

Nine Short Essays eBook

Nine Short Essays by Charles Dudley Warner

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A NIGHT IN THE GARDEN OF THE TUILERIES

It was in the time of the Second Empire. To be exact, it was the night of the 18th of June, 1868; I remember the date, because, contrary to the astronomical theory of short nights at this season, this was the longest night I ever saw. It was the loveliest time of the year in Paris, when one was tempted to lounge all day in the gardens and to give to sleep none of the balmy nights in this gay capital, where the night was illuminated like the day, and some new pleasure or delight always led along the sparkling hours. Any day the Garden of the Tuileries was a microcosm repaying study. There idle Paris sunned itself; through it the promenaders flowed from the Rue de Rivoli gate by the palace to the entrance on the Place de la Concorde, out to the Champs-Élysées and back again; here in the north grove gathered thousands to hear the regimental band in the afternoon; children chased butterflies about the flower-beds and amid the tubs of orange-trees; travelers, guide-book in hand, stood resolutely and incredulously before the groups of statuary, wondering what that Infant was doing with, the snakes and why the recumbent figure of the Nile should have so many children climbing over him; or watched the long facade of the palace hour after hour, in the hope of catching at some window the flutter of a royal robe; and swarthy, turbaned Zouaves, erect, lithe, insouciant, with the firm, springy step of the tiger, lounged along the allees.

Napoleon was at home—a fact attested by a reversal of the hospitable rule of democracy, no visitors being admitted to the palace when he was at home. The private garden, close to the imperial residence, was also closed to the public, who in vain looked across the sunken fence to the parterres, fountains, and statues, in the hope that the mysterious man would come out there and publicly enjoy himself. But he never came, though I have no doubt that he looked out of the windows upon the beautiful garden and his happy Parisians, upon the groves of horse-chestnuts, the needle-like fountain beyond, the Column of Luxor, up the famous and shining vista terminated by the Arch of the Star, and reflected with Christian complacency upon the greatness of a monarch who was the lord of such splendors and the goodness of a ruler who opened them all to his children. Especially when the western sunshine streamed down over it all, turning even the dust of the atmosphere into gold and emblazoning the windows of the Tuileries with a sort of historic glory, his heart must have swelled within him in throbs of imperial exaltation. It is the fashion nowadays not to consider him a great man, but no one pretends to measure his goodness.

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The public garden of the Tuileries was closed at dusk, no one being permitted to remain in it after dark. I suppose it was not safe to trust the Parisians in the covert of its shades after nightfall, and no one could tell what foreign fanatics and assassins might do if they were permitted to pass the night so near the imperial residence. At any rate, everybody was drummed out before the twilight fairly began, and at the most fascinating hour for dreaming in the ancient garden. After sundown the great door of the Pavilion de l'Horloge swung open and there issued from it a drum-corps, which marched across the private garden and down the broad allee of the public garden, drumming as if the judgment-day were at hand, straight to the great gate of the Place de la Concorde, and returning by a side allee, beating up every covert and filling all the air with clamor until it disappeared, still thumping, into the court of the palace; and all the square seemed to ache with the sound. Never was there such pounding since Thackeray's old Pierre, who, "just to keep up his drumming, one day drummed down the Bastile":

At midnight I beat the tattoo,
And woke up the Pikemen of Paris
To follow the bold Barbaroux.

On the waves of this drumming the people poured out from every gate of the garden, until the last loiterer passed and the gendarmes closed the portals for the night. Before the lamps were lighted along the Rue de Rivoli and in the great square of the Revolution, the garden was left to the silence of its statues and its thousand memories. I often used to wonder, as I looked through the iron railing at nightfall, what might go on there and whether historic shades might not flit about in the ghostly walks.

Late in the afternoon of the 18th of June, after a long walk through the galleries of the Louvre, and excessively weary, I sat down to rest on a secluded bench in the southern grove of the garden; hidden from view by the tree-trunks. Where I sat I could see the old men and children in that sunny flower-garden, La Petite Provence, and I could see the great fountain-basin facing the Porte du Pont-Tournant. I must have heard the evening drumming, which was the signal for me to quit the garden; for I suppose even the dead in Paris hear that and are sensitive to the throb of the glory-calling drum. But if I did hear it,—it was only like an echo of the past, and I did not heed it any more than Napoleon in his tomb at the Invalides heeds, through the drawn curtain, the chanting of the daily mass. Overcome with fatigue, I must have slept soundly.

When I awoke it was dark under the trees. I started up and went into the broad promenade. The garden was deserted; I could hear the splash of the fountains, but no other sound therein. Lights were gleaming from the windows of the Tuileries, lights blazed along the Rue de Rivoli, dotted the great Square, and glowed for miles up the Champs Elysees. There were the steady roar of wheels and the tramping of feet without, but within was the stillness of death.

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What should I do? I am not naturally nervous, but to be caught lurking in the Tuileries Garden in the night would involve me in the gravest peril. The simple way would have been to have gone to the gate nearest the Pavillon de Marsan, and said to the policeman on duty there that I had inadvertently fallen asleep, that I was usually a wide-awake citizen of the land that Lafayette went to save, that I wanted my dinner, and would like to get out. I walked down near enough to the gate to see the policeman, but my courage failed. Before I could stammer out half that explanation to him in his trifling language (which foreigners are mockingly told is the best in the world for conversation), he would either have slipped his hateful rapier through my body, or have raised an alarm and called out the guards of the palace to hunt me down like a rabbit.

A man in the Tuileries Garden at night! an assassin! a conspirator! one of the Carbonari, perhaps a dozen of them—who knows?—Orsini bombs, gunpowder, Greek-fire, Polish refugees, murder, *emeutes*, *revolution*!

No, I'm not going to speak to that person in the cocked hat and dress-coat under these circumstances. Conversation with him out of the best phrase-books would be uninteresting. Diplomatic row between the two countries would be the least dreaded result of it. A suspected conspirator against the life of Napoleon, without a chance for explanation, I saw myself clubbed, gagged, bound, searched (my minute notes of the Tuileries confiscated), and trundled off to the Conciergerie, and hung up to the ceiling in an iron cage there, like Ravailac.

I drew back into the shade and rapidly walked to the western gate. It was closed, of course. On the gate-piers stand the winged steeds of Marly, never less admired than by me at that moment. They interested me less than a group of the Corps d'Afrique, who lounged outside, guarding the entrance from the square, and unsuspecting that any assassin was trying to get out. I could see the gleam of the lamps on their bayonets and hear their soft tread. Ask them to let me out? How nimbly they would have scaled the fence and transfixed me! They like to do such things. No, no—whatever I do, I must keep away from the clutches of these cats of Africa.

And enough there was to do, if I had been in a mind to do it. All the seats to sit in, all the statuary to inspect, all the flowers to smell. The southern terrace overlooking the Seine was closed, or I might have amused myself with the toy railway of the Prince Imperial that ran nearly the whole length of it, with its switches and turnouts and houses; or I might have passed delightful hours there watching the lights along the river and the blazing illumination on the amusement halls. But I ascended the familiar northern terrace and wandered amid its bowers, in company with Hercules, Meleager, and other worthies I knew only by sight, smelling the orange-blossoms, and trying to fix the site of the old riding-school where the National Assembly sat in 1789.

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It must have been eleven o'clock when I found myself down by the private garden next the palace. Many of the lights in the offices of the household had been extinguished, but the private apartments of the Emperor in the wing south of the central pavilion were still illuminated. The Emperor evidently had not so much desire to go to bed as I had. I knew the windows of his petits appartements—as what good American did not?—and I wondered if he was just then taking a little supper, if he had bidden good-night to Eugenie, if he was alone in his room, reflecting upon his grandeur and thinking what suit he should wear on the morrow in his ride to the Bois. Perhaps he was dictating an editorial for the official journal; perhaps he was according an interview to the correspondent of the London Glorifier; perhaps one of the Abbots was with him. Or was he composing one of those important love-letters of state to Madame Blank which have since delighted the lovers of literature? I am not a spy, and I scorn to look into people's windows late at night, but I was lonesome and hungry, and all that square round about swarmed with imperial guards, policemen, keen-scented Zouaves, and nobody knows what other suspicious folk. If Napoleon had known that there was a

Manin the garden!

I suppose he would have called up his family, waked the drum-corps, sent for the Prefect of Police, put on the alert the 'sergents de ville,' ordered under arms a regiment of the Imperial Guards, and made it unpleasant for the Man.

All these thoughts passed through my mind, not with the rapidity of lightning, as is usual in such cases, but with the slowness of conviction. If I should be discovered, death would only stare me in the face about a minute. If he waited five minutes, who would believe my story of going to sleep and not hearing the drums? And if it were true, why didn't I go at once to the gate, and not lurk round there all night like another Clement? And then I wondered if it was not the disagreeable habit of some night-patrol or other to beat round the garden before the Sire went to bed for good, to find just such characters as I was gradually getting to feel myself to be.

But nobody came. Twelve o'clock, one o'clock sounded from the tower of the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, from whose belfry the signal was given for the beginning of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew—the same bells that tolled all that dreadful night while the slaughter went on, while the effeminate Charles IX fired from the windows of the Louvre upon stray fugitives on the quay—bells the reminiscent sound of which, a legend (which I fear is not true) says, at length drove Catharine de Medici from the Tuileries.

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One o'clock! The lights were going out in the Tuileries, had nearly all gone out. I wondered if the suspicious and timid and wasteful Emperor would keep the gas burning all night in his room. The night-roar of Paris still went on, sounding always to foreign ears like the beginning of a revolution. As I stood there, looking at the window that interested me most, the curtains were drawn, the window was opened, and a form appeared in a white robe. I had never seen the Emperor before in a night-gown, but I should have known him among a thousand. The Man of Destiny had on a white cotton night-cap, with a peaked top and no tassel. It was the most natural thing in the land; he was taking a last look over his restless Paris before he turned in. What if he should see me! I respected that last look and withdrew into the shadow. Tired and hungry, I sat down to reflect upon the pleasures of the gay capital.

One o'clock and a half! I had presence of mind enough to wind my watch; indeed, I was not likely to forget that, for time hung heavily on my hands. It was a gay capital. Would it never put out its lights, and cease its uproar, and leave me to my reflections? In less than an hour the country legions would invade the city, the market-wagons would rumble down the streets, the vegetable-man and the strawberry-woman, the fishmongers and the greens-venders would begin their melodious cries, and there would be no repose for a man even in a public garden. It is secluded enough, with the gates locked, and there is plenty of room to turn over and change position; but it is a wakeful situation at the best, a haunting sort of place, and I was not sure it was not haunted.

I had often wondered as I strolled about the place in the daytime or peered through the iron fence at dusk, if strange things did not go on here at night, with this crowd of effigies of persons historical and more or less mythological, in this garden peopled with the representatives of the dead, and no doubt by the shades of kings and queens and courtiers, 'intrigantes' and panders, priests and soldiers, who live once in this old pile—real shades, which are always invisible in the sunlight. They have local attachments, I suppose. Can science tell when they depart forever from the scenes of their objective intrusion into the affairs of this world, or how long they are permitted to revisit them? Is it true that in certain spiritual states, say of isolation or intense nervous alertness, we can see them as they can see each other? There was I—the I catalogued in the police description—present in that garden, yet so earnestly longing to be somewhere else that would it be wonderful if my 'eidolon' was somewhere else and could be seen?—though not by a policeman, for policemen have no spiritual vision.

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There were no policemen in the garden, that I was certain of; but a little after half-past one I saw a Man, not a man I had ever seen before, clad in doublet and hose, with a short cloak and a felt cap with a white plume, come out of the Pavillon de Flore and turn down the quay towards the house I had seen that afternoon where it stood—of the beautiful Gabrielle d’Estrees. I might have been mistaken but for the fact that, just at this moment, a window opened in the wing of the same pavilion, and an effeminate, boyish face, weak and cruel, with a crown on its head, appeared and looked down into the shadow of the building as if its owner saw what I had seen. And there was nothing remarkable in this, except that nowadays kings do not wear crowns at night. It occurred to me that there was a masquerade going on in the Tuileries, though I heard no music, except the tinkle of, it might be, a harp, or “the lascivious pleasing of a lute,” and I walked along down towards the central pavilion. I was just in time to see two ladies emerge from it and disappear, whispering together, in the shrubbery; the one old, tall, and dark, with the Italian complexion, in a black robe, and the other young, petite, extraordinarily handsome, and clad in light and bridal stuffs, yet both with the same wily look that set me thinking on poisons, and with a grace and a subtle carriage of deceit that could be common only to mother and daughter. I didn’t choose to walk any farther in the part of the garden they had chosen for a night promenade, and turned off abruptly.

What?

There, on the bench of the marble hemicycle in the north grove, sat a row of graybeards, old men in the costume of the first Revolution, a sort of serene and benignant Areopagus. In the cleared space before them were a crowd of youths and maidens, spectators and participants in the Floral Games which were about to commence; behind the old men stood attendants who bore chaplets of flowers, the prizes in the games. The young men wore short red tunics with copper belts, formerly worn by Roman lads at the ludi, and the girls tunics of white with loosened girdles, leaving their limbs unrestrained for dancing, leaping, or running; their hair was confined only by a fillet about the head. The pipers began to play and the dancers to move in rhythmic measures, with the slow and languid grace of those full of sweet wine and the new joy of the Spring, according to the habits of the Golden Age, which had come again by decree in Paris. This was the beginning of the classic sports, but it is not possible for a modern pen to describe particularly the Floral Games. I remember that the Convention ordered the placing of these hemicycles in the garden, and they were executed from Robespierre’s designs; but I suppose I am the only person who ever saw the games played that were expected to be played before them. It was a curious coincidence that the little livid-green man was also there, leaning against a tree and looking on with a half sneer. It seemed to me an odd classic revival, but then Paris has spasms of that, at the old Theatre Francais and elsewhere.

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Pipes in the garden, lutes in the palace, paganism, Revolution—the situation was becoming mixed, and I should not have been surprised at a ghostly procession from the Place de la Concorde, through the western gates, of the thousands of headless nobility, victims of the axe and the basket; but, thank Heaven, nothing of that sort appeared to add to the wonders of the night; yet, as I turned a moment from the dancers, I thought I saw something move in the shrubbery. The Laocoon? It could not be. The arms moving? Yes. As I drew nearer the arms distinctly moved, putting away at length the coiling serpent, and pushing from the pedestal the old-men boys, his comrades in agony. Laocoon shut his mouth, which had been stretched open for about eighteen centuries, untwisted the last coil of the snake, and stepped down, a free man. After this it did not surprise me to see Spartacus also step down and approach him, and the two ancients square off for fisticuffs, as if they had done it often before, enjoying at night the release from the everlasting pillory of art. It was the hour of releases, and I found myself in a moment in the midst of a “classic revival,” whimsical beyond description. Aeneas hastened to deposit his aged father in a heap on the gravel and ran after the Sylvan Nymphs; Theseus gave the Minotaur a respite; Themistocles was bending over the dying Spartan, who was coming to life; Venus Pudica was waltzing about the diagonal basin with Antinous; Ascanius was playing marbles with the infant Hercules. In this unreal phantasmagoria it was a relief to me to see walking in the area of the private garden two men: the one a stately person with a kingly air, a handsome face, his head covered with a huge wig that fell upon his shoulders; the other a farmer-like man, stout and ungracious, the counterpart of the pictures of the intendant Colbert. He was pointing up to the palace, and seemed to be speaking of some alterations, to which talk the other listened impatiently. I wondered what Napoleon, who by this time was probably dreaming of Mexico, would have said if he had looked out and seen, not one man in the garden, but dozens of men, and all the stir that I saw; if he had known, indeed, that the Great Monarch was walking under his windows.

I said it was a relief to me to see two real men, but I had no reason to complain of solitude thereafter till daybreak. That any one saw or noticed me I doubt, and I soon became so reassured that I had more delight than fear in watching the coming and going of personages I had supposed dead a hundred years and more; the appearance at windows of faces lovely, faces sad, faces terror-stricken; the opening of casements and the dropping of billets into the garden; the flutter of disappearing robes; the faint sounds of revels from the interior of the palace; the hurrying of feet, the flashing of lights, the clink of steel, that told of partings and sudden armings, and the presence of a king that will be denied at

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no doors. I saw through the windows of the long Galerie de Diane the robes of the Regency at supper, and at table with them a dark, semi-barbarian little man in a coat of Russian sable, the coolest head in Europe at a drinking-bout. I saw enter the south pavilion a tall lady in black, with the air of a royal procuress; and presently crossed the garden and disappeared in the pavilion a young Parisian girl, and then another and another, a flock of innocents, and I thought instantly of the dreadful Parc aux Cerfs at Versailles.

So wrought upon was I by the sight of this infamy that I scarcely noticed the incoming of a royal train at the southern end of the palace, and notably in it a lady with light hair and noble mien, and the look in her face of a hunted lioness at bay. I say scarcely, for hardly had the royal cortege passed within, when there arose a great clamor in the inner court, like the roar of an angry multitude, a scuffling of many feet, firing of guns, thrusting of pikes, followed by yells of defiance in mingled French and German, the pitching of Swiss Guards from doorways and windows, and the flashing of flambeaux that ran hither and thither. "Oh!" I said, "Paris has come to call upon its sovereign; the pikemen of Paris, led by the bold Barbaroux."

The tumult subsided as suddenly as it had risen, hushed, I imagined, by the jarring of cannon from the direction of St. Roch; and in the quiet I saw a little soldier alight at the Rue de Rivoli gate—a little man whom you might mistake for a corporal of the guard—with a wild, coarse-featured Corsican (say, rather, Basque) face, his disordered chestnut hair darkened to black locks by the use of pomatum—a face selfish and false, but determined as fate. So this was the beginning of the Napoleon "legend"; and by-and-by this coarse head will be idealized into the Roman Emperor type, in which I myself might have believed but for the revelations of the night of strange adventure.

What is history? What is this drama and spectacle, that has been put forth as history, but a cover for petty intrigue, and deceit, and selfishness, and cruelty? A man shut into the Tuileries Garden begins to think that it is all an illusion, the trick of a disordered fancy. Who was Grand, who was Well-Beloved, who was Desired, who was the Idol of the French, who was worthy to be called a King of the Citizens? Oh, for the light of day!

And it came, faint and tremulous, touching the terraces of the palace and the Column of Luxor. But what procession was that moving along the southern terrace? A squad of the National Guard on horseback, a score or so of King's officers, a King on foot, walking with uncertain step, a Queen leaning on his arm, both habited in black, moved out of the western gate. The King and the Queen paused a moment on the very spot where Louis XVI. was beheaded, and then got into a carriage drawn by one horse and were driven rapidly along the quays in the direction of St. Cloud. And again Revolution, on the heels of the fugitives, poured into the old palace and filled it with its tatterdemalions.

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Enough for me that daylight began to broaden. "Sleep on," I said, "O real President, real Emperor (by the grace of coup d'état) at last, in the midst of the most virtuous court in Europe, loved of good Americans, eternally established in the hearts of your devoted Parisians! Peace to the palace and peace to its lovely garden, of both of which I have had quite enough for one night!"

The sun came up, and, as I looked about, all the shades and concourse of the night had vanished. Day had begun in the vast city, with all its roar and tumult; but the garden gates would not open till seven, and I must not be seen before the early stragglers should enter and give me a chance of escape. In my circumstances I would rather be the first to enter than the first to go out in the morning, past those lynx-eyed gendarmes. From my covert I eagerly watched for my coming deliverers. The first to appear was a 'chiffonnier,' who threw his sack and pick down by the basin, bathed his face, and drank from his hand. It seemed to me almost like an act of worship, and I would have embraced that rag-picker as a brother. But I knew that such a proceeding, in the name even of egalite and fraternite would have been misinterpreted; and I waited till two and three and a dozen entered by this gate and that, and I was at full liberty to stretch my limbs and walk out upon the quay as nonchalant as if I had been taking a morning stroll.

I have reason to believe that the police of Paris never knew where I spent the night of the 18th of June. It must have mystified them.

TRUTHFULNESS

Truthfulness is as essential in literature as it is in conduct, in fiction as it is in the report of an actual occurrence. Falsehood vitiates a poem, a painting, exactly as it does a life. Truthfulness is a quality like simplicity. Simplicity in literature is mainly a matter of clear vision and lucid expression, however complex the subject-matter may be; exactly as in life, simplicity does not so much depend upon external conditions as upon the spirit in which one lives. It may be more difficult to maintain simplicity of living with a great fortune than in poverty, but simplicity of spirit—that is, superiority of soul to circumstance—is possible in any condition. Unfortunately the common expression that a certain person has wealth is not so true as it would be to say that wealth has him. The life of one with great possessions and corresponding responsibilities may be full of complexity; the subject of literary art may be exceedingly complex; but we do not set complexity over against simplicity. For simplicity is a quality essential to true life as it is to literature of the first class; it is opposed to parade, to artificiality, to obscurity.

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The quality of truthfulness is not so easily defined. It also is a matter of spirit and intuition. We have no difficulty in applying the rules of common morality to certain functions of writers for the public, for instance, the duties of the newspaper reporter, or the newspaper correspondent, or the narrator of any event in life the relation of which owes its value to its being absolutely true. The same may be said of hoaxes, literary or scientific, however clear they may be. The person indulging in them not only discredits his office in the eyes of the public, but he injures his own moral fibre, and he contracts such a habit of untruthfulness that he never can hope for genuine literary success. For there never was yet any genuine success in letters without integrity. The clever hoax is no better than the trick of imitation, that is, conscious imitation of another, which has untruthfulness to one's self at the bottom of it. Burlesque is not the highest order of intellectual performance, but it is legitimate, and if cleverly done it may be both useful and amusing, but it is not to be confounded with forgery, that is, with a composition which the author attempts to pass off as the production of somebody else. The forgery may be amazingly smart, and be even popular, and get the author, when he is discovered, notoriety, but it is pretty certain that with his ingrained lack of integrity he will never accomplish any original work of value, and he will be always personally suspected. There is nothing so dangerous to a young writer as to begin with hoaxing; or to begin with the invention, either as reporter or correspondent, of statements put forward as facts, which are untrue. This sort of facility and smartness may get a writer employment, unfortunately for him and the public, but there is no satisfaction in it to one who desires an honorable career. It is easy to recall the names of brilliant men whose fine talents have been eaten away by this habit of untruthfulness. This habit is the greatest danger of the newspaper press of the United States.

It is easy to define this sort of untruthfulness, and to study the moral deterioration it works in personal character, and in the quality of literary work. It was illustrated in the forgeries of the marvelous boy Chatterton. The talent he expended in deception might have made him an enviable reputation,—the deception vitiated whatever good there was in his work. Fraud in literature is no better than fraud in archaeology, —Chatterton deserves no more credit than Shapiro who forged the Moabite pottery with its inscriptions. The reporter who invents an incident, or heightens the horror of a calamity by fictions is in the case of Shapiro. The habit of this sort of invention is certain to destroy the writer's quality, and if he attempts a legitimate work of the imagination, he will carry the same untruthfulness into that. The quality of truthfulness cannot be juggled with. Akin to this is the trick which

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has put under proper suspicion some very clever writers of our day, and cost them all public confidence in whatever they do,—the trick of posing for what they are not. We do not mean only that the reader does not believe their stories of personal adventure, and regards them personally as “frauds,” but that this quality of deception vitiates all their work, as seen from a literary point of view. We mean that the writer who hoaxes the public, by inventions which he publishes as facts, or in regard to his own personality, not only will lose the confidence of the public but he will lose the power of doing genuine work, even in the field of fiction. Good work is always characterized by integrity.

These illustrations help us to understand what is meant by literary integrity. For the deception in the case of the correspondent who invents “news” is of the same quality as the lack of sincerity in a poem or in a prose fiction; there is a moral and probably a mental defect in both. The story of Robinson Crusoe is a very good illustration of veracity in fiction. It is effective because it has the simple air of truth; it is an illusion that satisfies; it is possible; it is good art: but it has no moral deception in it. In fact, looked at as literature, we can see that it is sincere and wholesome.

What is this quality of truthfulness which we all recognize when it exists in fiction? There is much fiction, and some of it, for various reasons, that we like and find interesting which is nevertheless insincere if not artificial. We see that the writer has not been honest with himself or with us in his views of human life. There may be just as much lying in novels as anywhere else. The novelist who offers us what he declares to be a figment of his own brain may be just as untrue as the reporter who sets forth a figment of his own brain which he declares to be a real occurrence. That is, just as much faithfulness to life is required of the novelist as of the reporter, and in a much higher degree. The novelist must not only tell the truth about life as he sees it, material and spiritual, but he must be faithful to his own conceptions. If fortunately he has genius enough to create a character that has reality to himself and to others, he must be faithful to that character. He must have conscience about it, and not misrepresent it, any more than he would misrepresent the sayings and doings of a person in real life. Of course if his own conception is not clear, he will be as unjust as in writing about a person in real life whose character he knew only by rumor. The novelist may be mistaken about his own creations and in his views of life, but if he have truthfulness in himself, sincerity will show in his work.

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Truthfulness is a quality that needs to be as strongly insisted on in literature as simplicity. But when we carry the matter a step further, we see that there cannot be truthfulness about life without knowledge. The world is full of novels, and their number daily increases, written without any sense of responsibility, and with very little experience, which are full of false views of human nature and of society. We can almost always tell in a fiction when the writer passes the boundary of his own experience and observation—he becomes unreal, which is another name for untruthful. And there is an absence of sincerity in such work. There seems to be a prevailing impression that any one can write a story. But it scarcely need be said that literature is an art, like painting and music, and that one may have knowledge of life and perfect sincerity, and yet be unable to produce a good, truthful piece of literature, or to compose a piece of music, or to paint a picture.

Truthfulness is in no way opposed to invention or to the exercise of the imagination. When we say that the writer needs experience, we do not mean to intimate that his invention of character or plot should be literally limited to a person he has known, or to an incident that has occurred, but that they should be true to his experience. The writer may create an ideally perfect character, or an ideally bad character, and he may try him by a set of circumstances and events never before combined, and this creation may be so romantic as to go beyond the experience of any reader, that is to say, wholly imaginary (like a composed landscape which has no counterpart in any one view of a natural landscape), and yet it may be so consistent in itself, so true to an idea or an aspiration or a hope, that it will have the element of truthfulness and subserve a very high purpose. It may actually be truer to our sense of verity to life than an array of undeniable, naked facts set down without art and without imagination.

The difficulty of telling the truth in literature is about as great as it is in real life. We know how nearly impossible it is for one person to convey to another a correct impression of a third person. He may describe the features, the manner, mention certain traits and sayings, all literally true, but absolutely misleading as to the total impression. And this is the reason why extreme, unrelieved realism is apt to give a false impression of persons and scenes. One can hardly help having a whimsical notion occasionally, seeing the miscarriages even in our own attempts at truthfulness, that it absolutely exists only in the imagination.

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In a piece of fiction, especially romantic fiction, an author is absolutely free to be truthful, and he will be if he has personal and literary integrity. He moves freely amid his own creations and conceptions, and is not subject to the peril of the writer who admittedly uses facts, but uses them so clumsily or with so little conscience, so out of their real relations, as to convey a false impression and an untrue view of life. This quality of truthfulness is equally evident in "The Three Guardsmen" and in "Midsummer Night's Dream." Dumas is as conscientious about his world of adventure as Shakespeare is in his semi-supernatural region. If Shakespeare did not respect the laws of his imaginary country, and the creatures of his fancy, if Dumas were not true to the characters he conceived, and the achievements possible to them, such works would fall into confusion. A recent story called "The Refugees" set out with a certain promise of veracity, although the reader understood of course that it was to be a purely romantic invention. But very soon the author recklessly violated his own conception, and when he got his "real" characters upon an iceberg, the fantastic position became ludicrous without being funny, and the performances of the same characters in the wilderness of the New World showed such lack of knowledge in the writer that the story became an insult to the intelligence of the reader. Whereas such a romance as that of "The Ms. Found in a Copper Cylinder," although it is humanly impossible and visibly a figment of the imagination, is satisfactory to the reader because the author is true to his conception, and it is interesting as a curious allegorical and humorous illustration of the ruinous character in human affairs of extreme unselfishness. There is the same sort of truthfulness in Hawthorne's allegory of "The Celestial Railway," in Froude's "On a Siding at a Railway Station," and in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress."

The habit of lying carried into fiction vitiates the best work, and perhaps it is easier to avoid it in pure romance than in the so-called novels of "every-day life." And this is probably the reason why so many of the novels of "real life" are so much more offensively untruthful to us than the wildest romances. In the former the author could perhaps "prove" every incident he narrates, and produce living every character he has attempted to describe. But the effect is that of a lie, either because he is not a master of his art, or because he has no literary conscience. He is like an artist who is more anxious to produce a meretricious effect than he is to be true to himself or to nature. An author who creates a character assumes a great responsibility, and if he has not integrity or knowledge enough to respect his own creation, no one else will respect it, and, worse than this, he will tell a falsehood to hosts of indiscriminating readers.

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

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Perhaps the most curious and interesting phrase ever put into a public document is “the pursuit of happiness.” It is declared to be an inalienable right. It cannot be sold. It cannot be given away. It is doubtful if it could be left by will.

The right of every man to be six feet high, and of every woman to be five feet four, was regarded as self-evident until women asserted their undoubted right to be six feet high also, when some confusion was introduced into the interpretation of this rhetorical fragment of the eighteenth century.

But the inalienable right to the pursuit of happiness has never been questioned since it was proclaimed as a new gospel for the New World. The American people accepted it with enthusiasm, as if it had been the discovery of a gold-pro prospector, and started out in the pursuit as if the devil were after them.

If the proclamation had been that happiness is a common right of the race, alienable or otherwise, that all men are or may be happy, history and tradition might have interfered to raise a doubt whether even the new form of government could so change the ethical condition. But the right to make a pursuit of happiness, given in a fundamental bill of rights, had quite a different aspect. Men had been engaged in many pursuits, most of them disastrous, some of them highly commendable. A sect in Galilee had set up the pursuit of righteousness as the only or the highest object of man’s immortal powers. The rewards of it, however, were not always immediate. Here was a political sanction of a pursuit that everybody acknowledged to be of a good thing.

Given a heart-aching longing in every human being for happiness, here was high warrant for going in pursuit of it. And the curious effect of this ‘mot d’ordre’ was that the pursuit arrested the attention as the most essential, and the happiness was postponed, almost invariably, to some future season, when leisure or plethora, that is, relaxation or gorged desire, should induce that physical and moral glow which is commonly accepted as happiness. This glow of well-being is sometimes called contentment, but contentment was not in the programme. If it came at all, it was only to come after strenuous pursuit, that being the inalienable right.

People, to be sure, have different conceptions of happiness, but whatever they are, it is the custom, almost universal, to postpone the thing itself. This, of course, is specially true in our American system, where we have a chartered right to the thing itself. Other nations who have no such right may take it out in occasional dribbles, odd moments that come, no doubt, to men and races who have no privilege of voting, or to such favored places as New York city, whose government is always the same, however they vote.

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We are all authorized to pursue happiness, and we do as a general thing make a pursuit of it. Instead of simply being happy in the condition where we are, getting the sweets of life in human intercourse, hour by hour, as the bees take honey from every flower that opens in the summer air, finding happiness in the well-filled and orderly mind, in the sane and enlightened spirit, in the self that has become what the self should be, we say that tomorrow, next year, in ten or twenty or thirty years, when we have arrived at certain coveted possessions or situation, we will be happy. Some philosophers dignify this postponement with the name of hope.

Sometimes wandering in a primeval forest, in all the witchery of the woods, besought by the kindest solicitations of nature, wild flowers in the trail, the call of the squirrel, the flutter of birds, the great world-music of the wind in the pine-tops, the flecks of sunlight on the brown carpet and on the rough bark of immemorial trees, I find myself unconsciously postponing my enjoyment until I shall reach a hoped-for open place of full sun and boundless prospect.

The analogy cannot be pushed, for it is the common experience that these open spots in life, where leisure and space and contentment await us, are usually grown up with thickets, fuller of obstacles, to say nothing of labors and duties and difficulties, than any part of the weary path we have trod.

Why add the pursuit of happiness to our other inalienable worries? Perhaps there is something wrong in ourselves when we hear the complaint so often that men are pursued by disaster instead of being pursued by happiness.

We all believe in happiness as something desirable and attainable, and I take it that this is the underlying desire when we speak of the pursuit of wealth, the pursuit of learning, the pursuit of power in office or in influence, that is, that we shall come into happiness when the objects last named are attained. No amount of failure seems to lessen this belief. It is matter of experience that wealth and learning and power are as likely to bring unhappiness as happiness, and yet this constant lesson of experience makes not the least impression upon human conduct. I suppose that the reason of this unheeding of experience is that every person born into the world is the only one exactly of that kind that ever was or ever will be created, so that he thinks he may be exempt from the general rules. At any rate, he goes at the pursuit of happiness in exactly the old way, as if it were an original undertaking. Perhaps the most melancholy spectacle offered to us in our short sojourn in this pilgrimage, where the roads are so dusty and the caravansaries so ill provided, is the credulity of this pursuit. Mind, I am not objecting to the pursuit of wealth, or of learning, or of power, they are all explainable, if not justifiable,—but to the blindness that does not perceive their futility as a means of attaining the end sought, which is happiness,

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an end that can only be compassed by the right adjustment of each soul to this and to any coming state of existence. For whether the great scholar who is stuffed with knowledge is happier than the great money-getter who is gorged with riches, or the wily politician who is a Warwick in his realm, depends entirely upon what sort of a man this pursuit has made him. There is a kind of fallacy current nowadays that a very rich man, no matter by what unscrupulous means he has gathered an undue proportion of the world into his possession, can be happy if he can turn round and make a generous and lavish distribution of it for worthy purposes. If he has preserved a remnant of conscience, this distribution may give him much satisfaction, and justly increase his good opinion of his own deserts; but the fallacy is in leaving out of account the sort of man he has become in this sort of pursuit. Has he escaped that hardening of the nature, that drying up of the sweet springs of sympathy, which usually attend a long-continued selfish undertaking? Has either he or the great politician or the great scholar cultivated the real sources of enjoyment?

The pursuit of happiness! It is not strange that men call it an illusion. But I am well satisfied that it is not the thing itself, but the pursuit, that is an illusion. Instead of thinking of the pursuit, why not fix our thoughts upon the moments, the hours, perhaps the days, of this divine peace, this merriment of body and mind, that can be repeated and perhaps indefinitely extended by the simplest of all means, namely, a disposition to make the best of whatever comes to us? Perhaps the Latin poet was right in saying that no man can count himself happy while in this life, that is, in a continuous state of happiness; but as there is for the soul no time save the conscious moment called "now," it is quite possible to make that "now" a happy state of existence. The point I make is that we should not habitually postpone that season of happiness to the future.

No one, I trust, wishes to cloud the dreams of youth, or to dispel by excess of light what are called the illusions of hope. But why should the boy be nurtured in the current notion that he is to be really happy only when he has finished school, when he has got a business or profession by which money can be made, when he has come to manhood? The girl also dreams that for her happiness lies ahead, in that springtime when she is crossing the line of womanhood,—all the poets make much of this,—when she is married and learns the supreme lesson how to rule by obeying. It is only when the girl and the boy look back upon the years of adolescence that they realize how happy they might have been then if they had only known they were happy, and did not need to go in pursuit of happiness.

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The pitiful part of this inalienable right to the pursuit of happiness is, however, that most men interpret it to mean the pursuit of wealth, and strive for that always, postponing being happy until they get a fortune, and if they are lucky in that, find at the end that the happiness has somehow eluded them, that; in short, they have not cultivated that in themselves that alone can bring happiness. More than that, they have lost the power of the enjoyment of the essential pleasures of life. I think that the woman in the Scriptures who out of her poverty put her mite into the contribution-box got more happiness out of that dribble of generosity and self-sacrifice than some men in our day have experienced in founding a university.

And how fares it with the intellectual man? To be a selfish miner of learning, for self-gratification only, is no nobler in reality than to be a miser of money. And even when the scholar is lavish of his knowledge in helping an ignorant world, he may find that if he has made his studies as a pursuit of happiness he has missed his object. Much knowledge increases the possibility of enjoyment, but also the possibility of sorrow. If intellectual pursuits contribute to an enlightened and altogether admirable character, then indeed has the student found the inner springs of happiness. Otherwise one cannot say that the wise man is happier than the ignorant man.

In fine, and in spite of the political injunction, we need to consider that happiness is an inner condition, not to be raced after. And what an advance in our situation it would be if we could get it into our heads here in this land of inalienable rights that the world would turn round just the same if we stood still and waited for the daily coming of our Lord!

LITERATURE AND THE STAGE

Is the divorce of Literature and the Stage complete, or is it still only partial? As the lawyers say, is it a 'vinculo', or only a 'mensa et thoro?' And if this divorce is permanent, is it a good thing for literature or the stage? Is the present condition of the stage a degeneration, as some say, or is it a natural evolution of an art independent of literature?

How long is it since a play has been written and accepted and played which has in it any so-called literary quality or is an addition to literature? And what is dramatic art as at present understood and practiced by the purveyors of plays for the public? If any one can answer these questions, he will contribute something to the discussion about the tendency of the modern stage.

Every one recognizes in the "good old plays" which are occasionally "revived" both a quality and an intention different from anything in most contemporary productions. They are real dramas, the interest of which depends upon sentiment, upon an exhibition of human nature, upon the interaction of varied character, and upon plot, and we

recognize in them a certain literary art. They can be read with pleasure. Scenery and mechanical contrivance may heighten the effects, but they are not absolute essentials.

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In the contemporary play instead of character we have “characters,” usually exaggerations of some trait, so pushed forward as to become caricatures. Consistency to human nature is not insisted on in plot, but there must be startling and unexpected incidents, mechanical devices, and a great deal of what is called “business,” which clearly has as much relation to literature as have the steps of a farceur in a clog-dance. The composition of such plays demands literary ability in the least degree, but ingenuity in inventing situations and surprises; the text is nothing, the action is everything; but the text is considerably improved if it have brightness of repartee and a lively apprehension of contemporary events, including the slang of the hour. These plays appear to be made up by the writer, the manager, the carpenter, the costumer. If they are successful with the modern audiences, their success is probably due to other things than any literary quality they may have, or any truth to life or to human nature.

We see how this is in the great number of plays adapted from popular novels. In the “dramatization” of these stories, pretty much everything is left out of the higher sort that the reader has valued in the story. The romance of “Monte Cristo” is an illustration of this. The play is vulgar melodrama, out of which has escaped altogether the refinement and the romantic idealism of the stirring romance of Dumas. Now and then, to be sure, we get a different result, as in “Olivia,” where all the pathos and character of the “Vicar of Wakefield” are preserved, and the effect of the play depends upon passion and sentiment. But as a rule, we get only the more obvious salencies, the bones of the novel, fitted in or clothed with stage “business.”

Of course it is true that literary men, even dramatic authors, may write and always have written dramas not suited to actors, that could not well be put upon the stage. But it remains true that the greatest dramas, those that have endured from the Greek times down, have been (for the audiences of their times) both good reading and good acting plays.

I am not competent to criticise the stage or its tendency. But I am interested in noticing the increasing non-literary character of modern plays. It may be explained as a necessary and justifiable evolution of the stage. The managers may know what the audience wants, just as the editors of some of the most sensational newspapers say that they make a newspaper to suit the public. The newspaper need not be well written, but it must startle with incident and surprise, found or invented. An observer must notice that the usual theatre-audience in New York or Boston today laughs at and applauds costumes, situations, innuendoes, doubtful suggestions, that it would have blushed at a few years ago. Has the audience been creating a theatre to suit its taste, or have the managers been educating an audience? Has the divorce of literary art from the mimic art of the stage anything to do with this condition?

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The stage can be amusing, but can it show life as it is without the aid of idealizing literary art? And if the stage goes on in this materialistic way, how long will it be before it ceases to amuse intelligent, not to say intellectual people?

THE LIFE-SAVING AND LIFE PROLONGING ART

In the minds of the public there is a mystery about the practice of medicine. It deals more or less with the unknown, with the occult, it appeals to the imagination. Doubtless confidence in its practitioners is still somewhat due to the belief that they are familiar with the secret processes of nature, if they are not in actual alliance with the supernatural. Investigation of the ground of the popular faith in the doctor would lead us into metaphysics. And yet our physical condition has much to do with this faith. It is apt to be weak when one is in perfect health; but when one is sick it grows strong. Saint and sinner both warm up to the doctor when the judgment Day heaves in view.

In the popular apprehension the doctor is still the Medicine Man. We smile when we hear about his antics in barbarous tribes; he dresses fantastically, he puts horns on his head, he draws circles on the ground, he dances about the patient, shaking his rattle and uttering incantations. There is nothing to laugh at. He is making an appeal to the imagination. And sometimes he cures, and sometimes he kills; in either case he gets his fee. What right have we to laugh? We live in an enlightened age, and yet a great proportion of the people, perhaps not a majority, still believe in incantations, have faith in ignorant practitioners who advertise a "natural gift," or a secret process or remedy, and prefer the charlatan who is exactly on the level of the Indian Medicine Man, to the regular practitioner, and to the scientific student of mind and body and of the properties of the materia medica. Why, even here in Connecticut, it is impossible to get a law to protect the community from the imposition of knavish or ignorant quacks, and to require of a man some evidence of capacity and training and skill, before he is let loose to experiment upon suffering humanity. Our teachers must pass an examination—though the examiner sometimes does not know as much as the candidate,—for misguiding the youthful mind; the lawyer cannot practice without study and a formal admission to the bar; and even the clergyman is not accepted in any responsible charge until he has given evidence of some moral and intellectual fitness. But the profession affecting directly the health and life of every human body, which needs to avail itself of the accumulated experience, knowledge, and science of all the ages, is open to every ignorant and stupid practitioner on the credulity of the public. Why cannot we get a law regulating the profession which is of most vital interest to all of us, excluding ignorance and quackery? Because the majority of our legislature, representing,

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I suppose, the majority of the public, believe in the “natural bone-setter,” the herb doctor, the root doctor, the old woman who brews a decoction of swamp medicine, the “natural gift” of some dabbler in diseases, the magnetic healer, the faith cure, the mind cure, the Christian Science cure, the efficacy of a prescription rapped out on a table by some hysterical medium,—in anything but sound knowledge, education in scientific methods, steadied by a sense of public responsibility. Not long ago, on a cross-country road, I came across a woman in a farmhouse, where I am sure the barn-yard drained into the well, who was sick; she had taken a shop-full of patent medicines. I advised her to send for a doctor. She had no confidence in doctors, but said she reckoned she would get along now, for she had sent for the seventh son of a seventh son, and didn't I think he could certainly cure her? I said that combination ought to fetch any disease except agnosticism. That woman probably influenced a vote in the legislature. The legislature believes in incantations; it ought to have in attendance an Indian Medicine Man.

We think the world is progressing in enlightenment; I suppose it is—inch by inch. But it is not easy to name an age that has cherished more delusions than ours, or been more superstitious, or more credulous, more eager to run after quackery. Especially is this true in regard to remedies for diseases, and the faith in healers and quacks outside of the regular, educated professors of the medical art. Is this an exaggeration? Consider the quantity of proprietary medicines taken in this country, some of them harmless, some of them good in some cases, some of them injurious, but generally taken without advice and in absolute ignorance of the nature of the disease or the specific action of the remedy. The drug-shops are full of them, especially in country towns; and in the far West and on the Pacific coast I have been astonished at the quantity and variety displayed. They are found in almost every house; the country is literally dosed to death with these manufactured nostrums and panaceas—and that is the most popular medicine which can be used for the greatest number of internal and external diseases and injuries. Many newspapers are half supported by advertising them, and millions and millions of dollars are invested in this popular industry. Needless to say that the patented remedies most in request are those that profess a secret and unscientific origin. Those most “purely vegetable” seem most suitable to the wooden-heads who believe in them, but if one were sufficiently advertised as not containing a single trace of vegetable matter, avoiding thus all possible conflict of one organic life with another organic life, it would be just as popular. The favorites are those that have been secretly used by an East Indian fakir, or accidentally discovered as the natural remedy, dug out of the ground by an American Indian tribe, or steeped in a kettle

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by an ancient colored person in a southern plantation, or washed ashore on the person of a sailor from the South Seas, or invented by a very aged man in New Jersey, who could not read, but had spent his life roaming in the woods, and whose capacity for discovering a “universal panacea,” besides his ignorance and isolation, lay in the fact that his sands of life had nearly run. It is the supposed secrecy or low origin of the remedy that is its attraction. The basis of the vast proprietary medicine business is popular ignorance and credulity. And it needs to be pretty broad to support a traffic of such enormous proportions.

During this generation certain branches of the life-saving and life-prolonging art have made great advances out of empiricism onto the solid ground of scientific knowledge. Of course I refer to surgery, and to the discovery of the causes and improvement in the treatment of contagious and epidemic diseases. The general practice has shared in this scientific advance, but it is limited and always will be limited within experimental bounds, by the infinite variations in individual constitutions, and the almost incalculable element of the interference of mental with physical conditions. When we get an exact science of man, we may expect an exact science of medicine. How far we are from this, we see when we attempt to make criminal anthropology the basis of criminal legislation. Man is so complex that if we were to eliminate one of his apparently worse qualities, we might develop others still worse, or throw the whole machine into inefficiency. By taking away what the phrenologists call combativeness, we could doubtless stop prize-fight, but we might have a springless society. The only safe way is that taught by horticulture, to feed a fruit-tree generously, so that it has vigor enough to throw off its degenerate tendencies and its enemies, or, as the doctors say in medical practice, bring up the general system. That is to say, there is more hope for humanity in stimulating the good, than in directly suppressing the evil. It is on something like this line that the greatest advance has been made in medical practice; I mean in the direction of prevention. This involves, of course, the exclusion of the evil, that is, of suppressing the causes that produce disease, as well as in cultivating the resistant power of the human system. In sanitation, diet, and exercise are the great fields of medical enterprise and advance. I need not say that the physician who, in the case of those under his charge, or who may possibly require his aid, contents himself with waiting for developed disease, is like the soldier in a besieged city who opens the gates and then attempts to repel the invader who has effected a lodgment. I hope the time will come when the chief practice of the physician will be, first, in oversight of the sanitary condition of his neighborhood, and, next, in preventive attendance on people who think they are well, and are all unconscious of the insidious approach of some concealed malady.

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Another great change in modern practice is specialization. Perhaps it has not yet reached the delicate particularity of the practice in ancient Egypt, where every minute part of the human economy had its exclusive doctor. This is inevitable in a scientific age, and the result has been on the whole an advance of knowledge, and improved treatment of specific ailments. The danger is apparent. It is that of the moral specialist, who has only one hobby and traces every human ill to strong liquor or tobacco, or the corset, or taxation of personal property, or denial of universal suffrage, or the eating of meat, or the want of the centralization of nearly all initiative and interest and property in the state. The tendency of the accomplished specialist in medicine is to refer all physical trouble to the ill conduct of the organ he presides over. He can often trace every disease to want of width in the nostrils, to a defective eye, to a sensitive throat, to shut-up pores, to an irritated stomach, to auricular defect. I suppose he is generally right, but I have a perhaps natural fear that if I happened to consult an amputationist about catarrh he would want to cut off my leg. I confess to an affection for the old-fashioned, all-round country doctor, who took a general view of his patient, knew his family, his constitution, all the gossip about his mental or business troubles, his affairs of the heart, disappointments in love, incompatibilities of temper, and treated the patient, as the phrase is, for all he was worth, and gave him visible medicine out of good old saddle-bags—how much faith we used to have in those saddle-bags—and not a prescription in a dead language to be put up by a dead-head clerk who occasionally mistakes arsenic for carbonate of soda. I do not mean, however, to say there is no sense in the retention of the hieroglyphics which the doctors use to communicate their ideas to a druggist, for I had a prescription made in Hartford put up in Naples, and that could not have happened if it had been written in English. And I am not sure but the mysterious symbols have some effect on the patient.

The mention of the intimate knowledge of family and constitutional conditions possessed by the old-fashioned country doctor, whose main strength lay in this and in his common-sense, reminds me of another great advance in the modern practice, in the attempt to understand nature better by the scientific study of psychology and the occult relations of mind and body. It is in the study of temper, temperament, hereditary predispositions, that we may expect the most brilliant results in preventive medicine.

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As a layman, I cannot but notice another great advance in the medical profession. It is not alone in it. It is rather expected that the lawyers will divide the oyster between them and leave the shell to the contestants. I suppose that doctors, almost without exception, give more of their time and skill in the way of charity than almost any other profession. But somebody must pay, and fees have increased with the general cost of living and dying. If fees continue to increase as they have done in the past ten years in the great cities, like New York, nobody not a millionaire can afford to be sick. The fees will soon be a prohibitive tax. I cannot say that this will be altogether an evil, for the cost of calling medical aid may force people to take better care of themselves. Still, the excessive charges are rather hard on people in moderate circumstances who are compelled to seek surgical aid. And here we touch one of the regrettable symptoms of the times, which is not by any means most conspicuous in the medical profession. I mean the tendency to subordinate the old notion of professional duty to the greed for money. The lawyers are almost universally accused of it; even the clergymen are often suspected of being influenced by it. The young man is apt to choose a profession on calculation of its profit. It will be a bad day for science and for the progress of the usefulness of the medical profession when the love of money in its practice becomes stronger than professional enthusiasm, than the noble ambition of distinction for advancing the science, and the devotion to human welfare.

I do not prophesy it. Rather I expect interest in humanity, love of science for itself, sympathy with suffering, self-sacrifice for others, to increase in the world, and be stronger in the end than sordid love of gain and the low ambition of rivalry in materialistic display. To this higher life the physician is called. I often wonder that there are so many men, brilliant men, able men, with so many talents for success in any calling, willing to devote their lives to a profession which demands so much self-sacrifice, so much hardship, so much contact with suffering, subject to the call of all the world at any hour of the day or night, involving so much personal risk, carrying so much heart-breaking responsibility, responded to by so much constant heroism, a heroism requiring the risk of life in a service the only glory of which is a good name and the approval of one's conscience.

To the members of such a profession, in spite of their human infirmities and limitations and unworthy hangers-on, I bow with admiration and the respect which we feel for that which is best in this world.

“H.H.” IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

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It seems somehow more nearly an irreparable loss to us than to "H. H." that she did not live to taste her very substantial fame in Southern California. We should have had such delight in her unaffected pleasure in it, and it would have been one of those satisfactions somewhat adequate to our sense of fitness that are so seldom experienced. It was my good fortune to see Mrs. Jackson frequently in the days in New York when she was writing "Ramona," which was begun and perhaps finished in the Berkeley House. The theme had complete possession of her, and chapter after chapter flowed from her pen as easily as one would write a letter to a friend; and she had an ever fresh and vigorous delight in it. I have often thought that no one enjoyed the sensation of living more than Mrs. Jackson, or was more alive to all the influences of nature and the contact of mind with mind, more responsive to all that was exquisite and noble either in nature or in society, or more sensitive to the disagreeable. This is merely saying that she was a poet; but when she became interested in the Indians, and especially in the harsh fate of the Mission Indians in California, all her nature was fused for the time in a lofty enthusiasm of pity and indignation, and all her powers seemed to be consecrated to one purpose. Enthusiasm and sympathy will not make a novel, but all the same they are necessary to the production of a work that has in it real vital quality, and in this case all previous experience and artistic training became the unconscious servants of Mrs. Jackson's heart. I know she had very little conceit about her performance, but she had a simple consciousness that she was doing her best work, and that if the world should care much for anything she had done, after she was gone, it would be for "Ramona." She had put herself into it.

And yet I am certain that she could have had no idea what the novel would be to the people of Southern California, or how it would identify her name with all that region, and make so many scenes in it places of pilgrimage and romantic interest for her sake. I do not mean to say that the people in California knew personally Ramona and Alessandro, or altogether believe in them, but that in their idealizations they recognize a verity and the ultimate truth of human nature, while in the scenery, in the fading sentiment of the old Spanish life, and the romance and faith of the Missions, the author has done for the region very much what Scott did for the Highlands. I hope she knows now, I presume she does, that more than one Indian school in the Territories is called the Ramona School; that at least two villages in California are contending for the priority of using the name Ramona; that all the travelers and tourists (at least in the time they can spare from real-estate speculations) go about under her guidance, are pilgrims to the shrines she has described, and eager searchers for the scenes she has made famous in her novel; that more than one

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city and more than one town claims the honor of connection with the story; that the tourist has pointed out to him in more than one village the very house where Ramona lived, where she was married—indeed, that a little crop of legends has already grown up about the story itself. I was myself shown the house in Los Angeles where the story was written, and so strong is the local impression that I confess to looking at the rose-embowered cottage with a good deal of interest, though I had seen the romance growing day by day in the Berkeley in New York.

The undoubted scene of the loves of Ramona and Alessandro is the Comulos rancho, on the railway from Newhall to Santa Paula, the route that one takes now (unless he wants to have a lifelong remembrance of the ground swells of the Pacific in an uneasy little steamer) to go from Los Angeles to Santa Barbara. It is almost the only one remaining of the old-fashioned Spanish haciendas, where the old administration prevails. The new railway passes it now, and the hospitable owners have been obliged to yield to the public curiosity and provide entertainment for a continual stream of visitors. The place is so perfectly described in “Ramona” that I do not need to draw it over again, and I violate no confidence and only certify to the extraordinary powers of delineation of the novelist, when I say that she only spent a few hours there,—not a quarter of the time we spent in identifying her picture. We knew the situation before the train stopped by the crosses erected on the conspicuous peaks of the serrated ashy—or shall I say purple—hills that enfold the fertile valley. It is a great domain, watered by a swift river, and sheltered by wonderfully picturesque mountains. The house is strictly in the old Spanish style, of one story about a large court, with flowers and a fountain, in which are the most noisy if not musical frogs in the world, and all the interior rooms opening upon a gallery. The real front is towards the garden, and here at the end of the gallery is the elevated room where Father Salvierderra slept when he passed a night at the hacienda,—a pretty room which has a case of Spanish books, mostly religious and legal, and some quaint and cheap holy pictures. We had a letter to Signora Del Valle, the mistress, and were welcomed with a sort of formal extension of hospitality that put us back into the courtly manners of a hundred years ago. The Signora, who is in no sense the original of the mistress whom “H. H.” describes, is a widow now for seven years, and is the vigilant administrator of all her large domain, of the stock, the grazing lands, the vineyard, the sheep ranch, and all the people. Rising very early in the morning, she visits every department, and no detail is too minute to escape her inspection, and no one in the great household but feels her authority.

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It was a very lovely day on the 17th of March (indeed, I suppose it had been preceded by 364 days exactly like it) as we sat upon the gallery looking on the garden, a garden of oranges, roses, citrons, lemons, peaches—what fruit and flower was not growing there?—acres and acres of vineyard beyond, with the tall cane and willows by the stream, and the purple mountains against the sapphire sky. Was there ever anything more exquisite than the peach-blossoms against that blue sky! Such a place of peace. A soft south wind was blowing, and all the air was drowsy with the hum of bees. In the garden is a vine-covered arbor, with seats and tables, and at the end of it is the opening into a little chapel, a domestic chapel, carpeted like a parlor, and bearing all the emblems of a loving devotion. By the garden gate hang three small bells, from some old mission, all cracked, but serving (each has its office) to summon the workmen or to call to prayer.

Perfect system reigns in Signora Del Valle's establishment, and even the least child in it has its duty. At sundown a little slip of a girl went out to the gate and struck one of the bells. "What is that for?" I asked as she returned. "It is the Angelus," she said simply. I do not know what would happen to her if she should neglect to strike it at the hour. At eight o'clock the largest bell was struck, and the Signora and all her household, including the house servants, went out to the little chapel in the garden, which was suddenly lighted with candles, gleaming brilliantly through the orange groves. The Signora read the service, the household responding—a twenty minutes' service, which is as much a part of the administration of the establishment as visiting the granaries and presses, and the bringing home of the goats. The Signora's apartments, which she permitted us to see, were quite in the nature of an oratory, with shrines and sacred pictures and relics of the faith. By the shrine at the head of her bed hung the rosary carried by Father Junipero,—a priceless possession. From her presses and armoires, the Signora, seeing we had a taste for such things, brought out the feminine treasures of three generations, the silk and embroidered dresses of last century, the ribosas, the jewelry, the brilliant stuffs of China and Mexico, each article with a memory and a flavor.

But I must not be betrayed into writing about Ramona's house. How charming indeed it was the next morning,—though the birds in the garden were astir a little too early,—with the thermometer set to the exact degree of warmth without languor, the sky blue, the wind soft, the air scented with orange and jessamine. The Signora had already visited all her premises before we were up. We had seen the evening before an enclosure near the house full of cashmere goats and kids, whose antics were sufficiently amusing—most of them had now gone afield; workmen were coming for their orders, plowing was going on in the barley fields,

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traders were driving to the plantation store, the fierce eagle in a big cage by the olive press was raging at his detention. Within the house enclosure are an olive mill and press, a wine-press and a great storehouse of wine, containing now little but empty casks,—a dusky, interesting place, with pomegranates and dried bunches of grapes and oranges and pieces of jerked meat hanging from the rafters. Near by is a cornhouse and a small distillery, and the corrals for sheep shearing are not far off. The ranches for cattle and sheep are on the other side of the mountain.

Peace be with Comulos. It must please the author of “Ramona” to know that it continues in the old ways; and I trust she is undisturbed by the knowledge that the rage for change will not long let it be what it now is.

SIMPLICITY

No doubt one of the most charming creations in all poetry is Nausicaa, the white-armed daughter of King Alcinous. There is no scene, no picture, in the heroic times more pleasing than the meeting of Ulysses with this damsel on the wild seashore of Scheria, where the Wanderer had been tossed ashore by the tempest. The place of this classic meeting was probably on the west coast of Corfu, that incomparable island, to whose beauty the legend of the exquisite maidenhood of the daughter of the king of the Phaeacians has added an immortal bloom.

We have no difficulty in recalling it in all its distinctness: the bright morning on which Nausicaa came forth from the palace, where her mother sat and turned the distaff loaded with a fleece dyed in sea-purple, mounted the car piled with the robes to be cleansed in the stream, and, attended by her bright-haired, laughing handmaidens, drove to the banks of the river, where out of its sweet grasses it flowed over clean sand into the Adriatic. The team is loosed to browse the grass; the garments are flung into the dark water, then trampled with hasty feet in frolic rivalry, and spread upon the gravel to dry. Then the maidens bathe, give their limbs the delicate oil from the cruse of gold, sit by the stream and eat their meal, and, refreshed, mistress and maidens lay aside their veils and play at ball, and Nausicaa begins a song. Though all were fair, like Diana was this spotless virgin midst her maids. A missed ball and maidenly screams waken Ulysses from his sleep in the thicket. At the apparition of the unclad, shipwrecked sailor the maidens flee right and left. Nausicaa alone keeps her place, secure in her unconscious modesty. To the astonished Sport of Fortune the vision of this radiant girl, in shape and stature and in noble air, is more than mortal, yet scarcely more than woman:

“Like thee, I saw of late,
In Delos, a young palm-tree growing up
Beside Apollo’s altar.”

When the Wanderer has bathed, and been clad in robes from the pile on the sand, and refreshed with food and wine which the hospitable maidens put before him, the train sets out for the town, Ulysses following the chariot among the bright-haired women. But before that Nausicaa, in the candor of those early days, says to her attendants:

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"I would that I might call
A man like him my husband, dwelling here
And here content to dwell."

Is there any woman in history more to be desired than this sweet, pure-minded, honest-hearted girl, as she is depicted with a few swift touches by the great poet?—the dutiful daughter in her father's house, the joyous companion of girls, the beautiful woman whose modest bearing commands the instant homage of man. Nothing is more enduring in literature than this girl and the scene on the—Corfu sands.

The sketch, though distinct, is slight, little more than outlines; no elaboration, no analysis; just an incident, as real as the blue sky of Scheria and the waves on the yellow sand. All the elements of the picture are simple, human, natural, standing in as unconfused relations as any events in common life. I am not recalling it because it is a conspicuous instance of the true realism that is touched with the ideality of genius, which is the immortal element in literature, but as an illustration of the other necessary quality in all productions of the human mind that remain age after age, and that is simplicity. This is the stamp of all enduring work; this is what appeals to the universal understanding from generation to generation. All the masterpieces that endure and become a part of our lives are characterized by it. The eye, like the mind, hates confusion and overcrowding. All the elements in beauty, grandeur, pathos, are simple—as simple as the lines in a Nile picture: the strong river, the yellow desert, the palms, the pyramids; hardly more than a horizontal line and a perpendicular line; only there is the sky, the atmosphere, the color—those need genius.

We may test contemporary literature by its conformity to the canon of simplicity—that is, if it has not that, we may conclude that it lacks one essential lasting quality. It may please;—it may be ingenious—brilliant, even; it may be the fashion of the day, and a fashion that will hold its power of pleasing for half a century, but it will be a fashion. Mannerisms of course will not deceive us, nor extravagances, eccentricities, affectations, nor the straining after effect by the use of coined or far-fetched words and prodigality in adjectives. But, style? Yes, there is such a thing as style, good and bad; and the style should be the writer's own and characteristic of him, as his speech is. But the moment I admire a style for its own sake, a style that attracts my attention so constantly that I say, How good that is! I begin to be suspicious. If it is too good, too pronouncedly good, I fear I shall not like it so well on a second reading. If it comes to stand between me and the thought, or the personality behind the thought, I grow more and more suspicious. Is the book a window, through which I am to see life? Then I cannot have the glass too clear. Is it to affect me like a strain of music? Then I am still more disturbed by any affectations. Is it

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to produce the effect of a picture? Then I know I want the simplest harmony of color. And I have learned that the most effective word-painting, as it is called, is the simplest. This is true if it is a question only of present enjoyment. But we may be sure that any piece of literature which attracts only by some trick of style, however it may blaze up for a day and startle the world with its flash, lacks the element of endurance. We do not need much experience to tell us the difference between a lamp and a Roman candle. Even in our day we have seen many reputations flare up, illuminate the sky, and then go out in utter darkness. When we take a proper historical perspective, we see that it is the universal, the simple, that lasts.

I am not sure whether simplicity is a matter of nature or of cultivation. Barbarous nature likes display, excessive ornament; and when we have arrived at the nobly simple, the perfect proportion, we are always likely to relapse into the confused and the complicated. The most cultivated men, we know, are the simplest in manners, in taste, in their style. It is a note of some of the purest modern writers that they avoid comparisons, similes, and even too much use of metaphor. But the mass of men are always relapsing into the tawdry and the over-ornamented. It is a characteristic of youth, and it seems also to be a characteristic of over-development. Literature, in any language, has no sooner arrived at the highest vigor of simple expression than it begins to run into prettiness, conceits, over-elaboration. This is a fact which may be verified by studying different periods, from classic literature to our own day.

It is the same with architecture. The classic Greek runs into the excessive elaboration of the Roman period, the Gothic into the flamboyant, and so on. We, have had several attacks of architectural measles in this country, which have left the land spotted all over with houses in bad taste. Instead of developing the colonial simplicity on lines of dignity and harmony to modern use, we stuck on the pseudo-classic, we broke out in the Mansard, we broke all up into the whimsicalities of the so-called Queen Anne, without regard to climate or comfort. The eye speedily tires of all these things. It is a positive relief to look at an old colonial mansion, even if it is as plain as a barn. What the eye demands is simple lines, proportion, harmony in mass, dignity; above all, adaptation to use. And what we must have also is individuality in house and in furniture; that makes the city, the village, picturesque and interesting. The highest thing in architecture, as in literature, is the development of individuality in simplicity.

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Dress is a dangerous topic to meddle with. I myself like the attire of the maidens of Scheria, though Nausicaa, we must note, was “clad royally.” But climate cannot be disregarded, and the vestment that was so fitting on a Greek girl whom I saw at the Second Cataract of the Nile would scarcely be appropriate in New York. If the maidens of one of our colleges for girls, say Vassar for illustration, habited like the Phaeacian girls of Scheria, went down to the Hudson to cleanse the rich robes of the house, and were surprised by the advent of a stranger from the city, landing from a steamboat—a wandering broker, let us say, clad in wide trousers, long topcoat, and a tall hat—I fancy that he would be more astonished than Ulysses was at the bevy of girls that scattered at his approach. It is not that women must be all things to all men, but that their simplicity must conform to time and circumstance. What I do not understand is that simplicity gets banished altogether, and that fashion, on a dictation that no one can trace the origin of, makes that lovely in the eyes of women today which will seem utterly abhorrent to them tomorrow. There appears to be no line of taste running through the changes. The only consolation to you, the woman of the moment, is that while the costume your grandmother wore makes her, in the painting, a guy in your eyes, the costume you wear will give your grandchildren the same impression of you. And the satisfaction for you is the thought that the latter raiment will be worse than the other two—that is to say, less well suited to display the shape, station, and noble air which brought Ulysses to his knees on the sands of Corfu.

Another reason why I say that I do not know whether simplicity belongs to nature or art is that fashion is as strong to pervert and disfigure in savage nations as it is in civilized. It runs to as much eccentricity in hair-dressing and ornament in the costume of the jingling belles of Nootka and the maidens of Nubia as in any court or coterie which we aspire to imitate. The only difference is that remote and unsophisticated communities are more constant to a style they once adopt. There are isolated peasant communities in Europe who have kept for centuries the most uncouth and inconvenient attire, while we have run through a dozen variations in the art of attraction by dress, from the most puffed and bulbous ballooning to the extreme of limpness and lankness. I can only conclude that the civilized human being is a restless creature, whose motives in regard to costumes are utterly unfathomable.

We need, however, to go a little further in this question of simplicity. Nausicaa was “clad royally.” There was a distinction, then, between her and her handmaidens. She was clad simply, according to her condition. Taste does not by any means lead to uniformity. I have read of a commune in which all the women dressed alike and unbecomingly, so as to discourage all attempt to please or attract, or

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to give value to the different accents of beauty. The end of those women was worse than the beginning. Simplicity is not ugliness, nor poverty, nor barrenness, nor necessarily plainness. What is simplicity for another may not be for you, for your condition, your tastes, especially for your wants. It is a personal question. You go beyond simplicity when you attempt to appropriate more than your wants, your aspirations, whatever they are, demand—that is, to appropriate for show, for ostentation, more than your life can assimilate, can make thoroughly yours. There is no limit to what you may have, if it is necessary for you, if it is not a superfluity to you. What would be simplicity to you may be superfluity to another. The rich robes that Nausicaa wore she wore like a goddess. The moment your dress, your house, your house-grounds, your furniture, your scale of living, are beyond the rational satisfaction of your own desires—that is, are for ostentation, for imposition upon the public—they are superfluous, the line of simplicity is passed. Every human being has a right to whatever can best feed his life, satisfy his legitimate desires, contribute to the growth of his soul. It is not for me to judge whether this is luxury or want. There is no merit in riches nor in poverty. There is merit in that simplicity of life which seeks to grasp no more than is necessary for the development and enjoyment of the individual. Most of us, in all conditions; are weighted down with superfluities or worried to acquire them. Simplicity is making the journey of this life with just baggage enough.

The needs of every person differ from the needs of every other; we can make no standard for wants or possessions. But the world would be greatly transformed and much more easy to live in if everybody limited his acquisitions to his ability to assimilate them to his life. The destruction of simplicity is a craving for things, not because we need them, but because others have them. Because one man who lives in a plain little house, in all the restrictions of mean surroundings, would be happier in a mansion suited to his taste and his wants, is no argument that another man, living in a palace, in useless ostentation, would not be better off in a dwelling which conforms to his cultivation and habits. It is so hard to learn the lesson that there is no satisfaction in gaining more than we personally want.

The matter of simplicity, then, comes into literary style, into building, into dress, into life, individualized always by one's personality. In each we aim at the expression of the best that is in us, not at imitation or ostentation.

The women in history, in legend, in poetry, whom we love, we do not love because they are "clad royally." In our day, to be clad royally is scarcely a distinction. To have a superfluity is not a distinction. But in those moments when we have a clear vision of life, that which seems to us most admirable and desirable is the simplicity that endears to us the idyl of Nausicaa.

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THE ENGLISH VOLUNTEERS DURING THE LATE INVASION

The most painful event since the bombardment of Alexandria has been what is called by an English writer the “invasion” of “American Literature in England.” The hostile forces, with an advanced guard of what was regarded as an “awkward squad,” had been gradually effecting a landing and a lodgment not unwelcome to the unsuspecting natives. No alarm was taken when they threw out a skirmish-line of magazines and began to deploy an occasional wild poet, who advanced in buckskin leggings, revolver in hand, or a stray sharp-shooting sketcher clad in the picturesque robes of the sunset. Put when the main body of American novelists got fairly ashore and into position the literary militia of the island rose up as one man, with the strength of a thousand, to repel the invaders and sweep them back across the Atlantic. The spectacle had a dramatic interest. The invaders were not numerous, did not carry their native tomahawks, they had been careful to wash off the frightful paint with which they usually go into action, they did not utter the defiant whoop of Pogram, and even the militia regarded them as on the whole “amusing” young ‘possums” and yet all the resources of modern and ancient warfare were brought to bear upon them. There was a crack of revolvers from the daily press, a lively fusillade of small-arms in the astonished weeklies, a discharge of point-blank blunderbusses from the monthlies; and some of the heavy quarterlies loaded up the old pieces of ordnance, that had not been charged in forty years, with slugs and brickbats and junk-bottles, and poured in raking broadsides. The effect on the island was something tremendous: it shook and trembled, and was almost hidden in the smoke of the conflict. What the effect is upon the invaders it is too soon to determine. If any of them survive, it will be God’s mercy to his weak and innocent children.

It must be said that the American people—such of them as were aware of this uprising—took the punishment of their presumption in a sweet and forgiving spirit. If they did not feel that they deserved it, they regarded it as a valuable contribution to the study of sociology and race characteristics, in which they have taken a lively interest of late. We know how it is ourselves, they said; we used to be thin-skinned and self-conscious and sensitive. We used to wince and cringe under English criticism, and try to strike back in a blind fury. We have learned that criticism is good for us, and we are grateful for it from any source. We have learned that English criticism is dictated by love for us, by a warm interest in our intellectual development, just as English anxiety about our revenue laws is based upon a yearning that our down-trodden millions shall enjoy the benefits of free-trade. We did not understand why a country that admits our beef and grain and cheese should seem to seek protection

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against a literary product which is brought into competition with one of the great British staples, the modern novel. It seemed inconsistent. But we are no more consistent ourselves. We cannot understand the action of our own Congress, which protects the American author by a round duty on foreign books and refuses to protect him by granting a foreign copyright; or, to put it in another way, is willing to steal the brains of the foreign author under the plea of free knowledge, but taxes free knowledge in another form. We have no defense to make of the state of international copyright, though we appreciate the complication of the matter in the conflicting interests of English and American publishers.

Yes; we must insist that, under the circumstances, the American people have borne this outburst of English criticism in an admirable spirit. It was as unexpected as it was sudden. Now, for many years our international relations have been uncommonly smooth, oiled every few days by complimentary banquet speeches, and sweetened by abundance of magazine and newspaper “taffy.” Something too much of “taffy” we have thought was given us at times for, in getting bigger in various ways, we have grown more modest. Though our English admirers may not believe it, we see our own faults more clearly than we once did—thanks, partly, to the faithful castigations of our friends—and we sometimes find it difficult to conceal our blushes when we are over-praised. We fancied that we were going on, as an English writer on “Down-Easters” used to say, as “slick as ile,” when this miniature tempest suddenly burst out in a revival of the language and methods used in the redoubtable old English periodicals forty years ago. We were interested in seeing how exactly this sort of criticism that slew our literary fathers was revived now for the execution of their degenerate children. And yet it was not exactly the same. We used to call it “slang-whanging.” One form of it was a blank surprise at the pretensions of American authors, and a dismissal with the formula of previous ignorance of their existence. This is modified now by a modest expression of “discomfiture” on reading of American authors “whose very names, much less peculiarities, we never heard of before.” This is a tribunal from which there is no appeal. Not to have been heard of by an Englishman is next door to annihilation. It is at least discouraging to an author who may think he has gained some reputation over what is now conceded to be a considerable portion of the earth’s surface, to be cast into total obscurity by the negative damnation of English ignorance. There is to us something pathetic in this and in the surprise of the English critic, that there can be any standard of respectable achievement outside of a seven-miles radius turning on Charing Cross.

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The pathetic aspect of the case has not, however, we are sorry to say, struck the American press, which has too often treated with unbecoming levity this unaccountable exhibition of English sensitiveness. There has been little reply to it; at most, generally only an amused report of the war, and now and then a discriminating acceptance of some of the criticism as just, with a friendly recognition of the fact that on the whole the critic had done very well considering the limitation of his knowledge of the subject on which he wrote. What is certainly noticeable is an entire absence of the irritation that used to be caused by similar comments on America thirty years ago. Perhaps the Americans are reserving their fire as their ancestors did at Bunker Hill, conscious, maybe, that in the end they will be driven out of their slight literary entrenchments. Perhaps they were disarmed by the fact that the acrid criticism in the London Quarterly Review was accompanied by a cordial appreciation of the novels that seemed to the reviewer characteristically American. The interest in the tatter's review of our poor field must be languid, however, for nobody has taken the trouble to remind its author that Brockden Brown—who is cited as a typical American writer, true to local character, scenery, and color—put no more flavor of American life and soil in his books than is to be found in "Frankenstein."

It does not, I should suppose, lie in the way of The Century, whose general audience on both sides of the Atlantic takes only an amused interest in this singular revival of a traditional literary animosity—an anachronism in these tolerant days when the reading world cares less and less about the origin of literature that pleases it—it does not lie in the way of The Century to do more than report this phenomenal literary effervescence. And yet it cannot escape a certain responsibility as an immediate though innocent occasion of this exhibition of international courtesy, because its last November number contained some papers that seem to have been irritating. In one of them Mr. Howells let fall some chance remarks on the tendency of modern fiction, without adequately developing his theory, which were largely dissented from in this country, and were like the uncorking of six vials in England. The other was an essay on England, dictated by admiration for the achievements of the foremost nation of our time, which, from the awkwardness of the eulogist, was unfortunately the uncorking of the seventh vial—an uncorking which, as we happen to know, so prostrated the writer that he resolved never to attempt to praise England again. His panic was somewhat allayed by the soothing remark in a kindly paper in Blackwood's Magazine for January, that the writer had discussed his theme "by no means unfairly or disrespectfully." But with a shudder he recognized what a peril he had escaped. Great Scott!—the reference is to a local American deity who is invoked in war, and not to the Biblical commentator—what would have happened to him if he had spoken of England "disrespectfully"!

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We gratefully acknowledge also the remark of the Blackwood writer in regard to the claims of America in literature. "These claims," he says, "we have hitherto been very charitable to." How our life depends upon a continual exhibition by the critics of this divine attribute of charity it would perhaps be unwise in us to confess. We can at least take courage that it exists—who does not need it in this world of misunderstandings?—since we know that charity is not puffed up, vaunteth not itself, hopeth all things, endureth all things, is not easily provoked; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish; but charity never faileth. And when all our "dialects" on both sides of the water shall vanish, and we shall speak no more Yorkshire or Cape Cod, or London cockney or "Pike" or "Cracker" vowel flatness, nor write them any more, but all use the noble simplicity of the ideal English, and not indulge in such odd-sounding phrases as this of our critic that "the combatants on both sides were by way of detesting each other," though we speak with the tongues of men and of angels—we shall still need charity.

It will occur to the charitable that the Americans are at a disadvantage in this little international "tiff." For while the offenders have inconsiderately written over their own names, the others preserve a privileged anonymity. Any attempt to reply to these voices out of the dark reminds one of the famous duel between the Englishman and the Frenchman which took place in a pitch-dark chamber, with the frightful result that when the tender-hearted Englishman discharged his revolver up the chimney he brought down his man. One never can tell in a case of this kind but a charitable shot might bring down a valued friend or even a peer of the realm.

In all soberness, however, and setting aside the open question, which country has most diverged from the English as it was at the time of the separation of the colonies from the motherland, we may be permitted a word or two in the hope of a better understanding. The offense in *The Century* paper on "England" seems to have been in phrases such as these: "When we began to produce something that was the product of our own soil and of our own social conditions, it was still judged by the old standards;" and, we are no longer irritated by "the snobbishness of English critics of a certain school," "for we see that its criticism is only the result of ignorance simply of inability to understand."

Upon this the reviewer affects to lose his respiration, and with "a gasp of incredulity" wants to know what the writer means, "and what standards he proposes to himself when he has given up the English ones?" The reviewer makes a more serious case than the writer intended, or than a fair construction of the context of his phrases warrants. It is the criticism of "a certain school" only that was said to be the result of ignorance. It is not the English language nor its body of enduring

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literature—the noblest monument of our common civilization—that the writer objected to as a standard of our performances. The standard objected to is the narrow insular one (the term “insular” is used purely as a geographical one) that measures life, social conditions, feeling, temperament, and national idiosyncrasies expressed in our literature by certain fixed notions prevalent in England. Probably also the expression of national peculiarities would diverge somewhat from the “old standards.” All we thought of asking was that allowance should be made for this expression and these peculiarities, as it would be made in case of other literatures and peoples. It might have occurred to our critics, we used to think, to ask themselves whether the English literature is not elastic enough to permit the play of forces in it which are foreign to their experience. Genuine literature is the expression, we take it, of life-and truth to that is the standard of its success. Reference was intended to this, and not to the common canons of literary art. But we have given up the expectation that the English critic “of a certain school” will take this view of it, and this is the plain reason—not intended to be offensive—why much of the English criticism has ceased to be highly valued in this country, and why it has ceased to annoy. At the same time, it ought to be added, English opinion, when it is seen to be based upon knowledge, is as highly respected as ever. And nobody in America, so far as we know, entertains, or ever entertained, the idea of setting aside as standards the master-minds in British literature. In regard to the “inability to understand,” we can, perhaps, make ourselves more clearly understood, for the Blackwood’s reviewer has kindly furnished us an illustration in this very paper, when he passes in patronizing review the novels of Mr. Howells. In discussing the character of Lydia Blood, in “The Lady of the Aroostook,” he is exceedingly puzzled by the fact that a girl from rural New England, brought up amid surroundings homely in the extreme, should have been considered a lady. He says:

“The really ‘American thing’ in it is, we think, quite undiscovered either by the author or his heroes, and that is the curious confusion of classes which attributes to a girl brought up on the humblest level all the prejudices and necessities of the highest society. Granting that there was anything dreadful in it, the daughter of a homely small farmer in England is not guarded and accompanied like a young lady on her journeys from one place to another. Probably her mother at home would be disturbed, like Lydia’s aunt, at the thought that there was no woman on board, in case her child should be ill or lonely; but, as for any impropriety, would never think twice on that subject. The difference is that the English girl would not be a young lady. She would find her sweetheart among the sailors, and would have nothing to say to the gentlemen. This difference

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is far more curious than the misadventure, which might have happened anywhere, and far more remarkable than the fact that the gentlemen did behave to her like gentlemen, and did their best to set her at ease, which we hope would have happened anywhere else. But it is, we think, exclusively American, and very curious and interesting, that this young woman, with her antecedents so distinctly set before us, should be represented as a lady, not at all out of place among her cultivated companions, and 'ready to become an ornament of society the moment she lands in Venice.'

Reams of writing could not more clearly explain what is meant by "inability to understand" American conditions and to judge fairly the literature growing out of them; and reams of writing would be wasted in the attempt to make our curious critic comprehend the situation. There is nothing in his experience of "farmers' daughters" to give him the key to it. We might tell him that his notion of a farmer's daughters in England does not apply to New England. We might tell him of a sort of society of which he has no conception and can have none, of farmers' daughters and farmers' wives in New England—more numerous, let us confess, thirty or forty years ago than now—who lived in homely conditions, dressed with plainness, and followed the fashions afar off; did their own household work, even the menial parts of it; cooked the meals for the "men folks" and the "hired help," made the butter and cheese, and performed their half of the labor that wrung an honest but not luxurious living from the reluctant soil. And yet those women—the sweet and gracious ornaments of a self-respecting society—were full of spirit, of modest pride in their position, were familiar with much good literature, could converse with piquancy and understanding on subjects of general interest, were trained in the subtleties of a solid theology, and bore themselves in any company with that traditional breeding which we associate with the name of lady. Such strong native sense had they, such innate refinement and courtesy—the product, it used to be said, of plain living and high thinking—that, ignorant as they might be of civic ways, they would, upon being introduced to them, need only a brief space of time to "orient" themselves to the new circumstances. Much more of this sort might be said without exaggeration. To us there is nothing incongruous in the supposition that Lydia Blood was "ready to become an ornament to society the moment she lands in Venice."

But we lack the missionary spirit necessary to the exertion to make our interested critic comprehend such a social condition, and we prefer to leave ourselves to his charity, in the hope of the continuance of which we rest in serenity.

NATHAN HALE—1887

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In a Memorial Day address at New Haven in 1881, the Hon. Richard D. Hubbard suggested the erection of a statue to Nathan Hale in the State Capitol. With the exception of the monument in Coventry no memorial of the young hero existed. The suggestion was acted on by the Hon. E. S. Cleveland, who introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives in the session of 1883, appropriating money for the purpose. The propriety of this was urged before a committee of the Legislature by Governor Hubbard, in a speech of characteristic grace and eloquence, seconded by the Hon. Henry C. Robinson and the Hon. Stephen W. Kellogg. The Legislature appropriated the sum of five thousand dollars for a statue in bronze, and a committee was appointed to procure it. They opened a public competition, and, after considerable delay, during which the commission was changed by death and by absence,—indeed four successive governors, Hubbard, Waller, Harrison, and Lounsbury have served on it,—the work was awarded to Karl Gerhardt, a young sculptor who began his career in this city. It was finished in clay, and accepted in October, 1886, put in plaster, and immediately sent to the foundry of Melzar Masman in Chicopee, Massachusetts.

Today in all its artistic perfection and beauty it stands here to be revealed to the public gaze. It is proper that the citizens of Connecticut should know how much of this result they owe to the intelligent zeal of Mr. Cleveland, the mover of the resolution in the Legislature, who in the commission, and before he became a member of it, has spared neither time nor effort to procure a memorial worthy of the hero and of the State. And I am sure that I speak the unanimous sentiment of the commission in the regret that the originator of this statue could not have seen the consummation of his idea, and could not have crowned it with the one thing lacking on this occasion, the silver words of eloquence we always heard from his lips, that compact, nervous speech, the perfect union of strength and grace; for who so fitly as the lamented Hubbard could have portrayed the moral heroism of the Martyr-Spy?

This is not a portrait statue. There is no likeness of Nathan Hale extant. The only known miniature of his face, in the possession of the lady to whom he was betrothed at the time of his death, disappeared many years ago. The artist was obliged, therefore, to create an ideal figure, aided by a few fragmentary descriptions of Hale's personal appearance. His object has been to represent an American youth of the period, an American patriot and scholar, whose manly beauty and grace tradition loves to recall, to represent in face and in bearing the moral elevation of character that made him conspicuous among his fellows, and to show forth, if possible, the deed that made him immortal. For it is the deed and the memorable last words we think of when we think of Hale. I know that by one of the canons of art it is held that sculpture should rarely fix a momentary action;

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but if this can be pardoned in the Laocoon, where suffering could not otherwise be depicted to excite the sympathy of the spectator, surely it can be justified in this case, where, as one may say, the immortality of the subject rests upon a single act, upon a phrase, upon the attitude of the moment. For all the man's life, all his character, flowered and blossomed into immortal beauty in this one supreme moment of self-sacrifice, triumph, defiance. The ladder of the gallows-tree on which the deserted boy stood, amidst the enemies of his country, when he uttered those last words which all human annals do not parallel in simple patriotism,—the ladder I am sure ran up to heaven, and if angels were not seen ascending and descending it in that gray morning, there stood the embodiment of American courage, unconquerable, American faith, invincible, American love of country, unquenchable, a new democratic manhood in the world, visible there for all men to take note of, crowned already with the halo of victory in the Revolutionary dawn. Oh, my Lord Howe! it seemed a trifling incident to you and to your bloodhound, Provost Marshal Cunningham, but those winged last words were worth ten thousand men to the drooping patriot army. Oh, your Majesty, King George the Third! here was a spirit, could you but have known it, that would cost you an empire, here was an ignominious death that would grow in the estimation of mankind, increasing in nobility above the fading pageantry of kings.

On the 21st of April, 1775, a messenger, riding express from Boston to New York with the tidings of Lexington and Concord, reached New London. The news created intense excitement. A public meeting was called in the court-house at twilight, and among the speakers who exhorted the people to take up arms at once, was one, a youth not yet twenty years of age, who said, "Let us march immediately, and never lay down our arms until we have obtained our independence,"—one of the first, perhaps the first, of the public declarations of the purpose of independence. It was Nathan Hale, already a person of some note in the colony, of a family then not unknown and destined in various ways to distinction in the Republic. A kinsman of the same name lost his life in the Louisburg fight. He had been for a year the preceptor of the Union Grammar School at New London. The morning after the meeting he was enrolled as a volunteer, and soon marched away with his company to Cambridge.

Nathan Hale, descended from Robert Hale who settled in Charlestown in 1632, a scion of the Hales of Kent, England, was born in Coventry, Connecticut, on the 6th of June, 1755, the sixth child of Richard Hale and his wife Elizabeth Strong, persons of strong intellect and the highest moral character, and Puritans of the strictest observances. Brought up in this atmosphere, in which duty and moral rectitude were the unquestioned obligations in life, he came to manhood with a character that enabled him to face death or obloquy without flinching,

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when duty called, so that his behavior at the last was not an excitement of the moment, but the result of ancestry, training, and principle. Feeble physically in infancy, he developed into a robust boy, strong in mind and body, a lively, sweet-tempered, beautiful youth, and into a young manhood endowed with every admirable quality. In feats of strength and agility he recalls the traditions of Washington; he early showed a remarkable avidity for knowledge, which was so sought that he became before he was of age one of the best educated young men of his time in the colonies. He was not only a classical scholar, with the limitations of those days; but, what was then rare, he made scientific attainments which greatly impressed those capable of judging, and he had a taste for art and a remarkable talent as an artist. His father intended him for the ministry. He received his preparatory education from Dr. Joseph Huntington, a classical scholar and the pastor of the church in Coventry, entered Yale College at the age of sixteen, and graduated with high honors in a class of sixty, in September, 1773. At the time of his graduation his personal appearance was notable. Dr. Enos Monro of New Haven, who knew him well in the last year at Yale, said of him

"He was almost six feet in height, perfectly proportioned, and in figure and deportment he was the most manly man I have ever met. His chest was broad; his muscles were firm; his face wore a most benign expression; his complexion was roseate; his eyes were light blue and beamed with intelligence; his hair was soft and light brown in color, and his speech was rather low, sweet, and musical. His personal beauty and grace of manner were most charming. Why, all the girls in New Haven fell in love with him," said Dr. Munro, "and wept tears of real sorrow when they heard of his sad fate. In dress he was always neat; he was quick to lend a hand to a being in distress, brute or human; was overflowing with good humor, and was the idol of all his acquaintances."

Dr. Jared Sparks, who knew several of Hale's intimate friends, writes of him:

"Possessing genius, taste, and order, he became distinguished as a scholar; and endowed in an eminent degree with those graces and gifts of Nature which add a charm to youthful excellence, he gained universal esteem and confidence. To high moral worth and irreproachable habits were joined gentleness of manner, an ingenuous disposition, and vigor of understanding. No young man of his years put forth a fairer promise of future usefulness and celebrity; the fortunes of none were fostered more sincerely by the generous good wishes of his superiors."

It was remembered at Yale that he was a brilliant debater as well as scholar. At his graduation he engaged in a debate on the question, "Whether the education of daughters be not, without any just reason, more neglected than that of the sons." "In this debate," wrote James Hillhouse, one of his classmates, "he was the champion of the daughters, and most ably advocated their cause. You may be sure that he received the plaudits of the ladies present."

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Hale seems to have had an irresistible charm for everybody. He was a favorite in society; he had the manners and the qualities that made him a leader among men and gained him the admiration of women. He was always intelligently busy, and had the Yankee ingenuity,—he “could do anything but spin,” he used to say to the girls of Coventry, laughing over the spinning wheel. There is a universal testimony to his alert intelligence, vivacity, manliness, sincerity, and winningness.

It is probable that while still an under-graduate at Yale, he was engaged to Alice Adams, who was born in Canterbury, a young lady distinguished then as she was afterwards for great beauty and intelligence. After Hale’s death she married Mr. Eleazer Ripley, and was left a widow at the age of eighteen, with one child, who survived its father only one year. She married, the second time, William Lawrence, Esq., of Hartford, and died in this city, greatly respected and admired, in 1845, aged eighty-eight. It is a touching note of the hold the memory of her young hero had upon her admiration that her last words, murmured as life was ebbing, were, “Write to Nathan.”

Hale’s short career in the American army need not detain us. After his flying visit as a volunteer to Cambridge, he returned to New London, joined a company with the rank of lieutenant, participated in the siege of Boston, was commissioned a captain in the Nineteenth Connecticut Regiment in January, 1776, performed the duties of a soldier with vigilance, bravery, and patience, and was noted for the discipline of his company. In the last dispiriting days of 1775, when the terms of his men had expired, he offered to give them his month’s pay if they would remain a month longer. He accompanied the army to New York, and shared its fortunes in that discouraging spring and summer. Shortly after his arrival Captain Hale distinguished himself by the brilliant exploit of cutting out a British sloop, laden with provisions, from under the guns of the man-of-war “Asia,” sixty-four, lying in the East River, and bringing her triumphantly into slip. During the summer he suffered a severe illness.

The condition of the American army and cause on the 1st of September, 1776, after the retreat from Long Island, was critical. The army was demoralized, clamoring in vain for pay, and deserting by companies and regiments; one-third of the men were without tents, one-fourth of them were on the sick list. On the 7th, Washington called a council of war, and anxiously inquired what should be done. On the 12th it was determined to abandon the city and take possession of Harlem Heights. The British army, twenty-five thousand strong, admirably equipped, and supported by a powerful naval force, threatened to envelop our poor force, and finish the war in a stroke. Washington was unable to penetrate the designs of the British commander, or to obtain any trustworthy information of the intentions or the movements of the British army.

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Information was imperatively necessary to save us from destruction, and it could only be obtained by one skilled in military and scientific knowledge and a good draughtsman, a man of quick eye, cool head, tact, sagacity, and courage, and one whose judgment and fidelity could be trusted. Washington applied to Lieutenant-Colonel Knowlton, who summoned a conference of officers in the name of the commander-in-chief, and laid the matter before them. No one was willing to undertake the dangerous and ignominious mission. Knowlton was in despair, and late in the conference was repeating the necessity, when a young officer, pale from recent illness, entered the room and said, "I will undertake it." It was Captain Nathan Hale. Everybody was astonished. His friends besought him not to attempt it. In vain. Hale was under no illusion. He silenced all remonstrances by saying that he thought he owed his country the accomplishment of an object so important and so much desired by the commander-in-chief, and he knew no way to obtain the information except by going into the enemy's camp in disguise. "I wish to be useful," he said; "and every kind of service necessary for the public good becomes honorable by being necessary. If the exigencies of my country demand a peculiar service, its claims to the performance of that service are imperious."

The tale is well known. Hale crossed over from Norwalk to Huntington Cove on Long Island. In the disguise of a schoolmaster, he penetrated the British lines and the city, made accurate drawings of the fortifications, and memoranda in Latin of all that he observed, which he concealed between the soles of his shoes, and returned to the point on the shore where he had first landed. He expected to be met by a boat and to cross the Sound to Norwalk the next morning. The next morning he was captured, no doubt by Tory treachery, and taken to Howe's headquarters, the mansion of James Beekman, situated at (the present) Fiftieth Street and First Avenue. That was on the 21st of September. Without trial and upon the evidence found on his person, Howe condemned him to be hanged as a spy early next morning. Indeed Hale made no attempt at defense. He frankly owned his mission, and expressed regret that he could not serve his country better. His open, manly bearing and high spirit commanded the respect of his captors. Mercy he did not expect, and pity was not shown him. The British were irritated by a conflagration which had that morning laid almost a third of the city in ashes, and which they attributed to incendiary efforts to deprive them of agreeable winter quarters. Hale was at first locked up in the Beekman greenhouse. Whether he remained there all night is not known, and the place of his execution has been disputed; but the best evidence seems to be that it took place on the farm of Colonel Rutger, on the west side, in the orchard in the vicinity of the present East Broadway and Market Street, and that he was hanged to the limb of an apple-tree.

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It was a lovely Sunday morning, before the break of day, that he was marched to the place of execution, September 22d. While awaiting the necessary preparations, a courteous young officer permitted him to sit in his tent. He asked for the presence of a chaplain; the request was refused. He asked for a Bible; it was denied. But at the solicitation of the young officer he was furnished with writing materials, and wrote briefly to his mother, his sister, and his betrothed. When the infamous Cunningham, to whom Howe had delivered him, read what was written, he was furious at the noble and dauntless spirit shown, and with foul oaths tore the letters into shreds, saying afterwards "that the rebels should never know that they had a man who could die with such firmness." As Hale stood upon the fatal ladder, Cunningham taunted him, and tauntingly demanded his "last dying speech and confession." The hero did not heed the words of the brute, but, looking calmly upon the spectators, said in a clear voice, "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country." And the ladder was snatched from under him.

My friends, we are not honoring today a lad who appears for a moment in a heroic light, but one of the most worthy of the citizens of Connecticut, who has by his lofty character long honored her, wherever patriotism is not a mere name, and where Christian manhood is respected. We have had many heroes, many youths of promise, and men of note, whose names are our only great and enduring riches; but no one of them all better illustrated, short as was his career, the virtues we desire for all our sons. We have long delayed this tribute to his character and his deeds, but in spite of our neglect his fame has grown year by year, as war and politics have taught us what is really admirable in a human being; and we are now sure that we are not erecting a monument to an ephemeral reputation. It is fit that it should stand here, one of the chief distinctions of our splendid Capitol, here in the political centre of the State, here in the city where first in all the world was proclaimed and put into a political charter the fundamental idea of democracy, that "government rests upon the consent of the people," here in the city where by the action of these self existing towns was formed the model, the town and the commonwealth, the bi-cameral legislature, of our constitutional federal union. If the soul of Nathan Hale, immortal in youth in the air of heaven, can behold today this scene, as doubtless it can, in the midst of a State whose prosperity the young colonist could not have imagined in his wildest dreams for his country, he must feel anew the truth that there is nothing too sacred for a man to give for his native land.

Governor Lounsbury, the labor of the commission is finished. On their behalf I present this work of art to the State of Connecticut.

Let the statue speak for itself.