustered, appearing at the door thus laden, and with a blush upon her brow.

“Mamma,” said she, her lovely head bent on one side and ringed with gloss beneath the burner, “the fruit is fresh, whether you call it cherry or *ciriegia*.” And straightway planting herself at her mother’s feet, taper fingers twinkled among shadowy leaves till the boughs were bare of their juicy burden, and they all made merry together upon the spoils of Luigi.

* * * * *

July was following June in sunshine down the slope of the year, and Eve, pursuing her pleasures, might almost have forgotten that an image-boy existed, had Luigi allowed her to forget. But he was omnipresent as a gnat.

As she walked from church on the next Sunday afternoon alone, gazing at her shadow by the way, she started to see another shadow fall beside it. In spite of his festal midsummer attire of white linen, a sidelong glance assured her that it was Luigi; yet she did not raise her eyes. He continued by her, in silence, several steps.

“Signorina Eve,” said he then, “I went that I might worship with you.”

But Eve had no reply.

“My prayer mounted with yours,—may he forgive, *il padre mio*,” said Luigi. “*Ebbene!* It is not lovely there. It is cold. Your heaven would be a dreary place, perhaps. Come rather to mine!” For they approached a little chapel, the crystallization in stone of a devout fancy, and through the open doors rolling organ, purple incense, and softened light invited entrance. “It is the holy vespers,” said the boy. “*Ciascuno alia sua volta*. The Signorina enters,—*forse?*”

“Not to-day,” answered Eve, gently.

“Kneel we not,” then faltered he, “before one shrine,—although,” and he grew angry with his hesitation, “at different gates?”

“Ah, certainly,” said Eve. “But now I must go home.”

“The Signorina refuses to come with me, then!” he exclaimed, springing forward so that he opposed her progress. “Her foot is too holy! she herself has said it. Her eyes are too lofty,—*gli occhi azzurri!* It is true; stood she there, who would look at the blessed saints? Ah! you have a fair face, but it is—*traditrice!*”



And as he confronted her, with his clenched hands slightly raised and advanced from his side, the lithe figure drawn back, the swarthy cheek, the eager eyes, aglow, and made more vivid by his spotless attire, Eve bethought herself that a scene in public had fewer charms than one in private, and, casting about for escape, quietly stepped across the street. For an instant Luigi gazed after her like one thunderstruck; then he dashed into the vestibule and was lost in its shadows.

It was at midnight that Eve's mother, rising to close an open window, caught sight of an outline in the obscurity, and discerned Luigi leaning on the railing below, with one arm supporting his upturned face. "Ah, the sad day! the sad day!" he was sighing in his native speech. "Pardon, pardon, Signorina! Alas! I was beside myself!"



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And on the next twilight Eve stood at the gate, her arms and hands full of a flush of rosy wild azaleas from the swamps, bounty that had been silently laid upon her by a fast and fleeting shadow. She doubted for a moment, then dropped them where she stood. But a tint as deep as theirs was broken by the arch and dimpling smile that flickered round her mouth as she went in, laughing because this devotion was so strange, and blushing because it was so genuine. "Mamma," said she, her eyes cast down, her head askant like a shy bird's, "I am afraid I have a lover!" And then to think of it the child grew sad. It pained her to grieve him with the beautiful pink blossoms she had dropped, and which she knew he would return to find; but better trivial sting than lasting ache, she had heard. And perhaps in his tropical nature the passion would be brief as the pain.

* * * * *

The broad, bright river flowing past the town by summer noon or night was never left unflecked with sails. And of all who loved its swinging bridge, its stately shores, its breezy expanses, none sought them more frequently than Eve.

She had gone out one day with her companions—who, beside her, seemed like the moss that clusters on a rose-bud—to watch the shoal in the weir as the treacherous ebb forsook it. It was a favorite diversion of Eve's,—for she always felt as if she were Scheherazade looking into the pools of her fancy, and viewing the submerged city with its princes and its populace transformed to fish, when, having entered the heart-shaped inclosure, she leaned over the boat-side and noted the twin tides of life whose facile and luminous career followed all the outline of the weir. For the mackerel, swimming in at the two eddies of the mouth, struck straight across in transverse courses till they met the barrier on either side, and then each slowly felt the way along to the end of the lobe, where, instead of escaping, they struck freely across again, and thus pursued their round in everlasting interchange of lustre,—through the darkly transparent surface each current glancing on its swift and silent way, an arrow of emerald and silver. Curving, racing, rippling with tints, they circled, till, warned by some subtle instinct that the river was betraying them, fresh fear swept faster and faster their lines of light, the rich dyes deepened in the splendid scales, and some huddled into herds, and some, more frantic than the rest, leaped from the water in shining streaks, and darted away like stars into outer safety. There the sail-boat already had preceded them, and the master of the weir, having taken its place, from the dip-net was loading his dory with massive fare of frosted silver and fusing jewel. As Eve and her friends lingered yet a moment there, watching the picturesque figure splashing barelegged in the shallow water, one of the droll little craft known as Joppa-chaises came up beside them, a fulvous face appeared at its helm, a tawny hand was extended, and they left Luigi bargaining for fish, and stringing these simulations of massed turquoise and scale-ruby at a penny apiece.



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What little wind there was that day blew from the southeast, and sheathed the brightness of the noonday sky in a soft veil of haze; and having made this pretty sight their own, Eve's party spread their sail for tacking to and fro, meaning to reach the sea. This, for some hidden reason, the wind refused to let them do, and when it found them obstinate brought an accomplice upon the scene, and they suddenly surprised themselves rocking this side the bar, and caught in the vapory fringes of a dark sea-turn, that, creeping round about, had soon so wrapped and folded them that they could scarcely see the pennon drooping at their mast-head. This done, the wind fell altogether, and they lay there a part of the great bank of mist that all day brooded above the bar. Everywhere around them the gray cloud hung and curled and curdled; it was impossible to see an oar's-length on either side; their very faces were unfamiliar, and seemed to be looking like the faces of spirits from a different atmosphere; their little boat was the whole world, and beyond it was only void. Now and then an idle puff parted the bank to right and left, their sail flapped impatiently, and in the sudden space they saw the barge that dashed along with the great white seine-boat heaped high with nets towering in its midst, the oars of the six red-shirted rowers flashing in the sun as it cut the channel and rushed by to join the fishing-fleet outside,—or they caught a glimpse of some little gunning-float, covered with wisps of hay and carrying its single occupant couched *perdu* along its length,—or, while they lunched and trifled and jested, Eve with her crumbs tolled about them the dwellers in the depths, and in the falling flake of sunshine laughed to see a stately aldermanic flounder, that came paddling after a chicken-bone, put to rout by a satanic sculpin, whereat an eel swiftly snaked the prize away, and the frost-fish, collecting at a chance of civil war, mingled in the *melee*, tooth and nail, or rather fin and tail. Then the vapors would darken round them again, till, with the stray rays caught and refracted in their fleece, it seemed like living in an opal full of cloudy color and fire. Far off they heard the great ground-swell of the surf upon the beach, or there came the dull report of the sportsmen in the marsh, or they exchanged first a laugh and then a yawn with some other unseen party becalmed in the fog and drifting with the currents; and all day long, on this side and on that, the cloud rang with near and distant music, as if Ariel and his sprites had lost their way in it, the tinkling of a mandolin, the singing of a clear, rich voice that had the tenor's golden strain, and yet, in floating through the mist, was sweet and sighing as a flute. The melody and the undistinguished words it bore upon its wings, delicious tune and passionate meaning, seemed the speech of another planet, an orb of song, the delicate sound lost when at sunset the threaded mist broke up and streamed away in fire, but coming again, as if they were haunted by the viewless voices of the air, when star-beam and haze tangled together at last in the dusk of summer night and found them still rocking on the swell, vainly whistling for the wind, and slowly tiding up with the flood.



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It was one of those days so long in the experience, but so charming to remember. Eve, with her wilful, fearless ways, her quips and joyousness, had been the life and the delight of it; now, chilled and weary, she hailed the sight of the lamps that seemed to be hung out along the shore to light them home: for their boatmen were inexperienced, and, though wind failed them, had not dared before to lift the oars, ignorant as they were of their precise whereabouts, and even now made no progress like that of the unseen voice still hovering around them. There had been a season of low tides, and when, to save the weary work of rowing a heavy sail-boat farther, it was decided to make the shore, they were hindered by a length of shallow water and weedy flat, through which the ladies of the party must consent to be carried. A late weird moon was rising down behind the light-houses, all red and angry in the mist still brooding over the horizon, the boat lay in the deep shade it cast, the river beyond was breaking into light, reach after reach, like a blossom into bloom. Two of her friends had already been taken to the bank; Eve stood in the bow, awaiting her bearers, and watching the distant bays of the stream, each one of which seemed just on the verge of opening into an impossible midnight glory. She heard the plash of feet in the water, but did not heed it other than to fold her cloak more conveniently about her, her eye caught the contour of a vague approaching form, and then shadowy arms were reaching up to encircle her. She was bending, and just yielding herself to the clasp, when the hearty voice of her bearers sounded at hand, bidding her be of good cheer; the adumbration shrank back into the gloom, and, before she recovered from her start, firm arms had borne her to firm land.

“Well, Eve,” said one of her awaiting friends, “is the earth going up and down with you? As for me, my head swims like a buoy. I feel as if I had waltzed all day.”

“Nympholeptic, then,” said Eve,—

“When you do dance, I wish you
A wave of the sea, that you might ever do
Nothing but that.”

“I thought they threw out the anchor down there,” said the other. “Are they tying her up for the night, too? How long it takes them! Oh, for an inquisition and a rack,—I am so cramped! Eve, here, is extinguished. What a day it has been!”

“Oh, sweet the flight, at dead of night,
When up the immeasurable height
The thin cloud wanders with the breeze
That shakes the splendor from the star,
That stoops and crisps the darkling seas,
And drives the daring keel afar
Where loneliness and silence are!
To cleave the crested wave, and mark



Drowned in its depth the shattered spark,
On airy swells to soar, and rise
Where nothing but the foam-bell flies,
O'er freest tracts of wild delight,
Oh, sweet the flight at dead of night!"



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sang Eve. "Ah, there they are! I am so tired that I could fall asleep here, if there were but a reed to lean against!"

"*Appoggiatevi a me*" sighed a murmurous voice in her ear, with musical monotone.

A little shiver ran over Eve, but no soul saw it; in an instant she knew the sound that had all day haunted the sea-turn; yet she could neither smile nor be angry at Luigi's simplicity; with a peremptory motion of her hand, she only waved him away, and fortified herself among her companions, who, thoroughly awakened, made the night ring as they wended along. They rallied Eve, then grew vexed that she refused the sport, and kept silence awhile, only to break it with gayer laughter, elate with life while half the world was stretched in white repose. At length they paused to rest in the lee of a cottage that seemed more like a hulk drawn up on shore than any house, but matted from ground to chimney in a smother of woodbine.

"A picturesque place," said one of the chevaliers.

"And a picturesque body lives in it," replied another. "The beauty of the fisher-maidens. I have seen her out upon the flats at low tide digging for clams, barefooted, the short petticoats fluttering, a handkerchief across her ears,—and outline could do no more."

"I have seen her, too," said Eve. "Though she lives in the belt of sunburn, she is white as snow,—milk-white, with hazel eyes. She has hair like Sordello's Elys. She is a girl that dreams. Let us serenade her till she sees visions."

And Eve's voice went warbling lightly up, till the others joined, as if the oriole in his hanging nest not far away had stirred to sing out the seasons of the dark.

"The hours that bear thy beauty prize
Star after star sinks numbering,—
The laden wind at thy lattice sighs
To find thee slumbering, slumbering!

"Ah, wantonly why waste these hours
That love would fain be borrowing?
Soon youth and joy must fall like flowers,
And leave thee sorrowing, sorrowing!

"Ye fleeting hours, ye sacred skies,
Sweet airs around her hovering,
Oh, open me the envied eyes
Your spells are covering, covering!

"Or only, while the dew's soft showers
Shake slowly into glistening,



Let her, O magic midnight hours,
In dreams be listening, listening!"

And their voices blended so together as they sang, and the plunge of the sea came on the east-wind in such chiming chord, that they never heeded the old mandolin whose strings in humble remoteness Luigi struck to their tune. But mingling the sound of the sea and the sound of the strings in her memory, it seemed to Eve that Luigi was fast becoming the undertone of her life.

* * * * *

But Luigi was not to be abashed. Faint heart never won fair lady, he said to himself, in some answering apophthegm. And thereat he summoned his reserves.



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At noon of the next day, Eve, having run down-stairs into the room where her mother sat, stood before her during the inspection of the attire she had proposed as possible for an approaching masquerade some weeks hence. She wore a white robe of classic make, and over its trailing folds her bright hair, all unbound from the heavy braids, streamed in a thousand ripples of scattered lustre, the brown breaking into gold, the gloss lurking in tremulous jacinth shadows, tresses like a cascade of ravelled light falling to her feet, shrouding her in a long and luminous veil,—such “sweet shaken hair” as was never seen since Spenser and Ariosto put their heads together.

“*Come sta?*” said some one in the doorway. And there stood Luigi, having deposited his tray of images on the steps, holding up a long string of birds’-eggs blown, tiny varicolored globes plundered from the thrushes, bobolinks, blue-jays, and cedar-birds, and trembling upon the thread as if their concrete melody quivered to open into tune.

For an indignant instant Eve felt her seclusion unwarrantably violated; she turned upon the invader with her blushes, and the venturesome Luigi blenched before the gaze. Still, though he retreated, a part of him remained: a slender brown hand, that stretched back in relief against the white door-post, yet suspended the pretty rosary; and there it caught Eve’s eye.

Now it was Euterpe that Eve was to represent at the masquerade; and what ornament so fit and fanciful as this amulet of spring-time, whose charm commanded all that hour of freshness, fragrance, and dew, when the burdened heart of the dawn bubbles over with music? Yet the enticement was brief. Eve looked and longed, and then hurriedly turned her back upon the tempting treasure, her two hands thrusting it off. “Behind me, Satan!” cried she, tossing a laugh at her mother; and Paula, the stately servant who had followed her down, signified to Luigi that the door awaited his movements.

Then the hand quietly withdrew, and his footstep was heard upon the threshold. It was arrested by a sound: Eve stood in the doorway, gathering her locks in one hand, and blushing and smiling upon him like sunshine, whether she would or no.

“You are very kind,” said she, hesitating, and fluttering out the broad, snowy love-ribbon that was to ornament her lute, “but, if you please,—indeed”—

“Indeed, the Signorina cares not for such bawbles,” said Luigi, sadly, covering her with his gaze. Then he turned, mounted his tray again, and went slowly down the street, forgetting to cry his wares.

Perhaps, after this, Luigi felt that his situation was desperate; perhaps despair made him bold,—for, having already spoiled Eve’s pleasure for the day, that same evening found him in her mother’s garden, half hidden in the grape-vines, and watching the movements in the lighted room opposite, through the long window, whose curtain was seldom dropped.



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It was a gay old town in those days, kind to its lads and lasses, and if the streets were grass-grown, it seemed only that so they might give softer footing to the young feet that trod them. Almost every night there was a festival at one house or another, and this evening the rendezvous was with Eve. The guests gathered and dallied, the dancers floated round the room, the lovers uttered their weighty trifles in such seclusion or shadow as they could secure, the voices melted in happy unison. Eve, with snowy shoulders and faultless arms escaping from the ruffle of her rosy gauzes, where skirt over skirt, like clinging petals, made her seem the dryad of a wild rose-tree just rising and looking from her blushing cup, Eve flitted to and fro among them, and, all the time, Luigi's gaze brooded over the scene. Sometimes her shadow fell in the lighted space of turf, and then Luigi went and laid his cheek upon it; it passed, and he returned once more to his hiding-place, and the dark, motionless countenance, with its wandering, glittering eyes, appeared to hang upon the dense leafage that sheltered all the rest of him like a vizard in whose cavities glowworms had gathered. And more than once, in passing, Eve delayed a moment, and almost caught that gaze; she was sensible of his presence there, felt it, as she might have felt an apparition, as if the eyes were those of a basilisk and she were fascinated to look and look again, till filled with a strange fear and unrest. It grew late; by-and-by, before they separated, Eve sang. It would have been impossible for her to say why she chose a luscious little Italian air, one that many a time at home, perhaps, Luigi had heard some midnight lover sing. Through it, as he listened now, he could fancy the fountain's fall, the rustle of the bough, the half-checked gurgle of the nightingale, upon the scented waft almost the slow down-floating of the scattered corolla of the full-blown flower. The tears sparkled over his face, first of delight, and then of anger. Something was wanting in the song,—he missed the passionate utterance of the lover standing by the gate and pouring his soul in his singing.

Suddenly the room was startled by the ring of a voice from the garden, a voice that outbroke sweet and strong, that snatched the measure from Eve's lips, flung a fervor into its flow, a depth into its burden, and carried it on with impetuous fire, lingering with tenderness here, swift with ardor there, till all hearts bounded in quicker palpitation when the air again was still. For deep feeling has a potency of its own, and all that careless group felt as if some deific cloud had passed by.

As for Eve, what coquetry there was in her nature was but the innocent coruscation of happy spirits, the desire to see her power, the necessity of being dear to all she touched. Far from pleasant was this vehemence of devotion; the approach of it oppressed her; she comprehended Luigi as a creature of another species, another race, than herself; she shrank before him now with a kind of horror. That night in a nervous excitation she did not close an eye, and in the morning she was wan as a flower after rain.



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This state of things found at least one observer, a personage of no less authority in household matters than Paula, the tall and stately woman of Nubian lineage who had been the nurse of Eve, and who every morning now stood behind her chair at breakfast, familiarly joining in and gathering what she chose of the conversation. Erect as a palm-tree, slender, queenly, with her thin and clearly cut features, and her head like that of some Circassian carved in black marble, she had a kinship of picturesqueness with Luigi, and could meet him more nearly on his own ground than another, for her voice was as sweet as his, and he was only less dark than she. Breakfast over, she took her way into the garden, set open the gate, and busied herself pinching the fresh shoots of the grape-vine, too luxuriant in leaves. She did not wait long before Luigi came up the side-street, his tray upon his head, his gait less elastic than beseemed the fresh, fragrant morning. Paula stepped forward and gave him pause, with a gesture.

“Sir!” said she, commandingly.

Luigi looked up at her inquiringly. Then a pleasant expectation overshot his gloomy face; he smiled, and his teeth glittered, and his eyes. Instantly he unslung his tray and set it upon the level gate-post.

“Sir,” said Paula, “do you come here often?”

“*Tutti i giorni*,” answered Luigi, scarcely considering her worth wasting his sparse and precious English upon.

“You come here often,” said Paula. “Will you come here no more?”

Luigi opened his eyes in amaze.

“You will come here no more,” said Paula.

“*Chi lo*,—who wishes it?” stammered Luigi.

“My mistress,” answered Paula, proudly, as if to be her servant were more than enough distinction, and to mention her name were sovereign.

“Who commands?” he demanded, imperatively.

“Still my mistress.”

“She said—Tell me that!”

“She said, ‘Paula, if the boy disturbs us further, we must take measures.’”

“The Signorina?”



“Her mother.”

“Not the Signorina, then!” And Luigi’s gloomy face grew radiant.

“She and her mother are one,” replied Paula.

Luigi was silent for a moment. One could see the shadows falling over him. Then he said, softly,—

“My Paula, you will befriend me?”

Paula bridled at the address; arrogant in family-place, she would have assured him plainly that she was none of his, to begin with, had he been an atom less disconsolate.

“Never more than now!” said she, loftily.

Luigi did not understand her; her tone was kind, but there was a “never” in her words.

“I should be the most a friend,” said Paula, unbending, “in urging you to forget us.”

“Ah, never!”

“Let me say. Can you read?”

“Some things,” replied Luigi quickly, his brow brightening.



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“Can you write?”

“It may be. Alas! I have not tried.”

“You see.”

There was no appeal from Paula’s dictatorial demeanor.

“*Dio!* I am unfit! Ah, Jesu, I am unfit! But if she cared not—if I learned”—and he paused, striving now for the purest, most intelligible speech, while his face beamed with his smiling hope.

“Listen,” interposed Paula, with the dignity of the headsman. “You have no truer friend than me at this moment, as some day you will discover. Come, now, will you do me a favor?”

“*Di tutto cuore!*”

“Then leave us to ourselves.”

“Not possible!” cried Luigi, stung with disappointment.

“What would you do, then? Would you wear her life out? Would you keep her in a terror? She has said to me that she must go away. It suffocates one to be pursued in this manner. You are not pleasant to her. Hark. She dislikes you!” And Paula bent toward him with uplifted finger, and, having delivered her stroke, after watching its effect a moment, reared herself and adjusted her gay turban with internal satisfaction.

Luigi cast his eyes slowly about him; they fell on the smooth grass-plats rising with webs of shaking sparkle, the opening flowers half-bowed beneath the weight of the shining spheres they held, the brilliant garden bathed in dew, the waving boughs tossing off light spray on every ravaging gust, the far fair sky bending over all. Then he hid his face against the great gate-post, murmuring only in a dry and broken sob,—

“*C’ e sole?*”

Paula herself was touched. She put her hand on his shoulder.

“It is a silly thing,” said she. “Do not take it so to heart. Put it out of sight. There is many a pretty tambourine-tosser to smile upon you, I’ll warrant!”

But Luigi vouchsafed no response.

“Come,” said she, “pluck up your courage. You will soon be better of it.”



“*Non sarò meglio!*” answered Luigi. “I shall never be better.”

He lifted his head and looked at her where she stood in the light, black, but comely, transfixing her on the burning glances of his bold eyes. “In your need,” said he, “may you find just such friend as I have found!” The words were of his native language, but the malediction was universal. Paula half shivered, and fingered the amulet that her princely Nubian ancestor had fingered before her, while he spoke. Then he bowed his head to its burden, fastened the straps, and went bent and stooping upon his way, repeating sadly to himself, “And does the sun shine?”

* * * * *

A week passed. Part of another. Eve saw no more of Luigi, but was yet all the time uncomfortably conscious of his espionage. He was hardly a living being to her, but, as soon as night fell, the soft starry nights now in which there was no moon, she felt him like a darker film of spirit haunting the shadow. In the daytime, sunshine reassured her, and she remained almost at peace.



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She was sitting one warm afternoon at the open window up-stairs, looking over a box of airy trifles, flowers and bows and laces, searching for a parcel of sheer white love-ribbon, a slip of woven hoarfrost that was not to be found. There was none like it to be procured; this was the night of the little masquerade; it was indispensable; and immediately she proceeded to raise the house. In answer to her descriptive inquiry, Paula, who every noon nestled as near the sun as possible, responded in a high key from the attic a descriptive negative; neither had her mother, waking from a *siesta* in the garden, seen any white gauze folderols. The three voices made the air well acquainted with the affair.

However, Eve was not to be baffled; she remembered distinctly having had the love-ribbon in her hands on the day she first proposed the dress; it must be found, and she sat down again at the open casement, intrenched behind twenty boxes of like treasure, in any one of which the thing might have hidden itself away, while her mother came up and established herself with a fan at the other window, and Paula, descending from her perch, rummaged the neighboring dressing-room.

On the opposite side of the street stretched a long strip of shaven turf, known as the Parade, yet seldom used for anything but summer-evening strolls, and below its velvet terraces, in a green dimple, lay a pool, borrowing all manner of umberous stains from the shore, and yet in its very heart contriving to reflect a part of heaven. Languishing elm-trees lined its edge, and beneath the boughs, whose heavily drooping masses seemed like the grapes of Eshcol, rude benches offered rest to the weary.

On one of these benches now sat a person profoundly occupied in carving something into its seat. If he could easily have heard the voices in the dwelling opposite, he had not once glanced up. Now and then he paused and leaned his head upon the arm that lay along the rail, then again he pursued his task. Once, when his progress, perhaps, had exceeded expectation, or the striking of a clock beneath some distant spire announced no need of haste, he laid down his knife, left his occupation, and came to lean against the low fence beneath Eve's window and gaze daringly up. Eve did not see him. Her mother did, and held her breath lest Eve should turn that way, and, having directed Eve's glance elsewhere, shook her fan at the bold boy. But there was no insolence in Luigi's gaze. He seemed merely wishing that his work should be marked; and, having attracted fit attention, he returned quietly to the bench and the carving once more.



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At length the sun hung high over the west, preparing to fall into his hidden resting-place that colored all the cloudless heaven with its mounting tinge. Luigi rose and inspected his work. Then again he crossed the street and stood below Eve's window. It was a long time that he leaned with his arms folded on the bar of the low paling. Perhaps he meant that she should look at him. She had closed the last of her receptacles, and, dismissing the matter, for want of better employment, her scissors were tinkering upon a tiny hand-glass with a setting thickly crusted in crystals, a trifle that one clear day a sailor diving from her father's ship had found upon the bottom of the sea,—a very mermaid's glass dropped in some shallow place for Eve herself, a glass that had reflected the rushing of the storm, the sliding of the keel above, the face of many a drowning mariner. Careless of all that, at the moment, she held it up now to the light to see if further furbishing could brighten it, and as she did so was hastily checked. She had caught sight of a dark face just framed and mirrored, the sad eyes raised and resting on her own, luminous no more, but heavy, and longing, and dull with a weight of woe. At the same moment, Paula, who had by no means abandoned the lost love-ribbon, cried from within,—

"Well, Miss, the lutestring has been spirited away, and no less. I've searched the house through, and nobody has it."

"*Qualcheduno l' ha,*" breathed a sweet, melancholy tone from below; and they turned and saw it in Luigi's hands, the frosty film of gossamer. He held it up a moment, pressed it to his lips, folded it again into his breast; and if it was plain that somebody had it, it was plainer still that somebody meant to keep it. And then, as if twin stars were bending over him out of the bluest deeps of heaven, Luigi kept Eve's eyes awhile suspended on his despairing gaze, and without other word or gesture turned and went away.

* * * * *

Many days afterward, when it was certain that the little foreign image-vender had indeed departed, Eve stole over to the bench beneath the lofty arches of the elm-tree, all checkered with flickering sunlight, and endeavored to read the sentence carved thereon. It was at first undecipherable, and then, the text conquered, not easy for her to comprehend. But when she had made it hers, she rose, bathed with blushes, and stole away home again, feeling only as if Luigi had laid a chain upon her heart.

Years have fled. The little legend yet remains cut deep into the wood, though he returns no more, and though, since then, her

"Part in all the pomp that fills
The circuit of the summer hills
Is that her grave is green."



Rain and snow have not effaced its *intaglio*, nor summer's dust, nor winter's wind; and if you ever pass it, you yet may read,—

AMOR QUE A NULLO
AMATO
AMAR PERDONA.



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* * * * *

COMMUNICATION.

Whether virtue can be taught is a question over which Plato lingers long. And it is a curious illustration of the different eyes with which different men read, that some students of Plato are confident he answers the question in the affirmative, while others are equally sure that he gives it an unqualified negative. "Plato," says Schwegler, "holds fast to the opinion that virtue is science, and therefore to be imparted by instruction." "We are told," says Burgess, one of Bohn's translators, "that, as virtue is not a science, it cannot, like a science, be made a subject of teaching." Professor Blackie, again, an open-minded and eloquent scholar, cannot doubt that virtue may be verbally imparted, nor, therefore, that the great Athenian thinker so believed and affirmed.

What is the voice of common sense and the teaching of history touching this matter? Can a liberal and lofty nature be included in words, and so passed over to another? Elevation of character, nobility of spirit, wealth of soul,—is any method known, or probably ever to be known, among men, whereby these can be got into a text-book, and then out of the text-book into a bosom wherein they had no dwelling before? Alas, is not the story of the world too full of cases in which the combined eloquence of verbal instruction, vital influence, and lustrous example, aided even by all the inspirations of the most majestic and moving presence, have failed utterly to shape the character of disciples? Did Alcibiades profit greatly by the conversation of Socrates? Was Judas extremely ennobled by the companionship of Jesus? Was it to any considerable purpose that the pure-minded, earnest, affluent Cicero strewed the seeds of Stoic culture upon the wayside nature of his son? Did Faustina learn much from Antoninus Pius, or Commodus from Marcus Aurelius?

I think we must assume it as the judgment of common sense that there neither is nor is likely to be any educational mortar wherein a fool may be so brayed that he shall come forth a wise man. The broad, unequivocal sentence of history seems to be that whoever is not noble by nature will hardly be rendered so by art. Education can do much; it can foster nobilities, it can discourage vices; but literal conveyance of lofty qualities, can it effect that? Can it create opulence of soul in a sterile nature? Can it cause a thin soil to do the work of a deep one? We have seen harsh natures mellowed, violent natures chastened, rough ones refined; but who has seen an essentially mean nature made large-hearted, self-forgetful, fertile of grandest faiths and greatest deeds? Who has beheld a Thersites transformed into an Achilles? Who a Shylock, Iago, or Regan changed into an Antonio, Othello, or Cordelia, or a Simon Magus into a Paul? What virtue of nature is in a man culture may bring out; but to put nature into any man surpasses her competence.



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Nay, it would even seem that in some cases the finest openings and invitations for what is best in man must operate inversely, and elicit only what is worst in him. Every profoundest truth, when uttered with fresh power in history, polarizes men, accumulating atheism at one pole, while collecting faith and resolve at the other. As the sun bleaches some surfaces into whiteness, but tans and blackens others, so the sweet shining of Truth illumines some countenances with belief, but some it darkens into a scowl of hate and denial. The American Revolution gave us George Washington; but it gave us also Benedict Arnold. One and the same great spiritual emergency in Europe produced Luther's Protestantism and Loyola's Jesuitism. Our national crisis has converted General Butler; what has it done for Vallandigham?

It were easy to show that the deepest intelligence of the world concurs with common sense in this judgment. Its declaration ever is, in effect, that, though Paul plant and Apollos water, yet fruit can come only out of divine and infinite Nature,—only, that is, out of the native, incommunicable resources of the soul. “No man can come to me,” said Jesus, “except the Father draw him.” “To him that hath shall be given.” The frequent formula, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear,” is a confession that no power of speech, no wisdom of instruction, can command results. The grandest teacher, like the humblest, can but utter his word, sure that the wealthy and prepared spirits will receive it, and equally sure that shallow, sterile, and inane natures will either not receive it at all, or do so to extremely little purpose.

And such, as I read, is the judgment of Plato; though, ever disposed to explore the remote possibilities of education, he discusses the subject in a tentative spirit, as if vaguely hoping that more might, through some discovery in method, be accomplished by means of doctrine. But in the “Republic” his permanent persuasion is shown. He there bases his whole scheme of polity, as Goethe in the second part of “Wilhelm Meister” bases his scheme of education, upon a primary inspection of natures, in which it is assumed that culture must begin by humbly accepting the work of Nature, forswearing all attempt to add one jot or tittle to the native virtue of any human spirit.

It is always, however, less important for us to know what another thinks upon any high matter than to know what is our own deepest and inevitable thought concerning it; for, as the man himself thinketh, not as another thinketh for him, so is he: his own thoughts are forces and engines in his nature; those of any other are at best but candidates for these profound effects. I propose, therefore, that we throw open the whole question of man's benefit to man by means of words. Let us inquire—if possible, with somewhat of courage and vigor—what are the limits and what the laws of instructive communication.

And our first discovery will be that such communication has adamantine limitations. The off-hand impression of most persons would probably be that we are able to make literal conveyance of our thought. But, in truth, one could as soon convey the life out of his veins into the veins of another as transfer from his own mind to that of another any belief, thought, or perception whatsoever.



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Words are simply the signs, they are not the vehicles, of thought. Like all signs, they convey nothing, but only suggest. Like all signs, they are intelligible to none but the initiated. One man, having a certain mental experience, hoists, as it were, a signal, like ships at sea, whereby he would make suggestion of it to another; and if in the mental experience of that other be somewhat akin to this, which, by virtue of that kindred, can interpret its symbol, then only, and to the extent of such interpretation, does communication occur. But the mental experience itself, the thought itself, does not pass; it only makes the sign.

If, for example, I utter the word *God*, it conveys nothing out of my mind into the mind of you, the reader; it simply appeals to your conception of divinity. If I attempt to explain, then every word of the explanation must be subject to the same conditions; not one syllable of it can do more than merely appeal to somewhat already in your mind. For instance, suppose I say, *God is love*; what then is done? The appeal is shifted to another sign; that is all. What my own soul, fed from the vital resources and incited by the vital relationships of my life, has learned of love, that my thought may connect with the word; but of all this nothing passes when it is uttered; and the sound, arriving at your ear, can do no more than invite you to summon and bring before the eye of your consciousness that which your own soul, out of its divine depths and through the instruction of vital relationship, has learned and has privily whispered to you of this sacred mystery, love. Just so much as each one, in the inviolable solitudes of his own consciousness, has learned to connect with this, or with any great word, just that, and never a grain more, it can summon. And if endeavor be made to explain any such by others, the explanation can come no nearer; it can only send words to your ear, each of which performs its utmost office by inviting you to call up and bring before your cognizance this or that portion of your mental experience. But always what answers the call is your mental experience, no less yours, no less wedded to your life, than the blood in your arteries; it cannot be that of any other.

And the same is true, or nearly the same, respecting the most obvious outside matters. Suppose one to make merely this statement, *I see a house*. Now, if the person addressed has ever had experience of the act of vision, if he has ever seen anything, he will know what see means; otherwise not. If, again, he has ever seen a house, he will know what *house* denotes; not otherwise. Or suppose, that, not knowing, he ask what a house is, and that the first speaker attempt to explain by telling him that it is such and such a structure, built of brick, wood, or stone; then it is assumed that he has seen stone, wood, or brick, that he has seen the act of building, or at least its result;—and in fine, the explanation, every syllable of it, can do no more than appeal to perceptions of which the questioner is assumed to have had experience.



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We do, indeed, gain an approximate knowledge of things we have never seen. For example, I have an imperfect notion of a banian-tree, though I have never seen one; but it is only by having seen other trees, and by having also had the perceptions to which appeal is made in describing the peculiarities of the banian. So he who is born blind may learn so much concerning outward objects as the senses of touch, hearing, smell, and taste can impart to him; and he may profit by verbal information to such extent as these perceptions enable him. But the perception itself, and so thought, faith, and in fine all mental experience whatsoever, whether of high order or low, whether relating to objects within us or to objects without, take place only in the privacy of our own minds, and are in their substance not to be transferred.

Observe with precision what is here said. The mental experience of each man, if it be of any spiritual depth, has transacted itself in his nature in virtue, to a most important degree, of spiritual relationship with other human beings. There never was an act of development in any man's soul that did not imply a humanity, and involve the virtue of social affinity. I should be dumb, but for the ears of others; I should be deaf, that is, my human ear would be closed, but for human voices; and there is no particle of human energy, and no tint of human coloring, for which we are not, in part, indebted to vital human fellowship. Nevertheless, of this experience, though in the absence of social connection it could not have occurred, not one jot nor tittle can be made over to another by means of words. It can hoist its verbal signal, and the like experience in other souls may interpret the sign; it can do no more.

Men may, indeed, *commune*; that is, they may by verbal conference enter mutually into a sense of an already existing unity of inward experience; and there are other and eminent uses of words, of which more anon; but here let it be noted with sufficient emphasis that of minds there can be no mixture, and that speech can make no substantive conveyance of any mental product from one mind to another. Each soul must draw from its native fountains; though we must never forget that without conversation and social relationship its divine thirst would not have been excited.

Therefore, in the midst of all warmest and quickest verity of social nearness, there is a kind of sacred and inviolable solitude of the soul. We speak across to each other, as out of different planets in heaven; and the closest intimacy of souls is like that of double stars which revolve about each other, not like that of two lumps of clay which are squeezed and confounded together.



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So much, then, concerning the limits of verbal communication. Words, we say, are not vehicles. No perception, no mental possession, passes from mind to mind. You can impart to another no piece of knowledge whose main elements were not already in his mind, no thought which was not substantially existent in his consciousness before your voice began to seek his ear. Instructors may, indeed, put a pupil in the way to obtain fresh perceptions, and more rarely a wise man may put an apt disciple in the way to obtain deeper insights; but, after all, the learner must *learn*; the learner must for himself behold the fact, with the eyes of body or of soul; and he must behold it as it is in itself, not merely as it is in words.

Hence the new scheme of school-education. Agassiz says, in substance,—“If you would teach a boy geography, take him out on the hills, and make the earth herself his instructor. If you would teach him respecting tigers or turtles, *show* him tiger or turtle. Take him to a Museum of Natural History; let him always, so far as possible, learn about facts from the facts themselves.” Judicious and important advice. And the basis of it we find in what has been set forth above, namely, that words convey no perception, whether of physical or of spiritual truth.

It follows, therefore, that only he whose soul is eloquent within him will gain much from any eloquence of his fellow. Only he whose heart is a prophet will hear the prophet. A divine preparation of the nature, divine activities of the soul, precede all high uses of communication. Though Demosthenes or Phillips speak, it is the hearer’s own spirit that convinces him. Conviction cannot be forced upon one from without. Hence the well-known futility of belligerent controversy. No possible logic will lead a man ahead of his own intelligence; neither will any take from him the persuasions which correspond to his mental condition. A good logical *pose* may sometimes serve to lower the crest of an obstreperous sophist, as boughs of one species of ash are said to quell the rattlesnake; but with both these sinuous animals the effect is temporary, and the quality of the creature remains unchanged.

Even though one be sincerely desirous of advancing his intelligence, it is seldom, as Mr. Emerson has somewhere said, of much use for him to carry his questions to another. He of whom insight is thus asked may be sage, eloquent, apt to teach; but it will commonly be found, nevertheless, that his words, for some reason, do not seem to suit the case in hand: admirable words they are, perhaps, for some cases closely analogous to this, it may be for all such cases, and it is a thousand pities that the present one does not come within their scope; but this, as ill luck will have it, is that other case which they do *not* fit.

And yet, despite these iron limits, communication is not only one of the especial delights, but also one of the chief uses, of human life. As every spiritual activity implies fellowship, so does almost every thought, almost every result of spiritual activity, imply some speech of our fellows. Voices and books,—who would be himself without them? I

do not believe myself to have now in my mind one valuable thought which owes nothing to the written or spoken thought of other men, living or dead.



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How, then, is it that the speech of our fellows renders us aid? What are to us the uses of the words of others?

And here be it first of all frankly acknowledged, that there is much speech of no remarkable import, in itself considered, which yet serves good ends. There is much speech whose office is simply to refresh the sense of fellowship. It will not make a good leading article; but the leading article which subserves equal uses is not to be contemned. So much are men empowered by each other, that any careless, kindly chat which gives them the sense of cordial nearness gives also warmth and invigoration. Better than most ambitious conversation is the light, happy, bubbling talk which means at bottom simply this:—"We are at home together; we believe in each other." Words are good, if they only festoon love and trust. Words are good, if they merely show us that worthy natures do not suspect us, do not lock their closets when we are in the house, do not put their souls in dress-costume to meet us, but leave their thoughts and hearts naked in our presence, and are not ashamed. Be it mine sometimes to sit with my friend when our mere nearness and unity of spirit are felt by us both to be so utterly eloquent, that, without silence, we forbear to set up any rivalry to them by grave and meditated speech,—observing, it may be, a falling leaf toyed with by the wind, and speaking words that drop from the lips like falling leaves, and float down a zephyr that knows not which way to blow. Some of the sweetest and most fruitful hours of life are these in which we speak half-articulate nothings, merely airing the sense of fellowship, and so replete with this wealth of vital intimacy that we have room for nothing more.

But our aim is to regard communication as an instruction, and to consider the more explicit and definite uses of words.

And of these the first, and one of the chief, is based upon the very limitations which have been set forth,—upon the very fact that words are *not* vehicles. I have said that there is a certain divine solitude of the soul; and of this solitude the uses are infinitely great. The absolute soul of humanity, we hold, seeks to insphere itself in each person, though in each giving itself a peculiar or individual representation; and only as this insphering takes place are the ends of creation attained, only so is man made indeed a *human* life. Therefore must we draw out of that, out of that alone; therefore truth is permitted to come to us only out of these infinite depths, albeit incitement, invitation, and the ability to draw from these native fountains may be due to social connection. Because our life is really enriched only as the absolute soul gives itself to us, therefore will it suffer us no otherwise than by its gift to supply our want. And as it cannot give itself to us save in response to a felt want, a seeking, an inward demand, it belongs to the chief economies of our life to bring us to this attitude of inward request, to this call and claim upon the resources of our intelligence.



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Now words come to us as empty vessels, which we are to fill from within; and in making for this purpose a requisition upon the perpetual contents of reason, conscience, and imagination, we open a valve through which new spiritual powers enter, and add themselves to our being. If the word *God* be sometimes spoken simply and spontaneously, a youth who hears it will be sure upon some day, when the sense of the infinite and divine stirs vaguely within him, to ask himself what this word means, to require his soul to tell him what is the verity corresponding thereto; and precisely this requisition is what the soul desires, for only when sought may its riches be found. The utilities of words in this kind are deserving of very grave estimation. Words teach us much, but they teach less by what is in them than by what is not in them,—less by what they give to us than by what they demand from us.

It is, therefore, one of the grand services of communication to bring us to the limits of communication, making us feel, that, ere it can go farther, there must occur in us new stretches of thought, new energies of hope, faith, and all noble imagining. It were well, therefore, that, among other things, we should sometimes thank God for our ignorance and weakness,—thank Him for what we do *not* understand and are not equal to; for with every fresh recognition of these, with every fresh approach to the borders of our intelligence, we are prepared for new requisitions upon the soul. As in a pump the air is exhausted in order that the water may rise, so a void in our intelligence *caused by its own energy* precedes every enrichment. Hence he who will not admit to his heart the sense of ignorance will always be a fool; he who is perpetually filled with self-sufficiency will never be filled with much else. And from this point of view one may discern the significance of that doctrine of humility which belongs equally to Socratic thinking and Christian believing.

It follows, too, that we need not laboriously push and foist upon the young our faith and experience. Aside from direct vital influence, which is a powerful propagandist, our simple, natural, inevitable speech will cause them to do much better than learn from us, it will cause them to learn from their own souls. And however uncertain may be a harvest from questions asked of others, a great question rightly put to one's self not only must be fruitful, but carries in it a capacity for infinite fruitfulness; while the longer and more patiently and persistently one can wait for an answer, the richer his future is to be. I am sure of him who can put to his heart the great questions of life, and wait serenely and vigilantly for a response, one, two, ten years, a lifetime, wellnigh an eternity, if need be, not falling into despondencies and despairing skepticisms because the universe forbears to babble and tattle its secret ere yet he half or a thousandth part guesses how deep and holy that secret is, but quietly, heroically asking and waiting. And toward this posture of asking the profound and vital words assist us by being heard,—which is their first eminent use to us.



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Secondly, they serve us greatly, when they simply cause a preexisting community of thought to be mutually recognized. It is much to bring like to like, brand to brand, believing soul to believing soul. As several pieces of anthracite coal will together make a powerful heat, but separately will not burn at all, so in the conjunction of similar faiths and beliefs there is a wholly new effect; it is not at all the mere sum of the forces previously in operation, but a pure product of union. "My confidence in my own belief," said Novalis, "is increased *infinitely* the moment another shares it with me. The reason is obvious. You and I have grown up apart, and have never conferred together; our temperaments, culture, circumstances are different; we have come to have certain thoughts which seem to us true and deep, but each of us doubts whether these thoughts may not be due to his peculiarities of mind, position, and influence. But to-day we come together, and discover, that, despite these outward diversities in which we are so widely unlike, our fundamental faiths are one and the same; the same thoughts, the same beliefs have sprung into life in our separate souls. Instantly is suggested a unity underlying our divided being, a law of thought abiding in mind itself,—not merely in your mind or mine, but in the mind and soul of man. What we arrive at, therefore, is not merely the sum of you and me, the aggregate of two men's opinions, but the universal, the absolute, and spiritually necessary. Such is always the suggestion which spontaneous unity of faith carries with it; hence it awakens religion, and gives total peace and rest."

But the faiths which are to be capable of these divine embraces must indeed be spontaneous and native. Hence those who create factitious unity of creed render these fructifications impossible. If we agree, not because the absolute soul has uttered in both of us the same word, but because we have both been fed with dust out of the same catechism, our unity will disgust and weary us rather than invigorate. Dr. Johnson said he would compel men to believe as he and the Church of England did, "because," he reasoned, "if another differs from me, he weakens my confidence in my own scheme of faith, and so injures me." Now this speech is good just so far as it asserts social dependence in belief; it is bad, it is idiotic or insane, so far as it advocates the substitution of a factitious and artificial unity for one of spiritual depth and reality. The fruits of the tree of life are not to be successfully thieved. In dishonest hands they become ashes and bitterness. He who has more faith in an Act of Parliament than in God and the universe may be a good conventional believer; but, in truth, the choice he makes is the essence of all denial and even of all atheism and blasphemy.



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Let each, then, bring up out of his own soul its purest, broadest, simplest faith; and when any ten or ten thousand find that the same faith has come to birth in their several souls, each one of them all will be exalted to a divine confidence, and will make new requisitions upon the soul which he has so been taught to trust. Thus, though we tell each nothing new, though we merely demonstrate our unity of consciousness, yet is the force of each many times multiplied,—dimless certitude and dauntless courage being bred in hearts where before, perhaps, were timorous hesitation and wavering.

The third service of words may be compared to the help which the smith renders to the fire on his forge. True it is that no blowing can enkindle dead coals, and make a flame where was no spark. True it is that both spark and bellows will be vain, if the fuel is stone or clay. And so no blowing will enkindle a nature which does not bring in itself the fire to be fanned and the substance that may support it. But in our being, as at the forge, the flame that languishes may be taught to leap, and the spark that was hidden may be wrought into blaze.

Simple attraction and encouragement,—there is somewhat of the marvellous in their effects. Physiologists tell us, that, if two liquids in the body are separated by a moist membrane, and if one of these fluids be in motion and the other at rest, that which rests will of its own accord force its way through the membrane and join the one which flows. So it is in history. Any man who represents a spiritual streaming will command and draw into the current of his soul those whose condition is one of stagnancy or arrest. Now courage and belief are streamings forward; skepticism and timidity are stagnancies; panic, fear, and destructive denial are streamings backward. True, now, it is, that any swift flowing, forward or backward, attracts; but progressive or affirmative currents have this vast advantage, that they are health, and therefore the healthy humanity in every man's being believes in them and belongs to them; and they accordingly are like rivers, which, however choked up temporarily and made refluent, are sure in the end to force their way; while negative and backward currents are like pestilences and conflagrations, which of necessity limit themselves by exhaustion, if not mastered by happier means.

We may, indeed, note it as a nicety, that the membrane must be moist through which this transudation is to take place; and I admit that there are men whose enveloping sheath of individualism and egotism is so hard and dry, so little interpenetrated by candor and the love of truth, as to be nearly impervious to noble persuasion; and were whole Missouris of tidings from the highest intelligence rushing past them, they would still yawn, and say, "Do you get any news?" as innocently as ever.



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Nevertheless, history throbs with the mystery of this influence. A little girl slumping by her mother's side awoke in a severe thunder-storm, and, nestling in terror near to the mother, and shrinking into the smallest possible space, said, trembling, "Mother, are you afraid?" "No, my dear," answered the lady, calmly. "Oh, well," said the child, assuming her full proportions, and again disposing herself for sleep, "if you're not afraid, I'm not afraid," and was soon slumbering quietly. What volumes of gravest human history in that little incident! So infinitely easy are daring and magnanimity, so easy is transcendent height of thought and will, when exalted spiritually, when imperial valor and purpose breathe and blow upon our souls from the lips of a living fellow! Not, it may be, that anything new is said. That is not required. What another now thrills, inspires, transfigures us by saying, we probably knew before, only dared not let ourselves think that we knew it. The universe, perhaps, had not a nook so hidden that therein we could have been solitary enough to whisper that divine suggestion to our own hearts. But now some childlike man stands up and speaks it to the common air, in serenest unconsciousness of doing anything singular. He has said it,—and lo, he lives! By the help of God, then, we too, by word and deed, will utter our souls.

Get one hero, and you may have a thousand. Create a grand impulse in history, and no fear but it will be reinforced. Obtain your champion in the cause of Right, and you shall have indomitable armies that charge for social justice.

More of the highest life is suppressed in every one of us than ever gets vent; and it is this inward suppression, after making due account of all outward oppressions and injuries, which constitutes the chief tragedy of history. Daily men cast to the ground the proffered beakers of heaven, from mere fear to drink. Daily they rebuke the divine, inarticulate murmur that arises from the depths of their being,—inarticulate only because denied and reprov'd. And he is greatest who can meet with a certain pure intrepidity those suggestions which haunt forever the hearts of men.

No greater blunder, accordingly, was ever made than that of attempting to render men brave and believing by addressing them as cowards and infidels. Garibaldi stands up before his soldiers in Northern Italy, and says to them, (though I forget the exact words,) "I do not call you to fortune and prosperity; I call you to hardship, to suffering, to death; I ask you to give your toil without reward, to spill your blood and lie in unknown graves, to sacrifice all for your country and kind, and hear no thanks but the *Well done* of God in heaven." Did they cower and go back? Ere the words had spent their echoes, every man's will was as the living adamant of God's purpose, and every man's hand was as the hand of Destiny, and from the shock of their onset the Austrians fled as from the opening jaws of an earthquake. Demosthenes told Athens only what Athens knew. He merely blew upon the people's hearts with their own best thoughts; and what a blaze! True, the divine fuel was nearly gone, Athens wellnigh burnt out, and the flame lasted not long; but that he could produce such effects, when half he fanned was merest ashes, serves all the more to show how great such effects may be.



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Before passing to the last and profoundest use of communication, I must not omit to mention that which is most obvious, but not most important,—the giving of ordinary informations and instructions. These always consist in a suggestion to another of new combinations of his notions, new societies in his mind. Thus, if I say, *Fire burns*, I simply assert a connection between fire and burning,—the notion of both these being assumed as existing in the mind of the person addressed. Or if I say, *God is just*, I invite him to associate in his mind the sentiment of justice and the sense of the infinite and omnipotent. Now in respect to matters of mere external form we usually confide in the representations of others, and picture to ourselves, so far as our existing perceptions enable us, the combinations they affirm,—provided always these have a certain undefined conformity with our own experience. But in respect to association, not of mere notions, but of *spiritual elements in the soul*,—of truths evolved by the spiritual nature of man,—the case is quite different. Thus, if the fool who once said in his heart, “There is no God,” should now say openly, (of course by some disguising euphemism,) “God is an egotist,” I may indeed shape an opinion accordingly, and fall into great confusion in consequence; but my spiritual nature does not consent to this representation; no *real* association takes place within me between the sense of the divine and the conception of egotism. Such opinion may have immense energy in history, but it has no efficiency in the eliciting and outbuilding of our personal being; these representations, however we may trust and base action upon them, serve us inwardly only to such degree as our spiritual nature can ally itself with them and find expression in them. It is simply impossible for any man to associate the idea of divinity with the conception of selfishness; but he may associate the notion of Zeus or Allah or the like with that or any other conception of baseness, and out of the result may form a sort of crust over his spiritual intelligence, which shall either imprison it utterly, or force it to oblique and covert expression. And of this last, by the way,—and we may deeply rejoice over the fact,—history is full.

Yet in this suggestion toward new societies in the soul, in this formal introduction to each other of kindred elements in the consciousness, there may be eminent service. It is only formal, it does not make friendship, it leaves our spirits to their own action; but it may prepare the way for inward unities and communities whose blessedness neither speech nor silence can tell.

Finally, there is an effect of words profounder and more creative than any of these. As a brand which burns powerfully may at last ignite even green wood, so divine faiths, alive and awake in one soul, may appeal to the mere elements, to mere possibilities, of such faiths in other souls, and at length evoke them by that appeal. The process is slow; it requires a celestial heat and persistency in the moving spirit; it is one of the “all things” that are possible only with God: but it occurs, and it is the most sacred and precious thing in history.



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Every human soul has the absolute soul, has the whole truth, significance, and virtue of the universe, as its lawful and native resource. Therefore says Jesus, "The kingdom of heaven is within you"; therefore Antoninus, "Look inwards, within is the fountain of truth"; therefore Eckart, "Ye have all truth potentially within you." All ideas of truth dwell in every soul, but in every soul they are at first wrapped in deep sleep, in an infinite depth of sleep; while the base incense of brutish lives is like chloroform, or the fumes of some benumbing drug, to steep them ever more and more in oblivion. But to awaken truth thus sleeping in the soul is the highest use of discipline, the noblest aim of culture, and the most eminent service which man can render to man. The scheme of our life is providentially arranged with reference to that end; and the thousand shocks, agitations, and moving influences of our experience, the supreme invitations of love, the venom of calumny, and all toil, trial, sudden bereavement, doubt, danger, vicissitude, joy, are hands that shake and voices that assail the lethargy of our deepest powers. Now it is in the power of truth divinely awakened in one soul to assist its awakening in another. For as nothing so quickly arouses us from slumber as hearing ourselves called upon by name, so is it with this celestial inhabitant: whoever by virtue of elder brotherhood can rightly name him shall cause his spirit to be stirred and his slumber to be broken.

Let him, therefore, in whom any great truth is alive and awake, enunciate, proclaim it steadily, clearly, cheerily, with a serene and cloudless passion; and wherever a soul less mature than his own lies open to the access of his tones, there the eye-fast angels of belief and knowledge shall hear that publication of their own hearts, and, hearing, lift their lids, and rise into wakefulness and power.

Seldom, indeed, is any voice, though it be in its origin a genuine voice of the soul, pure and impartial enough, enough delivered from the masks of egotism and accident, to be greatly competent for these effects. Besides which, there are not a few that have closed their ears, lest they should hear, not a few that are even filled with base astonishment and terror, and out of this with base wrath, to find their deafness assailed. And still further, it must be freely owned that our natures have mysterious elections, and though one desire openness of soul as much as folly fears it, yet may it happen that some tint of peculiarity in the tone of a worthy voice shall render it to him opaque and unintelligible.



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Yet let us not fear that the product of any sacred and spiritual sincerity will fail of sufficient uses. If a deep, cordial, and clarified nature will but give us his heart in a pure and boundless bravery of confession,—if, like autumn plants, that cast forth their seeds, winged with down, to the four winds of heaven, or like the blossoms of spring and early summer, that yield up their preciousness of pollen to the forage of bees, and even by being so robbed attain to the hearts of neighbor-blossoms, and accomplish that mystery of fructification which is to make glad the maturer year,—if so this inflorescence of eternity that we name a Noble Man will yield up the golden pollen of his soul, even to those that in visiting him seek but their own ends, and if so he will intrust winged words, words that are indeed spiritual *seeds*, purest, ripest, and most vital products of his being, to the winds of time,—he will be sure to reach some, and they to reach others, and there is no telling how far the seminal effect may go; there is no telling what harvests may yellow in the limitless fields of the future, what terrestrial and celestial reapers may go home rejoicing, bearing their sheaves with them, what immortal hungers may be fed at the feasts of earth and heaven, in final consequence of that lonely and faithful sowing. As in the still mornings of summer the earliest awakened bird hesitates to utter, yet utters, his solitary pipe, timidly rippling the silence, but is not long alone, for quickly the melodious throb begins to beat in every tree-top, and soon the whole rapturous grove gushes and palpitates into song,—even so, thus to appearance alone and unsupported, begins that chant of belief which is destined to heave and roll in billows of melodious confession over a continent, over a world. Thus does a faith that has lain long silent in the hearts of nations suddenly answer to the note of its kind, astonishing all bystanders, astonishing most of all the heart it inhabits. For, lo! the tree-tops of human life are full of slumbering melodies, and if a song-sparrow pipe sincerely on the hill-sides of Judea, saying, after his own fashion of speech, “Behold, the divine dawn hath visited my eyes,” be sure that the forests of far-off America, then unknown, will one day reply, and ten thousand thousand throats throbbing with high response will make it mutually known all round the world that this auroral beam is not for any single or private eye, but that the broad amber beauty of spiritual morning belongs to man’s being, and that in man’s heart, by virtue of its perennial nature, is prophesied the day whose sun shall be God and its earth heaven.

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HOUSE AND HOME PAPERS.

BY CHRISTOPHER CROWFIELD.

IX.

In the course of my papers various domestic revolutions have occurred. Our Marianne has gone from us with a new name to a new life, and a modest little establishment not

many squares off claims about as much of my wife's and Jennie's busy thoughts as those of the proper mistress.



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Marianne, as I always foresaw, is a careful and somewhat anxious housekeeper. Her tastes are fastidious; she is made for exactitude: the smallest departures from the straight line appear to her shocking deviations. She had always lived in a house where everything had been formed to quiet and order under the ever-present care and touch of her mother; nor had she ever participated in these cares more than to do a little dusting of the parlor-ornaments, or wash the best china, or make sponge-cake or chocolate-caramels. Certain conditions of life had always appeared so certain that she had never conceived of a house without them. It never occurred to her that such bread and biscuit as she saw at the home-table would not always and of course appear at every table,—that the silver would not always be as bright, the glass as clear, the salt as fine and smooth, the plates and dishes as nicely arranged as she had always seen them, apparently without the thought or care of any one,—for my wife is one of those housekeepers whose touch is so fine that no one feels it. She is never heard scolding or reproving,—never entertains her company with her recipes for cookery or the faults of her servants. She is so unconcerned about receiving her own personal share of credit for the good appearance of her establishment, that even the children of the house have not supposed that there is any particular will of hers in the matter,—it all seems the natural consequence of having very good servants.

One phenomenon they had never seriously reflected on,—that, under all the changes of the domestic cabinet which are so apt to occur in American households, the same coffee, the same bread and biscuit, the same nicely prepared dishes and neatly laid table always gladdened their eyes; and from this they inferred only that good servants were more abundant than most people had supposed. They were somewhat surprised when these marvels were wrought by professedly green hands, but were given to suppose that these green hands must have had some remarkable quickness or aptitude for acquiring. That sparkling jelly, well-flavored ice-creams, clear soups, and delicate biscuits could be made by a raw Irish girl, fresh from her native Erin, seemed to them a proof of the genius of the race; and my wife, who never felt it important to attain to the reputation of a cook, quietly let it pass.

For some time, therefore, after the inauguration of the new household, there was trouble in the camp. Sour bread had appeared on the table,—bitter, acrid coffee had shocked and astonished the palate,—lint had been observed on tumblers, and the spoons had sometimes dingy streaks on the brightness of their first bridal polish,—beds were detected made shockingly awry,—and Marianne came burning with indignation to her mother.

“Such a little family as we have, and two strong girls,” said she,—“everything ought to be perfect; there is really nothing to do. Think of a whole batch of bread absolutely sour! and when I gave that away, then this morning another exactly like it! and when I talked to cook about it, she said she had lived in this and that family, and her bread had always been praised as equal to the baker’s!”



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"I don't doubt she is right," said I. "Many families never have anything but sour bread from one end of the year to the other, eating it unperceiving, and with good cheer; and they buy also sour bread of the baker, with like approbation,—lightness being in their estimation the only virtue necessary in the article."

"Could you not correct her fault?" suggested my wife.

"I have done all I can. I told her we could not have such bread, that it was dreadful; Bob says it would give him the dyspepsia in a week; and then she went and made exactly the same;—it seems to me mere wilfulness."

"But," said I, "suppose, instead of such general directions, you should analyze her proceedings and find out just where she makes her mistake,—is the root of the trouble in the yeast, or in the time she begins it, letting it rise too long?—the time, you know, should vary so much with the temperature of the weather."

"As to that," said Marianne, "I know nothing. I never noticed; it never was my business to make bread; it always seemed quite a simple process, mixing yeast and flour and kneading it; and our bread at home was always good."

"It seems, then, my dear, that you have come to your profession without even having studied it."

My wife smiled, and said,—

"You know, Marianne, I proposed to you to be our family bread-maker for one month of the year before you married."

"Yes, mamma, I remember; but I was like other girls; I thought there was no need of it. I never liked to do such things; perhaps I had better have done it."

"You certainly had," said I; "for the first business of a housekeeper in America is that of a teacher. She can have a good table only by having practical knowledge, and tact in imparting it. If she understands her business practically and experimentally, her eye detects at once the weak spot; it requires only a little tact, some patience, some clearness in giving directions, and all comes right. I venture to say that your mother would have exactly such bread as always appears on our table, and have it by the hands of your cook, because she could detect and explain to her exactly her error."

"Do you know," said my wife, "what yeast she uses?"

"I believe," said Marianne, "it's a kind she makes herself. I think I heard her say so. I know she makes a great fuss about it, and rather values herself upon it. She is evidently accustomed to being praised for her bread, and feels mortified and angry, and I don't know how to manage her."



“Well,” said I, “if you carry your watch to a watch-maker, and undertake to show him how to regulate the machinery, he laughs and goes on his own way; but if a brother-machinist makes suggestions, he listens respectfully. So, when a woman who knows nothing of woman’s work undertakes to instruct one who knows more than she does, she makes no impression; but a woman who has been trained experimentally, and shows she understands the matter thoroughly, is listened to with respect.”



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“I think,” said my wife, “that your Bridget is worth teaching. She is honest, well-principled, and tidy. She has good recommendations from excellent families, whose ideas of good bread it appears differ from ours; and with a little good-nature, tact, and patience, she will come into your ways.”

“But the coffee, mamma,—you would not imagine it to be from the same bag with your own, so dark and so bitter; what do you suppose she has done to it?”

“Simply this,” said my wife. “She has let the berries stay a few moments too long over the fire,—they are burnt, instead of being roasted; and there are people who think it essential to good coffee that it should look black, and have a strong, bitter flavor. A very little change in the preparing will alter this.”

“Now,” said I, “Marianne, if you want my advice, I’ll give it to you gratis:—Make your own bread for one month. Simple as the process seems, I think it will take as long as that to give you a thorough knowledge of all the possibilities in the case; but after that you will never need to make any more,—you will be able to command good bread by the aid of all sorts of servants; you will, in other words, be a thoroughly prepared teacher.”

“I did not think,” said Marianne, “that so simple a thing required so much attention.”

“It is simple,” said my wife, “and yet requires a delicate care and watchfulness. There are fifty ways to spoil good bread; there are a hundred little things to be considered and allowed for that require accurate observation and experience. The same process that will raise good bread in cold weather will make sour bread in the heat of summer; different qualities of flour require variations in treatment, as also different sorts and conditions of yeast; and when all is done, the baking presents another series of possibilities which require exact attention.”

“So it appears,” said Marianne, gayly, “that I must begin to study my profession at the eleventh hour.”

“Better late than never,” said I. “But there is this advantage on your side: a well-trained mind, accustomed to reflect, analyze, and generalize, has an advantage over uncultured minds even of double experience. Poor as your cook is, she now knows more of her business than you do. After a very brief period of attention and experiment, you will not only know more than she does, but you will convince her that you do, which is quite as much to the purpose.”

“In the same manner,” said my wife, “you will have to give lessons to your other girl on the washing of silver and the making of beds. Good servants do not often come to us; they must be made by patience and training; and if a girl has a good disposition and a reasonable degree of handiness, and the housekeeper understands her profession, she

may make a good servant out of an indifferent one. Some of my best girls have been those who came to me directly from the ship, with no preparation but



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docility and some natural quickness. The hardest cases to be managed are not of those who have been taught nothing, but of those who have been taught wrongly,—who come to you self-opinionated, with ways that are distasteful to you, and contrary to the genius of your housekeeping. Such require that their mistress shall understand a least so much of the actual conduct of affairs as to prove to the servant that there are better ways than those in which she has hitherto been trained.”

“Don’t you think, mamma,” said Marianne, “that there has been a sort of reaction against woman’s work in our day? So much has been said of the higher sphere of woman, and so much has been done to find some better work for her, that insensibly, I think, almost everybody begins to feel that it is rather degrading for a woman in good society to be much tied down to family-affairs.”

“Especially,” said my wife, “since in these Woman’s-Rights Conventions there is so much indignation expressed at those who would confine her ideas to the kitchen and nursery.”

“There is reason in all things,” said I. “Woman’s-Rights Conventions are a protest against many former absurd, unreasonable ideas,—the mere physical and culinary idea of womanhood as connected only with puddings and shirt-buttons, the unjust and unequal burdens which the laws of harsher ages had cast upon the sex. Many of the women connected with these movements are as superior in everything properly womanly as they are in exceptional talent and culture. There is no manner of doubt that the sphere of woman is properly to be enlarged, and that republican governments in particular are to be saved from corruption and failure only by allowing to woman this enlarged sphere. Every woman has rights as a human being first, which belong to no sex, and ought to be as freely conceded to her as if she were a man,—and first and foremost, the great right of doing anything which God and Nature evidently have fitted her to excel in. If she be made a natural orator, like Miss Dickenson, or an astronomer, like Mrs. Somerville, or a singer, like Grisi, let not the technical rules of womanhood be thrown in the way of her free use of her powers. Nor can there be any reason shown why a woman’s vote in the State should not be received with as much respect as in the family. A State is but an association of families, and laws relate to the rights and immunities which touch woman’s most private and immediate wants and dearest hopes; and there is no reason why sister, wife, and mother should be more powerless in the State than in the home. Nor does it make a woman unwomanly to express an opinion by dropping a slip of paper into a box, more than to express that same opinion by conversation. In fact, there is no doubt, that, in all matters relating to the interests of education, temperance, and religion, the State would be a material gainer by receiving the votes of women.



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“But, having said all this, I must admit, *per contra*, not only a great deal of crude, disagreeable talk in these conventions, but a too great tendency of the age to make the education of women anti-domestic. It seems as if the world never could advance, except like ships under a head-wind, tacking and going too far, now in this direction, and now in the opposite. Our common-school system now rejects sewing from the education of girls, which very properly used to occupy many hours daily in school a generation ago. The daughters of laborers and artisans are put through algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and the higher mathematics, to the entire neglect of that learning which belongs distinctively to woman. A girl cannot keep pace with her class, if she gives any time to domestic matters; and accordingly she is excused from them all during the whole term of her education. The boy of a family, at an early age, is put to a trade, or the labors of a farm; the father becomes impatient of his support, and requires of him to care for himself. Hence an interrupted education,—learning coming by snatches in the winter months or in the intervals of work. As the result, the females in our country-towns are commonly, in mental culture, vastly in advance of the males of the same household; but with this comes a physical delicacy, the result of an exclusive use of the brain and a neglect of the muscular system, with great inefficiency in practical domestic duties. The race of strong, hardy, cheerful girls, that used to grow up in country-places, and made the bright, neat, New-England kitchens of old times,—the girls that could wash, iron, brew, bake, tackle a horse and drive him, no less than braid straw, embroider, draw, paint, and read innumerable books,—this race of women, pride of olden time, is daily lessening; and in their stead come the fragile, easily fatigued, languid girls of a modern age, drilled in book-learning, ignorant of common things. The great danger of all this, and of the evils that come from it, is that society by-and-by will turn as blindly against female intellectual culture as it now advocates it, and, having worked disproportionately one way, will work disproportionately in the opposite direction.”

“The fact is,” said my wife, “that domestic service is the great problem of life here in America; the happiness of families, their thrift, well-being, and comfort, are more affected by this than by any one thing else. Our girls, as they have been brought up, cannot perform the labor of their own families, as in those simpler, old-fashioned days you tell of; and what is worse, they have no practical skill with which to instruct servants, and servants come to us, as a class, raw and untrained; so what is to be done? In the present state of prices, the board of a domestic costs double her wages, and the waste she makes is a more serious matter still. Suppose you give us an article upon this subject in your ‘House and Home Papers.’ You could not have a better one.”



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So I sat down, and wrote thus on

SERVANTS AND SERVICE.

Many of the domestic evils in America originate in the fact, that, while society here is professedly based on new principles, which ought to make social life in every respect different from the life of the Old World, yet these principles have never been so thought out and applied as to give consistency and harmony to our daily relations. America starts with a political organization based on a declaration of the primitive freedom and equality of all men. Every human being, according to this principle, stands on the same natural level with every other, and has the same chance to rise according to the degree of power or capacity given by the Creator. All our civil institutions are designed to preserve this equality, as far as possible, from generation to generation: there is no entailed property, there are no hereditary titles, no monopolies, no privileged classes,—all are to be as free to rise and fall as the waves of the sea.

The condition of domestic service, however, still retains about it something of the influences from feudal times, and from the near presence of slavery in neighboring States. All English literature, all the literature of the world, describes domestic service in the old feudal spirit and with the old feudal language, which regarded the master as belonging to a privileged class and the servant to an inferior one. There is not a play, not a poem, not a novel, not a history, that does not present this view. The master's rights, like the rights of kings, were supposed to rest in his being born in a superior rank. The good servant was one who, from childhood, had learned "to order himself lowly and reverently to all his betters." When New England brought to these shores the theory of democracy, she brought, in the persons of the first pilgrims, the habits of thought and of action formed in aristocratic communities, Winthrop's Journal, and all the old records of the earlier colonists, show households where masters and mistresses stood on the "right divine" of the privileged classes, howsoever they might have risen up against authorities themselves.

The first consequence of this state of things was a universal rejection of domestic service in all classes of American-born society. For a generation or two, there was, indeed, a sort of interchange of family strength,—sons and daughters engaging in the service of neighboring families, in default of a sufficient working-force of their own, but always on conditions of strict equality. The assistant was to share the table, the family sitting-room, and every honor and attention that might be claimed by son or daughter. When families increased in refinement and education so as to make these conditions of close intimacy with more uncultured neighbors disagreeable, they had to choose between such intimacies and the performance of their own domestic toil. No wages could induce a son or daughter of New England to take the condition of a servant on terms which they thought applicable to that of a slave. The slightest hint of a separate

table was resented as an insult; not to enter the front-door, and not to sit in the front-parlor on state-occasions, was bitterly commented on as a personal indignity.



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The well-taught, self-respecting daughters of farmers, the class most valuable in domestic service, gradually retired from it. They preferred any other employment, however laborious. Beyond all doubt, the labors of a well-regulated family are more healthy, more cheerful, more interesting, because less monotonous, than the mechanical toils of a factory; yet the girls of New England, with one consent, preferred the factory, and left the whole business of domestic service to a foreign population; and they did it mainly because they would not take positions in families as an inferior laboring-class by the side of others of their own age who assumed as their prerogative to live without labor.

“I can’t let you have one of my daughters,” said an energetic matron to her neighbor from the city, who was seeking for a servant in her summer vacation; “if you hadn’t daughters of your own, maybe I would; but my girls a’n’t going to work so that your girls may live in idleness.”

It was vain to offer money. “We don’t need your money, Ma’am, we can support ourselves in other ways; my girls can braid straw, and bind shoes, but they a’n’t going to be slaves to anybody.”

In the Irish and German servants who took the place of Americans in families, there was, to begin with, the tradition of education in favor of a higher class; but even the foreign population became more or less infected with the spirit of democracy. They came to this country with vague notions of freedom and equality, and in ignorant and uncultivated people such ideas are often more unreasonable for being vague. They did not, indeed, claim a seat at the table and in the parlor, but they repudiated many of those habits of respect and courtesy which belonged to their former condition, and asserted their own will and way in the round, unvarnished phrase which they supposed to be their right as republican citizens. Life became a sort of domestic wrangle and struggle between the employers, who secretly confessed their weakness, but endeavored openly to assume the air and bearing of authority, and the employed, who knew their power and insisted on their privileges. From this cause domestic service in America has had less of mutual kindness than in old countries. Its terms have been so ill understood and defined that both parties have assumed the defensive; and a common topic of conversation in American female society has often been the general servile war which in one form or another was going on in their different families,—a war as interminable as would be a struggle between aristocracy and common people, undefined by any bill of rights or constitution, and therefore opening fields for endless disputes. In England, the class who go to service *are* a class, and service is a profession; the distance between them and their employers is so marked and defined, and all the customs and requirements of the position are so perfectly understood, that the master or mistress has no fear of being compromised by condescension, and no need of the external voice or air of authority. The higher up in the social scale one goes, the more courteous seems to become the intercourse of master and servant; the more perfect and real the power, the more is it veiled in outward expression,—commands are

phrased as requests, and gentleness of voice and manner covers an authority which no one would think of offending without trembling.



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But in America all is undefined. In the first place, there is no class who mean to make domestic service a profession to live and die in. It is universally an expedient, a stepping-stone to something higher; your best servants always have something else in view as soon as they have laid by a little money,—some form of independence which shall give them a home of their own is constantly in mind. Families look forward to the buying of landed homesteads, and the scattered brothers and sisters work awhile in domestic service to gain the common fund for the purpose; your seamstress intends to become a dress-maker, and take in work at her own house; your cook is pondering a marriage with the baker, which shall transfer her toils from your cooking-stove to her own. Young women are eagerly rushing into every other employment, till female trades and callings are all overstocked. We are continually harrowed with tales of the sufferings of distressed needle-women, of the exactions and extortions practised on the frail sex in the many branches of labor and trade at which they try their hands; and yet women will encounter all these chances of ruin and starvation rather than make up their minds to permanent domestic service. Now what is the matter with domestic service? One would think, on the face of it, that a calling which gives a settled home, a comfortable room, rent-free, with fire and lights, good board and lodging, and steady, well-paid wages, would certainly offer more attractions than the making of shirts for tenpence, with all the risks of providing one's own sustenance and shelter.

I think it is mainly from the want of a definite idea of the true position of a servant under our democratic institutions that domestic service is so shunned and avoided in America, that it is the very last thing which an intelligent young woman will look to for a living. It is more the want of personal respect toward those in that position than the labors incident to it which repels our people from it. Many would be willing to perform these labors, but they are not willing to place themselves in a situation where their self-respect is hourly wounded by *the implication of an inferiority which does not follow any other kind of labor or service in this country but that of the family.*

There exists in the minds of employers an unsuspected spirit of superiority, which is stimulated into an active form by the resistance which democracy inspires in the working-class. Many families think of servants only as a necessary evil, their wages as exactions, and all that allowed them as so much taken from the family; and they seek in every way to get from them as much and to give them as little as possible. Their rooms are the neglected, ill-furnished, incommodious ones,—and the kitchen is the most cheerless and comfortless place in the house. Other families, more good-natured and liberal, provide their domestics with more suitable accommodations, and are more indulgent;

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but there is still a latent spirit of something like contempt for the position. That they treat their servants with so much consideration seems to them a merit entitling them to the most prostrate gratitude; and they are constantly disappointed and shocked at that want of sense of inferiority on the part of these people which leads them to appropriate pleasant rooms, good furniture, and good living as mere matters of common justice.

It seems to be a constant surprise to some employers that servants should insist on having the same human wants as themselves. Ladies who yawn in their elegantly furnished parlors, among books and pictures, if they have not company, parties, or opera to diversify the evening, seem astonished and half indignant that cook and chambermaid are more disposed to go out for an evening gossip than to sit on hard chairs in the kitchen where they have been toiling all day. The pretty chambermaid's anxieties about her dress, the time she spends at her small and not very clear mirror, are sneeringly noticed by those whose toilet-cares take up serious hours; and the question has never apparently occurred to them why a serving-maid should not want to look pretty as well as her mistress. She is a woman as well as they, with all a woman's wants and weaknesses; and her dress is as much to her as theirs to them.

A vast deal of trouble among servants arises from impertinent interferences and petty tyrannical exactions on the part of employers. Now the authority of the master and mistress of a house in regard to their domestics extends simply to the things they have contracted to do and the hours during which they have contracted to serve; otherwise than this, they have no more right to interfere with them in the disposal of their time than with any mechanic whom they employ. They have, indeed, a right to regulate the hours of their own household, and servants can choose between conformity to these hours and the loss of their situation; but, within reasonable limits, their right to come and go at their own discretion, in their own time, should be unquestioned.

As to the terms of social intercourse, it seems somehow to be settled in the minds of many employers that their servants owe them and their family more respect than they and the family owe to the servants. But do they? What is the relation of servant to employer in a democratic country? Precisely that of a person who for money performs any kind of service for you. The carpenter comes into your house to put up a set of shelves,—the cook comes into your kitchen to cook your dinner. You never think that the carpenter owes you any more respect than you owe to him because he is in your house doing your behests; he is your fellow-citizen, you treat him with respect, you expect to be treated with respect by him. You have a claim on him that he shall do your work according to your directions,—no more. Now I apprehend that there is a very common



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notion as to the position and rights of servants which is quite different from this. Is it not a common feeling that a servant is one who may be treated with a degree of freedom by every member of the family which he or she may not return? Do not people feel at liberty to question servants about their private affairs, to comment on their dress and appearance, in a manner which they would feel to be an impertinence, if reciprocated? Do they not feel at liberty to express dissatisfaction with their performances in rude and unceremonious terms, to reprove them in the presence of company, while yet they require that the dissatisfaction of servants shall be expressed only in terms of respect? A woman would not feel herself at liberty to talk to her milliner or her dress-maker in language as devoid of consideration as she will employ towards her cook or chambermaid. Yet both are rendering her a service which she pays for in money, and one is no more made her inferior thereby than the other. Both have an equal right to be treated with courtesy. The master and mistress of a house have a right to require respectful treatment from all whom their roof shelters; but they have no more right to exact it of servants than of every guest and every child, and they themselves owe it as much to servants as to guests.

In order that servants may be treated with respect and courtesy, it is not necessary, as in simpler patriarchal days, that they sit at the family-table. Your carpenter or plumber does not feel hurt that you do not ask him to dine with you, nor your milliner and mantua-maker that you do not exchange ceremonious calls and invite them to your parties. It is well understood that your relations with them are of a mere business character. They never take it as an assumption of superiority on your part that you do not admit them to relations of private intimacy. There may be the most perfect respect and esteem and even friendship between them and you, notwithstanding. So it may be in the case of servants. It is easy to make any person understand that there are quite other reasons than the assumption of personal superiority for not wishing to admit servants to the family-privacy. It was not, in fact, to sit in the parlor or at the table, in themselves considered, that was the thing aimed at by New-England girls,—these were valued only as signs that they were deemed worthy of respect and consideration, and, where freely conceded, were often in point of fact declined.

Let servants feel, in their treatment by their employers, and in the atmosphere of the family, that their position is held to be a respectable one, let them feel in the mistress of the family the charm of unvarying consideration and good manners, let their work-rooms be made convenient and comfortable, and their private apartments bear some reasonable comparison in point of agreeableness to those of other members of the family, and domestic service will be more frequently sought by a superior and self-respecting class. There are families in which such a state of things prevails; and such families, amid the many causes which unite to make the tenure of service uncertain, have generally been able to keep good permanent servants.



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There is an extreme into which kindly disposed people often run with regard to servants, which may be mentioned here. They make pets of them. They give extravagant wages and indiscreet indulgences, and, through indolence and easiness of temper, tolerate negligence and neglect of duty. Many of the complaints of the ingratitude of servants come from those who have spoiled them in this way; while many of the longest and most harmonious domestic unions have sprung from a simple, quiet course of Christian justice and benevolence, a recognition of servants as fellow-beings and fellow-Christians, and a doing to them as we would in like circumstances that they should do to us.

The mistresses of American families, whether they like it or not, have the duties of missionaries imposed upon them by that class from which our supply of domestic servants is drawn. They may as well accept the position cheerfully, and, as one raw, untrained hand after another passes through their family, and is instructed by them in the mysteries of good housekeeping, comfort themselves with the reflection that they are doing something to form good wives and mothers for the Republic.

The complaints made of Irish girls are numerous and loud; the failings of green Erin, alas! are but too open and manifest; yet, in arrest of judgment, let us move this consideration: let us imagine our own daughters between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four, untaught and inexperienced in domestic affairs as they commonly are, shipped to a foreign shore to seek service in families. It may be questioned whether as a whole they would do much better. The girls that fill our families and do our housework are often of the age of our own daughters, standing for themselves, without mothers to guide them, in a foreign country, not only bravely supporting themselves, but sending home in every ship remittances to impoverished friends left behind. If our daughters did as much for us, should we not be proud of their energy and heroism?

When we go into the houses of our country, we find a majority of well-kept, well-ordered, and even elegant establishments where the only hands employed are those of the daughters of Erin. True, American women have been their instructors, and many a weary hour of care have they had in the discharge of this office; but the result on the whole is beautiful and good, and the end of it, doubtless, will be peace.

In speaking of the office of the American mistress as being a missionary one, we are far from recommending any controversial interference with the religious faith of our servants. It is far better to incite them to be good Christians in their own way than to run the risk of shaking their faith in all religion by pointing out to them the errors of that in which they have been educated. The general purity of life and propriety of demeanor of so many thousands of undefended young girls cast yearly upon our shores, with no home but their church, and no shield but their religion, are a sufficient proof that this religion exerts an influence over them not to be lightly trifled with. But there is a real unity even in opposite Christian forms; and the Roman Catholic servant and the Protestant mistress, if alike possessed by the spirit of Christ, and striving to conform to

the Golden Rule, cannot help being one in heart, though one go to mass and the other to meeting.



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Finally, the bitter baptism through which we are passing, the life-blood dearer than our own which is drenching distant fields, should remind us of the preciousness of distinctive American ideas. They who would seek in their foolish pride to establish the pomp of liveried servants in America are doing that which is simply absurd. A servant can never in our country be the mere appendage to another man, to be marked like a sheep with the color of his owner; he must be a fellow-citizen, with an established position of his own, free to make contracts, free to come and go, and having in his sphere titles to consideration and respect just as definite as those of any trade or profession whatever.

Moreover, we cannot in this country maintain to any great extent large retinues of servants. Even with ample fortunes they are forbidden by the general character of society here, which makes them cumbrous and difficult to manage. Every mistress of a family knows that her cares increase with every additional servant. Two keep the peace with each other and their employer; three begin a possible discord, which possibility increases with four, and becomes certain with five or six. Trained housekeepers, such as regulate the complicated establishments of the Old World, form a class that are not, and from the nature of the case never will be, found in any great numbers in this country. All such women, as a general thing, are keeping, and prefer to keep, houses of their own.

A moderate style of housekeeping, small, compact, and simple domestic establishments, must necessarily be the general order of life in America. So many openings of profit are to be found in this country, that domestic service necessarily wants the permanence which forms so agreeable a feature of it in the Old World.

American women must not try with three servants to carry on life in the style which in the Old World requires sixteen,—they must thoroughly understand, and be prepared to *teach*, every branch of housekeeping,—they must study to make domestic service desirable, by treating their servants in a way to lead them to respect themselves and to feel themselves respected,—and there will gradually be evolved from the present confusion a solution of the domestic problem which shall be adapted to the life of a new and growing world.

* * * * *

SERVICE.

When I beheld a lover woo
A maid unwilling,
And saw what lavish deeds men do,
Hope's flagon filling,—
What vines are tilled, what wines are spilled,
And madly wasted,



To fill the flask that's never filled,
And rarely tasted:

Devouring all life's heritage,
And inly starving;
Dulling the spirit's mystic edge,
The banquet carving;
Feasting with Pride, that Barmecide
Of unreal dishes;
And wandering ever in a wide,
Wide world of wishes:



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For gain or glory lands and seas
Endlessly ranging,
Safety and years and health and ease
Freely exchanging;
Chiselling Humanity to dust
Of glittering riches,
God's blood-veined marble to a bust
For Fame's cold niches:

Desire's loose reins, and steed that stains
The rider's raiment;
Sorrow and sacrifice and pains
For worthless payment:—
When, ever as I moved, I saw
The world's contagion,
Then turned, O Love! to thy sweet law
And compensation,—

Well might red shame my cheek consume!
O service slighted!
O Bride of Paradise, to whom
I long was plighted!
Do I with burning lips profess
To serve thee wholly,
Yet labor less for blessedness
Than fools for folly?

The wary worldling spread his toils
Whilst I was sleeping;
The wakeful miser locked his spoils,
Keen vigils keeping:
I loosed the latches of my soul
To pleading Pleasure,
Who stayed one little hour, and stole
My heavenly treasure.

A friend for friend's sake will endure
Sharp provocations;
And knaves are cunning to secure,
By cringing patience,
And smiles upon a smarting cheek,
Some dear advantage,—
Swathing their grievances in meek
Submission's bandage.



Yet for thy sake I will not take
One drop of trial,
But raise rebellious hands to break
The bitter vial.
At hardship's surly-visaged churl
My spirit sallies;
And melts, O Peace! thy priceless pearl
In passion's chalice.

Yet never quite, in darkest night,
Was I forsaken:
Down trickles still some starry rill
My heart to waken.
O Love Divine! could I resign
This changeful spirit
To walk thy ways, what wealth of grace
Might I inherit!

If one poor flower of thanks to thee
Be truly given,
All night thou snowest down to me
Lilies of heaven!
One task of human love fulfilled,
Thy glimpses tender
My days of lonely labor gild
With gleams of splendor!

One prayer,—“Thy will, not mine!”—and bright,
O'er all my being,
Breaks blissful light, that gives to sight
A subtler seeing;
Straightway mine ear is tuned to hear
Ethereal numbers,
Whose secret symphonies insphere
The dull earth's slumbers.

“Thy will!”—and I am armed to meet
Misfortune's volleys;
For every sorrow I have sweet,
Oh, sweetest solace!
“Thy will!”—no more I hunger sore,
For angels feed me;
Henceforth for days, by peaceful ways,
They gently lead me.



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For me the diamond dawns are set
In rings of beauty,
And all my paths are dewy wet
With pleasant duty;
Beneath the boughs of calm content
My hammock swinging,
In this green tent my eyes are spent,
Feasting and singing.

* * * * *

MADAME RECAMIER.

HER LOVERS, AND HER FRIENDS.

As the most beautiful woman of her day, Madame Recamier is widely known; as the friend of Chateaubriand and De Stael, she is scarcely less so. An historic as well as literary interest is attached to her name; for she lived throughout the most momentous and exciting period of modern times. Her relations with influential and illustrious men of successive revolutions were intimate and confidential; and though the *role* she played was but negative, the influence she exerted has closely connected her with the political history of her country.

But interesting as her life is from this point of view, in its social aspect it has a deeper significance. It is the life of a beautiful woman,—and so varied and romantic, so fruitful in incident and rich in experience, that it excites curiosity and invites speculation. It is a life difficult, if not impossible, to understand. Herein lies its peculiar and engrossing fascination. It is a curious web to unravel, a riddle to solve, a problem at once stimulating and baffling. Like the history of the times, it is full of puzzling contradictions and striking contrasts. The daughter of a provincial notary, Madame Recamier was the honored associate of princes. A married woman, she was a wife only in name. A beauty and a belle, she was as much admired by her own as by the other sex. A coquette, she changed passionate lovers into lifelong friends. Accepting the open and exclusive homage of married men, she continued on the best of terms with their wives. One day the mistress of every luxury that wealth can command,—the next a bankrupt's wife. One year the reigning "Queen of Society,"—the next a suspected exile. As much flattered and courted when she was poor as while she was rich. Just as fascinating when old and blind as while young and beautiful. Loss of fortune brought no loss of power,—decline of beauty, no decrease of admiration. Modelled by artists, flattered by princes, adored by women, eulogized by men of genius, courted by men of letters,—the beloved of the chivalric Augustus of Prussia, and the selfish, dreamy Chateaubriand,—with the high-toned Montmorencys for her friends, and the simple-minded Ballanche for her slave. Such were some of the triumphs, such some of the contrasts in the life of this remarkable woman.



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It is hard to conceive of a more brilliant career, or of one more calculated from its singularity to give rise to contradictory impressions. This natural perplexity is much increased by the character of Madame Recamier's memoirs, published in 1859, ten years after her death. They are from the pen of Madame Lenormant, the niece of Monsieur Recamier, and the adopted daughter of his wife. To her Madame Recamier bequeathed her papers, with the request that she should write the narrative of her life. Madame Lenormant had a delicate and difficult task to execute. The life she was to portray was strictly a social one. It was closely interwoven with the lives of other persons still living or lately dead. She owed heavy obligations to both. It is, therefore, not surprising, if her narrative is at times broken and obscure, and she a too partial biographer. Not that Madame Lenormant can be called untrustworthy. She cannot be accused of misrepresenting facts, but she does what is almost as bad,—she partially states them. Her vague allusions and half-and-half statements excite curiosity without gratifying it. We also crave to know more than she tells us of the heart-history of this woman who so captivated the world,—to see her sometimes in the silence of solitude, alone with her own thoughts,—to gain an insight into the inner, that we may more perfectly comprehend the outward life which so perplexes and confounds. Instead of all this, we have drawing-room interviews with the object of our interest. We see her chiefly as she appeared in society. We have to be content with what others say of her, in lieu of what she might say for herself. We hear of her conquests, her social triumphs, we listen to panegyrics, but are seldom admitted behind the scenes to judge for ourselves of what is gold and what is tinsel. We, moreover, seek in vain for those unconscious revelations so precious in divining character. The few letters of Madame Recamier that are published have little or no significance. She was not fond of writing, still she corresponded regularly with several of her friends; but her correspondence, it seems, has not been obtained by her biographer. The best insight we get, therefore, into the emotional part of her nature is from indirect allusions in letters addressed to her, and from conclusions drawn from her course of conduct in particular cases. Some of the incidents of her life are so dramatic, that, if fully and faithfully told, they would of themselves reveal the true character of the woman, but as it is we have but little help from them. It is impossible to resist the conviction that Madame Lenormant would not hesitate to suppress any circumstances that might cast a shadow on the memory of her aunt. It is true that she occasionally relates facts tending to injure Madame Recamier, but it is plain to be seen that she herself is totally unconscious of the nature and tendency of these disclosures. Upon the publication of her book, these indiscretions



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excited the displeasure of Madame Recamier's warm personal friends. One of them, Madame Moehl, by birth an Englishwoman, undertook her defence. This lady corrects a few slight inaccuracies of the "Souvenirs," and since she cannot controvert its more important facts, she attempts to explain them. Her sketch[A] of Madame Recamier is pleasant, from its personal recollections, but far inferior to one by Sainte-Beuve,[B] which is eminently significant. Neither, as sources of information, can supply the place of the more voluminous and explicit "Souvenirs." It is a little singular that this work has not been translated into English, for, in spite of its lack of method, its diffuseness and disproportionate developments, it is very attractive and interesting. It is also highly valuable for its large collection of letters from distinguished people. In the sketch we propose to make of Madame Recamier's life, we shall rely mainly upon it for our facts, giving in connection our own view of her character and career.

The beauty which first won celebrity for Madame Recamier was hers by inheritance. Her father was a remarkably handsome man, but a person of narrow capacity, who owed his advancement in life solely to the exertions of his more capable wife. Madame Bernard was a beautiful blonde. She was lively and *spirituelle*, coquettish and designing. Through her influence with Calonne, minister under Louis XVI., Monsieur Bernard was made *Receveur des Finances*. Upon this appointment, in 1784, they came to Paris, leaving their only child, Juliette, then seven years old, at Lyons, in the care of an aunt, though she was soon afterward placed in a convent, where she remained three years. Monsieur and Madame Bernard's style of living in Paris was both elegant and generous. Their house became the resort of the Lyonnese, and also of literary men,—the latter being especially courted by Madame Bernard. But, though seemingly given up to a life of gayety and pleasure, she did not neglect her own interests. Her cleverness was of the Becky-Sharp order. She knew how to turn the admiration she excited to her own advantage. Having a faculty for business, she engaged in successful speculations and amassed a fortune, which she carried safely through the Reign of Terror. This is the more remarkable as Monsieur Bernard was a known Royalist. He and his family and his wife's friends escaped not only death, but also persecution; and Madame Lenormant attributes this rare good-fortune to the agency of the infamous Barrere. Barrere's cruelty was equalled only by his profligacy, his cunning by his selfishness. Macaulay said of him, that "he approached nearer than any person mentioned in history or fiction, whether man or devil, to the idea of consummate and total depravity"; and everybody must remember the famous comparison by which he illustrated Barrere's faculty of lying. But even taking a much milder view of Barrere's character, it is a matter



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of history by what terms the unfortunate victims of the Revolution purchased of him their own lives and those of their friends, and it is certain that his friendship and protection were no honor to any woman. This view of their intimacy is confirmed by Madame Moehl. In speaking of a rumor current in Madame Recamier's lifetime, which reflected severely upon her mother, she says that Madame Bernard's reputation had nothing to lose by this story, and mentions the favors she received at the hands both of Calonne and Barrere.

Juliette Bernard was ten years old when she joined her parents in Paris, where she was placed under the care of masters. She played with skill on the harp and piano, and being passionately fond of music, it became her solace and amusement at an advanced age. In her youth dancing was equally a passion with her. The grace with which she executed the shawl-dance suggested to Madame de Stael the dance-scene in "Corinne." It is said that great care was bestowed upon her education; but as it is also stated that long hours were passed at the toilette, that she was the pet of all her mother's friends, who, as proud of her daughter's beauty as she was of her own, took her constantly to the theatre and public assemblies, little time could have been devoted to systematic instruction. There is no mention made throughout her life of any favorite studies or favorite books, and she was, moreover, married at fifteen.

Monsieur Recamier was forty-four years old when he proposed for the hand of Juliette Bernard. She accepted him without either reluctance or distrust. Much sympathy has been lavished upon Madame Recamier on account of this marriage, and her extreme youth is urged as an excuse for this false step of her life. Still she did not take it blindly. Her mother thought it her duty to lay before her all the objections to a union where there existed such a disparity of age. No undue influence was exerted, therefore, in favor of the marriage. Nor was Mademoiselle Bernard as unsophisticated as French girls usually are at that age. Her childhood had not been passed in seclusion. Since she was ten years old she had been constantly in the society of men of letters and men of the world. Under such influences girls ripen early, and in marrying Monsieur Recamier she at least realized all her expectations. She did not look for mutual affection; she expected to find in him a generous and indulgent protector, and this anticipation was not disappointed. If she discovered too late that she had other and greater needs, she was deeply to be pitied, but the responsibility of the step must remain with her. Madame Lenormant says of the union,—“It was simply an apparent one. Madame Recamier was a wife only in name. This fact is astonishing. But I am not bound to explain it, only to attest its truth, which all of Madame Recamier's friends can confirm. Monsieur Recamier's relations to his wife were strictly of a paternal character. He treated the young and innocent child who bore his name as a daughter whose beauty charmed him and whose celebrity flattered his vanity.”



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As an explanation of these singular relations, Madame Moehl states that it was the general belief of Madame Recamier's contemporaries that she was the own daughter of Monsieur Recamier, whom the unsettled state of the times had induced him to marry; but there is not a shadow of evidence in support of this hypothesis,—though, to make it more probable, Madame Moehl adds, that “Madame Lenormant rather confirms than contradicts this rumor.” In this she is strangely mistaken. Madame Lenormant does not allude to the report at all. Still she tacitly contradicts it. Her account of Monsieur Recamier's course with regard to the divorce proposed between him and his wife is of itself a sufficient refutation of this idle story.

Monsieur Recamier was a tall, vigorous, handsome man, of easy, agreeable manners. Perfectly polite, he was deficient in dignity, and preferred the society of his inferiors to that of his equals. He wrote and spoke Spanish with fluency, had some knowledge of Latin, and was fond of quoting Horace and Virgil. “It would be difficult to find,” says his niece, “a heart more generous than his, more easily moved, and yet more volatile. Let a friend need his time, his money, his advice, it was immediately at his service; but let that same friend be taken away by death, he would scarcely give two days to regret: *'Encore un tiroir ferme'*, he would say, and there would end his sensibility. Always ready to give and willing to serve, he was a good companion, and benevolent and gay in his temper. He carried his optimism to excess, and was always content with everybody and everything. He had fine natural abilities, and the gift of expression, being a good storyteller.” He was married in 1793, the most gloomy period of the Reign of Terror, and went every day to see the executions, wishing, he said, to familiarize himself with the fate he had every reason to fear would be his own.

The first four years of her marriage were passed by Madame Recamier in retirement, but when the government was settled under the Consulate she mingled freely and gayly in society. This was probably the happiest period of her life. Her husband was at the height of financial prosperity, and lavished every luxury upon his beautiful wife. Both their country-seat at Clichy and their town-house in the Rue Mont Blanc were models of elegant taste. Large dinner-parties and balls were given at the latter, but all the intimate friends went to Clichy, where Madame Recamier chiefly resided with her mother. Her husband only dined there, driving in to Paris every night. She was very fond of flowers, and filled her rooms with them. At that time floral decorations were a novelty, and another attraction was added to the charms of Clichy. Not only there, but in society, Madame Recamier reigned a queen. She had been pronounced by acclamation “the most beautiful,” and she enjoyed her triumphs with all the gayety and freshness of youth. Madame Lenormant asserts that she was unconscious



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of her beauty, and yet, with an amusing inconsistency, she adds that Madame Recamier always dressed in white and wore pearls in preference to other jewels, that the dazzling whiteness of her skin might eclipse their softness and purity. It was, in fact, impossible to be unconscious of a beauty so ravishing that it intoxicated all beholders. At the theatre, at the promenade, at public assemblies, she was followed by admiring throngs.

“She was sensible,” writes one who knew her well, “of every look, every word of admiration,—the exclamation of a child or a woman of the people, equally with the declaration of a prince. In crowds from the side of her elegant carriage, which advanced slowly, she thanked each for his admiration by a motion of the head and a smile.”

As an instance of the effect she produced, Madame Lenormant gives the testimony of a contemporary, Madame Regnaud de Saint-Jean d’Angely, who, talking over her own beauty and that of other women of her youth, named Madame Recamier. “Others,” she said, “were more truly beautiful, but none produced so much effect. I was in a drawing-room where I charmed and captivated all eyes. Madame Recamier entered. The brilliancy of her eyes, which were not, however, very large, the inconceivable whiteness of her shoulders, crushed and eclipsed everybody. She was resplendent. At the end of a moment, however, the true amateurs returned to me.”

It was not her own countrymen alone who raved about her beauty. The sober-minded English people were quite as much impressed. When she visited England during the short peace of Amiens, she created intense excitement. The journals recorded her movements, and on one occasion in Kensington Gardens the crowd was so great that she narrowly escaped being crushed. At the Opera she was obliged to steal away early to avoid a similar annoyance, and then barely succeeded in reaching her carriage. Chateaubriand tells us that her portrait, engraved by Bartolozzi, and spread throughout England, was carried thence to the isles of Greece. Ballanche, remarking on this circumstance, said that it was “beauty returning to the land of its birth.”

Years after, when the allied sovereigns were in Paris, and Madame Recamier thirty-eight years old, the effect of her beauty was just as striking. Madame de Kruedener, celebrated for her mysticism and the power she exerted over the Emperor Alexander, then held nightly reunions, beginning with prayer and ending in a more worldly fashion. Madame Recamier’s entrance always caused distraction, and Madame de Kruedener commissioned Benjamin Constant to write and beseech her to be less charming. As this piquant note will lose its flavor by translation, we give it in the original.

“Je m’acquitte avec un peu d’embarras d’une commission que *Mme.* de Kruedener vient de me donner. Elle vous supplie de venir la moins belle que vous pourrez. Elle dit que vous eblouissez tout le monde, et que par la toutes les ames sont troublees, et toutes

les attentions impossibles. Vous ne pouvez pas déposer votre charme, mais ne le rehaussez pas.”



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Madame Recamier's personal appearance at eighteen is thus described by her niece:

“A figure flexible and elegant; neck and shoulders admirably formed and proportioned; a well-poised head; a small, rosy mouth, pearly teeth, charming arms, though a little small, and black hair that curled naturally. A nose delicate and regular, but *bien français*, and an incomparable brilliancy of complexion. A countenance full of candor, and sometimes beaming with mischief, which the expression of goodness rendered irresistibly lovely. There was a shade of indolence and pride in her gestures, and what Saint Simon said of the Duchess of Burgundy is equally applicable to her: 'Her step was that of a goddess on the clouds.'”

Madame Recamier retained her beauty longer than is usual even with Frenchwomen, nor did she seek to repair it by any artificial means. “She did not struggle,” says Sainte-Beuve, “she resigned herself gracefully to the first touch of Time. She understood, that, for one who had enjoyed such success as a beauty, to seem yet beautiful was to make no pretensions. A friend who had not seen her for many years complimented her upon her looks. ‘Ah, my dear friend,’ she replied, ‘it is useless for me to deceive myself. From the moment I noticed that the little Savoyards in the street no longer turned to look at me, I comprehended that all was over.’” There is pathos in this simple acknowledgment, this quiet renunciation. Was it the result of secret struggles which taught her that all regret was vain, and that to contrast the present with the past was but a useless and torturing thing for a woman?

But at the time of which we write Madame Recamier had no sad realities to ponder. She was surrounded by admirers, with the liberty which French society accords to married women, and the freedom of heart of a young girl. She was still content to be simply admired. She understood neither the world nor her own heart. Her life was too gay for reflection, nor had the time arrived for it: “all analysis comes late.” It is not until we have in a measure ceased to be actors, and have accepted the more passive *role* of spectators, that we begin to reflect upon ourselves and upon life. And Madame Recamier had not tired of herself, or of the world. She was too young to be heart-weary, and she knew nothing yet of the burdens and perplexities of life. All her wishes were gratified before they were fairly expressed, and she had neither anxieties nor cares.

Her first vexation came with her first lover. It was in the spring of 1799 that Madame Recamier met Lucien Bonaparte at a dinner. He was then twenty-four, and she twenty-two. He asked permission to visit her at Clichy, and made his appearance there the next day. He first wrote to her, declaring his love, under the name of Romeo, and she, taking advantage of the subterfuge, returned his letter in the presence of other friends, with a compliment on



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its cleverness, while she advised him not to waste his ability on works of imagination, when it could be so much better employed in politics. Lucien was not thus to be repulsed. He then addressed her in his own name, and she showed the letters to her husband, and asked his advice. Monsieur Recamier was more politic than indignant. His wife wished to forbid Lucien the house, but he feared that such extreme measures toward the brother of the First Consul might compromise, if not ruin, his bank. He therefore advised her neither to encourage nor repulse him. Lucien continued his attentions for a year,—the absurd emphasis of his manners at times amusing Madame Recamier, while at others his violence excited her fears. At last, becoming conscious that he was making himself ridiculous, he gave up the pursuit in despair. Some time after he had discontinued his visits he sent a friend to demand his letters; but Madame Recamier refused to give them up. He sent a second time, adding menace to persuasion; but she was firm in her refusal. It was rumored that Lucien was a favored lover, and he was anxious to be so considered. His own letters were the strongest proof to the contrary, and as such they were kept and guarded by Madame Recamier. But the unpleasant gossip to which his attentions gave rise was a source of great annoyance to her. If it was her first vexation, it was not the only one of the same kind. Madame Lenormant makes no allusion, to any other, but in the lately published correspondence of Madame de Stael[C] we find among the letters to Madame Recamier one which consoles her under what was probably a somewhat similar trouble. "I hear from Monsieur Hochet that you have a chagrin. I hope by the time you have read this letter it will have passed away.... There is nothing to dread but truth and material persecution; beyond these two things enemies can do absolutely nothing. And what an enemy! only a contemptible woman who is jealous of your beauty and purity united."

It was at a *fete* given by Lucien that Madame Recamier had her first and only interview with the First Consul. On entering the drawing-room, she mistook him for his brother Joseph, and bowed to him. He returned her salutation with *empressement* mingled with surprise. Looking at her closely, he spoke to Fouche, who leaned over her chair and whispered, "The First Consul finds you charming." When Lucien approached, Napoleon, who was no stranger to his brother's passion, said aloud, "And I, too, would like to go to Clichy!" When dinner was announced, he rose and left the room alone, without offering his arm to any lady. As Madame Recamier passed out, Eliza (Madame Bacciocchi), who did the honors in the absence of Madame Lucien, who was indisposed, requested her to take the seat next to the First Consul. Madame Recamier did not understand her, and seated herself at a little distance, and on Cambaceres, the Second Consul, occupying the seat by her side, Napoleon



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exclaimed, "*Ah, ah, citoyen consul, aupres de la plus belle!*" He ate very little and very fast, and at the end of half an hour left the table abruptly, and returned to the drawing-room. He afterward asked Madame Recamier why she had not sat next to him at dinner. "I should not have presumed," she said. "It was your place," he replied; and his sister added, "That was what I said to you before dinner." A concert following, Napoleon stood alone by the piano, but, not fancying the instrumental part of the performance, at the end of a piece by Jadin, he struck on the piano and cried, "Garat! Garat!" who then sang a scene from "Orpheus." Music always profoundly moved Madame Recamier, but whenever she raised her eyes she found those of the Consul fixed upon her with so much intensity that she became uncomfortable. After the concert, he came to her and said, "You are very fond of music, Madame," and would probably have continued the conversation, had not Lucien interrupted. Madame Recamier confessed that she was prepossessed by Napoleon at this interview. She was evidently gratified by his attentions, scanty and slight as they seem to us. Indeed, his whole conduct during the dinner and concert was decidedly discourteous, if not positively rude. Madame Lenormant attributes Napoleon's subsequent attempt to attach Madame Recamier to his court to the strong impression she made upon him at this interview, and gives Fouche as her authority. Still, if this were the case, it is rather strange that Napoleon did not follow up the acquaintance more speedily. It was not until five years afterwards that he made the overtures to which Madame Lenormant refers,—and then Madame Recamier had long been in the ranks of the Opposition. It was Napoleon's policy to conciliate, if possible, his political opponents. He had succeeded in gaining over Bernadotte, of whose intrigues against him Madame Recamier had been the *confidante*, and he concluded that she also could be as easily won. He accordingly sent Fouche to her, who, after several preliminary visits, proposed that she should apply for a position at court. As Madame Recamier did not heed his suggestions, he spoke more openly. "He protested that the place would give her entire liberty, and then, seizing with finesse upon the inducements most powerful with a generous spirit, he dwelt upon the eminent services she might render to the oppressed of all classes, and also the good influence so attractive a woman would exert over the mind of the Emperor. 'He has not yet,' he added, 'found a woman worthy of him, and no one knows what the love of Napoleon would be, if he attached himself to a pure person,—assuredly she would obtain a power over him which would be entirely beneficent.'" If Madame Recamier listened with politic calmness to these disgraceful overtures, she gave Fouche no encouragement. But he was not easily discouraged. He planned another interview with her at the house of the Princess Caroline, who

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added her persuasions to his. The conversation turning on Talma, who was then performing at the French theatre, the Princess put her box, which was opposite the Emperor's, at Madame Recamier's disposal; she used it twice, and each time the Emperor was present, and kept his glass so constantly in her direction that it was generally remarked, and it was reported that she was on the eve of high favor. Upon further persistence on the part of Fouche, Madame Recamier gave him a decided refusal. He was vehemently indignant, and left Clichy never to return thither. In the St. Helena Memorial, Napoleon attributes Madame Recamier's rejection of his overtures to personal resentment on account of her father. In 1800 Monsieur Bernard had been appointed *Administrateur des Postes*; being implicated in a Royalist conspiracy, he was imprisoned, but finally set at liberty through the intercession of Bernadotte. Napoleon believed that Madame Recamier resented her father's removal from office, but she was too thankful at his release from prison to expect any further favors. Her dislike of the Emperor was caused by his treatment of her friends, more particularly of the one dearest to her, Madame de Stael.

The friendship between these women was highly honorable to both, though the sacrifices were chiefly on Madame Recamier's side. She espoused Madame de Stael's cause with zeal and earnestness; and when the latter was banished forty leagues from Paris, she found an asylum with her. Among the few fragments of autobiography preserved by Madame Lenormant is this account of the first interview between the friends.

"One day, which I count an epoch in my life, Monsieur Recamier arrived at Clichy with a lady whom he did not introduce, but whom he left alone with me while he joined some other persons in the park. This lady came about the sale and purchase of a house. Her dress was peculiar. She wore a morning-robe, and a little dress-hat decorated with flowers. I took her for a foreigner, and was struck with the beauty of her eyes and of her expression. I cannot analyze my sensations, but it is certain I was more occupied in divining who she was than in paying her the usual courtesies, when she said to me, with a lively and penetrating grace, that she was truly enchanted to know me; that her father, Monsieur Necker... At these words, I recognized Madame de Stael! I did not hear the rest of her sentence. I blushed. My embarrassment was extreme. I had just read with enthusiasm her letters on Rousseau, and I expressed what I felt more by my looks than by my words. She intimidated and attracted me at the same time. I saw at once that she was a perfectly natural person, of a superior nature. She, on her side, fixed upon me her great black eyes, but with a curiosity full of benevolence, and paid me compliments which would have seemed too exaggerated, had they not appeared to escape her, thus giving to her words an irresistible seduction. My embarrassment did me no injury. She understood it, and expressed a wish to see more of me on her return to Paris, as she was then on the eve of starting for Coppet. She was at that time only

an apparition in my life, but the impression was a lively one. I thought only of Madame de Stael, I was so much affected by her strong and ardent nature.”



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The sweet serenity of Madame Recamier's nature soothed the more restless and tumultuous spirit of her friend. The unaffected veneration, too, of one so beautiful touched and gratified the woman of genius. Still, this intimacy was not unmixed with bitterness for Madame de Stael. But it troubled only her own heart, not the common friendship. She continually contrasted Madame Recamier's beauty with her own plain appearance, her friend's power of fascination with her own lesser faculty of interesting, and she repeatedly declared that Madame Recamier was the most enviable of human beings. But in comparing the lives of the two, as they now appear to us, Madame de Stael seems the more fortunate. If her married life was uncongenial, she had children to love and cherish, to whom she was fondly attached. Madame Recamier was far more isolated. Years had made her entirely independent of her husband, and she had no children upon whom to lavish the wealth of her affection. Her mother's death left her comparatively alone in the world, for she had neither brother nor sister, and her father seems to have had but little hold on her heart, all her love being lavished on her mother. She had a host of friends, it is true, but the closest friendship is but a poor substitute for the natural ties of affection. Both these women sighed for what they had not. The one yearned for love, the other for the liberty of loving. Madame Recamier was dependent for her enjoyments on society, while Madame de Stael had rich and manifold resources within herself, which no caprice of friends could materially affect, and no reverse of fortune impair. Her poetic imagination and creative thought were inexhaustible treasures. Solitude could never be irksome to her. Her genius brought with it an inestimable blessing. It gave her a purpose in life,—consequently she was never in want of occupation; and if at intervals she bitterly felt that heart-loneliness which Mrs. Browning has so touchingly expressed in verse,—

“My father!—thou hast knowledge, only thou!
How dreary 't is for women to sit still
On winter nights by solitary fires,
And hear the nations praising them far off,
Too far! ay, praising our quick sense of love,
Our very heart of passionate womanhood,
Which could not beat so in the verse without
Being present also in the unkissed lips,
And eyes undried because there's none to ask
The reason they grew moist,”—

in the excitement and ardor of composition such feelings slumbered, while in the honest and pure satisfaction of work well done they were for the time extinguished. Madame Recamier, though beautiful and beloved, had no such precious compensations. She depended for her happiness upon her friends, and they who rely upon others for their chief enjoyments must meet with bitter and deep disappointments. Madame Recamier had great triumphs which secured to her moments of rapture. When the crowd worshipped her beauty, she probably experienced the same delirium of joy, the same momentary exultation, that a *prima donna* feels when called before an excited and

enthusiastic audience. But satiety and chagrin surely follow such triumphs, and she lived to feel their hollowness.



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In a letter to her adopted daughter, she says,—“I hope you will be more happy than I have been”; and she confessed to Sainte-Beuve, that more than once in her most brilliant days, in the midst of *fetes* where she reigned a queen, she disengaged herself from the crowd surrounding her and retired to weep in solitude. Surely so sad a woman was not to be envied.

Another friend of Madame Recamier’s youth, whose friendship in a marked degree influenced her life, was Matthieu de Montmorency. He was seventeen years older than she, and may with emphasis be termed her best friend. A devout Roman Catholic, he awakened and strengthened her religious convictions, and constantly warned her of the perils surrounding her. Much as he evidently admired and loved her, he did not hesitate to utter unwelcome truths. Vicomte, afterward Duc de Montmorency, belonged to one of the oldest families of France, but, espousing the Revolutionary cause, he was the first to propose the abolition of the privileges of the nobility. He was married early in life to a woman without beauty, to whom he was profoundly indifferent, and soon separated from her, though from family motives the tie was renewed in after-years. In his youth he had been gay and dissipated; but the death of a favorite brother, who fell a victim to the Revolution, changed and sobered him. From an over-sensibility, he believed himself to be the cause of his brother’s death on account of the part he had taken in hastening the Revolution, and he strove to atone for this mistake, as well as for his youthful follies, by a life of austerity and piety. While his letters testify his great affection for Madame Recamier, they are entirely free from those lover-like protestations and declarations of eternal fidelity so characterise of her other masculine correspondents. He always addressed her as “*amiable amis*”, and his nearest approach to gallantry is the expression of a hope that “in prayer their thoughts had often mingled, and might continue so to do.” He ends a long letter of religious counsel with this grave warning:—“Do what is good and amiable, what will not rend the heart or leave any regrets behind. But in the name of God renounce all that is unworthy of you, and which under no circumstances can ever render you happy.”

Adrien de Montmorency, Duke of Laval, if not so near and dear a friend, was quite as devoted an admirer of Madame Recamier as his cousin Matthieu. His son also wore her chains, and frequently marred the pleasure of his father’s visits by his presence. In reference to the family’s devotion, Adrien wrote to her,—“My son is fascinated by you, and you know that I am so also. It is the fate of the Montmorencys,—

“Ils ne mouraient pas tous, mais tout étaient frappes.”

Adrien was a man of wit, and he had more ability than Matthieu. “Of all your admirers,” writes Madame de Stael, in a letter given in Chateaubriand’s *Memoirs*, “you know that I prefer Adrien de Montmorency. I have just received one of his letters, which is remarkable for wit and grace, and I believe in the durability of his affections, notwithstanding the charm of his manners. Besides, this word durability is becoming in

me, who have but a secondary place in his heart. But you are the heroine of all those sentiments out of which grow tragedies and romances.”



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Other admirers succeeded the Montmorencys. The masked balls, fashionable under the Empire, were occasions for fresh conquests. Madame Recamier attended them regularly under the protection of an elder brother of her husband, and had many piquant adventures. Prince Metternich was devoted to her one season, and when Lent put an end to festivity, he visited her privately in the morning, that he might not incur the Emperor's displeasure. Napoleon's animosity had now become marked and positive. On one occasion, when three of his ministers met accidentally at her house, he heard of it, and asked petulantly how long since had the council been held at Madame Recamier's? He was especially jealous of foreign ministers, and treated with so much haughtiness any who frequented her *salon*, that, as a matter of prudence, they saw her only in society or visited her by stealth. The Duke of Mecklenburg, whom she met at one of the masked balls, was extremely anxious to keep up her acquaintance. She declined the honor, alleging the Emperor's jealousy as reason for her refusal. He persuaded her, however, to grant him an interview, and she appointed an evening when she did not generally receive visitors. Stealing into the house in an undignified manner, the Duke was collared by the *concierge*, who mistook him for a thief. This ill-fortune did not deter him, however, from visiting her frequently. Years after, he wrote,—“Among the precious souvenirs which I owe to you is one I particularly cherish. It is the eminently noble and generous course you pursued toward me, when Napoleon had said openly, in the *salon* of the Empress Josephine, that he 'should regard as his personal enemy any foreigner who frequented the *salon* of Madame Recamier.”

Madame Recamier was to feel yet more severely the effects of the Emperor's displeasure. In the autumn of 1806 the banking-house of Monsieur Recamier became embarrassed, through financial disorders in Spain. Their difficulties would have been temporary, had the Bank of France granted them a loan on good security. This favor was refused, and the house failed. While the decision of the bank was yet uncertain, Monsieur Recamier confided to his wife the desperate state of his affairs, and deputed her to do, the next day, the honors of a large dinner-party, which could not be postponed, lest suspicion should be excited. He went into the country, completely overwhelmed, and awaited there the result of his application. Madame Recamier forced herself to appear as usual. No one suspected the agony of her mind. She afterwards said that she felt the whole evening as though she were a prey to some horrible nightmare. In contrasting the conduct of the husband and wife, Madame Lenormant is scarcely just to the former. Acutely as Madame Recamier dreaded the impending ruin, it could not be to her what it was to her husband. A fearful responsibility rested upon him. The failure of his house was not only disaster and possible dishonor, but the ruin of thousands who had confided in him. A strong intellect might well be bowed down under the apprehension of such a catastrophe. Women, too, are proverbially calmer in such emergencies than men. To them it simply means sacrifice, but to men it is infinitely more than that.



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When the blow fell, Monsieur Recamier met it manfully. He gave up everything to his creditors, who had so much confidence in his integrity that they put him at the head of the settlement of liquidation. Madame Recamier was equally honorable. She sold all her jewels. They disposed of their plate, and offered the house in the Rue Mont Blanc for sale. As a purchaser could not immediately be found, they removed to the ground-floor and let the other stories. This reverse of fortune involved more than personal sacrifices. Madame Recamier was both generous and charitable, and had dispensed her benefits with an open hand. She had, with the aid of friends, founded a school for orphans, and had numerous claims upon her bounty. To be restricted in her charities must have been a sore trial. Further mortifications she was spared, for she was treated with greater deference than ever. Her friends redoubled their attentions, her door was besieged by callers, who vied with each other in showing sympathy and respect. Junot was one of her firmest friends at this crisis. Witnessing, in Paris, the attentions she received, he spoke of them to the Emperor, when he rejoined him in Germany. He was checked by Napoleon, who pettishly remarked that they could not have paid more homage to the widow of a marshal of France fallen on the field of battle.

Junot was not the only general of the Emperor who was concerned at her reverse of fortune. Bernadotte, whom Sainte-Beuve numbers among her lovers, and whose letters confirm this idea, wrote to her from Germany, expressing his sympathy. Madame de Stael was sensibly afflicted. "Dear Juliette," she writes, "we have enjoyed the luxury which surrounded you. Your fortune has been ours, and I feel ruined because you are no longer rich."

Another anxiety now weighed heavily upon Madame Recamier. Her mother's health had long been failing, and the misfortunes of her son-in-law were more than her shattered constitution could bear. She died six months after the failure, leaving her fortune to her daughter, though her husband was still living. To the last she was devoted to dress and society. Throughout her illness she insisted upon being becomingly dressed every day, and supported to a couch, where she received her friends for several hours.

After Madame Bernard's death, her daughter passed six months in retirement, but, her grief affecting her health, she was induced by Madame de Stael to visit her at Coppet. Here she met the exiled Prince Augustus of Prussia, nephew of Frederick the Great. We find in the "Seaforth Papers," lately published in England, an allusion to this Prince, who visited London in the train of the allied sovereigns in 1814. A lady writes, "All the ladies are desperately in love with him,—his eyes are so fine, his moustaches so black, and his teeth so white." Madame Lenormant describes him as extremely handsome, brave, chivalric, and loyal. He was twenty-four when he fell passionately in love with Madame de Stael's beautiful guest, to whom he at once proposed a divorce and marriage. We give Madame Lenormant's account of his attachment.

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“Three months passed in the enchantments of a passion by which Madame Recamier was profoundly touched, if she did not share it. Everything conspired to favor Prince Augustus. The imagination of Madame de Stael, easily seduced by anything poetical and singular, made her an eloquent auxiliary of the Prince. The place itself, those beautiful shores of Lake Geneva, peopled by romantic phantoms, had a tendency to bewilder the judgment. Madame Recamier was moved. For a moment she welcomed an offer of marriage which was not only a proof of the passion, but of the esteem of a prince of a royal house, deeply impressed by the weight of its own prerogatives and the greatness of its rank. Vows were exchanged. The tie which united the beautiful Juliette to Monsieur Recamier was one which the Catholic Church itself proclaimed null. Yielding to the sentiment with which she inspired the Prince, Juliette wrote to Monsieur Recamier, requesting the rupture of their union. He replied that he would consent to a divorce, if it was her wish, but he made an appeal to her feelings. He recalled the affection he had shown her from childhood. He even expressed regret at having respected her susceptibilities and repugnances, thus preventing a closer bond of union, which would have made all thoughts of a separation impossible. Finally he requested, that, if Madame Recamier persisted in her project, the divorce should not take place in Paris, but out of France, where he would join her to arrange matters.”

This letter had the desired effect. Madame Recamier concluded not to abandon her husband, and returned to Paris, but without undeceiving the Prince, who started for Berlin. According to her biographer, Madame Recamier trusted that absence would soften the disappointment she had in store for him; but, if this was the case, the means she took to accomplish it were very inadequate. She sent him her portrait soon after her return to Paris, which the Prince acknowledged in a letter, of which the following is an extract:—

“April 24th, 1808.

“I hope that my letter of the 31st has already been received. I could only very feebly express to you the happiness I felt on the receipt of your last, but it will give you some idea of my sensations when reading it, and in receiving your portrait. For whole hours I looked at this enchanting picture, dreaming of a happiness which must surpass the most delicious reveries of imagination. What fate can be compared to that of the man whom you love?”

When Madame Recamier subsequently wrote to him more candidly, the Prince was astonished. “Your letter was a thunderbolt,” he replied; but he would not accept her decision, and claimed the right of seeing her again. Three years passed in uncertainty, and in 1811 Madame Recamier consented to meet him at Schaffhausen; but she did not fulfil her engagement, giving the sentence of exile which had just been passed



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upon her as an excuse. The Prince, after waiting in vain, wrote indignantly to Madame de Stael, "I hope I am now cured of a foolish love, which I have nourished for four years." But when the news of her exile reached him, he wrote to her expressing his sympathy, but at the same time reproaching her for her breach of faith. "After four years of absence I hoped to see you again, and this exile seemed to furnish you with a pretext for coming to Switzerland. But you have cruelly deceived me. I cannot conceive, if you could not or would not see me, why you did not condescend to tell me so, and I might have been spared a useless journey of three hundred leagues."

Madame Recamier's conduct to the Prince, even viewed in the light of her biographer's representations, is scarcely justifiable. Madame Moehl attempts to defend her. She alleges, that, at the time Prince Augustus was paying his addresses to her, he had contracted a left-handed marriage at Berlin. Even if this story be true, there is no evidence that Madame Recamier was then acquainted with the fact, and if she had been, there was only the more reason for breaking with the Prince at once, instead of keeping him so long alternating between hope and despair. In speaking of him to Madame Moehl, Madame Recamier said that he was desperately in love, but he was very gallant and had many other fancies. The impression she made upon him, however, seems to have been lasting. Three months before his death, in 1845, he wrote to her that the ring she had given him should follow him to the tomb, and her portrait, painted by Gerard, was, at his death, returned to her by his orders. Either the Prince had two portraits of Madame Recamier, or else Madame Lenormant's statements are contradictory. She says that her aunt sent him her portrait soon after her return to Paris, and the date of the Prince's letter acknowledging the favor confirms this statement. It is afterward asserted that Madame Recamier gave him her portrait in exchange for one of Madame de Stael, painted by Gerard, as Corinne.

The next important event in Madame Recamier's life is her exile, caused by a visit she paid Madame de Stael when the surveillance exercised over the latter by the government had become more rigorous. Montmorency had been already exiled for the same offence. But, disregarding this warning, Madame Recamier persisted in going to Coppet, and though she only remained one night there, she was exiled forty leagues from Paris.

She bore her exile with dignity. She would not solicit a recall, and she forbade those of her friends, who, like Junot, were on familiar terms with the Emperor, to mention her name in his presence. She doubtless felt all its deprivations, even more keenly than Madame de Stael, though she made no complaints. Her means were narrow, as she does not appear to have been in the full possession of her mother's fortune until after the Restoration. She had lived, with scarcely an interruption, a life of society; now she was thrown on her own resources, with little except music to cheer and enliven her. It was not only the loss of Paris that exiles under the Empire had to endure. They were

subjected to an annoying surveillance by the police, and even the friends who paid them any attention became objects of suspicion.



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The first eight months of her exile Madame Recamier passed at Chalons. She had for companionship a little niece of her husband's, whom she had previously adopted. At the suggestion of Madame de Stael, she removed to Lyons, where Monsieur Recamier had many influential relatives. Here she formed an intimacy with a companion in misfortune, the high-spirited Duchess of Chevreuse, whose proud refusal to enter into the service of the captive Spanish Queen was the cause of her exile. "I can be a prisoner," she replied, when the offer was made to her, "but I will never be a jailer."

Though the society of friends offered Madame Recamier many diversions, she was often a prey to melancholy. The Duchess D'Abrantes, who saw her here, casually mentions her dejection in her Memoirs, and Chateaubriand says that the separation from Madame de Stael weighed heavily upon her spirits. He also alludes to a coolness between the friends, caused by Madame de Stael's marriage with Monsieur de Rocca. The desire to keep this connection secret induced Madame de Stael to write to her friend, declining a proposed visit from her, on the plea that she was about to leave Switzerland. Chateaubriand asserts that Madame Recamier felt this slight severely, but Madame Lenormant makes no allusion to the circumstance.

At Lyons Madame Recamier met the author, Monsieur Ballanche. He was presented to her by Camille Jordan, and, in the words of her biographer, "from that moment Monsieur Ballanche belonged to Madame Recamier." He was the least exacting of any of her friends. All he asked was to devote his life to her, and to be allowed to worship her. His friends called her his Beatrice. As he was an extremely awkward and ugly man, the two might have been termed with equal propriety "Beauty and the Beast." Monsieur Ballanche's face had been frightfully disfigured by an operation, and though his friends thought that his fine eyes and expression redeemed his appearance, he was, to strangers, particularly unprepossessing. He was, moreover, very absent-minded. When he joined Madame Recamier at Rome, she noticed, during an evening walk with him, that he had no hat. In reply to her questions, he quietly said, "Oh, yes, he had left it at Alexandria." He had, in fact, forgotten it; and it never occurred to him to replace it by another. Madame Lenormant relates an anecdote of his second interview with Madame Recamier, which is illustrative of his simplicity.

"He found her alone, working on embroidery. The conversation at first languished, but soon became interesting,—for, though Monsieur Ballanche had no chit-chat, he talked extremely well on subjects which interested him, such as philosophy, morals, politics, and literature. Unfortunately, his shoes had an odor about them which was very disagreeable to Madame Recamier. It finally made her faint, and, overcoming with difficulty the embarrassment she felt in speaking of so prosaic an annoyance, she



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timidly avowed to him that the smell of his shoes was unpleasant. Monsieur Ballanche apologized, humbly regretting that she had not spoken before, and then went out of the room. He returned in a few moments without his shoes, resumed his seat, and continued the conversation. Other persons came in, and noticing him in this situation, he said, by way of explanation, 'The smell of my shoes annoyed Madame Recamier, so I left them in the antechamber.'

After the death of his father, Monsieur Ballanche left Lyons, and passed the rest of his life in the society of her whom he worshipped with so single-minded a devotion.

Madame Recamier subsequently left Lyons for Italy, and the next new admirer whose attentions we have to chronicle is Canova. During her stay in Rome he wrote a note to her every morning, and the heat of the city growing excessive, he invited her to share his lodgings at Albano. Taking with her her niece and waiting-maid, she became his guest for two months. A Roman artist painted a picture of this retreat, with Madame Recamier sitting near a window, reading. Canova sent the picture to her in 1816. When she left Rome for a short absence, Canova modelled two busts of her from memory, in the hope of giving her a pleasant surprise,—one with the hair simply arranged, the other with a veil. Madame Recamier was not pleased, and her annoyance did not escape the penetrating eye of the artist. She tried in vain to efface the unfavorable impression he had received, but he only half forgave her. He added a crown of olives to the one with the veil, and when she asked him about it, he replied, "It did not please you, so I made a Beatrice of it."

Madame Recamier left Rome for Naples when Napoleon's power was on the decline. The sovereigns Murat and Caroline Bonaparte treated her with marked distinction, especially the Queen, who was not only gracious, but confidential. Madame Recamier was with Caroline the day that Murat pledged himself to the allied cause. He returned to the palace in great agitation, and, stating the case to her without telling her that he had already made his decision, asked what course he ought to pursue. She replied, "You are a Frenchman, Sire. It is to France that you owe allegiance." Murat turned pale, and, throwing open the window, showed her the English fleet entering the harbor, and exclaimed, "I am, then, a traitor!" He threw himself on a couch, burst into tears, covering his face with his hands. Madame Recamier's candor did not affect their friendly relations. When the Queen acted as Regent in the absence of her husband, she signed the pardon of a condemned criminal at her request, and, upon her return to Rome, wrote, begging her to come back to Naples. She did so, though her stay was necessarily short. Paris was again open to her by the overthrow of Napoleon, and she hastened to rejoin her friends. Still she was not unmindful of the princess who had shown her such marks of friendship. She did many kind services for her in Paris, and after the execution of Murat, when Caroline lived in obscurity as the Countess of Lipona,

she paid her a visit, which cheered the neglected woman whose prosperity had been of such short duration.



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The Restoration was the beginning of a new era in the life of Madame Recamier, one even more brilliant and animated, if not so thoughtlessly gay as that of her youth. Her husband had, in a measure, retrieved his fallen fortunes. She was in possession of her mother's property, able to have a box at the Opera, and to keep her carriage, which was a necessity, as she never walked in the street. Her exile had made her more famous, while her joy at being restored to Paris and her friends lent another charm to the seduction of her manners. Her association with the Montmorencys, who were in high favor with the new court, increased her political influence. She held nightly receptions after the Opera, and her *salon* was neutral ground, the resort of persons of all parties. Paris was full of foreigners of distinction, who were curious to know a person of so much celebrity, and they swelled the ranks of her admirers. Among them was the Duke of Wellington, who, if Madame Recamier's vanity did not mislead her, was willing and anxious to wear her chains. But she never forgave his boastful speech after the Battle of Waterloo. Remembering her personal dislike of the Emperor, and forgetting that she was a Frenchwoman, he said to her, on his return to Paris, "*Je l'ai bien battu.*" The next time he called he was not admitted. The Duke complained to Madame de Stael, and when he next met Madame Recamier in society treated her with coldness, and devoted himself to a young English lady. They rarely met afterward, though the Duke came once to the Abbaye-aux-Bois.

Madame Recamier had at this time a much more earnest admirer in Benjamin Constant. As common friends of Madame de Stael, they had been acquainted for years, and had played together in private theatricals at Coppet. Still it was not until 1814, when Madame Recamier had an interview with him in regard to the affairs of the King and Queen of Naples, that the relations between them assumed a serious aspect. He left her at the end of this interview violently enamored. According to Madame Lenormant, Benjamin Constant had not the slightest encouragement to justify his madness, but it is clear from other testimony that Madame Recamier was not free from blame in respect to him. Sainte-Beuve hints that the subject is unpleasant, and summarily dismisses it; and Madame Moehl, ever ready to defend Madame Recamier, acknowledges that in this case she was to blame, and that Madame Recamier thought so herself, and wished Constant's letters to be published after her death, in order to justify him. She adds, that it was a mistake not to publish them, as their suppression has given occasion for surmises utterly false. There is nothing in the "Souvenirs" to explain either the vague hints of Sainte-Beuve or the obscure allusions of Madame Moehl; and the biographical sketches of Constant throw no light upon the subject: they are chiefly narratives of his political career.



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If we except Chateaubriand, who was more loved than loving, Benjamin Constant stands last on the list of Madame Recamier's conquests; for, after the author of "Atala" and of the "Genius of Christianity" crossed her path, we hear of no more flirtations, no more despairing lovers. Chateaubriand and Madame Recamier first met, familiarly, at the death-bed of Madame de Stael, whose loss they mutually deplored. It was not, however, until the next year, 1818, when Madame Recamier had retired to the Abbaye-aux-Bois, that the acquaintance ripened into intimacy. A second reverse of fortune was the cause of this retirement, to which we shall briefly refer before entering upon the more complicated subject of this friendship.

New and unfortunate speculations on the part of Monsieur Recamier had not only left him penniless, but had to some extent involved his wife's fortune, which she had confided to him. In this emergency, Madame Recamier acted with her usual promptitude and decision. She had two objects in view in her plans for the future,—economy, and a separation from her husband. An asylum in the Abbaye-aux-Bois secured to her both advantages. She established her husband and father in the vicinity of the Convent, and they with Ballanche dined with her every day. From Monsieur Recamier she exacted a promise to engage in no more speculations, while she supplied his wants. "She anticipated his needs with a filial affection, and until the last studied to make his life mild and pleasant,—a singularly easy task on account of his optimism." Monsieur Recamier had need to be a philosopher. The nominal husband of a beautiful woman, with whom he had shared his prosperity, he had not only to bear her indifference, but to see her form friendships and make plans from which he was excluded. When his misfortunes left him a dependent upon her bounty, he was a mere cipher in her household,—kindly treated, but with a kindness that savored more of toleration than affection. Monsieur Recamier died at the advanced age of eighty. Shortly before his death, his wife obtained permission from the Convent to remove him to the Abbaye, where he was tenderly cared for by her in his last moments.

The retirement forced upon Madame Recamier by her husband's reverses was far from being seclusion. "*La petite cellule*" as Chateaubriand called her retreat, was as much frequented as her brilliant *salons* in Paris had been, and she was even more highly considered. Chateaubriand visited her regularly at three o'clock; they passed an hour alone, when other persons favored by him were admitted. In the evening her door was open to all. She no longer mingled in society, people came to her, and nothing could be more delightful than her receptions. All parties and all ranks met there, and her *salon* gradually became a literary centre and focus. Delphine Gay (Madame Emile de Girardin) recited her first verses there, Rachel declaimed there, and Lamartine's "Meditations"



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were read and applauded there before publication. Among distinguished strangers who sought admittance to the Abbaye, we notice the names of Humboldt, Sir Humphry Davy, and Maria Edgeworth. De Tocqueville, Monsieur Ampere, and Sainte-Beuve were frequent visitors. Peace and serenity reigned there, for Madame Recamier softened asperities and healed dissensions by the mere magnetism of her presence. "It was Eurydice," said Sainte-Beuve, "playing the part of Orpheus." But while she was the presiding genius of this varied and brilliant society, Chateaubriand was the controlling spirit. Everybody deferred to him, if not for his sake, then for the sake of her whose greatest happiness was to see him pleased and amused.

Madame Recamier has frequently been called cold and heartless. English reviewers have doubted whether she was capable of any warm, deep attachment. Sainte-Beuve even, with all his insight, believed that the desire to be loved had satisfied her heart, and that she herself had never loved. But he formed this opinion before the publication of Madame Recamier's memoirs. Chateaubriand's letters, together with other corroborating facts, warrant a totally different conclusion. It is very evident that Madame Recamier loved Chateaubriand with all the strength of a reticent and constant nature. That he was the only man she did love, we think is also clear. Prince Augustus captivated her for a time, but her conduct toward him, in contrast with that toward Chateaubriand, proves that her heart had not then been touched. The one she treated with caprice and coldness, the other with unvarying consideration and tenderness. There is no reason to conclude that the Prince ever made her unhappy, while it is certain that Chateaubriand made her miserable, and a mere friendship, however deep, does not render a woman wretched. This attachment not only shaped and colored the remainder of Madame Recamier's life, but it threatened at one time to completely subvert all other interests. She who was so equable, such a perfect mistress of herself, so careful to give every one due meed of attention, became fitful and indifferent. Her friends saw the change with alarm, and Montmorency remonstrated bitterly with her. "I was extremely troubled and ashamed," he writes, "at the sudden change in your manner toward others and myself. Ah, Madame, the evil that your best friends have been dreading has made rapid progress in a few weeks! Does not this thought make you tremble? Ah, turn, while yet there is time, to Him who gives strength to them who pray for it! He can cure all, repair all. God and a generous heart are all-sufficient. I implore Him, from the bottom of my heart, to sustain and enlighten you."



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Ballanche, equally concerned and jealous, strove to interest her in literature, and urged her to translate Petrarch. Madame Recamier speedily recovered herself. She listened graciously to the admonitions of Montmorency, and she consented to undertake Petrarch, but made little progress in the work. Still, as far as her feelings for Chateaubriand were concerned, the efforts of her friends were in vain. He occupied the first place in her affections, and she regulated her time and pursuits to please and accommodate him, though for a long time he but poorly repaid her devotion. He admired and perhaps loved her, as well as he was capable of loving anybody but himself, but it was not until disappointments had sobered him that he fully appreciated her worth. At the time their intimacy commenced he was the pet and favorite of the whole French nation. "The Genius of Christianity" had been received with acclamations by a people just recovering from the wild skepticism of the Revolution. The reaction had taken place, the Goddess of Reason was dethroned, and the burning words and vivid eloquence of Chateaubriand appealed at once to the heart and the imagination of his countrymen. They did not criticise, they only admired. Politically he was also a rising man. The world, or at least the French world, expected great things from the writer of the pamphlet, "De Buonaparte et des Bourbons." His manners were courtly and distinguished, and women especially flattered and courted him. Their attentions fostered his natural vanity, and his fancy, if not his heart, wandered from Madame Recamier, and she knew it. The tables were turned: she who had been so passionately beloved was now to feel some of the pangs she had all her life been unconsciously inflicting. Wounded and jealous, she stooped to reproaches. The following extracts from letters addressed to her by Chateaubriand while he was ambassador at London clearly betray the state of her mind.

"I will not ask you again for an explanation, since you will not give it. I have written you by the last courier a letter which ought to content you, if you still love me."

* * * * *

"Do not delude yourself with the idea that you can fly from me. I will seek you everywhere. But if I go to the Congress, it will be an occasion to put you to the proof. I shall see then if you keep your promises."

* * * * *

"*Allons*,—I much prefer to understand your folly than to read mysterious and angry notes. I comprehend now, or at least I think I do. It is apparently that woman of whom the friend of the Queen of Sweden has spoken to you. But, tell me, have I the means to prevent Vernet, Mademoiselle Levert, who writes me declarations, and thirty *artistes*, men and women, from coming to England in order to get money? And if I have been culpable, do you think that such fancies can do you the least injury,



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or take from you anything which I have given you? You have been told a thousand falsehoods. Herein I recognize my friends. But tranquillize yourself: the lady leaves, and will never return to England. But perhaps you would like me to remain here on that account: a very useless precaution; for, whatever happens, Congress or no Congress, I cannot live so long separated from you, and am determined to see you at any cost."

The letters from which we quote are very characteristic of their author. While protesting eternal fidelity, and declaring his intention to renounce the world and live but for Madame Recamier, he begs her at the same time to use all her influence to get him sent to the approaching Congress at Vienna as one of the French representatives,—an appointment which would necessarily separate him still longer from her. "*Songez au Congres*" is the refrain to all his poetical expressions of attachment.

It is to be hoped that Madame Recamier did not perceive the inconsistency of which he was totally unconscious. Though Chateaubriand was perpetually analyzing himself and his emotions, no man had less self-knowledge. He was too much absorbed by his "self-study, self-wonder, and self-worship," as one of his critics styles his egotism, to be clear-sighted. He had generous impulses, but no uniform generosity of heart; and while glorying in the few ostentatious sacrifices he made to pet ideas, he had no perception of the nature of self-sacrifice. Much, therefore, as he was gratified at the devotion of a woman of Madame Recamier's position and influence, he did not value it sufficiently to make any sacrifices to secure it, and consequently she was continually annoyed and distressed. Her life was also embittered by his political differences with Mathieu de Montmorency, to whom, by means which can scarcely be deemed honorable, he had succeeded as Minister of Foreign Affairs. The confidential friend of both parties, her position was a very difficult one; but she was equal to the emergency. She satisfied each, without being false to, or unmindful of, the interests of either.

But her relations to Chateaubriand were fast becoming intolerable, and she resolved to break her chains and leave Paris. He regarded this resolution as a mere threat. "No," he wrote, "you have not bid farewell to all earthly joys. If you go, you will return." She did go, however, taking with her Ballanche and her adopted daughter, whose delicate health was the ostensible cause of her departure. What it cost her to leave Paris may well be conjectured, and nothing is more indicative of her power of self-control than this voluntary withdrawal from a companionship which fascinated while it tortured her. Chateaubriand sent letters after her full of protestations and upbraidings; but after a while he wrote less frequently, and for a year they ceased to correspond. To a friend who urged her to return Madame Recamier wrote,—"If



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I return at present to Paris, I shall again meet with the agitations that induced me to leave it. If Monsieur Chateaubriand were unhappy on my account, I should be grieved; if he were not, I should have another trouble, which I am determined henceforth to avoid. I find here diversion in art, and a support in religion which shall shelter me from all these storms. It is painful to me to remain absent six months longer from my friends; but it is better to make this sacrifice, and I confess to you that I feel it to be necessary.”

There was much to make a stay in Italy attractive to Madame Recamier, if she could have forgotten Chateaubriand, Her old admirer, the Duc de Laval, was ambassador at Rome, and put his horses and servants at her disposal. She renewed her acquaintance with the celebrated Duchess of Devonshire, (Lady Elizabeth Foster,) whose career was quite as singular as her own, while it was more open to reproach. The Duchess was a liberal patron of the fine arts, and the devoted friend of Cardinal Gonsalvi, from the shock of whose death she never recovered. Madame Recamier also found at Rome the Duchess of Saint-Leu, whom she had slightly known when she was Queen of Holland. For political reasons it was unwise for them to visit openly, so they contrived private and romantic interviews. Their friendship seems to have been close and sincere. Subsequently, Madame Recamier was able, through her political influence, to serve Hortense in many ways. She also took an interest in her son Louis Napoleon, and visited him in prison after his unsuccessful attempt at Strasbourg, which kindness he afterwards acknowledged in several notes preserved by Madame Lenormant.

But while accepting all the diversions offered her by the pleasant society at, Rome, Madame Recamier was not unmindful of Chateaubriand. She ordered from the artist Tenerani a bas-relief, the subject to be taken from Chateaubriand's poem of "The Martyrs." She wrote constantly to her friends in Paris for intelligence respecting him, and watched his course from afar with interest and anxiety. It was not one to tranquillize her. He had quarrelled with the President of the Council, Villele; and being also personally disliked by the King, he was peremptorily dismissed, and he bore this disgrace with neither dignity nor composure. Turning his pen against the government, he did as much by his persistent savage opposition, clothed as it was in the language of superb invective, to bring about the final overthrow of the elder Bourbon dynasty, as either the stupid arrogance of Charles X. or the dogged tyranny of Polignac. Yet no man was more concerned and disgusted than he was at the result of the Revolution of 1830. So far true to his convictions, he refused office under Louis Philippe, priding himself greatly on his allegiance to the exiled princes, when neither his loyalty nor his services could be of any use. The truth is, that, though Chateaubriand was fond of meddling and



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making a noise, he had none of the fundamental qualities of a statesman. By the inspiration of his genius, he could seize the right moment for making a telling speech, or he could promulgate in a pamphlet a striking truth, calculated to electrify and convince. But he could not be calmly deliberate. Always enthusiastic, he was never temperate. He was the slave of his partialities and prejudices. Harriet Martineau, who for keen analysis and nice discrimination of character has few equals among historians, characterizes him as “the wordy Chateaubriand,” and Guizot says of him, “It was his illusion to think himself the equal of the most consummate statesmen, and his soul was filled with bitterness because men would not admit him to be the rival of Napoleon as well as of Milton.” It was this bitterness with which Madame Recamier had to contend, for his literary successes did not console him for his political disappointments, and his temper, never very equable, was now more variable and uncertain.

After an absence of eighteen months she returned to Paris. She apprised Chateaubriand of her arrival by a note. He came immediately to see her, and was rapturous with delight. No word of reproach passed between them, and he fell at once into his old habits. From this time his behavior was respectful and devoted. Absence and his disappointments had taught him the inestimable value of such a friend. She daily became more and more necessary to him. After his resignation of the Roman embassy in 1829, which had been secured to him through her instrumentality, he no longer engaged actively in politics, and, deprived of the stimulus of ambition, he looked to her for excitement. She encouraged his literary exertions, drew him out from his fits of depression, and soothed his wounded self-love. This was no light task; for Chateaubriand's self-complacency was not of that imperturbable sort which, however intolerable to others, has at least the merit of keeping its possessor content and tranquil. With him it partook more of the nature of egotism than of self-conceit, and it therefore made him always restless and continually dissatisfied. But no effort was too great for Madame Recamier's devotion. Her friends looked upon her sacrifices with feelings of mingled regret and admiration, but she herself was unconscious of them. They were simply a labor of love; and much as her tranquillity must have been disturbed at times by the caprices and exactions of this moody, melancholy man, she was probably happy in being allowed to sacrifice herself. Of the success of her efforts Sainte-Beuve thus gracefully speaks:—“Madame de Maintenon was never more ingenious in amusing Louis XIV. than Madame Recamier in interesting Chateaubriand. ‘I have always remarked,’ said Boileau, on returning from Versailles, ‘that, when the conversation does not turn on himself, the King directly gets tired, and is either ready to yawn or to go away.’ Every great poet, when he is growing old, is a little like Louis XIV. in this respect. Madame Recamier had each day a thousand pleasant contrivances to excite and flatter him. She assembled from all quarters friends for him,—new admirers. She chained us all to the feet of her idol with links of gold.”



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One of her most successful efforts in amusing him was the reading of "Les Memoires d'Outre-Tombe" to a select and admiring audience at the Abbaye. He first read them in private to Madame Recamier, who passed judgment upon them, and they were then read aloud by M. Charles Lenormant. This device worked like a charm; everybody applauded, and the author was content. The personal interest attached to the chief parties concerned, no doubt, made these readings very delightful. But it would now be impossible for any reader to be enthusiastic about the Memoirs themselves. Out of France it would be difficult to find a more egotistical piece of self-portraiture.

Chateaubriand is not quite so ostentatious in his egotism as the Prince de Ligne, who headed the chapters in his "Memoires et Melanges," "De moi pendant le jour," "De moi pendant la nuit," "De moi encore," "Memoirs pour mon coeur"; still he parades himself on every possible occasion, and not always to his own advantage. His conduct in passing himself off as a single man in an English family who were kind to him during his exile, thereby engaging the daughter's affections, is entirely inexcusable. That a person of Madame Recamier's good judgment did not perceive the discredit that must attach to such revelations is only to be accounted for by supposing her blind to Chateaubriand's follies. But with all her partiality, it is still surprising that she should have given her sanction to his deliberate and cold analysis of the character of his parents, and his equally heartless and selfish reflections on his marriage.

Chateaubriand married simply to please his sisters, feeling that he "had none of the qualifications of a husband," and for years he seemed entirely oblivious of his wife's existence. After he gave up his wandering life, and became distinguished, he treated her with more consideration. Madame de Chateaubriand was a pretty, delicate woman, of quick natural intelligence. M. Daniolo, Chateaubriand's secretary, has written an interesting sketch of her, which is affixed to her husband's memoirs. She was a person of eccentric habits, but of a warm heart and lively sensibilities, and was devoted to her religious duties and the Infirmary of Maria Theresa. She professed a great contempt for literature, and asserted that she had never read a line of her husband's works; but this was regarded as an affectation. Madame de Chateaubriand was not an amiable person, but very frank and sincere. She often reproached herself for her faults and love of contradiction. Though she appears to have loved her husband, she was not blind to his weaknesses, and he was afraid of her sallies. So vain and sensitive a man could not feel comfortable in the society of a woman of her keen penetration, and her wit was not always tempered by discretion. Madame Recamier gained by the contrast. She believed in him, and "there are few things so pleasant," says a writer in Fraser, "as to have a woman at hand that believes



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in you.” Madame Recamier’s insight never disturbed Chateaubriand, for it was of the heart, not of the intellect. It was not a critical analysis that probes and dissects, but a sympathy that cheered and tranquillized. There could be but little in common between two such women, though they were on friendly terms; and when Chateaubriand left his wife in Paris, he always commended her to Madame Recamier’s care. On one occasion he writes,—“I must again request you to go and see Madame de Chateaubriand, who complains that she has not seen you. What would you have? Since you have become associated in my life, it is necessary to share it fully.”

There is nothing to indicate Madame Recamier’s sentiments toward the wife of her friend, except a significant passage in one of Chateaubriand’s letters:—“Your judgments are very severe on the Rue du Bac.[D] But think of the difference of habit. If you look upon her occupations as trifles, she may on her side think the same with regard to yours. It is only necessary to change the point of view.”

Madame de Chateaubriand died in February, 1847, from the effects of dieting. A few months after her death her husband offered himself in marriage to Madame Recamier, who rejected him. “Why should we marry?” she said. “There can be no impropriety in my taking care of you at our age. If you find solitude oppressive, I am willing to live with you. The world, I am confident, will do justice to the purity of our friendship, and sanction all my efforts to render your old age comfortable and happy. If we were younger, I would not hesitate,—I would accept with joy the right to consecrate my life to you. Tears and blindness have given me that right. Let us change nothing.”

We have heard this refusal of Madame Recamier’s urged as a proof that she did not love Chateaubriand; but when we consider their respective ages at the time, this objection has little weight. Chateaubriand was seventy-nine; Madame Recamier seventy. The former was tottering on the brink of the grave. He had lost the use of his limbs, and his mind was visibly failing. Madame Recamier was keenly sensible of the decay of his faculties, though she succeeded so well in concealing the fact from others that few of the habitual visitors at the Abbaye recognized its extent. The reason she gave to her friends for refusing him was undoubtedly the true one. She said that his daily visit to her was his only diversion, and he would lose that, if she married him.

The record of these last years of Madame Recamier’s life is inexpressibly touching, telling as it does of self-denial, patient suffering, and silent devotion. To avert the blindness which was gradually stealing upon her, she submitted to an operation, which might have been successful, had she obeyed the injunctions of her physicians. But Ballanche lay dying in the opposite house, and, true to the noble instincts of her heart, she could not let the friend who had



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loved her so long and well die alone. She crossed the street, and took her place by his bedside, thus sealing her own fate, for all hopes of recovering her sight were lost. Her health also was extremely delicate; but, much as she needed quiet and repose, she kept up her relations with society and held her receptions for Chateaubriand's sake. But both their lives were fast approaching to a close. Chateaubriand died on the 4th of July, 1848. For some time before his death he was speechless, but kept his dying eyes fixed upon Madame Recamier. She could not see him, and this dark, dreary silence filled her soul with despair.

Madame Recamier shed no tears over her loss, and uttered no lamentations. She received the condolences of her friends with gratitude, and strove to interest herself in their pursuits. But a deadly paleness, which never left her, spread over her face, and "the sad smile on her lips was heart-breaking." Sightless and sad, it was time for her to die. Madame de Stael and Montmorency, the friends of her youth, had long since departed. Ballanche was gone, and now Chateaubriand. She survived the latter only eleven months. Stricken with cholera the following summer, her illness was short, but severe, and her last words to Madame Lenormant, who bent over her, were, "*Nous nous reverrons,—nous nous reverrons.*"

So impalpable was the attraction that brought the world to the feet of Madame Recamier that it is interesting to analyze it. It did not lie in her beauty and wealth alone; for she lost the one, while time blighted the other. Nor was it due to power of will; for she was not great intellectually. And had she been a person of strong convictions, she would never have been so universally popular. As it was, she pleased equally persons of every shade of opinion and principle. Her instinctive coquetry can partly account for her sway over men, but not over women. What, then, was the secret of her influence? It lay in the subtle power of a marvellous tact. This tact had its roots deep in her nature. It was part and parcel of herself, the distinguishing trait in a rare combination of qualities. Though nurtured and ripened by experience, it was not the offspring of art. It was an effect, not a cause,—not simply the result of an intense desire to please, regulated by a fine intuitive perception, but of higher, finer characteristics, such as natural sweetness of temper, kindness of heart, and forgetfulness of self. Her successes were the triumph of impulse rather than of design. In order to please she did not study character, she divined it. Keenly alive to outward influences, and losing in part her own personality when coming in contact with that of others, she readily adapted herself to their moods,—and her apprehension was quick, if not profound. It is always gratifying to feel one's self understood, and every person who talked with Madame Recamier enjoyed this pleasant consciousness. No one felt a humiliating



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sense of inferiority in her presence, and this was owing as much to the character of her intellect as to her tact. Partial friends detected genius in her conversation and letters, and tried to excite her to literary effort; but other and stronger evidence forces us to look upon such praise as mere delicate flattery. A woman more beautiful than gifted was far more likely to be gratified by a compliment to her intellect than to her personal charms, as Madame de Stael was more delighted at an allusion to the beauty of her neck and arms than to the merits of "L'Allemagne" or "Corinne." But if Madame Recamier did not possess genius, she had unerring instincts which stood her in lieu of it, and her mind, if not original, was appreciative. The genuine admiration she felt for her literary friends stimulated as well as gratified them. She drew them out, and, dazzled by their own brilliancy, they gave her credit for thoughts which were in reality their own. To this faculty of intelligent appreciation was joined another still more captivating. She was a good listener. "*Bien écouter c'est presque répondre,*" quotes Jean Paul from Marivaux, and Sainte-Beuve said of Madame Recamier that she listened "*avec seduction.*" She was also an extremely indulgent and charitable person, and was severe neither on the faults nor on the foibles of others. "No one knew so well as she how to spread balm on the wounds that are never acknowledged, how to calm and exorcise the bitterness of rivalry or literary animosity. For moral chagrins and imaginary sorrows, which are so intense in some natures, she was, *par excellence*, the Sister of Charity." The repose of her manner made this sympathy more effective. Hers was not a stormy nature, but calm and equable. If she had emotion to master, it was mastered in secret, and not a ripple on the surface betrayed the agitation beneath. She had no nervous likes or dislikes, no changeful humors, few unequal moods. She did not sparkle and then die out. The fire was always kindled on the hearth, the lamp serenely burning. Some women charm by their mutability; she attracted by her uniformity. But in her uniformity there was no monotony. Like the continuous murmur of a brook, it gladdened as well as soothed.

It was probably these sweet womanly qualities, together with the meekness with which she bore her honors, that endeared her to her feminine friends. All her life had been a series of triumphs, which were not won by any conscious effort on her part, but were spontaneous gifts of fortune,—

"As though a shower of fairy wreaths
Had fallen upon her from the sky."

Yet her manner was entirely free from pretension or self-assertion.



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It is not one of the least remarkable things about Madame Recamier, that one who had been so petted from childhood, so exposed to pernicious influences, should have continued unspoiled by adulation, uncorrupted by example. The gay life she led was calculated to make her selfish and arrogant, yet she was to an eminent degree self-sacrificing and gentle. Constant in her affections, she never lost a friend through waywardness, or alienated any by indifference. It has been prettily said of her, that she brought the art of friendship to perfection. Coquettish she was,—seldom capricious. Her coquetry was owing more to an instinctive desire to please than to any systematic attempt to swell the list of her conquests. She had received the gift of fascination at her birth: and can a woman be fascinating who has not a touch of coquetry? It was as natural in Madame Recamier to charm as it was to breathe. It was a necessity of her nature, which her unnatural position developed and fostered to a reprehensible extent. But while she permitted herself to be loved, and rejoiced in the consciousness of this power, she never carried her flirtations so far as to lose her own self-respect or the respect of her admirers. She was ever dignified and circumspect, though gracious and captivating. To most of her lovers, therefore, she was more a goddess whom they worshipped than a woman whom they loved. Ballanche compared her to the solitary phoenix, nourished by perfumes, and living in the purest regions of the air,—

“Who sings to the last his own death-lay,
And in music and perfume dies away.”

It is a singular fact, that the men who began by loving her passionately usually ended by becoming her true friends. Still there were exceptions to this rule, exceptions which her biographer does not care to dwell upon, but which the more candid Sainte-Beuve acknowledges, giving as his authority Madame Recamier, who was fond of talking over the past with her new friends. “*C’est une maniere,*” disait-elle, *’de mettre du passe devant l’amitie.’*” The subtle and piquant critic cannot resist saying, in regard to these reminiscences, that “*elle se souvenait avec gout.*” Still, pleasant as her recollections were, she often looked back self-reproachfully upon passages of her youth; and Sainte-Beuve, though he calls her coquetry “*une coquetterie angelique,*” recognizes it as a blemish. “She, who was so good, brought sorrow to many hearts, not only to indignant and soured men, but to poor feminine rivals, whom she sacrificed and wounded without knowing it. It is the dark side of her life, which she lived to comprehend.”



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This “dark side” suggests itself. It is impossible to read the record of Madame Recamier’s conquests without thinking of women slighted and neglected for her sake. The greater number of her admirers were married men. That their wives did not hate this all-conquering woman is strange indeed; that they witnessed her triumphs unmoved is scarcely credible. For, while French society allows great laxity in such matters, and a domestic husband, as we understand the term, is a rarity, still French wives, we imagine, differ very little from other women in wishing to be considered a first object. Public desertion is rarely relished even where there is no affection to be wounded, for it is not necessary to love to be jealous. But whatever heart-aches and jealousies were caused by Madame Recamier’s conquests, they do not appear on the surface. In her voluminous correspondence we find tender letters from husbands side by side with friendly notes from their wives. Her biographer parades the latter with some ostentation, as a proof of the friendship these women entertained for Madame Recamier. That they respected her is evident; that they loved her is not so apparent. Mere complimentary notes prove but little. He must be but a superficial judge of life who draws decided conclusions simply from appearances. Madame Lucien Bonaparte might invite Madame Recamier to her *fetes*; but the consciousness that all her world knew that her husband was *epousé* with her beautiful guest did not tend to make her cordial at heart. Madame Moreau, young and lovely, might visit her intimately, and even cherish friendship for her; but she could scarcely be an indifferent spectator, when the great General demanded a white ribbon from her friend’s dress as a favor, and afterward wrote to her that he had worn it in every battle, and that it had been the talisman that led him on to victory. Nor is it probable that Madame de Montmorency and Madame de Chateaubriand, unloved wives, saw without a pang another woman possess the influence which they exerted in vain. But, if they suffered, it was in secret; and, moreover, they did justice to the character of their rival. Madame Recamier’s reputation was compromised neither in their eyes nor in the eyes of the world. Society is seldom just to any woman whose career in life is exceptional; but to her it was not only just, but indulgent. When we reflect upon her peculiar position, so exposed to injurious suspicions, the doubtful reputation of some of her associates, the character for gallantry possessed by many of her avowed admirers, it seems scarcely possible that she should have escaped calumny. The few scandals caused by some of her early indiscretions were soon dissipated, and she lived down all unpleasant rumors. She, indeed, seemed to possess some talisman, as potent as the magic ring that bewitched King Charlemagne, by whose spell she disarmed envy and silenced detraction. This attaching power she exercised on every person



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who came within the sphere of her influence. Even the gossiping Duchess D'Abrantes has only words of respectful admiration for her. The preconceived prejudices of Madame Swetchine, whom Miss Muloch numbers among her "Good Women," vanished at a first interview. She wrote to her,—“I found myself a captive before I dreamt of defending myself. I yielded at once to that penetrating and undefinable charm which you exert even over those persons to whom you are indifferent.” Madame de Genlis, equally prejudiced, was alike subdued. She made Madame Recamier the heroine of a novel, and addressed letters to her full of affectionate admiration and extravagant flattery. “You are one of the phenomena of the age,” she writes, “and certainly the most amiable.... You can look back upon the past without remorse. At any age this is the most beautiful of privileges, but at our time of life it is invaluable.” Madame Lenormant, even more enthusiastic, calls her a saint, which she certainly was not, but a gracious woman of the world. Some acts of her life it is impossible to defend. They tarnish the lustre of an otherwise irreproachable career. Still, when we think of the low tone of morals prevalent in her youth, together with her many and great temptations, it is surprising that she should have preserved her purity of heart, and earned the respect and love of the best and wisest of her contemporaries. No woman has ever received more universal and uniform homage, or has been more deeply lamented. Her death left a void in French society that has never been filled. The *salon*, which, from its origin in the seventeenth century, was so vital an element in Paris life, no longer exists. That of the Hotel de Rambouillet was the first; that of the Abbaye-aux-Bois the last. “*On se reunit encore, on donne des fetes splendides, on ne cause plus.*”

* * * * *

THE WELLFLEET OYSTERMAN.

Having walked about eight miles since we struck the beach, and passed the boundary between Wellfleet and Truro, a stone post in the sand,—for even this sand comes under the jurisdiction of one town or another,—we turned inland over barren hills and valleys, whither the sea, for some reason, did not follow us, and, tracing up a hollow, discovered two or three sober-looking houses within half a mile, uncommonly near the eastern coast. Their garrets were apparently so full of chambers that their roofs could hardly lie down straight, and we did not doubt that there was room for us there. Houses near the sea are generally low and broad. These were a story and a half high; but if you merely counted the windows in their gable-ends, you would think that there were many stories more, or, at any rate, that the half-story was the only one thought worthy of being illustrated. The great number of windows in the ends of the houses, and their irregularity in size and position, here and elsewhere on the Cape, struck us agreeably,—as if each of the

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various occupants who had their *cunabula* behind had punched a hole where his necessities required it, and according to his size and stature, without regard to outside effect. There were windows for the grown folks, and windows for the children,—three or four apiece: as a certain man had a large hole cut in his barn-door for the cat, and another smaller one for the kitten. Sometimes they were so low under the eaves that I thought they must have perforated the plate-beam for another apartment, and I noticed some which were triangular, to fit that part more exactly. The ends of the houses had thus as many muzzles as a revolver; and if the inhabitants have the same habit of staring out of the windows that some of our neighbors have, a traveller must stand a small chance with them.

Generally, the old-fashioned and unpainted houses on the Cape looked more comfortable, as well as picturesque, than the modern and more pretending ones, which were less in harmony with the scenery, and less firmly planted.

These houses were on the shores of a chain of ponds, seven in number, the source of a small stream called Herring River, which empties into the Bay. There are many Herring Rivers on the Cape: they will, perhaps, be more numerous than herrings soon. We knocked at the door of the first house, but its inhabitants were all gone away. In the mean while we saw the occupants of the next one looking out of the window at us, and before we reached it an old woman came out and fastened the door of her bulkhead, and went in again. Nevertheless, we did not hesitate to knock at her door, when a grizzly-looking man appeared, whom we took to be sixty or seventy years old. He asked us, at first, suspiciously, where we were from, and what our business was; to which we returned plain answers.

“How far is Concord from Boston?” he inquired.

“Twenty miles by railroad.”

“Twenty miles by railroad,” he repeated.

“Didn’t you ever hear of Concord of Revolutionary fame?”

“Didn’t I ever hear of Concord? Why, I heard the guns fire at the Battle of Bunker Hill.” (They hear the sound of heavy cannon across the Bay.) “I am almost ninety: I am eighty-eight year old. I was fourteen year old at the time of Concord Fight,—and where were you then?”

We were obliged to confess that we were not in the fight.

“Well, walk in, we’ll leave it to the women,” said he.



So we walked in, surprised, and sat down, an old woman taking our hats and bundles, and the old man continued, drawing up to the large, old-fashioned fireplace,—

“I am a poor good-for-nothing crittur, as Isaiah says; I am all broken down this year. I am under petticoat-government here.”

The family consisted of the old man, his wife, and his daughter, who appeared nearly as old as her mother,—a fool, her son, (a brutish-looking, middle-aged man, with a prominent lower face, who was standing by the hearth when we entered, but immediately went out,) and a little boy of ten.



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While my companion talked with the women, I talked to the old man. They said that he was old and foolish, but he was evidently too knowing for them.

“These women,” said he to me, “are both of them poor good-for-nothing critturs. This one is my wife. I married her sixty-four years ago. She is eighty-four years old, and as deaf as an adder, and the other is not much better.”

He thought well of the Bible,—or at least he *spoke* well, and did not *think* ill, of it, for that would not have been prudent for a man of his age. He said that he had read it attentively for many years, and he had much of it at his tongue’s end. He seemed deeply impressed with a sense of his own nothingness, and would repeatedly exclaim,

—

“I am a nothing. What I gather from my Bible is just this: that man is a poor good-for-nothing crittur, and everything is just as God sees fit and disposes.”

“May I ask your name?” I said.

“Yes,” he answered,—“I am not ashamed to tell my name. My name is ——. My great-grandfather came over from England and settled here.”

He was an old Wellfleet oysterman, who had acquired a competency in that business, and had sons still engaged in it.

Nearly all the oyster-shops and stands in Massachusetts, I am told, are supplied and kept by natives of Wellfleet, and a part of this town is still called Billingsgate, from the oysters having been formerly planted there; but the native oysters are said to have died in 1770. Various causes are assigned for this, such as a ground frost, the carcasses of black-fish kept to rot in the harbor, and the like; but the most common account of the matter is,—and I find that a similar superstition with regard to the disappearance of fishes exists almost everywhere,—that, when Wellfleet began to quarrel with the neighboring towns about the right to gather them, yellow specks appeared in them, and Providence caused them to disappear. A few years ago sixty thousand bushels were annually brought from the South and planted in the harbor of Wellfleet till they attained “the proper relish of Billingsgate”; but now they are imported commonly full-grown, and laid down near their markets, at Boston and elsewhere, where the water, being a mixture of salt and fresh, suits them better. The business was said to be still good and improving.

The old man said that the oysters were liable to freeze in the winter, if planted too high; but if it were not “so cold as to strain their eyes,” they were not injured. The inhabitants of New Brunswick have noticed that “ice will not form over an oyster-bed, unless the cold is very intense indeed; and when the bays are frozen over, the oyster-beds are

easily discovered by the water above them remaining unfrozen, or, as the French residents say, *degele*." Our host said that they kept them in cellars all winter.

"Without anything to eat or drink?" I asked.



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“Without anything to eat or drink,” he answered.

“Can the oysters move?”

“Just as much as my shoe.”

But when I caught him saying that they “bedded themselves down in the sand, flat side up, round side down,” I told him that my shoe could not do that, without the aid of my foot in it; at which he said that they merely settled down as they grew; if put down in a square, they would be found so; but the clam could move quite fast. I have since been told by oystermen of Long Island, where the oyster is still indigenous and abundant, that they are found in large masses attached to the parent in their midst, and are so taken up with their tongs; in which case, they say, the age of the young proves that there could have been no motion for five or six years at least. And Buckland, in his “Curiosities of Natural History,” (page 50,) says,—“An oyster, who has once taken up his position and fixed himself when quite young, can never make a change. Oysters, nevertheless, that have not fixed themselves, but remain loose at the bottom of the sea, have the power of locomotion; they open their shells to their fullest extent, and then suddenly contracting them, the expulsion of the water forwards gives a motion backwards. A fisherman at Guernsey told me that he had frequently seen oysters moving in this way.”

Some still entertain the question whether the oyster was indigenous in Massachusetts Bay, and whether Wellfleet Harbor was a natural habitat of this fish; but, to say nothing of the testimony of old oystermen, which, I think, is quite conclusive, though the native oyster may now be extinct there, I saw that their shells, opened by the Indians, were strewn all over the Cape. Indeed, the Cape was at first thickly settled by Indians on account of the abundance of these and other fish. We saw many traces of their occupancy, after this, in Truro, near Great Hollow, and at High-Head, near East-Harbor River,—oysters, clams, cockles, and other shells, mingled with ashes and the bones of deer and other quadrupeds. I picked up half a dozen arrow-heads, and in an hour or two could have filled my pockets with them. The Indians lived about the edges of the swamps, then probably in some instances ponds, for shelter and water. Moreover, Champlain, in the edition of his “Voyages” printed in 1613, says that in the year 1606 he and Poitricourt explored a harbor (Barnstable Harbor?) in the southerly part of what is now called Massachusetts Bay, in latitude 42 deg., about five leagues south, one point west of *Cap Blanc*, (Cape Cod,) and there they found many good oysters, and they named it *Le Port aux Huistres* (Oyster-Harbor). In one edition of his map, (1632,) the “*R. aux Escailles*” is drawn emptying into the same part of the Bay, and on the map “*Novi Belgii*” in Ogilby’s “*America*,” (1670,) the words “*Port aux Huistres*” are set against the same place. Also William Wood, who left New England in 1633, speaks, in his



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“New England’s Prospect,” published in 1634, of “a great oyster-bank” in Charles River, and of another in the Mystic, each of which obstructed the navigation. “The oysters,” he says, “be great ones, in form of a shoe-horn; some be a foot long; these breed on certain banks that are bare every spring-tide. This fish without the shell is so big that it must admit of a division before you can well get it into your mouth.” Oysters are still found there. (See, also, Thomas Morton’s “New English Canaan,” page 90.)

Our host told us that the sea-clam, or hen, was not easily obtained; it was raked up, but never on the Atlantic side, only cast ashore there in small quantities in storms. The fisherman sometimes wades in water several feet deep, and thrusts a pointed stick into the sand before him. When this enters between the valves of a clam, he closes them on it, and is drawn out. The clam has been known to catch and hold coot and teal which were preying on it. I chanced to be on the bank of the Acushnet at New Bedford one day, watching some ducks, when a man informed me, that, having let out his young ducks to seek their food amid the samphire (*Salicornia*) and other weeds along the river-side at low tide that morning, at length he noticed that one remained stationary amid the weeds, something preventing it from following the others, and on going to it he found its foot tightly shut in a quahaug’s shell. He took up both together, carried them home, and his wife, opening the shell with a knife, released the duck and cooked the quahaug. The old man said that the great clams were good to eat, but that they always took out a certain part, which was poisonous, before cooking them. “People said it would kill a cat.” I did not tell him that I had eaten a large one entire that afternoon, but began to think that I was tougher than a cat. He stated that peddlers came round there, and sometimes tried to sell the women-folks a skimmer, but he told them that their women had got a better skimmer than *they* could make, in the shell of their clams; it was shaped just right for this purpose. They call them “skim-alls” in some places. He also said that the sun-squawl was poisonous to handle, and when the sailors came across it, they did not meddle with it, but hove it out of their way. I told him that I had handled it that afternoon, and had felt no ill effects as yet. But he said it made the hands itch, especially if they had previously been scratched,—or if I put it into my bosom, I should find out what it was.

He informed us that ice never formed on the back side of the Cape, or not more than once in a century, and but little snow lay there, it being either absorbed or blown or washed away. Sometimes in winter, when the tide was down, the beach was frozen, and afforded a hard road up the back side for some thirty miles, as smooth as a floor. One winter, when he was a boy, he and his father “took right out into the back side before daylight, and walked to Provincetown and back to dinner.”



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When I asked what they did with all that barren-looking land, where I saw so few cultivated fields,—

“Nothing,” he said.

“Then why fence your fields?”

“To keep the sand from blowing and covering up the whole.”

“The yellow sand,” said he, “has some life in it, but the white little or none.”

When, in answer to his questions, I told him that I was a surveyor, he said that those who surveyed his farm were accustomed, where the ground was uneven, to loop up each chain as high as their elbows; that was the allowance they made, and he wished to know if I could tell him why they did not come out according to his deed, or twice alike. He seemed to have more respect for surveyors of the old school, which I did not wonder at. “King George the Third,” said he, “laid out a road four rods wide and straight the whole length of the Cape”; but where it was now he could not tell.

This story of the surveyors reminded me of a Long-Islander, who once, when I had made ready to jump from the bow of his boat to the shore, and he thought that I underrated the distance and would fall short,—though I found afterward that he judged of the elasticity of my joints by his own,—told me, that, when he came to a brook which he wanted to get over, he held up one leg, and then, if his foot appeared to cover any part of the opposite bank, he knew that he could jump it. “Why,” I told him, “to say nothing of the Mississippi, and other small watery streams, I could blot out a star with my foot, but I would not engage to jump that distance,” and asked how he knew when he had got his leg at the right elevation. But he regarded his legs as no less accurate than a pair of screw-dividers or an ordinary quadrant, and appeared to have a painful recollection of every degree and minute in the arc which they described; and he would have had me believe that there was a kind of hitch in his hip-joint which answered the purpose. I suggested that he should connect his two ankles by a string of the proper length, which should be the chord of an arc measuring his jumping ability on horizontal surfaces,—assuming one leg to be a perpendicular to the plane of the horizon, which, however, may have been too bold an assumption in this case. Nevertheless, this was a kind of geometry in the legs which it interested me to hear of.

Our host took pleasure in telling us the names of the ponds, most of which we could see from his windows, and making us repeat them after him, to see if we had got them right. They were Gull Pond, (the largest and a very handsome one, clear and deep, and more than a mile in circumference,) Newcomb’s, Swett’s, Slough, Horse-Leech, Round, and Herring Ponds,—all connected at high-water, if I do not mistake. The coast-surveyors had come to him for their names, and he told them of one which they had not

detected. He said that they were not so high as formerly. There was an earthquake about four years before he was born, which cracked



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the pans of the ponds, which were of iron, and caused them to settle. I did not remember to have read of this. Innumerable gulls used to resort to them; but the large gulls were now very scarce, for, as he said, the English robbed their nests far in the North, where they breed. He remembered well when gulls were taken in the gull-house, and when small birds were killed by means of a frying-pan and fire at night. His father once lost a valuable horse from this cause. A party from Wellfleet having lighted their fire for this purpose, one dark night, on Billingsgate Island, twenty horses which were pastured there, and this colt among them, being frightened by it, and endeavoring in the dark to cross the passage which separated them from the neighboring beach, and which was then fordable at low tide, were all swept out to sea and drowned. I observed that many horses were still turned out to pasture all summer on the islands and beaches in Wellfleet, Eastham, and Orleans, as a kind of common. He also described the killing of what he called "wild hens" here, after they had gone to roost in the woods, when he was a boy. Perhaps they were "Prairie hens" (pinnated grouse).

He liked the beach pea, (*Lathyrus maritimus*,) cooked green, as well as the cultivated. He had seen them growing very abundantly in Newfoundland, where also the inhabitants ate them, but he had never been able to obtain any ripe for seed. We read, under the head of Chatham, that, "in 1555, during a time of great scarcity, the people about Orford, in Sussex (England) were preserved from perishing by eating the seeds of this plant, which grew there in great abundance on the sea-coast. Cows, horses, sheep, and goats eat it." But the writer who quoted this could not learn that they had ever been used in Barnstable County.

He had been a voyager, then?

Oh, he had been about the world in his day. He once considered himself a pilot for all our coast; but now, they had changed the names so, he might be bothered.

He gave us to taste what he called the Summer Sweeting, a pleasant apple which he raised, and frequently grafted from, but had never seen growing elsewhere, except once,—three trees on Newfoundland, or at the Bay of Chaleur, I forget which, as he was sailing by. He was sure that he could tell the tree at a distance.

At length the fool, whom my companion called the wizard, came in, muttering between his teeth, "Damn book-peddlers,—all the time talking about books. Better do something. Damn 'em, I'll shoot 'em. Got a doctor down here. Damn him, I'll get a gun and shoot him"; never once holding up his head. Whereat the old man stood up and said in a loud voice, as if he were accustomed to command, and this was not the first time he had been obliged to exert his authority there,—"John, go sit down, mind your business,—we've heard you talk before,—precious little you'll do,—your bark is worse than your bite." But, without minding, John muttered the same gibberish over again,



and then sat down at the table which the old folks had left. He ate all there was on it, and then turned to the apples which his aged mother was paring, that she might give her guests some apple-sauce for breakfast; but she drew them away, and sent him off.



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When I approached this house the next summer, over the desolate hills between it and the shore, which are worthy to have been the birthplace of Ossian, I saw the wizard in the midst of a cornfield on the hillside, but, as usual, he loomed so strangely that I mistook him for a scarecrow.

This was the merriest old man that we had ever seen, and one of the best-preserved. His style of conversation was coarse and plain enough to have suited Rabelais. He would have made a good Panurge. Or rather he was a sober Silenus, and we were the boys Chromis and Mnasilus who listened to his story.

“Not by Haemonian hills the Thracian bard,
Nor awful Phoebus was on Pindus heard
With deeper silence or with more regard.”

There was a strange mingling of past and present in his conversation, for he had lived under King George, and might have remembered when Napoleon and the moderns generally were born. He said that one day, when the troubles between the Colonies and the mother-country first broke out, as he, a boy of fifteen, was pitching hay out of a cart, one Doane, an old Tory, who was talking with his father, a good Whig, said to him, “Why, Uncle Bill, you might as well undertake to pitch that pond into the ocean with a pitchfork as for the Colonies to undertake to gain their independence.” He remembered well General Washington, and how he rode his horse along the streets of Boston, and he stood up to show us how he looked.

“He was a r-a-ther large and portly-looking man, a manly and resolute-looking officer, with a pretty good leg, as he sat on his horse.—There, I’ll tell you, this was the way with Washington.” Then he jumped up again, and bowed gracefully to right and left, making show as if he were waving his hat. Said he, “*That was Washington.*”

He told us many anecdotes of the Revolution, and was much pleased when we told him that we had read the same in history, and that his account agreed with the written.

“Oh,” he said, “I know, I know! I was a young fellow of sixteen, with my ears wide open; and a fellow of that age, you know, is pretty wide awake, and likes to know everything that’s going on. Oh, I know!”

He told us the story of the wreck of the Franklin, which took place there the previous spring: how a boy came to his house early in the morning to know whose boat that was by the shore, for there was a vessel in distress; and he, being an old man, first ate his breakfast, and then walked over to the top of the hill by the shore, and sat down there, having found a comfortable seat, to see the ship wrecked. She was on the bar, only a quarter of a mile from him, and still nearer to the men on the beach, who had got a boat ready, but could render no assistance on account of the breakers, for there was a pretty high sea running. There were the passengers all crowded together in the forward part

of the ship, and some were getting out of the cabin-windows and were drawn on deck by the others.



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“I saw the captain get out his boat,” said he; “he had one little one; and then they jumped into it, one after another, down as straight as an arrow. I counted them. There were nine. One was a woman, and she jumped as straight as any of them. Then they shoved off. The sea took them back, one wave went over them, and when they came up there were six still clinging to the boat: I counted them. The next wave turned the boat bottom upward, and emptied them all out. None of them ever came ashore alive. There were the rest of them all crowded together on the forecastle, the other parts of the ship being under water. They had seen all that happened to the boat. At length a heavy sea separated the forecastle from the rest of the wreck, and set it inside of the worst breaker, and the boat was able to reach them, and it saved all that were left, but one woman.”

He also told us of the steamer Cambria’s getting aground on his shore a few months before we were there, and of her English passengers who roamed over his grounds, and who, he said, thought the prospect from the high hill by the shore “the most delightful they had ever seen,” and also of the pranks which the ladies played with his scoop-net in the ponds. He spoke of these travellers, with their purses full of guineas, just as our Provincial fathers used to speak of British bloods in the time of King George III.

Quid loquar? Why repeat what he told us?

“Aut Scyllam Nisi, quam fama secuta est,
Candida succinctam latrantibus inguina monstris,
Dulichias vexasse rates, et gurgite in alto
Ah timidos nautas canibus lacerasse marinis?”

In the course of the evening I began to feel the potency of the clam which I had eaten, and I was obliged to confess to our host that I was no tougher than the cat he told of; but he answered, that he was a plain-spoken man, and he could tell me that it was all imagination. At any rate, it proved an emetic in my case, and I was made quite sick by it for a short time, while he laughed at my expense. I was pleased to read afterward, in Mourt’s Relation of the Landing of the Pilgrims in Provincetown Harbor, these words:—
“We found great muscles,” (the old editor says that they were undoubtedly sea-clams,) “and very fat and full of sea-pearl; but we could not eat them, for they made us all sick that did eat, as well sailors as passengers, ... but they were soon well again.” It brought me nearer to the Pilgrims to be thus reminded by a similar experience that I was so like them. Moreover, it was a valuable confirmation of their story, and I am prepared now to believe every word of Mourt’s “Relation.” I was also pleased to find that man and the clam lay still at the same angle to one another. But I did not notice sea-pearl. Like Cleopatra, I must have swallowed it. I have since dug these clams on a flat in the Bay, and observed them. They could squirt full ten feet before the wind, as appeared by the marks of the drops on the sand.



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“Now I am going to ask you a question,” said the old man, “and I don’t know as you can tell me; but you are a learned man, and I never had any learning, only what I got by natur.”—It was in vain that we reminded him that he could quote Josephus to our confusion.—“I’ve thought, if I ever met a learned man, I should like to ask him this question. Can you tell me how *Axy* is spelt, and what it means? *Axy*,” says he; “there’s a girl over here is named *Axy*. Now what is it? What does it mean? Is it *Scriptur*? I’ve read my Bible twenty-five years over and over, and I never came across it.”

“Did you read it twenty-five years for this object?” I asked.

“Well, *how* is it spelt? Wife, how is it spelt?”

She said,—“It is in the Bible; I’ve seen it.”

“Well, how do you spell it?”

“I don’t know. A c h, ach, s e h, seh,—Achseh.”

“Does that spell *Axy*? Well, do *you* know what it means?” asked he, turning to me.

“No,” I replied,—“I never heard the sound before.”

“There was a schoolmaster down here once, and they asked him what it meant, and he said it had no more meaning than a bean-pole.”

I told him that I held the same opinion with the schoolmaster. I had been a schoolmaster myself, and had had strange names to deal with. I also heard of such names as *Zoheth*, *Beriah*, *Amaziah*, *Bethuel*, and *Shearjashub*, hereabouts.

At length the little boy, who had a seat quite in the chimney-corner, took off his stockings and shoes, warmed his feet, and went off to bed; then the fool followed him; and finally the old man. He proceeded to make preparations for retiring, discoursing meanwhile with Panurgic plainness of speech on the ills to which old humanity is subject. We were a rare haul for him. He could commonly get none but ministers to talk to, though sometimes ten of them at once, and he was glad to meet some of the laity at leisure. The evening was not long enough for him. As I had been sick, the old lady asked if I would not go to bed,—it was getting late for old people; but the old man, who had not yet done his stories, said,—

“You a’n’t particular, are you?”

“Oh, no,” said I,—“I am in no hurry. I believe I have weathered the Clam cape.”

“They are good,” said he; “I wish I had some of them now.”



“They never hurt me,” said the old lady.

“But then you took out the part that killed a cat,” said I.

At last we cut him short in the midst of his stories, which he promised to resume in the morning. Yet, after all, one of the old ladies who came into our room in the night to fasten the fire-board, which rattled, as she went out took the precaution to fasten us in. Old women are by nature more suspicious than old men. However, the winds howled around the house, and made the fire-boards as well as the casements rattle well that night. It was probably a windy night for any locality, but we could not distinguish the roar which was proper to the ocean from that which was due to the wind alone.



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The sounds which the ocean makes must be very significant and interesting to those who live near it. When I was leaving the shore at this place the next summer, and had got a quarter of a mile distant, ascending a hill, I was startled by a sudden, loud sound from the sea, as if a large steamer were letting off steam by the shore, so that I caught my breath and felt my blood run cold for an instant, and I turned about, expecting to see one of the Atlantic steamers thus far out of her course; but there was nothing unusual to be seen. There was a low bank at the entrance of the Hollow, between me and the ocean, and suspecting that I might have risen into another stratum of air in ascending the hill, which had wafted to me only the ordinary roar of the sea, I immediately descended again, to see if I lost the sound; but, without regard to my ascending or descending, it died away in a minute or two, and yet there was scarcely any wind all the while. The old man said that this was what they called the "rut," a peculiar roar of the sea before the wind changes, which, however, he could, not account for. He thought that he could tell all about the weather from the sounds which the sea made.

Old Josselyn, who came to New England in 1638, has it among his weather-signs, that "the resounding of the sea from the shore, and murmuring of the winds in the woods, without apparent wind, sheweth wind to follow."

Being on another part of the coast one night afterwards, I heard the roar of the surf a mile distant, and the inhabitants said it was a sign that the wind would work round east, and we should have rainy weather. The ocean was heaped up somewhere at the eastward, and this roar was occasioned by its effort to preserve its equilibrium, the wave reaching the shore before the wind. Also the captain of a packet between this country and England told me that he sometimes met with a wave on the Atlantic coming against the wind, perhaps in a calm sea, which indicated that at a distance the wind was blowing from an opposite quarter, but the undulation had travelled faster than it. Sailors tell of "tide-rips" and "ground-swells," which they suppose to have been occasioned by hurricanes and earthquakes, and to have travelled many hundred, and sometimes even two or three thousand miles.

Before sunrise the next morning they let us out again, and I ran over to the beach to see the sun come out of the ocean. The old woman of eighty-four winters was already out in the cold morning wind, bare-headed, tripping about like a young girl, and driving up the cow to milk. She got the breakfast with despatch, and without noise or bustle; and meanwhile the old man resumed his stories.

After breakfast we looked at his clock, which was out of order, and oiled it with some "hen's grease," for want of sweet oil, for he scarcely could believe that we were not tinkers or peddlers; meanwhile he told a story about visions, which had reference to a crack in the clock-case made by frost one night. He was curious to know to what religious sect we belonged. He said that he had been to hear thirteen kinds of preaching in one month, when he was young, but he did not join any of them,—he stuck to his Bible: there was nothing like any of them in his Bible. While I was shaving in the

next room, I heard him ask my companion to what sect he belonged, to which he answered,—



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“Oh, I belong to the Universal Brotherhood.”

“What’s that?” he asked,—“Sons o’ Temperance?”

Finally, filling our pockets with doughnuts, which he was pleased to find that we called by the same name that he did, and paying for our entertainment, we took our departure; but he followed us out of doors, and made us tell him the names of the vegetables which he had raised from seeds that came out of the Franklin. They were cabbage, broccoli, and parsley. As I had asked him the names of so many things, he tried me in turn with all the plants which grew in his garden, both wild and cultivated. It was about half an acre, which he cultivated wholly himself. Besides the common garden-vegetables, there were Yellow-Dock, Lemon-Balm, Hyssop, Gill-go-over-the-ground, Mouse-ear, Chickweed, Roman Wormwood, Elecampane, and other plants. As we stood there, I saw a fish-hawk stoop to pick a fish out of his pond.

“There,” said I, “he has got a fish.”

“Well,” said the old man, who was looking all the while, but could see nothing, “he didn’t dive, he just wet his claws.”

And, sure enough, he did not this time, though it is said that they often do, but he merely stooped low enough to pick him out with his talons; but as he bore his shining prey over the bushes, it fell to the ground, and we did not see that he recovered it. That is not their practice.

Thus, having had another crack with the old man, he standing bareheaded under the eaves, he directed us “athwart the fields,” and we took to the beach again for another day, it being now late in the morning.

It was but a day or two after this that the safe of the Provincetown Bank was broken open and robbed by two men from the interior, and we learned that our hospitable entertainers did at least transiently harbor the suspicion that we were the men.

* * * * *

CHARLES LAMB’S UNCOLLECTED WRITINGS.

THIRD PAPER.

“I remember,” says “The Spectator,” “upon Mr. Baxter’s death, there was published a sheet of very good sayings, inscribed, ‘The Last Words of Mr. Baxter.’ The title sold so great a number of these papers that about a week after there came out a second sheet, inscribed, ‘More Last Words of Mr. Baxter.’” And so kindly and gladly did the public—or at least that portion of the public that read the “Atlantic Monthly”—receive the specimens of Charles Lamb’s uncollected writings, published somewhere since in these



pages, that I am induced to print another paper on the same pleasant and entertaining subject.

The success of that piece of “ingenious nonsense,” that gem of biographical literature, the unique and veracious “Memoir of Liston,” over which the lovers of wit and the lovers of Charles Lamb have had many a good laugh, was so great that Lamb was encouraged to try his hand at another theatrical memoir, and produced a mock and mirthful autobiography of his old friend and favorite comedian, Munden, whom he had previously immortalized in one of the best and most admired of the “Essays of Elia.”



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Those who enjoyed the biography of Liston will chuckle over the autobiography of Munden. It was certainly a happy idea to represent Munden as writing a sketch of his life,—not to gratify his own vanity, or for the pleasure and entertainment of the public, but solely and purposely to prevent the truthful and matter-of-fact biographer of Liston from making the old player the subject of a biographical work. The veteran actor's vehement protests against being represented as a Presbyterian or Anabaptist, and his brief, but pungent comments on certain passages in the Liston biography, are delightful. Methinks I see the old man,—

“The gray-haired man of glee,”—

the great and wonderful impersonator of the “Cobbler of Preston” and “Old Dozey,”—methinks I see this fine actor, this genial and jovial comedian, and his son, gravely and carefully examining the great map of Kent in search of Lupton Magna!

Leigh Hunt, in his Autobiography, speaking of some of Elia's contributions to the “London Magazine,” thus mentions these two “he-children” of Lamb's:—

“He wrote in the same magazine two lives of Liston and Munden, which the public took for serious, and which exhibit an extraordinary jumble of imaginary facts and truth of by-painting. Munden he made born at “Stoke Pogis”; the very sound of which was like the actor speaking and digging his words.”

* * * * *

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MR. MUNDEN.

In a Letter to the Editor of the “London Magazine.”

Hark'ee, Mr. Editor. A word in your ear. They tell me you are going to put me in print,—in print, Sir; to publish my life. What is my life to you, Sir? What is it to you whether I ever lived at all? My life is a very good life, Sir. I am insured at the Pelican, Sir. I am threescore years and six,—six; mark me, Sir: but I can play Polonius, which, I believe, few of your corre—correspondents can do, Sir. I suspect tricks, Sir; I smell a rat: I do, I do. You would cog the die upon us: you would, you would, Sir. But I will forestall you, Sir. You would be deriving me from William the Conqueror, with a murrain to you. It is no such thing, Sir. The town shall know better, Sir. They begin to smoke your flams, Sir. Mr. Liston may be born where he pleases, Sir; but I will not be born at Lup—Lupton Magna for anybody's pleasure, Sir. My son and I have looked over the great map of Kent together, and we can find no such place as you would palm upon us, Sir,—palm upon us, I say. Neither Magna nor Parva, as my son says; and he knows Latin, Sir,—Latin. If you write my life true, Sir, you must set down, that I, Joseph Munden, comedian, came into the world upon Allhallows Day, Anno Domini 1759,—1759; no sooner nor later, Sir: and I saw the first light—the first light, remember, Sir—at Stoke



Pogis,—Stoke Pogis, *comitatu* Bucks, and not at Lup—Lup Magna, which I believe to be no better than moonshine,—moonshine;



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do you mark me, Sir? I wonder you can put such flim-flams upon us, Sir: I do, I do. It does not become you, Sir: I say it,—I say it. And my father was an honest tradesman, Sir: he dealt in malt and hops, Sir; and was a Corporation-man, Sir; and of the Church of England, Sir; and no Presbyterian, nor Ana—Anabaptist, Sir; however you may be disposed to make honest people believe to the contrary, Sir. Your bams are found out, Sir. The town will be your stale puts no longer, Sir; and you must not send us jolly fellows, Sir,—we that are comedians, Sir,—you must not send us into groves and Charn—Charnwoods a-moping, Sir. Neither Charns, nor charnel-houses, Sir. It is not our constitutions, Sir: I tell it you,—I tell it you. I was a droll dog from my cradle. I came into the world tittering, and the midwife tittered, and the gossips spilt their caudle with tittering; and when I was brought to the font, the parson could not christen me for tittering. So I was never more than half baptized. And when I was little Joey, I made 'em all titter; there was not a melancholy face to be seen in Pogis. Pure nature, Sir. I was born a comedian. Old Screwup, the undertaker, could tell you, Sir, if he were living. Why, I was obliged to be locked up every time there was to be a funeral at Pogis. I was, I was, Sir. I used to *grimace* at the mutes, as he called it, and put 'em out with my mops and my mows, till they couldn't stand at a door for me. And when I was locked up, with nothing but a cat in my company, I followed my bent with trying to make her laugh; and sometimes she would, and sometimes she would not. And my schoolmaster could make nothing of me: I had only to thrust my tongue in my cheek,—in my cheek, Sir,—and the rod dropped from his fingers; and so my education was limited, Sir. And I grew up a young fellow, and it was thought convenient to enter me upon some course of life that should make me serious; but it wouldn't do, Sir. And I articed to a dry-salter. My father gave forty pounds premium with me, Sir. I can show the indent—dent—dentures, Sir. But I was born to be a comedian, Sir: so I ran away, and listed with the players, Sir; and I topt my parts at Amersham and Gerrard's Cross, and played my own father to his face, in his own town of Pogis, in the part of Gripe, when I was not full seventeen years of age; and he did not know me again, but he knew me afterwards; and then he laughed, and I laughed, and, what is better, the dry-salter laughed, and gave me up my articles for the joke's sake: so that I came into court afterwards with clean hands,—with clean hands; do you see, Sir?



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[Here the manuscript becomes illegible for two or three sheets onwards, which we presume to be occasioned by the absence of Mr. Munden, jun., who clearly transcribed it for the press thus far. The rest (with the exception of the concluding paragraph, which seemingly is resumed in the first handwriting) appears to contain a confused account of some lawsuit in which the elder Munden was engaged; with a circumstantial history of the proceedings on a case of breach of promise of marriage, made to or by (we cannot pick out which) Jemima Munden, spinster, probably the comedian's cousin, for it does not appear he had any sister; with a few dates, rather better preserved, of this great actor's engagements,—as "Cheltenham, [spelt Cheltnam,] 1776," "Bath, 1779," "London, 1789,"—together with stage-anecdotes of Messrs. Edwin, Wilson, Lee, Lewis, *etc.*; over which we have strained our eyes to no purpose, in the hope of presenting something amusing to the public. Towards the end, the manuscript brightens up a little, as we have said, and concludes in the following manner.]

— stood before them for six-and-thirty years, [we suspect that Mr. Munden is here speaking of his final leave-taking of the stage,] and to be dismissed at last. But I was heart-whole,—heart-whole to the last, Sir. What though a few drops did course themselves down the old veteran's cheeks? who could help it, Sir? I was a giant that night, Sir, and could have played fifty parts, each as arduous as Dozey. My faculties were never better, Sir. But I was to be laid upon the shelf. It did not suit the public to laugh with their old servant any longer, Sir. [Here some moisture has blotted a sentence or two.] But I can play Polonius still, Sir: I can, I can.

Your servant, Sir,
JOSEPH MUNDEN.

* * * * *

In the "Reflector," a short-lived periodical set up by Leigh Hunt, and in which Lamb's quaint and beautiful poem, "A Farewell to Tobacco," and his masterly critical essays on "The Tragedies of Shakspeare," and on "The Genius of Hogarth," and other of his early writings, appeared, I find the following characteristic article from Elia's pen.

The reader will observe (and smile as he observes) that there is a great difference between the "good clerk" of fifty years ago and the "good clerk" of to-day. He of yesterday is a wonderfully simple, humble, automaton-like person, in comparison with the brisk, dashing, independent "votaries of the desk" of the year eighteen hundred and sixty-four.

* * * * *

THE GOOD CLERK: A CHARACTER.



THE GOOD CLERK.—He writeth a fair and swift hand, and is competently versed in the four first rules of arithmetic, in the Rule of Three, (which is sometimes called the Golden Rule,) and in Practice. We mention these things that we may leave no room for cavillers to say that anything essential hath been omitted in our definition; else, to speak the truth, these are but ordinary accomplishments, and such as every understrapper at a desk is commonly furnished with. The character we treat of soareth higher.



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He is clean and neat in his person, not from a vainglorious desire of setting himself forth to advantage in the eyes of the other sex,—with which vanity too many of our young sparks nowadays are infected,—but to do credit, as we say, to the office. For this reason, he evermore taketh care that his desk or his books receive no soil; the which things he is commonly as solicitous to have fair and unblemished as the owner of a fine horse is to have him appear in good keep.

He riseth early in the morning,—not because early rising conduceth to health, (though he doth not altogether despise that consideration,) but chiefly to the intent that he may be first at the desk. There is his post, there he delighteth to be, unless when his meals or necessity calleth him away; which time he alway esteemeth as lost, and maketh as short as possible.

He is temperate in eating and drinking, that he may preserve a clear head and steady hand for his master's service. He is also partly induced to this observation of the rules of temperance by his respect for religion and the laws of his country; which things, it may once for all be noted, do add especial assistances to his actions, but do not and cannot furnish the main spring or motive thereto. His first ambition, as appeareth all along, is to be a good clerk; his next, a good Christian, a good patriot, *etc.*

Correspondent to this, he keepeth himself honest, not for fear of the laws, but because he hath observed how unseemly an article it maketh in the day-book or ledger when a sum is set down lost or missing; it being his pride to make these books to agree and to tally, the one side with the other, with a sort of architectural symmetry and correspondence.

He marrieth, or marrieth not, as best suiteth with his employer's views. Some merchants do the rather desire to have married men in their counting-houses, because they think the married state a pledge for their servants' integrity, and an incitement to them to be industrious; and it was an observation of a late Lord-Mayor of London, that the sons of clerks do generally prove clerks themselves, and that merchants encouraging persons in their employ to marry, and to have families, was the best method of securing a breed of sober, industrious young men attached to the mercantile interest. Be this as it may, such a character as we have been describing will wait till the pleasure of his employer is known on this point, and regulateth his desires by the custom of the house or firm to which he belongeth.

He avoideth profane oaths and jesting, as so much time lost from his employ. What spare time he hath for conversation, which in a counting-house such as we have been supposing can be but small, he spendeth in putting seasonable questions to such of his fellows (and sometimes *respectfully* to the master himself) who can give him information respecting the price and quality of goods, the state of exchange, or the latest improvements in book-keeping; thus making the motion of his lips, as well as of his fingers, subservient to his master's interest. Not that he refuseth a brisk saying, or a



cheerful sally of wit, when it comes unforced, is free of offence, and hath a convenient brevity. For this reason, he hath commonly some such phrase as this in his mouth,—



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“It’s a slovenly look
To blot your book.”

Or,

“Red ink for ornament, black for use:
The best of things are open to abuse.”

So upon the eve of any great holiday, of which he keepeth one or two at least every year, he will merrily say, in the hearing of a confidential friend, but to none other,—

“All work and no play’
Makes Jack a dull boy.”

Or,

“A bow always bent must crack at last.”

But then this must always be understood to be spoken confidentially, and, as we say, *under the rose*.

Lastly, his dress is plain, without singularity,—with no other ornament than the quill, which is the badge of his function, stuck behind the dexter ear, and this rather for convenience of having it at hand, when he hath been called away from his desk, and expecteth to resume his seat there again shortly, than from any delight which he taketh in foppery or ostentation. The color of his clothes is generally noted to be black rather than brown, brown rather than blue or green. His whole deportment is staid, modest, and civil. His motto is “Regularity.”

* * * * *

This character was sketched in an interval of business, to divert some of the melancholy hours of a counting-house. It is so little a creature of fancy, that it is scarce anything more than a recollection of some of those frugal and economical maxims which about the beginning of the last century (England’s meanest period) were endeavored to be inculcated and instilled into the breasts of the London apprentices[E] by a class of instructors who might not inaptly be termed “The Masters of Mean Morals.” The astonishing narrowness and illiberality of the lessons contained in some of those books is inconceivable by those whose studies have not led them that way, and would almost induce one to subscribe to the hard censure which Drayton has passed upon the mercantile spirit,—

“The grapple merchant, born to be the curse
Of this brave isle.”



In the laudable endeavor to eke out “a something contracted income,” Lamb, in his younger days, essayed to write lottery-puffs,—(Byron, we know, was accused of writing lottery-puffs,)—but he did not succeed very well in the task. His samples were returned on his hands, as “done in too severe and terse a style.” Some Grub-Street hack—a nineteenth-century Tom Brown or Mr. Dash—succeeded in composing these popular and ingenious productions; but the man who wrote the Essays of Elia could not write a successful lottery-puff. At this exult, O mediocrity! and take courage, man of genius!

Although Elia was an unsuccessful lottery-puffer, he always took special interest in lotteries, and was present at the drawing of many of them.



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Mr. Bickerstaff, we remember,—though I fear that in these days the pleasant and profitable pages of “The Father” are hardly more known to the generality of readers than the lost books of Livy or the missing cantos of the “Faerie Queene,”—possibly we may remember, I say, that the wise, witty, learned, eloquent, delightful Mr. Bickerstaff, in order to raise the requisite sum to purchase a ticket in the (then) newly erected lottery, sold off a couple of globes and a telescope (the venerable Isaac was a Professor of Palmistry and Astrology, as well as Censor of Great Britain); and finding by a learned calculation that it was but a hundred and fifty thousand to one against his being worth one thousand pounds for thirty-two years, he spent many days and nights in preparing his mind for this change of fortune.

And albeit I do not believe that Lamb, in his poorest and most needy days, was ever tempted by any Alnaschar-dreams of wealth to exchange the raggedest and least valuable of his “midnight darlings” for the wherewithal to purchase lottery-tickets, I dare say the money which Elia had saved for the purchase of some choice and long-coveted old folio or other went into the coffers of the lottery-dealers. Though Lamb drew nothing but blanks, “or those more vexatious tantalizers of the spirit, denominated small prizes,” yet he held himself largely indebted to the Lottery, and, upon its abolition in England in 1825, he wrote a long, eloquent, pathetic discourse on the great departed. It appeared in Colburn’s “New Monthly Magazine,” and is, I think, a very pleasant, entertaining paper, worthy of its subject, and not unworthy of the pen of Charles Lamb. I take great pleasure in introducing the article to the readers of the “Atlantic.”

* * * * *

THE ILLUSTRIOUS DEFUNCT.[F]

“Nought but a blank remains, a dead void space,
A step of life that promised such a race.”

—Dryden.

Napoleon has now sent us back from the grave sufficient echoes of his living renown: the twilight of posthumous fame has lingered long enough over the spot where the sun of his glory set; and his name must at length repose in the silence, if not in the darkness of night. In this busy and evanescent scene, other spirits of the age are rapidly snatched away, claiming our undivided sympathies and regrets, until in turn they yield to some newer and more absorbing grief. Another name is now added to the list of the mighty departed,—a name whose influence upon the hopes and fears, the fates and fortunes of our countrymen, has rivalled, and perhaps eclipsed, that of the defunct “child and champion of Jacobinism,” while it is associated with all the sanctions of legitimate government, all the sacred authorities of social order and our most holy religion. We speak of one, indeed, under whose warrant heavy and incessant contributions were imposed upon our fellow-citizens, but who exacted



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nothing without the signet and the sign-manual of most devout Chancellors of the Exchequer. Not to dally longer with the sympathies of our readers, we think it right to premonish them that we are composing an epicedium upon no less distinguished a personage than the Lottery, whose last breath, after many penultimate puffs, has been sobbed forth by sorrowing contractors, as if the world itself were about to be converted into a blank. There is a fashion of eulogy, as well as of vituperation, and, though the Lottery stood for some time in the latter predicament, we hesitate not to assert that "*multis ille bonis flebilis occidit.*" Never have we joined in the senseless clamor which condemned the only tax whereto we became voluntary contributors, the only resource which gave the stimulus without the danger or infatuation of gambling, the only alembic which in these plodding days sublimized our imaginations, and filled them with more delicious dreams than ever flitted athwart the sensorium of Alnaschar.

Never can the writer forget, when, as a child, he was hoisted upon a servant's shoulder in Guildhall, and looked down upon the installed and solemn pomp of the then drawing Lottery. The two awful cabinets of iron, upon whose massy and mysterious portals the royal initials were gorgeously emblazoned, as if, after having deposited the unfulfilled prophecies within, the King himself had turned the lock, and still retained the key in his pocket,—the blue-coat boy, with his naked arm, first converting the invisible wheel, and then diving into the dark recess for a ticket,—the grave and reverend faces of the commissioners eying the announced number,—the scribes below calmly committing it to their huge books,—the anxious countenances of the surrounding populace,—while the giant figures of Gog and Magog, like presiding deities, looked down with a grim silence upon the whole proceeding,—constituted altogether a scene which, combined with the sudden wealth supposed to be lavished from those inscrutable wheels, was well calculated to impress the imagination of a boy with reverence and amazement. Jupiter, seated between the two fatal urns of good and evil, the blind goddess with her cornucopia, the Parcae wielding the distaff, the thread of life, and the abhorred shears, seemed but dim and shadowy abstractions of mythology, when I had gazed upon an assemblage exercising, as I dreamt, a not less eventful power, and all presented to me in palpable and living operation. Reason and experience, ever at their old spiteful work of catching and destroying the bubbles which youth delighted to follow, have indeed dissipated much of this illusion; but my mind so far retained the influence of that early impression, that I have ever since continued to deposit my humble offerings at its shrine, whenever the ministers of the Lottery went forth with type and trumpet to announce its periodical dispensations; and though nothing has been doled out to me from its udiscerning coffer



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but blanks, or those more vexatious tantalizers of the spirit denominated small prizes, yet do I hold myself largely indebted to this most generous diffuser of universal happiness. Ingrates that we are, are we to be thankful for no benefits that are not palpable to sense, to recognize no favors that are not of marketable value, to acknowledge no wealth unless it can be counted with the five fingers? If we admit the mind to be the sole depository of genuine joy, where is the bosom that has not been elevated into a temporary Elysium by the magic of the Lottery? Which of us has not converted his ticket, or even his sixteenth share of one, into a nest-egg of Hope, upon which he has sat brooding in the secret roosting-places of his heart, and hatched it into a thousand fantastical apparitions?

What a startling revelation of the passions, if all the aspirations engendered by the Lottery could be made manifest! Many an impecuniary epicure has gloated over his locked-up warrant for future wealth, as a means of realizing the dream of his namesake in the "Alchemist":—

"My meat shall all come in in Indian shells,—
Dishes of agate set in gold, and studded
With emeralds, sapphires, hyacinths, and rubies;
The tongues of carps, dormice, and camels' heels,
Boiled i' the spirit of Sol, and dissolved in pearl
(Apicius' diet 'gainst the epilepsy);
And I will eat these broths with spoons of amber
Headed with diamant and carbuncle.
My footboy shall eat pheasants, calvered salmons,
Knots, goodwits, lampreys. I myself will have
The beards of barbels served; instead of salads,
Oiled mushrooms, and the swelling unctuous paps
Of a fat pregnant sow, newly cut off,
Dressed with an exquisite and poignant sauce,
For which I'll say unto my cook, 'There's gold:
Go forth, and he a knight.'"

Many a doting lover has kissed the scrap of paper whose promissory shower of gold was to give up to him his otherwise unattainable Danae; Nimrods have transformed the same narrow symbol into a saddle by which they have been enabled to bestride the backs of peerless hunters; while nymphs have metamorphosed its Protean form into

"Rings, gauds, conceits,
Knacks, trifles, nose-gays, sweetmeats,"



and all the braveries of dress, to say nothing of the obsequious husband, the two-footmaned carriage, and the opera-box. By the simple charm of this numbered and printed rag, gamblers have, for a time at least, recovered their losses, spendthrifts have cleared off mortgages from their estates, the imprisoned debtor has leaped over his lofty boundary of circumscription and restraint and revelled in all the joys of liberty and fortune, the cottage-walls have swelled out into more goodly proportion than those of Baucis and Philemon, poverty has tasted the luxuries of competence, labor has lolled at ease in a perpetual armchair of idleness,



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sickness has been bribed into banishment, life has been invested with new charms, and death deprived of its former terrors. Nor have the affections been less gratified than the wants, appetites, and ambitions of mankind. By the conjurations of the same potent spell, kindred have lavished anticipated benefits upon one another, and charity upon all. Let it be termed a delusion,—a fool's Paradise is better than the wise man's Tartarus; be it branded as an *ignis-fatuus*,—it was at least a benevolent one, which, instead of beguiling its followers into swamps, caverns, and pitfalls, allured them on with all the blandishments of enchantment to a garden of Eden, an ever-blooming Elysium of delight. True, the pleasures it bestowed were evanescent: but which of our joys are permanent? and who so inexperienced as not to know that anticipation is always of higher relish than reality, which strikes a balance both in our sufferings and enjoyments? “The fear of ill exceeds the ill we fear”; and fruition, in the same proportion, invariably falls short of hope. “Men are but children of a larger growth,” who may amuse themselves for a long time in gazing at the reflection of the moon in the water; but, if they jump in to grasp it, they may grope forever, and only get the farther from their object. He is the wisest who keeps feeding upon the future, and refrains as long as possible from undeceiving himself by converting his pleasant speculations into disagreeable certainties.

The true mental epicure always purchased his ticket early, and postponed inquiry into its fate to the last possible moment, during the whole of which intervening period he had an imaginary twenty thousand locked up in his desk: and was not this well worth all the money? Who would scruple to give twenty pounds interest for even the ideal enjoyment of as many thousands during two or three months? “*Crede quod habes, et habes*”; and the usufruct of such a capital is sorely not dear at such a price. Some years ago, a gentleman, in passing along Cheapside, saw the figures 1,069, of which number he was the sole proprietor, flaming on the window of a lottery-office as a capital prize. Somewhat flurried by this discovery, not less welcome than unexpected, he resolved to walk round St. Paul's that he might consider in what way to communicate the happy tidings to his wife and family; but, upon repassing the shop, he observed that the number was altered to 10,069, and, upon inquiry, had the mortification to learn that his ticket was a blank, and had only been stuck up in the window by a mistake of the clerk. This effectually calmed his agitation; but he always speaks of himself as having once possessed twenty thousand pounds, and maintains that his ten-minutes' walk round St. Paul's was worth ten times the purchase-money of the ticket. A prize thus obtained has, moreover, this special advantage: it is beyond the reach of fate; it cannot be squandered; bankruptcy cannot lay siege to it; friends cannot



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pull it down, nor enemies blow it up; it bears a charmed life, and none of woman born can break its integrity, even by the dissipation of a single fraction. Show me the property in these perilous times that is equally compact and impregnable. We can no longer become enriched for a quarter of an hour; we can no longer succeed in such splendid failures: all our chances of making such a miss have vanished with the last of the Lotteries.

Life will now become a flat, prosaic routine of matter-of-fact; and sleep itself, erst so prolific of numerical configurations and mysterious stimulants to lottery-adventure, will be disfurnished of its figures and figments. People will cease to harp upon the one lucky number suggested in a dream, and which forms the exception, while they are scrupulously silent upon the ten thousand falsified dreams which constitute the rule. Morpheus will stifle Cocker with a handful of poppies, and our pillows will be no longer haunted by the book of numbers.

And who, too, shall maintain the art and mystery of puffing in all its pristine glory, when the lottery-professors shall have abandoned its cultivation? They were the first, as they will assuredly be the last, who fully developed the resources of that ingenious art,—who cajoled and decoyed the most suspicious and wary reader into a perusal of their advertisements by devices of endless variety and cunning,—who baited their lurking schemes with midnight murders, ghost-stories, crim-cons, bon-mots, balloons, dreadful catastrophes, and every diversity of joy and sorrow, to catch newspaper-gudgeons. Ought not such talents to be encouraged? Verily the abolitionists have much to answer for!

And now, having established the felicity of all those who gained imaginary prizes, let us proceed to show that the equally numerous class who were presented with real blanks have not less reason to consider themselves happy. Most of us have cause to be thankful for that which is bestowed; but we have all, probably, reason to be still more grateful for that which is withheld, and more especially for our being denied the sudden possession of riches. In the Litany, indeed, we Call upon the Lord to deliver us “in all time of our wealth”; but how few of us are sincere in deprecating such a calamity! Massinger’s *Luke*, and Ben Jonson’s *Sir Epicure Mammon*, and Pope’s *Sir Balaam*, and our own daily observation, might convince us that the Devil “now tempts by making rich, not making poor.” We may read in the “Guardian” a circumstantial account of a man who was utterly ruined by gaining a capital prize; we may recollect what Dr. Johnson said to Garrick, when the latter was making a display of his wealth at Hampton Court,—“Ah, David! David! these are the things that make a death-bed terrible”; we may recall the Scripture declaration as to the difficulty a rich man finds in entering into the kingdom of heaven; and, combining all these denunciations against opulence, let us heartily



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congratulate one another upon our lucky escape from the calamity of a twenty or thirty thousand pound prize! The fox in the fable, who accused the unattainable grapes of sourness, was more of a philosopher than we are generally willing to allow. He was an adept in that species of moral alchemy which turns everything to gold, and converts disappointment itself into a ground of resignation and content. Such we have shown to be the great lesson inculcated by the Lottery, when rightly contemplated; and if we might parody M. de Chateaubriand's jingling expression, "*Le Roi est mort: vive le Roi!*" we should be tempted to exclaim, "The Lottery is no more: long live the Lottery!"

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The foregoing article, as the reader may possibly remember, was not Lamb's only contribution to the "New Monthly Magazine." Indeed, it was in that pleasant and popular periodical,—then at the height of its popularity, with many of the most admired writers in Great Britain among its contributors, and edited by the elegant and polished poet who sang the "Pleasures of Hope,"—it was in this magazine that Elia's admirable "Popular Fallacies" were first given to the world. (I fear, however, that the exquisite grace, beauty, and polish of these delightful papers were hardly appreciated by the readers of the "New Monthly.") And it was for this publication that he undertook to write a novel. Although Elia had but little fancy for novels himself, and in the writing of them would not have done justice, perhaps, to his rare genius, yet, nevertheless, I suspect that all admirers of "Rosamund Gray," if not all readers of novels, regret that he did not complete the work of fiction he began for the "New Monthly Magazine." Judging from the specimen that was published, it would have been, had the author seen fit to finish it, quite an original and very characteristic production. Here is the first chapter of the story. Though advertised to be continued, this is all of it that ever appeared.

* * * * *

REMINISCENCES OF JUKE JUDKINS, ESQ., OF BIRMINGHAM

I am the only son of a considerable brazier in Birmingham, who, dying in 1803, left me successor to the business, with no other incumbrance than a sort of rent-charge, which I am enjoined to pay out of it, of ninety-three pounds sterling *per annum*, to his widow, my mother, and which the improving state of the concern, I bless God, has hitherto enabled me to discharge with punctuality. (I say, I am enjoined to pay the said sum, but not strictly obligated: that is to say, as the will is worded, I believe the law would relieve me from the payment of it; but the wishes of a dying parent should in some sort have the effect of law.) So that, though the annual profits of my business, on an average of the last three or four years, would appear to an indifferent observer, who should inspect my

shop-books, to amount to the sum of one thousand three hundred and three pounds, odd shillings, the real proceeds in that time have fallen short of that sum to the amount of the aforesaid payment of ninety-three pounds sterling annually.



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I was always my father's favorite. He took a delight, to the very last, in recounting the little sagacious tricks and innocent artifices of my childhood. One manifestation thereof I never heard him repeat without tears of joy trickling down his cheeks. It seems, that, when I quitted the parental roof, (August 27th, 1788,) being then six years and not quite a month old, to proceed to the Free School at Warwick, where my father was a sort of trustee, my mother—as mothers are usually provident on these occasions—had stuffed the pockets of the coach, which was to convey me and six more children of my own growth that were going to be entered along with me at the same seminary, with a prodigious quantity of gingerbread, which I remember my father said was more than was needed: and so, indeed, it was; for, if I had been to eat it all myself, it would have got stale and mouldy before it had been half spent. The consideration whereof set me upon my contrivances how I might secure to myself as much of the gingerbread as would keep good for the next two or three days, and yet none of the rest in a manner be wasted. I had a little pair of pocket-compasses, which I usually carried about me for the purpose of making draughts and measurements, at which I was always very ingenious, of the various engines and mechanical inventions in which such a town as Birmingham abounded. By the means of these, and a small penknife which my father had given me, I cut out the one half of the cake, calculating that the remainder would reasonably serve my turn; and subdividing it into many little slices, which were curious to see for the neatness and niceness of their proportion, I sold it out in so many pennyworths to my young companions as served us all the way to Warwick, which is a distance of some twenty miles from this, town: and very merry, I assure you, we made ourselves with it, feasting all the way. By this honest stratagem, I put double the prime cost of the gingerbread into my purse, and secured as much as I thought would keep good and moist for my next two or three days' eating. When I told this to my parents, on their first visit to me at Warwick, my father (good man) patted me on the cheek, and stroked my head, and seemed as if he could never make enough of me; but my mother unaccountably burst into tears, and said "it was a very niggardly action," or some such expression, and that "she would rather it would please God to take me"—meaning, God help me, that I should die—"than that she should live to see me grow up a *mean man*": which shows the difference of parent from parent, and how some mothers are more harsh and intolerant to their children than some fathers,—when we might expect quite the contrary. My father, however, loaded me with presents from that time, which made me the envy of my school-fellows. As I felt this growing disposition in them, I naturally sought to avert it by all the means in my power; and from that time I used to eat my little packages of fruit



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and other nice things in a corner, so privately that I was never found out. Once, I remember, I had a huge apple sent me, of that sort which they call *cats'-heads*. I concealed this all day under my pillow; and at night, but not before I had ascertained that my bed-fellow was sound asleep,—which I did by pinching him rather smartly two or three times, which he seemed to perceive no more than a dead person, though once or twice he made a motion as if he would turn, which frightened me,—I say, when I had made all sure, I fell to work upon my apple; and though it was as big as an ordinary man's two fists, I made shift to get through it before it was time to get up. And a more delicious feast I never made,—thinking all night what a good parent I had (I mean my father) to send me so many nice things, when the poor lad that lay by me had no parent or friend in the world to send him anything nice; and thinking of his desolate condition, I munched and munched as silently as I could, that I might not set him a-longing, if he overheard me. And yet, for all this considerateness and attention to other people's feelings; I was never much a favorite with my school-fellows; which I have often wondered at, seeing that I never defrauded any one of them of the value of a halfpenny, or told stories of them to their master, as some little lying boys would do, but was ready to do any of them all the services in my power that were consistent with my own well-doing. I think nobody can be expected to go further than that.—But I am detaining my reader too long in the recording of my juvenile days. It is time that I should go forward to a season when it became natural that I should have some thoughts of marrying, and, as they say, settling in the world. Nevertheless, my reflections on what I may call the boyish period of my life may have their use to some readers. It is pleasant to trace the man in the boy, to observe shoots of generosity in those young years, and to watch the progress of liberal sentiments, and what I may call a genteel way of thinking, which is discernible in some children at a very early age, and usually lays the foundation of all that is praiseworthy in the manly character afterwards.

With the warmest inclinations towards that way of life, and a serious conviction of its superior advantages over a single one, it has been the strange infelicity of my lot never to have entered into the respectable estate of matrimony. Yet I was once very near it. I courted a young woman in my twenty-seventh year,—for so early I began to feel symptoms of the tender passion! She was well to do in the world, as they call it, but yet not such a fortune as, all things considered, perhaps I might have pretended to. It was not my own choice altogether; but my mother very strongly pressed me to it. She was always putting it to me, that I “had comings-in sufficient,—that I need not stand upon a portion”; though the young woman, to do her justice,



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had considerable expectations, which yet did not quite come up to my mark, as I told you before. She had this saying always in her mouth: that I “had money enough; that it was time I enlarged my housekeeping, and to show a spirit befitting my circumstances.” In short, what with her importunities, and my own desires *in part* cooeperating,—for, as I said, I was not yet quite twenty-seven, a time when the youthful feelings may be pardoned, if they show a little impetuosity,—I resolved, I say, upon all these considerations, to set about the business of courting in right earnest. I was a young man then, and having a spice of romance in my character, (as the reader doubtless has observed long ago,) such as that sex is apt to be taken with, I had reason in no long time to think my addresses were anything but disagreeable.

Certainly the happiest part of a young man’s life is the time when he is going a-courting. All the generous impulses are then awake, and he feels a double existence in participating his hopes and wishes with another being. Return yet again for a brief moment, ye visionary views, transient enchantments! ye moonlight rambles with Cleora in the Silent Walk at Vauxhall,—(N.B.—About a mile from Birmingham, and resembling the gardens of that name near London, only that the price of admission is lower,)—when the nightingale has suspended her notes in June to listen to our loving discourses, while the moon was overhead! (for we generally used to take our tea at Cleora’s mother’s before we set out, not so much to save expenses as to avoid the publicity of a repast in the gardens,—coming in much about the time of half-price, as they call it)—ye soft intercommunions of soul, when, exchanging mutual vows, we prattled of coming felicities! The loving disputes we have had under those trees, when this house (planning our future settlement) was rejected, because, though cheap, it was dull, and the other house was given up, because, though agreeably situated, it was too high-rented,—one was too much in the heart of the town, another was too far from business. These minutiae will seem impertinent to the aged and the prudent. I write them only to the young. Young lovers, and passionate as being young, (such were Cleora and I then,) alone can understand me. After some weeks wasted, as I may now call it, in this sort of amorous colloquy, we at length fixed upon the house in the High Street, No. 203, just vacated by the death of Mr. Hutton of this town, for our future residence. I had till that time lived in lodgings (only renting a shop for business) to be near to my mother,—near, I say: not in the same house with her, for that would have been to introduce confusion into our housekeeping, which it was desirable to keep separate. Oh, the loving wrangles, the endearing differences I had with Cleora, before we could quite make up our minds to the house that was to receive us!—I pretending, for argument’s sake, that the rent



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was too high, and she insisting that the taxes were moderate in proportion, and love at last reconciling us in the same choice. I think at that time, moderately speaking, she might have had anything out of me for asking. I do not, nor shall ever, regret that my character at that time was marked with a tinge of prodigality. Age comes fast enough upon us, and, in its good time, will prune away all that is inconvenient in these excesses. Perhaps it is right that it should do so. Matters, as I said, were ripening to a conclusion between us, only the house was yet not absolutely taken. Some necessary arrangements, which the ardor of my youthful impetuosity could hardly brook at that time (love and youth will be precipitate)—some preliminary arrangements, I say, with the landlord, respecting fixtures,—very necessary things to be considered in a young man about to settle in the world, though not very accordant with the impatient state of my then passions,—some obstacles about the valuation of the fixtures,—had hitherto precluded (and I shall always think providentially) my final closes with his offer, when one of those accidents, which, unimportant in themselves, often arise to give a turn to the most serious intentions of our life, intervened, and put an end at once to my projects of wiving and of housekeeping.

I was never much given to theatrical entertainments,—that is, at no time of my life was I ever what they call a regular play-goer; but on some occasion of a benefit-night, which was expected to be very productive, and indeed turned out so, Cleora expressing a desire to be present, I could do no less than offer, as I did very willingly, to squire her and her mother to the pit. At that time it was not customary in our town for tradesfolk, except some of the very topping ones, to sit, as they now do, in the boxes. At the time appointed I waited upon the ladies, who had brought with them a young man, a distant relation, whom it seems they had invited to be of the party. This a little disconcerted me, as I had about me barely silver enough to pay for our three selves at the door, and did not at first know that their relation had proposed paying for himself. However, to do the young man justice, he not only paid for himself, but for the old lady besides,—leaving me only to pay for two, as it were. In our passage to the theatre, the notice of Cleora was attracted to some orange-wenches that stood about the doors vending their commodities. She was leaning on my arm; and I could feel her every now and then giving me a nudge, as it is called, which I afterwards discovered were hints that I should buy some oranges. It seems, it is a custom at Birmingham, and perhaps in other places, when a gentleman treats ladies to the play, especially when a full night is expected, and that the house will be inconveniently warm, to provide them with this kind of fruit, oranges being esteemed for their cooling property. But how could I guess at that, never having treated ladies



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to a play before, and being, as I said, quite a novice at these kind of entertainments? At last she spoke plain out, and begged that I would buy some of “those oranges,” pointing to a particular barrow. But when I came to examine the fruit, I did not think that the quality of it was answerable to the price. In this way I handled several baskets of them; but something in them all displeased me. Some had thin rinds, and some were plainly over-ripe, which is as great a fault as not being ripe enough; and I could not (what they call) make a bargain. While I stood haggling with the women, secretly determining to put off my purchase till I should get within the theatre, where I expected we should have better choice, the young man, the cousin, (who, it seems, had left us without my missing him,) came running to us with his pockets stuffed out with oranges, inside and out, as they say. It seems, not liking the look of the barrow-fruit any more than myself, he had slipped away to an eminent fruiterer’s, about three doors distant, which I never had the sense to think of, and had laid out a matter of two shillings in some of the best St. Michael’s, I think, I ever tasted. What a little hinge, as I said before, the most important affairs in life may turn upon! The mere inadvertence to the fact that there was an eminent fruiterer’s within three doors of us, though we had just passed it without the thought once occurring to me, which he had taken advantage of, lost me the affections of my Cleora. From that time she visibly cooled towards me, and her partiality was as visibly transferred to this cousin. I was long unable to account for this change in her behavior; when one day, accidentally discoursing of oranges to my mother, alone, she let drop a sort of reproach to me, as if I had offended Cleora by my *nearness*, as she called it, that evening. Even now, when Cleora has been wedded some years to that same officious relation, as I may call him, I can hardly be persuaded that such a trifle could have been the motive to her inconstancy; for could she suppose that I would sacrifice my dearest hopes in her to the paltry sum of two shillings, when I was going to treat her to the play, and her mother too, (an expense of more than four times that amount,) if the young man had not interfered to pay for the latter, as I mentioned? But the caprices of the sex are past finding out: and I begin to think my mother was in the right; for doubtless women know women better than we can pretend to know them.

* * * * *

WORKS AND DAYS.

—“Ritorna a tua scienza!

Che vuol, quanto la cosa e piu perfetta,
Piu senta il bene, e cosi la doglienza.”—DANTE.

Record, O Muse! and let the record stand,
That, when Bellona ravaged half the land,
When even these groves, from bloody fields afar,
Oft shook and shuddered at the sounds of war,



When the drum drowned the music of the flail,
And midnight marches broke the peace of Yale,
Then gathered here amid these vacant bowers
A band of scholars, men of various powers,
Various in motion, but with one desire,
Through wreck and war to watch the sacred fire,
The authentic fire that great forethoughted Mind
Stole from the gods for good of humankind.



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Say, Terebinthia, from thy tree of pine,
Nymph of New England! Muse beyond the Nine!
Great Berkeley's goddess! giver oftentimes
Of strength to him, and now and then of rhymes,—
Whose tears were balsam to the Bishop's brain,
To cheer, but not infuriate his vein,—
Tell me, sad virgin, who came after terms
In these dry fields to stir the slumbering germs?

Their names were few,—but Agassiz was one,
And Peirce, the lord of numbers, and alone:
Arithmeticians many more will be,
But when another to outrival thee?
Then those Professors,—Philadelphian pair,
Winlock, the wise, and watchful as a hare,
Bright Benjamin that bears the golden name,
(Apthorp the quick,) Augustus of the same,
And that strict student, evermore exact,
One of the Wymans,—both such men of fact,—
If observation with extensive view
More such observers can observe, they're few.

Ye sacred shades where Silliman made gray
Those hairs that greet him eighty-five to-day!
Good names be these! good names to stand with his,—
Fit to record with Yale's old histories,
When sage Timotheus woke the Western lyre
That Hillhouse touched, and Percival with fire!

Declare now, Clio! 'mid this gifted band,
Who held the reins?—what scientific hand?
Did He preside? did Franklin's honored heir
With wonted influence possess the chair?
No: bowed with cares, a servant of the State,
In loftier fields he held his watch sedate:
Bache could not come,—for us a mighty void!
Yet well for him,—for he was best employed
High on his tented mountain's breezy slope,
Might but those maidens meet him—Health and Hope!

Yet wouldst thou know who stood superior there,
Where all seemed equal, this I may declare:—
Of all the wise that wandered from the East
Or West or South to sit in solemn feast,



Two men did mostly fascinate the Muse,
Differing in genius, but with equal views:
One measuring heaven, in starry lore supreme;
The other lighting, like the morning beam,
Old Ocean's bed, or his fresh Alpine snows,
Reading the laws whereby the glacier grows,
Or life, through some half-intimated plan,
Rose from a star-fish to the race of man:
Choose thine own monarch! either well might reign!
I knew but one before,—and now but twain.

Now shut the gates,—the fields have drunk enough
The time demands a Muse of sterner stuff;
No more one bard, exempt from vulgar throng,
May sing through Roman towns the Ascraean song,
Or court in Learning's elmy bowers relief
From individual shame or general grief:
Silence is music to a soul outworn



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With the wild clangor of the warlike horn,
The paltry fife, the brain-benumbing drum.
When, white Astraea! will thy kingdom come,—
The chaster period that our boyhood saw,—
Arts above arms, and without conquest, Law,—
Rights well maintained without the strength of steel
And milder manners for the gentle weal,—
That Freedom's promise may not come to blight,
And Wisdom fail, and Knowledge end in night?

NEW HAVEN, *August 8.*

* * * * *

PAUL JONES AND DENIS DUVAL.

Ingham and his wife have a habit of coming in to spend the evening with us, unless we go there, or unless we both go to Haliburton's, or unless there is something better to do elsewhere.

We talk, or we play besique, or Mrs. Haliburton sings, or we sit on the stoup and hear the crickets sing; but when there is a new Trollope or Thackeray,—alas, there will never be another new Thackeray!—all else has always been set aside till we have read that aloud.

When I began the last sentence of the last Thackeray that ever was written, Ingham jumped out of his seat, and cried,—

“There, I said I remembered this *Duval*, and you made fun of me. Go on,—and I will tell you all about him, when you have done.”

So I read on to the sudden end:—

“We had been sent for in order to protect a fleet of merchantmen that were bound to the Baltic, and were to sail under the convoy of our ship and the Countess of Scarborough, commanded by Captain Piercy. And thus it came about, that, after being twenty-five days in His Majesty's service, I had the fortune to be present at one of the most severe and desperate combats that have been fought in our or in any time.

“I shall not attempt to tell that story of the battle of the 23d of September, which ended in our glorious captain striking his own colors to our superior and irresistible enemy.” (This



enemy, as Mr. Thackeray has just said, is “Monsieur John Paul Jones, afterwards Knight of His Most Christian Majesty’s Order of Merit.”) “Sir Richard [Pearson, of the English frigate *Serapis*] has told the story of his disaster in words nobler than any I could supply, who, though indeed engaged in that fatal action, in which our flag went down before a renegade Briton and his motley crew, saw but a very small portion of the battle which ended so fatally for us. It did not commence till nightfall. How well I remember the sound of the enemy’s gun, of which the shot crashed into our side in reply to the challenge of our captain who hailed her! Then came a broadside from us,—the first I had ever heard in battle.”[G]

Ingham did not speak for a little while. None of us did. And when we did, it was not to speak of Denis Duval, so much as of the friend we lost, when we lost the monthly letter, or at least, Roundabout Paper, from Mr. Thackeray. How much we had prized him,—how strange it was that there was ever a day when we did not know about him,—how strange it was that anybody should call him cynical, or think men must apologize for him:—of such things and of a thousand more we spoke, before we came back to Denis Duval.



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But at last Fausta said,—“What do you mean, Fred, by saying you remember Denis Duval?”

And I,—“Did you meet him at the Battle of Pavia, or in Valerius Flaccus’s Games in Numidia?” For we have a habit of calling Ingham “The Wandering Jew.”

But he would not be jeered at; he only called us to witness, that, from the first chapter of Denis Duval, he had said the name was familiar,—even to the point of looking it out in the Biographical Dictionary; and now that it appeared Duval fought on board the Serapis, he said it all came back to him. His grandfather, his mother’s father, was a “volunteer”-boy, preparing to be midshipman, on the Serapis,—and he knew he had heard him speak of Duval!

Oh, how we all screamed! It was so like Ingham! Haliburton asked him if his grandfather was not *best-man* when Denis married Agnes. Fausta asked him if he would not continue the novel in the “Cornhill.” I said it was well known that the old gentleman advised Montcalm to surrender Quebec, interpreted between Cook and the first Kamehameha, piloted La Perouse between the Centurion and the Graves in Boston harbor, and called him up with a toast at a school-dinner;—that I did not doubt, therefore, that it was all right,—and that he and Duval had sworn eternal friendship in their boyhood, and now formed one constellation in the southern hemisphere. But after we had all done, Ingham offered to bet Newport for the Six that he would substantiate what he said. This is by far the most tremendous wager in our little company; it is never offered, unless there be certainty to back it; it is, therefore, never accepted; and the nearest approach we have ever made to Newport, as a company, was one afternoon when we went to South-Boston Point in the horse-car, and found the tide down. Silence reigned, therefore, and the subject changed.

The next night we were at Ingham’s. He unlocked a ravishing old black mahogany secretary he has, and produced a pile of parchment-covered books of different sizes, which were diaries of old Captain Heddart’s. They were often called log-books,—but, though in later years kept on paper ruled for log-books, and often following to a certain extent the indications of the columns, they were almost wholly personal, and sometimes ran a hundred pages without alluding at all to the ship on which he wrote. Well! the earliest of these was by far the most elegant in appearance. My eyes watered a little, as Ingham showed me on the first page, in the stiff Italian hand which our grandmothers wrote in, when they aspired to elegance, the dedication,—

“TO MY DEAR FRANCIS,
who will write something here every day, because he loves his
MOTHER.”

That old English gentleman, whom I just remember, when Ingham first went to sea, as the model of mild, kind old men, at Ingham’s mother’s house,—then he went to sea

once himself for the first time,—and he had a mother himself,—and as he went off, she gave him the best album-book that Thetford Regis could make,—and wrote this inscription in ink that was not rusty then!



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Well, again! in this book, Ingham, who had been reading it all day, had put five or six newspaper-marks.

The first was at this entry,—

“A new boy came into the mess. They said he was a French boy, but the first luff says he is the Captain’s own nef-few.”

Two pages on,—

“The French boy fought Wimple and beat him. They fought seeventeen rounds.”

Farther yet,—

“Toney is offe on leave. So the French boy was in oure watch. He is not a French boy. His name is Doovarl.”

In the midst of a great deal about the mess, and the fellows, and the boys, and the others, and an inexplicable fuss there is about a speculation the mess entered into with some illicit dealer for an additional supply, not of liquor, but of sugar,—which I believe was detected, and which covers pages of badly written and worse spelled manuscript, not another distinct allusion to the French boy,—not near so much as to Toney or Wimple or Scroop, or big Wallis or little Wallis. Ingham had painfully toiled through it all, and I did after him. But in another volume, written years after, at a time when the young officer wrote a much more rapid, though scarcely more legible hand, he found a long account of an examination appointed to pass midshipmen, and, to our great delight, as it began, this exclamation:—

“When the Amphion’s boat came up, who should step up but old Den, whom I had not seen since we were in the Rainbow. We were together all day,—and it was very good to see him.”

And afterwards, in the detail of the examination, he is spoken of as “Duval.” The passage is a little significant.

Young Heddart details all the questions put to him, as thus:—

“Old Saumarez asked me which was the narrowest part of the Channel, and I told him. Then he asked how Silly [*sic*] bore, if I had 75 fathom, red sand and gravel. I said, ‘About N.W.,’ and the old man said, ‘Well, yes,—rather West of N.W., is not it so, Sir Richard?’ And Sir Richard did not know what they were talking about, and they pulled out Mackenzie’s Survey,” *etc.*, *etc.*, *etc.*,—more than any man would delve through at this day, unless he were searching for Paul Jones or Denis Duval, or some other hero. “What is the mark for going into Spithead?” “What is the mark for clearing Royal



Sovereign Shoals?”—let us hope they were all well answered. Evidently, in Mr. Heddart’s mind, they were more important than any other detail of that day, but fortunately for posterity then comes this passage:—

“After me they called up Brooke, and Calthorp, and Clements,—and then old Wingate, Tom Wingate’s father, who had examined them, seemed to get tired, and turned to Pierson, and said, ‘Sir Richard, you ought to take your turn.’” And so Sir Richard began, and, as if by accident, called up Den.

“‘Mr. Duval,’ said he, ‘how do you find the variation of the compass by the amplitudes or azimuths?’



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“Of course any fool knew that. And of course he could not ask all such questions. So, when he came on *practice*, he said,—

“Mr. Duval, what is the mark for Stephenson’s Shoal?’

“Oh, dear! what fun it was to hear Den answer,—Lyd Church and the ruins of Lynn Monastery must come in one. The Shoal was about three miles from Dungeness, and bore S.W. or somewhere from it. The Soundings were red sand—or white sand or something,—very glib. Then—

“How would you anchor under Dungeness, Mr. Duval?’

“And Duval was not too glib, but very certain. He would bring it to bear S.W. by W., or, perhaps, W.S.W.; he would keep the Hope open of Dover, and he would try to have twelve fathoms water.

“Well, Mr. Duval, how does Dungeness bear from Beachy Head?’—and so on, and so on.

“And Den was very good and modest, but quite correct all the same, and as true to the point as Cocker and Gunter together. Oh, dear! I hope the post-captains did not know that Sir Richard was Den’s uncle, and that Den had sailed in and out of Winchelsea harbour, in sight of Beachy Head and Dungeness, ever since the day after he was born!

“But he made no secret of it when we passed—mids dined at the Anchor.

“A jolley time we had! I slept there.”

With these words, Denis Duval vanishes from the Diary.

Of course, as soon as we had begged Ingham’s pardon, we turned back to find the battle with the Bon Homme Richard. Little enough was there. The entry reads thus,—this time rather more in log-book shape.

On the left-hand page, in columns elaborately ruled,—

Week-days. |Sept. 1779.|Wind.|Courses. |Dist.|Lat. |Long. |Bearings.

| | |Waiting for | | | |Flamboro.
Wednesday, | 22.23. | S.E.|Convoy till |None.|54 deg. 9’|0 deg.5’ E.| H.
Thursday. /| | |11 of | | | | N. by W.



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“At 1 P.M. beat to quarters. All my men at quarters but West, who was on shore when we sailed, the men say on leave,—and Collins in the sick bay. (MEM. *shirked*.) The others in good spirits. Mr. Wallis made us a speech, and the men cheered well. Engaged the enemy at about 7.20 P.M. Mr. Wallis had bade me open my larboard ports, and I did so; but I did not loosen the stern-guns, which are fought by my crew, when necessary. The captain hailed the stranger twice, and then the order came to fire. Our gun No. 2 (after-gun but one) was my first piece. No. 1 flashed, and the gunner had to put on new priming. Fired twice with those guns, but before we had loaded the second time, for the third fire, the enemy ran into us. One of my men (Craik) was badly jammed in the shock,—squeezed between the gun and the deck. But he did not leave the gun. Tried to fire into the enemy, but just as we got the gun to bear, and got a new light, he fell off. It was very bad working in the dark. The lanthorns are as bad as they can be. Loaded both guns, got new portfires, and we ran into the enemy. We were wearing, and I believe our jib-boom got into his mizzen rigging. The ships were made fast by the men on the upper deck. At first I could not bring a gun to bear, the enemy was so far ahead of me. But as soon as we anchored, our ship forged ahead a little,—and by bringing the hind axle-trucks well aft, I made both my starboard guns bear on his bows. Fired right into his forward ports. I do not think there was a man or a gun there. In the second battery, forward of me, they had to blow our own ports open, because the enemy lay so close. Stopped firing three times for my guns to cool. No. 2 cools quicker than No. 1, or I think so. Forward we could hear musket-shot, and grenadoes,—but none of these things fell where we were at work. A man came into port No. 5, where little Wallis was, and said that the enemy was sinking, and had released him and the other prisoners. But we had no orders to stop firing. Afterwards there was a great explosion. It began at the main hatch, but came back to me and scalded some of my No. 2 men horribly. Afterwards Mr. Wallis came and took some of No. 2’s men to board. I tried to bring both guns to bear with No. 1’s crew. No. 2’s crew did not come back. At half-past ten all firing stopped on the upper deck. Mr. Wallis went up to see if the enemy had struck. He did not come down,—but the master came down and said we had struck, and the orders were to cease firing.

“We had struck to the *Richard*, 44, Commodore Jones, and the *Alliance*, 40, which was the vessel they saw from the quarter-deck. Our consort, the *Countess Scarborough*, had struck to the enemy’s ship *Pallas*. The officers and crew of the *Richard* are on board our ship. The mids talk English well, and are good fellows. They are very sorry for Mr. Mayrant, who was stabbed with a pike in boarding us, and Mr. Potter, another midshipman, who was hurt.



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 Week-days.|Sept., 1779.|Wind. |Courses.|Dist.|Lat. |Long. |Bearings.

 Friday, \24th, 25th. |S.S.W.| |None.|As |As |As above.
 Saturday./| | | | |above. |above. |

“The enemy’s sick and wounded and prisoners were brought on board. At ten on the 25th, his ship, the Richard, sank. Played chess with Mr. Merry, one of the enemy’s midshipmen. Beat him twice out of three.

“There is a little French fellow named Travaillier among their volunteers. When I first saw him he was naked to his waist. He had used his coat for a wad, and his shirt wet to put out fire. Plenty of our men had their coats burnt off, but they did not live to tell it.”

Then the diary relapses into the dreariness of most ship-diaries, till they come into the Texel, when it is to a certain extent relieved by discussions about exchanges.

* * * * *

Such a peep at the most remarkable frigate-action in history, as that action was seen by a boy in the dark, through such key-hole as the after-ports of one of the vessels would give him, stimulated us all to “ask for more,” and then to abuse Master Robert Heddart, “volunteer,” a little, that he had not gone into more detail. Ingham defended his grandfather by saying that it was the way diaries always served you, which is true enough, and that the boy had literally told what he saw, which was also true enough, only he seemed to have seen “mighty little,” which, I suppose, should be spelled “mity little.” When we said this, Ingham said it was all in the dark, and Haliburton added, that “the battle-lanterns were as bad as they could be,” Ingham said, however, that he thought there was more somewhere,—he had often heard the old gentleman tell the story in vastly more detail.

Accordingly, a few days after, he sent me a yellow old letter on long foolscap sheets, in which the old gentleman had written out his recollections for Ingham’s own benefit, after some talk of old times on Thanksgiving evening. It is all he has ever found in his grandfather’s rather tedious papers about the battle, and one passing allusion in it drops the curtain on Denis Duval.

Here it is.



“JAMAICA PLAIN, NOV. 29, 1824.

“MY DEAR BOY,—I am very glad to comply with your request about an account of the great battle between the Serapis and the Bon Homme Richard and her consort. I had rather you should write out what I told you all on Thanksgiving evening at your mother’s, for you hold a better pen than I do. But I know my memory of the event is strong, for it was the first fight I ever saw; and although it does not compare with Rodney’s great fight with De Grasse, which I saw also, yet there are circumstances



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connected with it which will always make it a remarkable fight in history."You said, at your mother's, that you had never understood why the men on each side kept inquiring if the others had struck. The truth is, we had it all our own way below. And, as it proved, when our captain, Pearson, struck, most of his men were below. I know, that, in all the confusion and darkness and noise, I had no idea, aft on the main deck, that we were like to come off second best. On the other hand, at that time, the Richard probably had not a man left between-decks, unless some whom they were trying to keep at her pumps. But on her upper deck and quarter-deck and in her tops she had it all her own way. Jones himself was there; by that time Dale was there; and they had wholly cleared our upper deck, as we had cleared their main deck and gun-room. This was the strangeness of that battle. We were pounding through and through her, while she did not fight a gun of her main battery. But Jones was working his quarter-deck guns so as almost to rake our deck from stem to stern. You know, the ships were foul and lashed together. Jones says in his own account he aimed at our main-mast and kept firing at it. You can see that no crew could have lived under such a fire as that. There you have the last two hours of the battle: Jones's men all above, our men all below; we pounding at his main deck, he pelting at our upper deck. If there had not been some such division, of course the thing could not have lasted so long, even with the horrid havoc there was. I never saw anything like it, and I hope, dear boy, you may never have to."[*Mem. by Ingham. I had just made my first cruise as a midshipman in the U.S. navy on board the Intrepid, when the old gentleman wrote this to me. He made his first cruise in the British navy in the Serapis. After he was exchanged, he remained in that service till 1789, when he married in Canso, N.S., resigned his commission, and settled there.*]

The letter continues:—

"I have been looking back on my own boyish journal of that time. My mother made me keep a log, as I hope yours does. But it is strange to see how little of the action it tells. The truth is, I was nothing but a butterfly of a youngster. To save my conceit, the first lieutenant, Wallis, told me I was assigned to keep an eye on the after-battery, where were two fine old fellows as ever took the King's pay really commanding the crews and managing the guns. Much did I know about sighting or firing them! However, I knew enough to keep my place. I remember tying up a man's arm with my own shirt-sleeves, by way of showing I was not frightened, as in truth I was. And I remember going down to the cockpit with a poor wretch who was awfully burned with powder,—and the sight there was so much worse than it was at my gun that I was glad to get back again. Well, you may judge, that, from two after-portholes below, first larboard,



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then starboard, I saw little enough of the battle. But I have talked about it since, with Dale, who was Jones's first lieutenant, and whom I met at Charlestown when he commanded the yard there. I have talked of it with Wallis many times. I talked of it with Sir Richard Pearson, who was afterwards Lt.-Gov. of Greenwich, and whom I saw there. Paul Jones I have touched my hat to, but never spoke to, except when we all took wine with him one day at dinner. But I have met his niece, Miss Janet Taylor, who lives in London now, and calculates nautical tables. I hope you will see her some day. Then there is a gentleman named Napier in Edinburgh, who has the Richard's log-book. Go and see it, if you are ever there,—Mr. George Napier. And I have read every word I could find about the battle. It was a remarkable fight indeed. 'All of which I was, though so little I saw.'"

[*Mem.* by F.C. And dear Ingham's nice old grandfather is a little slow in getting into action, *me judice*. It was a way they had in the navy before steam.]

The letter continues:—

"I do not know that Captain Pearson was a remarkable man; but I do know he was a brave man. He was made Sir Richard Pearson by the King for his bravery in this fight. When Paul Jones heard of that, he said Pearson deserved the knighthood, and that he would make him an earl the next time he met him. Of course, I only knew the captain as a midshipman (we were 'volunteers' then) knows a post-captain, and that for a few months only. We joined in summer (the *Serapis* was just commissioned for the first time). We were taken prisoners in September, but it was mid-winter before we were exchanged. He was very cross all the time we were in Holland. I do not suppose he wrote as good a letter as Jones did. I have heard that he could not spell well. But what I know is that he was a brave man." Paul Jones is one of the curiosities of history. He certainly was of immense value to your struggling cause. He kept England in terror; he showed the first qualities as a naval commander; he achieved great successes with very little force. Yet he has a damaged reputation. I do not think he deserves this reputation; but I know he has it. Now I can see but one difference between him and any of your land-heroes or your water-heroes whom all the world respects. This is, that he was born on our side, and they were born on the American side. This ought not to make any difference. But in actual fact I think it did. Jones was born in the British Islands. The popular feeling of England made a distinction between the allegiance which he owed to King George and that of born Americans. It ought not to have done so, because he had in good faith emigrated to America before the Rebellion, and took part in it with just the same motives which led any other American officer.[H]

"He had a fondness for books and for society, and thought himself gifted in writing. I should think he wrote too much. I have seen verses of his which were very poor."



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[*Mem.* by F.C. I should think Ingham's grandfather wrote too much. I have seen letters of his which were very long, before they came to their subject.]

The letter continues:—

“To return. The *Serapis*, as I have said, was but just built. She had been launched that spring. She was one of the first 44-gun frigates that were ever built in the world. We (the English) were the first naval power to build frigates, as now understood, at all. I believe the name is Italian, but in the Mediterranean it means a very different thing. We had little ships-of-the-line, which were called fourth-rates, and which fought sixty, and even as low as fifty guns; they had two decks, and a quarter-deck above. But just as I came into the service, the old *Phoenix* and *Rainbow* and *Roebuck* were the only 44s we had: they were successful ships, and they set the Admiralty on building 44-gun frigates, which, even when they carried 50 guns, as we did, were quite different from the old fourth-rates. Very useful vessels they proved. I remember the *Romulus*, the *Ulysses*, the *Actaeon*, and the *Endymion*: the *Endymion* fought the *President* forty years after. As I say, the *Serapis* was one of a batch of these vessels launched in the spring of 1779. “We had been up the *Cattegat* that summer, waiting for what was known as the Baltic fleet.[I]f there were room and time, I could tell you good stories of the fun we had at Copenhagen. At last we got the convoy together, and got to sea,—no little job in that land-locked sailing. We got well across the North Sea, and, for some reason, made *Sunderland* first, and afterwards *Scarborough*. “We were lying close in with *Scarborough*, when news came off that *Paul Jones*, with a fleet, was on the coast. Captain *Pearson* at once tried to signal the convoy back,—for they were working down the coast towards the *Humber*,—but the signals did no good till they saw the enemy themselves, and then they scud fast enough, passing us, and running into *Scarborough* harbor. We had not a great deal of wind, and the other armed vessel we had, the *Countess of Scarborough*, was slow, so that I remember we lay to for her. *Jones* was as anxious as we were to fight. We neared each other steadily till seven in the evening or later. The sun was down, but it was full moon,—and as we came near enough to speak, we could see everything on his ship. At that time the *Poor Richard* was the only ship we had to do with. His other ships were after our consort. The *Richard* was a queer old French Indiaman, you know. She was the first French ship-of-war I had ever seen. She had six guns on her lower deck, and six ports on each side there,—meaning to fight all these guns on the same side. On her proper gun-deck, above these, she had fourteen guns on each side,—twelves and nines. Then she had a high quarter, and a high fore-castle, with eight more guns on these,—having, you



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know, one of those queer old poops you see in old pictures. She was, therefore, a good deal higher than we; for our quarter-deck had followed the fashion and come down. We fought twenty guns on our lower deck, twenty on our upper deck, and on the forecastle and quarter-deck we had ten little things,—fifty guns,—not unusual, you know, in a vessel rated as a forty-four. We had twenty-two in broadside. I remember I supposed for some time that all French ships were black, because the *Richard* was. “As I said, I was on the main deck, aft. We were all lying stretched out in the larboard ports to see and hear what we could, when Captain Pearson himself hailed, “What ship is that?” I could not hear their answer, and he hailed again, and then said, if they did not answer, he would fire. We all took this as good as an order, and, hearing nothing, tumbled in and blazed away. The *Poor Richard* fired at the same time. It was at that first broadside of hers, as you remember, that two of Jones’s heavy guns, below his main deck, burst. We could see that as we sighted for our next broadside, because we could see how they hove up the gun-deck above them. As for our shot, I suppose they all told. We had ten eighteen-pounders in that larboard battery below. I do not see why any shot should have failed. “However, he had no thought of being pounded to pieces by his own firing and ours, and so he bore right down on us. He struck our quarter, just forward of my forward gun,—struck us hard, too. We had just fired our second shot, and then he closed, so I could not bring our two guns to bear. This was when he first tried to fasten the ships together. But they would not stay fastened. He could not bring a gun to bear,—having no forward ports that served him,—till we fell off again, and it was then that Captain Pearson asked, in that strange stillness, if he had struck. Jones answered, ‘I have not begun to fight.’ And so it proved. Our sails were filled, he backed his top-sails, and we wore short round. As he laid us athwart-hawse, or as we swung by him, our jib-boom ran into his mizzen-rigging. They say Jones himself then fastened our boom to his mainmast. Somebody did, but it did not hold, but one of our anchors hooked his quarter, and so we fought, fastened together, to the end,—both now fighting our starboard batteries, and being fixed stern to stem. “On board the *Serapis* our ports were not open on the starboard side, because we had been firing on the other. And as we ran across and loosened those guns, the men amidships actually found they could not open their ports, the *Richard* was so close. They therefore fired their first shots right through our own port-lids, and blew them off. I was so far aft that my port-lids swung free. “What I said, in beginning this letter, will explain to you the long continuance of the action after this moment, when, you would say,



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it must be ended by boarding, or in some other way, very soon. As soon as we on our main deck got any idea of the Richard's main deck, we saw that almost nobody replied to us there. In truth, two of the six guns which made her lower starboard battery had burst, and Jones's men would not fight what were left, nor do I blame them. Above, their gun-deck had been hoisted up, and, as it proved the next day, we were cutting them right through. We pounded away at what we could see,—and much more at what we could not see,—for it was now night, and there was a little smoke, as you may fancy. But above, the Richard's upper deck was a good deal higher than ours, and there Jones had dragged across upon his quarter a piece from the larboard battery, so that he had three nine-pounders, with which he was doing his best, almost raking us, as you may imagine. No one ever said so to me, that I know, but I doubt whether we could get elevation enough from any of our light guns on our upper deck (nines) to damage his battery much, he was so much higher than we. As for musketry, there is not much sharp-shooting when you are firing at night in the smoke, with the decks swaying under you. "Many a man has asked me why neither side boarded,—and, in fact, there is a popular impression that Jones took our ship by boarding, as he did not. As to that, such questions are easier asked than answered. This is to be said, however: about ten o'clock, an English officer, who had commanded the Union letter-of-marque, which Jones had taken a few days before, came scrambling through one of our ports from the Richard. He went up aft to Captain Pearson at once, and told him that the Richard was sinking, that they had had to release all her prisoners (and she had hundreds) from the hold and spar-deck, himself among them, because the water came in so fast, and that, if we would hold on a few minutes more, the ship was ours. Every word of this was true, except the last. Hearing this, Captain Pearson—who, if you understand, was over my head, for he kept the quarter-deck almost throughout—hailed to ask if they had struck. He got no answer, Jones in fact being at the other end of his ship, on his quarter, pounding away at our main-mast. Pearson then called for boarders; they were formed hastily, and dashed on board to take the prize. But the Richard had not struck, though I know some of her men had called for quarters. Her men were ready for us,—under cover, Captain Pearson says in his despatch,—Jones himself seized a pike and headed his crew, and our men fell back again. One of the accounts says we tried to board earlier, as soon as the vessels were made fast to each other. But of this I knew nothing. "Meanwhile Jones's people could not stay on his lower deck,—and could not do anything, if they had stayed there. They worked their way above. His main deck (of twelves) was fought more successfully, but his great strength was on his upper deck and in his



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tops. To read his own account, you would almost think he fought the battle himself with his three quarter-deck cannon, and I suppose it would be hard to overstate what he did do. Both he and Captain Pearson ascribe the final capture of the *Serapis* to this strange incident. "The men in the *Richard's* tops were throwing hand-grenades upon our decks, and at last one fellow worked himself out to the end of the main-yard with a bucket filled with these missiles, lighted them one by one, and threw them fairly down our main hatchway. Here, as our ill luck ordered, was a row of our eighteen-gun cartridges, which the powder-boys had left there as they went for more,—our fire, I suppose, having slackened there:—cartridges were then just coming into use in the navy. One of these grenades lighted the row, and the flash passed—bang—bang—bang—back to me. Oh, it was awful! Some twenty of our men were fairly blown to pieces. There were other men who were stripped naked, with nothing on but the collars of their shirts and their wristbands. Farther aft there was not so much powder, perhaps, and the men were scorched or burned more than they were wounded. I do not know how I escaped, but I do know that there was hardly a man forward of my guns who did escape,—some hurt,—and the groaning and shrieking were terrible. I will not ask you to imagine all this, —in the utter darkness of smoke and night below-decks, almost every lantern blown out or smashed. But I assure you I can remember it. There were agonies there which I have never trusted my tongue to tell. Yet I see, in my journal, in a boy's mock-man way, this is passed by, as almost nothing. I did not think so or feel so, I can tell you. "It was after this that the effort was made to board. I know I had filled some buckets of water from our lee ports, and had got some of the worst hurt of my men below, and was trying to understand what Brooks, who was jammed, but not burned, thought we could do, to see if we could not at least clear things enough to fight one gun, when boarders were called, and he left me. Cornish, who had really been captain of the other gun, was badly hurt, and had gone below. Then came the effort to board, which, as I say, failed; and that was really our last effort. About half-past ten, Captain Pearson struck. He was not able to bring a gun to bear on the *Alliance*, had she closed with us; his ship had been on fire a dozen times, and the explosion had wholly disabled our main battery, which had been, until this came, our chief strength. But so uncertain and confused was it all, that I know, when I heard the cry, 'They've struck,' I took it for granted it was the *Richard*. In fact, Captain Pearson had struck our flag with his own hands. The men would not expose themselves to the fire from the *Richard's* tops. Mr. Mayrant, a fine young fellow, one of Jones's midshipmen, was wounded in boarding us after we struck, because



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some of our people did not know we had struck. I know, when Wallis, our first lieutenant, heard the cry, he ran up-stairs,—supposing that Jones had struck to us, and not we to him.

“It was Lieutenant Dale who boarded us. He is still living, a fine old man, at Philadelphia. He found Captain Pearson on the lee of our quarter-deck again, and said,—

“‘Sir, I have orders to send you on board the ship along-side.’

“Up the companion comes Wallis, and says to Captain Pearson,—

“‘Have they struck?’

“‘No, Sir,’ said Dale,—‘the contrary: he has struck to us.’

“Wallis would not take it, and said to Pearson,—

“‘Have you struck, Sir?’

“And he had to say he had. Wallis said, ‘I have nothing more to say,’ and turned to come down to us, but Dale would not let him. Wallis said he would silence the lower-deck guns, but Dale sent some one else, and took them both aboard the Richard. Little Duval—a volunteer on board, not yet rated as midshipman—went with them. Jones gave back our captain’s sword, with the usual speech about bravery,—but they quarrelled awfully afterwards. ‘I suppose Paul Jones was himself astonished when daylight showed the condition of his ship. I am sure we were. His ship was still on fire: ours had been a dozen times, but was out. Wherever our main battery could hit him, we had torn his ship to pieces,—knocked in and knocked out the sides. There was a complete breach from the main-mast to the stern. You could see the sky and sea through the old hulk anywhere. Indeed, the wonder was that the quarter-deck did not fall in. The ship was sinking fast, and the pumps would not free her. For us, our jib-boom had been wrenched off at the beginning; our main-mast and mizzentop fell as we struck, and at day-break the wreck was not cleared away. Jones put Lieutenant Lunt on our vessel that night, but the next day he removed all his wounded, and finally all his people, to the Serapis, and at ten the Poor Richard went to the bottom. I have always wondered that your Naval Commissioners never named another frigate for her.

“And so, my dear boy, I will stop. I hope in God, it will never be your fate to see such a fight, or any fight, between an English and an American frigate.

“We drifted into Holland. Our wounded men were sent into hospital in the fort of the Texel. At last we were all transferred to the French Government as prisoners, and that



winter we were exchanged. The Serapis went into the French navy, and the only important result of the affair in history was that King George had to make war with Holland. For, as soon as we were taken into the Texel, the English minister claimed us of the Dutch. But the Dutch gentlemen said they were neutrals, and could not interfere in the Rebel quarrel. "Interfere or fight,"



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said England,—and the first clause of the manifesto which makes war with Holland states this grievance, that the Dutch would not surrender us when asked for. That is the way England treats neutrals who offer hospitality to rebels.”

So ends the letter. I suppose the old gentleman got tired of writing. I have observed that the end of all letters is more condensed than the beginning. Mr. Weller, indeed, pronounces the “sudden pull-up” to be the especial charm of letter-writing. I had a mind to tell what the old gentleman saw of Kempenfelt and the Royal George, but this is enough. As Denis Duval scrambles across to Paul Jones’s quarter-deck, at eleven o’clock of that strange moonlight night, he vanishes from history.

* * * * *

THE FUTURE SUMMER.

Summer in all! deep summer in the pines,
And summer in the music on the sands,
And summer where the sea-flowers rise and fall
About the gloomy foreheads of stern rocks
And the green wonders of our circling sphere.

Can mockery be hidden in such guise,
To peep, like sunlight, behind shifting leaves,
And dye the purple berries of the field,
Or gleam like moonlight upon juniper,
Or wear the gems outshining jewelled pride?
Can mockery do this, and we endure
In Nature’s rounded palace of the world?

Where, then, has fled the summer’s wonted peace?
Sweeter than breath borne on the scented seas,
Over fresh fields, and brought to weary shores,
It should await the season’s worshipper;
But as a star shines on the daisy’s eye,
So shines great Conscience on the face of Peace,
And lends it calmer lustre with the dew:
When that star dims, the paling floweret fades!

Yet there be those who watch a serpent crawl
And, blackening, sleep within a blossom’s heart,
Who will not slay, but call their gazing “Peace.”
Even thus within the bosom of our land



Creeps, serpent-like, Sedition, and hath gnawed
In silence, while a timid crowd stood still.

O suffering land! O dear long-suffering land,
Slay thou the serpent ere he slime the core!
Take thou our houses and amenities,
Take thou the hand that parting clings to ours,
And going bears our heart into the fight;
Take thou, but slay the serpent ere he kill!

Now, as a lonely watcher on the strand,
Hemmed by the mist and the quick coming waves,
Hears but one voice, the voice of warning bell,
That solemn speaks, "Beware the jaws of death!"
Death on the sea, and warning on the strand!
Such is our life, while Summer, mocking, broods.



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O mighty heart! O brave, heroic soul!
Hid in the dim mist of the things that be,
We call thee up to fill the highest place!
Whether to till thy corn and give the tithe,
Whether to grope a picket in the dark,
Or, having nobly served, to be cast down,
And, unregarded, passed by meaner feet,
Or, happier thou, to snatch the fadeless crown,
And walk in youth and beauty to God's rest,—
The purpose makes the hero, meet thy doom!

We call to thee, where'er thy pillowed head
Rests lonely for the brother who has gone,
To fix thy gaze on Freedom's chrysolite,
Which rueful fate can neither crack nor mar,
And, hand in hand indissolubly bound
To thy next fellow, hand and purpose one,
Stretch thus, a living wall, from the rock coast
Home to our ripe and yellow heart of the West,
Impenetrable union triumphing.

The solemn Autumn comes, the gathering-time!
Stand we now ripe, a harvest for the Right!
That, when fair Summer shall return to earth,
Peace may inhabit all her sacred ways,
Lap in the waves upon melodious sands,
And linger in the swaying of the corn,
Or sit with clouds upon the ambient skies,—
Summer and Peace brood on the grassy knolls
Where twilight glimmers over the calm dead,
While clustered children chant heroic tales.

* * * * *

DEMOCRACY AND THE SECESSION WAR.

The interest which foreign peoples take in our civil war proceeds from two causes chiefly, though there are minor causes that help swell the force of the current of feeling. The first of these causes is the contemplation of the check which has been given by the war's occurrence to our march to universal American dominion. For about seventy-two years our "progress," as it was called, was more marvellous than the dreams of other nations. In spite of Indian wars, of wars with France and England and Mexico, of depredations on our commerce by France and England and Barbary, of a currency that seemed to have been created for the promotion of bankruptcy and the organization of



instability, of biennial changes in our tariffs and systems of revenue, of competition that ought to have been the death of trade,—in spite of these and other evils, this country, in the brief term of one not over-long human life, increased in all respects at a rate to excite the gravest fears in the minds of men who had been nursed on the balance-of-power theory. A new power had intruded itself into the old system, and its disturbing force was beyond all calculation. Between the day on which George Washington took the Presidential oath and the day when South Carolina broke her oath, our population had increased from something like three millions to more than thirty-one millions; and in all the elements of material strength our increase had far exceeded



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our growth in numbers. When the first Congress of the old Union met, our territory was confined to a strip of land on the western shore of the Atlantic,—and that territory was but sparsely settled. When the thirty-sixth Congress broke up, our territory had extended to the Pacific, on which we had two States, while other communities there were preparing to become States. It did seem as if Coleridge's "august conception" was about to become a great fact. "The possible destiny of the United States of America," said that mighty genius, "as a nation of a hundred millions of freemen, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, living under the laws of Alfred, and speaking the language of Shakspeare and Milton, is an august conception." To all appearance in 1860, there would be a hundred millions of freemen here, and not far from twenty millions of slaves, at the close of the nineteenth century; and middle-aged men were not unreasonable in their expectation of seeing the splendid spectacle. The rate of increase in population that we had known warranted their most sanguine hopes. Such a nation,—a nation that should grow its own food, make its own cloths, dig or pick up its own gold and silver and quicksilver, mine its own coal and iron, supply itself, and the rest of the world too, with cotton and tobacco and rice and sugar, and that should have a mercantile tonnage of not less than fifteen millions, and perhaps very much more,—such a nation, we say, it was reasonable to expect the United States would become by the year 1900. But because the thought of it was pleasing to us, we are not to conclude that it would be so to European sovereigns and statesmen. On the contrary, they had abundant reason to dread the accumulation of so much strength in one empire. Even in 1860 we had passed the point at which it was possible for us to have any fear of European nations, or of a European alliance. We had but to will it, and British America, and what there was left of Spanish America and Mexico, would all have been gathered in, reaped by that mowing-machine, the American sword. Had our rulers of that year sought to stave off civil war by plunging us into a foreign war, we could have made ourselves masters of all North America, despite the opposition of all Europe, had all Europe been ready to try the question with us, whether the Monroe doctrine were a living thing or a dirty skeleton from the past. But all Europe would not have opposed us, seeing that England would have been the principal sufferer from our success; and England is unpopular throughout Continental Europe,—in France, in Germany, and in Russia. Probably the French Emperor would have preferred a true cordial understanding with us to a nominal one with England, and, confining his labors to Europe and the East, would have obtained her "natural boundaries" for France, and supremacy over Egypt. The war might have left but three great powers in the world, namely, France, Russia, and America, or the United States, the latter



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to include Canada and Mexico, with the Slave-Power's ascendancy everywhere established in North America. It was on the cards that we might avoid dissension and civil strife by extending the Union, and by invading and conquering the territories of our neighbors. Why this course was not adopted it is not our purpose now to discuss; but that it would have been adopted, if the Secession movement had been directed from the North against the rule of the Democratic party, we are as firmly convinced as we are of the existence of the tax-gatherer,—and no man in this country can now entertain any doubt of his existence, or of his industry and exactions.

When, therefore, our Union was severed in twain by the action of the Southern Secessionists, and the Confederacy was established, it was the most natural thing in the world that most European governments, and by far the larger part of the governing classes in most European nations, should sympathize with the Rebels: not because they altogether approved of what the Rebels avowed to be their principles, or of their scandalous actions in the cause of lawlessness; but because their success would break down a nation that was becoming too strong to have any regard for European opinion, and the continuance and growth of which were believed to be incompatible with the safety of Europe, and the retention of its controlling position in the world. England was relieved of her fears with regard to her North-American possessions; and Spain saw an end put to those insulting demands that she should sell Cuba, which for years had proceeded from Democratic administrations,—President Buchanan, in the very last days of his term, and while the Union was falling to pieces around him, persisting in a demand which then had become as ridiculous as it had ever been wicked. Austria and Prussia could have no objection to the breaking-up of a nation which had sympathized with Poland, Hungary, and Italy, and which, so far as it acted at all, had acted in behalf of European Liberalism. France, which would have been willing to act with us, had we remained in condition to render our action valuable, had no idea of risking anything in our behalf, and turned her attention to Mexico, as a field well worthy of her cultivation, and which our troubles had laid open to her enterprise and ambition. The kingdom of Italy was of too recent birth to have much influence; and, though its sympathies were with us, it was forced by circumstances to conform to the example of France and England. Even Russia, though unquestionably our friend, and sincerely anxious for our success, probably did not much regret that something had here occurred which might teach us to become less ready to prompt Poles to rebel, and not so eager to help them when in rebellion. Most of the lesser governments of Europe saw our difficulties with satisfaction, because generally they are illiberal in their character, and our example was calculated to render their subjects disaffected.

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The feeling of which we speak is one that arose from the rapid growth of this country, and of the fears that that growth had created as to the safety of European States. It had nothing to do with the character of our national polity, or with the political opinions of our people. It would have existed all the same, if we had been governed by an Autocrat or a Stratocrat, instead of having a movable President for our chief. It would have been as strong, if our national legislature had been as quiescent as Napoleon I.'s Senate, instead of being a reckless and an undignified Congress. It owed its existence to our power, our growth, our ambition, our "reannexing" spirit, our disposition to meddle with the affairs of others, our restlessness, and our frequent avowals of an intention to become masters of all the Occident. We might have been regarded as even more dangerous than we were, had our government been as firmly founded as that of Russia, or had it, like that of France, the power that proceeds at once from the great intellect and the great name of its chief. A Napoleon or a Nicholas at the head of a people so intelligent and so active as Americans would indeed have been a most formidable personage, and likely to employ his power for the disturbance of mankind.

But in addition to the fear that was created by our rapid growth in greatness, the rulers of foreign nations regarded us with apprehension because of our political position. We stood at the head of the popular interest of Christendom, and all that we effected was carried to the credit of popular institutions. We stood in antagonism to the monarchical and aristocratical polities of Europe. The greater our success, the stronger was the testimony borne by our career against the old forms of government. Our example was believed to have brought about that French movement which had shaken the world. The French Revolution was held to be the child of the American Revolution; and if we had accomplished so much in our weak youth, what might not be expected from our example when we should have passed into the state of ripened manhood? Our existence in full proportions would be a protest against hereditary rule and exclusiveness. Imitation would follow, and every existing political interest in Europe was alarmed at the thought of the attacks to which it was exposed, and which might be precipitated at any moment. On the other hand, if our "experiment" should prove a failure, if democracy should come to utter grief in America, if civil war, debt, and the lessening of the comforts of the masses should be the final result of our attempt to establish the sovereignty of the people, would not the effect be fatal to the popular cause in Europe? Certainly there would be a great reaction, perhaps as great, and even as permanent, as that Catholic reaction which began in the generation that followed the death of Luther, and which has been so forcibly painted by the greatest literary artists of our time. This was the second



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cause of that interest in our conflict which has prevailed in Europe, which still prevails there, and which has compelled Europeans of all classes, our foes as well as our friends, to turn their attention to our land. "The eyes of the world are upon us!" is a common saying with egotistical communities and parties, and mostly it is ridiculously employed; but it was the soberest of facts for the three years that followed the Battle of Bull Run. If that gaze has latterly lost some of its intensity, it is because the thought of intervention in our quarrel has, to appearance, been abandoned even by the most inveterate of Tories who are not at the same time fools or the hireling advocates of the Confederate cause. Intervention in Mexico, too, whatever its success, has proved a more difficult and a more costly business than was expected, and has indisposed men who wish our fall to be eager in taking any part in bringing it about. It may be, too, that the opinion prevails in Europe that the Rebels are quite equal to the work which there it is desired should here be wrought, and that policy requires that both parties should be allowed to bleed to death, perishing by their own hands. If American democracy is bent upon suicide, why should European aristocrats interfere openly in the conflict?

We admit that the inference which the European foes of freedom are prepared to draw from our unhappy quarrel would be perfectly correct, if they started from a correct position. If our polity is a democratic polity, and if the end thereof is disunion, civil war, debt, immense suffering, and the fear of the conflict assuming even a social character before it shall have been concluded and peace restored, then is the conclusion inevitable that a democracy is no better than any other form of government, and is as bad as aristocracy or pure monarchy, under both of which modes of governing states there have been civil wars, heavy expenditures, much suffering for all classes of men, and great insecurity for life and property. Assuredly, democracy never could hope for a fairer field than has here existed; and if here it has failed, the friends of democracy must suffer everywhere, and the cause of democracy receive a check from which it cannot hope to recover for generations. As "the horrors of the French Revolution" have proved most prejudicial to the popular cause for seventy years, so must the failure of the American "experiment" prove prejudicial to that cause throughout Christendom. Our failure must be even more prejudicial than that of France; for the French movement was undertaken under circumstances that rendered failure all but certain, whereas ours was entered upon amid the most favoring conditions, such as seemed to make failure wellnigh impossible. But we do not admit that the position assumed by our European enemies is a sound one, and therefore we hold that the conclusion to which they have come, and from which they hope to effect so much for the cause of oppression, is

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entirely erroneous. Whether we have failed or not, the democratic principle remains unaffected. As we never have believed that our example was fairly quotable by European democrats, even when we appeared to be, and in most respects were, the most successful of constitutionally governed nations, so do we now deny that our failure to preserve peace in the old Union can be adduced in evidence against the excellence of democracy, as that is understood by the advanced liberals of Europe. As there is nothing in the history of the French Revolution that should make reflecting men averse to constitutional liberty, so is there nothing in the history of our war that should cause such men to become hostile to that democratic idea which, as great observers assure us, is to overcome and govern the world.

If we have failed, *if* our conflict is destined to end in a “general break-down,” so unhappy a close to a grand movement will not be due to the ascendancy of democracy here, but rather to democracy having by us been kept down and depressed. Our polity is not a democratic polity. It was never meant that it should be a democratic polity. Judging from the history of the doings of the national convention which made the Federal Constitution, and of the State conventions which ratified it, we should be justified in saying that the chief object of “the fathers” was to prevent the existence of a democracy in America. Their words and deeds are alike adverse to the notion that democracy had many friends here in the years that followed the achievement of our nationality. What might have happened, had the work of constitution-making been entered upon two or three years later, so that we should have had to read of Frenchmen and Americans engaged at the same time in the same great business, it might be interesting to inquire, as matter of curiosity; but our government under the Constitution had been fairly organized some days before the last States-General of France met, and, much as this country was subsequently influenced by considerations that proceeded from the French Revolution, they did not affect our polity, while they largely affected our policy. Some eminent men, who were much under the influence of French ideas, and others who were democratically inclined by their mental constitution, did not altogether approve of the polity which had been formed and ratified, and they represented the extreme left of the country,—as others, who thought that polity too liberal, (too feeble, they would have said,) represented the extreme right. These men agreed in nothing but this, that the Federal Constitution was but a temporary contrivance, and destined to last only until one extreme party or the other should succeed in overthrowing it, and substituting for it a polity in which either liberty or power should embody a complete triumph. Probably not one of their number ever dreamed that it would have seventy-two years of unbroken existence, or that the first serious attack made on it would proceed from the quarter whence that attack was destined to come.



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That our polity ever should have been looked upon as democratical in its character, as well at home as abroad, is one of the strangest facts in political history. Probably it is owing to some popular expressions in the Constitution itself. "We, the People of the United States," are the first words of the instrument, and they are represented as ordaining and establishing the Constitution. Some of the provisions of the Constitution are of a popular character, beyond doubt; but they are, in most instances, not inspirations, but derived from English experience,—and it will hardly be pretended that England was an armory from which democracy would think of drawing special weapons. Our fathers, as it were, codified English ideas and practices, because they knew them well, and knew them to be good. The two legislative chambers, the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, the good-behavior tenure of judges, and generally the modes of procedure, were taken from England; and they are not of democratic origin, while they are due to the action of aristocrats. The English Habeas-Corpus Act has been well described as "the most stringent curb that ever legislation imposed on tyranny"; and that act was the work of the English Whigs, the most aristocratical party that ever existed, and it was as dear to Tories as to Whigs. Democracy had no more to do with its existence than with the existence of the earth. No democratic movement has ever aimed to extend this blessing to other countries. In forming our judicial system, the men of 1787-'91 paid little regard to democracy, making judges practically independent. There have been but two Chief Justices of the United States for wellnigh sixty-four years, though it is well known that Chief-Justice Marshall was as odious to the Jeffersonians of the early part of the century as Chief-Justice Taney is to the ascendent party of the last four years. Mansfield did not hold his seat more securely in England than Marshall held his in America, though Mansfield was as emphatically a favorite of George III. as Marshall was detestable in the eyes of President Jefferson, who seems to have looked upon the Federal Supreme Court with feelings not unlike to those with which James II. regarded the Habeas-Corpus Act. Had he been the head of a democratic polity, as he was the head of the democratic party, President Jefferson would have got rid of the obnoxious Chief Justice as summarily as ever a Stuart king ridded himself of an independent judge. And he would have been supported by his political friends,—democrats being quite as ready to support tyranny, and to punish independent officials, as ever were aristocrats or monarchists.



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The manner in which Congress is constituted ought alone to suffice to show that our polity is thoroughly anti-democratic. The House of Representatives has the appearance of being a popular body; but a popular body it is not, in any extended sense. The right to vote for members of the House is restricted, in some States essentially so. As matters stood during the whole period between the first election of Representatives and the closing days of 1860, a large number of members were chosen as representatives of property in men, a number sufficiently large to decide the issue of more than one great political question. In the Congress that met in December, 1859, the last Congress of the old *regime*, one eleventh part of the Representatives, or thereabout, represented slaves! Could anything be more opposed to democratic ideas than such a basis of representation as that? Does any one suppose it would be possible to incorporate into a democratic constitution that should be formed for a European nation a provision giving power in the legislature to men because they were slaveholders, allowing them to treat their slaves as beasts from one point of view, and to regard them as men and women from another point of view? Even in the Free States, and down to recent times, large numbers of men have been excluded from voting for Members of Congress because of the closeness of State laws. At this very time, the State of Rhode Island—a State which in opinion has almost invariably been in advance of her sisters—maintains a suffrage-system that is considered illiberal, if not odious, in Massachusetts; and Massachusetts herself is very careful to guard the polls so jealously that she will not allow any man to vote who does not pay roundly for the “privilege” of voting, while she provides other securities that operate so stringently as sometimes to exclude even men who have paid their money. Universal suffrage exists nowhere in the United States, nor has its introduction ever been proposed in any part of this country. The French imperial system of voting approaches much nearer to universality than anything that ever has been known in America; and yet England manages to get along tolerably well with her imperial and democratic neighbor. Perhaps imperialism sweetens democracy for her, just as democracy salts imperialism in France.

But our House of Representatives, as originally constituted, was a democratic body, when compared with “the upper chamber,” the Senate. The very existence of an “upper chamber” was an invasion of democratic ideas. If the people are right, why institute a body expressly for the purpose of checking their operations? Yet, in making our Constitution, not only was such a body instituted, but it was rendered as anti-democratic and as aristocratical as it could possibly be made. Its members were limited to two from each State, so that perfect equality between the States existed in the Senate, though one State might have four million inhabitants, and its neighbor



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not one hundred thousand. How this worked in practice will appear from the statement of a few facts. The year before the war began, the three leading States of the Union, New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, had, in round numbers, ten millions of people, and they sent six members to the Senate, or the same number with Delaware, Florida, and Oregon, which had not above a twelfth part as many. Massachusetts had seven times as many people as Rhode Island, and each had two Senators. And so on through the whole roll of States. The Senators are not popularly elected, but are chosen by the State legislatures, and for the long term of six years, while Representatives are elected by the people, every two years. The effect was, that the Senate became the most powerful body in the Republic, which it really ruled during the last twelve years of the old Union's existence, when our Presidents were of the Forcible-Feeble order of men. The English have Mr. Mason in their country, and they make much of him; and he will tell them, if asked, that the Senate was the chief power of the American State in its last days. That it was so testifies most strongly to the fact that our polity is not democratic. Yet it was to the peculiar constitution of the Senate that the seventy-two years of the Union were due; and had nothing occurred to disturb its formation, we should have had no Secession War. There was no danger that Secession could happen but what came from the existence of Slavery; and so long as the number of Slave States and of Free States remained the same, it was impossible to convince any large portion of the slaveholders that their beloved institution could be put in danger. But latterly the Free States got ahead of the Slave States, and then the Secessionists had an opportunity to labor to some purpose, and that opportunity they did not neglect. It was to preserve the relative position of the two "sections" that the Missouri Compromise was repealed in 1854, in the hope and expectation that several new States might be made that should set up Slavery, and be represented by slaveholders. Had this nefarious scheme succeeded, it would have saved us from the Secession War; but it would have brought other evils upon the country, which, in the long run, might have proved as great as those under which we are now suffering. We were reduced to a choice of evils; and though we chose blindly, it is by no means certain that we did not choose wisely. As in all other cases, the judgment must depend upon the event,—and the judges are gentlemen who sit in courts-martial.

The manner in which the President and Vice-President of the United States were chosen was the reverse of democratical. Each State had the right to cast as many Electoral votes as it had Representatives in Congress, which was a democratic arrangement up to a certain point; but as a score and upward of the Representatives owed their existence to the existence of Slavery, the equality of the arrangement was more

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apparent than real. Yet farther in the direction of inequality: each State was allowed two Electors who answered to its Senators, which placed New Jersey on a footing with New York, Delaware with Pennsylvania, and Florida with Ohio, in utter disregard of all democratic ideas. The simple creation of Electoral Colleges was an anti-democratic proceeding. The intention of the framers of the Constitution was that the Electors of each State should be a perfectly independent body, and that they should vote according to their own sense of duty. We know that they never formed an independent body, and that they became at once mere agents of parties. This failure was in part owing to a sort of Chalcedonian blindness in the National Convention of 1787. That convention should have placed the choice of Electors where it placed the choice of Senators,—in the State legislatures. This would not have made the Electors independent, but it would have worked as well as the plan for choosing Senators, which has never been changed, and which it has never been sought to change. The mode of choosing a President by the National House of Representatives, when the people have failed to elect one, is thoroughly anti-democratic. The voting is then by States, the small States being equal to the great ones. Delaware then counts for as much as New York, though Delaware has never had but one Representative, and during one decennial term New York's Representatives numbered forty! Twice in our history—in 1801 and in 1825—have Presidents been chosen by the House of Representatives.

The manner in which it is provided that amendments to the Constitution shall be effected amounts to a denial of the truth of what is considered to be an American truism, namely, that the majority shall rule. Two-thirds of both Houses of Congress, or two-thirds of the legislatures of the several States, must unite in the first instance, before amendments can be proposed, or a convention called in which to propose them. If thus far effected, they must be ratified by three-fourths of the States, before they can be incorporated into the Constitution. The process is as difficult as that which awaited the proposer of an amendment to the legislation of the Locrian lawgiver, who made his motion with a rope round his neck, with which he was strangled, if that motion was negatived. The provisions of Article V. pay no more attention to the mere majority of the people than Napoleon III would pay to a request from the majority of Frenchmen to abdicate that imperial position which he won for himself, and which it is his firm purpose shall remain in his family.



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It would be no difficult matter to point out other anti-democratic provisions in our National Constitution; and it would be easy to show that in the Constitutions of most of our States, if not in all of them, there are provisions which flagrantly violate the democratic principle, and of which European democrats never could approve. All through the organic laws of the Nation and the States there are to be found restraints on numbers, as if the leading idea of the Constitution-makers of America were aversion to mere majorities, things that fluctuate from year to year,—almost from day to day,—and therefore are not to be trusted. We are stating the fact, and it does not concern our purpose to discuss the wisdom of what has here been done. How happened it, then, that our polity was so generally regarded as purely democratical in its character? Partly this was owing to the extremely popular nature of all our political action, and to the circumstances of the country not admitting of any struggle between the rich and the poor. Because there was no such struggle, it was inferred that the rich had been conquered by the poor, when the truth was, that, outside of the cities and large towns, there were no poor from whom to form a party. Degrees of wealth, and of means below wealth, there were, and there were poor men; but there was no class of poor people, and hence no material from which to form a proletarian party. In all our great party-conflicts the wealth and talents of the country were not far from equally divided, the wealth and ability of the South being mostly with the democratic party, while those of the North were on the side of their opponents; but to this rule there were considerable exceptions. Foreigners could not understand this; and their conclusion was that the masses had their own way in America, and that property was at their mercy, as it is said by some writers to have been at the mercy of the democracy of Athens.[J] We were said to have established universal suffrage, when in fact suffrage was limited in every State, and in some States essentially limited, the abuses that from time to time occurred happening in great towns for the most part. Most citizens were legal voters in the larger number of the States; but this was owing, not altogether to the liberal character of our polity or legislation, but to the general prosperity of the country, which made tax-paying easy and intelligence common, and hence caused myriads of men to take a warm interest in politics who in other countries never would have thought of troubling themselves about politics, save in times of universal commotion. The political appearance presented by the country was that of a democracy, beyond all question. America seemed to be a democratic flat to the foreigner. To him the effect was much the same as follows from looking upon a map. Look upon a map, and there is nothing but flatness to be seen, the most perfect equality between all parts of the earth. There are neither

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mountains nor villages, neither elevations nor chasms, nothing but conventional marks to indicate the existence of such things. The earth is a boundless plain, on which the prairie is as high as Chimborazo. The observer of the real earth knows that such is not the case, and that inequality is the physical world's law. So was it here, to the foreign eye. All appeared to be on the same level, when he looked upon us from his home; but when he came amongst us, he found that matters here differed in no striking respect from those of older nations. Yet so wedded were foreigners to the notion that we were all democrats, and that here the majority did as it pleased them to do, that, but a short time before his death,—which took place just a year before the beginning of the Secession movement,—Lord Macaulay wrote a letter in which he expressed his belief that we should fall because of a struggle between the rich and the poor, for which we had provided by making suffrage universal! He could not have been more ignorant of the real sources of the danger that threatened us, if he had been an American who resolutely closed his eyes, and then would not believe in what he would not see. When such a man could make such a mistake, and supposed that we were to perish from an agrarian revolt,—we being then on the eve of a revolt of the slaveholders,—it cannot be matter for wonder that the common European belief was that the United States constituted a pure and perfect democracy, or that most Europeans of the higher classes should have considered that democracy as the most impure and imperfect of political things.[K]

The long and almost unbroken ascendancy of the democratic party in this country had much to do with creating the firm impression that our system was democratic in its character,—men not discriminating closely between that party and the polity of which it had charge. Originally, some reproach attached to the word *Democrat*, considered as a party-name; and it was not generally accepted until after the Jeffersonian time had passed away. Men who would now be called *Democrats* were known as *Republicans* in the early part of the century. But the word conquered a great place for itself, and became the most popular of political names, so that even respectable Whigs did not hesitate to appropriate it to their own use. Whatever name it was known by, the democratic party took possession of the Federal Government in 1801, and held it through an unbroken line of Virginia Presidents for twenty-four years. The Presidential term of Mr. J.Q. Adams was no breach of democratic party-rule in fact, whatever it was in name, for almost every man who held high office under Mr. Adams was a Jeffersonian democrat. In 1829 the new democratic party came into power, and held office for twelve successive years. The Whig victory of 1840 hardly interrupted that rule, as President Harrison's early death threw power into the hands of Mr. Tyler,



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who was an ultra-Jeffersonian democrat, a Pharisee of the Pharisees. Mr. Polk, a Jacksonian democrat, was President from 1845 to 1849. The four years that followed saw the Presidential chair filled by Whigs, General Taylor and Mr. Fillmore; and those four years form the only time in which men who had had no connection with the democratic party wielded the executive power of the United States. General Pierce and Mr. Buchanan, both democrats, were at the head of the Government for the eight years that followed Mr. Fillmore's retirement. Thus, during the sixty years that followed Mr. Jefferson's inauguration in 1801, the Presidency was held by democrats for fifty-six years, President Harrison himself being a democrat originally,—and if he is to be counted on the other side, the counting would not amount to much, as he was President less than five weeks. Even in those years in which the democrats did not have the Presidency, they were powerful in Congress, and generally controlled Federal legislation. It was natural, when the democratic party was so successful under our polity, that that polity should itself be considered democratic. In point of fact, the polity was as democratic as the party,—our democrats seldom displaying much sympathy with liberal ideas, and in their latter days becoming even servilely subservient to Slavery. It is but fair to add, that down to 1854 their sins with respect to Slavery were rather those of position than of principle, and that their action was no worse than would have been that of their opponents, had the latter been the ruling party. But, as the democratic party did rule here, and was supposed to hold to democratic principles, the conclusion was not unreasonable that we were living under a democratic polity, the overthrow of which would be a warning to the Liberals of Europe.

Our polity was constitutional in its character, strictly so; and if it has failed,—which we are far indeed from admitting,—the inference would seem fairly to be, that Constitutionalism has received a blow, not Democracy. As England is the greatest of constitutional countries, our failure, supposing it to have occurred, tells with force against her, from whose system we have drawn so much, and not adversely to the cause of European democracy, from whose principles and practice we have taken little. To us it seems that our war bears hard upon no government but our own, upon no people but ourselves, upon no party but American parties. It is as peculiar in its origin as in its modes. It had its origin in the existence of Slavery, and Slavery here existed in the worst form ever known among men. Until Slavery shall be found elsewhere in combination with Constitutionalism or Democracy, it would be unfair to quote our contest as a warning to other liberally governed lands. We were a nation with a snake in its bosom; and as no other nation is similarly afflicted, our misfortune cannot be cited in the case of any other community. Free institutions are to be judged by their effect when they have had fair play, and not by what has happened in a republic which sought to have them in an unnatural alliance with the most detestable form of tyrannical oppression. REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTICES.

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A Summer Cruise on the Coast of New England. By Robert Carter. Boston: Crosby & Nichols, pp. 261.

In these days, when the high price of paper makes it easy for authors to sell by the pound what no one would take by the single copy, he is luckiest who has made the heaviest book. Our morning newspaper nowadays is a kind of palimpsest, and one cannot help wondering how many dead volumes, how many hopes and disappointments, lie buried under that surface made smooth for the Telegraph (sole author who is sure of readers) to write upon. We seem to detect here and there a flavor of Jones's Poem or Smith's History, something like the rhythm of the one and the accuracy of the other. *Quot libras autore summo invenies?* is the question for booksellers now.

In a metaphysical sense, one is apt to find many heavy books for one weighty one, and it is as difficult to make light reading that shall have any nutriment in it as to make light bread. Mr. Carter has succeeded in giving us something at once entertaining and instructive. One who introduces us to a new pleasure close by our own doors, and tells us how we may have a cheap vacation of open air, with fresh experience of scenery and adventure at every turn, deserves something of the same kind of gratitude as he who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before. Americans, above all other men, need to be taught to take a vacation, and how to spend one so as to find in it the rest which mere waste of time never gives. Mr. Carter teaches us how we may have all the pleasure without any of the responsibilities of yachting, and, reversing the method of our summer migration, shows us the shore from the sea.

Hakluyt and Purchas have made us familiar with, the landscape of our coast to the early voyagers,—with its fringe of forest to the water's edge, its fair havens, its swarms of wild fowl, its wooded islets tangled with grape-vines, its unknown mountains looming inland, and its great rivers flowing out of the realm of dream; but its present aspect is nearly as unfamiliar to us as to them. We know almost as little of the natives as Gosnold. Mr. Carter's voyage extends from Plymouth to Mount Desert, and he lands here and there to explore a fishing-village or seaport town, with all the interest of an outlandish man. He describes scenery with the warmth of a lover of Nature and the accuracy of a geographer. Acting as a kind of volunteer aide-de-camp to a naturalist, he dredges and fishes both as man of science and amateur, and makes us more familiarly acquainted with many queer denizens of fin-land. He mingles with our fishermen, and finds that the schoolmaster has been among them also. His book is lively without being flippant, and full of information without that dulness which is apt to be the evil demon of statistics. The moral of it is, that, as one may travel from Dan to Beersheba and see nothing, so one needs but to open his eyes to the life and Nature around him to find plenty of entertainment and knowledge.



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Azarian: An Episode. By Harriet E. Prescott, Author of "The Amber Gods," etc.
Boston: Ticknor & Fields.

If one opened the costly album of some rare colorist, and became bewildered amid successive wreaths of pictured flowers, with hues that seemed to burn, and freshness that seemed fragrant, one could hardly quarrel with a few stray splashes of purple or carmine spilt heedlessly on the pages. Such a book is "Azarian"; and if few are so lavish and reckless with their pigments as Harriet Prescott, it is because few have access to such wealth. If one proceeds from the theory that all life in New England is to be pictured as bare and pallid, it must seem very wrong in her to use tints so daring; but if one believes that life here, as elsewhere, may be passionate as Petrarch and deep as Beethoven, there appears no reason why all descriptive art should be Quaker-colored.

Nature and cultivation gave to this writer a rare inventive skill, an astonishing subtlety in the delineation of character, and a style perhaps unequalled among contemporaries in a certain Keats-like affluence. Yet her plots have usually been melodramatic, her characters morbid, and her descriptions overdone. These are undoubtedly great offences, and have grievously checked her growing fame. But the American public, so ready to flatter early merit, has itself to thank, if that flattery prove a pernicious atmosphere. That fatal cheapness of immediate reputation which stunts most of our young writers, making the rudiments of fame so easy to acquire, and fame itself so difficult,—which dwarfs our female writers so especially that not one of them, save Margaret Fuller, has ever yet taken the pains to train herself for first-class literary work,—has no doubt had a transient influence on Harriet Prescott. Add to this, perhaps, the common and fatal necessity of authorship which pushes even second-best wares into the market. It is evident, that, with all the instinct of a student and an artist, she has been a sensation-writer against her will. The whole structure of "Azarian," which is evidently a work of art and of love, indicates these higher aspirations, and shows that she is resolved to nourish them, not by abandoning her own peculiar ground, but by training her gifts and gradually exorcising her temptations. Like her "Amber Gods," the book rests its strength on its descriptive and analytic power, not on its events; but, unlike that extraordinary story, it is healthful in its development and hopeful in its ending. The name of "An Episode" seems to be given to it, not in affectation, but in humility. It is simply a minute study of character, in the French style, though with a freshness and sweetness which no Frenchman ever yet succeeded in transferring into language, and which here leave none of that bad taste in the mouth of which Charlotte Bronte complained. The main situation is one not new in fiction, being simply unequal love and broken



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truth, but it is one never to be portrayed too often or too tenderly, and it is not desecrated, but ennobled by the handling. It is refreshing to be able to say for Miss Prescott that she absolutely reaches the end of the book without a suicide or a murder, although the heroine for a moment meditates the one and goes to the theatre to behold the other. The dialogue, usually a weak point with this writer, is here for better managed than usual, having her customary piquancy, with less of disfigurement from flippancy and bad puns. The plot shows none of those alarming pieces of incongruity and bathos which have marred some of her stories. And one may fancy that it is not far to seek for the originals of Azarian, Charmian, and Madame Sarator.

It is the style of the book, however, to which one must revert with admiration, not unmingled with criticism, and, it may be, a trifle of just indignation. There are not ten living writers in America of whom it can be said that their style is in itself a charm,—that it has the range, the flexibility, the delicacy, the ease, the strength, which constitute permanent power,—that it is so saturated with life, with literary allusion, with the symbolism of Nature, as to make us dwell on the mere sentences with delight, apart from all thought of argument or theme. This it is to be a literary artist; and as Miss Prescott may justly claim to rank among these favored ones, she must be tried by the code which befits her station. There is not, perhaps, another individual among us who could have written the delicious descriptions of external Nature which this book contains,—not one of the multitude of young artists, now devoting their happy hours to flower-painting, who can depict color by color as she depicts it by words. We hold in our hands an illuminated missal, some Gospel of Nature according to June or October, as the case may be. The price she pays for this astonishing gift is to be often overmastered by it, to be often betrayed into exuberant and fantastic phrases, and wanderings into the realm of words unborn. One fancies the dismay of the accomplished corrector of the University Press, as his indignant pencil hung over “incanting” and “reverizing” and “cose.” Yet closer examination always shows that she, too, has studied grammar and dictionary, algebra and the Greek alphabet; and her most daring verbal feats are never vague or wayward, for there is always an eager and accurate brain behind them. She dares too much to escape blunders, yet, after all, commits fewer in proportion than those who dare less. The basis of all good writing is truth in details; and her lavish wealth of description would be a gaudy profanation, were it not based on a fidelity of observation which is Thoreau-like, so far as it goes. “Sabbatia sprays, those rosy ghosts that haunt the Plymouth ponds,”—“the cardinal, with the very glitter of the stream it loves meshed like a silver mist behind its scarlet sheen,”—“the



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wide rhodora marshes, where some fleece of burning mist seemed to be fallen and caught and tangled in countless filaments upon the bare twigs,"—such traits as these are not to be found in the newspapers nor in the botanies. With all her seeming lavishness, she rarely wastes a word. Though she may sometimes heap upon a frail hepatica some greater accumulation of fine-spun fancies than its slender head will bear, she yet can so characterize a flower with a touch that any one of its lovers would know it without the name. If she hints at "those slipshod little anemones that cannot stop to count their petals, but take one from their neighbor or leave another behind them," it is because she knows how peculiarly this fantastic variableness belongs to the rue-leaved species, so unlike the staid precision of its cousin, the wind-flower, from which not one pedestrian in a hundred can yet distinguish it. If she simply says, "great armfuls of blue lupines," she has said enough, because this is almost the only wild-flower whose size, shape, and abundance naturally tempt one to gather it thus: imagine her speaking of armfuls of violets or wild roses! From this basis of accurate fact her fancy can safely unfold its utmost wings, as in her fancied illustrations for the Garden-Song in "Maud," or in the wonderful descriptions of Azarian's lonely nights on the water. "He leaned over his boat-side, miles away from any shore, a star looked down from far above, a star looked up from far below, the glint passed as instantly, and left him the sole spirit between immense concaves of void and fulness, shut in like the flaw in a diamond." How the subscribers to the Circulating Library of the enterprising Mr. Loring must catch their breaths in amazement, when that courteous gentleman hands them for the last new novel—sandwiched between "Pique" and "Woodburn"—thoughts of such a compass as that!

There are sometimes fictitious writers who sweep across the land in a great wave of popularity and then pass away,—as Frederika Bremer twenty years ago,—and leave no visible impression behind. But Harriet Prescott's fame rests on a foundation of sure superiorities, so far as she possesses it; and no one has impaired or can impair it, except herself. If it has not grown as was at first anticipated, it has been her own doing, and "Azarian" has come none too soon to give a better augury for the future. There is no literary laurel too high for her to grasp, if her own will, and favoring circumstances, shall enable her to choose only noble and innocent themes, and to use canvas firm and pure enough for the rare colors she employs.

The Wrong of Slavery, the Right of Emancipation, and the Future of the African Race in the United States. By Robert Dale Owen. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co. 12mo.



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“Book, Sir, book! It’s the *title!*” This is the reputed saying of Longman, the publisher, when asked for the key to bookselling. It is a pity that Mr. Owen’s book has so cumbrous a name to carry; for everything else about it is compact and portable. Few American works on statistics or political economy possess either brevity or an index, and this combines both treasures. “In this small volume, which a busy man may read in a few hours,” the author condenses an immense deal,—and it is a blessed sign, if a man who has been in Congress can still be so economical of words. If his brother Congressmen would only imitate his precious example, what a blessed hope! How gladly would one subscribe for the “Congressional Globe,” with the assurance that it would henceforth be the only tedious book in his library, that all the chaff would hereafter be safely winnowed into that, and all the sense put into comfortable little duodecimos like this!

Mr. Owen’s opportunities, as Chairman of the American Freedmen’s Commission, have been very great, and he has used them well. The history of slavery and the slave-trade,—the practical consequences of both,—the constitutionality of emancipation,—the present condition of the freed slaves, and their probable future,—all this ground is comprehended within two hundred and fifty pages. The points last named have, of course, the most immediate value, and his treatment of these is exceedingly manly and sensible. He shows conclusively that the whole demeanor of the freed slaves has done them infinite credit, and that the key to their successful management is simply to treat them with justice. That this justice includes equal rights of citizenship he fully asserts, and states the gist of the matter in one of the most telling paragraphs of the book. “God, who made the liberation of the negro the condition under which alone we could succeed in this war, has now, in His providence, brought about a position of things under which it would seem that a full recognition of that negro’s rights as a citizen becomes indispensable to stability of government in peace.” For, as Mr. Owen shows, even if under any other circumstances we might excuse ourselves for delaying the recognition of the freedman’s right to suffrage, because of his ignorance and inexperience, yet it would be utterly disastrous to do so now, when two-thirds of the white population will remain disloyal, even when conquered. We cannot safely reorganize a republican government on the basis of one-sixth of its population, and shall be absolutely compelled to avail ourselves of that additional three-sixths which is loyal and black. Fortunately, as a matter of fact, there are no obstacles to the citizenship of the Southern negro greater than those in the way of the average foreign immigrant. The emancipated negro is at least as industrious and thrifty as the Celt, takes more pride in self-support, is far more eager for education, and has fewer vices. It is impossible to name any standard of requisites for the full rights of citizenship which will give a vote to the Celt and exclude the negro.



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Much as has been written on this point, Mr. Owen has yet some astonishing facts to contribute. He shows, for instance, by the official statements, that, amidst the great distress produced in the city of St. Louis at the beginning of the war, by the gathering of white and black refugees from all parts of the State, when ten thousand persons received public aid, only two out of that whole vast number were of negro blood. These two were all who applied, one being lame, the other bedridden, and both women. He shows, upon similar authority, that the free colored people of Louisiana, under serious civil disabilities, are, on the average, richer, by seven and a half per cent., than the people of the Northern States. Their average wealth in 1860 was five hundred and twenty dollars, while the average wealth in the loyal Free States is only four hundred and eighty-four dollars. Such facts show how utterly gratuitous is the frequent assumption that the emancipated slave does not sufficiently know the value of a dollar.

Upon some disputed points Mr. Owen does not, perhaps, make his facts quite cover his inferences, as, for instance, on the vexed question of the vigor and vitality of the mulatto, upon which the more extended observations of the last three years have as yet shed little light. It is the same with the whole obscure problem of amalgamation; indeed, he slips into an absolute contradiction, in pronouncing judgment rather too hastily here. "I believe," he says, "that the effect of general emancipation will be to discourage amalgamation. It is rare in Canada." (p. 219.) But, however it may be in Canada, he has already admitted, four pages before, that "the proportion of mulattoes among the free colored is much greater than among the slaves," which is, doubt less, true, except, perhaps, in a few large cities of the South. It is a subject of common remark that the Southern colored regiments are generally of far darker complexion than those recruited at the North, and this is inexplicable except on the supposition that freedom, even more than slavery, tends thus far to amalgamation. What further step in reasoning this suggests, it is, fortunately, not needful to inquire; like all other mysteries of human destiny, this will safely work itself out. It is not for nothing that the black man thrives in contact with the white, while the red man dies; and there certainly are practical anxieties enough to last us for a month or two, without borrowing any from the remoter future.

Enoch Arden, etc. By ALFRED TENNYSON, D.C.L., Poet-Laureate. Boston: Ticknor & Fields.



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In his new volume Tennyson has thrown out some verses, graceful, defiant, triumphant, and yet a little touched with sadness, in which he assails the thieves who have stolen his seed of poetry, and made the flower so common that the people call it—as, indeed, they did when first it blossomed—a weed. It may be for the reason here indicated that he has chosen for his later poems a form—that of the Idyl—the versification, construction, and use of which he has made his own by a delicate and yet indisputable stamp of sovereignty: whatever may be the reason, let us be thankful for the choice. He has worked in no field of whose resources he was more completely master, or which has yielded him more full and varied development of his rare genius. The work of his riper years, with the results of his fidelity in discipline, his generous culture, his catholic and earnest intercourse with men, and his clear and thoughtful observation lying ready for his use, he has crowned the green glory of his past with a chaplet that will grow more sure of permanence with the scrutiny of every succeeding year. In his “Idyls of the King” we recognized the best moral qualities of many of his previous works; and in “Enoch Arden,” which gives the title to his last volume, he has turned the full light of his perfected genius on the simple scenes of domestic joy and sorrow.

We have always deemed it one of the greatest of Tennyson’s great and good qualities, that he is unfaltering in the tribute of honor which he pays to the sterling virtues and to the beauty and heroism which he rejoices to point us to in the daily walk of the humblest life. A blameless character, pure desire, manly ambition, a fervent faith, and a strong will, resting on the firm innermost foundation of a Christian spirit, are as real to him in the fisherman as in the peerless prince. The temptations, the strength, and the temper of the hero are so common to both, and so clearly brought out in each, that we feel the Man in the Prince, and the high aim of the Prince in the true Man. There is the “grand, heroic soul” in Enoch as in Arthur,—

“Who revered his conscience as his king;
Whose glory was redressing human wrong;
Who spoke no slander, no, nor listened to it;
Who loved one only, and who clave to her.”

Our poet never strays from Nature; which has for him two sides,—the old duality, which is also forever,—the real and the ideal. To the one he brings the most patient fidelity of study; the other he reflects in every part of his poems in glowing imagery. “Enoch Arden” contains scenes which a Pre-Raphaelite might draw from,—as that “cup-like hollow in the down” which held the hazel-wood, with the children nutting through its reluctant boughs, or the fireside of Philip, on which Enoch looked and was desolate. On the other hand, no poet has so planted our literature with gorgeous gardens from which generations of lesser laborers will be enriched and prospered. The figures in which Tennyson uses Nature are not, moreover, strained or artificial; they do not distort or cover the inner meaning, but bloom from it, revealing its beauty and its sweetness. All bear the mark of loving thought,—now so delicate that its very faintness thrills and holds us, now strong and spirited and solemn.



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In this latest poem we find also the old surpassing skill of language, a skill dependent on the faculty of penetrating to the inmost significance both of words and of things, so that there is no waste, and so that single words in single sentences stamp on the brain the substance of long experiences. Witness this: Enoch lies sick, distant from home and wife and children; here is one word crowded with pathos, telling of the weary loss of livelihood, the burden slowly growing more intolerably irksome to the bold and careful worker wrestling with pain, and to the fragile mother of the new-born babe:—

“Another hand *crept*, too, across his trade,
Taking her bread and theirs.”

See, again, how one line woven in the context shows where the tears came. Enoch, wrecked, solitary, almost hopeless, found that

“A phantom made of many phantoms moved
Before him, haunting him,—or he himself
Moved, haunting people, things, and places known
Far in a darker isle beyond the line:
The babes, their babble, Annie, the small house,
The climbing street, the mill, the leafy lanes,
The peacock-yewtree and the lonely Hall,
The horse he drove, the boat he sold, the chill
November dawns and dewy glooming of the downs,
The gentle shower, *the smell of dying leaves*,
And the low moan of leaden-colored seas.”

We know of no more perfect rendering of an unlearned and trustful faith in God than this which Tennyson puts in the mouth of Enoch as he departs on the voyage from which he never returns to his wife:—

“If you fear,
Cast all your fears on God: that anchor holds.
Is He not yonder in those uttermost
Parts of the morning? if I flee to these,
Can I go from Him? And the sea is His,
The sea is His: He made it.”

In the repetition in the last line one can almost hear the sob welling up from the heart of the strong sailor, as he speaks of God to one beloved, in time of trial,—the feeling of bitterness in parting starting with the impulse of the stronger faith.

In “Enoch Arden,” as in “In Memoriam,” Tennyson shows the sweet and sure sympathy which informs him of all the ways of grief. In its sacred experiences, where the slightest



variance from the simplicity of actual feeling would jostle all, he holds his way unquestioned.

It is a test, unembarrassed and complete, of genius, this treatment of grief, the emotion which least of all brooks exaggeration or sentimentalism. It is the test of human purity, too, and the hand must be very tender and very clean which leaves thus exact and clear the picture of the crowning phase of human life. If "In Memoriam" has appropriated to itself, by its sublime supremacy, a phrase which, though in daily use, is never heard without suggesting the poem, Tennyson shows in "Enoch Arden" that he understands the sad and perfect reign of grief in the life of the sailor and of the sailor's wife struck with a great sorrow for the loss of the latest born, as well as in the broad and varied range of his own cultured nature.



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Coupled with the knowledge of grief is this of prayer,—“that mystery when God in man is one with man-in-God,”—which is said when Enoch had resolved to surrender his Annie rather than to break in upon her happiness:—

“His resolve
Upbore him, and firm faith, and evermore
Prayer, from a living source within the will,
And beating up through all the bitter world,
Like fountains of sweet water in the sea,
Kept him a living soul.”

And so we close the poem, which touches us again more than we deemed possible, till each renewal of the reading stirs again the depths of passionate sympathy. A pure manhood among the poets, a heart simple as the simplest, an imperial fancy, whose lofty supremacy none can question, a high faith, and a spirit possessed with the sublimest and most universal of Christ's truths, a tender and strong humanity, not bounded by a vague and misty sentiment, but pervading life in all its forms, and with these great skill and patience and beauty in expression,—these are the riper qualities to which “Enoch Arden” testifies. They are qualities whose attainment and retention are singularly rare, and whose value we cannot easily overrate.

And thus much having been said of “Enoch Arden,” we find no space for consideration of the other poems contained in the new volume. “Aylmer's Field” is in some respects, perhaps, more remarkable than the poem which precedes it, since the poet never loses sight of England, in its course, nor the old familiar scenes, but tugs at the fetid roots of shallow aristocracy with the relentless clutch of one of God's noblemen laboring for the right.

Shut in these few pages we find the substance of a three-volume novel; and while the mind sways slowly to the music of its “sculptured lines,” the lives of men move on from birth to death, leaving their meaning stamped in rhythmic beauty on our heart and brain.

Nor must we forget, while contemplating the two principal poems in the volume,—finished heroic lessons of the poet's mature life,—the songs, singing themselves like summer ripples on the strand, which are their melodious companions. Among them we dare to mention “In the Valley of Caunteretz,”—

“Sweeter thy voice, though every sound is sweet.”

FOOTNOTES:

[A] *Madame Recamier, with a Sketch of the History of Society in France*. By Madame M ——. London. 1862.



[B] *Causeries de Lundi.*

[C] *Coppet et Weimar: Madame de Stael et la Grande Duchesse Louise.*

[D] Madame de Chateaubriand.

[E] This term designated a larger class of young men than that to which it is now confined. It took in the articed clerks of merchants and bankers, the George Barnwells of the day.



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[F] Since writing this article, we have been informed that the object of our funeral oration is not definitively dead, but only moribund. So much the better: we shall have an opportunity of granting the request made to Walter by one of the children in the wood, and “kill him two times.” The Abbe de Vertot, having a siege to write, and not receiving the materials in time, composed the whole from his invention. Shortly after its completion, the expected documents arrived, when he threw them aside, exclaiming, “You are of no use to me now: I have carried the town.”

[G] *Cornhill Magazine*, June, 1864, Vol. IX. p. 654.

[H] Gates was an Englishman, and has a damaged reputation. Lee was another, who has no reputation at all. Conway was an Irishman, and the same is true of him. But these men all did something to forfeit esteem. Jones never did. Montgomery died in the full flush of his deserved honors. He was Irish by birth.

[I] Not bound to the Baltic, as Mr. Thackeray supposes. Cf. Beatson’s *Naval Memoirs*, Vol. IV. pp. 550-553.

[J] The bad character that is commonly given to the Athenian polity by the enemies of popular government is by no means deserved if we can trust the definition of that polity by Pericles, as reported by Thucydides, and translated by that eminent scholar and great historian, Mr. Grote. “We live under a constitution,” says Pericles, in the famous funeral speech, “such as noway to envy the laws of our neighbors,—ourselves an example to others, rather than mere imitators. It is called a democracy, since its permanent aim tends toward the Many and not toward the Few: in regard to private matters and disputes, the laws deal equally with every man: while looking to public affairs and to claims of individual influence, every man’s chance of advancement is determined, not by party favor, but by real worth, according as his reputation stands in his own particular department: nor does poverty, or obscure station, keep him back, if he really has the means of benefiting the city.” This wellnigh makes a political Arcadia of Athens. Yet there is no good reason, after making due allowance for the imperfection of human action, when compared with the theory of a given polity, for doubting the correctness of the picture.

[K] One of our English Friends, a man of well-earned eminence, says that “extracts from the contemporary literature of America seem to show, that, if the result of the Presidential election of 1860 had been different, separation would have come, not from the South, but from the North.” (See *Essays on Fiction*, by Nassau W. Senior, p. 397.) Mr. Senior is mistaken, as much so as when he says that “a total abstinence from novel-reading pervades New England,” where there is more novel-reading than in any other community of the same numbers in the world. With the exception of “the old Abolitionists,” there were not five hundred disunionists in all the Free States in 1860; and the Abolitionists would neither fight nor vote, and, though possessed of eminent abilities, they had no influence. If Mr. Senior were right, we do not see how the South

could be blamed for what it has done; for, if we could secede because of Mr. Lincoln's defeat, it follows that the South could secede because of his election.