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THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST-TABLE

THE AUTOCRAT'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The interruption referred to in the first sentence of the first of these papers was just a quarter of a century in duration.

Two articles entitled "The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table" will be found in the "New England Magazine," formerly published in Boston by J. T. and E. Buckingham. The date of the first of these articles is November 1831, and that of the second February 1832. When "The Atlantic Monthly" was begun, twenty-five years afterwards, and the author was asked to write for it, the recollection of these crude products of his uncombed literary boyhood suggested the thought that it would be a curious experiment to shake the same bough again, and see if the ripe fruit were better or worse than the early windfalls.

So began this series of papers, which naturally brings those earlier attempts to my own notice and that of some few friends who were idle enough to read them at the time of their publication. The man is father to the boy that was, and I am my own son, as it seems to me, in those papers of the New England Magazine. If I find it hard to pardon the boy's faults, others would find it harder. They will not, therefore, be reprinted here, nor as I hope, anywhere.

But a sentence or two from them will perhaps bear reproducing, and with these I trust the gentle reader, if that kind being still breathes, will be contented.

—"It is a capital plan to carry a tablet with you, and, when you find yourself felicitous, take notes of your own conversation."—

—"When I feel inclined to read poetry I take down my Dictionary. The poetry of words is quite as beautiful as that of sentences. The author may arrange the gems effectively, but their shape and lustre have been given by the attrition of ages. Bring me the finest simile from the whole range of imaginative writing, and I will show you a single word which conveys a more profound, a more accurate, and a more eloquent analogy."—

—"Once on a time, a notion was started, that if all the people in the world would shout at once, it might be heard in the moon. So the projectors agreed it should be done in just ten years. Some thousand ship-loads of chronometers were distributed to the selectmen and other great folks of all the different nations. For a year beforehand, nothing else was talked about but the awful noise that was to be made on the great occasion. When the time came, everybody had their ears so wide open, to hear the universal ejaculation of *boo*,—the word agreed upon,—that nobody spoke except a deaf man in one of the Feejee Islands, and a woman in Peking, so that the world was never so still since the creation."—

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There was nothing better than these things and there was not a little that was much worse. A young fellow of two or three and twenty has as good a right to spoil a magazine-full of essays in learning how to write, as an oculist like Wenzel had to spoil his hat-full of eyes in learning how to operate for cataract, or an *elegant* like Brummel to point to an armful of failures in the attempt to achieve a perfect tie. This son of mine, whom I have not seen for these twenty-five years, generously counted, was a self-willed youth, always too ready to utter his unchastised fancies. He, like too many American young people, got the spur when he should have had the rein. He therefore helped to fill the market with that unripe fruit which his father says in one of these papers abounds in the marts of his native country. All these by-gone shortcomings he would hope are forgiven, did he not feel sure that very few of his readers know anything about them. In taking the old name for the new papers, he felt bound to say that he had uttered unwise things under that title, and if it shall appear that his unwisdom has not diminished by at least half while his years have doubled, he promises not to repeat the experiment if he should live to double them again and become his own grandfather.

Oliver Wendell Holmes.
Boston. Nov. 1st 1858.

CHAPTER I

I was just going to say, when I was interrupted, that one of the many ways of classifying minds is under the heads of arithmetical and algebraical intellects. All economical and practical wisdom is an extension or variation of the following arithmetical formula: $2+2=4$. Every philosophical proposition has the more general character of the expression $a+b=c$. We are mere operatives, empirics, and egotists, until we learn to think in letters instead of figures.

They all stared. There is a divinity student lately come among us to whom I commonly address remarks like the above, allowing him to take a certain share in the conversation, so far as assent or pertinent questions are involved. He abused his liberty on this occasion by presuming to say that Leibnitz had the same observation.—No, sir, I replied, he has not. But he said a mighty good thing about mathematics, that sounds something like it, and you found it, *not in the original*, but quoted by Dr. Thomas Reid. I will tell the company what he did say, one of these days.

—If I belong to a Society of Mutual Admiration?—I blush to say that I do not at this present moment. I once did, however. It was the first association to which I ever heard the term applied; a body of scientific young men in a great foreign city who admired their teacher, and to some extent each other. Many of them deserved it; they have become famous since. It amuses me to hear the talk of one of those beings described by Thackeray—

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“Letters four do form his name”—

about a social development which belongs to the very noblest stage of civilization. All generous companies of artists, authors, philanthropists, men of science, are, or ought to be, Societies of Mutual Admiration. A man of genius, or any kind of superiority, is not debarred from admiring the same quality in another, nor the other from returning his admiration. They may even associate together and continue to think highly of each other. And so of a dozen such men, if any one place is fortunate enough to hold so many. The being referred to above assumes several false premises. First, that men of talent necessarily hate each other. Secondly, that intimate knowledge or habitual association destroys our admiration of persons whom we esteemed highly at a distance. Thirdly, that a circle of clever fellows, who meet together to dine and have a good time, have signed a constitutional compact to glorify themselves and to put down him and the fraction of the human race not belonging to their number. Fourthly, that it is an outrage that he is not asked to join them.

Here the company laughed a good deal, and the old gentleman who sits opposite said, “That’s it! that’s it!”

I continued, for I was in the talking vein. As to clever people’s hating each other, I think a *little* extra talent does sometimes make people jealous. They become irritated by perpetual attempts and failures, and it hurts their tempers and dispositions. Unpretending mediocrity is good, and genius is glorious; but a weak flavor of genius in an essentially common person is detestable. It spoils the grand neutrality of a commonplace character, as the rinsings of an unwashed wineglass spoil a draught of fair water. No wonder the poor fellow we spoke of, who always belongs to this class of slightly flavored mediocrities, is puzzled and vexed by the strange sight of a dozen men of capacity working and playing together in harmony. He and his fellows are always fighting. With them familiarity naturally breeds contempt. If they ever praise each other’s bad drawings, or broken-winded novels, or spavined verses, nobody ever supposed it was from admiration; it was simply a contract between themselves and a publisher or dealer.

If the Mutuals have really nothing among them worth admiring, that alters the question. But if they are men with noble powers and qualities, let me tell you, that, next to youthful love and family affections, there is no human sentiment better than that which unites the Societies of Mutual Admiration. And what would literature or art be without such associations? Who can tell what we owe to the Mutual Admiration Society of which Shakspeare, and Ben Jonson, and Beaumont and Fletcher were members? Or to that of which Addison and Steele formed the centre, and which gave us the Spectator? Or to that where Johnson, and Goldsmith, and Burke, and Reynolds, and Beauclerk, and Boswell, most admiring among all admirers, met together? Was there any great harm in the fact that the Irvings and Paulding wrote in company? or any unpardonable cabal in

the literary union of Verplanck and Bryant and Sands, and as many more as they chose to associate with them?

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The poor creature does not know what he is talking about, when he abuses this noblest of institutions. Let him inspect its mysteries through the knot-hole he has secured, but not use that orifice as a medium for his popgun. Such a society is the crown of a literary metropolis; if a town has not material for it, and spirit and good feeling enough to organize it, it is a mere caravansary, fit for a man of genius to lodge in, but not to live in. Foolish people hate and dread and envy such an association of men of varied powers and influence, because it is lofty, serene, impregnable, and, by the necessity of the case, exclusive. Wise ones are prouder of the title M. S. M. A. than of all their other honors put together.

—All generous minds have a horror of what are commonly called “facts.” They are the brute beasts of the intellectual domain. Who does not know fellows that always have an ill-conditioned fact or two which they lead after them into decent company like so many bull-dogs, ready to let them slip at every ingenious suggestion, or convenient generalization, or pleasant fancy? I allow no “facts” at this table. What! Because bread is good and wholesome and necessary and nourishing, shall you thrust a crumb into my windpipe while I am talking? Do not these muscles of mine represent a hundred loaves of bread? and is not my thought the abstract of ten thousand of these crumbs of truth with which you would choke off my speech?

[The above remark must be conditioned and qualified for the vulgar mind. The reader will of course understand the precise amount of seasoning which must be added to it before he adopts it as one of the axioms of his life. The speaker disclaims all responsibility for its abuse in incompetent hands.]

This business of conversation is a very serious matter. There are men that it weakens one to talk with an hour more than a day’s fasting would do. Mark this that I am going to say, for it is as good as a working professional man’s advice, and costs you nothing: It is better to lose a pint of blood from your veins than to have a nerve tapped. Nobody measures your nervous force as it runs away, nor bandages your brain and marrow after the operation.

There are men of esprit who are excessively exhausting to some people. They are the talkers who have what may be called *jerky* minds. Their thoughts do not run in the natural order of sequence. They say bright things on all possible subjects, but their zigzags rack you to death. After a jolting half-hour with one of these jerky companions, talking with a dull friend affords great relief. It is like taking the cat in your lap after holding a squirrel.

What a comfort a dull but kindly person is, to be sure, at times! A ground-glass shade over a gas-lamp does not bring more solace to our dazzled eyes than such a one to our minds.

“Do not dull people bore you?” said one of the lady-boarders,—the same that sent me her autograph-book last week with a request for a few original stanzas, not remembering that “The Pactolian” pays me five dollars a line for every thing I write in its columns.

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“Madam,” said I, (she and the century were in their teens together,) “all men are bores, except when we want them. There never was but one man whom I would trust with my latch-key.”

“Who might that favored person be?”

“Zimmermann.”

—The men of genius that I fancy most have erectile heads like the cobra-di-capello. You remember what they tell of William Pinkney, the great pleader; how in his eloquent paroxysms the veins of his neck would swell and his face flush and his eyes glitter, until he seemed on the verge of apoplexy. The hydraulic arrangements for supplying the brain with blood are only second in importance to its own organization. The bulbous-headed fellows that steam well when they are at work are the men that draw big audiences and give us marrowy books and pictures. It is a good sign to have one’s feet grow cold when he is writing. A great writer and speaker once told me that he often wrote with his feet in hot water; but for this, *all* his blood would have run into his head, as the mercury sometimes withdraws into the ball of a thermometer.

—You don’t suppose that my remarks made at this table are like so many postage-stamps, do you,—each to be only once uttered? If you do, you are mistaken. He must be a poor creature that does not often repeat himself. Imagine the author of the excellent piece of advice, “Know thyself,” never alluding to that sentiment again during the course of a protracted existence! Why, the truths a man carries about with him are his tools; and do you think a carpenter is bound to use the same plane but once to smooth a knotty board with, or to hang up his hammer after it has driven its first nail? I shall never repeat a conversation, but an idea often. I shall use the same types when I like, but not commonly the same stereotypes. A thought is often original, though you have uttered it a hundred times. It has come to you over a new route, by a new and express train of associations.

Sometimes, but rarely, one may be caught making the same speech twice over, and yet be held blameless. Thus, a certain lecturer, after performing in an inland city, where dwells a Litteratrice of note, was invited to meet her and others over the social teacup. She pleasantly referred to his many wanderings in his new occupation. “Yes,” he replied, “I am like the Huma, the bird that never lights, being always in the cars, as he is always on the wing.”—Years elapsed. The lecturer visited the same place once more for the same purpose. Another social cup after the lecture, and a second meeting with the distinguished lady. “You are constantly going from place to place,” she said.—“Yes,” he answered, “I am like the Huma,”—and finished the sentence as before.

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What horrors, when it flashed over him that he had made this fine speech, word for word, twice over! Yet it was not true, as the lady might perhaps have fairly inferred, that he had embellished his conversation with the Huma daily during that whole interval of years. On the contrary, he had never once thought of the odious fowl until the recurrence of precisely the same circumstances brought up precisely the same idea. He ought to have been proud of the accuracy of his mental adjustments. Given certain factors, and a sound brain should always evolve the same fixed product with the certainty of Babbage's calculating machine.

—What a satire, by the way, is that machine on the mere mathematician! A Frankenstein-monster, a thing without brains and without heart, too stupid to make a blunder; that turns out results like a corn-sheller, and never grows any wiser or better, though it grind a thousand bushels of them!

I have an immense respect for a man of talents *plus* "the mathematics." But the calculating power alone should seem to be the least human of qualities, and to have the smallest amount of reason in it; since a machine can be made to do the work of three or four calculators, and better than any one of them. Sometimes I have been troubled that I had not a deeper intuitive apprehension of the relations of numbers. But the triumph of the ciphering hand-organ has consoled me. I always fancy I can hear the wheels clicking in a calculator's brain. The power of dealing with numbers is a kind of "detached lever" arrangement, which may be put into a mighty poor watch—I suppose it is about as common as the power of moving the ears voluntarily, which is a moderately rare endowment.

—Little localized powers, and little narrow streaks of specialized knowledge, are things men are very apt to be conceited about. Nature is very wise; but for this encouraging principle how many small talents and little accomplishments would be neglected! Talk about conceit as much as you like, it is to human character what salt is to the ocean; it keeps it sweet, and renders it enduring. Say rather it is like the natural unguent of the sea-fowl's plumage, which enables him to shed the rain that falls on him and the wave in which he dips. When one has had *all* his conceit taken out of him, when he has lost *all* his illusions, his feathers will soon soak through, and he will fly no more.

"So you admire conceited people, do you?" said the young lady who has come to the city to be finished off for—the duties of life.

I am afraid you do not study logic at your school, my dear. It does not follow that I wish to be pickled in brine because I like a salt-water plunge at Nahant. I say that conceit is just as natural a thing to human minds as a centre is to a circle. But little-minded people's thoughts move in such small circles that five minutes' conversation gives you an arc long enough to determine their whole curve. An arc in the movement of a large intellect does not sensibly differ from a straight line. Even if it have the third vowel as its

centre, it does not soon betray it. The highest thought, that is, is the most seemingly impersonal; it does not obviously imply any individual centre.

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Audacious self-esteem, with good ground for it, is always imposing. What resplendent beauty that must have been which could have authorized Phryne to “peel” in the way she did! What fine speeches are those two: “Non omnis mortar,” and “I have taken all knowledge to be my province”! Even in common people, conceit has the virtue of making them cheerful; the man who thinks his wife, his baby, his house, his horse, his dog, and himself severally unequalled, is almost sure to be a good-humored person, though liable to be tedious at times.

—What are the great faults of conversation? Want of ideas, want of words, want of manners, are the principal ones, I suppose you think. I don’t doubt it, but I will tell you what I have found spoil more good talks than anything else;—long arguments on special points between people who differ on the fundamental principles upon which these points depend. No men can have satisfactory relations with each other until they have agreed on certain ultmata of belief not to be disturbed in ordinary conversation, and unless they have sense enough to trace the secondary questions depending upon these ultimate beliefs to their source. In short, just as a written constitution is essential to the best social order, so a code of finalities is a necessary condition of profitable talk between two persons. Talking is like playing on the harp; there is as much in laying the hand on the strings to stop their vibrations as in twanging them to bring out their music.

—Do you mean to say the pun-question is not clearly settled in your minds? Let me lay down the law upon the subject. Life and language are alike sacred. Homicide and verbicide—that is, violent treatment of a word with fatal results to its legitimate meaning, which is its life—are alike forbidden. Manslaughter, which is the meaning of the one, is the same as man’s laughter, which is the end of the other. A pun is *prima facie* an insult to the person you are talking with. It implies utter indifference to or sublime contempt for his remarks, no matter how serious. I speak of total depravity, and one says all that is written on the subject is deep raving. I have committed my self-respect by talking with such a person. I should like to commit him, but cannot, because he is a nuisance. Or I speak of geological convulsions, and he asks me what was the cosine of Noah’s ark; also, whether the Deluge was not a deal huger than any modern inundation.

A pun does not commonly justify a blow in return. But if a blow were given for such cause, and death ensued, the jury would be judges both of the facts and of the pun, and might, if the latter were of an aggravated character, return a verdict of justifiable homicide. Thus, in a case lately decided before Miller, J., Doe presented Roe a subscription paper, and urged the claims of suffering humanity. Roe replied by asking, When charity was like a top? It was in evidence that Doe preserved a dignified

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silence. Roe then said, "When it begins to hum." Doe then—and not till then—struck Roe, and his head happening to hit a bound volume of the Monthly Rag-bag and Stolen Miscellany, intense mortification ensued, with a fatal result. The chief laid down his notions of the law to his brother justices, who unanimously replied, "Jest so." The chief rejoined, that no man should jest so without being punished for it, and charged for the prisoner, who was acquitted, and the pun ordered to be burned by the sheriff. The bound volume was forfeited as a deodand, but not claimed.

People that make puns are like wanton boys that put coppers on the railroad tracks. They amuse themselves and other children, but their little trick may upset a freight train of conversation for the sake of a battered witticism.

I will thank you, B. F., to bring down two books, of which I will mark the places on this slip of paper. (While he is gone, I may say that this boy, our land-lady's youngest, is called *Benjamin Franklin*, after the celebrated philosopher of that name. A highly merited compliment.)

I wished to refer to two eminent authorities. Now be so good as to listen. The great moralist says: "To trifle with the vocabulary which is the vehicle of social intercourse is to tamper with the currency of human intelligence. He who would violate the sanctities of his mother tongue would invade the recesses of the paternal till without remorse, and repeat the banquet of Saturn without an indigestion."

And, once more, listen to the historian. "The Puritans hated puns. The Bishops were notoriously addicted to them. The Lords Temporal carried them to the verge of license. Majesty itself must have its Royal quibble. 'Ye be burly, my Lord of Burleigh,' said Queen Elizabeth, 'but ye shall make less stir in our realm than my Lord of Leicester.' The gravest wisdom and the highest breeding lent their sanction to the practice. Lord Bacon playfully declared himself a descendant of 'Og, the King of Bashan. Sir Philip Sidney, with his last breath, reproached the soldier who brought him water, for wasting a casque full upon a dying man. A courtier, who saw Othello performed at the Globe Theatre, remarked, that the blackamoor was a brute, and not a man. 'Thou hast reason,' replied a great Lord, 'according to Plato his saying; for this be a two-legged animal *with* feathers.' The fatal habit became universal. The language was corrupted. The infection spread to the national conscience. Political double-dealings naturally grew out of verbal double meanings. The teeth of the new dragon were sown by the Cadmus who introduced the alphabet of equivocation. What was levity in the time of the Tudors grew to regicide and revolution in the age of the Stuarts."

Who was that boarder that just whispered something about the Macaulay-flowers of literature?—There was a dead silence.—I said calmly, I shall henceforth consider any interruption by a pun as a hint to change my boarding-house. Do not plead my

example. If I have used any such, it has been only as a Spartan father would show up a drunken helot. We have done with them.

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—If a logical mind ever found out anything with its logic?—I should say that its most frequent work was to build a pons asinorum over chasms which shrewd people can bestride without such a structure. You can hire logic, in the shape of a lawyer, to prove anything that you want to prove. You can buy treatises to show that Napoleon never lived, and that no battle of Bunker-hill was ever fought. The great minds are those with a wide span, which couple truths related to, but far removed from, each other. Logicians carry the surveyor's chain over the track of which these are the true explorers. I value a man mainly for his primary relations with truth, as I understand truth,—not for any secondary artifice in handling his ideas. Some of the sharpest men in argument are notoriously unsound in judgment. I should not trust the counsel of a smart debater, any more than that of a good chess-player. Either may of course advise wisely, but not necessarily because he wrangles or plays well.

The old gentleman who sits opposite got his hand up, as a pointer lifts his forefoot, at the expression, “his relations with truth, as I understand truth,” and when I had done, sniffed audibly, and said I talked like a transcendentalist. For his part, common sense was good enough for him.

Precisely so, my dear sir, I replied; common sense, *as you understand it*. We all have to assume a standard of judgment in our own minds, either of things or persons. A man who is willing to take another's opinion has to exercise his judgment in the choice of whom to follow, which is often as nice a matter as to judge of things for one's self. On the whole, I had rather judge men's minds by comparing their thoughts with my own, than judge of thoughts by knowing who utter them. I must do one or the other. It does not follow, of course, that I may not recognize another man's thoughts as broader and deeper than my own; but that does not necessarily change my opinion, otherwise this would be at the mercy of every superior mind that held a different one. How many of our most cherished beliefs are like those drinking-glasses of the ancient pattern, that serve us well so long as we keep them in our hand, but spill all if we attempt to set them down! I have sometimes compared conversation to the Italian game of mora, in which one player lifts his hand with so many fingers extended, and the other gives the number if he can. I show my thought, another his; if they agree, well; if they differ, we find the largest common factor, if we can, but at any rate avoid disputing about remainders and fractions, which is to real talk what tuning an instrument is to playing on it.

—What if, instead of talking this morning, I should read you a copy of verses, with critical remarks by the author? Any of the company can retire that like.

ALBUM VERSES.



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When Eve had led her lord away,
And Cain had killed his brother,
The stars and flowers, the poets say,
Agreed with one another

To cheat the cunning tempter's art,
And teach the race its duty,
By keeping on its wicked heart
Their eyes of light and beauty.

A million sleepless lids, they say,
Will be at least a warning;
And so the flowers would watch by day,
The stars from eve to morning.

On hill and prairie, field and lawn,
Their dewy eyes upturning,
The flowers still watch from reddening dawn
Till western skies are burning.

Alas! each hour of daylight tells
A tale of shame so crushing,
That some turn white as sea-bleached shells,
And some are always blushing.

But when the patient stars look down
On all their light discovers,
The traitor's smile, the murderer's frown,
The lips of lying lovers,

They try to shut their saddening eyes,
And in the vain endeavour
We see them twinkling in the skies,
And so they wink forever.

What do *you* think of these verses my friends?—Is that piece an impromptu? said my landlady's daughter. (Aet. 19 +. Tender-eyed blonde. Long ringlets. Cameo pin. Gold pencil-case on a chain. Locket. Bracelet. Album. Autograph book. Accordeon. Reads Byron, Tupper, and Sylvanus Cobb, junior, while her mother makes the puddings. Says "Yes?" when you tell her anything.)—Oui et non, ma petite,—Yes and no, my child. Five of the seven verses were written off-hand; the other two took a week,—that is, were hanging round the desk in a ragged, forlorn, unrhymed condition as long as that. All poets will tell you just such stories. C'est le *dernier* pas qui coute. Don't you know how hard it is for some people to get out of a room after their visit is really over? They want



to be off, and you want to have them off, but they don't know how to manage it. One would think they had been built in your parlour or study, and were waiting to be launched. I have contrived a sort of ceremonial inclined plane for such visitors, which being lubricated with certain smooth phrases, I back them down, metaphorically speaking, stern-foremost, into their "native element," the great ocean of out-doors. Well, now, there are poems as hard to get rid of as these rural visitors. They come in glibly, use up all the serviceable rhymes, *day, ray, beauty, duty, skies, eyes, other, brother, mountain, fountain*, and the like; and so they go on until you think it is time for the wind-up, and the wind-up won't come on any terms. So they lie about until you get sick of the sight of them, and end by thrusting some cold scrap of a final couplet upon them, and turning them out of doors. I suspect a good many "impromptus" could tell just such a story as the above.—Here turning to our landlady, I used an illustration which pleased the company much at the time, and has since been highly commanded. "Madam," I said, "you can pour three gills and three quarters of honey from that pint jug, if it is full, in less than one minute; but, Madam, you could not empty that last quarter of a gill, though you were turned into a marble Hebe, and held the vessel upside down for a thousand years."

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One gets tired to death of the old, old rhymes, such as you see in that copy of verses, —which I don't mean to abuse, or to praise either. I always feel as if I were a cobbler, putting new top-leathers to an old pair of boot-soles and bodies, when I am fitting sentiments to these venerable jingles.

. . . . youth
. . . . morning
. . . . truth
. . . . warning

Nine tenths of the “Juvenile Poems” written spring out of the above musical and suggestive coincidences.

“Yes?” said our landlady’s daughter.

I did not address the following remark to her, and I trust, from her limited range of reading, she will never see it; I said it softly to my next neighbour.

When a young female wears a flat circular side—curl, gummed on each temple,—when she walks with a male, not arm in arm, but his arm against the back of hers,—and when she says “Yes?” with the note of interrogation, you are generally safe in asking her what wages she gets, and who the “feller” was you saw her with.

“What were you whispering?” said the daughter of the house, moistening her lips, as she spoke, in a very engaging manner.

“I was only laying down a principle of social diagnosis.”

“Yes?”

—It is curious to see how the same wants and tastes find the same implements and modes of expression in all times and places. The young ladies of Otaheite, as you may see in Cook’s Voyages, had a sort of crinoline arrangement fully equal in radius to the largest spread of our own lady-baskets. When I fling a Bay-State shawl over my shoulders, I am only taking a lesson from the climate that the Indian had learned before me. A *blanket*-shawl we call it, and not a plaid; and we wear it like the aborigines, and not like the Highlanders.

—We are the Romans of the modern world,—the great assimilating people. Conflicts and conquests are of course necessary accidents with us, as with our prototypes. And so we come to their style of weapon. Our army sword is the short, stiff, pointed gladius of the Romans; and the American bowie-knife is the same tool, modified to meet the

daily wants of civil society. I announce at this table an axiom not to be found in Montesquieu or the journals of Congress:-

The race that shortens its weapons lengthens its boundaries.

Corollary. It was the Polish *lance* that left Poland at last with nothing of her own to bound.

“Dropped from her nerveless grasp the *shattered spear!*”

What business had Sarmatia to be fighting for liberty with a fifteen-foot pole between her and the breasts of her enemies? If she had but clutched the old Roman and young American weapon, and come to close quarters, there might have been a chance for her; but it would have spoiled the best passage in “The Pleasures of Hope.”

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—Self-made men?—Well, yes. Of course everybody likes and respects self-made men. It is a great deal better to be made in that way than not to be made at all. Are any of you younger people old enough to remember that Irishman's house on the marsh at Cambridgeport, which house he built from drain to chimney-top with his own hands? It took him a good many years to build it, and one could see that it was a little out of plumb, and a little wavy in outline, and a little queer and uncertain in general aspect. A regular hand could certainly have built a better house; but it was a very good house for a "self-made" carpenter's house, and people praised it, and said how remarkably well the Irishman had succeeded. They never thought of praising the fine blocks of houses a little farther on.

Your self-made man, whittled into shape with his own jack-knife, deserves more credit, if that is all, than the regular engine-turned article, shaped by the most approved pattern, and French-polished by society and travel. But as to saying that one is every way the equal of the other, that is another matter. The right of strict social discrimination of all things and persons, according to their merits, native or acquired, is one of the most precious republican privileges. I take the liberty to exercise it, when I say, that, *other things being equal*, in most relations of life I prefer a man of family.

What do I mean by a man of family?—O, I'll give you a general idea of what I mean. Let us give him a first-rate fit out; it costs us nothing.

Four or five generations of gentlemen and gentlewomen; among them a member of his Majesty's Council for the Province, a Governor or so, one or two Doctors of Divinity, a member of Congress, not later than the time of top-boots with tassels.

Family portraits. The member of the Council, by Smibert. The great merchant-uncle, by Copley, full length, sitting in his arm-chair, in a velvet cap and flowered robe, with a globe by him, to show the range of his commercial transactions, and letters with large red seals lying round, one directed conspicuously to The Honourable *etc. etc.* Great-grandmother, by the same artist; brown satin, lace very fine, hands superlative; grand old lady, stiffish, but imposing. Her mother, artist unknown; flat, angular, hanging sleeves; parrot on fist. A pair of Stuarts, *viz.*, 1. A superb full-blown, mediaeval gentleman, with a fiery dash of Tory blood in his veins, tempered down with that of a fine old rebel grandmother, and warmed up with the best of old India Madeira; his face is one flame of ruddy sunshine; his ruffled shirt rushes out of his bosom with an impetuous generosity, as if it would drag his heart after it; and his smile is good for twenty thousand dollars to the Hospital, besides ample bequests to all relatives and dependants. 2. Lady of the same; remarkable cap; high waist, as in time of Empire; bust à la Josephine; wisps of curls, like celery-tips, at sides of forehead; complexion clear and warm, like rose-cordial. As for the miniatures by Malbone, we don't count them in the gallery.

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Books, too, with the names of old college-students in them,—family names;—you will find them at the head of their respective classes in the days when students took rank on the catalogue from their parents' condition. Elzevirs, with the Latinized appellations of youthful progenitors, and Hic liber est meus on the title-page. A set of Hogarth's original plates. Pope, original edition, 15 volumes, London, 1717. Barrow on the lower shelves, in folio. Tillotson on the upper, in a little dark platoon of octo-decimos.

Some family silver; a string of wedding and funeral rings; the arms of the family curiously blazoned; the same in worsted, by a maiden aunt.

If the man of family has an old place to keep these things in, furnished with claw-footed chairs and black mahogany tables, and tall bevel-edged mirrors, and stately upright cabinets, his outfit is complete.

No, my friends, I go (always, other things being equal) for the man who inherits family traditions and the cumulative humanities of at least four or five generations. Above all things, as a child, he should have tumbled about in a library. All men are afraid of books, who have not handled them from infancy. Do you suppose our dear didascalos over there ever read Poli Synopsis, or consulted Castelli Lexicon, while he was growing up to their stature? Not he; but virtue passed through the hem of their parchment and leather garments whenever he touched them, as the precious drugs sweated through the bat's handle in the Arabian story. I tell you he is at home wherever he smells the invigorating fragrance of Russia leather. No self-made man feels so. One may, it is true, have all the antecedents I have spoken of, and yet be a boor or a shabby fellow. One may have none of them, and yet be fit for councils and courts. Then let them change places. Our social arrangement has this great beauty, that its strata shift up and down as they change specific gravity, without being clogged by layers of prescription. But I still insist on my democratic liberty of choice, and I go for the man with the gallery of family portraits against the one with the twenty-five-cent daguerreotype, unless I find out that the last is the better of the two.

—I should have felt more nervous about the late comet, if I had thought the world was ripe. But it is very green yet, if I am not mistaken; and besides, there is a great deal of coal to use up, which I cannot bring myself to think was made for nothing. If certain things, which seem to me essential to a millennium, had come to pass, I should have been frightened; but they haven't. Perhaps you would like to hear my

LATTER-DAY WARNINGS.

When legislators keep the law,
When banks dispense with bolts and locks,
When berries, whortle—rasp—and straw—
Grow bigger *downwards* through the box,—

When he that selleth house or land
Shows leak in roof or flaw in right,—
When haberdashers choose the stand
Whose window hath the broadest light,—

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When preachers tell us all they think,
And party leaders all they mean,—
When what we pay for, that we drink,
From real grape and coffee-bean,—

When lawyers take what they would give,
And doctors give what they would take,—
When city fathers eat to live,
Save when they fast for conscience' sake,—

When one that hath a horse on sale
Shall bring his merit to the proof,
Without a lie for every nail
That holds the iron on the hoof,—

When in the usual place for rips
Our gloves are stitched with special care,
And guarded well the whalebone tips
Where first umbrellas need repair,—

When Cuba's weeds have quite forgot
The power of suction to resist,
And claret-bottles harbor not
Such dimples as would hold your fist,—

When publishers no longer steal,
And pay for what they stole before,—
When the first locomotive's wheel
Rolls through the Hoosac tunnel's bore;—

Till then let Cumming a blaze away,
And Miller's saints blow up the globe;
But when you see that blessed day,
then order your ascension robe!

The company seemed to like the verses, and I promised them to read others occasionally, if they had a mind to hear them. Of course they would not expect it every morning. Neither must the reader suppose that all these things I have reported were said at any one breakfast-time. I have not taken the trouble to date them, as Raspail, pere, used to date every proof he sent to the printer; but they were scattered over several breakfasts; and I have said a good many more things since, which I shall very possibly print some time or other, if I am urged to do it by judicious friends.



I finished off with reading some verses of my friend the Professor, of whom you may perhaps hear more by and by. The Professor read them, he told me, at a farewell meeting, where the youngest of our great Historians met a few of his many friends at their invitation.

Yes, we knew we must lose him,—though friendship may claim
To blend her green leaves with the laurels of fame;
Though fondly, at parting, we call him our own,
'Tis the whisper of love when the bugle has blown.

As the rider that rests with the spur on his heel,—
As the guardsman that sleeps in his corselet of steel,—
As the archer that stands with his shaft on the string,
He stoops from his toil to the garland we bring.

What pictures yet slumber unborn in his loom
Till their warriors shall breathe and their beauties shall bloom,
While the tapestry lengthens the life-glowing dyes
That caught from our sunsets the stain of their skies!

In the alcoves of death, in the charnels of time,
Where flit the gaunt spectres of passion and crime,
There are triumphs untold, there are martyrs unsung,
There are heroes yet silent to speak with his tongue!

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Let us hear the proud story which time has bequeathed
From lips that are warm with the freedom they breathed!
Let him summon its tyrants, and tell us their doom,
Though he sweep the black past like Van Tromp with his broom!

* * * * *

The dream flashes by, for the west-winds awake
On pampas, on prairie, o'er mountain and lake,
To bathe the swift bark, like a sea-girdled shrine,
With incense they stole from the rose and the pine.

So fill a bright cup with the sunlight that gushed
When the dead summer's jewels were trampled and crushed:
The true knight of learning,—the world holds him dear,—
Love bless him, Joy crown him, God speed his career!

CHAPTER II

I really believe some people save their bright thoughts, as being too precious for conversation. What do you think an admiring friend said the other day to one that was talking good things, —good enough to print? “Why,” said he, “you are wasting merchantable literature, a cash article, at the rate, as nearly as I can tell, of fifty dollars an hour.” The talker took him to the window and asked him to look out and tell what he saw.

“Nothing but a very dusty street,” he said, “and a man driving a sprinkling-machine through it.”

“Why don’t you tell the man he is wasting that water? What would be the state of the highways of life, if we did not drive our *thought-SPRINKLERS* through them with the valves open, sometimes?

“Besides, there is another thing about this talking, which you forget. It shapes our thoughts for us;—the waves of conversation roll them as the surf rolls the pebbles on the shore. Let me modify the image a little. I rough out my thoughts in talk as an artist models in clay. Spoken language is so plastic,—you can pat and coax, and spread and shave, and rub out, and fill up, and stick on so easily when you work that soft material, that there is nothing like it for modelling. Out of it come the shapes which you turn into marble or bronze in your immortal books, if you happen to write such. Or, to use another illustration, writing or printing is like shooting with a rifle; you may hit your reader’s mind, or miss it;—but talking is like playing at a mark with the pipe of an engine; if it is within reach, and you have time enough, you can’t help hitting it.”

The company agreed that this last illustration was of superior excellence, or, in the phrase used by them, “Fust-rate.” I acknowledged the compliment, but gently rebuked the expression. “Fust-rate,” “prime,” “a prime article,” “a superior piece of goods,” “a handsome garment,” “a gent in a flowered vest,”—all such expressions are final. They blast the lineage of him or her who utters them, for generations up and down. There is one other phrase which will soon come to be decisive of a man’s social *status*, if it is not already: “That tells the whole story.” It is an expression which vulgar and conceited people particularly affect, and which well-meaning ones, who know better, catch from them. It is intended to stop all debate, like the previous question in the General Court. Only it doesn’t; simply because “that” does not usually tell the whole, nor one half of the whole story.

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—It is an odd idea, that almost all our people have had a professional education. To become a doctor a man must study some three years and hear a thousand lectures, more or less. Just how much study it takes to make a lawyer I cannot say, but probably not more than this. Now most decent people hear one hundred lectures or sermons (discourses) on theology every year,—and this, twenty, thirty, fifty years together. They read a great many religious books besides. The clergy, however, rarely hear any sermons except what they preach themselves. A dull preacher might be conceived, therefore, to lapse into a state of quasi heathenism, simply for want of religious instruction. And on the other hand, an attentive and intelligent hearer, listening to a succession of wise teachers, might become actually better educated in theology than any one of them. We are all theological students, and more of us qualified as doctors of divinity than have received degrees at any of the universities.

It is not strange, therefore, that very good people should often find it difficult, if not impossible, to keep their attention fixed upon a sermon treating feebly a subject which they have thought vigorously about for years, and heard able men discuss scores of times. I have often noticed, however, that a hopelessly dull discourse acts *inductively*, as electricians would say, in developing strong mental currents. I am ashamed to think with what accompaniments and variations and fioriture I have sometimes followed the droning of a heavy speaker,—not willingly,—for my habit is reverential,—but as a necessary result of a slight continuous impression on the senses and the mind, which kept both in action without furnishing the food they required to work upon. If you ever saw a crow with a king-bird after him, you will get an image of a dull speaker and a lively listener. The bird in sable plumage flaps heavily along his straight-forward course, while the other sails round him, over him, under him, leaves him, comes back again, tweaks out a black feather, shoots away once more, never losing sight of him, and finally reaches the crow's perch at the same time the crow does, having cut a perfect labyrinth of loops and knots and spirals while the slow fowl was painfully working from one end of his straight line to the other.

[I think these remarks were received rather coolly. A temporary boarder from the country, consisting of a somewhat more than middle-aged female, with a parchment forehead and a dry little “frisette” shingling it, a sallow neck with a necklace of gold beads, a black dress too rusty for recent grief and contours in basso-rilievo, left the table prematurely, and was reported to have been very virulent about what I said. So I went to my good old minister, and repeated the remarks, as nearly as I could remember them, to him. He laughed good-naturedly, and said there was considerable truth in them. He thought he could tell when people's minds were

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wandering, by their looks. In the earlier years of his ministry he had sometimes noticed this, when he was preaching; —very little of late years. Sometimes, when his colleague was preaching, he observed this kind of inattention; but after all, it was not so very unnatural. I will say, by the way, that it is a rule I have long followed, to tell my worst thoughts to my minister, and my best thoughts to the young people I talk with.]

—I want to make a literary confession now, which I believe nobody has made before me. You know very well that I write verses sometimes, because I have read some of them at this table. (The company assented,—two or three of them in a resigned sort of way, as I thought, as if they supposed I had an epic in my pocket, and was going to read half a dozen books or so for their benefit.)—I continued. Of course I write some lines or passages which are better than others; some which, compared with the others, might be called relatively excellent. It is in the nature of things that I should consider these relatively excellent lines or passages as absolutely good. So much must be pardoned to humanity. Now I never wrote a “good” line in my life, but the moment after it was written it seemed a hundred years old. Very commonly I had a sudden conviction that I had seen it somewhere. Possibly I may have sometimes unconsciously stolen it, but I do not remember that I ever once detected any historical truth in these sudden convictions of the antiquity of my new thought or phrase. I have learned utterly to distrust them, and never allow them to bully me out of a thought or line.

This is the philosophy of it. (Here the number of the company was diminished by a small secession.) Any new formula which suddenly emerges in our consciousness has its roots in long trains of thought; it is virtually old when it first makes its appearance among the recognized growths of our intellect. Any crystalline group of musical words has had a long and still period to form in. Here is one theory.

But there is a larger law which perhaps comprehends these facts. It is this. The rapidity with which ideas grow old in our memories is in a direct ratio to the squares of their importance. Their apparent age runs up miraculously, like the value of diamonds, as they increase in magnitude. A great calamity, for instance, is as old as the trilobites an hour after it has happened. It stains backward through all the leaves we have turned over in the book of life, before its blot of tears or of blood is dry on the page we are turning. For this we seem to have lived; it was foreshadowed in dreams that we leaped out of in the cold sweat of terror; in the “dissolving views” of dark day-visions; all omens pointed to it; all paths led to it. After the tossing half-forgetfulness of the first sleep that follows such an event, it comes upon us afresh, as a surprise, at waking; in a few moments it is old again,—old as eternity.

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[I wish I had not said all this then and there. I might have known better. The pale schoolmistress, in her mourning dress, was looking at me, as I noticed, with a wild sort of expression. All at once the blood dropped out of her cheeks as the mercury drops from a broken barometer-tube, and she melted away from her seat like an image of snow; a slung-shot could not have brought her down better. God forgive me!

After this little episode, I continued, to some few that remained balancing teaspoons on the edges of cups, twirling knives, or tilting upon the hind legs of their chairs until their heads reached the wall, where they left gratuitous advertisements of various popular cosmetics.]

When a person is suddenly thrust into any strange, new position of trial, he finds the place fits him as if he had been measured for it. He has committed a great crime, for instance, and is sent to the State Prison. The traditions, prescriptions, limitations, privileges, all the sharp conditions of his new life, stamp themselves upon his consciousness as the signet on soft wax;—a single pressure is enough. Let me strengthen the image a little. Did you ever happen to see that most soft-spoken and velvet-handed steam-engine at the Mint? The smooth piston slides backward and forward as a lady might slip her delicate finger in and out of a ring. The engine lays one of *its* fingers calmly, but firmly, upon a bit of metal; it is a coin now, and will remember that touch, and tell a new race about it, when the date upon it is crusted over with twenty centuries. So it is that a great silent-moving misery puts a new stamp on us in an hour or a moment,—as sharp an impression as if it had taken half a lifetime to engrave it.

It is awful to be in the hands of the wholesale professional dealers in misfortune; undertakers and jailers magnetize you in a moment, and you pass out of the individual life you were living into the rhythmical movements of their horrible machinery. Do the worst thing you can, or suffer the worst that can be thought of, you find yourself in a category of humanity that stretches back as far as Cain, and with an expert at your elbow who has studied your case all out beforehand, and is waiting for you with his implements of hemp or mahogany. I believe, if a man were to be burned in any of our cities tomorrow for heresy, there would be found a master of ceremonies that knew just how many fagots were necessary, and the best way of arranging the whole matter.

—So we have not won the Goodwood cup; au contraire, we were a “bad fifth,” if not worse than that; and trying it again, and the third time, has not yet bettered the matter. Now I am as patriotic as any of my fellow-citizens,—too patriotic in fact, for I have got into hot water by loving too much of my country; in short, if any man, whose fighting weight is not more than eight stone four pounds, disputes it, I am ready to discuss the

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point with him. I should have gloried to see the stars and stripes in front at the finish. I love my country, and I love horses. Stubbs's old mezzotint of Eclipse hangs over my desk, and Herring's portrait of Plenipotentiary,—whom I saw run at Epsom,—over my fireplace. Did I not elope from school to see Revenge, and Prospect, and Little John, and Peacemaker run over the race-course where now yon suburban village flourishes, in the year eighteen hundred and ever-so-few? Though I never owned a horse, have I not been the proprietor of six equine females, of which one was the prettiest little "Morgin" that ever stepped? Listen, then, to an opinion I have often expressed long before this venture of ours in England. Horse-*racing* is not a republican institution; horse-*trotting* is. Only very rich persons can keep race-horses, and everybody knows they are kept mainly as gambling implements. All that matter about blood and speed we won't discuss; we understand all that; useful, very,—*of course*,—great obligations to the Godolphin "Arabian," and the rest. I say racing horses are essentially gambling implements, as much as roulette tables. Now I am not preaching at this moment; I may read you one of my sermons some other morning; but I maintain that gambling, on the great scale, is not republican. It belongs to two phases of society,—a cankered over-civilization, such as exists in rich aristocracies, and the reckless life of borderers and adventurers, or the semi-barbarism of a civilization resolved into its primitive elements. Real Republicanism is stern and severe; its essence is not in forms of government, but in the omnipotence of public opinion which grows out of it. This public opinion cannot prevent gambling with dice or stocks, but it can and does compel it to keep comparatively quiet. But horse-racing is the most public way of gambling, and with all its immense attractions to the sense and the feelings,—to which I plead very susceptible,—the disguise is too thin that covers it, and everybody knows what it means. Its supporters are the Southern gentry,—fine fellows, no doubt, but not republicans exactly, as we understand the term,—a few Northern millionnaires more or less thoroughly millioned, who do not represent the real people, and the mob of sporting men, the best of whom are commonly idlers, and the worst very bad neighbors to have near one in a crowd, or to meet in a dark alley. In England, on the other hand, with its aristocratic institutions, racing is a natural growth enough; the passion for it spreads downwards through all classes, from the Queen to the costermonger. London is like a shelled corn-cob on the Derby day, and there is not a clerk who could raise the money to hire a saddle with an old hack under it that can sit down on his office-stool the next day without wincing.

Now just compare the racer with the trotter for a moment. The racer is incidentally useful, but essentially something to bet upon, as much as the thimble-rigger's "little joker." The trotter is essentially and daily useful, and only incidentally a tool for sporting men.

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What better reason do you want for the fact that the racer is most cultivated and reaches his greatest perfection in England, and that the trotting horses of America beat the world? And why should we have expected that the pick—if it was the pick—of our few and far-between racing stables should beat the pick of England and France? Throw over the fallacious time-test, and there was nothing to show for it but a natural kind of patriotic feeling, which we all have, with a thoroughly provincial conceit, which some of us must plead guilty to.

We may beat yet. As an American, I hope we shall. As a moralist and occasional sermonizer, I am not so anxious about it. Wherever the trotting horse goes, he carries in his train brisk omnibuses, lively bakers' carts, and therefore hot rolls, the jolly butcher's wagon, the cheerful gig, the wholesome afternoon drive with wife and child,—all the forms of moral excellence, except truth, which does not agree with any kind of horse-flesh. The racer brings with him gambling, cursing, swearing, drinking, the eating of oysters, and a distaste for mob-caps and the middle-aged virtues.

And by the way, let me beg you not to call a *trotting match* a *race*, and not to speak of a "thoroughbred" as a "*Blooded*" horse, unless he has been recently phlebotomized. I consent to your saying "blood horse," if you like. Also, if, next year, we send out Posterior and Posterioress, the winners of the great national four-mile race in 7 18.5, and they happen to get beaten, pay your bets, and behave like men and gentlemen about it, if you know how.

[I felt a great deal better after blowing off the ill-temper condensed in the above paragraph. To brag little,—to show well, —to crow gently, if in luck,—to pay up, to own up, and to shut up, if beaten, are the virtues of a sporting man, and I can't say that I think we have shown them in any great perfection of late.]

—Apropos of horses. Do you know how important good jockeying is to authors? Judicious management; letting the public see your animal just enough, and not too much; holding him up hard when the market is too full of him; letting him out at just the right buying intervals; always gently feeling his mouth; never slacking and never jerking the rein;—this is what I mean by jockeying.

—When an author has a number of books out a cunning hand will keep them all spinning, as Signor Blitz does his dinner-plates; fetching each one up, as it begins to "wabble," by an advertisement, a puff, or a quotation.

—Whenever the extracts from a living writer begin to multiply fast in the papers, without obvious reason, there is a new book or a new edition coming. The extracts are *ground-bait*.

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—Literary life is fun of curious phenomena. I don't know that there is anything more noticeable than what we may call *conventional reputations*. There is a tacit understanding in every community of men of letters that they will not disturb the popular fallacy respecting this or that electro-gilded celebrity. There are various reasons for this forbearance: one is old; one is rich; one is good-natured; one is such a favorite with the pit that it would not be safe to hiss him from the manager's box. The venerable augurs of the literary or scientific temple may smile faintly when one of the tribe is mentioned; but the farce is in general kept up as well as the Chinese comic scene of entreating and imploring a man to stay with you with the implied compact between you that he shall by no means think of doing it. A poor wretch he must be who would wantonly sit down on one of these bandbox reputations. A Prince-Rupert's-drop, which is a tear of unannealed glass, lasts indefinitely, if you keep it from meddling hands; but break its tail off, and it explodes and resolves itself into powder. These celebrities I speak of are the Prince-Rupert's drops of the learned and polite world. See how the papers treat them! What an array of pleasant kaleidoscopic phrases, which can be arranged in ever so many charming patterns, is at their service! How kind the "Critical Notices"—where small authorship comes to pick up chips of praise, fragrant, sugary, and sappy—always are to them! Well, life would be nothing without paper-credit and other fictions; so let them pass current. Don't steal their chips; don't puncture their swimming-bladders; don't come down on their pasteboard boxes; don't break the ends of their brittle and unstable reputations, you fellows who all feel sure that your names will be household words a thousand years from now.

"A thousand years is a good while," said the old gentleman who sits opposite, thoughtfully.

—Where have I been for the last three or four days? Down at the Island, deer-shooting. —How many did I bag? I brought home one buck shot.—The Island is where? No matter. It is the most splendid domain that any man looks upon in these latitudes. Blue sea around it, and running up into its heart, so that the little boat slumbers like a baby in lap, while the tall ships are stripping naked to fight the hurricane outside, and storm-stay-sails banging and flying in ribbons. Trees, in stretches of miles; beeches, oaks, most numerous;—many of them hung with moss, looking like bearded Druids; some coiled in the clasp of huge, dark-stemmed grape-vines. Open patches where the sun gets in and goes to sleep, and the winds come so finely sifted that they are as soft as swan's down. Rocks scattered about,—Stonehenge-like monoliths. Fresh-water lakes; one of them, Mary's lake, crystal-clear, full of flashing pickerel lying under the lily-pads like tigers in the jungle. Six pounds of ditto killed one morning for breakfast. *Ego fecit*.

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The divinity-student looked as if he would like to question my Latin. No, sir, I said,—you need not trouble yourself. There is a higher law in grammar, not to be put down by Andrews and Stoddard. Then I went on.

Such hospitality as that island has seen there has not been the like of in these our New England sovereignties. There is nothing in the shape of kindness and courtesy that can make life beautiful, which has not found its home in that ocean-principality. It has welcomed all who were worthy of welcome, from the pale clergyman who came to breathe the sea-air with its medicinal salt and iodine, to the great statesman who turned his back on the affairs of empire, and smoothed his Olympian forehead, and flashed his white teeth in merriment over the long table, where his wit was the keenest and his story the best.

[I don't believe any man ever talked like that in this world. I don't believe *I* talked just so; but the fact is, in reporting one's conversation, one cannot help *Blair*-ing it up more or less, ironing out crumpled paragraphs, starching limp ones, and crimping and plaiting a little sometimes; it is as natural as prinking at the looking-glass.]

—How can a man help writing poetry in such a place? Everybody does write poetry that goes there. In the state archives, kept in the library of the Lord of the Isle, are whole volumes of unpublished verse,—some by well-known hands, and others quite as good, by the last people you would think of as versifiers,—men who could pension off all the genuine poets in the country, and buy ten acres of Boston common, if it was for sale, with what they had left. Of course I had to write my little copy of verses with the rest; here it is, if you will hear me read it. When the sun is in the west, vessels sailing in an easterly direction look bright or dark to one who observes them from the north or south, according to the tack they are sailing upon. Watching them from one of the windows of the great mansion, I saw these perpetual changes, and moralized thus:-

SUN AND SHADOW.

As I look from the isle, o'er its billows of green,
To the billows of foam-crested blue,
Yon bark, that afar in the distance is seen,
Half dreaming, my eyes will pursue:
Now dark in the shadow, she scatters the spray
As the chaff in the stroke of the flail;
Now white as the sea-gull, she flies on her way,
The sun gleaming bright on her sail.

Yet her pilot is thinking of dangers to shun,—
Of breakers that whiten and roar;
How little he cares, if in shadow or sun

They see him that gaze from the shore!
He looks to the beacon that looms from the reef,
To the rock that is under his lee,
As he drifts on the blast, like a wind-wafted leaf,
O'er the gulfs of the desolate sea.

Thus drifting afar to the dim-vaulted caves
Where life and its ventures are laid,
The dreamers who gaze while we battle the waves
May see us in sunshine or shade;
Yet true to our course, though our shadow grow dark,
We'll trim our broad sail as before,
And stand by the rudder that governs the bark,
Nor ask how we look from the shore!

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—Insanity is often the logic of an accurate mind overtaken. Good mental machinery ought to break its own wheels and levers, if anything is thrust among them suddenly which tends to stop them or reverse their motion. A weak mind does not accumulate force enough to hurt itself; stupidity often saves a man from going mad. We frequently see persons in insane hospitals, sent there in consequence of what are called *religious* mental disturbances. I confess that I think better of them than of many who hold the same notions, and keep their wits and appear to enjoy life very well, outside of the asylums. Any decent person ought to go mad, if he really holds such or such opinions. It is very much to his discredit in every point of view, if he does not. What is the use of my saying what some of these opinions are? Perhaps more than one of you hold such as I should think ought to send you straight over to Somerville, if you have any logic in your heads or any human feeling in your hearts. Anything that is brutal, cruel, heathenish, that makes life hopeless for the most of mankind and perhaps for entire races,—anything that assumes the necessity of the extermination of instincts which were given to be regulated, —no matter by what name you call it,—no matter whether a fakir, or a monk, or a deacon believes it,—if received, ought to produce insanity in every well-regulated mind. That condition becomes a normal one, under the circumstances. I am very much ashamed of some people for retaining their reason, when they know perfectly well that if they were not the most stupid or the most selfish of human beings, they would become non-compotes at once.

[Nobody understood this but the theological student and the schoolmistress. They looked intelligently at each other; but whether they were thinking about my paradox or not, I am not clear.—It would be natural enough. Stranger things have happened. Love and Death enter boarding-houses without asking the price of board, or whether there is room for them. Alas, these young people are poor and pallid! Love *should* be both rich and rosy, but *must* be either rich or rosy. Talk about military duty! What is that to the warfare of a married maid-of-all-work, with the title of mistress, and an American female constitution, which collapses just in the middle third of life, and comes out vulcanized India-rubber, if it happen to live through the period when health and strength are most wanted?]

—Have I ever acted in private theatricals? Often. I have played the part of the “Poor Gentleman,” before a great many audiences, —more, I trust, than I shall ever face again. I did not wear a stage-costume, nor a wig, nor moustaches of burnt cork; but I was placarded and announced as a public performer, and at the proper hour I came forward with the ballet-dancer’s smile upon my countenance, and made my bow and acted my part. I have seen my name stuck up in letters so big that

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I was ashamed to show myself in the place by daylight. I have gone to a town with a sober literary essay in my pocket, and seen myself everywhere announced as the most desperate of buffos,—one who was obliged to restrain himself in the full exercise of his powers, from prudential considerations. I have been through as many hardships as Ulysses, in the pursuit of my histrionic vocation. I have travelled in cars until the conductors all knew me like a brother. I have run off the rails, and stuck all night in snow-drifts, and sat behind females that would have the window open when one could not wink without his eyelids freezing together. Perhaps I shall give you some of my experiences one of these days;—I will not now, for I have something else for you.

Private theatricals, as I have figured in them in country lyceum-halls, are one thing,—and private theatricals, as they may be seen in certain gilded and frescoed saloons of our metropolis, are another. Yes, it is pleasant to see real gentlemen and ladies, who do not think it necessary to mouth, and rant, and stride, like most of our stage heroes and heroines, in the characters which show off their graces and talents; most of all to see a fresh, unrouged, unspoiled, high bred young maiden, with a lithe figure, and a pleasant voice, acting in those love-dramas which make us young again to look upon, when real youth and beauty will play them for us.

—Of course I wrote the prologue I was asked to write. I did not see the play, though. I knew there was a young lady in it, and that somebody was in love with her, and she was in love with him, and somebody (an old tutor, I believe) wanted to interfere, and, very naturally, the young lady was too sharp for him. The play of course ends charmingly; there is a general reconciliation, and all concerned form a line and take each others' hands, as people always do after they have made up their quarrels,—and then the curtain falls,—if it does not stick, as it commonly does at private theatrical exhibitions, in which case a boy is detailed to pull it down, which he does, blushing violently.

Now, then, for my prologue. I am not going to change my caesuras and cadences for anybody; so if you do not like the heroic, or iambic trimeter brachy-catalectic, you had better not wait to hear it

THIS IS IT.

A Prologue? Well, of course the ladies know;—
I have my doubts. No matter,—here we go!
What is a Prologue? Let our Tutor teach:
Pro means beforehand; logos stands for speech.
'Tis like the harper's prelude on the strings,
The prima donna's courtesy ere she sings;—

Prologues in metre are to other pros
As worsted stockings are to engine-hose.



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"The world's a stage," as Shakspeare said, one day;
The stage a world—was what he meant to say.
The outside world's a blunder, that is clear;
The real world that Nature meant is here.
Here every foundling finds its lost mamma;
Each rogue, repentant, melts his stern papa;
Misers relent, the spendthrift's debts are paid,
The cheats are taken in the traps they laid;
One after one the troubles all are past
Till the fifth act comes right side up at last,
When the young couple, old folks, rogues, and all,
Join hands, so happy at the curtain's fall.
—Here suffering virtue ever finds relief,
And black-browed ruffians always come to grief,
—When the lorn damsel, with a frantic screech,
And cheeks as hueless as a brandy-peach,
Cries, "Help, kyind Heaven!" and drops upon her knees
On the green—baize,—beneath the (canvas) trees,—
See to her side avenging Valor fly:-
"Ha! Villain! Draw! Now, Terraitorr, yield or die!"
—When the poor hero flounders in despair,
Some dear lost uncle turns up millionaire,—
Clasps the young scapegrace with paternal joy,
Sobs on his neck, "*My boy! My boy!! My boy!!!*"

Ours, then, sweet friends, the real world to-night.
Of love that conquers in disaster's spite.
Ladies, attend! While woful cares and doubt
Wrong the soft passion in the world without,
Though fortune scowl, though prudence interfere,
One thing is certain: Love will triumph here!

Lords of creation, whom your ladies rule,—
The world's great masters, when you're out of school,—
Learn the brief moral of our evening's play:
Man has his will,—but woman has her way!
While man's dull spirit toils in smoke and fire,
Woman's swift instinct threads the electric wire,—
The magic bracelet stretched beneath the waves
Beats the black giant with his score of slaves.
All earthly powers confess your sovereign art
But that one rebel,—woman's wilful heart.
All foes you master; but a woman's wit
Lets daylight through you ere you know you're hit.



So, just to picture what her art can do,
Hear an old story made as good as new.

Rudolph, professor of the headsman's trade,
Alike was famous for his arm and blade.
One day a prisoner Justice had to kill
Knelt at the block to test the artist's skill.
Bare-armed, swart-visaged, gaunt, and shaggy-browed,
Rudolph the headsman rose above the crowd.
His falchion lightened with a sudden gleam,
As the pike's armor flashes in the stream.
He sheathed his blade; he turned as if to go;
The victim knelt, still waiting for the blow.
"Why strikest not? Perform thy murderous act,"
The prisoner said. (His voice was slightly cracked.)
"Friend I *have* struck," the artist straight replied;
"Wait but one moment, and yourself decide."

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He held his snuff-box,—“Now then, if you please!”
The prisoner sniffed, and, with a crashing sneeze,
Off his head tumbled,—bowed along the floor,—
Bounced down the steps;—the prisoner said no more!

Woman! thy falchion is a glittering eye;
If death lurks in it, oh, how sweet to die!
Thou takest hearts as Rudolph took the head;
We die with love, and never dream we're dead!

The prologue went off very well, as I hear. No alterations were suggested by the lady to whom it was sent, so far as I know. Sometimes people criticize the poems one sends them, and suggest all sorts of improvements. Who was that silly body that wanted Burns to alter “Scots wha hae,” so as to lengthen the last line, thus

“*Edward!*” Chains and slavery!

Here is a little poem I sent a short time since to a committee for a certain celebration. I understood that it was to be a festive and convivial occasion, and ordered myself accordingly. It seems the president of the day was what is called a “teetotaller.” I received a note from him in the following words, containing the copy subjoined, with the emendations annexed to it.

“Dear Sir,—your poem gives good satisfaction to the committee. The sentiments expressed with reference to liquor are not, however, those generally entertained by this community. I have therefore consulted the clergyman of this place, who has made come slight changes, which he thinks will remove all objections, and keep the valuable portions of the poem. Please to inform me of your charge for said poem. Our means are limited, *etc.*, *etc.*, *etc.*”

Yours with respect,”

HERE IT IS—WITH THE SLIGHT ALTERATIONS!

Come! fill a fresh bumper,—for why should we go
While the [nectar] [logwood] still reddens our cups as they flow?
Pour out the [rich juices] [decoction] still bright with the sun,
Till o'er the brimmed crystal the [rubies] [dye-stuff] shall run.

The [purple glebed clusters] [half-ripened apples] their life-dews have bled; How sweet is the [breath] [taste] of the [fragrance they shed] [sugar of lead]! For summer's [last roses] [rank poisons] lie hid in the [wines] [*wines!!!*] That were garnered by [maidens who laughed through the vines.] [stable-boys smoking long-nines.]



Then a [smile] [scowl], and a [glass] [howl], and a [toast] [scoff], and a [cheer] [sneer],
For all [the good wine, and we've some of it here] [strychnine and whiskey, and
ratsbane and beer] In cellar, in pantry, in attic, in hall, [Long live the gay servant that
laughs for us all!] [Down, down, with the tyrant that masters us all!]

The company said I had been shabbily treated, and advised me to charge the
committee double,—which I did. But as I never got my pay, I don't know that it made
much difference. I am a very particular person about having all I write printed as I write
it. I require to see a proof, a revise, a re-revise, and a double re-revise, or fourth-proof
rectified impression of all my productions, especially verse. A misprint kills a sensitive
author. An intentional change of his text murders him. No wonder so many poets die
young!

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I have nothing more to report at this time, except two pieces of advice I gave to the young women at table. One relates to a vulgarism of language, which I grieve to say is sometimes heard even from female lips. The other is of more serious purport, and applies to such as contemplate a change of condition,—matrimony, in fact.

—The woman who “calculates” is lost.

—Put not your trust in money, but put your money in trust.

CHAPTER III

[The “Atlantic” obeys the moon, and its LUNIVERSARY has come round again. I have gathered up some hasty notes of my remarks made since the last high tides, which I respectfully submit. Please to remember this is *talk*; just as easy and just as formal as I choose to make it.]

—I never saw an author in my life—saving, perhaps, one—that did not purr as audibly as a full-grown domestic cat, (*Felis Catus*, *Linn.*,) on having his fur smoothed in the right way by a skilful hand.

But let me give you a caution. Be very careful how you tell an author he is *droll*. Ten to one he will hate you; and if he does, be sure he can do you a mischief, and very probably will. Say you *cried* over his romance or his verses, and he will love you and send you a copy. You can laugh over that as much as you like—in private.

—Wonder why authors and actors are ashamed of being funny?—Why, there are obvious reasons, and deep philosophical ones. The clown knows very well that the women are not in love with him, but with Hamlet, the fellow in the black cloak and plumed hat. Passion never laughs. The wit knows that his place is at the tail of a procession.

If you want the deep underlying reason, I must take more time to tell it. There is a perfect consciousness in every form of wit—using that term in its general sense—that its essence consists in a partial and incomplete view of whatever it touches. It throws a single ray, separated from the rest,—red, yellow, blue, or any intermediate shade,—upon an object; never white light; that is the province of wisdom. We get beautiful effects from wit,—all the prismatic colors,—but never the object as it is in fair daylight. A pun, which is a kind of wit, is a different and much shallower trick in mental optics throwing the *shadows* of two objects so that one overlies the other. Poetry uses the rainbow tints for special effects, but always keeps its essential object in the purest white light of truth.—Will you allow me to pursue this subject a little further?

[They didn’t allow me at that time, for somebody happened to scrape the floor with his chair just then; which accidental sound, as all must have noticed, has the instantaneous

effect that the cutting of the yellow hair by Iris had upon infelix Dido. It broke the charm, and that breakfast was over.]

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—Don't flatter yourselves that friendship authorizes you to say disagreeable things to your intimates. On the contrary, the nearer you come into relation with a person, the more necessary do tact and courtesy become. Except in cases of necessity, which are rare, leave your friend to learn unpleasant truths from his enemies; they are ready enough to tell them. Good-breeding *never* forgets that amour-propre is universal. When you read the story of the Archbishop and Gil Blas, you may laugh, if you will, at the poor old man's delusion; but don't forget that the youth was the greater fool of the two, and that his master served such a booby rightly in turning him out of doors.

—You need not get up a rebellion against what I say, if you find everything in my sayings is not exactly new. You can't possibly mistake a man who means to be honest for a literary pickpocket. I once read an introductory lecture that looked to me too learned for its latitude. On examination, I found all its erudition was taken ready-made from D'Israeli. If I had been ill-natured, I should have shown up the little great man, who had once belabored me in his feeble way. But one can generally tell these wholesale thieves easily enough, and they are not worth the trouble of putting them in the pillory. I doubt the entire novelty of my remarks just made on telling unpleasant truths, yet I am not conscious of any larceny.

Neither make too much of flaws and occasional overstatements. Some persons seem to think that absolute truth, in the form of rigidly stated propositions, is all that conversation admits. This is precisely as if a musician should insist on having nothing but perfect chords and simple melodies,—no diminished fifths, no flat sevenths, no flourishes, on any account. Now it is fair to say, that, just as music must have all these, so conversation must have its partial truths, its embellished truths, its exaggerated truths. It is in its higher forms an artistic product, and admits the ideal element as much as pictures or statues. One man who is a little too literal can spoil the talk of a whole tableful of men of esprit.—“Yes,” you say, “but who wants to hear fanciful people's nonsense? Put the facts to it, and then see where it is!” —Certainly, if a man is too fond of paradox,—if he is flighty and empty,—if, instead of striking those fifths and sevenths, those harmonious discords, often so much better than the twinned octaves, in the music of thought,—if, instead of striking these, he jangles the chords, stick a fact into him like a stiletto. But remember that talking is one of the fine arts,—the noblest, the most important, and the most difficult,—and that its fluent harmonies may be spoiled by the intrusion of a single harsh note. Therefore conversation which is suggestive rather than argumentative, which lets out the most of each talker's results of thought, is commonly the pleasantest and the most profitable. It is not easy, at the best, for two persons talking together to make the most of each other's thoughts, there are so many of them.

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[The company looked as if they wanted an explanation.]

When John and Thomas, for instance, are talking together, it is natural enough that among the six there should be more or less confusion and misapprehension.

[Our landlady turned pale;—no doubt she thought there was a screw loose in my intellects,—and that involved the probable loss of a boarder. A severe-looking person, who wears a Spanish cloak and a sad cheek, fluted by the passions of the melodrama, whom I understand to be the professional ruffian of the neighboring theatre, alluded, with a certain lifting of the brow, drawing down of the corners of the mouth, and somewhat rasping voce di petto, to Falstaff's nine men in buckram. Everybody looked up. I believe the old gentleman opposite was afraid I should seize the carving-knife; at any rate, he slid it to one side, as it were carelessly.]

I think, I said, I can make it plain to Benjamin Franklin here, that there are at least six personalities distinctly to be recognized as taking part in that dialogue between John and Thomas.

Three Johns.

1. The real John; known only to his Maker. 2. John's ideal John; never the real one, and often very unlike him. 3. Thomas's ideal John; never the real John, nor John's John, but often very unlike either.

Three Thomas.

1. The real Thomas. 2. Thomas's ideal Thomas. 3. John's ideal Thomas.

Only one of the three Johns is taxed; only one can be weighed on a platform-balance; but the other two are just as important in the conversation. Let us suppose the real John to be old, dull, and ill-looking. But as the Higher Powers have not conferred on men the gift of seeing themselves in the true light, John very possibly conceives himself to be youthful, witty, and fascinating, and talks from the point of view of this ideal. Thomas, again, believes him to be an artful rogue, we will say; therefore he is, so far as Thomas's attitude in the conversation is concerned, an artful rogue, though really simple and stupid. The same conditions apply to the three Thomases. It follows, that, until a man can be found who knows himself as his Maker knows him, or who sees himself as others see him, there must be at least six persons engaged in every dialogue between two. Of these, the least important, philosophically speaking, is the one that we have called the real person. No wonder two disputants often get angry, when there are six of them talking and listening all at the same time.

[A very unphilosophical application of the above remarks was made by a young fellow, answering to the name of John, who sits near me at table. A certain basket of peaches,



a rare vegetable, little known to boarding-houses, was on its way to me via this unlettered Johannes. He appropriated the three that remained in the basket, remarking that there was just one apiece for him. I convinced him that his practical inference was hasty and illogical, but in the mean time he had eaten the peaches.]

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—The opinions of relatives as to a man's powers are very commonly of little value; not merely because they sometimes overrate their own flesh and blood, as some may suppose; on the contrary, they are quite as likely to underrate those whom they have grown into the habit of considering like themselves. The advent of genius is like what florists style the *breaking* of a seedling tulip into what we may call high-caste colors,—ten thousand dingy flowers, then one with the divine streak; or, if you prefer it, like the coming up in old Jacob's garden of that most gentlemanly little fruit, the seckel pear, which I have sometimes seen in shop-windows. It is a surprise,—there is nothing to account for it. All at once we find that twice two make *five*. Nature is fond of what are called "gift-enterprises." This little book of life which she has given into the hands of its joint possessors is commonly one of the old story-books bound over again. Only once in a great while there is a stately poem in it, or its leaves are illuminated with the glories of art, or they enfold a draft for untold values signed by the million-fold millionaire old mother herself. But strangers are commonly the first to find the "gift" that came with the little book.

It may be questioned whether anything can be conscious of its own flavor. Whether the musk-deer, or the civet-cat, or even a still more eloquently silent animal that might be mentioned, is aware of any personal peculiarity, may well be doubted. No man knows his own voice; many men do not know their own profiles. Every one remembers Carlyle's famous "Characteristics" article; allow for exaggerations, and there is a great deal in his doctrine of the self-unconsciousness of genius. It comes under the great law just stated. This incapacity of knowing its own traits is often found in the family as well as in the individual. So never mind what your cousins, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, and the rest, say about that fine poem you have written, but send it (postage-paid) to the editors, if there are any, of the "Atlantic,"—which, by the way, is not so called because it is *A notion*, as some dull wits wish they had said, but are too late.

—Scientific knowledge, even in the most modest persons, has mingled with it a something which partakes of insolence. Absolute, peremptory facts are bullies, and those who keep company with them are apt to get a bullying habit of mind;—not of manners, perhaps; they may be soft and smooth, but the smile they carry has a quiet assertion in it, such as the Champion of the Heavy Weights, commonly the best-natured, but not the most diffident of men, wears upon what he very inelegantly calls his "mug." Take the man, for instance, who deals in the mathematical sciences. There is no elasticity in a mathematical fact; if you bring up against it, it never yields a hair's breadth; everything must go to pieces that comes in collision with it. What the mathematician

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knows being absolute, unconditional, incapable of suffering question, it should tend, in the nature of things, to breed a despotic way of thinking. So of those who deal with the palpable and often unmistakable facts of external nature; only in a less degree. Every probability—and most of our common, working beliefs are probabilities—is provided with *buffers* at both ends, which break the force of opposite opinions clashing against it; but scientific certainty has no spring in it, no courtesy, no possibility of yielding. All this must react on the minds which handle these forms of truth.

—Oh, you need not tell me that Messrs. A. and B. are the most gracious, unassuming people in the world, and yet preeminent in the ranges of science I am referring to. I know that as well as you. But mark this which I am going to say once for all: If I had not force enough to project a principle full in the face of the half dozen most obvious facts which seem to contradict it, I would think only in single file from this day forward. A rash man, once visiting a certain noted institution at South Boston, ventured to express the sentiment, that man is a rational being. An old woman who was an attendant in the Idiot School contradicted the statement, and appealed to the facts before the speaker to disprove it. The rash man stuck to his hasty generalization, notwithstanding.

[—It is my desire to be useful to those with whom I am associated in my daily relations. I not unfrequently practise the divine art of music in company with our landlady's daughter, who, as I mentioned before, is the owner of an accordion. Having myself a well-marked barytone voice of more than half an octave in compass, I sometimes add my vocal powers to her execution of

"Thou, thou reign'st in this bosom."

not, however, unless her mother or some other discreet female is present, to prevent misinterpretation or remark. I have also taken a good deal of interest in Benjamin Franklin, before referred to, sometimes called B. F., or more frequently Frank, in imitation of that felicitous abbreviation, combining dignity and convenience, adopted by some of his betters. My acquaintance with the French language is very imperfect, I having never studied it anywhere but in Paris, which is awkward, as B. F. devotes himself to it with the peculiar advantage of an Alsatian teacher. The boy, I think, is doing well, between us, notwithstanding. The following is an *uncorrected* French exercise, written by this young gentleman. His mother thinks it very creditable to his abilities; though, being unacquainted with the French language, her judgment cannot be considered final.

LE RAT DIES SALONS A LECTURE.

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Ce rat ci est un animal fort singulier. Il a deux pattes de derriere sur lesquelles il marche, et deux pattes de devant dont il fait usage pour tenir les journaux. Cet animal a la peau noire pour le plupart, et porte un cerele blanchatre autour de son cou. On le trouve tous les jours aux dits salons, on il demeure, digere, s'il y a do quoi dans son interieur, respire, tousse, eternue, dort, et renfle quelquefois, ayant toujours le semblant de lire. On ne sait pas s'il a une autre gite que cela. Il a l'air d'une bete tres stupide, mais il est d'une sagacite et d'une vitesse extraordinaire quand il s'agit de saisir un journal nouveau. On ne sait pas pourquoi il lit, parcequ'il ne parait pas avoir des idees. Il vocalise rarement, mais en revanche, il fait des bruits nasaux divers. Il porte un crayon dans une de ses poches pectorales, avec lequel il fait des marques sur les bords des journaux et des livres, semblable aux suivans: !!!—Bah! Pooh! Il ne faut pas cependant les prendre pour des signes d'intelligence. Il ne vole pas, ordinairement; il fait rarement meme des echanges de parapluie, et jamais de chapeau, parceque son chapeau a toujours un caractere specifique. On ne sait pas au juste ce dont il se nourrit. Feu Cuvier etait d'avis que c'etait de l'odeur du cuir des reliures; ce qu'on dit d'etre une nourriture animale fort saine, et peu chere. Il vit bien longtems. Enfin il meure, en laissant a ses heritiers une carte du Salon a Lecture on il avait existe pendant sa vie. On pretend qu'il revient toutes les nuits, apres la mort, visiter le Salon. On peut le voir, dit on, a minuit, dans sa place habituelle, tenant le journal du soir, et ayant a sa main un crayon de charbon. Le lendemain on trouve des caracteres inconnus sur les bords du journal. Ce qui prouve que le spiritualisme est vrai, et que Messieurs les Professeurs de Cambridge sont des imbeciles qui ne savent rien du tout, du tout.

I think this exercise, which I have not corrected, or allowed to be touched in any way, is not discreditable to B. F. You observe that he is acquiring a knowledge of zoology at the same time that he is learning French. Fathers of families in moderate circumstances will find it profitable to their children, and an economical mode of instruction, to set them to revising and amending this boy's exercise. The passage was originally taken from the "Histoire Naturelle des Betes Ruminans et Rongeurs, Bipedes et Autres," lately published in Paris. This was translated into English and published in London. It was republished at Great Pedlington, with notes and additions by the American editor. The notes consist of an interrogation-mark on page 53d, and a reference (p. 127th) to another book "edited" by the same hand. The additions consist of the editor's name on the title-page and back, with a complete and authentic list of said editor's honorary titles in the first of these localities. Our boy translated the translation back into French. This may be compared with the original, to be found on Shelf 13, Division X, of the Public Library of this metropolis.]

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—Some of you boarders ask me from time to time why I don't write a story, or a novel, or something of that kind. Instead of answering each one of you separately, I will thank you to step up into the wholesale department for a few moments, where I deal in answers by the piece and by the bale.

That every articulately-speaking human being has in him stuff for *one* novel in three volumes duodecimo has long been with me a cherished belief. It has been maintained, on the other hand, that many persons cannot write more than one novel,—that all after that are likely to be failures.—Life is so much more tremendous a thing in its heights and depths than any transcript of it can be, that all records of human experience are as so many bound herbaria to the innumerable glowing, glistening, rustling, breathing, fragrance-laden, poison-sucking, life-giving, death-distilling leaves and flowers of the forest and the prairies. All we can do with books of human experience is to make them alive again with something borrowed from our own lives. We can make a book alive for us just in proportion to its resemblance in essence or in form to our own experience. Now an author's first novel is naturally drawn, to a great extent, from his personal experiences; that is, is a literal copy of nature under various slight disguises. But the moment the author gets out of his personality, he must have the creative power, as well as the narrative art and the sentiment, in order to tell a living story; and this is rare.

Besides, there is great danger that a man's first life-story shall clean him out, so to speak, of his best thoughts. Most lives, though their stream is loaded with sand and turbid with alluvial waste, drop a few golden grains of wisdom as they flow along. Oftentimes a single *cradling* gets them all, and after that the poor man's labor is only rewarded by mud and worn pebbles. All which proves that I, as an individual of the human family, could write one novel or story at any rate, if I would.

—Why don't I, then?—Well, there are several reasons against it. In the first place, I should tell all my secrets, and I maintain that verse is the proper medium for such revelations. Rhythm and rhyme and the harmonies of musical language, the play of fancy, the fire of imagination, the flashes of passion, so hide the nakedness of a heart laid open, that hardly any confession, transfigured in the luminous halo of poetry, is reproached as self-exposure. A beauty shows herself under the chandeliers, protected by the glitter of her diamonds, with such a broad snowdrift of white arms and shoulders laid bare, that, were she unadorned and in plain calico, she would be unendurable—in the opinion of the ladies.

Again, I am terribly afraid I should show up all my friends. I should like to know if all story-tellers do not do this? Now I am afraid all my friends would not bear showing up very well; for they have an average share of the common weakness of humanity, which I am pretty certain would come out. Of all that have told stories among us there is hardly one I can recall who has not drawn too faithfully some living portrait that might better have been spared.

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Once more, I have sometimes thought it possible I might be too dull to write such a story as I should wish to write.

And finally, I think it very likely I *shall* write a story one of these days. Don't be surprised at any time, if you see me coming out with "The Schoolmistress," or "The Old Gentleman Opposite." [*Our* schoolmistress and *our* old gentleman that sits opposite had left the table before I said this.] I want my glory for writing the same discounted now, on the spot, if you please. I will write when I get ready. How many people live on the reputation of the reputation they might have made!

—I saw you smiled when I spoke about the possibility of my being too dull to write a good story. I don't pretend to know what you meant by it, but I take occasion to make a remark which may hereafter prove of value to some among you.—When one of us who has been led by native vanity or senseless flattery to think himself or herself possessed of talent arrives at the full and final conclusion that he or she is really dull, it is one of the most tranquillizing and blessed convictions that can enter a mortal's mind. All our failures, our shortcomings, our strange disappointments in the effect of our efforts are lifted from our bruised shoulders, and fall, like Christian's pack, at the feet of that Omnipotence which has seen fit to deny us the pleasant gift of high intelligence,—with which one look may overflow us in some wider sphere of being.

—How sweetly and honestly one said to me the other day, "I hate books!" A gentleman, —singularly free from affectations,—not learned, of course, but of perfect breeding, which is often so much better than learning,—by no means dull, in the sense of knowledge of the world and society, but certainly not clever either in the arts or sciences,—his company is pleasing to all who know him. I did not recognize in him inferiority of literary taste half so distinctly as I did simplicity of character and fearless acknowledgment of his inaptitude for scholarship. In fact, I think there are a great many gentlemen and others, who read with a mark to keep their place, that really "hate books," but never had the wit to find it out, or the manliness to own it. [Entre nous, I always read with a mark.]

We get into a way of thinking as if what we call an "intellectual man" was, as a matter of course, made up of nine-tenths, or thereabouts, of book-learning, and one-tenth himself. But even if he is actually so compounded, he need not read much. Society is a strong solution of books. It draws the virtue out of what is best worth reading, as hot water draws the strength of tea-leaves. If I were a prince, I would hire or buy a private literary tea-pot, in which I would steep all the leaves of new books that promised well. The infusion would do for me without the vegetable fibre. You understand me; I would have a person whose sole business should be to read day and night,

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and talk to me whenever I wanted him to. I know the man I would have: a quick-witted, out-spoken, incisive fellow; knows history, or at any rate has a shelf full of books about it, which he can use handily, and the same of all useful arts and sciences; knows all the common plots of plays and novels, and the stock company of characters that are continually coming on in new costume; can give you a criticism of an octavo in an epithet and a wink, and you can depend on it; cares for nobody except for the virtue there is in what he says; delights in taking off big wigs and professional gowns, and in the disembalming and unbandaging of all literary mummies. Yet he is as tender and reverential to all that bears the mark of genius,—that is, of a new influx of truth or beauty,—as a nun over her missal. In short, he is one of those men that know everything except how to make a living. Him would I keep on the square next my own royal compartment on life's chessboard. To him I would push up another pawn, in the shape of a comely and wise young woman, whom he would of course take—to wife. For all contingencies I would liberally provide. In a word, I would, in the plebeian, but expressive phrase, “put him through” all the material part of life; see him sheltered, warmed, fed, button-mended, and all that, just to be able to lay on his talk when I liked,—with the privilege of shutting it off at will.

A Club is the next best thing to this, strung like a harp, with about a dozen ringing intelligences, each answering to some chord of the macrocosm. They do well to dine together once in a while. A dinner-party made up of such elements is the last triumph of civilization over barbarism. Nature and art combine to charm the senses; the equatorial zone of the system is soothed by well-studied artifices; the faculties are off duty, and fall into their natural attitudes; you see wisdom in slippers and science in a short jacket.

The whole force of conversation depends on how much you can take for granted. Vulgar chess-players have to play their game out; nothing short of the brutality of an actual checkmate satisfies their dull apprehensions. But look at two masters of that noble game! White stands well enough, so far as you can see; but Red says, Mate in six moves;—White looks,—nods;—the game is over. Just so in talking with first-rate men; especially when they are good-natured and expansive, as they are apt to be at table. That blessed clairvoyance which sees into things without opening them, —that glorious license, which, having shut the door and driven the reporter from its key-hole, calls upon Truth, majestic virgin! to get off from her pedestal and drop her academic poses, and take a festive garland and the vacant place on the medius lectus,—that carnival-shower of questions and replies and comments, large axioms bowled over the mahogany like bomb-shells from professional mortars, and explosive wit dropping its trains of many-colored fire, and the mischief-making rain of bon-bons pelted everybody that shows himself,—the picture of a truly intellectual banquet is one which the old Divinities might well have attempted to reproduce in their—

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—“Oh, oh, oh!” cried the young fellow whom they call John,—“that is from one of your lectures!”

I know it, I replied,—I concede it, I confess it, I proclaim it.

“The trail of the serpent is over them all!”

All lecturers, all professors, all schoolmasters, have ruts and grooves in their minds into which their conversation is perpetually sliding. Did you never, in riding through the woods of a still June evening, suddenly feel that you had passed into a warm stratum of air, and in a minute or two strike the chill layer of atmosphere beyond? Did you never, in cleaving the green waters of the Back Bay,—where the Provincial blue-noses are in the habit of beating the “Metropolitan” boat-clubs,—find yourself in a tepid streak, a narrow, local gulf-stream, a gratuitous warm-bath a little underdone, through which your glistening shoulders soon flashed, to bring you back to the cold realities of full-sea temperature? Just so, in talking with any of the characters above referred to, one not unfrequently finds a sudden change in the style of the conversation. The lack-lustre eye rayless as a Beacon-Street door-plate in August, all at once fills with light; the face flings itself wide open like the church-portals when the bride and bridegroom enter; the little man grows in stature before your eyes, like the small prisoner with hair on end, beloved yet dreaded of early childhood; you were talking with a dwarf and an imbecile, —you have a giant and a trumpet-tongued angel before you!—Nothing but a streak out of a fifty-dollar lecture.—As when, at some unlooked-for moment, the mighty fountain-column springs into the air before the astonished passer-by,—silver-footed, diamond-crowned, rainbow-scarfed,—from the bosom of that fair sheet, sacred to the hymns of quiet batrachians at home, and the epigrams of a less amiable and less elevated order of reptilia in other latitudes.

—Who was that person that was so abused some time since for saying that in the conflict of two races our sympathies naturally go with the higher? No matter who he was. Now look at what is going on in India,—a white, superior “Caucasian” race, against a dark-skinned, inferior, but still “Caucasian” race,—and where are English and American sympathies? We can’t stop to settle all the doubtful questions; all we know is, that the brute nature is sure to come out most strongly in the lower race, and it is the general law that the human side of humanity should treat the brutal side as it does the same nature in the inferior animals,—tame it or crush it. The India mail brings stories of women and children outraged and murdered; the royal stronghold is in the hands of the babe-killers. England takes down the Map of the World, which she has girdled with empire, and makes a correction thus: [*Delphi*] Dele. The civilized world says, Amen.

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—Do not think, because I talk to you of many subjects briefly, that I should not find it much lazier work to take each one of them and dilute it down to an essay. Borrow some of my old college themes and water my remarks to suit yourselves, as the Homeric heroes did with their melas oinos,—that black sweet, syrupy wine (?) which they used to alloy with three parts or more of the flowing stream. [Could it have been melasses, as Webster and his provincials spell it,—or Molossa's, as dear old smattering, chattering, would-be-College-President, Cotton Mather, has it in the "Magnalia"? Ponder thereon, ye small antiquaries who make barn-door-fowl flights of learning in "Notes and Queries!"—ye Historical Societies, in one of whose venerable triremes I, too, ascend the stream of time, while other hands tug at the oars!—ye Amines of parasitical literature, who pick up your grains of native-grown food with a bodkin, having gorged upon less honest fare, until, like the great minds Goethe speaks of, you have "made a Golgotha" of your pages!—ponder thereon!]

—Before you go, this morning, I want to read you a copy of verses. You will understand by the title that they are written in an imaginary character. I don't doubt they will fit some family-man well enough. I send it forth as "Oak Hall" projects a coat, on a priori grounds of conviction that it will suit somebody. There is no loftier illustration of faith than this. It believes that a soul has been clad in flesh; that tender parents have fed and nurtured it; that its mysterious compages or frame-work has survived its myriad exposures and reached the stature of maturity; that the Man, now self-determining, has given in his adhesion to the traditions and habits of the race in favor of artificial clothing; that he will, having all the world to choose from, select the very locality where this audacious generalization has been acted upon. It builds a garment cut to the pattern of an Idea, and trusts that Nature will model a material shape to fit it. There is a prophecy in every seam, and its pockets are full of inspiration. —Now hear the verses.

THE OLD MAN DREAMS.

O for one hour of youthful joy!
Give back my twentieth spring!
I'd rather laugh a bright-haired boy
Than reign a gray-beard king!

Off with the wrinkled spoils of age!
Away with learning's crown!
Tear out life's wisdom-written page,
And dash its trophies down!

One moment let my life-blood stream
From boyhood's fount of flame!
Give me one giddy, reeling dream
Of life all love and fame!



—My listening angel heard the prayer,
And calmly smiling, said,
“If I but touch thy silvered hair,
Thy hasty wish hath sped.

“But is there nothing in thy track
To bid thee fondly stay,
While the swift seasons hurry back
To find the wished-for day?”



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—Ah, truest soul of womankind!
Without thee, what were life?
One bliss I cannot leave behind:
I'll take—my—precious wife!

—The angel took a sapphire pen
And wrote in rainbow dew,
“The man would be a boy again,
And be a husband too!”

—“And is there nothing yet unsaid
Before the change appears?
Remember, all their gifts have fled
With those dissolving years!”

Why, yes; for memory would recall
My fond paternal joys;
I could not bear to leave them all;
I'll take—my—girl—and—boys!

The smiling angel dropped his pen,—
“Why this will never do;
The man would be a boy again,
And be a father too!”

And so I laughed,—my laughter woke
The household with its noise,—
And wrote my dream, when morning broke,
To please the gray-haired boys.

CHAPTER IV

[I am so well pleased with my boarding-house that I intend to remain there, perhaps for years. Of course I shall have a great many conversations to report, and they will necessarily be of different tone and on different subjects. The talks are like the breakfasts,—sometimes dipped toast, and sometimes dry. You must take them as they come. How can I do what all these letters ask me to? No. 1. want serious and earnest thought. No. 2. (letter smells of bad cigars) must have more jokes; wants me to tell a “good storey” which he has copied out for me. (I suppose two letters before the word “good” refer to some Doctor of Divinity who told the story.) No. 3. (in female hand)—more poetry. No. 4. wants something that would be of use to a practical man. (Prahctical mahn he probably pronounces it.) No. 5. (gilt-edged, sweet-scented)—“more sentiment,”—“heart’s outpourings.”—

My dear friends, one and all, I can do nothing but report such remarks as I happen to have made at our breakfast-table. Their character will depend on many accidents,—a good deal on the particular persons in the company to whom they were addressed. It so happens that those which follow were mainly intended for the divinity-student and the school-mistress; though others, whom I need not mention, saw to interfere, with more or less propriety, in the conversation. This is one of my privileges as a talker; and of course, if I was not talking for our whole company, I don't expect all the readers of this periodical to be interested in my notes of what was said. Still, I think there may be a few that will rather like this vein,—possibly prefer it to a livelier one,—serious young men, and young women generally, in life's roseate parenthesis from—years of age to— inclusive.

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Another privilege of talking is to misquote.—Of course it wasn't Proserpina that actually cut the yellow hair,—but Iris. (As I have since told you) it was the former lady's regular business, but Dido had used herself ungenteelly, and Madame d'Enfer stood firm on the point of etiquette. So the bathycolpian Here—Juno, in Latin —sent down Iris instead. But I was mightily pleased to see that one of the gentlemen that do the heavy articles for the celebrated "Oceanic Miscellany" misquoted Campbell's line without any excuse. "Waft us *home* the *message*" of course it ought to be. Will he be duly grateful for the correction?]

—The more we study the body and the mind, the more we find both to be governed, not by, but *according to* laws, such as we observe in the larger universe.—You think you know all about *walking*,—don't you, now? Well, how do you suppose your lower limbs are held to your body? They are sucked up by two cupping vessels, ("cotyloid" —cup-like—cavities,) and held there as long as you live, and longer. At any rate, you think you move them backward and forward at such a rate as your will determines, don't you?—On the contrary, they swing just as any other pendulums swing, at a fixed rate, determined by their length. You can alter this by muscular power, as you can take hold of the pendulum of a clock and make it move faster or slower; but your ordinary gait is timed by the same mechanism as the movements of the solar system.

[My friend, the Professor, told me all this, referring me to certain German physiologists by the name of Weber for proof of the facts, which, however, he said he had often verified. I appropriated it to my own use; what can one do better than this, when one has a friend that tells him anything worth remembering?

The Professor seems to think that man and the general powers of the universe are in partnership. Some one was saying that it had cost nearly half a million to move the Leviathan only so far as they had got it already.—Why,—said the Professor,—they might have hired an *earthquake* for less money!]

Just as we find a mathematical rule at the bottom of many of the bodily movements, just so thought may be supposed to have its regular cycles. Such or such a thought comes round periodically, in its turn. Accidental suggestions, however, so far interfere with the regular cycles, that we may find them practically beyond our power of recognition. Take all this for what it is worth, but at any rate you will agree that there are certain particular thoughts that do not come up once a day, nor once a week, but that a year would hardly go round without your having them pass through your mind. Here is one which comes up at intervals in this way. Some one speaks of it, and there is an instant and eager smile of assent in the listener or listeners. Yes, indeed; they have often been struck by it.

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All at once A conviction flashes through us that we have been in the same precise circumstances as at the present instant, once or many times before.

O, dear, yes!—said one of the company,—everybody has had that feeling.

The landlady didn't know anything about such notions; it was an idee in folks' heads, she expected.

The schoolmistress said, in a hesitating sort of way, that she knew the feeling well, and didn't like to experience it; it made her think she was a ghost, sometimes.

The young fellow whom they call John said he knew all about it; he had just lighted a cheroot the other day, when a tremendous conviction all at once came over him that he had done just that same thing ever so many times before. I looked severely at him, and his countenance immediately fell—*on the side toward me*; I cannot answer for the other, for he can wink and laugh with either half of his face without the other half's knowing it.

—I have noticed—I went on to say—the following circumstances connected with these sudden impressions. First, that the condition which seems to be the duplicate of a former one is often very trivial,—one that might have presented itself a hundred times. Secondly, that the impression is very evanescent, and that it is rarely, if ever, recalled by any voluntary effort, at least after any time has elapsed. Thirdly, that there is a disinclination to record the circumstances, and a sense of incapacity to reproduce the state of mind in words. Fourthly, I have often felt that the duplicate condition had not only occurred once before, but that it was familiar and, as it seemed, habitual. Lastly, I have had the same convictions in my dreams.

How do I account for it?—Why, there are several ways that I can mention, and you may take your choice. The first is that which the young lady hinted at;—that these flashes are sudden recollections of a previous existence. I don't believe that; for I remember a poor student I used to know told me he had such a conviction one day when he was blacking his boots, and I can't think he had ever lived in another world where they use Day and Martin.

Some think that Dr. Wigan's doctrine of the brain's being a double organ, its hemispheres working together like the two eyes, accounts for it. One of the hemispheres hangs fire, they suppose, and the small interval between the perceptions of the nimble and the sluggish half seems an indefinitely long period, and therefore the second perception appears to be the copy of another, ever so old. But even allowing the centre of perception to be double, I can see no good reason for supposing this indefinite lengthening of the time, nor any analogy that bears it out.

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It seems to me most likely that the coincidence of circumstances is very partial, but that we take this partial resemblance for identity, as we occasionally do resemblances of persons. A momentary posture of circumstances is so far like some preceding one that we accept it as exactly the same, just as we accost a stranger occasionally, mistaking him for a friend. The apparent similarity may be owing perhaps, quite as much to the mental state at the time, as to the outward circumstances.

—Here is another of these curiously recurring remarks. I have said it, and heard it many times, and occasionally met with something like it in books,—somewhere in Bulwer’s novels, I think, and in one of the works of Mr. Olmsted, I know.

Memory, imagination, old sentiments and associations, are more readily reached through the sense of smell than by almost any other channel.

Of course the particular odors which act upon each person’s susceptibilities differ.—O, yes! I will tell you some of mine. The smell of *phosphorus* is one of them. During a year or two of adolescence I used to be dabbling in chemistry a good deal, and as about that time I had my little aspirations and passions like another, some of these things got mixed up with each other: orange-colored fumes of nitrous acid, and visions as bright and transient; reddening litmus-paper, and blushing cheeks;—eheu!

“Soles occidere et redire possunt,”

but there is no reagent that will redden the faded roses of eighteen hundred and—spare them! But, as I was saying, phosphorus fires this train of associations in an instant; its luminous vapors with their penetrating odor throw me into a trance; it comes to me in a double sense “trailing clouds of glory.” Only the confounded Vienna matches, ohne phosphor-geruch, have worn my sensibilities a little.

Then there is the *marigold*. When I was of smallest dimensions, and wont to ride impacted between the knees of fond parental pair, we would sometimes cross the bridge to the next village-town and stop opposite a low, brown, “gambrel-roofed” cottage. Out of it would come one Sally, sister of its swarthy tenant, swarthy herself, shady-lipped, sad-voiced, and, bending over her flower-bed, would gather a “posy,” as she called it, for the little boy. Sally lies in the churchyard with a slab of blue slate at her head, lichen-crusted, and leaning a little within the last few years. Cottage, garden-beds, posies, grenadier-like rows of seedling onions, —stateliest of vegetables,—all are gone, but the breath of a marigold brings them all back to me.

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Perhaps the herb *everlasting*, the fragrant immortelle of our autumn fields, has the most suggestive odor to me of all those that set me dreaming. I can hardly describe the strange thoughts and emotions that come to me as I inhale the aroma of its pale, dry, rustling flowers. A something it has of sepulchral spicery, as if it had been brought from the core of some great pyramid, where it had lain on the breast of a mummied Pharaoh. Something, too, of immortality in the sad, faint sweetness lingering so long in its lifeless petals. Yet this does not tell why it fills my eyes with tears and carries me in blissful thought to the banks of asphodel that border the River of Life.

—I should not have talked so much about these personal susceptibilities, if I had not a remark to make about them which I believe is a new one. It is this. There may be a physical reason for the strange connection between the sense of smell and the mind. The olfactory nerve—so my friend, the Professor, tells me—is the only one directly connected with the hemispheres of the brain, the parts in which, as we have every reason to believe, the intellectual processes are performed. To speak more truly the olfactory “nerve” is not a nerve at all, he says, but a part of the brain, in intimate connection with its anterior lobes. Whether this anatomical arrangement is at the bottom of the facts I have mentioned, I will not decide, but it is curious enough to be worth remembering. Contrast the sense of taste, as a source of suggestive impressions, with that of smell. Now the Professor assures me that you will find the nerve of taste has no immediate connection with the brain proper, but only with the prolongation of the spinal cord.

[The old gentleman opposite did not pay much attention, I think, to this hypothesis of mine. But while I was speaking about the sense of smell he nestled about in his seat, and presently succeeded in getting out a large red bandanna handkerchief. Then he lurched a little to the other side, and after much tribulation at last extricated an ample round snuff-box. I looked as he opened it and felt for the wonted pugil. Moist rappee, and a Tonka-bean lying therein. I made the manual sign understood of all mankind that use the precious dust, and presently my brain, too, responded to the long unused stimulus—O boys,—that were,—actual papas and possible grandpapas,—some of you with crowns like billiard-balls, —some in locks of sable silvered, and some of silver sabled,—do you remember, as you doze over this, those after-dinners at the Trois Freres when the Scotch-plaided snuff-box went round, and the dry Lundy-Foot tickled its way along into our happy sensoria? Then it was that the Chambertin or the Clos Vougeot came in, slumbering in its straw cradle. And one among you,—do you remember how he would have a bit of ice always in his Burgundy, and sit tinkling it against the sides of the bubble-like glass, saying that he was hearing the cow-bells as he used to hear them, when the deep-breathing kine came home at twilight from the huckleberry pasture, in the old home a thousand leagues towards the sunset?]

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Ah me! what strains and strophes of unwritten verse pulsate through my soul when I open a certain closet in the ancient house where I was born! On its shelves used to lie bundles of sweet-marjoram and pennyroyal and lavender and mint and catnip; there apples were stored until their seeds should grow black, which happy period there were sharp little milk-teeth always ready to anticipate; there peaches lay in the dark, thinking of the sunshine they had lost, until, like the hearts of saints that dream of heaven in their sorrow, they grew fragrant as the breath of angels. The odorous echo of a score of dead summers lingers yet in those dim recesses.

—Do I remember Byron’s line about “striking the electric chain”? —To be sure I do. I sometimes think the less the hint that stirs the automatic machinery of association, the more easily this moves us. What can be more trivial than that old story of opening the folio Shakspeare that used to lie in some ancient English hall and finding the flakes of Christmas pastry between its leaves, shut up in them perhaps a hundred years ago? And, lo! as one looks on these poor relics of a bygone generation, the universe changes in the twinkling of an eye; old George the Second is back again, and the elder Pitt is coming into power, and General Wolfe is a fine, promising young man, and over the Channel they are pulling the *Sieur Damiens* to pieces with wild horses, and across the Atlantic the Indians are tomahawking *Hirams* and *Jonathans* and *Jonases* at Fort William Henry; all the dead people who have been in the dust so long—even to the stout-armed cook that made the pastry—are alive again; the planet unwinds a hundred of its luminous coils, and the precession of the equinoxes is retraced on the dial of heaven! And all this for a bit of pie-crust!

—I will thank you for that pie,—said the provoking young fellow whom I have named repeatedly. He looked at it for a moment, and put his hands to his eyes as if moved.—I was thinking,—he said indistinctly—

—How? What is’t?—said our landlady.

—I was thinking—said he—who was king of England when this old pie was baked,—and it made me feel bad to think how long he must have been dead.

[Our landlady is a decent body, poor, and a widow, of course; *cela va sans dire*. She told me her story once; it was as if a grain of corn that had been ground and bolted had tried to individualize itself by a special narrative. There was the wooing and the wedding,—the start in life,—the disappointments,—the children she had buried,—the struggle against fate,—the dismantling of life, first of its small luxuries, and then of its comforts,—the broken spirits,—the altered character of the one on whom she leaned,—and at last the death that came and drew the black curtain between her and all her earthly hopes.

I never laughed at my landlady after she had told me her story, but I often cried,—not those pattering tears that run off the eaves upon our neighbors’ grounds, the *stillicidium*



of self-conscious sentiment, but those which steal noiselessly through their conduits until they reach the cisterns lying round about the heart; those tears that we weep inwardly with unchanging features;—such I did shed for her often when the imps of the boarding-house Inferno tugged at her soul with their red-hot pincers.]

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Young man,—I said,—the pasty you speak lightly of is not old, but courtesy to those who labor to serve us, especially if they are of the weaker sex, is very old, and yet well worth retaining. May I recommend to you the following caution, as a guide, whenever you are dealing with a woman, or an artist, or a poet—if you are handling an editor or politician, it is superfluous advice. I take it from the back of one of those little French toys which contain pasteboard figures moved by a small running stream of fine sand; Benjamin Franklin will translate it for you: “Quoiqu’elle soit tres solidement montee, il faut ne pas BRUTALISER la machine.”—I will thank you for the pie, if you please.

[I took more of it than was good for me—as much as 85 degrees, I should think,—and had an indigestion in consequence. While I was suffering from it, I wrote some sadly desponding poems, and a theological essay which took a very melancholy view of creation. When I got better I labelled them all “Pie-crust,” and laid them by as scarecrows and solemn warnings. I have a number of books on my shelves that I should like to label with some such title; but, as they have great names on their title-pages,—Doctors of Divinity, some of them,—it wouldn’t do.]

—My friend, the Professor, whom I have mentioned to you once or twice, told me yesterday that somebody had been abusing him in some of the journals of his calling. I told him that I didn’t doubt he deserved it; that I hoped he did deserve a little abuse occasionally, and would for a number of years to come; that nobody could do anything to make his neighbors wiser or better without being liable to abuse for it; especially that people hated to have their little mistakes made fun of, and perhaps he had been doing something of the kind.—The Professor smiled.—Now, said I, hear what I am going to say. It will not take many years to bring you to the period of life when men, at least the majority of writing and talking men, do nothing but praise. Men, like peaches and pears, grow sweet a little while before they begin to decay. I don’t know what it is,—whether a spontaneous change, mental or bodily, or whether it is thorough experience of the thanklessness of critical honesty,—but it is a fact, that most writers, except sour and unsuccessful ones, get tired of finding fault at about the time when they are beginning to grow old. As a general thing, I would not give a great deal for the fair words of a critic, if he is himself an author, over fifty years of age. At thirty we are all trying to cut our names in big letters upon the walls of this tenement of life; twenty years later we have carved it, or shut up our jack-knives. Then we are ready to help others, and care less to hinder any, because nobody’s elbows are in our way. So I am glad you have a little life left; you will be saccharine enough in a few years.

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—Some of the softening effects of advancing age have struck me very much in what I have heard or seen here and elsewhere. I just now spoke of the sweetening process that authors undergo. Do you know that in the gradual passage from maturity to helplessness the harshest characters sometimes have a period in which they are gentle and placid as young children? I have heard it said, but I cannot be sponsor for its truth, that the famous chieftain, Lochiel, was rocked in a cradle like a baby, in his old age. An old man, whose studies had been of the severest scholastic kind, used to love to hear little nursery-stories read over and over to him. One who saw the Duke of Wellington in his last years describes him as very gentle in his aspect and demeanor. I remember a person of singularly stern and lofty bearing who became remarkably gracious and easy in all his ways in the later period of his life.

And that leads me to say that men often remind me of pears in their way of coming to maturity. Some are ripe at twenty, like human Jargonelles, and must be made the most of, for their day is soon over. Some come into their perfect condition late, like the autumn kinds, and they last better than the summer fruit. And some, that, like the Winter-Nelis, have been hard and uninviting until all the rest have had their season, get their glow and perfume long after the frost and snow have done their worst with the orchards. Beware of rash criticisms; the rough and stringent fruit you condemn may be an autumn or a winter pear, and that which you picked up beneath the same bough in August may have been only its worm-eaten windfalls. Milton was a Saint-Germain with a graft of the roseate Early-Catherine. Rich, juicy, lively, fragrant, russet skinned old Chaucer was an Easter-Beurre; the buds of a new summer were swelling when he ripened.

—There is no power I envy so much—said the divinity-student—as that of seeing analogies and making comparisons. I don't understand how it is that some minds are continually coupling thoughts or objects that seem not in the least related to each other, until all at once they are put in a certain light, and you wonder that you did not always see that they were as like as a pair of twins. It appears to me a sort of miraculous gift.

[He is rather a nice young man, and I think has an appreciation of the higher mental qualities remarkable for one of his years and training. I try his head occasionally as housewives try eggs, —give it an intellectual shake and hold it up to the light, so to speak, to see if it has life in it, actual or potential, or only contains lifeless albumen.]

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You call it *miraculous*,—I replied,—tossing the expression with my facial eminence, a little smartly, I fear.—Two men are walking by the polyphloesboean ocean, one of them having a small tin cup with which he can scoop up a gill of sea-water when he will, and the other nothing but his hands, which will hardly hold water at all, —and you call the tin cup a miraculous possession! It is the ocean that is the miracle, my infant apostle! Nothing is clearer than that all things are in all things, and that just according to the intensity and extension of our mental being we shall see the many in the one and the one in the many. Did Sir Isaac think what he was saying when he made *his* speech about the ocean,—the child and the pebbles, you know? Did he mean to speak slightly of a pebble? Of a spherical solid which stood sentinel over its compartment of space before the stone that became the pyramids had grown solid, and has watched it until now! A body which knows all the currents of force that traverse the globe; which holds by invisible threads to the ring of Saturn and the belt of Orion! A body from the contemplation of which an archangel could infer the entire inorganic universe as the simplest of corollaries! A throne of the all-pervading Deity, who has guided its every atom since the rosary of heaven was strung with beaded stars!

So,—to return to *our* walk by the ocean,—if all that poetry has dreamed, all that insanity has raved, all that maddening narcotics have driven through the brains of men, or smothered passion nursed in the fancies of women,—if the dreams of colleges and convents and boarding-schools,—if every human feeling that sighs, or smiles, or curses, or shrieks, or groans, should bring all their innumerable images, such as come with every hurried heart-beat, —the epic which held them all, though its letters filled the zodiac, would be but a cupful from the infinite ocean of similitudes and analogies that rolls through the universe.

[The divinity-student honored himself by the way in which he received this. He did not swallow it at once, neither did he reject it; but he took it as a pickerel takes the bait, and carried it off with him to his hole (in the fourth story) to deal with at his leisure.]

—Here is another remark made for his especial benefit.—There is a natural tendency in many persons to run their adjectives together in TRIADS, as I have heard them called, —thus: He was honorable, courteous, and brave; she was graceful, pleasing, and virtuous. Dr. Johnson is famous for this; I think it was Bulwer who said you could separate a paper in the “Rambler” into three distinct essays. Many of our writers show the same tendency,—my friend, the Professor, especially. Some think it is in humble imitation of Johnson,—some that it is for the sake of the stately sound only. I don’t think they get to the bottom of it. It is, I suspect, an instinctive and involuntary effort of the mind

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to present a thought or image with the *three dimensions* that belong to every solid,—an unconscious handling of an idea as if it had length, breadth, and thickness. It is a great deal easier to say this than to prove it, and a great deal easier to dispute it than to disprove it. But mind this: the more we observe and study, the wider we find the range of the automatic and instinctive principles in body, mind, and morals, and the narrower the limits of the self-determining conscious movement.

—I have often seen piano-forte players and singers make such strange motions over their instruments or song-books that I wanted to laugh at them. “Where did our friends pick up all these fine ecstatic airs?” I would say to myself. Then I would remember My Lady in “Marriage a la Mode,” and amuse myself with thinking how affectation was the same thing in Hogarth’s time and in our own. But one day I bought me a Canary-bird and hung him up in a cage at my window. By-and-by he found himself at home, and began to pipe his little tunes; and there he was, sure enough, swimming and waving about, with all the droopings and liftings and languishing side-turnings of the head that I had laughed at. And now I should like to ask, *who* taught him all this?—and me, through him, that the foolish head was not the one swinging itself from side to side and bowing and nodding over the music, but that other which was passing its shallow and self-satisfied judgment on a creature made of finer clay than the frame which carried that same head upon its shoulders?

—Do you want an image of the human will, or the self-determining principle, as compared with its prearranged and impassable restrictions? A drop of water, imprisoned in a crystal; you may see such a one in any mineralogical collection. One little fluid particle in the crystalline prism of the solid universe!

—Weaken moral obligations?—No, not weaken, but define them. When I preach that sermon I spoke of the other day, I shall have to lay down some principles not fully recognized in some of your text-books.

I should have to begin with one most formidable preliminary. You saw an article the other day in one of the journals, perhaps, in which some old Doctor or other said quietly that patients were very apt to be fools and cowards. But a great many of the clergyman’s patients are not only fools and cowards, but also liars.

[Immense sensation at the table.—Sudden retirement of the angular female in oxydated bombazine. Movement of adhesion—as they say in the Chamber of Deputies—on the part of the young fellow they call John. Falling of the old-gentleman-opposite’s lower jaw —(gravitation is beginning to get the better of him.) Our landlady to Benjamin Franklin, briskly,—Go to school right off, there’s a good boy! Schoolmistress curious,—takes a quick glance at divinity-student. Divinity-student slightly flushed draws his

shoulders back a little, as if a big falsehood—or truth—had hit him in the forehead. Myself calm.]

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—I should not make such a speech as that, you know, without having pretty substantial indorsers to fall back upon, in case my credit should be disputed. Will you run up stairs, Benjamin Franklin, (for B. F. had *not* gone right off, of course,) and bring down a small volume from the left upper corner of the right-hand shelves?

[Look at the precious little black, ribbed backed, clean-typed, vellum-papered 32mo. “DESIDERII ERASMI *colloquia*. Amstelodami. Typis Ludovici Elzevirii. 1650.” Various names written on title-page. Most conspicuous this: Gul. Cookeson E. Coll. Omn. Anim. 1725. Oxon.

—O William Cookeson, of All-Souls College, Oxford,—then writing as I now write,—now in the dust, where I shall lie,—is this line all that remains to thee of earthly remembrance? Thy name is at least once more spoken by living men;—is it a pleasure to thee? Thou shalt share with me my little draught of immortality,—its week, its month, its year,—whatever it may be,—and then we will go together into the solemn archives of Oblivion’s Uncatalogued Library!]

—If you think I have used rather strong language, I shall have to read something to you out of the book of this keen and witty scholar,—the great Erasmus,—who “laid the egg of the Reformation which Luther hatched.” Oh, you never read his *Naufragium*, or “Shipwreck,” did you? Of course not; for, if you had, I don’t think you would have given me credit—or discredit—for entire originality in that speech of mine. That men are cowards in the contemplation of futurity he illustrates by the extraordinary antics of many on board the sinking vessel; that they are fools, by their praying to the sea, and making promises to bits of wood from the true cross, and all manner of similar nonsense; that they are fools, cowards, and liars all at once, by this story: I will put it into rough English for you.—“I couldn’t help laughing to hear one fellow bawling out, so that he might be sure to be heard, a promise to Saint Christopher of Paris—the monstrous statue in the great church there—that he would give him a wax taper as big as himself. ‘Mind what you promise!’ said an acquaintance that stood near him, poking him with his elbow; ‘you couldn’t pay for it, if you sold all your things at auction.’ ‘Hold your tongue, you donkey!’ said the fellow,—but softly, so that Saint Christopher should not hear him,—‘do you think I’m in earnest? If I once get my foot on dry ground, catch me giving him so much as a tallow candle!’”

Now, therefore, remembering that those who have been loudest in their talk about the great subject of which we were speaking have not necessarily been wise, brave, and true men, but, on the contrary, have very often been wanting in one or two or all of the qualities these words imply, I should expect to find a good many doctrines current in the schools which I should be obliged to call foolish, cowardly, and false.

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—So you would abuse other people's beliefs, Sir, and yet not tell us your own creed!— said the divinity-student, coloring up with a spirit for which I liked him all the better.

—I have a creed,—I replied;—none better, and none shorter. It is told in two words,—the two first of the Paternoster. And when I say these words I mean them. And when I compared the human will to a drop in a crystal, and said I meant to *define* moral obligations, and not weaken them, this was what I intended to express: that the fluent, self-determining power of human beings is a very strictly limited agency in the universe. The chief planes of its enclosing solid are, of course, organization, education, condition. Organization may reduce the power of the will to nothing, as in some idiots; and from this zero the scale mounts upwards by slight gradations. Education is only second to nature. Imagine all the infants born this year in Boston and Timbuctoo to change places! Condition does less, but “Give me neither poverty nor riches” was the prayer of Agur, and with good reason. If there is any improvement in modern theology, it is in getting out of the region of pure abstractions and taking these every-day working forces into account. The great theological question now heaving and throbbing in the minds of Christian men is this:-

No, I wont talk about these things now. My remarks might be repeated, and it would give my friends pain to see with what personal incivilities I should be visited. Besides, what business has a mere boarder to be talking about such things at a breakfast-table? Let him make puns. To be sure, he was brought up among the Christian fathers, and learned his alphabet out of a quarto “Concilium Tridentinum.” He has also heard many thousand theological lectures by men of various denominations; and it is not at all to the credit of these teachers, if he is not fit by this time to express an opinion on theological matters.

I know well enough that there are some of you who had a great deal rather see me stand on my head than use it for any purpose of thought. Does not my friend, the Professor, receive at least two letters a week, requesting him to. . . ,—on the strength of some youthful antic of his, which, no doubt, authorizes the intelligent constituency of autograph-hunters to address him as a harlequin?

—Well, I can't be savage with you for wanting to laugh, and I like to make you laugh, well enough, when I can. But then observe this: if the sense of the ridiculous is one side of an impressible nature, it is very well; but if that is all there is in a man, he had better have been an ape at once, and so have stood at the head of his profession. Laughter and tears are meant to turn the wheels of the same machinery of sensibility; one is wind-power, and the other water-power; that is all. I have often heard the Professor talk about hysterics as being Nature's cleverest illustration of the reciprocal convertibility of the two states of which these acts are the manifestations; But you may see it every day in children; and if you want to choke with stifled tears at sight of the transition, as it shows itself in older years, go and see Mr. Blake play *Jesse rural*.

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It is a very dangerous thing for a literary man to indulge his love for the ridiculous. People laugh *with* him just so long as he amuses them; but if he attempts to be serious, they must still have their laugh, and so they laugh *at* him. There is in addition, however, a deeper reason for this than would at first appear. Do you know that you feel a little superior to every man who makes you laugh, whether by making faces or verses? Are you aware that you have a pleasant sense of patronizing him, when you condescend so far as to let him turn somersets, literal or literary, for your royal delight? Now if a man can only be allowed to stand on a dais, or raised platform, and look down on his neighbor who is exerting his talent for him, oh, it is all right!—first-rate performance!—and all the rest of the fine phrases. But if all at once the performer asks the gentleman to come upon the floor, and, stepping upon the platform, begins to talk down at him,—ah, that wasn't in the programme!

I have never forgotten what happened when Sydney Smith—who, as everybody knows, was an exceedingly sensible man, and a gentleman, every inch of him—ventured to preach a sermon on the Duties of Royalty. The “Quarterly,” “so savage and tartarly,” came down upon him in the most contemptuous style, as “a joker of jokes,” a “diner-out of the first water,” in one of his own phrases; sneering at him, insulting him, as nothing but a toady of a court, sneaking behind the anonymous, would ever have been mean enough to do to a man of his position and genius, or to any decent person even.—If I were giving advice to a young fellow of talent, with two or three facets to his mind, I would tell him by all means to keep his wit in the background until after he had made a reputation by his more solid qualities. And so to an actor: Hamlet first, and Bob Logic afterwards, if you like; but don't think, as they say poor Liston used to, that people will be ready to allow that you can do anything great with Macbeth's dagger after flourishing about with Paul Pry's umbrella. Do you know, too, that the majority of men look upon all who challenge their attention,—for a while, at least,—as beggars, and nuisances? They always try to get off as cheaply as they can; and the cheapest of all things they can give a literary man—pardon the forlorn pleasantry!—is the *funny*-bone. That is all very well so far as it goes, but satisfies no man, and makes a good many angry, as I told you on a former occasion.

—Oh, indeed, no!—I am not ashamed to make you laugh, occasionally. I think I could read you something I have in my desk which would probably make you smile. Perhaps I will read it one of these days, if you are patient with me when I am sentimental and reflective; not just now. The ludicrous has its place in the universe; it is not a human invention, but one of the Divine ideas, illustrated in the practical jokes of kittens and monkeys long before Aristophanes

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or Shakspeare. How curious it is that we always consider solemnity and the absence of all gay surprises and encounter of wits as essential to the idea of the future life of those whom we thus deprive of half their faculties and then call *blessed*! There are not a few who, even in this life, seem to be preparing themselves for that smileless eternity to which they look forward, by banishing all gayety from their hearts and all joyousness from their countenances. I meet one such in the street not unfrequently, a person of intelligence and education, but who gives me (and all that he passes) such a rayless and chilling look of recognition,—something as if he were one of Heaven’s assessors, come down to “doom” every acquaintance he met,—that I have sometimes begun to sneeze on the spot, and gone home with a violent cold, dating from that instant. I don’t doubt he would cut his kitten’s tail off, if he caught her playing with it. Please tell me, who taught her to play with it?

No, no!—give me a chance to talk to you, my fellow-boarders, and you need not be afraid that I shall have any scruples about entertaining you, if I can do it, as well as giving you some of my serious thoughts, and perhaps my sadder fancies. I know nothing in English or any other literature more admirable than that sentiment of Sir Thomas Browne *“Every man truly lives, so long as he acts his nature, or some way makes good the faculties of himself.”*

I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving: To reach the port of heaven, we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it,—but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor. There is one very sad thing in old friendships, to every mind that is really moving onward. It is this: that one cannot help using his early friends as the seaman uses the log, to mark his progress. Every now and then we throw an old schoolmate over the stern with a string of thought tied to him, and look—I am afraid with a kind of luxurious and sanctimonious compassion—to see the rate at which the string reels off, while he lies there bobbing up and down, poor fellow! and we are dashing along with the white foam and bright sparkle at our bows;—the ruffled bosom of prosperity and progress, with a sprig of diamonds stuck in it! But this is only the sentimental side of the matter; for grow we must, if we outgrow all that we love.

Don’t misunderstand that metaphor of heaving the log, I beg you. It is merely a smart way of saying that we cannot avoid measuring our rate of movement by those with whom we have long been in the habit of comparing ourselves; and when they once become stationary, we can get our reckoning from them with painful accuracy. We see just what we were when they were our peers, and can strike the balance

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between that and whatever we may feel ourselves to be now. No doubt we may sometimes be mistaken. If we change our last simile to that very old and familiar one of a fleet leaving the harbor and sailing in company for some distant region, we can get what we want out of it. There is one of our companions;—her streamers were torn into rags before she had got into the open sea, then by and by her sails blew out of the ropes one after another, the waves swept her deck, and as night came on we left her a seeming wreck, as we flew under our pyramid of canvas. But lo! at dawn she is still in sight,—it may be in advance of us. Some deep ocean-current has been moving her on, strong, but silent,—yes, stronger than these noisy winds that puff our sails until they are swollen as the cheeks of jubilant cherubim. And when at last the black steam-tug with the skeleton arms, which comes out of the mist sooner or later and takes us all in tow, grapples her and goes off panting and groaning with her, it is to that harbor where all wrecks are refitted, and where, alas! we, towering in our pride, may never come.

So you will not think I mean to speak lightly of old friendships, because we cannot help instituting comparisons between our present and former selves by the aid of those who were what we were, but are not what we are. Nothing strikes one more, in the race of life, than to see how many give out in the first half of the course. “Commencement day” always reminds me of the start for the “Derby,” when the beautiful high-bred three-year olds of the season are brought up for trial. That day is the start, and life is the race. Here we are at Cambridge, and a class is just “graduating.” Poor Harry! he was to have been there too, but he has paid forfeit; step out here into the grass back of the church; ah! there it is:-

“HUNC LAPIDEM POSUERUNT
SOCII MOERENTES.”

But this is the start, and here they are,—coats bright as silk, and manes as smooth as eau lustrale can make them. Some of the best of the colts are pranced round, a few minutes each, to show their paces. What is that old gentleman crying about? and the old lady by him, and the three girls, what are they all covering their eyes for? Oh, that is *their* colt which has just been trotted up on the stage. Do they really think those little thin legs can do anything in such a slashing sweepstakes as is coming off in these next forty years? Oh, this terrible gift of second-sight that comes to some of us when we begin to look through the silvered rings of the arcus senilis!

Ten years gone. First turn in the race. A few broken down; two or three bolted. Several show in advance of the ruck. *Cassock*, a black colt, seems to be ahead of the rest; those black colts commonly get the start, I have noticed, of the others, in the first quarter. *Meteor* has pulled up.



Twenty years. Second corner turned. *Cassock* has dropped from the front, and JUDEX, an iron-gray, has the lead. But look! how they have thinned out! Down flat,—five,—six,—how many? They lie still enough! they will not get up again in this race, be very sure! And the rest of them, what a “tailing off”! Anybody can see who is going to win,—perhaps.

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Thirty years. Third corner turned. *Dives*, bright sorrel, ridden by the fellow in a yellow jacket, begins to make play fast; is getting to be the favourite with many. But who is that other one that has been lengthening his stride from the first, and now shows close up to the front? Don't you remember the quiet brown colt *asteroid*, with the star in his forehead? That is he; he is one of the sort that lasts; look out for him! The black "colt," as we used to call him, is in the background, taking it easily in a gentle trot. There is one they used to call *the filly*, on account of a certain feminine air he had; well up, you see; the Filly is not to be despised my boy!

Forty years. More dropping off,—but places much as before.

Fifty years. Race over. All that are on the course are coming in at a walk; no more running. Who is ahead? Ahead? What! and the winning-post a slab of white or gray stone standing out from that turf where there is no more jockeying or straining for victory! Well, the world marks their places in its betting-book; but be sure that these matter very little, if they have run as well as they knew how!

—Did I not say to you a little while ago that the universe swam in an ocean of similitudes and analogies? I will not quote Cowley, or Burns, or Wordsworth, just now, to show you what thoughts were suggested to them by the simplest natural objects, such as a flower or a leaf; but I will read you a few lines, if you do not object, suggested by looking at a section of one of those chambered shells to which is given the name of Pearly Nautilus. We need not trouble ourselves about the distinction between this and the Paper Nautilus, the Argonauta of the ancients. The name applied to both shows that each has long been compared to a ship, as you may see more fully in Webster's Dictionary, or the "Encyclopedia," to which he refers. If you will look into Roget's Bridgewater Treatise, you will find a figure of one of these shells, and a section of it. The last will show you the series of enlarging compartments successively dwelt in by the animal that inhabits the shell, which is built in a widening spiral. Can you find no lesson in this?

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS.

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
Sails the unshadowed main,—
The venturous bark that flings
On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!

And every clambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!



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Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn!
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings:-

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

CHAPTER V

A lyric conception—my friend, the Poet, said—hits me like a bullet in the forehead. I have often had the blood drop from my cheeks when it struck, and felt that I turned as white as death. Then comes a creeping as of centipedes running down the spine, —then a gasp and a great jump of the heart,—then a sudden flush and a beating in the vessels of the head,—then a long sigh,—and the poem is written.

It is an impromptu, I suppose, then, if you write it so suddenly,
—I replied.

No,—said he,—far from it. I said written, but I did not say *copied*. Every such poem has a soul and a body, and it is the body of it, or the copy, that men read and publishers pay for. The soul of it is born in an instant in the poet's soul. It comes to him a thought, tangled in the meshes of a few sweet words,—words that have loved each other from the cradle of the language, but have never been wedded until now. Whether it will ever fully embody itself in a bridal train of a dozen stanzas or not is uncertain; but it exists potentially from the instant that the poet turns pale with it. It is enough to stun and scare anybody, to have a hot thought come crashing into his brain, and ploughing up those

parallel ruts where the wagon trains of common ideas were jogging along in their regular sequences of association. No wonder the ancients made the poetical impulse wholly external. [Greek text which cannot be reproduced]. Goddess,—Muse,—divine afflatus, —something outside always. *I* never wrote any verses worth reading. I can't. I am too stupid. If I ever copied any that were worth reading, I was only a medium.

[I was talking all this time to our boarders, you understand, —telling them what this poet told me. The company listened rather attentively, I thought, considering the literary character of the remarks.]

The old gentleman opposite all at once asked me if I ever read anything better than Pope's "Essay on Man"? Had I ever perused McFingal? He was fond of poetry when he was a boy,—his mother taught him to say many little pieces,—he remembered one beautiful hymn;—and the old gentleman began, in a clear, loud voice, for his years,—

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"The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens,"—

He stopped, as if startled by our silence, and a faint flush ran up beneath the thin white hairs that fell upon his cheek. As I looked round, I was reminded of a show I once saw at the Museum,—the Sleeping Beauty, I think they called it. The old man's sudden breaking out in this way turned every face towards him, and each kept his posture as if changed to stone. Our Celtic Bridget, or Biddy, is not a foolish fat scullion to burst out crying for a sentiment. She is of the serviceable, red-handed, broad-and-high-shouldered type; one of those imported female servants who are known in public by their amorphous style of person, their stoop forwards, and a headlong and as it were precipitous walk,—the waist plunging downwards into the rocking pelvis at every heavy footfall. Bridget, constituted for action, not for emotion, was about to deposit a plate heaped with something upon the table, when I saw the coarse arm stretched by my shoulder arrested,—motionless as the arm of a terra-cotta caryatid; she couldn't set the plate down while the old gentleman was speaking!

He was quite silent after this, still wearing the slight flush on his cheek. Don't ever think the poetry is dead in an old man because his forehead is wrinkled, or that his manhood has left him when his hand trembles! If they ever *were* there, they *are* there still!

By and by we got talking again.—Does a poet love the verses written through him, do you think, Sir?—said the divinity-student.

So long as they are warm from his mind, carry any of his animal heat about them, / *know* he loves them,—I answered. When they have had time to cool, he is more indifferent.

A good deal as it is with buckwheat cakes,—said the young fellow whom they call John.

The last words, only, reached the ear of the economically organized female in black bombazine.—Buckwheat is skerce and high,—she remarked. [Must be a poor relation sponging on our landlady,—pays nothing,—so she must stand by the guns and be ready to repel boarders.]

I liked the turn the conversation had taken, for I had some things I wanted to say, and so, after waiting a minute, I began again.—I don't think the poems I read you sometimes can be fairly appreciated, given to you as they are in the green state.

—You don't know what I mean by the *green state*? Well, then, I will tell you. Certain things are good for nothing until they have been kept a long while; and some are good for nothing until they have been long kept and *used*. Of the first, wine is the illustrious and immortal example. Of those which must be kept and used I will name three,—

meerschaum pipes, violins, and poems. The meerschaum is but a poor affair until it has
burned a thousand offerings to the cloud-compelling

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deities. It comes to us without complexion or flavor,—born of the sea-foam, like Aphrodite, but colorless as pallida Mors herself. The fire is lighted in its central shrine, and gradually the juices which the broad leaves of the Great Vegetable had sucked up from an acre and curdled into a drachm are diffused through its thirsting pores. First a discoloration, then a stain, and at last a rich, glowing, umber tint spreading over the whole surface. Nature true to her old brown autumnal hue, you see,—as true in the fire of the meerschaum as in the sunshine of October! And then the cumulative wealth of its fragrant reminiscences! he who inhales its vapors takes a thousand whiffs in a single breath; and one cannot touch it without awakening the old joys that hang around it as the smell of flowers clings to the dresses of the daughters of the house of Farina!

[Don't think I use a meerschaum myself, for *I do not*, though I have owned a calumet since my childhood, which from a naked Pict (of the Mohawk species) my grandsire won, together with a tomahawk and beaded knife-sheath; paying for the lot with a bullet-mark on his right check. On the maternal side I inherit the loveliest silver-mounted tobacco-stopper you ever saw. It is a little box-wood Triton, carved with charming liveliness and truth; I have often compared it to a figure in Raphael's "Triumph of Galatea." It came to me in an ancient shagreen case,—how old it is I do not know,—but it must have been made since Sir Walter Raleigh's time. If you are curious, you shall see it any day. Neither will I pretend that I am so unused to the more perishable smoking contrivance that a few whiffs would make me feel as if I lay in a ground-swell on the Bay of Biscay. I am not unacquainted with that fusiform, spiral-wound bundle of chopped stems and miscellaneous incombustibles, the *cigar*, so called, of the shops,—which to "draw" asks the suction-power of a nursling infant Hercules, and to relish, the leathery palate of an old Silenus. I do not advise you, young man, even if my illustration strike your fancy, to consecrate the flower of your life to painting the bowl of a pipe, for, let me assure you, the stain of a reverie-breeding narcotic may strike deeper than you think for. I have seen the green leaf of early promise grow brown before its time under such Nicotian regimen, and thought the umbered meerschaum was dearly bought at the cost of a brain enfeebled and a will enslaved.]

Violins, too,—the sweet old Amati!—the divine Stradivarius! Played on by ancient maestros until the bow-hand lost its power and the flying fingers stiffened. Bequeathed to the passionate, young enthusiast, who made it whisper his hidden love, and cry his inarticulate longings, and scream his untold agonies, and wail his monotonous despair. Passed from his dying hand to the cold virtuoso, who let it slumber in its case for a generation, till, when

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his hoard was broken up, it came forth once more and rode the stormy symphonies of royal orchestras, beneath the rushing bow of their lord and leader. Into lonely prisons with improvident artists; into convents from which arose, day and night, the holy hymns with which its tones were blended; and back again to orgies in which it learned to howl and laugh as if a legion of devils were shut up in it; then again to the gentle dilettante who calmed it down with easy melodies until it answered him softly as in the days of the old maestros. And so given into our hands, its pores all full of music; stained, like the meerschaum, through and through, with the concentrated hue and sweetness of all the harmonies which have kindled and faded on its strings.

Now I tell you a poem must be kept *and used*, like a meerschaum, or a violin. A poem is just as porous as the meerschaum;—the more porous it is, the better. I mean to say that a genuine poem is capable of absorbing an indefinite amount of the essence of our own humanity,—its tenderness, its heroism, its regrets, its aspirations, so as to be gradually stained through with a divine secondary color derived from ourselves. So you see it must take time to bring the sentiment of a poem into harmony with our nature, by staining ourselves through every thought and image our being can penetrate.

Then again as to the mere music of a new poem; why, who can expect anything more from that than from the music of a violin fresh from the maker's hands? Now you know very well that there are no less than fifty-eight different pieces in a violin. These pieces are strangers to each other, and it takes a century, more or less, to make them thoroughly acquainted. At last they learn to vibrate in harmony, and the instrument becomes an organic whole, as if it were a great seed-capsule which had grown from a garden-bed in Cremona, or elsewhere. Besides, the wood is juicy and full of sap for fifty years or so, but at the end of fifty or a hundred more gets tolerably dry and comparatively resonant.

Don't you see that all this is just as true of a poem? Counting each word as a piece, there are more pieces in an average copy of verses than in a violin. The poet has forced all these words together, and fastened them, and they don't understand it at first. But let the poem be repeated aloud and murmured over in the mind's muffled whisper often enough, and at length the parts become knit together in such absolute solidarity that you could not change a syllable without the whole world's crying out against you for meddling with the harmonious fabric. Observe, too, how the drying process takes place in the stuff of a poem just as in that of a violin. Here is a Tyrolese fiddle that is just coming to its hundredth birthday,—(Pedro Klauss, Tyroli, fecit, 1760,)—the sap is pretty well out of it. And here is the song of an old poet whom Neaera cheated.—

“Nox erat, et coelo fulgebat Luna sereno
Inter minora sidera,

Cum tu magnorum numen laesura deorum
In verba jurabas mea.”

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Don't you perceive the sonorousness of these old dead Latin phrases? Now I tell you that, every word fresh from the dictionary brings with it a certain succulence; and though I cannot expect the sheets of the "Pactolian," in which, as I told you, I sometimes print my verses, to get so dry as the crisp papyrus that held those words of Horatius Flaccus, yet you may be sure, that, while the sheets are damp, and while the lines hold their sap, you can't fairly judge of my performances, and that, if made of the true stuff, they will ring better after a while.

[There was silence for a brief space, after my somewhat elaborate exposition of these self-evident analogies. Presently *A person* turned towards me—I do not choose to designate the individual—and said that he rather expected my pieces had given pretty good "sahtisfahction."—I had, up to this moment, considered this complimentary phrase as sacred to the use of secretaries of lyceums, and, as it has been usually accompanied by a small pecuniary testimonial, have acquired a certain relish for this moderately tepid and unstimulating expression of enthusiasm. But as a reward for gratuitous services, I confess I thought it a little below that blood-heat standard which a man's breath ought to have, whether silent, or vocal and articulate. I waited for a favorable opportunity, however, before making the remarks which follow.]

—There are single expressions, as I have told you already, that fix a man's position for you before you have done shaking hands with him. Allow me to expand a little. There are several things, very slight in themselves, yet implying other things not so unimportant. Thus, your French servant has devalise your premises and got caught. Excusez, says the sergent-de-ville, as he politely relieves him of his upper garments and displays his bust in the full daylight. Good shoulders enough,—a little marked,—traces of smallpox, perhaps,—but white. . . . Crac! from the sergent-de-ville's broad palm on the white shoulder! Now look! Vogue la galere! Out comes the big red V—mark of the hot iron;—he had blistered it out pretty nearly,—hadn't he?—the old rascal VOLEUR, branded in the galleys at Marseilles! [Don't! What if he has got something like this?—nobody supposes I *invented* such a story.]

My man John, who used to drive two of those six equine females which I told you I had owned,—for, look you, my friends, simple though I stand here, I am one that has been driven in his "kerridge,"—not using that term, as liberal shepherds do, for any battered old shabby-genteel go-cart which has more than one wheel, but meaning thereby a four-wheeled vehicle *with A pole*,—my man John, I say, was a retired soldier. He retired unostentatiously, as many of Her Majesty's modest servants have done before and since. John told me, that when an officer thinks he recognizes one of these retiring heroes, and would know if he has really been in the service, that he may restore him, if possible, to a grateful country, he comes suddenly upon him, and says, sharply, "Strap!" If he has ever worn the shoulder-strap, he has learned the reprimand for its ill adjustment. The old word of command flashes through his muscles, and his hand goes up in an instant to the place where the strap used to be.

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[I was all the time preparing for my grand coup, you understand; but I saw they were not quite ready for it, and so continued, —always in illustration of the general principle I had laid down.]

Yes, odd things come out in ways that nobody thinks of. There was a legend, that, when the Danish pirates made descents upon the English coast, they caught a few Tartars occasionally, in the shape of Saxons, who would not let them go,—on the contrary, insisted on their staying, and, to make sure of it, treated them as Apollo treated Marsyas, or an Bartholinus has treated a fellow-creature in his title-page, and, having divested them of the one essential and perfectly fitting garment, indispensable in the mildest climates, nailed the same on the church-door as we do the banns of marriage, in terrorem.

[There was a laugh at this among some of the young folks; but as I looked at our landlady, I saw that “the water stood in her eyes,” as it did in Christiana’s when the interpreter asked her about the spider, and I fancied, but wasn’t quite sure that the schoolmistress blushed, as Mercy did in the same conversation, as you remember.]

That sounds like a cock-and-bull-story,—said the young fellow whom they call John. I abstained from making Hamlet’s remark to Horatio, and continued.

Not long since, the church-wardens were repairing and beautifying an old Saxon church in a certain English village, and among other things thought the doors should be attended to. One of them particularly, the front-door, looked very badly, crusted, as it were, and as if it would be all the better for scraping. There happened to be a microscopist in the village who had heard the old pirate story, and he took it into his head to examine the crust on this door. There was no mistake about it; it was a genuine historical document, of the Ziska drum-head pattern,—a real cutis humana, stripped from some old Scandinavian filibuster, and the legend was true.

My friend, the Professor, settled an important historical and financial question once by the aid of an exceedingly minute fragment of a similar document. Behind the pane of plate-glass which bore his name and title burned a modest lamp, signifying to the passers-by that at all hours of the night the slightest favors (or fevers) were welcome. A youth who had freely partaken of the cup which cheers and likewise inebriates, following a moth-like impulse very natural under the circumstances, dashed his fist at the light and quenched the meek luminary,—breaking through the plate-glass, of course, to reach it. Now I don’t want to go into minutiae at table, you know, but a naked hand can no more go through a pane of thick glass without leaving some of its cuticle, to say the least, behind it, than a butterfly can go through a sausage-machine without looking the worse for it. The Professor gathered up the fragments of glass, and with them certain very minute but entirely satisfactory documents which would have identified and hanged any rogue in Christendom who had parted with them.—The historical question, *who did*

it? and the financial question, *who paid for it?* were both settled before the new lamp was lighted the next evening.

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You see, my friends, what immense conclusions, touching our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor, may be reached by means of very insignificant premises. This is eminently true of manners and forms of speech; a movement or a phrase often tells you all you want to know about a person. Thus, "How's your health?" (commonly pronounced haalth)—instead of, How do you do? or, How are you? Or calling your little dark entry a "hall," and your old rickety one-horse wagon a "kerridge." Or telling a person who has been trying to please you that he has given you pretty good "sahtisfahction." Or saying that you "remember of" such a thing, or that you have been "stoppin'" at Deacon Somebody's,—and other such expressions. One of my friends had a little marble statuette of Cupid in the parlor of his country-house,—bow, arrows, wings, and all complete. A visitor, indigenous to the region, looking pensively at the figure, asked the lady of the house "if that was a statoo of her deceased infant?" What a delicious, though somewhat voluminous biography, social, educational, and aesthetic in that brief question!

[Please observe with what Machiavellian astuteness I smuggled in the particular offence which it was my object to hold up to my fellow-boarders, without too personal an attack on the individual at whose door it lay.]

That was an exceedingly dull person who made the remark, *Ex pede Herculem*. He might as well have said, "From a peck of apples you may judge of the barrel." *Ex pede*, to be sure! Read, instead, *Ex ungue minimi digiti pedis, Herculem, ejusque patrem, matrem, avos et proavos, filios, nepotes et pronepotes!* Talk to me about your [Greek text which cannot be reproduced]! Tell me about Cuvier's getting up a megatherium from a tooth, or Agassiz's drawing a portrait of an undiscovered fish from a single scale! As the "O" revealed Giotto,—as the one word "moi" betrayed the Stratford atte-Bowe-taught Anglais,—so all a man's antecedents and possibilities are summed up in a single utterance which gives at once the gauge of his education and his mental organization.

Possibilities, Sir?—said the divinity-student; can't a man who says Haow? arrive at distinction?

Sir,—I replied,—in a republic all things are possible. But the man *with A future* has almost of necessity sense enough to see that any odious trick of speech or manners must be got rid of. Doesn't Sydney Smith say that a public man in England never gets over a false quantity uttered in early life? *Our* public men are in little danger of this fatal misstep, as few of them are in the habit of introducing Latin into their speeches,—for good and sufficient reasons. But they are bound to speak decent English,—unless, indeed, they are rough old campaigners, like General Jackson or General Taylor; in which case, a few scars on Priscian's head are pardoned to old fellows who have quite as many on their own, and a constituency of thirty empires is not at all particular, provided they do not swear in their Presidential Messages.

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However, it is not for me to talk. I have made mistakes enough in conversation and print. I never find them out until they are stereotyped, and then I think they rarely escape me. I have no doubt I shall make half a dozen slips before this breakfast is over, and remember them all before another. How one does tremble with rage at his own intense momentary stupidity about things he knows perfectly well, and to think how he lays himself open to the impertinences of the captatores verborum, those useful but humble scavengers of the language, whose business it is to pick up what might offend or injure, and remove it, hugging and feeding on it as they go! I don't want to speak too slightly of these verbal critics;—how can I, who am so fond of talking about errors and vulgarisms of speech? Only there is a difference between those clerical blunders which almost every man commits, knowing better, and that habitual grossness or meanness of speech which is unendurable to educated persons, from anybody that wears silk or broadcloth.

[I write down the above remarks this morning, January 26th, making this record of the date that nobody may think it was written in wrath, on account of any particular grievance suffered from the invasion of any individual scarabaeus grammaticus.]

—I wonder if anybody ever finds fault with anything I say at this table when it is repeated? I hope they do, I am sure. I should be very certain that I had said nothing of much significance, if they did not.

Did you never, in walking in the fields, come across a large flat stone, which had lain, nobody knows how long, just where you found it, with the grass forming a little hedge, as it were, all round it, close to its edges,—and have you not, in obedience to a kind of feeling that told you it had been lying there long enough, insinuated your stick or your foot or your fingers under its edge and turned it over as a housewife turns a cake, when she says to herself, "It's done brown enough by this time"? What an odd revelation, and what an unforeseen and unpleasant surprise to a small community, the very existence of which you had not suspected, until the sudden dismay and scattering among its members produced by your turning the old stone over! Blades of grass flattened down, colorless, matted together, as if they had been bleached and ironed; hideous crawling creatures, some of them coleopterous or horny-shelled,—turtle-bugs one wants to call them; some of them softer, but cunningly spread out and compressed like Lepine watches; (Nature never loses a crack or a crevice, mind you, or a joint in a tavern bedstead, but she always has one of her flat-pattern five timekeepers to slide into it;) black, glossy crickets, with their long filaments sticking out like the whips of four-horse stage-coaches; motionless, slug-like creatures, young larvae, perhaps more horrible in their pulpy stillness than even in the infernal wriggle of maturity! But no sooner is the stone

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turned and the wholesome light of day let upon this compressed and blinded community of creeping things, than all of them which enjoy the luxury of legs—and some of them have a good many—rush round wildly, butting each other and everything in their way, and end in a general stampede for underground retreats from the region poisoned by sunshine. *Next year* you will find the grass growing tall and green where the stone lay; the ground-bird builds her nest where the beetle had his hole; the dandelion and the buttercup are growing there, and the broad fans of insect-angels open and shut over their golden disks, as the rhythmic waves of blissful consciousness pulsate through their glorified being.

—The young fellow whom they call John saw fit to say, in his very familiar way,—at which I do not choose to take offence, but which I sometimes think it necessary to repress,—that I was coming it rather strong on the butterflies.

No, I replied; there is meaning in each of those images,—the butterfly as well as the others. The stone is ancient error. The grass is human nature borne down and bleached of all its colour by it. The shapes which are found beneath are the crafty beings that thrive in darkness, and the weaker organisms kept helpless by it. He who turns the stone over is whosoever puts the staff of truth to the old lying incubus, no matter whether he do it with a serious face or a laughing one. The next year stands for the coming time. Then shall the nature which had lain blanched and broken rise in its full stature and native hues in the sunshine. Then shall God's minstrels build their nests in the hearts of a new-born humanity. Then shall beauty—Divinity taking outlines and color—light upon the souls of men as the butterfly, image of the beatified spirit rising from the dust, soars from the shell that held a poor grub, which would never have found wings, had not the stone been lifted.

You never need think you can turn over any old falsehood without a terrible squirming and scattering of the horrid little population that dwells under it.

—Every real thought on every real subject knocks the wind out of somebody or other. As soon as his breath comes back, he very probably begins to expend it in hard words. These are the best evidence a man can have that he has said something it was time to say. Dr. Johnson was disappointed in the effect of one of his pamphlets. "I think I have not been attacked enough for it," he said;—"attack is the reaction; I never think I have hit hard unless it rebounds."

—If a fellow attacked my opinions in print would I reply? Not I. Do you think I don't understand what my friend, the Professor, long ago called *the hydrostatic paradox of controversy*?



Don't know what that means?—Well, I will tell you. You know, that, if you had a bent tube, one arm of which was of the size of a pipe-stem, and the other big enough to hold the ocean, water would stand at the same height in one as in the other. Controversy equalizes fools and wise men in the same way,—*and the fools know it.*

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—No, but I often read what they say about other people. There are about a dozen phrases which all come tumbling along together, like the tongs, and the shovel, and the poker, and the brush, and the bellows, in one of those domestic avalanches that everybody knows. If you get one, you get the whole lot.

What are they?—Oh, that depends a good deal on latitude and longitude. Epithets follow the isothermal lines pretty accurately. Grouping them in two families, one finds himself a clever, genial, witty, wise, brilliant, sparkling, thoughtful, distinguished, celebrated, illustrious scholar and perfect gentleman, and first writer of the age; or a dull, foolish, wicked, pert, shallow, ignorant, insolent, traitorous, black-hearted outcast, and disgrace to civilization.

What do I think determines the set of phrases a man gets?—Well, I should say a set of influences something like these:—1st. Relationships, political, religious, social, domestic. 2d. Oyster, in the form of suppers given to gentlemen connected with criticism. I believe in the school, the college, and the clergy; but my sovereign logic, for regulating public opinion—which means commonly the opinion of half a dozen of the critical gentry—is the following *major proposition*. Oysters au naturel. Minor proposition. The same “scalloped.” Conclusion. That—(here insert entertainer’s name) is clever, witty, wise, brilliant,—and the rest.

—No, it isn’t exactly bribery. One man has oysters, and another epithets. It is an exchange of hospitalities; one gives a “spread” on linen, and the other on paper,—that is all. Don’t you think you and I should be apt to do just so, if we were in the critical line? I am sure I couldn’t resist the softening influences of hospitality. I don’t like to dine out, you know,—I dine so well at our own table, [our landlady looked radiant,] and the company is so pleasant [a rustling movement of satisfaction among the boarders]; but if I did partake of a man’s salt, with such additions as that article of food requires to make it palatable, I could never abuse him, and if I had to speak of him, I suppose I should hang my set of jingling epithets round him like a string of sleigh-bells. Good feeling helps society to make liars of most of us,—not absolute liars, but such careless handlers of truth that its sharp corners get terribly rounded. I love truth as chiefest among the virtues; I trust it runs in my blood; but I would never be a critic, because I know I could not always tell it. I might write a criticism of a book that happened to please me; that is another matter.

—Listen, Benjamin Franklin! This is for you, and such others of tender age as you may tell it to.

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When we are as yet small children, long before the time when those two grown ladies offer us the choice of Hercules, there comes up to us a youthful angel, holding in his right hand cubes like dice, and in his left spheres like marbles. The cubes are of stainless ivory, and on each is written in letters of gold—*truth*. The spheres are veined and streaked and spotted beneath, with a dark crimson flush above, where the light falls on them, and in a certain aspect you can make out upon every one of them the three letters L, I, E. The child to whom they are offered very probably clutches at both. The spheres are the most convenient things in the world; they roll with the least possible impulse just where the child would have them. The cubes will not roll at all; they have a great talent for standing still, and always keep right side up. But very soon the young philosopher finds that things which roll so easily are very apt to roll into the wrong corner, and to get out of his way when he most wants them, while he always knows where to find the others, which stay where they are left. Thus he learns—thus we learn—to drop the streaked and speckled globes of falsehood and to hold fast the white angular blocks of truth. But then comes Timidity, and after her Good-nature, and last of all Polite-behavior, all insisting that truth must *roll*, or nobody can do anything with it; and so the first with her coarse rasp, and the second with her broad file, and the third with her silken sleeve, do so round off and smooth and polish the snow-white cubes of truth, that, when they have got a little dingy by use, it becomes hard to tell them from the rolling spheres of falsehood.

The schoolmistress was polite enough to say that she was pleased with this, and that she would read it to her little flock the next day. But she should tell the children, she said, that there were better reasons for truth than could be found in mere experience of its convenience and the inconvenience of lying.

Yes,—I said,—but education always begins through the senses, and works up to the idea of absolute right and wrong. The first thing the child has to learn about this matter is, that lying is unprofitable,—afterwards, that it is against the peace and dignity of the universe.

—Do I think that the particular form of lying often seen in newspapers, under the title, “From our Foreign Correspondent,” does any harm?—Why, no,—I don’t know that it does. I suppose it doesn’t really deceive people any more than the “Arabian Nights” or “Gulliver’s Travels” do. Sometimes the writers compile *too* carelessly, though, and mix up facts out of geographies, and stories out of the penny papers, so as to mislead those who are desirous of information. I cut a piece out of one of the papers, the other day, which contains a number of improbabilities, and, I suspect, misstatements. I will send up and get it for you, if you would like to hear it.—Ah, this is it; it is headed

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"Our Sumatra correspondence.

"This island is now the property of the Stamford family,—having been won, it is said, in a raffle, by Sir—Stamford, during the stock-gambling mania of the South-Sea Scheme. The history of this gentleman may be found in an interesting series of questions (unfortunately not yet answered) contained in the 'Notes and Queries.' This island is entirely surrounded by the ocean, which here contains a large amount of saline substance, crystallizing in cubes remarkable for their symmetry, and frequently displays on its surface, during calm weather, the rainbow tints of the celebrated South-Sea bubbles. The summers are oppressively hot, and the winters very probably cold; but this fact cannot be ascertained precisely, as, for some peculiar reason, the mercury in these latitudes never shrinks, as in more northern regions, and thus the thermometer is rendered useless in winter.

"The principal vegetable productions of the island are the pepper tree and the bread-fruit tree. Pepper being very abundantly produced, a benevolent society was organized in London during the last century for supplying the natives with vinegar and oysters, as an addition to that delightful condiment. [Note received from Dr. D. P.] It is said, however, that, as the oysters were of the kind called *natives* in England, the natives of Sumatra, in obedience to a natural instinct, refused to touch them, and confined themselves entirely to the crew of the vessel in which they were brought over. This information was received from one of the oldest inhabitants, a native himself, and exceedingly fond of missionaries. He is said also to be very skilful in the *cuisine* peculiar to the island.

"During the season of gathering the pepper, the persons employed are subject to various incommodities, the chief of which is violent and long-continued sternutation, or sneezing. Such is the vehemence of these attacks, that the unfortunate subjects of them are often driven backwards for great distances at immense speed, on the well-known principle of the aeolipile. Not being able to see where they are going, these poor creatures dash themselves to pieces against the rocks or are precipitated over the cliffs and thus many valuable lives are lost annually. As, during the whole pepper-harvest, they feed exclusively on this stimulant, they become exceedingly irritable. The smallest injury is resented with ungovernable rage. A young man suffering from the *pepper-fever* as it is called, cudgelled another most severely for appropriating a superannuated relative of trifling value, and was only pacified by having a present made him of a pig of that peculiar species of swine called the Peccavi by the Catholic Jews, who, it is well known, abstain from swine's flesh in imitation of the Mahometan Buddhists.

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“The bread-tree grows abundantly. Its branches are well known to Europe and America under the familiar name of macaroni. The smaller twigs are called vermicelli. They have a decided animal flavor, as may be observed in the soups containing them. Macaroni, being tubular, is the favorite habitat of a very dangerous insect, which is rendered peculiarly ferocious by being boiled. The government of the island, therefore, never allows a stick of it to be exported without being accompanied by a piston with which its cavity may at any time be thoroughly swept out. These are commonly lost or stolen before the macaroni arrives among us. It therefore always contains many of these insects, which, however, generally die of old age in the shops, so that accidents from this source are comparatively rare.

“The fruit of the bread-tree consists principally of hot rolls. The buttered-muffin variety is supposed to be a hybrid with the cocoa-nut palm, the cream found on the milk of the cocoa-nut exuding from the hybrid in the shape of butter, just as the ripe fruit is splitting, so as to fit it for the tea-table, where it is commonly served up with cold”—

—There,—I don’t want to read any more of it. You see that many of these statements are highly improbable.—No, I shall not mention the paper.—No, neither of them wrote it, though it reminds me of the style of these popular writers. I think the fellow who wrote it must have been reading some of their stories, and got them mixed up with his history and geography. I don’t suppose *he* lies;—he sells it to the editor, who knows how many squares off “Sumatra” is. The editor, who sells it to the public—By the way, the papers have been very civil haven’t they?—to the—the what d’ye call it? —“Northern Magazine,”—isn’t it?—got up by some of those Come-outers, down East, as an organ for their local peculiarities.

—The Professor has been to see me. Came in, glorious, at about twelve o’clock, last night. Said he had been with “the boys.” On inquiry, found that “the boys,” were certain baldish and grayish old gentlemen that one sees or hears of in various important stations of society. The Professor is one of the same set, but he always talks as if he had been out of college about ten years, whereas. . . [Each of these dots was a little nod, which the company understood, as the reader will, no doubt.] He calls them sometimes “the boys,” and sometimes “the old fellows.” Call him by the latter title, and see how he likes it.—Well, he came in last night glorious, as I was saying. Of course I don’t mean vinously exalted; he drinks little wine on such occasions, and is well known to all the Peters and Patricks as the gentleman who always has indefinite quantities of black tea to kill any extra glass of red claret he may have swallowed. But the Professor says he always gets tipsy on old memories at these gatherings. He was, I forget how many years old when he went to the meeting; just

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turned of twenty now,—he said. He made various youthful proposals to me, including a duet under the landlady's daughter's window. He had just learned a trick, he said, of one of "the boys," of getting a splendid bass out of a door-panel by rubbing it with the palm of his hand. Offered to sing "The sky is bright," accompanying himself on the front-door, if I would go down and help in the chorus. Said there never was such a set of fellows as the old boys of the set he has been with. Judges, mayors, Congress-men, Mr. Speakers, leaders in science, clergymen better than famous, and famous too, poets by the half-dozen, singers with voices like angels, financiers, wits, three of the best laughers in the Commonwealth, engineers, agriculturists,—all forms of talent and knowledge he pretended were represented in that meeting. Then he began to quote Byron about Santa Croce, and maintained that he could "furnish out creation" in all its details from that set of his. He would like to have the whole boodle of them, (I remonstrated against this word, but the Professor said it was a diabolish good word, and he would have no other,) with their wives and children, shipwrecked on a remote island, just to see how splendidly they would reorganize society. They could build a city,—they have done it; make constitutions and laws; establish churches and lyceums; teach and practise the healing art; instruct in every department; found observatories; create commerce and manufactures; write songs and hymns, and sing 'em, and make instruments to accompany the songs with; lastly, publish a journal almost as good as the "Northern Magazine," edited by the Come-outers. There was nothing they were not up to, from a christening to a hanging; the last, to be sure, could never be called for, unless some stranger got in among them.

—I let the Professor talk as long as he liked; it didn't make much difference to me whether it was all truth, or partly made up of pale Sherry and similar elements. All at once he jumped up and said,—

Don't you want to hear what I just read to the boys?

I have had questions of a similar character asked me before, occasionally. A man of iron mould might perhaps say, No! I am not a man of iron mould, and said that I should be delighted.

The Professor then read—with that slightly sing-song cadence which is observed to be common in poets reading their own verses—the following stanzas; holding them at a focal distance of about two feet and a half, with an occasional movement back or forward for better adjustment, the appearance of which has been likened by some impertinent young folks to that of the act of playing on the trombone. His eyesight was never better; I have his word for it.



MARE RUBRUM.

Flash out a stream of blood-red wine!—
For I would drink to other days;
And brighter shall their memory shine,
Seen flaming through its crimson blaze.
The roses die, the summers fade;
But every ghost of boyhood's dream
By Nature's magic power is laid
To sleep beneath this blood-red stream.



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It filled the purple grapes that lay
And drank the splendors of the sun
Where the long summer's cloudless day
Is mirrored in the broad Garonne;
It pictures still the bacchant shapes
That saw their hoarded sunlight shed,—
The maidens dancing on the grapes,—
Their milk-white ankles splashed with red.

Beneath these waves of crimson lie,
In rosy fetters prisoned fast,
Those flitting shapes that never die,
The swift-winged visions of the past.
Kiss but the crystal's mystic rim,
Each shadow rends its flowery chain,
Springs in a bubble from its brim
And walks the chambers of the brain.

Poor Beauty! time and fortune's wrong
No form nor feature may withstand,—
Thy wrecks are scattered all along,
Like emptied sea-shells on the sand;—
Yet, sprinkled with this blushing rain,
The dust restores each blooming girl,
As if the sea-shells moved again
Their glistening lips of pink and pearl.

Here lies the home of school-boy life,
With creaking stair and wind-swept hall,
And, scarred by many a truant knife,
Our old initials on the wall;
Here rest—their keen vibrations mute—
The shout of voices known so well,
The ringing laugh, the wailing flute,
The chiding of the sharp-tongued bell.

Here, clad in burning robes, are laid
Life's blossomed joys, untimely shed;
And here those cherished forms have strayed
We miss awhile, and call them dead.
What wizard fills the maddening glass
What soil the enchanted clusters grew?
That buried passions wake and pass
In beaded drops of fiery dew?



Nay, take the cup of blood-red wine,—
Our hearts can boast a warmer grow,
Filled from a vantage more divine,—
Calmed, but not chilled by winter's snow!
To-night the palest wave we sip
Rich as the priceless draught shall be
That wet the bride of Cana's lip,—
The wedding wine of Galilee!

CHAPTER VI

Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle which fits them all.

—I think, Sir,—said the divinity-student,—you must intend that for one of the sayings of the Seven Wise Men of Boston you were speaking of the other day.

I thank you, my young friend,—was my reply,—but I must say something better than that, before I could pretend to fill out the number.

—The schoolmistress wanted to know how many of these sayings there were on record, and what, and by whom said.

—Why, let us see,—there is that one of Benjamin Franklin, “the great Bostonian,” after whom this lad was named. To be sure, he said a great many wise things,—and I don't feel sure he didn't borrow this,—he speaks as if it were old. But then he applied it so neatly!—

“He that has once done you a kindness will be more ready to do you another than he whom you yourself have obliged.”

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Then there is that glorious Epicurean paradox, uttered by my friend, the Historian, in one of his flashing moments:-

“Give us the luxuries of life, and we will dispense with its necessities.”

To these must certainly be added that other saying of one of the wittiest of men:-

“Good Americans, when they die, go to Paris.”—

The divinity-student looked grave at this, but said nothing.

The schoolmistress spoke out, and said she didn't think the wit meant any irreverence. It was only another way of saying, Paris is a heavenly place after New York or Boston.

A jaunty-looking person, who had come in with the young fellow they call John,—evidently a stranger,—said there was one more wise man's saying that he had heard; it was about our place, but he didn't know who said it.—A civil curiosity was manifested by the company to hear the fourth wise saying. I heard him distinctly whispering to the young fellow who brought him to dinner, *shall I tell it?* To which the answer was, *go ahead!*—Well,—he said,—this was what I heard:-

“Boston State-House is the hub of the solar system. You couldn't pry that out of a Boston man if you had the tire of all creation straightened out for a crowbar.”

Sir,—said I,—I am gratified with your remark. It expresses with pleasing vivacity that which I have sometimes heard uttered with malignant dulness. The satire of the remark is essentially true of Boston,—and of all other considerable—and inconsiderable—places with which I have had the privilege of being acquainted. Cockneys think London is the only place in the world. Frenchmen—you remember the line about Paris, the Court, the World, *etc.*—I recollect well, by the way, a sign in that city which ran thus: “Hotel l'Univers et des Etats Unis”; and as Paris *is* the universe to a Frenchman, of course the United States are outside of it. —“See Naples and then die.”—It is quite as bad with smaller places. I have been about, lecturing, you know, and have found the following propositions to hold true of all of them.

1. The axis of the earth sticks out visibly through the centre of each and every town or city.
2. If more than fifty years have passed since its foundation, it is affectionately styled by the inhabitants the “*Good old* town of” —(whatever its name may happen to be.)
3. Every collection of its inhabitants that comes together to listen to a stranger is invariably declared to be a “remarkably intelligent audience.”
4. The climate of the place is particularly favorable to longevity.

5. It contains several persons of vast talent little known to the world. (One or two of them, you may perhaps chance to remember, sent short pieces to the "Pactolian" some time since, which were "respectfully declined.")

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Boston is just like other places of its size;—only perhaps, considering its excellent fish-market, paid fire-department, superior monthly publications, and correct habit of spelling the English language, it has some right to look down on the mob of cities. I'll tell you, though, if you want to know it, what is the real offence of Boston. It drains a large water-shed of its intellect, and will not itself be drained. If it would only send away its first-rate men, instead of its second-rate ones, (no offence to the well-known exceptions, of which we are always proud,) we should be spared such epigrammatic remarks as that which the gentleman has quoted. There can never be a real metropolis in this country, until the biggest centre can drain the lesser ones of their talent and wealth.—I have observed, by the way, that the people who really live in two great cities are by no means so jealous of each other, as are those of smaller cities situated within the intellectual basin, or suction-range, of one large one, of the pretensions of any other. Don't you see why? Because their promising young author and rising lawyer and large capitalist have been drained off to the neighboring big city,—their prettiest girl has been exported to the same market; all their ambition points there, and all their thin gilding of glory comes from there. I hate little toad-eating cities.

—Would I be so good as to specify any particular example?—Oh,—an example? Did you ever see a bear-trap? Never? Well, shouldn't you like to see me put my foot into one? With sentiments of the highest consideration I must beg leave to be excused.

Besides, some of the smaller cities are charming. If they have an old church or two, a few stately mansions of former grandees, here and there an old dwelling with the second story projecting, (for the convenience of shooting the Indians knocking at the front-door with their tomahawks,)—if they have, scattered about, those mighty square houses built something more than half a century ago, and standing like architectural boulders dropped by the former diluvium of wealth, whose reflux wave has left them as its monument,—if they have gardens with elbowed apple-trees that push their branches over the high board-fence and drop their fruit on the side-walk, —if they have a little grass in the side-streets, enough to betoken quiet without proclaiming decay,—I think I could go to pieces, after my life's work were done, in one of those tranquil places, as sweetly as in any cradle that an old man may be rocked to sleep in. I visit such spots always with infinite delight. My friend, the Poet, says, that rapidly growing towns are most unfavorable to the imaginative and reflective faculties. Let a man live in one of these old quiet places, he says, and the wine of his soul, which is kept thick and turbid by the rattle of busy streets, settles, and, as you hold it up, you may see the sun through it by day and the stars by night.

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—Do I think that the little villages have the conceit of the great towns?—I don't believe there is much difference. You know how they read Pope's line in the smallest town in our State of Massachusetts?—Well, they read it

“All are but parts of one stupendous *Hull!*”

—Every person's feelings have a front-door and a side-door by which they may be entered. The front-door is on the street. Some keep it always open; some keep it latched; some, locked; some, bolted,—with a chain that will let you peep in, but not get in; and some nail it up, so that nothing can pass its threshold. This front-door leads into a passage which opens into an ante-room, and this into the inferior apartments. The side-door opens at once into the sacred chambers.

There is almost always at least one key to this side-door. This is carried for years hidden in a mother's bosom. Fathers, brothers, sisters, and friends, often, but by no means so universally, have duplicates of it. The wedding-ring conveys a right to one; alas, if none is given with it!

If nature or accident has put one of these keys into the hands of a person who has the torturing instinct, I can only solemnly pronounce the words that Justice utters over its doomed victim, —*the lord have mercy on your soul!* You will probably go mad within a reasonable time,—or, if you are a man, run off and die with your head on a curb-stone, in Melbourne or San Francisco,—or, if you are a woman, quarrel and break your heart, or turn into a pale, jointed petrification that moves about as if it were alive, or play some real life-tragedy or other.

Be very careful to whom you trust one of these keys of the side-door. The fact of possessing one renders those even who are dear to you very terrible at times. You can keep the world out from your front-door, or receive visitors only when you are ready for them; but those of your own flesh and blood, or of certain grades of intimacy, can come in at the side-door, if they will, at any hour and in any mood. Some of them have a scale of your whole nervous system, and can play all the gamut of your sensibilities in semitones, —touching the naked nerve-pulps as a pianist strikes the keys of his instrument. I am satisfied that there are as great masters of this nerve-playing as Vieuxtemps or Thalberg in their lines of performance. Married life is the school in which the most accomplished artists in this department are found. A delicate woman is the best instrument; she has such a magnificent compass of sensibilities! From the deep inward moan which follows pressure on the great nerves of right, to the sharp cry as the filaments of taste are struck with a crashing sweep, is a range which no other instrument possesses. A few exercises on it daily at home fit a man wonderfully for his habitual labors, and refresh him immensely as he returns from them. No stranger can get a great many notes of torture out of a human soul; it takes one that knows it well,—parent, child, brother, sister, intimate. Be very careful to whom you give a side-door key; too many have them already.

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—You remember the old story of the tender-hearted man, who placed a frozen viper in his bosom, and was stung by it when it became thawed? If we take a cold-blooded creature into our bosom, better that it should sting us and we should die than that its chill should slowly steal into our hearts; warm it we never can! I have seen faces of women that were fair to look upon, yet one could see that the icicles were forming round these women's hearts. I knew what freezing image lay on the white breasts beneath the laces!

A very simple *intellectual* mechanism answers the necessities of friendship, and even of the most intimate relations of life. If a watch tells us the hour and the minute, we can be content to carry it about with us for a life-time, though it has no second-hand and is not a repeater, nor a musical watch,—though it is not enamelled nor jewelled,—in short, though it has little beyond the wheels required for a trustworthy instrument, added to a good face and a pair of useful hands. The more wheels there are in a watch or a brain, the more trouble they are to take care of. The movements of exaltation which belong to genius are egotistic by their very nature. A calm, clear mind, not subject to the spasms and crises which are so often met with in creative or intensely perceptive natures, is the best basis for love or friendship.—Observe, I am talking about *minds*. I won't say, the more intellect, the less capacity for loving; for that would do wrong to the understanding and reason;—but, on the other hand, that the brain often runs away with the heart's best blood, which gives the world a few pages of wisdom or sentiment or poetry, instead of making one other heart happy, I have no question.

If one's intimate in love or friendship cannot or does not share all one's intellectual tastes or pursuits, that is a small matter. Intellectual companions can be found easily in men and books. After all, if we think of it, most of the world's loves and friendships have been between people that could not read nor spell.

But to radiate the heat of the affections into a clod which absorbs all that is poured into it, but never warms beneath the sunshine of smiles or the pressure of hand or lip,—this is the great martyrdom of sensitive beings,—most of all in that perpetual *auto da fe* where young womanhood is the sacrifice.

—You noticed, perhaps, what I just said about the loves and friendships of illiterate persons,—that is, of the human race, with a few exceptions here and there. I like books,—I was born and bred among them, and have the easy feeling, when I get into their presence, that a stable-boy has among horses. I don't think I undervalue them either as companions or as instructors. But I can't help remembering that the world's great men have not commonly been great scholars, nor its great scholars great men. The Hebrew patriarchs had small libraries, I think, if any; yet they represent to our imaginations a very complete idea of manhood, and, I think, if we could ask in Abraham to dine with us men of letters next Saturday, we should feel honored by his company.

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What I wanted to say about books is this: that there are times in which every active mind feels itself above any and all human books.

—I think a man must have a good opinion of himself, Sir,—said the divinity-student,—who should feel himself above Shakspeare at any time.

My young friend,—I replied,—the man who is never conscious of a state of feeling or of intellectual effort entirely beyond expression by any form of words whatsoever is a mere creature of language. I can hardly believe there are any such men. Why, think for a moment of the power of music. The nerves that make us alive to it spread out (so the Professor tells me) in the most sensitive region of the marrow just where it is widening to run upwards into the hemispheres. It has its seat in the region of sense rather than of thought. Yet it produces a continuous and, as it were, logical sequence of emotional and intellectual changes; but how different from trains of thought proper! how entirely beyond the reach of symbols!—Think of human passions as compared with all phrases! Did you ever hear of a man's growing lean by the reading of "Romeo and Juliet," or blowing his brains out because Desdemona was maligned? There are a good many symbols, even, that are more expressive than words. I remember a young wife who had to part with her husband for a time. She did not write a mournful poem; indeed, she was a silent person, and perhaps hardly said a word about it; but she quietly turned of a deep orange color with jaundice. A great many people in this world have but one form of rhetoric for their profoundest experiences,—namely, to waste away and die. When a man can *read*, his paroxysm of feeling is passing. When he can *read*, his thought has slackened its hold.—You talk about reading Shakspeare, using him as an expression for the highest intellect, and you wonder that any common person should be so presumptuous as to suppose his thought can rise above the text which lies before him. But think a moment. A child's reading of Shakspeare is one thing, and Coleridge's or Schlegel's reading of him is another. The saturation-point of each mind differs from that of every other. But I think it is as true for the small mind which can only take up a little as for the great one which takes up much, that the suggested trains of thought and feeling ought always to rise above—not the author, but the reader's mental version of the author, whoever he may be.

I think most readers of Shakspeare sometimes find themselves thrown into exalted mental conditions like those produced by music. Then they may drop the book, to pass at once into the region of thought without words. We may happen to be very dull folks, you and I, and probably are, unless there is some particular reason to suppose the contrary. But we get glimpses now and then of a sphere of spiritual possibilities, where we, dull as we are now, may sail in vast circles round the largest compass of earthly intelligences.

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—I confess there are times when I feel like the friend I mentioned to you some time ago,
—I hate the very sight of a book. Sometimes it becomes almost a physical necessity to talk out what is in the mind, before putting anything else into it. It is very bad to have thoughts and feelings, which were meant to come out in talk, *strike in*, as they say of some complaints that ought to show outwardly.

I always believed in life rather than in books. I suppose every day of earth, with its hundred thousand deaths and something more of births,—with its loves and hates, its triumphs and defeats, its pangs and blisses, has more of humanity in it than all the books that were ever written, put together. I believe the flowers growing at this moment send up more fragrance to heaven than was ever exhaled from all the essences ever distilled.

—Don't I read up various matters to talk about at this table or elsewhere?—No, that is the last thing I would do. I will tell you my rule. Talk about those subjects you have had long in your mind, and listen to what others say about subjects you have studied but recently. Knowledge and timber shouldn't be much used, till they are seasoned.

—Physiologists and metaphysicians have had their attention turned a good deal of late to the automatic and involuntary actions of the mind. Put an idea into your intelligence and leave it there an hour, a day, a year, without ever having occasion to refer to it. When, at last, you return to it, you do not find it as it was when acquired. It has domiciliated itself, so to speak,—become at home,—entered into relations with your other thoughts, and integrated itself with the whole fabric of the mind.—Or take a simple and familiar example; Dr. Carpenter has adduced it. You forget a name, in conversation,—go on talking, without making any effort to recall it,—and presently the mind evolves it by its own involuntary and unconscious action, while you were pursuing another train of thought, and the name rises of itself to your lips.

There are some curious observations I should like to make about the mental machinery, but I think we are getting rather didactic.

—I should be gratified, if Benjamin Franklin would let me know something of his progress in the French language. I rather liked that exercise he read us the other day, though I must confess I should hardly dare to translate it, for fear some people in a remote city where I once lived might think I was drawing their portraits.

—Yes, Paris is a famous place for societies. I don't know whether the piece I mentioned from the French author was intended simply as Natural History, or whether there was not a little malice in his description. At any rate, when I gave my translation to B. F. to turn back again into French, one reason was that I thought it would sound a little bald in English, and some people might think it was meant to have some local bearing or other,—which the author, of course, didn't mean, inasmuch as he could not be acquainted with anything on this side of the water.

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[The above remarks were addressed to the school-mistress, to whom I handed the paper after looking it over. The divinity-student came and read over her shoulder,—very curious, apparently, but his eyes wandered, I thought. Fancying that her breathing was somewhat hurried and high, or thoracic, as my friend, the Professor, calls it, I watched her a little more closely.—It is none of my business.—After all, it is the imponderables that move the world, —heat, electricity, love. Habet?]

This is the piece that Benjamin Franklin made into boarding-school French, such as you see here; don't expect too much;—the mistakes give a relish to it, I think.

LES SOCIETES POLYPHYSIOPHILOSOPHIQUES.

Ces Societes la sont une Institution pour suppleer aux besoins d'esprit et de coeur de ces individus qui ont survécu a leurs emotions a l'egard du beau sexe, et qui n'ont pas la distraction de l'habitude de boire.

Pour devenir membre d'une de ces Societes, on doit avoir le moins de cheveux possible. S'il y en reste plusieurs qui resistent aux depilatoires naturelles et autres, on doit avoir quelques connaissances, n'importe dans quel genre. Des le moment qu'on ouvre la porte de la Societe, on a un grand interet dans toutes les choses dont on ne sait rien. Ainsi, un microscopiste demontre un nouveau *flexor* du TARSE d'un *melolontha vulgaris*. Douze savans improvises, portans des besicles, et qui ne connaissent rien des insectes, si ce n'est les morsures du *Culex*, se precipitent sur l'instrument, et voient—une grande bulle d'air, dont ils s'emeuvent avec effusion. Ce qui est un spectacle plein d'instruction—pour ceux qui ne sont pas de ladite Societe. Tous les membres regardent les chimistes en particulier avec un air d'intelligence parfaite pendant qu'ils prouvent dans un discours d'une demiheure que $O_6 N_3 H_5 C_6$ etc. font quelque chose qui n'est bonne a rien, mais qui probablement a une odeur tres desagreable, selon l'habitude des produits chimiques. Apres cela vient un mathematicien qui vous bourre avec des $a+b$ et vous rapporte enfin un $x+y$, dont vous n'avez pas besoin et qui ne change nullement vos relations avec la vie. Un naturaliste vous parle des formations speciales des animaux excessivement inconnus, dont vous n'avez jamais soupconne l'existence. Ainsi il vous decrit les FOLLICULES de L'APPENDIX VERMIFORMIS d'un DZIGGUETAI. Vous ne savez pas ce que c'est qu'un FOLLICULE. Vous ne savez pas ce que c'est qu'un *appendix* UERMIFORMIS. Vous n'avez jamais entendu parler du DZIGGUETAI. Ainsi vous gagnez toutes ces connaissances a la fois, qui s'attachent a votre esprit comme l'eau adhère aux plumes d'un canard. On connait toutes les langues *ex officio* en devenant membre d'une de ces Societes. Ainsi quand on entend lire un Essai sur les dialectes Tchutchiens, on comprend tout cela de suite, et s'instruit enormement.

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Il y a deux especes d'individus qu'on trouve toujours a ces Societes: 1 (degree) Le membre a questions; 2 (degree) Le membre a "Bylaws."

La *question* est une specialite. Celui qui en fait metier ne fait jamais des reponses. La question est une maniere tres commode de dire les choses suivantes: "Me voila! Je ne suis pas fossil, moi,—je respire encore! J'ai des idees,—voyez mon intelligence! Vous ne croyiez pas, vous autres, que je savais quelque chose de cela! Ah, nous avons un peu de sagacite, voyez vous! Nous ne sommes nullement la bete qu'on pense!"—*Le FAISEUR de questions Donne peu D'ATTENTION aux reponses qu'on fait; ce n'est pas la dans sa specialite.*

Le membre a "Bylaws" est le bouchon de toutes les emotions mousseuses et genereuses qui se montrent dans la Societe. C'est un empereur manque,—un tyran a la troisieme trituration. C'est un esprit dur, borne, exact, grand dans les petitesesses, petit dans les grandeurs, selon le mot du grand Jefferson. On ne l'aime pas dans la Societe, mais on le respecte et on le craint. Il n'y a qu'un mot pour ce membre audessus de "Bylaws." Ce mot est pour lui ce que l'Om est aux Hundous. C'est sa religion; il n'y a rien audela. Ce mot la c'est la *constitution*!

Lesdites Societes publient des feuillets de tems en tems. On les trouve abandonnes a sa porte, nus comme des enfans nouveaunes, faute de membrane cutanee, ou meme papyracee. Si on aime la botanique, on y trouve une memoire sur les coquilles; si on fait des etudes zoologiques, on square trouve un grand tas de q' [square root of minus one], ce qui doit etre infiniment plus commode que les encyclopedies. Ainsi il est clair comme la metaphysique qu'on doit devenir membre d'une Societe telle que nous decrivons.

Recette pour le Depilatoire Physiophilosophique
Chaux vive lb. ss. Eau bouillante Oj.
Depilez avec. Polissez ensuite.

I told the boy that his translation into French was creditable to him; and some of the company wishing to hear what there was in the piece that made me smile, I turned it into English for them, as well as I could, on the spot.

The landlady's daughter seemed to be much amused by the idea that a depilatory could take the place of literary and scientific accomplishments; she wanted me to print the piece, so that she might send a copy of it to her cousin in Mizzourah; she didn't think he'd have to do anything to the outside of his head to get into any of the societies; he had to wear a wig once, when he played a part in a tabullo.

No,—said I,—I shouldn't think of printing that in English. I'll tell you why. As soon as you get a few thousand people together in a town, there is somebody that every sharp thing you say is sure to hit. What if a thing was written in Paris or in Pekin?—that

makes no difference. Everybody in those cities, or almost everybody, has his counterpart here, and in all large places.—You never studied *averages* as I have had occasion to.

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I'll tell you how I came to know so much about averages. There was one season when I was lecturing, commonly, five evenings in the week, through most of the lecturing period. I soon found, as most speakers do, that it was pleasanter to work one lecture than to keep several in hand.

—Don't you get sick to death of one lecture?—said the landlady's daughter,—who had a new dress on that day, and was in spirits for conversation.

I was going to talk about averages,—I said,—but I have no objection to telling you about lectures, to begin with.

A new lecture always has a certain excitement connected with its delivery. One thinks well of it, as of most things fresh from his mind. After a few deliveries of it, one gets tired and then disgusted with its repetition. Go on delivering it, and the disgust passes off, until, after one has repeated it a hundred or a hundred and fifty times, he rather enjoys the hundred and first or hundred and fifty-first time, before a new audience. But this is on one condition,—that he never lays the lecture down and lets it cool. If he does, there comes on a loathing for it which is intense, so that the sight of the old battered manuscript is as bad as sea-sickness.

A new lecture is just like any other new tool. We use it for a while with pleasure. Then it blisters our hands, and we hate to touch it. By-and-by our hands get callous, and then we have no longer any sensitiveness about it. But if we give it up, the calluses disappear; and if we meddle with it again, we miss the novelty and get the blisters.—The story is often quoted of Whitefield, that he said a sermon was good for nothing until it had been preached forty times. A lecture doesn't begin to be old until it has passed its hundredth delivery; and some, I think, have doubled, if not quadrupled, that number. These old lectures are a man's best, commonly; they improve by age, also,—like the pipes, fiddles, and poems I told you of the other day. One learns to make the most of their strong points and to carry off their weak ones, —to take out the really good things which don't tell on the audience, and put in cheaper things that do. All this degrades him, of course, but it improves the lecture for general delivery. A thoroughly popular lecture ought to have nothing in it which five hundred people cannot all take in a flash, just as it is uttered.

—No, indeed,—I should be very sorry to say anything disrespectful of audiences. I have been kindly treated by a great many, and may occasionally face one hereafter. But I tell you the *average* intellect of five hundred persons, taken as they come, is not very high. It may be sound and safe, so far as it goes, but it is not very rapid or profound. A lecture ought to be something which all can understand, about something which interests everybody. I think, that, if any experienced lecturer gives you a different account from this, it will probably be one of those eloquent or forcible speakers who hold an audience by the charm of their manner, whatever they talk about,—even when they don't talk very well.

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But an *average*, which was what I meant to speak about, is one of the most extraordinary subjects of observation and study. It is awful in its uniformity, in its automatic necessity of action. Two communities of ants or bees are exactly alike in all their actions, so far as we can see. Two lyceum assemblies, of five hundred each, are so nearly alike, that they are absolutely undistinguishable in many cases by any definite mark, and there is nothing but the place and time by which one can tell the “remarkably intelligent audience” of a town in New York or Ohio from one in any New England town of similar size. Of course, if any principle of selection has come in, as in those special associations of young men which are common in cities, it deranges the uniformity of the assemblage. But let there be no such interfering circumstances, and one knows pretty well even the look the audience will have, before he goes in. Front seats: a few old folk,—shiny-headed,—slant up best ear towards the speaker,—drop off asleep after a while, when the air begins to get a little narcotic with carbonic acid. Bright women’s faces, young and middle-aged, a little behind these, but toward the front—(pick out the best, and lecture mainly to that.) Here and there a countenance, sharp and scholarlike, and a dozen pretty female ones sprinkled about. An indefinite number of pairs of young people,—happy, but not always very attentive. Boys, in the background, more or less quiet. Dull faces here, there,—in how many places! I don’t say dull *people*, but faces without a ray of sympathy or a movement of expression. They are what kill the lecturer. These negative faces with their vacuous eyes and stony lineaments pump and suck the warm soul out of him;—that is the chief reason why lecturers grow so pale before the season is over. They render *latent* any amount of vital caloric; they act on our minds as those cold-blooded creatures I was talking about act on our hearts.

Out of all these inevitable elements the audience is generated,—a great compound vertebrate, as much like fifty others you have seen as any two mammals of the same species are like each other. Each audience laughs, and each cries, in just the same places of your lecture; that is, if you make one laugh or cry, you make all. Even those little indescribable movements which a lecturer takes cognizance of, just as a driver notices his horse’s cocking his ears, are sure to come in exactly the same place of your lecture always. I declare to you, that as the monk said about the picture in the convent,—that he sometimes thought the living tenants were the shadows, and the painted figures the realities,—I have sometimes felt as if I were a wandering spirit, and this great unchanging multivertebrate which I faced night after night was one ever-listening animal, which writhed along after me wherever I fled, and coiled at my feet every evening, turning up to me the same sleepless eyes which I thought I had closed with my last drowsy incantation!

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—Oh, yes! A thousand kindly and courteous acts,—a thousand faces that melted individually out of my recollection as the April snow melts, but only to steal away and find the beds of flowers whose roots are memory, but which blossom in poetry and dreams. I am not ungrateful, nor unconscious of all the good feeling and intelligence everywhere to be met with through the vast parish to which the lecturer ministers. But when I set forth, leading a string of my mind's daughters to market, as the country-folk fetch in their strings of horses—Pardon me, that was a coarse fellow who sneered at the sympathy wasted on an unhappy lecturer, as if, because he was decently paid for his services, he had therefore sold his sensibilities.—Family men get dreadfully homesick. In the remote and bleak village the heart returns to the red blaze of the logs in one's fireplace at home.

“There are his young barbarians all at play,”—

if he owns any youthful savages.—No, the world has a million roosts for a man, but only one nest.

—It is a fine thing to be an oracle to which an appeal is always made in all discussions. The men of facts wait their turn in grim silence, with that slight tension about the nostrils which the consciousness of carrying a “settler” in the form of a fact or a revolver gives the individual thus armed. When a person is really full of information, and does not abuse it to crush conversation, his part is to that of the real talkers what the instrumental accompaniment is in a trio or quartette of vocalists.

—What do I mean by the real talkers?—Why, the people with fresh ideas, of course, and plenty of good warm words to dress them in. Facts always yield the place of honor, in conversation, to thoughts about facts; but if a false note is uttered, down comes the finger on the key and the man of facts asserts his true dignity. I have known three of these men of facts, at least, who were always formidable,—and one of them was tyrannical.

—Yes, a man sometimes makes a grand appearance on a particular occasion; but these men knew something about almost everything, and never made mistakes.—He? Veneers in first-rate style. The mahogany scales off now and then in spots, and then you see the cheap light stuff—I found—very fine in conversational information, the other day when we were in company. The talk ran upon mountains. He was wonderfully well acquainted with the leading facts about the Andes, the Apennines, and the Appalachians; he had nothing in particular to say about Ararat, Ben Nevis, and various other mountains that were mentioned. By and by some Revolutionary anecdote came up, and he showed singular familiarity with the lives of the Adamses, and gave many details relating to Major Andre. A point of Natural History being suggested, he gave an excellent account of the air-bladder of fishes. He was very full upon the subject of agriculture, but retired from the conversation when horticulture

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was introduced in the discussion. So he seemed well acquainted with the geology of anthracite, but did not pretend to know anything of other kinds of coal. There was something so odd about the extent and limitations of his knowledge, that I suspected all at once what might be the meaning of it, and waited till I got an opportunity.—Have you seen the “New American Cyclopaedia?” said I.—I have, he replied; I received an early copy.—How far does it go?—He turned red, and answered,—To Araguay.—Oh, said I to myself,—not quite so far as Ararat;—that is the reason he knew nothing about it; but he must have read all the rest straight through, and, if he can remember what is in this volume until he has read all those that are to come, he will know more than I ever thought he would.

Since I had this experience, I hear that somebody else has related a similar story. I didn't borrow it, for all that.—I made a comparison at table some time since, which has often been quoted and received many compliments. It was that of the mind of a bigot to the pupil of the eye; the more light you pour on it, the more it contracts. The simile is a very obvious, and, I suppose I may now say, a happy one; for it has just been shown me that it occurs in a Preface to certain Political Poems of Thomas Moore's published long before my remark was repeated. When a person of fair character for literary honesty uses an image, such as another has employed before him, the presumption is, that he has struck upon it independently, or unconsciously recalled it, supposing it his own.

It is impossible to tell, in a great many cases, whether a comparison which suddenly suggests itself is a new conception or a recollection. I told you the other day that I never wrote a line of verse that seemed to me comparatively good, but it appeared old at once, and often as if it had been borrowed. But I confess I never suspected the above comparison of being old, except from the fact of its obviousness. It is proper, however, that I proceed by a formal instrument to relinquish all claim to any property in an idea given to the world at about the time when I had just joined the class in which Master Thomas Moore was then a somewhat advanced scholar.

I, therefore, in full possession of my native honesty, but knowing the liability of all men to be elected to public office, and for that reason feeling uncertain how soon I may be in danger of losing it, do hereby renounce all claim to being considered the *first* person who gave utterance to a certain simile or comparison referred to in the accompanying documents, and relating to the pupil of the eye on the one part and the mind of the bigot on the other. I hereby relinquish all glory and profit, and especially all claims to letters from autograph collectors, founded upon my supposed property in the above comparison,—knowing well, that, according to the laws of literature, they who speak first hold the fee of the thing said.

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I do also agree that all Editors of Cyclopedias and Biographical Dictionaries, all Publishers of Reviews and Papers, and all Critics writing therein, shall be at liberty to retract or qualify any opinion predicated on the supposition that I was the sole and undisputed author of the above comparison. But, inasmuch as I do affirm that the comparison aforesaid was uttered by me in the firm belief that it was new and wholly my own, and as I have good reason to think that I had never seen or heard it when first expressed by me, and as it is well known that different persons may independently utter the same idea,—as is evinced by that familiar line from Donatus,—

“Pereant illi qui ante nos nostra dixerunt,”—

now, therefore, I do request by this instrument that all well-disposed persons will abstain from asserting or implying that I am open to any accusation whatsoever touching the said comparison, and, if they have so asserted or implied, that they will have the manliness forthwith to retract the same assertion or insinuation.

I think few persons have a greater disgust for plagiarism than myself. If I had even suspected that the idea in question was borrowed, I should have disclaimed originality, or mentioned the coincidence, as I once did in a case where I had happened to hit on an idea of Swift's.—But what shall I do about these verses I was going to read you? I am afraid that half mankind would accuse me of stealing their thoughts, if I printed them. I am convinced that several of you, especially if you are getting a little on in life, will recognize some of these sentiments as having passed through your consciousness at some time. I can't help it,—it is too late now. The verses are written, and you must have them. Listen, then, and you shall hear

WHAT WE ALL THINK.

That age was older once than now,
In spite of locks untimely shed,
Or silvered on the youthful brow;
That babes make love and children wed.

That sunshine had a heavenly glow,
Which faded with those “good old days,”
When winters came with deeper snow,
And autumns with a softer haze.

That—mother, sister, wife, or child—
The “best of women” each has known.



Were schoolboys ever half so wild?
How young the grandpapas have grown,

That *but for this* our souls were free,
And *but for that* our lives were blest;
That in some season yet to be
Our cares will leave us time to rest.

Whene'er we groan with ache or pain,
Some common ailment of the race,—
Though doctors think the matter plain,—
That ours is "a peculiar case."

That when like babes with fingers burned
We count one bitter maxim more,
Our lesson all the world has learned,
And men are wiser than before.

That when we sob o'er fancied woes,
The angels hovering overhead
Count every pitying drop that flows
And love us for the tears we shed.

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That when we stand with tearless eye
And turn the beggar from our door,
They still approve us when we sigh,
“Ah, had I but *one thousand more!*”

That weakness smoothed the path of sin,
In half the slips our youth has known;
And whatsoe’er its blame has been,
That Mercy flowers on faults outgrown.

Though temples crowd the crumbled brink
O’erhanging truth’s eternal flow,
Their tablets bold with *what we think*,
Their echoes dumb to *what we know*;

That one unquestioned text we read,
All doubt beyond, all fear above,
Nor crackling pile nor cursing creed
Can burn or blot it: *God is love!*

CHAPTER VII

[This particular record is noteworthy principally for containing a paper by my friend, the Professor, with a poem or two annexed or intercalated. I would suggest to young persons that they should pass over it for the present, and read, instead of it, that story about the young man who was in love with the young lady, and in great trouble for something like nine pages, but happily married on the tenth page or thereabouts, which, I take it for granted, will be contained in the periodical where this is found, unless it differ from all other publications of the kind. Perhaps, if such young people will lay the number aside, and take it up ten years, or a little more, from the present time, they may find something in it for their advantage. They can’t possibly understand it all now.]

My friend, the Professor, began talking with me one day in a dreary sort of way. I couldn’t get at the difficulty for a good while, but at last it turned out that somebody had been calling him an old man.—He didn’t mind his students calling him *the* old man, he said. That was a technical expression, and he thought that he remembered hearing it applied to himself when he was about twenty-five. It may be considered as a familiar and sometimes endearing appellation. An Irishwoman calls her husband “the old man,” and he returns the caressing expression by speaking of her as “the old woman.” But now, said he, just suppose a case like one of these. A young stranger is overheard talking of you as a very nice old gentleman. A friendly and genial critic speaks of your green old age as illustrating the truth of some axiom you had uttered with reference to that period of life. What I call an old man is a person with a smooth, shining crown and

a fringe of scattered white hairs, seen in the streets on sunshiny days, stooping as he walks, bearing a cane, moving cautiously and slowly; telling old stories, smiling at present follies, living in a narrow world of dry habits; one that remains waking when others have dropped asleep, and keeps a little night-lamp-flame of life burning year after year, if the lamp is not upset, and there is only a careful hand held round it to prevent the puffs of wind from blowing the flame out. That's what I call an old man.

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Now, said the Professor, you don't mean to tell me that I have got to that yet? Why, bless you, I am several years short of the time when—[I knew what was coming, and could hardly keep from laughing; twenty years ago he used to quote it as one of those absurd speeches men of genius will make, and now he is going to argue from it]—several years short of the time when Balzac says that men are —most—you know—dangerous to—the hearts of—in short, most to be dreaded by duennas that have charge of susceptible females.—What age is that? said I, statistically.—Fifty-two years, answered the Professor.—Balzac ought to know, said I, if it is true that Goethe said of him that each of his stories must have been dug out of a woman's heart. But fifty-two is a high figure.

Stand in the light of the window, Professor, said I.—The Professor took up the desired position.—You have white hairs, I said.—Had 'em any time these twenty years, said the Professor. —And the crow's-foot,—pes anserinus, rather.—The Professor smiled, as I wanted him to, and the folds radiated like the ridges of a half-opened fan, from the outer corner of the eyes to the temples. —And the calipers said I.—What are the calipers? he asked, curiously.—Why, the parenthesis, said I.—Parenthesis? said the Professor; what's that?—Why, look in the glass when you are disposed to laugh, and see if your mouth isn't framed in a couple of crescent lines,—so, my boy ().—It's all nonsense, said the Professor; just look at my *biceps*;—and he began pulling off his coat to show me his arm. Be careful, said I; you can't bear exposure to the air, at your time of life, as you could once.—I will box with you, said the Professor, row with you, walk with you, ride with you, swim with you, or sit at table with you, for fifty dollars a side.—Pluck survives stamina, I answered.

The Professor went off a little out of humor. A few weeks afterwards he came in, looking very good-natured, and brought me a paper, which I have here, and from which I shall read you some portions, if you don't object. He had been thinking the matter over, he said,—had read Cicero "De Senectute," and made up his mind to meet old age half way. These were some of his reflections that he had written down; so here you have.

THE PROFESSOR'S PAPER.

There is no doubt when old age begins. The human body is a furnace which keeps in blast three-score years and ten, more or less. It burns about three hundred pounds of carbon a year, (besides other fuel,) when in fair working order, according to a great chemist's estimate. When the fire slackens, life declines; when it goes out, we are dead.

It has been shown by some noted French experimenters, that the amount of combustion increases up to about the thirtieth year, remains stationary to about forty-five, and then diminishes. This last is the point where old age starts from. The great fact of physical life is the perpetual commerce with the elements, and the fire is the measure of it.

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About this time of life, if food is plenty where you live,—for that, you know, regulates matrimony,—you may be expecting to find yourself a grandfather some fine morning; a kind of domestic felicity that gives one a cool shiver of delight to think of, as among the not remotely possible events.

I don't mind much those slipshod lines Dr. Johnson wrote to Thrale, telling her about life's declining from *thirty-five*; the furnace is in full blast for ten years longer, as I have said. The Romans came very near the mark; their age of enlistment reached from seventeen to forty-six years.

What is the use of fighting against the seasons, or the tides, or the movements of the planetary bodies, or this ebb in the wave of life that flows through us? We are old fellows from the moment the fire begins to go out. Let us always behave like gentlemen when we are introduced to new acquaintance.

Incipit Allegoria Senectutis.

Old Age, this is Mr. Professor; Mr. Professor, this is Old Age.

Old Age.—Mr. Professor, I hope to see you well. I have known you for some time, though I think you did not know me. Shall we walk down the street together?

Professor (drawing back a little).—We can talk more quietly, perhaps, in my study. Will you tell me how it is you seem to be acquainted with everybody you are introduced to, though he evidently considers you an entire stranger?

Old Age.—I make it a rule never to force myself upon a person's recognition until I have known him at least *five years*.

Professor.—Do you mean to say that you have known me so long as that?

Old Age. I do. I left my card on you longer ago than that, but I am afraid you never read it; yet I see you have it with you.

Professor.—Where?

Old Age.—There, between your eyebrows,—three straight lines running up and down; all the probate courts know that token,—“Old Age, his mark.” Put your forefinger on the inner end of one eyebrow, and your middle finger on the inner end of the other eyebrow; now separate the fingers, and you will smooth out my sign-manual; that's the way you used to look before I left my card on you.

Professor.—What message do people generally send back when you first call on them?

Old Age.—Not at home. Then I leave a card and go. Next year I call; get the same answer; leave another card. So for five or six,—sometimes ten years or more. At last, if they don't let me in, I break in through the front door or the windows.

We talked together in this way some time. Then Old Age said again,—Come, let us walk down the street together,—and offered me a cane, an eyeglass, a tippet, and a pair of over-shoes.—No, much obliged to you, said I. I don't want those things, and I had a little rather talk with you here, privately, in my study. So I dressed myself up in a jaunty way and walked out alone;—got a fall, caught a cold, was laid up with a lumbago, and had time to think over this whole matter.

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Explicit Allegoria Senectutis.

We have settled when old age begins. Like all Nature's processes, it is gentle and gradual in its approaches, strewed with illusions, and all its little griefs soothed by natural sedatives. But the iron hand is not less irresistible because it wears the velvet glove. The button-wood throws off its bark in large flakes, which one may find lying at its foot, pushed out, and at last pushed off, by that tranquil movement from beneath, which is too slow to be seen, but too powerful to be arrested. One finds them always, but one rarely sees them fall. So it is our youth drops from us, —scales off, sapless and lifeless, and lays bare the tender and immature fresh growth of old age. Looked at collectively, the changes of old age appear as a series of personal insults and indignities, terminating at last in death, which Sir Thomas Browne has called "the very disgrace and ignominy of our nature."

My lady's cheek can boast no more
The cranberry white and pink it wore;
And where her shining locks divide,
The parting line is all too wide—

No, no,—this will never do. Talk about men, if you will, but spare the poor women.

We have a brief description of seven stages of life by a remarkably good observer. It is very presumptuous to attempt to add to it, yet I have been struck with the fact that life admits of a natural analysis into no less than fifteen distinct periods. Taking the five primary divisions, infancy, childhood, youth, manhood, old age, each of these has its own three periods of immaturity, complete development, and decline. I recognize on *old* baby at once,—with its "pipe and mug," (a stick of candy and a porringer,)—so does everybody; and an old child shedding its milk-teeth is only a little prototype of the old man shedding his permanent ones. Fifty or thereabouts is only the childhood, as it were, of old age; the graybeard youngster must be weaned from his late suppers now. So you will see that you have to make fifteen stages at any rate, and that it would not be hard to make twenty-five; five primary, each with five secondary divisions.

The infancy and childhood of commencing old age have the same ingenuous simplicity and delightful unconsciousness about them as the first stage of the earlier periods of life shows. The great delusion of mankind is in supposing that to be individual and exceptional which is universal and according to law. A person is always startled when he hears himself seriously called an old man for the first time.

Nature gets us out of youth into manhood, as sailors are hurried on board of vessels,—in a state of intoxication. We are hustled into maturity reeling with our passions and imaginations, and we have drifted far away from port before we awake out of our illusions. But to carry us out of maturity into old age, without our knowing where we are going, she drugs us with strong opiates, and so we stagger along with wide open eyes

that see nothing until snow enough has fallen on our heads to rouse our comatose brains out of their stupid trances.

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There is one mark of age that strikes me more than any of the physical ones;—I mean the formation of Habits. An old man who shrinks into himself falls into ways that become as positive and as much beyond the reach of outside influences as if they were governed by clock-work. The *animal* functions, as the physiologists call them, in distinction from the *organic*, tend, in the process of deterioration to which age and neglect united gradually lead them, to assume the periodical or rhythmical type of movement. Every man's *heart* (this organ belongs, you know, to the organic system) has a regular mode of action; but I know a great many men whose *brains*, and all their voluntary existence flowing from their brains, have a systole and diastole as regular as that of the heart itself. Habit is the approximation of the animal system to the organic. It is a confession of failure in the highest function of being, which involves a perpetual self-determination, in full view of all existing circumstances. But habit, you see, is an action in present circumstances from past motives. It is substituting a *vis a tergo* for the evolution of living force.

When a man, instead of burning up three hundred pounds of carbon a year, has got down to two hundred and fifty, it is plain enough he must economize force somewhere. Now habit is a labor-saving invention which enables a man to get along with less fuel, —that is all; for fuel is force, you know, just as much in the page I am writing for you as in the locomotive or the legs that carry it to you. Carbon is the same thing, whether you call it wood, or coal, or bread and cheese. A reverend gentleman demurred to this statement,—as if, because combustion is asserted to be the *sine qua non* of thought, therefore thought is alleged to be a purely chemical process. Facts of chemistry are one thing, I told him, and facts of consciousness another. It can be proved to him, by a very simple analysis of some of his spare elements, that every Sunday, when he does his duty faithfully, he uses up more phosphorus out of his brain and nerves than on ordinary days. But then he had his choice whether to do his duty, or to neglect it, and save his phosphorus and other combustibles.

It follows from all this that *the formation of habits* ought naturally to be, as it is, the special characteristic of age. As for the muscular powers, they pass their maximum long before the time when the true decline of life begins, if we may judge by the experience of the ring. A man is “stale,” I think, in their language, soon after thirty,—often, no doubt, much earlier, as gentlemen of the pugilistic profession are exceedingly apt to keep their vital fire burning *with the blower up*.

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—So far without Tully. But in the mean time I have been reading the treatise, “De Senectute.” It is not long, but a leisurely performance. The old gentleman was sixty-three years of age when he addressed it to his friend T. Pomponius Atticus, Eq., a person of distinction, some two or three years older. We read it when we are schoolboys, forget all about it for thirty years, and then take it up again by a natural instinct,—provided always that we read Latin as we drink water, without stopping to taste it, as all of us who ever learned it at school or college ought to do.

Cato is the chief speaker in the dialogue. A good deal of it is what would be called in vulgar phrase “slow.” It unpacks and unfolds incidental illustrations which a modern writer would look at the back of, and toss each to its pigeon-hole. I think ancient classics and ancient people are alike in the tendency to this kind of expansion.

An old doctor came to me once (this is literal fact) with some contrivance or other for people with broken kneepans. As the patient would be confined for a good while, he might find it dull work to sit with his hands in his lap. Reading, the ingenious inventor suggested, would be an agreeable mode of passing the time. He mentioned, in his written account of his contrivance, various works that might amuse the weary hour. I remember only three,—Don Quixote, Tom Jones, and *Watts on the mind*.

It is not generally understood that Cicero’s essay was delivered as a lyceum lecture, (concio popularis,) at the Temple of Mercury. The journals (papyri) of the day (“Tempora Quotidiana,”—“Tribuinus Quirinalis,”—“Praeco Romanus,” and the rest) gave abstracts of it, one of which I have translated and modernized, as being a substitute for the analysis I intended to make.

IV. Kal. Mart.

The lecture at the Temple of Mercury, last evening, was well attended by the elite of our great city. Two hundred thousand sestertia were thought to have been represented in the house. The doors were besieged by a mob of shabby fellows, (illotum vulgus,) who were at length quieted after two or three had been somewhat roughly handled (gladio jugulati). The speaker was the well-known Mark Tully, Eq.,—the subject Old Age. Mr. T. has a lean and scraggy person, with a very unpleasant excrescence upon his nasal feature, from which his nickname of *chick-pea* (Cicero) is said by some to be derived. As a lecturer is public property, we may remark, that his outer garment (toga) was of cheap stuff and somewhat worn, and that his general style and appearance of dress and manner (habitus, vestitusque) were somewhat provincial.

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The lecture consisted of an imaginary dialogue between Cato and Laelius. We found the first portion rather heavy, and retired a few moments for refreshment (*pocula quaedam vini*).—All want to reach old age, says Cato, and grumble when they get it; therefore they are donkeys.—The lecturer will allow us to say that he is the donkey; we know we shall grumble at old age, but we want to live through youth and manhood, *in spite* of the troubles we shall groan over.—There was considerable prosing as to what old age can do and can't.—True, but not new. Certainly, old folks can't jump,—break the necks of their thigh-bones, (*femorum cervices*,) if they do; can't crack nuts with their teeth; can't climb a greased pole (*malum inunctum scandere non possunt*); but they can tell old stories and give you good advice; if they know what you have made up your mind to do when you ask them.—All this is well enough, but won't set the Tiber on fire (*Tiberim accendere nequaquam potest*.)

There were some clever things enough, (*dicta hand inepta*,) a few of which are worth reporting.—Old people are accused of being forgetful; but they never forget where they have put their money. —Nobody is so old he doesn't think he can live a year.—The lecturer quoted an ancient maxim,—Grow old early, if you would be old long,—but disputed it.—Authority, he thought, was the chief privilege of age.—It is not great to have money, but fine to govern those that have it.—Old age begins at *forty-six* years, according to the common opinion.—It is not every kind of old age or of wine that grows sour with time.—Some excellent remarks were made on immortality, but mainly borrowed from and credited to Plato.—Several pleasing anecdotes were told.—Old Milo, champion of the heavy weights in his day, looked at his arms and whimpered, “They are dead.” Not so dead as you, you old fool,—says Cato; —you never were good for anything but for your shoulders and flanks.—Pisistratus asked Solon what made him dare to be so obstinate. Old age, said Solon.

The lecture was on the whole acceptable, and a credit to our culture and civilization.—The reporter goes on to state that there will be no lecture next week, on account of the expected combat between the bear and the barbarian. Betting (*sponsio*) two to one (*duo ad unum*) on the bear.

—After all, the most encouraging things I find in the treatise, “*De Senectute*,” are the stories of men who have found new occupations when growing old, or kept up their common pursuits in the extreme period of life. Cato learned Greek when he was old, and speaks of wishing to learn the fiddle, or some such instrument, (*fidibus*,) after the example of Socrates. Solon learned something new, every day, in his old age, as he gloried to proclaim. Cyrus pointed out with pride and pleasure the trees he had planted with his own hand. [I remember a pillar on the Duke of Northumberland's estate at Alnwick,

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with an inscription in similar words, if not the same. That, like other country pleasures, never wears out. None is too rich, none too poor, none too young, none too old to enjoy it.] There is a New England story I have heard more to the point, however, than any of Cicero's. A young farmer was urged to set out some apple-trees.—No, said he, they are too long growing, and I don't want to plant for other people. The young farmer's father was spoken to about it, but he, with better reason, alleged that apple-trees were slow and life was fleeting. At last some one mentioned it to the old grandfather of the young farmer. He had nothing else to do,—so he stuck in some trees. He lived long enough to drink barrels of cider made from the apples that grew on those trees.

As for myself, after visiting a friend lately,—[Do remember all the time that this is the Professor's paper.]—I satisfied myself that I had better concede the fact that—my contemporaries are not so young as they have been,—and that,—awkward as it is,—science and history agree in telling me that I can claim the immunities and must own the humiliations of the early stage of senility. Ah! but we have all gone down the hill together. The dandies of my time have split their waistbands and taken to high-low shoes. The beauties of my recollections—where are they? They have run the gantlet of the years as well as I. First the years pelted them with red roses till their cheeks were all on fire. By and by they began throwing white roses, and that morning flush passed away. At last one of the years threw a snow-ball, and after that no year let the poor girls pass without throwing snow-balls. And then came rougher missiles,—ice and stones; and from time to time an arrow whistled, and down went one of the poor girls. So there are but few left; and we don't call those few *girls*, but—

Ah, me! Here am I groaning just as the old Greek sighed Ai, ai! and the old Roman, Eheu! I have no doubt we should die of shame and grief at the indignities offered us by age, if it were not that we see so many others as badly or worse off than ourselves. We always compare ourselves with our contemporaries.

[I was interrupted in my reading just here. Before I began at the next breakfast, I read them these verses;—I hope you will like them, and get a useful lesson from them.]

THE LAST BLOSSOM.

Though young no more, we still would dream
Of beauty's dear deluding wiles;
The leagues of life to graybeards seem
Shorter than boyhood's lingering miles.

Who knows a woman's wild caprice?
It played with Goethe's silvered hair,

And many a Holy Father's "niece"
Has softly smoothed the papal chair.

When sixty bids us sigh in vain
To melt the heart of sweet sixteen,
We think upon those ladies twain
Who loved so well the tough old Dean.



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We see the Patriarch's wintry face,
The maid of Egypt's dusky glow,
And dream that Youth and Age embrace,
As April violets fill with snow.

Tranced in her Lord's Olympian smile
His lotus-loving Memphian lies,—
The musky daughter of the Nile
With plaited hair and almond eyes.

Might we but share one wild caress
Ere life's autumnal blossoms fall,
And Earth's brown, clinging lips impress
The long cold kiss that waits us all!

My bosom heaves, remembering yet
The morning of that blissful day
When Rose, the flower of spring, I met,
And gave my raptured soul away.

Flung from her eyes of purest blue,
A lasso, with its leaping chain
Light as a loop of larkspurs, flew
O'er sense and spirit, heart and brain.

Thou com'st to cheer my waning age,
Sweet vision, waited for so long!
Dove that would seek the poet's cage
Lured by the magic breath of song!

She blushes! Ah, reluctant maid,
Love's drapeau rouge the truth has told!
O'er girlhood's yielding barricade
Floats the great Leveller's crimson fold!

Come to my arms!—love heeds not years
No frost the bud of passion knows.—
Ha! what is this my frenzy hears?
A voice behind me uttered,—Rose!

Sweet was her smile,—but not for me;
Alas, when woman looks *too* kind,
Just turn your foolish head and see,—
Some youth is walking close behind!



As to *giving up* because the almanac or the Family-Bible says that it is about time to do it, I have no intention of doing any such thing. I grant you that I burn less carbon than some years ago. I see people of my standing really good for nothing, decrepit, effete, la levre inferieure deja pendante, with what little life they have left mainly concentrated in their epigastrium. But as the disease of old age is epidemic, endemic, and sporadic, and everybody that lives long enough is sure to catch it, I am going to say, for the encouragement of such as need it, how I treat the malady in my own case.

First. As I feel, that, when I have anything to do, there is less time for it than when I was younger, I find that I give my attention more thoroughly, and use my time more economically than ever before; so that I can learn anything twice as easily as in my earlier days. I am not, therefore, afraid to attack a new study. I took up a difficult language a very few years ago with good success, and think of mathematics and metaphysics by-and-by.

Secondly. I have opened my eyes to a good many neglected privileges and pleasures within my reach, and requiring only a little courage to enjoy them. You may well suppose it pleased me to find that old Cato was thinking of learning to play the fiddle, when I had deliberately taken it up in my old age, and satisfied myself that I could get much comfort, if not much music, out of it.

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Thirdly. I have found that some of those active exercises, which are commonly thought to belong to young folks only, may be enjoyed at a much later period.

A young friend has lately written an admirable article in one of the journals, entitled, "Saints and their Bodies." Approving of his general doctrines, and grateful for his records of personal experience, I cannot refuse to add my own experimental confirmation of his eulogy of one particular form of active exercise and amusement, namely, *boating*. For the past nine years, I have rowed about, during a good part of the summer, on fresh or salt water. My present fleet on the river Charles consists of three row-boats. 1. A small flat-bottomed skiff of the shape of a flat-iron, kept mainly to lend to boys. 2. A fancy "dory" for two pairs of sculls, in which I sometimes go out with my young folks. 3. My own particular water-sulky, a "skeleton" or "shell" race-boat, twenty-two feet long, with huge outriggers, which boat I pull with ten-foot sculls,—alone, of course, as it holds but one, and tips him out, if he doesn't mind what he is about. In this I glide around the Back Bay, down the stream, up the Charles to Cambridge and Watertown, up the Mystic, round the wharves, in the wake of steamboats which leave a swell after them delightful to rock upon; I linger under the bridges,—those "caterpillar bridges," as my brother professor so happily called them; rub against the black sides of old wood-schooners; cool down under the overhanging stern of some tall Indiaman; stretch across to the Navy-Yard, where the sentinel warns me off from the Ohio,—just as if I should hurt her by lying in her shadow; then strike out into the harbor, where the water gets clear and the air smells of the ocean,—till all at once I remember, that, if a west wind blows up of a sudden, I shall drift along past the islands, out of sight of the dear old State-house,—plate, tumbler, knife and fork all waiting at home, but no chair drawn up at the table,—all the dear people waiting, waiting, waiting, while the boat is sliding, sliding, sliding into the great desert, where there is no tree and no fountain. As I don't want my wreck to be washed up on one of the beaches in company with devil's-aprons, bladder-weeds, dead horse-shoes, and bleached crab-shells, I turn about and flap my long narrow wings for home. When the tide is running out swiftly, I have a splendid fight to get through the bridges, but always make it a rule to beat,—though I have been jammed up into pretty tight places at times, and was caught once between a vessel swinging round and the pier, until our bones (the boat's, that is) cracked as if we had been in the jaws of Behemoth. Then back to my moorings at the foot of the Common, off with the rowing-dress, dash under the green translucent wave, return to the garb of civilization, walk through my Garden, take a look at my elms on the Common, and, reaching my habitat, in consideration of my advanced period of life, indulge in the Elysian abandonment of a huge recumbent chair.

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When I have established a pair of well-pronounced feathering-calluses on my thumbs, when I am in training so that I can do my fifteen miles at a stretch without coming to grief in any way, when I can perform my mile in eight minutes or a little less, then I feel as if I had old Time's head in chancery, and could give it to him at my leisure.

I do not deny the attraction of walking. I have bored this ancient city through and through in my daily travels, until I know it as an old inhabitant of a Cheshire knows his cheese. Why, it was I who, in the course of these rambles, discovered that remarkable avenue called Myrtle Street, stretching in one long line from east of the Reservoir to a precipitous and rudely paved cliff which looks down on the grim abode of Science, and beyond it to the far hills; a promenade so delicious in its repose, so cheerfully varied with glimpses down the northern slope into busy Cambridge Street with its iron river of the horse-railroad, and wheeled barges gliding back and forward over it,—so delightfully closing at its western extremity in sunny courts and passages where I know peace, and beauty, and virtue, and serene old age must be perpetual tenants, —so alluring to all who desire to take their daily stroll, in the words of Dr. Watts,—

“Alike unknowing and unknown,”—

that nothing but a sense of duty would have prompted me to reveal the secret of its existence. I concede, therefore, that walking is an immeasurably fine invention, of which old age ought constantly to avail itself.

Saddle-leather is in some respects even preferable to sole-leather. The principal objection to it is of a financial character. But you may be sure that Bacon and Sydenham did not recommend it for nothing. One's hepar, or, in vulgar language, liver, —a ponderous organ, weighing some three or four pounds,—goes up and down like the dasher of a churn in the midst of the other vital arrangements, at every step of a trotting horse. The brains also are shaken up like coppers in a money-box. Riding is good, for those that are born with a silver-mounted bridle in their hand, and can ride as much and as often as they like, without thinking all the time they hear that steady grinding sound as the horse's jaws triturate with calm lateral movement the bank-bills and promises to pay upon which it is notorious that the profligate animal in question feeds day and night.

Instead, however, of considering these kinds of exercise in this empirical way, I will devote a brief space to an examination of them in a more scientific form.

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The pleasure of exercise is due first to a purely physical impression, and secondly to a sense of power in action. The first source of pleasure varies of course with our condition and the state of the surrounding circumstances; the second with the amount and kind of power, and the extent and kind of action. In all forms of active exercise there are three powers simultaneously in action,—the will, the muscles, and the intellect. Each of these predominates in different kinds of exercise. In walking, the will and muscles are so accustomed to work together and perform their task with so little expenditure of force, that the intellect is left comparatively free. The mental pleasure in walking, as such, is in the sense of power over all our moving machinery. But in riding, I have the additional pleasure of governing another will, and my muscles extend to the tips of the animal's ears and to his four hoofs, instead of stopping at my hands and feet. Now in this extension of my volition and my physical frame into another animal, my tyrannical instincts and my desire for heroic strength are at once gratified. When the horse ceases to have a will of his own and his muscles require no special attention on your part, then you may live on horseback as Wesley did, and write sermons or take naps, as you like. But you will observe, that, in riding on horseback, you always have a feeling, that, after all, it is not you that do the work, but the animal, and this prevents the satisfaction from being complete.

Now let us look at the conditions of rowing. I won't suppose you to be disgracing yourself in one of those miserable tubs, tugging in which is to rowing the true boat what riding a cow is to bestriding an Arab. You know the Esquimaux kayak, (if that is the name of it,) don't you? Look at that model of one over my door. Sharp, rather?—On the contrary, it is a lubber to the one you and I must have; a Dutch fish-wife to Psyche, contrasted with what I will tell you about.—Our boat, then, is something of the shape of a pickerel, as you look down upon his back, he lying in the sunshine just where the sharp edge of the water cuts in among the lily-pads. It is a kind of a giant pod, as one may say,—tight everywhere, except in a little place in the middle, where you sit. Its length is from seven to ten yards, and as it is only from sixteen to thirty inches wide in its widest part, you understand why you want those “outriggers,” or projecting iron frames with the rowlocks in which the oars play. My rowlocks are five feet apart; double the greatest width of the boat.

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Here you are, then, afloat with a body a rod and a half long, with arms, or wings, as you may choose to call them, stretching more than twenty feet from tip to tip; every volition of yours extending as perfectly into them as if your spinal cord ran down the centre strip of your boat, and the nerves of your arms tingled as far as the broad blades of your oars,—oars of spruce, balanced, leathered, and ringed under your own special direction. This, in sober earnest, is the nearest approach to flying that man has ever made or perhaps ever will make. As the hawk sails without flapping his pinions, so you drift with the tide when you will, in the most luxurious form of locomotion indulged to an embodied spirit. But if your blood wants rousing, turn round that stake in the river, which you see a mile from here; and when you come in in sixteen minutes, (if you do, for we are old boys, and not champion scullers, you remember,) then say if you begin to feel a little warmed up or not! You can row easily and gently all day, and you can row yourself blind and black in the face in ten minutes, just as you like. It has been long agreed that there is no way in which a man can accomplish so much labor with his muscles as in rowing. It is in the boat, then, that man finds the largest extension of his volitional and muscular existence; and yet he may tax both of them so slightly, in that most delicious of exercises, that he shall mentally write his sermon, or his poem, or recall the remarks he has made in company and put them in form for the public, as well as in his easy-chair.

I dare not publicly name the rare joys, the infinite delights, that intoxicate me on some sweet June morning, when the river and bay are smooth as a sheet of beryl-green silk, and I run along ripping it up with my knife-edged shell of a boat, the rent closing after me like those wounds of angels which Milton tells of, but the seam still shining for many a long rood behind me. To lie still over the Flats, where the waters are shallow, and see the crabs crawling and the sculpins gliding busily and silently beneath the boat,—to rustle in through the long harsh grass that leads up some tranquil creek,—to take shelter from the sunbeams under one of the thousand-footed bridges, and look down its interminable colonnades, crusted with green and oozy growths, studded with minute barnacles, and belted with rings of dark muscles, while overhead streams and thunders that other river whose every wave is a human soul flowing to eternity as the river below flows to the ocean,—lying there moored unseen, in loneliness so profound that the columns of Tadmor in the Desert could not seem more remote from life,—the cool breeze on one's forehead, the stream whispering against the half-sunken pillars,—why should I tell of these things, that I should live to see my beloved haunts invaded and the waves blackened with boats as with a swarm of water-beetles? What a city of idiots we must be not to have covered this glorious bay with gondolas and wherries, as we have just learned to cover the ice in winter with skaters!

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I am satisfied that such a set of black-coated, stiff-jointed, soft-muscled, paste-complexioned youth as we can boast in our Atlantic cities never before sprang from loins of Anglo-Saxon lineage. Of the females that are the mates of these males I do not here speak. I preached my sermon from the lay-pulpit on this matter a good while ago. Of course, if you heard it, you know my belief is that the total climatic influences here are getting up a number of new patterns of humanity, some of which are not an improvement on the old model. Clipper-built, sharp in the bows, long in the spars, slender to look at, and fast to go, the ship, which is the great organ of our national life of relation, is but a reproduction of the typical form which the elements impress upon its builder. All this we cannot help; but we can make the best of these influences, such as they are. We have a few good boatmen, —no good horsemen that I hear of,—I cannot speak for cricketing, —but as for any great athletic feat performed by a gentleman in these latitudes, society would drop a man who should run round the Common in five minutes. Some of our amateur fencers, single-stick players, and boxers, we have no reason to be ashamed of. Boxing is rough play, but not too rough for a hearty young fellow. Anything is better than this white-blooded degeneration to which we all tend.

I dropped into a gentlemen's sparring exhibition only last evening. It did my heart good to see that there were a few young and youngish youths left who could take care of their own heads in case of emergency. It is a fine sight, that of a gentleman resolving himself into the primitive constituents of his humanity. Here is a delicate young man now, with an intellectual countenance, a slight figure, a sub-pallid complexion, a most unassuming deportment, a mild adolescent in fact, that any Hiram or Jonathan from between the ploughtails would of course expect to handle with perfect ease. Oh, he is taking off his gold-bowed spectacles! Ah, he is divesting himself of his cravat! Why, he is stripping off his coat! Well, here he is, sure enough, in a tight silk shirt, and with two things that look like batter puddings in the place of his fists. Now see that other fellow with another pair of batter puddings,—the big one with the broad shoulders; he will certainly knock the little man's head off, if he strikes him. Feinting, dodging, stopping, hitting, countering,—little man's head not off yet. You might as well try to jump upon your own shadow as to hit the little man's intellectual features. He needn't have taken off the gold-bowed spectacles at all. Quick, cautious, shifty, nimble, cool, he catches all the fierce lunges or gets out of their reach, till his turn comes, and then, whack goes one of the batter puddings against the big one's ribs, and bang goes the other into the big one's face, and, staggering, shuffling, slipping, tripping, collapsing, sprawling, down goes the big one in a miscellaneous

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bundle.—If my young friend, whose excellent article I have referred to, could only introduce the manly art of self-defence among the clergy, I am satisfied that we should have better sermons and an infinitely less quarrelsome church-militant. A bout with the gloves would let off the ill-nature, and cure the indigestion, which, united, have embroiled their subject in a bitter controversy. We should then often hear that a point of difference between an infallible and a heretic, instead of being vehemently discussed in a series of newspaper articles, had been settled by a friendly contest in several rounds, at the close of which the parties shook hands and appeared cordially reconciled.

But boxing you and I are too old for, I am afraid. I was for a moment tempted, by the contagion of muscular electricity last evening, to try the gloves with the Benicia Boy, who looked in as a friend to the noble art; but remembering that he had twice my weight and half my age, besides the advantage of his training, I sat still and said nothing.

There is one other delicate point I wish to speak of with reference to old age. I refer to the use of dioptric media which correct the diminished refracting power of the humors of the eye,—in other words, spectacles. I don't use them. All I ask is a large, fair type, a strong daylight or gas-light, and one yard of focal distance, and my eyes are as good as ever. But if *your* eyes fail, I can tell you something encouraging. There is now living in New York State an old gentleman who, perceiving his sight to fail, immediately took to exercising it on the finest print, and in this way fairly bullied Nature out of her foolish habit of taking liberties at five-and-forty, or thereabout. And now this old gentleman performs the most extraordinary feats with his pen, showing that his eyes must be a pair of microscopes. I should be afraid to say to you how much he writes in the compass of a half-dime,—whether the Psalms or the Gospels, or the Psalms *and* the Gospels, I won't be positive.

But now let rue tell you this. If the time comes when you must lay down the fiddle and the bow, because your fingers are too stiff, and drop the ten-foot sculls, because your arms are too weak, and, after dallying awhile with eye-glasses, come at last to the undisguised reality of spectacles,—if the time comes when that fire of life we spoke of has burned so low that where its flames reverberated there is only the sombre stain of regret, and where its coals glowed, only the white ashes that cover the embers of memory,—don't let your heart grow cold, and you may carry cheerfulness and love with you into the teens of your second century, if you can last so long. As our friend, the Poet, once said, in some of those old-fashioned heroics of his which he keeps for his private reading,—



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Call him not old, whose visionary brain
Holds o'er the past its undivided reign.
For him in vain the envious seasons roll
Who bears eternal summer in his soul.
If yet the minstrel's song, the poet's lay,
Spring with her birds, or children with their play,
Or maiden's smile, or heavenly dream of art
Stir the few life-drops creeping round his heart,—
Turn to the record where his years are told,—
Count his gray hairs,—they cannot make him old!

End of the Professor's paper.

[The above essay was not read at one time, but in several instalments, and accompanied by various comments from different persons at the table. The company were in the main attentive, with the exception of a little somnolence on the part of the old gentleman opposite at times, and a few sly, malicious questions about the "old boys" on the part of that forward young fellow who has figured occasionally, not always to his advantage, in these reports.

On Sunday mornings, in obedience to a feeling I am not ashamed of, I have always tried to give a more appropriate character to our conversation. I have never read them my sermon yet, and I don't know that I shall, as some of them might take my convictions as a personal indignity to themselves. But having read our company so much of the Professor's talk about age and other subjects connected with physical life, I took the next Sunday morning to repeat to them the following poem of his, which I have had by me some time. He calls it—I suppose, for his professional friends—the *anatomist's hymn*, but I shall name it—]

THE LIVING TEMPLE.

Not in the world of light alone,
Where God has built his blazing throne,
Nor yet alone in earth below,
With belted seas that come and go,
And endless isles of sunlit green,
Is all thy Maker's glory seen:
Look in upon thy wondrous frame,—
Eternal wisdom still the same!

The smooth, soft air with pulse-like waves
Flows murmuring through its hidden caves
Whose streams of brightening purple rush



Fired with a new and livelier blush,
While all their burden of decay
The ebbing current steals away,
And red with Nature's flame they start
From the warm fountains of the heart.

No rest that throbbing slave may ask,
Forever quivering o'er his task,
While far and wide a crimson jet
Leaps forth to fill the woven net
Which in unnumbered crossing tides
The flood of burning life divides,
Then kindling each decaying part
Creeps back to find the throbbing heart.

But warmed with that unchanging flame
Behold the outward moving frame,
Its living marbles jointed strong
With glistening band and silvery thong,
And linked to reason's guiding reins
By myriad rings in trembling chains,
Each graven with the threaded zone
Which claims it as the master's own.

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See how yon beam of seeming white
Is braided out of seven-hued light,
Yet in those lucid globes no ray
By any chance shall break astray.
Hark how the rolling surge of sound,
Arches and spirals circling round,
Wakes the hushed spirit through thine ear
With music it is heaven to hear.

Then mark the cloven sphere that holds
All thought in its mysterious folds,
That feels sensation's faintest thrill
And flashes forth the sovereign will;
Think on the stormy world that dwells
Locked in its dim and clustering cells!
The lightning gleams of power it sheds
Along its hollow glassy threads!

O Father! grant thy love divine
To make these mystic temples thine!
When wasting age and wearying strife
Have sapped the leaning walls of life,
When darkness gathers over all,
And the last tottering pillars fall,
Take the poor dust thy mercy warms
And mould it into heavenly forms!

CHAPTER VIII

[Spring has come. You will find some verses to that effect at the end of these notes. If you are an impatient reader, skip to them at once. In reading aloud, omit, if you please, the sixth and seventh verses. These are parenthetical and digressive, and, unless your audience is of superior intelligence, will confuse them. Many people can ride on horseback who find it hard to get on and to get off without assistance. One has to dismount from an idea, and get into the saddle again, at every parenthesis.]

—The old gentleman who sits opposite, finding that spring had fairly come, mounted a white hat one day, and walked into the street. It seems to have been a premature or otherwise exceptionable exhibition, not unlike that commemorated by the late Mr. Bayly. When the old gentleman came home, he looked very red in the face, and complained that he had been “made sport of.” By sympathizing questions, I learned from him that a boy had called him “old daddy,” and asked him when he had his hat whitewashed.

This incident led me to make some observations at table the next morning, which I here repeat for the benefit of the readers of this record.

—The hat is the vulnerable point of the artificial integument. I learned this in early boyhood. I was once equipped in a hat of Leghorn straw, having a brim of much wider dimensions than were usual at that time, and sent to school in that portion of my native town which lies nearest to this metropolis. On my way I was met by a “Port-chuck,” as we used to call the young gentlemen of that locality, and the following dialogue ensued.

The Port-chuck. Hullo, You-sir, joo know th’ wuz gon-to be a race to-morrah?

Myself. No. Who’s gon-to run, ‘n’ wher’s’t gon-to be?

The Port-chuck. Squire Mico ‘n’ Doctor Wiliams, round the brim o’ your hat.

These two much-respected gentlemen being the oldest inhabitants at that time, and the alleged race-course being out of the question, the Port-chuck also winking and thrusting his tongue into his cheek, I perceived that I had been trifled with, and the effect has been to make me sensitive and observant respecting this article of dress ever since. Here is an axiom or two relating to it.

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A hat which has been *popped*, or exploded by being sat down upon, is never itself again afterwards.

It is a favorite illusion of sanguine natures to believe the contrary.

Shabby gentility has nothing so characteristic as its hat. There is always an unnatural calmness about its nap, and an unwholesome gloss, suggestive of a wet brush.

The last effort of decayed fortune is expended in smoothing its dilapidated castor. The hat is the *ultimum moriens* of “respectability.”

—The old gentleman took all these remarks and maxims very pleasantly, saying, however, that he had forgotten most of his French except the word for potatoes,—*pummies de tare*.—*Ultimum moriens*, I told him, is old Italian, and signifies *last thing to die*. With this explanation he was well contented, and looked quite calm when I saw him afterwards in the entry with a black hat on his head and the white one in his hand.

—I think myself fortunate in having the Poet and the Professor for my intimates. We are so much together, that we no doubt think and talk a good deal alike; yet our points of view are in many respects individual and peculiar. You know me well enough by this time. I have not talked with you so long for nothing and therefore I don’t think it necessary to draw my own portrait. But let me say a word or two about my friends.

The Professor considers himself, and I consider him, a very useful and worthy kind of drudge. I think he has a pride in his small technicalities. I know that he has a great idea of fidelity; and though I suspect he laughs a little inwardly at times at the grand airs “Science” puts on, as she stands marking time, but not getting on, while the trumpets are blowing and the big drums beating,—yet I am sure he has a liking for his specially, and a respect for its cultivators.

But I’ll tell you what the Professor said to the Poet the other day.—My boy, said he, I can work a great deal cheaper than you, because I keep all my goods in the lower story. You have to hoist yours into the upper chambers of the brain, and let them down again to your customers. I take mine in at the level of the ground, and send them off from my doorstep almost without lifting. I tell you, the higher a man has to carry the raw material of thought before he works it up, the more it costs him in blood, nerve, and muscle. Coleridge knew all this very well when he advised every literary man to have a profession.

—Sometimes I like to talk with one of them, and sometimes with the other. After a while I get tired of both. When a fit of intellectual disgust comes over me, I will tell you what I have found admirable as a diversion, in addition to boating and other amusements which I have spoken of,—that is, working at my carpenter’s-bench. Some mechanical employment is the greatest possible relief, after the purely intellectual faculties begin to

tire. When I was quarantined once at Marseilles, I got to work immediately at carving a wooden wonder of loose rings on a stick, and got so interested in it, that when we were set loose, I “regained my freedom with a sigh,” because my toy was unfinished.

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There are long seasons when I talk only with the Professor, and others when I give myself wholly up to the Poet. Now that my winter's work is over and spring is with us, I feel naturally drawn to the Poet's company. I don't know anybody more alive to life than he is. The passion of poetry seizes on him every spring, he says,—yet oftentimes he complains, that, when he feels most, he can sing least.

Then a fit of despondency comes over him.—I feel ashamed, sometimes,—said he, the other day,—to think how far my worst songs fall below my best. It sometimes seems to me, as I know it does to others who have told me so, that they ought to be *all best*,—if not in actual execution, at least in plan and motive. I am grateful—he continued—for all such criticisms. A man is always pleased to have his most serious efforts praised, and the highest aspect of his nature get the most sunshine.

Yet I am sure, that, in the nature of things, many minds must change their key now and then, on penalty of getting out of tune or losing their voices. You know, I suppose,—he said,—what is meant by complementary colors? You know the effect, too, which the prolonged impression of any one color has on the retina. If you close your eyes after looking steadily at a *red* object, you see a *green* image.

It is so with many minds,—I will not say with all. After looking at one aspect of external nature, or of any form of beauty or truth, when they turn away, the *complementary* aspect of the same object stamps itself irresistibly and automatically upon the mind. Shall they give expression to this secondary mental state, or not?

When I contemplate—said my friend, the Poet—the infinite largeness of comprehension belonging to the Central Intelligence, how remote the creative conception is from all scholastic and ethical formulae, I am led to think that a healthy mind ought to change its mood from time to time, and come down from its noblest condition,—never, of course, to degrade itself by dwelling upon what is itself debasing, but to let its lower faculties have a chance to air and exercise themselves. After the first and second floor have been out in the bright street dressed in all their splendors, shall not our humble friends in the basement have their holiday, and the cotton velvet and the thin-skinned jewelry—simple adornments, but befitting the station of those who wear them—show themselves to the crowd, who think them beautiful, as they ought to, though the people up stairs know that they are cheap and perishable?

—I don't know that I may not bring the Poet here, some day or other, and let him speak for himself. Still I think I can tell you what he says quite as well as he could do it.—Oh,—he said to me, one day,—I am but a hand-organ man,—say rather, a hand-organ. Life turns the winch, and fancy or accident pulls out the stops. I come under your windows, some fine

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spring morning, and play you one of my adagio movements, and some of you say,—This is good,—play us so always. But, dear friends, if I did not change the stop sometimes, the machine would wear out in one part and rust in another. How easily this or that tune flows!—you say,—there must be no end of just such melodies in him.—I will open the poor machine for you one moment, and you shall look.—Ah! Every note marks where a spur of steel has been driven in. It is easy to grind out the song, but to plant these bristling points which make it was the painful task of time.

I don't like to say it,—he continued,—but poets commonly have no larger stock of tunes than hand-organs; and when you hear them piping up under your window, you know pretty well what to expect. The more stops, the better. Do let them all be pulled out in their turn!

So spoke my friend, the Poet, and read me one of his stateliest songs, and after it a gay chanson, and then a string of epigrams. All true,—he said,—all flowers of his soul; only one with the corolla spread, and another with its disk half opened, and the third with the heart-leaves covered up and only a petal or two showing its tip through the calyx. The water-lily is the type of the poet's soul,—he told me.

—What do you think, Sir,—said the divinity-student,—opens the souls of poets most fully?

Why, there must be the internal force and the external stimulus. Neither is enough by itself. A rose will not flower in the dark, and a fern will not flower anywhere.

What do I think is the true sunshine that opens the poet's corolla?—I don't like to say. They spoil a good many, I am afraid; or at least they shine on a good many that never come to anything.

Who are *they*?—said the schoolmistress.

Women. Their love first inspires the poet, and their praise is his best reward.

The schoolmistress reddened a little, but looked pleased.—Did I really think so?—I do think so; I never feel safe until I have pleased them; I don't think they are the first to see one's defects, but they are the first to catch the color and fragrance of a true poem. Fit the same intellect to a man and it is a bow-string,—to a woman and it is a harp-string. She is vibratile and resonant all over, so she stirs with slighter musical tremblings of the air about her.—Ah, me!—said my friend, the Poet, to me, the other day,—what color would it not have given to my thoughts, and what thrice-washed whiteness to my words, had I been fed on women's praises! I should have grown like Marvell's fawn,—

“Lilies without; roses within!”

But then,—he added,—we all think, *if* so and so, we should have been this or that, as you were saying the other day, in those rhymes of yours.

—I don't think there are many poets in the sense of creators; but of those sensitive natures which reflect themselves naturally in soft and melodious words, pleading for sympathy with their joys and sorrows, every literature is full. Nature carves with her own hands the brain which holds the creative imagination, but she casts the over-sensitive creatures in scores from the same mould.



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There are two kinds of poets, just as there are two kinds of blondes. [Movement of curiosity among our ladies at table.—Please to tell us about those blondes, said the schoolmistress.] Why, there are blondes who are such simply by deficiency of coloring matter,—*negative* or *washed* blondes, arrested by Nature on the way to become albinesses. There are others that are shot through with golden light, with tawny or fulvous tinges in various degree, —*positive* or *stained* blondes, dipped in yellow sunbeams, and as unlike in their mode of being to the others as an orange is unlike a snowball. The albino-style carries with it a wide pupil and a sensitive retina. The other, or the leonine blonde, has an opaline fire in her clear eye, which the brunette can hardly match with her quick glittering glances.

Just so we have the great sun-kindled, constructive imaginations, and a far more numerous class of poets who have a certain kind of moonlight-genius given them to compensate for their imperfection of nature. Their want of mental coloring-matter makes them sensitive to those impressions which stronger minds neglect or never feel at all. Many of them die young, and all of them are tinged with melancholy. There is no more beautiful illustration of the principle of compensation which marks the Divine benevolence than the fact that some of the holiest lives and some of the sweetest songs are the growth of the infirmity which unfits its subject for the rougher duties of life. When one reads the life of Cowper, or of Keats, or of Lucretia and Margaret Davidson, —of so many gentle, sweet natures, born to weakness, and mostly dying before their time,—one cannot help thinking that the human race dies out singing, like the swan in the old story. The French poet, Gilbert, who died at the Hotel Dieu, at the age of twenty-nine,—(killed by a key in his throat, which he had swallowed when delirious in consequence of a fall.)—this poor fellow was a very good example of the poet by excess of sensibility. I found, the other day, that some of my literary friends had never heard of him, though I suppose few educated Frenchmen do not know the lines which he wrote, a week before his death, upon a mean bed in the great hospital of Paris.

“Au banquet de la vie, infortune convive,
J’apparus un jour, et je meurs;
Je meurs, et sur ma tombe, ou lentement j’arrive,
Nul ne viendra verser des pleurs.”

At life’s gay banquet placed, a poor unhappy guest,
One day I pass, then disappear;
I die, and on the tomb where I at length shall rest
No friend shall come to shed a tear.

You remember the same thing in other words some where in Kirke White’s poems. It is the burden of the plaintive songs of all these sweet albino-poets. “I shall die and be forgotten, and the world will go on just as if I had never been;—and yet how I have loved! how I have longed! how I have aspired!” And so singing, their eyes grow brighter

and brighter, and their features thinner and thinner, until at last the veil of flesh is threadbare, and, still singing, they drop it and pass onward.

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—Our brains are seventy-year clocks. The Angel of Life winds them up once for all, then closes the case, and gives the key into the hand of the Angel of the Resurrection.

Tic-tac! tic-tac! go the wheels of thought; our will cannot stop them; they cannot stop themselves, sleep cannot still them; madness only makes them go faster; death alone can break into the case, and, seizing the ever-swinging pendulum, which we call the heart, silence at last the clicking of the terrible escapement we have carried so long beneath our wrinkled foreheads.

If we could only get at them, as we lie on our pillows and count the dead beats of thought after thought and image after image jarring through the overtired organ! Will nobody block those wheels, uncouple that pinion, cut the string that holds those weights, blow up the infernal machine with gunpowder? What a passion comes over us sometimes for silence and rest!—that this dreadful mechanism, unwinding the endless tapestry of time, embroidered with spectral figures of life and death, could have but one brief holiday! Who can wonder that men swing themselves off from beams in hempen lassos?—that they jump off from parapets into the swift and gurgling waters beneath?—that they take counsel of the grim friend who has but to utter his one peremptory monosyllable and the restless machine is shivered as a vase that is dashed upon a marble floor? Under that building which we pass every day there are strong dungeons, where neither hook, nor bar, nor bed-cord, nor drinking-vessel from which a sharp fragment may be shattered, shall by any chance be seen. There is nothing for it, when the brain is on fire with the whirling of its wheels, but to spring against the stone wall and silence them with one crash. Ah, they remembered that,—the kind city fathers,—and the walls are nicely padded, so that one can take such exercise as he likes without damaging himself on the very plain and serviceable upholstery. If anybody would only contrive some kind of a lever that one could thrust in among the works of this horrid automaton and check them, or alter their rate of going, what would the world give for the discovery?

—From half a dime to a dime, according to the style of the place and the quality of the liquor,—said the young fellow whom they call John.

You speak trivially, but not unwisely,—I said. Unless the will maintain a certain control over these movements, which it cannot stop, but can to some extent regulate, men are very apt to try to get at the machine by some indirect system of leverage or other. They clap on the brakes by means of opium; they change the maddening monotony of the rhythm by means of fermented liquors. It is because the brain is locked up and we cannot touch its movement directly, that we thrust these coarse tools in through any crevice, by which they may reach the interior, and so alter its rate of going for a while, and at last spoil the machine.

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Men who exercise chiefly those faculties of the mind which work independently of the will,—poets and artists, for instance, who follow their imagination in their creative moments, instead of keeping it in hand as your logicians and practical men do with their reasoning faculty,—such men are too apt to call in the mechanical appliances to help them govern their intellects.

—He means they get drunk,—said the young fellow already alluded to by name.

Do you think men of true genius are apt to indulge in the use of inebriating fluids? said the divinity-student.

If you think you are strong enough to bear what I am going to say, —I replied,—I will talk to you about this. But mind, now, these are the things that some foolish people call *dangerous* subjects, —as if these vices which burrow into people's souls, as the Guinea-worm burrows into the naked feet of West-Indian slaves, would be more mischievous when seen than out of sight. Now the true way to deal with those obstinate animals, which are a dozen feet long, some of them, and no bigger than a horse hair, is to get a piece of silk round their *heads*, and pull them out very cautiously. If you only break them off, they grow worse than ever, and sometimes kill the person who has the misfortune to harbor one of them. Whence it is plain that the first thing to do is to find out where the head lies.

Just so of all the vices, and particularly of this vice of intemperance. What is the head of it, and where does it lie? For you may depend upon it, there is not one of these vices that has not a head of its own,—an intelligence,—a meaning,—a certain virtue, I was going to say,—but that might, perhaps, sound paradoxical. I have heard an immense number of moral physicians lay down the treatment of moral Guinea-worms, and the vast majority of them would always insist that the creature had no head at all, but was all body and tail. So I have found a very common result of their method to be that the string slipped, or that a piece only of the creature was broken off, and the worm soon grew again, as bad as ever. The truth is, if the Devil could only appear in church by attorney, and make the best statement that the facts would bear him out in doing on behalf of his special virtues, (what we commonly call vices,) the influence of good teachers would be much greater than it is. For the arguments by which the Devil prevails are precisely the ones that the Devil-queller most rarely answers. The way to argue down a vice is not to tell lies about it,—to say that it has no attractions, when everybody knows that it has,—but rather to let it make out its case just as it certainly will in the moment of temptation, and then meet it with the weapons furnished by the Divine armory. Ithuriel did not spit the toad on his spear, you remember, but touched him with it, and the blasted angel took the sad glories of his true shape. If he had shown fight then, the fair spirits would have known how to deal with him.

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That all spasmodic cerebral action is an evil is not perfectly clear. Men get fairly intoxicated with music, with poetry, with religious excitement, oftenest with love. Ninon de l'Enclos said she was so easily excited that her soup intoxicated her, and convalescents have been made tipsy by a beef-steak.

There are forms and stages of alcoholic exaltation which, in themselves, and without regard to their consequences, might be considered as positive improvements of the persons affected. When the sluggish intellect is roused, the slow speech quickened, the cold nature warmed, the latent sympathy developed, the flagging spirit kindled,—before the trains of thought become confused or the will perverted, or the muscles relaxed,—just at the moment when the whole human zoophyte flowers out like a full-blown rose, and is ripe for the subscription-paper or the contribution-box,—it would be hard to say that a man was, at that very time, worse, or less to be loved, than when driving a hard bargain with all his meaner wits about him. The difficulty is, that the alcoholic virtues don't wash; but until the water takes their colors out, the tints are very much like those of the true celestial stuff.

[Here I was interrupted by a question which I am very unwilling to report, but have confidence enough in those friends who examine these records to commit to their candor.

A person at table asked me whether I “went in for rum as a steady drink?”—His manner made the question highly offensive, but I restrained myself, and answered thus:-]

Rum I take to be the name which unwashed moralists apply alike to the product distilled from molasses and the noblest juices of the vineyard. Burgundy “in all its sunset glow” is rum. Champagne, “the foaming wine of Eastern France,” is rum. Hock, which our friend, the Poet, speaks of as

“The Rhine’s breastmilk, gushing cold and bright, Pale as the moon, and maddening as her light,”

is rum. Sir, I repudiate the loathsome vulgarism as an insult to the first miracle wrought by the Founder of our religion! I address myself to the company.—I believe in temperance, nay, almost in abstinence, as a rule for healthy people. I trust that I practice both. But let me tell you, there are companies of men of genius into which I sometimes go, where the atmosphere of intellect and sentiment is so much more stimulating than alcohol, that, if I thought fit to take wine, it would be to keep me sober.

Among the gentlemen that I have known, few, if any, were ruined by drinking. My few drunken acquaintances were generally ruined before they became drunkards. The habit of drinking is often a vice, no doubt,—sometimes a misfortune,—as when an almost irresistible hereditary propensity exists to indulge in it,—but oftenest of all a *punishment*.

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Empty heads,—heads without ideas in wholesome variety and sufficient number to furnish food for the mental clockwork, —ill-regulated heads, where the faculties are not under the control of the will,—these are the ones that hold the brains which their owners are so apt to tamper with, by introducing the appliances we have been talking about. Now, when a gentleman's brain is empty or ill-regulated, it is, to a great extent, his own fault; and so it is simple retribution, that, while he lies slothfully sleeping or aimlessly dreaming, the fatal habit settles on him like a vampyre, and sucks his blood, fanning him all the while with its hot wings into deeper slumber or idler dreams! I am not such a hard-souled being as to apply this to the neglected poor, who have had no chance to fill their heads with wholesome ideas, and to be taught the lesson of self-government. I trust the tariff of Heaven has an ad valorem scale for them—and all of us.

But to come back to poets and artists;—if they really are more prone to the abuse of stimulants,—and I fear that this is true, —the reason of it is only too clear. A man abandons himself to a fine frenzy, and the power which flows through him, as I once explained to you, makes him the medium of a great poem or a great picture. The creative action is not voluntary at all, but automatic; we can only put the mind into the proper attitude, and wait for the wind, that blows where it listeth, to breathe over it. Thus the true state of creative genius is allied to reverie, or dreaming. If mind and body were both healthy and had food enough and fair play, I doubt whether any men would be more temperate than the imaginative classes. But body and mind often flag,—perhaps they are ill-made to begin with, underfed with bread or ideas, overworked, or abused in some way. The automatic action, by which genius wrought its wonders, fails. There is only one thing which can rouse the machine; not will,—that cannot reach it; nothing but a ruinous agent, which hurries the wheels awhile and soon eats out the heart of the mechanism. The dreaming faculties are always the dangerous ones, because their mode of action can be imitated by artificial excitement; the reasoning ones are safe, because they imply continued voluntary effort.

I think you will find it true, that, before any vice can fasten on a man, body, mind, or moral nature must be debilitated. The mosses and fungi gather on sickly trees, not thriving ones; and the odious parasites which fasten on the human frame choose that which is already enfeebled. Mr. Walker, the hygeian humorist, declared that he had such a healthy skin it was impossible for any impurity to stick to it, and maintained that it was an absurdity to wash a face which was of necessity always clean. I don't know how much fancy there was in this; but there is no fancy in saying that the lassitude of tired-out operatives, and the languor of imaginative natures in their periods of collapse, and the vacuity of minds untrained to labor and discipline, fit the soul and body for the germination of the seeds of intemperance.

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Whenever the wandering demon of Drunkenness finds a ship adrift, —no steady wind in its sails, no thoughtful pilot directing its course,—he steps on board, takes the helm, and steers straight for the maelstrom.

—I wonder if you know the *terrible smile*? [The young fellow whom they call John winked very hard, and made a jocular remark, the sense of which seemed to depend on some double meaning of the word *smile*. The company was curious to know what I meant.]

There are persons—I said—who no sooner come within sight of you than they begin to smile, with an uncertain movement of the mouth, which conveys the idea that they are thinking about themselves, and thinking, too, that you are thinking they are thinking about themselves,—and so look at you with a wretched mixture of self-consciousness, awkwardness, and attempts to carry off both, which are betrayed by the cowardly behaviour of the eye and the tell-tale weakness of the lips that characterize these unfortunate beings.

—Why do you call them unfortunate, Sir?—asked the divinity-student.

Because it is evident that the consciousness of some imbecility or other is at the bottom of this extraordinary expression. I don't think, however, that these persons are commonly fools. I have known a number, and all of them were intelligent. I think nothing conveys the idea of UNDERBREEDING more than this self-betraying smile. Yet I think this peculiar habit as well as that of *meaningless blushing* may be fallen into by very good people who met often, or sit opposite each other at table. A true gentleman's face is infinitely removed from all such paltriness,—calm-eyed, firm-mouthed. I think Titian understood the look of a gentleman as well as anybody that ever lived. The portrait of a young man holding a glove in his hand, in the Gallery of the Louvre, if any of you have seen that collection, will remind you of what I mean.

—Do I think these people know the peculiar look they have?—I cannot say; I hope not; I am afraid they would never forgive me, if they did. The worst of it is, the trick is catching; when one meets one of these fellows, he feels a tendency to the same manifestation. The Professor tells me there is a muscular slip, a dependence of the platysma myoides, which is called the risorius Santorini.

—Say that once more,—exclaimed the young fellow mentioned above.

The Professor says there is a little fleshy slip called Santorini's laughing muscle. I would have it cut out of my face, if I were born with one of those constitutional grins upon it. Perhaps I am uncharitable in my judgment of those sour-looking people I told you of the other day, and of these smiling folks. It may be that they are born with these looks, as other people are with more generally recognized deformities. Both are bad enough, but I had rather meet three of the scowlers than one of the smilers.

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—There is another unfortunate way of looking, which is peculiar to that amiable sex we do not like to find fault with. There are some very pretty, but, unhappily, very ill-bred women, who don't understand the law of the road with regard to handsome faces. Nature and custom would, no doubt, agree in conceding to all males the right of at least two distinct looks at every comely female countenance, without any infraction of the rules of courtesy or the sentiment of respect. The first look is necessary to define the person of the individual one meets so as to avoid it in passing. Any unusual attraction detected in a first glance is a sufficient apology for a second,—not a prolonged and impertinent stare, but an appreciating homage of the eyes, such as a stranger may inoffensively yield to a passing image. It is astonishing how morbidly sensitive some vulgar beauties are to the slightest demonstration of this kind. When a lady walks the streets, she leaves her virtuous-indignation countenance at home; she knows well enough that the street is a picture-gallery, where pretty faces framed in pretty bonnets are meant to be seen, and everybody has a right to see them.

—When we observe how the same features and style of person and character descend from generation to generation, we can believe that some inherited weakness may account for these peculiarities. Little snapping-turtles snap—so the great naturalist tells us—before they are out of the egg-shell. I am satisfied, that, much higher up in the scale of life, character is distinctly shown at the age of—2 or—3 months.

—My friend, the Professor, has been full of eggs lately. [This remark excited a burst of hilarity which I did not allow to interrupt the course of my observations.] He has been reading the great book where he found the fact about the little snapping-turtles mentioned above. Some of the things he has told me have suggested several odd analogies enough.

There are half a dozen men, or so, who carry in their brains the *ovarian eggs* of the next generation's or century's civilization. These eggs are not ready to be laid in the form of books as yet; some of them are hardly ready to be put into the form of talk. But as rudimentary ideas or inchoate tendencies, there they are; and these are what must form the future. A man's general notions are not good for much, unless he has a crop of these intellectual ovarian eggs in his own brain, or knows them as they exist in the minds of others. One must be in the *habit* of talking with such persons to get at these rudimentary germs of thought; for their development is necessarily imperfect, and they are moulded on new patterns, which must be long and closely studied. But these are the men to talk with. No fresh truth ever gets into a book.

—A good many fresh lies get in, anyhow,—said one of the company.

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I proceeded in spite of the interruption.—All uttered thought, my friend, the Professor, says, is of the nature of an excretion. Its materials have been taken in, and have acted upon the system, and been reacted on by it; it has circulated and done its office in one mind before it is given out for the benefit of others. It may be milk or venom to other minds; but, in either case, it is something which the producer has had the use of and can part with. A man instinctively tries to get rid of his thought in conversation or in print so soon as it is matured; but it is hard to get at it as it lies imbedded, a mere potentiality, the germ of a germ, in his intellect.

—Where are the brains that are fullest of these ovarian eggs of thought?—I decline mentioning individuals. The producers of thought, who are few, the “jobbers” of thought, who are many, and the retailers of thought, who are numberless, are so mixed up in the popular apprehension, that it would be hopeless to try to separate them before opinion has had time to settle. Follow the course of opinion on the great subjects of human interest for a few generations or centuries, get its parallax, map out a small arc of its movement, see where it tends, and then see who is in advance of it or even with it; the world calls him hard names, probably; but if you would find the ova of the future, you must look into the folds of his cerebral convolutions.

[The divinity-student looked a little puzzled at this suggestion, as if he did not see exactly where he was to come out, if he computed his arc too nicely. I think it possible it might cut off a few corners of his present belief, as it has cut off martyr-burning and witch-hanging;—but time will show,—time will show, as the old gentleman opposite says.]

—Oh,—here is that copy of verses I told you about.

SPRING HAS COME.

Intra Muros.

The sunbeams, lost for half a year,
Slant through my pane their morning rays
For dry Northwesters cold and clear,
The East blows in its thin blue haze.

And first the snowdrop's bells are seen,
Then close against the sheltering wall
The tulip's horn of dusky green,
The peony's dark unfolding ball.

The golden-chaliced crocus burns;
The long narcissus-blades appear;



The cone-beaked hyacinth returns,
And lights her blue-flamed chandelier.

The willow's whistling lashes, wrung
By the wild winds of gusty March,
With sallow leaflets lightly strung,
Are swaying by the tufted larch.

The elms have robed their slender spray
With full-blown flower and embryo leaf;
Wide o'er the clasping arch of day
Soars like a cloud their hoary chief.

—[See the proud tulip's flaunting cup,
That flames in glory for an hour,—
Behold it withering,—then look up,—
How meek the forest-monarch's flower!—



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When wake the violets, Winter dies;
When sprout the elm-buds, Spring is near;
When lilacs blossom, Summer cries,
“Bud, little roses! Spring is here!”]

The windows blush with fresh bouquets,
Cut with the May-dew on their lips;
The radish all its bloom displays,
Pink as Aurora’s finger-tips.

Nor less the flood of light that showers
On beauty’s changed corolla-shades,—
The walks are gay as bridal bowers
With rows of many-petalled maids.

The scarlet shell-fish click and clash
In the blue barrow where they slide;
The horseman, proud of streak and splash,
Creeps homeward from his morning ride.

Here comes the dealer’s awkward string,
With neck in rope and tail in knot,—
Rough colts, with careless country-swing,
In lazy walk or slouching trot.

—Wild filly from the mountain-side,
Doomed to the close and chafing thills,
Lend me thy long, untiring stride
To seek with thee thy western hills!

I hear the whispering voice of Spring,
The thrush’s trill, the cat-bird’s cry,
Like some poor bird with prisoned wing
That sits and sings, but longs to fly.

Oh for one spot of living green,—
One little spot where leaves can grow,—
To love unblamed, to walk unseen,
To dream above, to sleep below!

CHAPTER IX

[Aqui esta encerrada el alma del licenciado Pedro Garcias.

If I should ever make a little book out of these papers, which I hope you are not getting tired of, I suppose I ought to save the above sentence for a motto on the title-page. But I want it now, and must use it. I need not say to you that the words are Spanish, nor that they are to be found in the short Introduction to "Gil Blas," nor that they mean, "Here lies buried the soul of the licentiate Pedro Garcias."

I warned all young people off the premises when I began my notes referring to old age. I must be equally fair with old people now. They are earnestly requested to leave this paper to young persons from the age of twelve to that of fourscore years and ten, at which latter period of life I am sure that I shall have at least one youthful reader. You know well enough what I mean by youth and age;—something in the soul, which has no more to do with the color of the hair than the vein of gold in a rock has to do with the grass a thousand feet above it.

I am growing bolder as I write. I think it requires not only youth, but genius, to read this paper. I don't mean to imply that it required any whatsoever to talk what I have here written down. It did demand a certain amount of memory, and such command of the English tongue as is given by a common school education. So much I do claim. But here I have related, at length, a string of trivialities. You must have the imagination of a poet to transfigure them. These little colored patches are stains upon the windows of a human soul; stand on the outside, they are but dull and meaningless spots of color; seen from within, they are glorified shapes with empurpled wings and sunbright aureoles.

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My hand trembles when I offer you this. Many times I have come bearing flowers such as my garden grew; but now I offer you this poor, brown, homely growth, you may cast it away as worthless. And yet—and yet—it is something better than flowers; it is a *seed-capsule*. Many a gardener will cut you a bouquet of his choicest blossoms for small fee, but he does not love to let the seeds of his rarest varieties go out of his own hands.

It is by little things that we know ourselves; a soul would very probably mistake itself for another, when once disembodied, were it not for individual experiences which differ from those of others only in details seemingly trifling. All of us have been thirsty thousands of times, and felt, with Pindar, that water was the best of things. I alone, as I think, of all mankind, remember one particular pailful of water, flavored with the white-pine of which the pail was made, and the brown mug out of which one Edmund, a red-faced and curly-haired boy, was averred to have bitten a fragment in his haste to drink; it being then high summer, and little full-blooded boys feeling very warm and porous in the low-"studded" school-room where Dame Prentiss, dead and gone, ruled over young children, many of whom are old ghosts now, and have known Abraham for twenty or thirty years of our mortal time.

Thirst belongs to humanity, everywhere, in all ages; but that white-pine pail, and that brown mug belong to me in particular; and just so of my special relationships with other things and with my rice. One could never remember himself in eternity by the mere fact of having loved or hated any more than by that of having thirsted; love and hate have no more individuality in them than single waves in the ocean;—but the accidents or trivial marks which distinguished those whom we loved or hated make their memory our own forever, and with it that of our own personality also.

Therefore, my aged friend of five-and-twenty, or thereabouts, pause at the threshold of this particular record, and ask yourself seriously whether you are fit to read such revelations as are to follow. For observe, you have here no splendid array of petals such as poets offer you,—nothing but a dry shell, containing, if you will get out what is in it, a few small seeds of poems. You may laugh at them, if you like. I shall never tell you what I think of you for so doing. But if you can read into the heart of these things, in the light of other memories as slight, yet as dear to your soul, then you are neither more nor less than a *poet*, and can afford to write no more verses during the rest of your natural life,—which abstinence I take to be one of the surest marks of your meriting the divine name I have just bestowed upon you.

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May I beg of you who have begun this paper nobly trusting to your own imagination and sensibilities to give it the significance which it does not lay claim to without your kind assistance,—may I beg of you, I say, to pay particular attention to the *brackets* which enclose certain paragraphs? I want my “asides,” you see, to whisper loud to you who read my notes, and sometimes I talk a page or two to you without pretending that I said a word of it to our boarders. You will find a very long “aside” to you almost as soon as you begin to read. And so, dear young friend, fall to at once, taking such things as I have provided for you; and if you turn them, by the aid of your powerful imagination, into a fair banquet, why, then, peace be with you, and a summer by the still waters of some quiet river, or by some yellow beach, where, as my friend the Professor, says, you can sit with Nature’s wrist in your hand and count her ocean-pulses.]

I should like to make a few intimate revelations relating especially to my early life, if I thought you would like to hear them.

[The schoolmistress turned a little in her chair, and sat with her face directed partly towards me.—Half-mourning now;—purple ribbon. That breastpin she wears has *gray* hair in it; her mother’s, no doubt;—I remember our landlady’s daughter telling me, soon after the schoolmistress came to board with us, that she had lately “buried a payrent.” That’s what made her look so pale, —kept the poor dying thing alive with her own blood. Ah! long illness is the real vampyrism; think of living a year or two after one is dead, by sucking the life-blood out of a frail young creature at one’s bedside! Well, souls grow white, as well as cheeks, in these holy duties one that goes in a nurse may come out an angel.—God bless all good women!—to their soft hands and pitying hearts we must all come at last!—The schoolmistress has a better color than when she came. —Too late! “It might have been.” —Amen!—How many thoughts go to a dozen heart-beats, sometimes! There was no long pause after my remark addressed to the company, but in that time I had the train of ideas and feelings I have just given flash through my consciousness sudden and sharp as the crooked red streak that springs out of its black sheath like the creese of a Malay in his death-race, and stabs the earth right and left in its blind rage.

I don’t deny that there was a pang in it,—yes, a stab; but there was a prayer, too,—the “Amen” belonged to that.—Also, a vision of a four-story brick house, nicely furnished,—I actually saw many specific articles,—curtains, sofas, tables, and others, and could draw the patterns of them at this moment,—a brick house, I say, looking out on the water, with a fair parlor, and books and busts and pots of flowers and bird-cages, all complete; and at the window, looking on the water, two of us.—“Male and female created He them.”—These two were standing at the window, when a smaller shape that was playing near them looked up at me with such a look that I——poured out a glass of water, drank it all down, and then continued.]

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I said I should like to tell you some things, such as people commonly never tell, about my early recollections. Should you like to hear them?

Should we *like* to hear them?—said the schoolmistress;—no, but we should love to.

[The voice was a sweet one, naturally, and had something very pleasant in its tone, just then.—The four-story brick house, which had gone out like a transparency when the light behind it is quenched, glimmered again for a moment; parlor, books, busts, flower-pots, bird-cages, all complete,—and the figures as before.]

We are waiting with eagerness, Sir,—said the divinity-student.

[The transparency went out as if a flash of black lightning had struck it.]

If you want to hear my confessions, the next thing—I said—is to know whether I can trust you with them. It is only fair to say that there are a great many people in the world that laugh at such things. *I* think they are fools, but perhaps you don't all agree with me.

Here are children of tender age talked to as if they were capable of understanding Calvin's "Institutes," and nobody has honesty or sense enough to tell the plain truth about the little wretches: that they are as superstitious as naked savages, and such miserable spiritual cowards—that is, if they have any imagination—that they will believe anything which is taught them, and a great deal more which they teach themselves.

I was born and bred, as I have told you twenty times, among books and those who knew what was in books. I was carefully instructed in things temporal and spiritual. But up to a considerable maturity of childhood I believed Raphael and Michael Angelo to have been superhuman beings. The central doctrine of the prevalent religious faith of Christendom was utterly confused and neutralized in my mind for years by one of those too common stories of actual life, which I overheard repeated in a whisper.—Why did I not ask? you will say.—You don't remember the rosy pudency of sensitive children. The first instinctive movement of the little creatures is to make a cache, and bury in it beliefs, doubts, dreams, hopes, and terrors. I am uncovering one of these *cachees*. Do you think I was necessarily a greater fool and coward than another?

I was afraid of ships. Why, I could never tell. The masts looked frightfully tall,—but they were not so tall as the steeple of our old yellow meeting-house. At any rate I used to hide my eyes from the sloops and schooners that were wont to lie at the end of the bridge, and I confess that traces of this undefined terror lasted very long.—One other source of alarm had a still more fearful significance. There was a great wooden *hand*,—a glove-maker's sign, which used to swing and creak in the blast, as it hung from a pillar before a certain shop a mile or two outside of the city. Oh, the dreadful hand! Always hanging there ready to catch up a little boy, who would come home to supper no

more, nor yet to bed, —whose porringer would be laid away empty thenceforth, and his half-worn shoes wait until his small brother grew to fit them.

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As for all manner of superstitious observances, I used once to think I must have been peculiar in having such a list of them, but I now believe that half the children of the same age go through the same experiences. No Roman soothsayer ever had such a catalogue of *omens* as I found in the Sibylline leaves of my childhood. That trick of throwing a stone at a tree and attaching some mighty issue to hitting or missing, which you will find mentioned in one or more biographies, I well remember. Stepping on or over certain particular things or spots—Dr. Johnson's especial weakness I got the habit of at a very early age.—I won't swear that I have not some tendency to these not wise practices even at this present date. [How many of you that read these notes can say the same thing!]

With these follies mingled sweet delusions, which I loved so well I would not outgrow them, even when it required a voluntary effort to put a momentary trust in them. Here is one which I cannot help telling you.

The firing of the great guns at the Navy-yard is easily heard at the place where I was born and lived. "There is a ship of war come in," they used to say, when they heard them. Of course, I supposed that such vessels came in unexpectedly, after indefinite years of absence,—suddenly as falling stones; and that the great guns roared in their astonishment and delight at the sight of the old war-ship splitting the bay with her cutwater. Now, the sloop-of-war the *Wasp*, Captain Blakely, after gloriously capturing the *Reindeer* and the *Avon*, had disappeared from the face of the ocean, and was supposed to be lost. But there was no proof of it, and, of course, for a time, hopes were entertained that she might be heard from. Long after the last real chance had utterly vanished, I pleased myself with the fond illusion that somewhere on the waste of waters she was still floating, and there were years during which I never heard the sound of the great guns booming inland from the Navy-yard without saying to myself, "The *Wasp* has come!" and almost thinking I could see her, as she rolled in, crumpling the water before her, weather-beaten, barnacled, with shattered spars and threadbare canvas, welcomed by the shouts and tears of thousands. This was one of those dreams that I nursed and never told. Let me make a clean breast of it now, and say, that, so late as to have outgrown childhood, perhaps to have got far on towards manhood, when the roar of the cannon has struck suddenly on my ear, I have started with a thrill of vague expectation and tremulous delight, and the long-unspoken words have articulated themselves in the mind's dumb whisper, *the Wasp has come!*

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—Yes, children believe plenty of queer things. I suppose all of you have had the pocket-book fever when you were little?—What do I mean? Why, ripping up old pocket-books in the firm belief that bank-bills to an immense amount were hidden in them.—So, too, you must all remember some splendid unfulfilled promise of somebody or other, which fed you with hopes perhaps for years, and which left a blank in your life which nothing has ever filled up.—O. T. quitted our household carrying with him the passionate regrets of the more youthful members. He was an ingenious youngster; wrote wonderful copies, and carved the two initials given above with great skill on all available surfaces. I thought, by the way, they were all gone; but the other day I found them on a certain door which I will show you some time. How it surprised me to find them so near the ground! I had thought the boy of no trivial dimensions. Well, O. T., when he went, made a solemn promise to two of us. I was to have a ship, and the other a marTIN-house (last syllable pronounced as in the word *tin*). Neither ever came; but, oh, how many and many a time I have stolen to the corner,—the cars pass close by it at this time,—and looked up that long avenue, thinking that he must be coming now, almost sure, as I turned to look northward, that there he would be, trudging toward me, the ship in one hand and the marTIN-house in the other!

[You must not suppose that all I am going to say, as well as all I have said, was told to the whole company. The young fellow whom they call John was in the yard, sitting on a barrel and smoking a cheroot, the fumes of which came in, not ungrateful, through the open window. The divinity-student disappeared in the midst of our talk. The poor relation in black bombazine, who looked and moved as if all her articulations were elbow-joints, had gone off to her chamber, after waiting with a look of soul-subduing decorum at the foot of the stairs until one of the male sort had passed her and ascended into the upper regions. This is a famous point of etiquette in our boarding-house; in fact, between ourselves, they make such an awful fuss about it, that I, for one, had a great deal rather have them simple enough not to think of such matters at all. Our landlady's daughter said, the other evening, that she was going to "retire"; whereupon the young fellow called John took up a lamp and insisted on lighting her to the foot of the staircase. Nothing would induce her to pass by him, until the schoolmistress, saying in good plain English that it was her bed-time, walked straight by them both, not seeming to trouble herself about either of them.]



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I have been led away from what I meant the portion included in these brackets to inform my readers about. I say, then, most of the boarders had left the table about the time when I began telling some of these secrets of mine,—all of them, in fact, but the old gentleman opposite and the schoolmistress. I understand why a young woman should like to hear these simple but genuine experiences of early life, which are, as I have said, the little brown seeds of what may yet grow to be poems with leaves of azure and gold; but when the old gentleman pushed up his chair nearer to me, and slanted round his best ear, and once, when I was speaking of some trifling, tender reminiscence, drew a long breath, with such a tremor in it that a little more and it would have been a sob, why, then I felt there must be something of nature in them which redeemed their seeming insignificance. Tell me, man or woman with whom I am whispering, have you not a small store of recollections, such as these I am uncovering, buried beneath the dead leaves of many summers, perhaps under the unmelting snows of fast-returning winters,—a few such recollections, which, if you should write them all out, would be swept into some careless editor's drawer, and might cost a scanty half-hour's lazy reading to his subscribers,—and yet, if Death should cheat you of them, you would not know yourself in eternity?]

—I made three acquaintances at a very early period of life, my introduction to whom was never forgotten. The first unequivocal act of wrong that has left its trace in my memory was this: refusing a small favor asked of me,—nothing more than telling what had happened at school one morning. No matter who asked it; but there were circumstances which saddened and awed me. I had no heart to speak;—I faltered some miserable, perhaps petulant excuse, stole away, and the first battle of life was lost. What remorse followed I need not tell. Then and there, to the best of my knowledge, I first consciously took Sin by the hand and turned my back on Duty. Time has led me to look upon my offence more leniently; I do not believe it or any other childish wrong is infinite, as some have pretended, but infinitely finite. Yet, oh if I had but won that battle!

The great Destroyer, whose awful shadow it was that had silenced me, came near me, —but never, so as to be distinctly seen and remembered, during my tender years. There flits dimly before me the image of a little girl, whose name even I have forgotten, a schoolmate, whom we missed one day, and were told that she had died. But what death was I never had any very distinct idea, until one day I climbed the low stone wall of the old burial-ground and mingled with a group that were looking into a very deep, long, narrow hole, dug down through the green sod, down through the brown loam, down through the yellow gravel, and there at the bottom was an oblong red box, and a still, sharp, white face of a young man seen through an opening at one end of it. When the lid was closed, and the gravel and stones rattled down pell-mell, and the woman in black, who was crying and wringing her hands, went off with the other mourners, and left him, then I felt that I had seen Death, and should never forget him.

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One other acquaintance I made at an earlier period of life than the habit of romancers authorizes.—Love, of course.—She was a famous beauty afterwards.—I am satisfied that many children rehearse their parts in the drama of life before they have shed all their milk-teeth.—I think I won't tell the story of the golden blonde. —I suppose everybody has had his childish fancies; but sometimes they are passionate impulses, which anticipate all the tremulous emotions belonging to a later period. Most children remember seeing and adoring an angel before they were a dozen years old.

[The old gentleman had left his chair opposite and taken a seat by the schoolmistress and myself, a little way from the table.—It's true, it's true,—said the old gentleman.—He took hold of a steel watch-chain, which carried a large, square gold key at one end and was supposed to have some kind of time-keeper at the other. With some trouble he dragged up an ancient-looking, thick, silver, bull's-eye watch. He looked at it for a moment,—hesitated, —touched the inner corner of his right eye with the pulp of his middle finger,—looked at the face of the watch,—said it was getting into the forenoon, —then opened the watch and handed me the loose outside case without a word.—The watch-paper had been pink once, and had a faint tinge still, as if all its tender life had not yet quite faded out. Two little birds, a flower, and, in small school-girl letters, a date, —17 . .—no matter.—Before I was thirteen years old,—said the old gentleman.—I don't know what was in that young schoolmistress's head, nor why she should have done it; but she took out the watch-paper and put it softly to her lips, as if she were kissing the poor thing that made it so long ago. The old gentleman took the watch-paper carefully from her, replaced it, turned away and walked out, holding the watch in his hand. I saw him pass the window a moment after with that foolish white hat on his head; he couldn't have been thinking what he was about when he put it on. So the schoolmistress and I were left alone. I drew my chair a shade nearer to her, and continued.]

And since I am talking of early recollections, I don't know why I shouldn't mention some others that still cling to me,—not that you will attach any very particular meaning to these same images so full of significance to me, but that you will find something parallel to them in your own memory. You remember, perhaps, what I said one day about smells. There were certain *sounds* also which had a mysterious suggestiveness to me, —not so intense, perhaps, as that connected with the other sense, but yet peculiar, and never to be forgotten.

The first was the creaking of the wood-sleds, bringing their loads of oak and walnut from the country, as the slow-swinging oxen trailed them along over the complaining snow, in the cold, brown light of early morning. Lying in bed and listening to their dreary music had a pleasure in it akin to the Lucretian luxury, or that which Byron speaks of as to be enjoyed in looking on at a battle by one "who hath no friend, no brother there."

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There was another sound, in itself so sweet, and so connected with one of those simple and curious superstitions of childhood of which I have spoken, that I can never cease to cherish a sad sort of love for it.—Let me tell the superstitious fancy first. The Puritan “Sabbath,” as everybody knows, began at “sundown” on Saturday evening. To such observance of it I was born and bred. As the large, round disk of day declined, a stillness, a solemnity, a somewhat melancholy hush came over us all. It was time for work to cease, and for playthings to be put away. The world of active life passed into the shadow of an eclipse, not to emerge until the sun should sink again beneath the horizon.

It was in this stillness of the world without and of the soul within that the pulsating lullaby of the evening crickets used to make itself most distinctly heard,—so that I well remember I used to think that the purring of these little creatures, which mingled with the batrachian hymns from the neighboring swamp, *was peculiar to Saturday evenings*. I don’t know that anything could give a clearer idea of the quieting and subduing effect of the old habit of observance of what was considered holy time, than this strange, childish fancy.

Yes, and there was still another sound which mingled its solemn cadences with the waking and sleeping dreams of my boyhood. It was heard only at times,—a deep, muffled roar, which rose and fell, not loud, but vast,—a whistling boy would have drowned it for his next neighbor, but it must have been heard over the space of a hundred square miles. I used to wonder what this might be. Could it be the roar of the thousand wheels and the ten thousand footsteps jarring and trampling along the stones of the neighboring city? That would be continuous; but this, as I have said, rose and fell in regular rhythm. I remember being told, and I suppose this to have been the true solution, that it was the sound of the waves, after a high wind, breaking on the long beaches many miles distant. I should really like to know whether any observing people living ten miles, more or less, inland from long beaches,—in such a town, for instance, as Cantabridge, in the eastern part of the Territory of the Massachusetts,—have ever observed any such sound, and whether it was rightly accounted for as above.

Mingling with these inarticulate sounds in the low murmur of memory, are the echoes of certain voices I have heard at rare intervals. I grieve to say it, but our people, I think, have not generally agreeable voices. The marrowy organisms, with skins that shed water like the backs of ducks, with smooth surfaces neatly padded beneath, and velvet linings to their singing-pipes, are not so common among us as that other pattern of humanity with angular outlines and plane surfaces, and integuments, hair like the fibrous covering of a cocoa-nut in gloss and suppleness as well as color, and voices at once

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thin and strenuous,—acidulous enough to produce effervescence with alkalis, and stridulous enough to sing duets with the katydids. I think our conversational soprano, as sometimes overheard in the cars, arising from a group of young persons, who may have taken the train at one of our great industrial centres, for instance,—young persons of the female sex, we will say, who have bustled in full-dressed, engaged in loud strident speech, and who, after free discussion, have fixed on two or more double seats, which having secured, they proceed to eat apples and hand round daguerreotypes,—I say, I think the conversational soprano, heard under these circumstances, would not be among the allurements the old Enemy would put in requisition, were he getting up a new temptation of St. Anthony.

There are sweet voices among us, we all know, and voices not musical, it may be, to those who hear them for the first time, yet sweeter to us than any we shall hear until we listen to some warbling angel in the overture to that eternity of blissful harmonies we hope to enjoy.—But why should I tell lies? If my friends love me, it is because I try to tell the truth. I never heard but two voices in my life that frightened me by their sweetness.

—Frightened you?—said the schoolmistress.—Yes, frightened me. They made me feel as if there might be constituted a creature with such a chord in her voice to some string in another's soul, that, if she but spoke, he would leave all and follow her, though it were into the jaws of Erebus. Our only chance to keep our wits is, that there are so few natural chords between others' voices and this string in our souls, and that those which at first may have jarred a little by and by come into harmony with it.—But I tell you this is no fiction. You may call the story of Ulysses and the Sirens a fable, but what will you say to Mario and the poor lady who followed him?

—Whose were those two voices that bewitches me so?—They both belonged to German women. One was a chambermaid, not otherwise fascinating. The key of my room at a certain great hotel was missing, and this Teutonic maiden was summoned to give information respecting it. The simple soul was evidently not long from her motherland, and spoke with sweet uncertainty of dialect. But to hear her wonder and lament and suggest, with soft, liquid inflexions, and low, sad murmurs, in tones as full of serious tenderness for the fate of the lost key as if it had been a child that had strayed from its mother, was so winning, that, had her features and figure been as delicious as her accents,—if she had looked like the marble Clytie, for instance,—why, all can say is—

[The schoolmistress opened her eyes so wide, that I stopped short.]

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I was only going to say that I should have drowned myself. For Lake Erie was close by, and it is so much better to accept asphyxia, which takes only three minutes by the watch, than a mesalliance, that lasts fifty years to begin with, and then passes along down the line of descent, (breaking out in all manner of boorish manifestations of feature and manner, which, if men were only as short-lived as horses, could be readily traced back through the square-roots and the cube-roots of the family stem on which you have hung the armorial bearings of the De Champignons or the De la Morues, until one came to beings that ate with knives and said “Haow?”) that no person of right feeling could have hesitated for a single moment.

The second of the ravishing voices I have heard was, as I have said, that of another German woman.—I suppose I shall ruin myself by saying that such a voice could not have come from any Americanized human being.

—What was there in it?—said the schoolmistress,—and, upon my word, her tones were so very musical, that I almost wished I had said three voices instead of two, and not made the unpatriotic remark above reported.—Oh, I said, it had so much *woman* in it, —*muliebrity*, as well as *femineity*;—no self-assertion, such as free suffrage introduces into every word and movement; large, vigorous nature, running back to those huge-limbed Germans of Tacitus, but subdued by the reverential training and tuned by the kindly culture of fifty generations. Sharp business habits, a lean soil, independence, enterprise, and east winds, are not the best things for the larynx. Still, you hear noble voices among us,—I have known families famous for them,—but ask the first person you meet a question, and ten to one there is a hard, sharp, metallic, matter-of-business clink in the accents of the answer, that produces the effect of one of those bells which small trades-people connect with their shop-doors, and which spring upon your ear with such vivacity, as you enter, that your first impulse is to retire at once from the precincts.

—Ah, but I must not forget that dear little child I saw and heard in a French hospital. Between two and three years old. Fell out of her chair and snapped both thigh-bones. Lying in bed, patient, gentle. Rough students round her, some in white aprons, looking fearfully business-like; but the child placid, perfectly still. I spoke to her, and the blessed little creature answered me in a voice of such heavenly sweetness, with that reedy thrill in it which you have heard in the thrush’s even-song, that I hear it at this moment, while I am writing, so many, many years afterwards. —C’est tout comme un serin, said the French student at my side.



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These are the voices which struck the key-note of my conceptions as to what the sounds we are to hear in heaven will be, if we shall enter through one of the twelve gates of pearl. There must be other things besides aerolites that wander from their own spheres to ours; and when we speak of celestial sweetness or beauty, we may be nearer the literal truth than we dream. If mankind generally are the shipwrecked survivors of some pre-Adamitic cataclysm, set adrift in these little open boats of humanity to make one more trial to reach the shore,—as some grave theologians have maintained,—if, in plain English, men are the ghosts of dead devils who have “died into life,” (to borrow an expression from Keats,) and walk the earth in a suit of living rags which lasts three or four score summers,—why, there must have been a few good spirits sent to keep them company, and these sweet voices I speak of must belong to them.

—I wish you could once hear my sister’s voice,—said the schoolmistress.

If it is like yours, it must be a pleasant one,—said I.

I never thought mine was anything,—said the schoolmistress.

How should you know?—said I.—People never hear their own voices, —any more than they see their own faces. There is not even a looking-glass for the voice. Of course, there is something audible to us when we speak; but that something is not our own voice as it is known to all our acquaintances. I think, if an image spoke to us in our own tones, we should not know them in the least.—How pleasant it would be, if in another state of being we could have shapes like our former selves for playthings,—we standing outside or inside of them, as we liked, and they being to us just what we used to be to others!

—I wonder if there will be nothing like what we call “play,” after our earthly toys are broken,—said the schoolmistress.

Hush,—said I,—what will the divinity-student say?

[I thought she was hit, that time;—but the shot must have gone over her, or on one side of her; she did not flinch.]

Oh,—said the schoolmistress,—he must look out for my sister’s heresies; I am afraid he will be too busy with them to take care of mine.

Do you mean to say,—said I,—that it is *your sister* whom that student—

[The young fellow commonly known as John, who had been sitting on the barrel, smoking, jumped off just then, kicked over the barrel, gave it a push with his foot that set it rolling, and stuck his saucy-looking face in at the window so as to cut my question



off in the middle; and the schoolmistress leaving the room a few minutes afterwards, I did not have a chance to finish it.

The young fellow came in and sat down in a chair, putting his heels on the top of another.

Pooty girl,—said he.

A fine young lady,—I replied.

Keeps a first-rate school, according to accounts,—said he, —teaches all sorts of things, —Latin and Italian and music. Folks rich once,—smashed up. She went right ahead as smart as if she'd been born to work. That's the kind o' girl I go for. I'd marry her, only two or three other girls would drown themselves, if I did.

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I think the above is the longest speech of this young fellow's which I have put on record. I do not like to change his peculiar expressions, for this is one of those cases in which the style is the man, as M. de Buffon says. The fact is, the young fellow is a good-hearted creature enough, only too fond of his jokes,—and if it were not for those heat-lightning winks on one side of his face, I should not mind his fun much.]

[Some days after this, when the company were together again, I talked a little.]

—I don't think I have a genuine hatred for anybody. I am well aware that I differ herein from the sturdy English moralist and the stout American tragedian. I don't deny that I hate *the sight* of certain people; but the qualities which make me tend to hate the man himself are such as I am so much disposed to pity, that, except under immediate aggravation, I feel kindly enough to the worst of them. It is such a sad thing to be born a sneaking fellow, so much worse than to inherit a hump-back or a couple of club-feet, that I sometimes feel as if we ought to love the crippled souls, if I may use this expression, with a certain tenderness which we need not waste on noble natures. One who is born with such congenital incapacity that nothing can make a gentleman of him is entitled, not to our wrath, but to our profoundest sympathy. But as we cannot help hating the sight of these people, just as we do that of physical deformities, we gradually eliminate them from our society,—we love them, but open the window and let them go. By the time decent people reach middle age they have weeded their circle pretty well of these unfortunates, unless they have a taste for such animals; in which case, no matter what their position may be, there is something, you may be sure, in their natures akin to that of their wretched parasites.

—The divinity-student wished to know what I thought of affinities, as well as of antipathies; did I believe in love at first sight?

Sir,—said I,—all men love all women. That is the *prima-facie* aspect of the case. The Court of Nature assumes the law to be, that all men do so; and the individual man is bound to show cause why he does not love any particular woman. A man, says one of my old black-letter law-books, may show divers good reasons, as thus: He hath not seen the person named in the indictment; she is of tender age, or the reverse of that; she hath certain personal disqualifications,—as, for instance, she is a blackamoor, or hath an ill-favored countenance; or, his capacity of loving being limited, his affections are engrossed by a previous comer; and so of other conditions. Not the less is it true that he is bound by duty and inclined by nature to love each and every woman. Therefore it is that each woman virtually summons every man to show cause why he doth not love her. This is not by written document, or direct speech, for the most part, but

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by certain signs of silk, gold, and other materials, which say to all men,—Look on me and love, as in duty bound. Then the man pleadeth his special incapacity, whatsoever that may be,—as, for instance, impecuniosity, or that he hath one or many wives in his household, or that he is of mean figure, or small capacity; of which reasons it may be noted, that the first is, according to late decisions, of chiefest authority.—So far the old law-book. But there is a note from an older authority, saying that every woman doth also love each and every man, except there be some good reason to the contrary; and a very observing friend of mine, a young unmarried clergyman, tells me, that, so far as his experience goes, he has reason to think the ancient author had fact to justify his statement.

I'll tell you how it is with the pictures of women we fall in love with at first sight.

—We a'n't talking about pictures,—said the landlady's daughter, —we're talking about women.

I understood that we were speaking of love at sight,—I remarked, mildly.—Now, as all a man knows about a woman whom he looks at is just what a picture as big as a copper, or a “nickel,” rather, at the bottom of his eye can teach him, I think I am right in saying we are talking about the pictures of women.—Well, now, the reason why a man is not desperately in love with ten thousand women at once is just that which prevents all our portraits being distinctly seen upon that wall. They all *are* painted there by reflection from our faces, but because *all* of them are painted on each spot, and each on the same surface, and many other objects at the same time, no one is seen as a picture. But darken a chamber and let a single pencil of rays in through a key-hole, then you have a picture on the wall. We never fall in love with a woman in distinction from women, until we can get an image of her through a pin-hole; and then we can see nothing else, and nobody but ourselves can see the image in our mental camera-obscura.

—My friend, the Poet, tells me he has to leave town whenever the anniversaries come round.

What's the difficulty?—Why, they all want him to get up and make speeches, or songs, or toasts; which is just the very thing he doesn't want to do. He is an old story, he says, and hates to show on these occasions. But they tease him, and coax him, and can't do without him, and feel all over his poor weak head until they get their fingers on the fontanelle, (the Professor will tell you what this means,—he says the one at the top of the head always remains open in poets,) until, by gentle pressure on that soft pulsating spot, they stupefy him to the point of acquiescence.



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There are times, though, he says, when it is a pleasure, before going to some agreeable meeting, to rush out into one's garden and clutch up a handful of what grows there,—weeds and violets together,—not cutting them off, but pulling them up by the roots with the brown earth they grow in sticking to them. That's his idea of a post-prandial performance. Look here, now. These verses I am going to read you, he tells me, were pulled up by the roots just in that way, the other day.—Beautiful entertainment,—names there on the plates that flow from all English-speaking tongues as familiarly as *and* or *the*; entertainers known wherever good poetry and fair title-pages are held in esteem; guest a kind-hearted, modest, genial, hopeful poet, who sings to the hearts of his countrymen, the British people, the songs of good cheer which the better days to come, as all honest souls trust and believe, will turn into the prose of common life. My friend, the Poet, says you must not read such a string of verses too literally. If he trimmed it nicely below, you wouldn't see the roots, he says, and he likes to keep them, and a little of the soil clinging to them.

This is the farewell my friend, the Poet, read to his and our friend, the Poet:-

A GOOD TIME GOING!

Brave singer of the coming time,
Sweet minstrel of the joyous present,
Crowned with the noblest wreath of rhyme,
The holly-leaf of Ayrshire's peasant,
Good-bye! Good-bye!—Our hearts and hands,
Our lips in honest Saxon phrases,
Cry, God be with him, till he stands
His feet among the English daisies!

'Tis here we part;—for other eyes
The busy deck, the flattering streamer,
The dripping arms that plunge and rise,
The waves in foam, the ship in tremor,
The kerchiefs waving from the pier,
The cloudy pillar gliding o'er him,
The deep blue desert, lone and drear,
With heaven above and home before him!

His home!—the Western giant smiles,
And twirls the spotty globe to find it;—
This little speck the British Isles?
'Tis but a freckle,—never mind it!—
He laughs, and all his prairies roll,
Each gurgling cataract roars and chuckles,



And ridges stretched from pole to pole
Heave till they crack their iron knuckles!

But memory blushes at the sneer,
And Honor turns with frown defiant,
And Freedom, leaning on her spear,
Laughs louder than the laughing giant:-
"An islet is a world," she said,
"When glory with its dust has blended,
And Britain kept her noble dead
Till earth and seas and skies are rended!"

Beneath each swinging forest-bough
Some arm as stout in death reposes,—
From wave-washed foot to heaven-kissed brow
Her valor's life-blood runs in roses;
Nay, let our brothers of the West
Write smiling in their florid pages,
One-half her soil has walked the rest
In poets, heroes, martyrs, sages!

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Hugged in the clinging billow's clasp,
From sea-weed fringe to mountain heather,
The British oak with rooted grasp
Her slender handful holds together;—
With cliffs of white and bowers of green,
And Ocean narrowing to caress her,
And hills and threaded streams between,—
Our little mother isle, God bless her!

In earth's broad temple where we stand,
Fanned by the eastern gales that brought us,
We hold the missal in our hand,
Bright with the lines our Mother taught us;
Where'er its blazoned page betrays
The glistening links of gilded fetters,
Behold, the half-turned leaf displays
Her rubric stained in crimson letters!

Enough! To speed a parting friend
'Tis vain alike to speak and listen;—
Yet stay,—these feeble accents blend
With rays of light from eyes that glisten.
Good-bye! once more,—and kindly tell
In words of peace the young world's story,—
And say, besides,—we love too well
Our mother's soil, our father's glory!

When my friend, the Professor, found that my friend, the Poet, had been coming out in this full-blown style, he got a little excited, as you may have seen a canary, sometimes, when another strikes up. The Professor says he knows he can lecture, and thinks he can write verses. At any rate, he has often tried, and now he was determined to try again. So when some professional friends of his called him up, one day, after a feast of reason and a regular "freshet" of soul which had lasted two or three hours, he read them these verses. He introduced them with a few remarks, he told me, of which the only one he remembered was this: that he had rather write a single line which one among them should think worth remembering than set them all laughing with a string of epigrams. It was all right, I don't doubt; at any rate, that was his fancy then, and perhaps another time he may be obstinately hilarious; however, it may be that he is growing graver, for time is a fact so long as clocks and watches continue to go, and a cat can't be a kitten always, as the old gentleman opposite said the other day.

You must listen to this seriously, for I think the Professor was very much in earnest when he wrote it.



THE TWO ARMIES.

As Life's unending column pours,
Two marshalled hosts are seen,—
Two armies on the trampled shores
That Death flows black between.

One marches to the drum-beat's roll,
The wide-mouthed clarion's bray,
And bears upon a crimson scroll,
"Our glory is to slay."

One moves in silence by the stream,
With sad, yet watchful eyes,
Calm as the patient planet's gleam
That walks the clouded skies.

Along its front no sabres shine,
No blood-red pennons wave;
Its banner bears the single line,
"Our duty is to save."

For those no death-bed's lingering shade;
At Honor's trumpet-call,
With knitted brow and lifted blade
In Glory's arms they fall.



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For these no clashing falchions bright,
No stirring battle-cry;
The bloodless stabber calls by night,—
Each answers, “Here am I!”

For those the sculptor’s laurelled bust,
The builder’s marble piles,
The anthems pealing o’er their dust
Through long cathedral aisles.

For these the blossom-sprinkled turf
That floods the lonely graves,
When Spring rolls in her sea-green surf
In flowery-foaming waves.

Two paths lead upward from below,
And angels wait above,
Who count each burning life-drop’s flow,
Each falling tear of Love.

Though from the Hero’s bleeding breast
Her pulses Freedom drew,
Though the white lilies in her crest
Sprang from that scarlet dew,—

While Valor’s haughty champions wait
Till all their scars are shown,
Love walks unchallenged through the gate,
To sit beside the Throne!

CHAPTER X

[The schoolmistress came down with a rose in her hair,—a fresh June rose. She has been walking early; she has brought back two others,—one on each cheek.

I told her so, in some such pretty phrase as I could muster for the occasion. Those two blush-roses I just spoke of turned into a couple of damasks. I suppose all this went through my mind, for this was what I went on to say:-]

I love the damask rose best of all. The flowers our mothers and sisters used to love and cherish, those which grow beneath our eaves and by our doorstep, are the ones we always love best. If the Houyhnhnms should ever catch me, and, finding me particularly vicious and unmanageable, send a man-tamer to Rarefy me, I’ll tell you what drugs he

would have to take and how he would have to use them. Imagine yourself reading a number of the Houyhnhnm Gazette, giving an account of such an experiment.

“Man-taming extraordinary.

“The soft-hoofed semi-quadroped recently captured was subjected to the art of our distinguished man-tamer in presence of a numerous assembly. The animal was led in by two stout ponies, closely confined by straps to prevent his sudden and dangerous tricks of shoulder-hitting and foot-striking. His countenance expressed the utmost degree of ferocity and cunning.

*“The operator took a handful of *budding lilac-leaves*, and crushing them slightly between his hoofs, so as to bring out their peculiar fragrance, fastened them to the end of a long pole and held them towards the creature. Its expression changed in an instant,—it drew in their fragrance eagerly, and attempted to seize them with its soft split hoofs. Having thus quieted his suspicious subject, the operator proceeded to tie a *blue hyacinth* to the end of the pole and held it out towards the wild animal. The effect was magical. Its eyes filled as if with raindrops, and its lips trembled as it pressed them to the flower. After this it was perfectly quiet, and brought a measure of corn to the man-tamer, without showing the least disposition to strike with the feet or hit from the shoulder.”*

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That will do for the Houyhnhnm Gazette.—Do you ever wonder why poets talk so much about flowers? Did you ever hear of a poet who did not talk about them? Don't you think a poem, which, for the sake of being original, should leave them out, would be like those verses where the letter A or E or some other is omitted? No,—they will bloom over and over again in poems as in the summer fields, to the end of time, always old and always new. Why should we be more shy of repeating ourselves than the spring be tired of blossoms or the night of stars? Look at Nature. She never wearies of saying over her floral pater-noster. In the crevices of Cyclopean walls, —in the dust where men lie, dust also,—on the mounds that bury huge cities, the wreck of Nineveh and the Babel-heap,—still that same sweet prayer and benediction. The Amen! of Nature is always a flower.

Are you tired of my trivial personalities,—those splashes and streaks of sentiment, sometimes perhaps of sentimentality, which you may see when I show you my heart's corolla as if it were a tulip? Pray, do not give yourself the trouble to fancy me an idiot whose conceit it is to treat himself as an exceptional being. It is because you are just like me that I talk and know that you will listen. We are all splashed and streaked with sentiments,—not with precisely the same tints, or in exactly the same patterns, but by the same hand and from the same palette.

I don't believe any of you happen to have just the same passion for the blue hyacinth which I have,—very certainly not for the crushed lilac-leaf-buds; many of you do not know how sweet they are. You love the smell of the sweet-fern and the bayberry-leaves, I don't doubt; but I hardly think that the last bewitches you with young memories as it does me. For the same reason I come back to damask roses, after having raised a good many of the rarer varieties. I like to go to operas and concerts, but there are queer little old homely sounds that are better than music to me. However, I suppose it's foolish to tell such things.

—It is pleasant to be foolish at the right time,—said the divinity-student;—saying it, however, in one of the dead languages, which I think are unpopular for summer-reading, and therefore do not bear quotation as such.

Well, now,—said I,—suppose a good, clean, wholesome-looking countryman's cart stops opposite my door.—Do I want any huckleberries?—If I do not, there are those that do. Thereupon my soft-voiced handmaid bears out a large tin pan, and then the wholesome countryman, heaping the peck-measure, spreads his broad hands around its lower arc to confine the wild and frisky berries, and so they run nimbly along the narrowing channel until they tumble rustling down in a black cascade and tinkle on the resounding metal beneath.—I won't say that this rushing huckleberry hail-storm has not more music for me than the "Anvil Chorus."

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—I wonder how my great trees are coming on this summer.

—Where are your great trees, Sir?—said the divinity-student.

Oh, all round about New England. I call all trees mine that I have put my wedding-ring on, and I have as many tree-wives as Brigham Young has human ones.

—One set's as green as the other,—exclaimed a boarder, who has never been identified.

They're all Bloomers,—said the young fellow called John.

[I should have rebuked this trifling with language, if our landlady's daughter had not asked me just then what I meant by putting my wedding-ring on a tree.]

Why, measuring it with my thirty-foot tape, my dear,—said I,—I have worn a tape almost out on the rough barks of our old New England elms and other big trees.—Don't you want to hear me talk trees a little now? That is one of my specialities.

[So they all agreed that they should like to hear me talk about trees.]

I want you to understand, in the first place, that I have a most intense, passionate fondness for trees in general, and have had several romantic attachments to certain trees in particular. Now, if you expect me to hold forth in a "scientific" way about my tree-loves,—to talk, for instance, of the *Ulmus Americana*, and describe the ciliated edges of its samara, and all that,—you are an anserine individual, and I must refer you to a dull friend who will discourse to you of such matters. What should you think of a lover who should describe the idol of his heart in the language of science, thus: Class, Mammalia; Order, Primates; Genus, *Homo*; Species, *Europeus*; Variety, Brown; Individual, Ann Eliza; Dental Formula

2-2 1-1 2-2 3-3
i—c—p—m—
2-2 1-1 2-2 3-3'

and so on?

No, my friends, I shall speak of trees as we see them, love them, adore them in the fields, where they are alive, holding their green sun-shades over our heads, talking to us with their hundred thousand whispering tongues, looking down on us with that sweet meekness which belongs to huge, but limited organisms,—which one sees in the brown eyes of oxen, but most in the patient posture, the outstretched arms, and the heavy-drooping robes of these vast beings endowed with life, but not with soul,—which outgrow us and outlive us, but stand helpless,—poor things!—while Nature dresses and undresses them, like so many full-sized, but under-witted children.

Did you ever read old Daddy Gilpin? Slowest of men, even of English men; yet delicious in his slowness, as is the light of a sleepy eye in woman. I always supposed "Dr. Syntax" was written to make fun of him. I have a whole set of his works, and am very proud of it, with its gray paper, and open type, and long ff, and orange-juice landscapes. The Pere Gilpin had the kind of science I like in the study of Nature,—a little less observation than White of Selborne, but a little more poetry.—Just think of applying the Linnaean system to an elm! Who cares how many stamens or pistils that little brown flower, which comes out before the leaf, may have to classify it by? What we want is the meaning, the character, the expression of a tree, as a kind and as an individual.

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There is a mother-idea in each particular kind of tree, which, if well marked, is probably embodied in the poetry of every language. Take the oak, for instance, and we find it always standing as a type of strength and endurance. I wonder if you ever thought of the single mark of supremacy which distinguishes this tree from all our other forest-trees? All the rest of them shirk the work of resisting gravity; the oak alone defies it. It chooses the horizontal direction for its limbs, so that their whole weight may tell,—and then stretches them out fifty or sixty feet, so that the strain may be mighty enough to be worth resisting. You will find, that, in passing from the extreme downward droop of the branches of the weeping-willow to the extreme upward inclination of those of the poplar, they sweep nearly half a circle. At 90 degrees the oak stops short; to slant upward another degree would mark infirmity of purpose; to bend downwards, weakness of organization. The American elm betrays something of both; yet sometimes, as we shall see, puts on a certain resemblance to its sturdier neighbor.

It won't do to be exclusive in our taste about trees. There is hardly one of them which has not peculiar beauties in some fitting place for it. I remember a tall poplar of monumental proportions and aspect, a vast pillar of glossy green, placed on the summit of a lofty hill, and a beacon to all the country round. A native of that region saw fit to build his house very near it, and, having a fancy that it might blow down some time or other, and exterminate himself and any incidental relatives who might be "stopping" or "tarrying" with him,—also laboring under the delusion that human life is under all circumstances to be preferred to vegetable existence,—had the great poplar cut down. It is so easy to say, "It is only a poplar!" and so much harder to replace its living cone than to build a granite obelisk!

I must tell you about some of my tree-wives. I was at one period of my life much devoted to the young lady-population of Rhode Island, a small, but delightful State in the neighborhood of Pawtucket. The number of inhabitants being not very large, I had leisure, during my visits to the Providence Plantations, to inspect the face of the country in the intervals of more fascinating studies of physiognomy. I heard some talk of a great elm a short distance from the locality just mentioned. "Let us see the great elm,"—I said, and proceeded to find it,—knowing that it was on a certain farm in a place called Johnston, if I remember rightly. I shall never forget my ride and my introduction to the great Johnston elm.

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I always tremble for a celebrated tree when I approach it for the first time. Provincialism has no scale of excellence in man or vegetable; it never knows a first-rate article of either kind when it has it, and is constantly taking second and third rate ones for Nature's best. I have often fancied the tree was afraid of me, and that a sort of shiver came over it as over a betrothed maiden when she first stands before the unknown to whom she has been plighted. Before the measuring-tape the proudest tree of them all quails and shrinks into itself. All those stories of four or five men stretching their arms around it and not touching each other's fingers, if one's pacing the shadow at noon and making it so many hundred feet, die upon its leafy lips in the presence of the awful ribbon which has strangled so many false pretensions.

As I rode along the pleasant way, watching eagerly for the object of my journey, the rounded tops of the elms rose from time to time at the road-side. Wherever one looked taller and fuller than the rest, I asked myself,—“Is this it?” But as I drew nearer, they grew smaller,—or it proved, perhaps, that two standing in a line had looked like one, and so deceived me. At last, all at once, when I was not thinking of it,—I declare to you it makes my flesh creep when I think of it now,—all at once I saw a great, green cloud swelling in the horizon, so vast, so symmetrical, of such Olympian majesty and imperial supremacy among the lesser forest-growths, that my heart stopped short, then jumped at my ribs as a hunter springs at a five-barred gate, and I felt all through me, without need of uttering the words,—“This is it!”

You will find this tree described, with many others, in the excellent Report upon the Trees and Shrubs of Massachusetts. The author has given my friend the Professor credit for some of his measurements, but measured this tree himself, carefully. It is a grand elm for size of trunk, spread of limbs, and muscular development,—one of the first, perhaps the first, of the first class of New England elms.

The largest actual girth I have ever found at five feet from the ground is in the great elm lying a stone's throw or two north of the main road (if my points of compass are right) in Springfield. But this has much the appearance of having been formed by the union of two trunks growing side by side.

The West-Springfield elm and one upon Northampton meadows, belong also to the first class of trees.

There is a noble old wreck of an elm at Hatfield, which used to spread its claws out over a circumference of thirty-five feet or more before they covered the foot of its bole up with earth. This is the American elm most like an oak of any I have ever seen.

The Sheffield elm is equally remarkable for size and perfection of form. I have seen nothing that comes near it in Berkshire County, and few to compare with it anywhere. I am not sure that I remember any other first-class elms in New England, but there may be many.

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—What makes a first-class elm?—Why, size, in the first place, and chiefly. Anything over twenty feet of clear girth, five feet above the ground, and with a spread of branches a hundred feet across, may claim that title, according to my scale. All of them, with the questionable exception of the Springfield tree above referred to, stop, so far as my experience goes, at about twenty-two or twenty-three feet of girth and a hundred and twenty of spread.

Elms of the second class, generally ranging from fourteen to eighteen feet, are comparatively common. The queen of them all is that glorious tree near one of the churches in Springfield. Beautiful and stately she is beyond all praise. The “great tree” on Boston Common comes in the second rank, as does the one at Cohasset, which used to have, and probably has still, a head as round as an apple-tree, and that at Newburyport, with scores of others which might be mentioned. These last two have perhaps been over-celebrated. Both, however, are pleasing vegetables. The poor old Pittsfield elm lives on its past reputation. A wig of false leaves is indispensable to make it presentable.

[I don't doubt there may be some monster-elm or other, vegetating green, but inglorious, in some remote New England village, which only wants a sacred singer to make it celebrated. Send us your measurements,—(certified by the postmaster, to avoid possible imposition,)—circumference five feet from soil, length of line from bough-end to bough-end, and we will see what can be done for you.]

—I wish somebody would get us up the following work:-

SYLVA NOVANGLICA.

Photographs of New England Elms and other Trees, taken upon the Same Scale of Magnitude. With Letter-Press Descriptions, by a Distinguished Literary Gentleman. Boston & Co. 185..

The same camera should be used,—so far as possible,—at a fixed distance. Our friend, who has given us so many interesting figures in his “Trees of America,” must not think this Prospectus invades his province; a dozen portraits, with lively descriptions, would be a pretty complement to his large work, which, so far as published, I find excellent. If my plan were carried out, and another series of a dozen English trees photographed on the same scale the comparison would be charming.

It has always been a favorite idea of mine to bring the life of the Old and the New World face to face, by an accurate comparison of their various types of organization. We should begin with man, of course; institute a large and exact comparison between the development of *la pianta umana*, as Alfieri called it, in different sections of each country, in the different callings, at different ages, estimating height, weigh, force by the

dynamometer and the spirometer, and finishing off with a series of typical photographs, giving the principal national physiognomies. Mr. Hutchinson has given us some excellent English data to begin with.

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Then I would follow this up by contrasting the various parallel forms of life in the two continents. Our naturalists have often referred to this incidentally or expressly; but the animus of Nature in the two half globes of the planet is so momentous a point of interest to our race, that it should be made a subject of express and elaborate study. Go out with me into that walk which we call *the mall*, and look at the English and American elms. The American elm is tall, graceful, slender-sprayed, and drooping as if from languor. The English elm is compact, robust, holds its branches up, and carries its leaves for weeks longer than our own native tree.

Is this typical of the creative force on the two sides of the ocean, or not? Nothing but a careful comparison through the whole realm of life can answer this question.

There is a parallelism without identity in the animal and vegetable life of the two continents, which favors the task of comparison in an extraordinary manner. Just as we have two trees alike in many ways, yet not the same, both elms, yet easily distinguishable, just so we have a complete flora and a fauna, which, parting from the same ideal, embody it with various modifications. Inventive power is the only quality of which the Creative Intelligence seems to be economical; just as with our largest human minds, that is the divinest of faculties, and the one that most exhausts the mind which exercises it. As the same patterns have very commonly been followed, we can see which is worked out in the largest spirit, and determine the exact limitations under which the Creator places the movement of life in all its manifestations in either locality. We should find ourselves in a very false position, if it should prove that Anglo-Saxons can't live here, but die out, if not kept up by fresh supplies, as Dr. Knox and other more or less wise persons have maintained. It may turn out the other way, as I have heard one of our literary celebrities argue,—and though I took the other side, I liked his best,—that the American is the Englishman reinforced.

—Will you walk out and look at those elms with me after breakfast?—I said to the schoolmistress.

[I am not going to tell lies about it, and say that she blushed, —as I suppose she ought to have done, at such a tremendous piece of gallantry as that was for our boarding-house. On the contrary, she turned a little pale,—but smiled brightly and said,—Yes, with pleasure, but she must walk towards her school.—She went for her bonnet.—The old gentleman opposite followed her with his eyes, and said he wished he was a young fellow. Presently she came down, looking very pretty in her half-mourning bonnet, and carrying a school-book in her hand.]

MY FIRST WALK WITH THE SCHOOLMISTRESS.

This is the shortest way,—she said, as we came to a corner.—Then we won't take it,—said I.—The schoolmistress laughed a little, and said she was ten minutes early, so she could go round.

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We walked under Mr. Paddock's row of English elms. The gray squirrels were out looking for their breakfasts, and one of them came toward us in light, soft, intermittent leaps, until he was close to the rail of the burial-ground. He was on a grave with a broad blue-slate-stone at its head, and a shrub growing on it. The stone said this was the grave of a young man who was the son of an Honorable gentleman, and who died a hundred years ago and more. —Oh, yes, *died*,—with a small triangular mark in one breast, and another smaller opposite, in his back, where another young man's rapier had slid through his body; and so he lay down out there on the Common, and was found cold the next morning, with the night-dews and the death-dews mingled on his forehead.

Let us have one look at poor Benjamin's grave,—said I.—His bones lie where his body was laid so long ago, and where the stone says they lie,—which is more than can be said of most of the tenants of this and several other burial-grounds.

[The most accursed act of Vandalism ever committed within my knowledge was the uprooting of the ancient gravestones in three at least of our city burialgrounds, and one at least just outside the city, and planting them in rows to suit the taste for symmetry of the perpetrators. Many years ago, when this disgraceful process was going on under my eyes, I addressed an indignant remonstrance to a leading journal. I suppose it was deficient in literary elegance, or too warm in its language; for no notice was taken of it, and the hyena-horror was allowed to complete itself in the face of daylight. I have never got over it. The bones of my own ancestors, being entombed, lie beneath their own tablet; but the upright stones have been shuffled about like chessmen, and nothing short of the Day of Judgment will tell whose dust lies beneath any of those records, meant by affection to mark one small spot as sacred to some cherished memory. Shame! shame! shame!—that is all I can say. It was on public thoroughfares, under the eye of authority, that this infamy was enacted. The red Indians would have known better; the selectmen of an African kraal-village would have had more respect for their ancestors. I should like to see the gravestones which have been disturbed all removed, and the ground levelled, leaving the flat tombstones; epitaphs were never famous for truth, but the old reproach of “Here *lies*” never had such a wholesale illustration as in these outraged burial-places, where the stone does lie above, and the bones do not lie beneath.]

Stop before we turn away, and breathe a woman's sigh over poor Benjamin's dust. Love killed him, I think. Twenty years old, and out there fighting another young fellow on the Common, in the cool of that old July evening;—yes, there must have been love at the bottom of it.

The schoolmistress dropped a rosebud she had in her hand, through the rails, upon the grave of Benjamin Woodbridge. That was all her comment upon what I told her.—How women love Love! said I;—but she did not speak.

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We came opposite the head of a place or court running eastward from the main street. —Look down there,—I said,—My friend the Professor lived in that house at the left hand, next the further corner, for years and years. He died out of it, the other day. —Died?—said the schoolmistress.—Certainly,—said I.—We die out of houses, just as we die out of our bodies. A commercial smash kills a hundred men's houses for them, as a railroad crash kills their mortal frames and drives out the immortal tenants. Men sicken of houses until at last they quit them, as the soul leaves its body when it is tired of its infirmities. The body has been called "the house we live in"; the house is quite as much the body we live in. Shall I tell you some things the Professor said the other day? —Do!—said the schoolmistress.

A man's body,—said the Professor,—is whatever is occupied by his will and his sensibility. The small room down there, where I wrote those papers you remember reading, was much more a portion of my body than a paralytic's senseless and motionless arm or leg is of his.

The soul of a man has a series of concentric envelopes round it, like the core of an onion, or the innermost of a nest of boxes. First, he has his natural garment of flesh and blood. Then, his artificial integuments, with their true skin of solid stuffs, their cuticle of lighter tissues, and their variously-tinted pigments. Thirdly, his domicile, be it a single chamber or a stately mansion. And then, the whole visible world, in which Time buttons him up as in a loose outside wrapper.

You shall observe,—the Professor said,—for, like Mr. John Hunter and other great men, he brings in that *shall* with great effect sometimes,—you shall observe that a man's clothing or series of envelopes does after a certain time mould itself upon his individual nature. We know this of our hats, and are always reminded of it when we happen to put them on wrong side foremost. We soon find that the beaver is a hollow cast of the skull, with all its irregular bumps and depressions. Just so all that clothes a man, even to the blue sky which caps his head,—a little loosely,—shapes itself to fit each particular being beneath it. Farmers, sailors, astronomers, poets, lovers, condemned criminals, all find it different, according to the eyes with which they severally look.

But our houses shape themselves palpably on our inner and outer natures. See a householder breaking up and you will be sure of it. There is a shell-fish which builds all manner of smaller shells into the walls of its own. A house is never a home until we have crusted it with the spoils of a hundred lives besides those of our own past. See what these are and you can tell what the occupant is.

I had no idea,—said the Professor,—until I pulled up my domestic establishment the other day, what an enormous quantity of roots I had been making during the years I was planted there. Why, there wasn't a nook or a corner that some fibre had not worked its way into; and when I gave the last wrench, each of them seemed to shriek like a mandrake, as it broke its hold and came away.

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There is nothing that happens, you know, which must not inevitably, and which does not actually, photograph itself in every conceivable aspect and in all dimensions. The infinite galleries of the Past await but one brief process and all their pictures will be called out and fixed forever. We had a curious illustration of the great fact on a very humble scale. When a certain bookcase, long standing in one place, for which it was built, was removed, there was the exact image on the wall of the whole, and of many of its portions. But in the midst of this picture was another,—the precise outline of a map which had hung on the wall before the bookcase was built. We had all forgotten everything about the map until we saw its photograph on the wall. Then we remembered it, as some day or other we may remember a sin which has been built over and covered up, when this lower universe is pulled away from before the wall of Infinity, where the wrong-doing stands self-recorded.

The Professor lived in that house a long time,—not twenty years, but pretty near it. When he entered that door, two shadows glided over the threshold; five lingered in the doorway when he passed through it for the last time,—and one of the shadows was claimed by its owner to be longer than his own. What changes he saw in that quiet place! Death rained through every roof but his; children came into life, grew to maturity, wedded, faded away, threw themselves away; the whole drama of life was played in that stock-company's theatre of a dozen houses, one of which was his, and no deep sorrow or severe calamity ever entered his dwelling. Peace be to those walls, forever,—the Professor said,—for the many pleasant years he has passed within them!

The Professor has a friend, now living at a distance, who has been with him in many of his changes of place, and who follows him in imagination with tender interest wherever he goes.—In that little court, where he lived in gay loneliness so long,—

—in his autumnal sojourn by the Connecticut, where it comes loitering down from its mountain fastnesses like a great lord, swallowing up the small proprietary rivulets very quietly as it goes, until it gets proud and swollen and wantons in huge luxurious oxbows about the fair Northampton meadows, and at last overflows the oldest inhabitant's memory in profligate freshets at Hartford and all along its lower shores,—up in that caravansary on the banks of the stream where Ledyard launched his log canoe, and the jovial old Colonel used to lead the Commencement processions, —where blue Ascutney looked down from the far distance, and the hills of Beulah, as the Professor always called them, rolled up the opposite horizon in soft climbing masses, so suggestive of the Pilgrim's Heavenward Path that he used to look through his old "Dollond" to see if the Shining Ones were not within range of sight,—sweet visions, sweetest in those Sunday walks which carried them by the peaceful common, through the solemn village lying in cataleptic stillness under the shadow of the rod of Moses, to the terminus of their harmless stroll,—the patulous fage, in the Professor's classic dialect,—the spreading beech, in more familiar phrase,—[stop and breathe here a moment, for the sentence is not done yet, and we have another long journey before us,]—

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—and again once more up among those other hills that shut in the amber-flowing Housatonic,—dark stream, but clear, like the lucid orbs that shine beneath the lids of auburn-haired, sherry-wine-eyed demi-blondes,—in the home overlooking the winding stream and the smooth, flat meadow; looked down upon by wild hills, where the tracks of bears and catamounts may yet sometimes be seen upon the winter snow; facing the twin summits which rise in the far North, the highest waves of the great land-storm in all this billowy region,—suggestive to mad fancies of the breasts of a half-buried Titaness, stretched out by a stray thunderbolt, and hastily hidden away beneath the leaves of the forest,—in that home where seven blessed summers were passed, which stand in memory like the seven golden candlesticks in the beatific vision of the holy dreamer,—

—in that modest dwelling we were just looking at, not glorious, yet not unlovely in the youth of its drab and mahogany,—full of great and little boys' playthings from top to bottom,—in all these summer or winter nests he was always at home and always welcome.

This long articulated sigh of reminiscences,—this calenture which shows me the maple-shadowed plains of Berkshire and the mountain-circled green of Grafton beneath the salt waves which come feeling their way along the wall at my feet, restless and soft-touching as blind men's busy fingers,—is for that friend of mine who looks into the waters of the Patapsco and sees beneath them the same visions which paint themselves for me in the green depths of the Charles.

—Did I talk all this off to the schoolmistress?—Why, no,—of course not. I have been talking with you, the reader, for the last ten minutes. You don't think I should expect any woman to listen to such a sentence as that long one, without giving her a chance to put in a word?

—What did I say to the schoolmistress?—Permit me one moment. I don't doubt your delicacy and good-breeding; but in this particular case, as I was allowed the privilege of walking alone with a very interesting young woman, you must allow me to remark, in the classic version of a familiar phrase, used by our Master Benjamin Franklin, it is nullum tui negotii.

When the schoolmistress and I reached the school-room door, the damask roses I spoke of were so much heightened in color by exercise that I felt sure it would be useful to her to take a stroll like this every morning, and made up my mind I would ask her to let me join her again.

EXTRACT FROM MY PRIVATE JOURNAL. (To be burned unread.)

I am afraid I have been a fool; for I have told as much of myself to this young person as if she were of that ripe and discreet age which invites confidence and expansive utterance. I have been low-spirited and listless, lately,—it is coffee, I think, —(I observe

that which is bought *ready-ground* never affects the head,)—and I notice that I tell my secrets too easily when I am downhearted.

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There are inscriptions on our hearts, which, like that on Dighton Rock, are never to be seen except at dead-low tide.

There is a woman's footstep on the sand at the side of my deepest ocean-buried inscription!

—Oh, no, no, no! a thousand times, no!—Yet what is this which has been shaping itself in my soul?—Is it a thought?—is it a dream? —is it a *passion*?—Then I know what comes next.

—The Asylum stands on a bright and breezy hill; those glazed corridors are pleasant to walk in, in bad weather. But there are iron bars to all the windows. When it is fair, some of us can stroll outside that very high fence. But I never see much life in those groups I sometimes meet;—and then the careful man watches them so closely! How I remember that sad company I used to pass on fine mornings, when I was a schoolboy! —B., with his arms full of yellow weeds,—ore from the gold mines which he discovered long before we heard of California,—Y., born to millions, crazed by too much plum-cake, (the boys said,) dogged, explosive,—made a Polyphemus of my weak-eyed schoolmaster, by a vicious flirt with a stick,—(the multi-millionnaires sent him a trifle, it was said, to buy another eye with; but boys are jealous of rich folks, and I don't doubt the good people made him easy for life,)—how I remember them all!

I recollect, as all do, the story of the Hall of Eblis, in "Vathek," and how each shape, as it lifted its hand from its breast, showed its heart,—a burning coal. The real Hall of Eblis stands on yonder summit. Go there on the next visiting-day, and ask that figure crouched in the corner, huddled up like those Indian mummies and skeletons found buried in the sitting posture, to lift its hand,—look upon its heart, and behold, not fire, but ashes.—No, I must not think of such an ending! Dying would be a much more gentlemanly way of meeting the difficulty. Make a will and leave her a house or two and some stocks, and other little financial conveniences, to take away her necessity for keeping school.—I wonder what nice young man's feet would be in my French slippers before six months were over! Well, what then? If a man really loves a woman, of course he wouldn't marry her for the world, if he were not quite sure that he was the best person she could by any possibility marry.

—It is odd enough to read over what I have just been writing.—It is the merest fancy that ever was in the world. I shall never be married. She will; and if she is as pleasant as she has been so far, I will give her a silver tea-set, and go and take tea with her and her husband, sometimes. No coffee, I hope, though,—it depresses me sadly. I feel very miserably;—they must have been grinding it at home.—Another morning walk will be good for me, and I don't doubt the schoolmistress will be glad of a little fresh air before school.



—The throbbing flushes of the poetical intermittent have been coming over me from time to time of late. Did you ever see that electrical experiment which consists in passing a flash through letters of gold-leaf in a darkened room, whereupon some name or legend springs out of the darkness in characters of fire?



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There are songs all written out in my soul, which I could read, if the flash might pass through them,—but the fire must come down from heaven. Ah! but what if the stormy nimbus of youthful passion has blown by, and one asks for lightning from the ragged cirrus of dissolving aspirations, or the silvered cumulus of sluggish satiety? I will call on her whom the dead poets believed in, whom living ones no longer worship,—the immortal maid, who, name her what you will,—Goddess, Muse, Spirit of Beauty,—sits by the pillow of every youthful poet, and bends over his pale forehead until her tresses lie upon his cheek and rain their gold into his dreams.

MUSA.

O my lost Beauty!—hast thou folded quite
Thy wings of morning light
Beyond those iron gates
Where Life crowds hurrying to the haggard Fates,
And Age upon his mound of ashes waits
To chill our fiery dreams,
Hot from the heart of youth plunged in his icy streams?

Leave me not fading in these weeds of care,
Whose flowers are silvered hair!—
Have I not loved thee long,
Though my young lips have often done thee wrong
And vexed thy heaven-tuned ear with careless song?
Ah, wilt thou yet return,
Bearing thy rose-hued torch, and bid thine altar burn?

Come to me!—I will flood thy silent shine
With my soul's sacred wine,
And heap thy marble floors
As the wild spice-trees waste their fragrant stores
In leafy islands walled with madrepores
And lapped in Orient seas,
When all their feathery palm toss, plume-like, in the breeze.

Come to me!—thou shalt feed on honied words,
Sweeter than song of birds;—
No wailing bulbul's throat,
No melting dulcimer's melodious note,
When o'er the midnight wave its murmurs float,
Thy ravished sense might soothe
With flow so liquid-soft, with strain so velvet-smooth.



Thou shalt be decked with jewels, like a queen,
Sought in those bowers of green
Where loop the clustered vines
And the close-clinging dulcamara twines,—
Pure pearls of Maydew where the moonlight shines,
And Summer's fruited gems,
And coral pendants shorn from Autumn's berried stems.

Sit by me drifting on the sleepy waves,—
Or stretched by grass-grown graves,
Whose gray, high-shouldered stones,
Carved with old names Life's time-worn roll disowns,
Lean, lichen-spotted, o'er the crumbled bones
Still slumbering where they lay
While the sad Pilgrim watched to scare the wolf away.

Spread o'er my couch thy visionary wing!
Still let me dream and sing,—
Dream of that winding shore
Where scarlet cardinals bloom,—for me no more,—
The stream with heaven beneath its liquid floor,
And clustering nenuphars
Sprinkling its mirrored blue like golden-chaliced stars!

Come while their balms the linden-blossoms shed!—
Come while the rose is red,—
While blue-eyed Summer smiles
On the green ripples round you sunken piles
Washed by the moon-wave warm from Indian isles,
And on the sultry air
The chestnuts spread their palms like holy men in prayer!

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Oh, for thy burning lips to fire my brain
With thrills of wild sweet pain!—
On life's autumnal blast,
Like shrivelled leaves, youth's, passion-flowers are cast,—
Once loving thee, we love thee to the last!—
Behold thy new-decked shrine,
And hear once more the voice that breathed "Forever thine!"

CHAPTER XI

[The company looked a little flustered one morning when I came in, —so much so, that I inquired of my neighbor, the divinity-student,) what had been going on. It appears that the young fellow whom they call John had taken advantage of my being a little late (I having been rather longer than usual dressing that morning) to circulate several questions involving a quibble or play upon words,—in short, containing that indignity to the human understanding, condemned in the passages from the distinguished moralist of the last century and the illustrious historian of the present, which I cited on a former occasion, and known as a *pun*. After breakfast, one of the boarders handed me a small roll of paper containing some of the questions and their answers. I subjoin two or three of them, to show what a tendency there is to frivolity and meaningless talk in young persons of a certain sort, when not restrained by the presence of more reflective natures.—It was asked, "Why tertian and quartan fevers were like certain short-lived insects." Some interesting physiological relation would be naturally suggested. The inquirer blushes to find that the answer is in the paltry equivocation, that they *skip* a day or two.—"Why an Englishman must go to the Continent to weaken his grog or punch." The answer proves to have no relation whatever to the temperance-movement, as no better reason is given than that island—(or, as it is absurdly written, *ile and*) water won't mix.—But when I came to the next question and its answer, I felt that patience ceased to be a virtue. "Why an onion is like a piano" is a query that a person of sensibility would be slow to propose; but that in an educated community an individual could be found to answer it in these words,—"Because it smell odious," quasi, it's melodious,—is not credible, but too true. I can show you the paper.

Dear reader, I beg your pardon for repeating such things. I know most conversations reported in books are altogether above such trivial details, but folly will come up at every table as surely as purslain and chickweed and sorrel will come up in gardens. This young fellow ought to have talked philosophy, I know perfectly well; but he didn't,—he made jokes.]

I am willing,—I said,—to exercise your ingenuity in a rational and contemplative manner. —No, I do not proscribe certain forms of philosophical speculation which involve an approach to the absurd or the ludicrous, such as you may find, for example, in the folio of the Reverend Father Thomas Sanchez, in his famous Disputations, "De Sancto

Matrimonio.” I will therefore turn this levity of yours to profit by reading you a rhymed problem, wrought out by my friend the Professor.



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*The deacon's masterpiece:
Or the wonderful "One-hoss-shay."
A logical story.*

Have you heard of the wonderful one-shay,
That was built in such a logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it—ah, but stay,
I'll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits,—
Have you ever heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five.
Georgius Secundus was then alive,—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive.
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,
And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on the terrible Earthquake-day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss-shay.

Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot,—
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,
In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace,—lurking still
Find it somewhere you must and will,—
Above or below, or within or without,—
And that's the reason, beyond a doubt,
A chaise *breasts down*, but doesn't *wear out*.

But the Deacon swore (as Deacons do,
With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell yeou,")
He would build one shay to beat the taown
'n' the keounty 'n' all the kentry raoun';
It should be so built that it COULDN' break daown—
—"Fur," said the Deacon, "'t's mighty plain
Thut the weakes' place mus' stan the strain;
'n' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain,
Is only jest
T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."



So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That couldn't be split nor bent nor broke,—
That was for spokes and floor and sills;
He sent for lancewood to make the thills;
The crossbars were ash, from the straightest trees;
The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these;
The hubs of logs from the "Settler's ellum,"—
Last of its timber,—they couldn't sell 'em,
Never an axe had seen their chips,
And the wedges flew from between their lips,
Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;
Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin too,
Steel of the finest, bright and blue;
Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;
Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide
Found in the pit when the tanner died.
That was the way he "put her through."—
"There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll dew."

Do! I tell you, I father guess
She was a wonder, and nothing less!
Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,
Deacon and deaconess dropped away,
Children and grand-children—where were they?
But there stood the stout old one-hoss-shay
As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake-day!



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Eighteen hundred;—it came and found
The Deacon's Masterpiece strong and sound.
Eighteen hundred increased by ten;—
“Hahnsum kerridge” they called it then.
Eighteen hundred and twenty came;—
Running as usual; much the same.
Thirty and forty at last arrive,
And then come fifty, and *fifty-five*.

Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large;
Take it.—You're welcome.—No extra charge.)

First of November,—the Earthquake-day.—
There are traces of age in the one-hoss-shay.
A general flavor of mild decay,
But nothing local, as one may say.
There couldn't be,—for the Deacon's art
Had made it so like in every part
That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
And the panels just as strong as the floor,
And the whippetree neither less nor more,
And the back-crossbar as strong as the fore,
And spring and axle and hub encore.
And yet, as *A whole*, it is past a doubt
In another hour it will be *worn out*!

First of November, 'Fifty-five!
This morning the parson takes a drive.
Now, small boys, get out of the way!
Here comes the wonderful one-horse-shay,
Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
“Huddup!” said the parson.—Off went they.

The parson was working his Sunday's text,—
Had got to *fifthly*, and stopped perplexed
At what the—Moses—was coming next.
All at once the horse stood still,



Close by the meet'n-house on the hill.
—First a shiver, and then a thrill,
Then something decidedly like a spill,—
And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
At half-past nine by the meet'n-house clock,—
Just the hour of the Earthquake shock!
—What do you think the parson found,
When he got up and stared around?
The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
As if it had been to the mill and ground!
You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
How it went to pieces all at once,—
All at once, and nothing first,—
Just as bubbles do when they burst.

End of the wonderful one-hoss-shay.
Logic is logic. That's all I say.

—I think there is one habit,—I said to our company a day or two afterwards—worse than that of punning. It is the gradual substitution of cant or flash terms for words which truly characterize their objects. I have known several very genteel idiots whose whole vocabulary had deliquesced into some half dozen expressions. All things fell into one of two great categories, —*fast* or *slow*. Man's chief end was to be

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a *brick*. When the great calamities of life overtook their friends, these last were spoken of as being a *good deal cut up*. Nine-tenths of human existence were summed up in the single word, *bore*. These expressions come to be the algebraic symbols of minds which have grown too weak or indolent to discriminate. They are the blank checks of intellectual bankruptcy;—you may fill them up with what idea you like; it makes no difference, for there are no funds in the treasury upon which they are drawn. Colleges and good-for-nothing smoking-clubs are the places where these conversational fungi spring up most luxuriantly. Don't think I undervalue the proper use and application of a cant word or phrase. It adds piquancy to conversation, as a mushroom does to a sauce. But it is no better than a toadstool, odious to the sense and poisonous to the intellect, when it spawns itself all over the talk of men and youths capable of talking, as it sometimes does. As we hear flash phraseology, it is commonly the dishwater from the washings of English dandyism, school-boy or full-grown, wrung out of a three-volume novel which had sopped it up, or decanted from the pictured urn of Mr. Verdant Green, and diluted to suit the provincial climate.

—The young fellow called John spoke up sharply and said, it was “rum” to hear me “pitchin’ into fellers” for “goin’ it in the slang line,” when I used all the flash words myself just when I pleased.

—I replied with my usual forbearance.—Certainly, to give up the algebraic symbol, because A or B is often a cover for ideal nihility, would be unwise. I have heard a child laboring to express a certain condition, involving a hitherto undescribed sensation (as it supposed,) all of which could have been sufficiently explained by the participle—*bored*. I have seen a country-clergyman, with a one-story intellect and a one-horse vocabulary, who has consumed his valuable time (and mine) freely, in developing an opinion of a brother-minister's discourse which would have been abundantly characterized by a peach-down-lipped sophomore in the one word—*slow*. Let us discriminate, and be shy of absolute proscription. I am omniverbivorous by nature and training. Passing by such words as are poisonous, I can swallow most others, and chew such as I cannot swallow.

Dandies are not good for much, but they are good for something. They invent or keep in circulation those conversational blank checks or counters just spoken of, which intellectual capitalists may sometimes find it worth their while to borrow of them. They are useful, too, in keeping up the standard of dress, which, but for them, would deteriorate, and become, what some old fools would have it, a matter of convenience, and not of taste and art. Yes, I like dandies well enough,—on one condition.

—What is that, Sir?—said the divinity-student.

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—That they have pluck. I find that lies at the bottom of all true dandyism. A little boy dressed up very fine, who puts his finger in his mouth and takes to crying, if other boys make fun of him, looks very silly. But if he turns red in the face and knotty in the fists, and makes an example of the biggest of his assailants, throwing off his fine Leghorn and his thickly-buttoned jacket, if necessary, to consummate the act of justice, his small toggery takes on the splendors of the crested helmet that frightened Astyanax. You remember that the Duke said his dandy officers were his best officers. The “Sunday blood,” the super-superb sartorial equestrian of our annual Fast-day, is not imposing or dangerous. But such fellows as Brummel and D’Orsay and Byron are not to be snubbed quite so easily. Look out for “la main de fer sous le gant de velours,” (which I printed in English the other day without quotation-marks, thinking whether any scarabaeus criticus would add this to his globe and roll in glory with it into the newspapers, —which he didn’t do it, in the charming pleonasm of the London language, and therefore I claim the sole merit of exposing the same.) A good many powerful and dangerous people have had a decided dash of dandyism about them. There was Alcibiades, the “curled son of Clinias,” an accomplished young man, but what would be called a “swell” in these days. There was Aristoteles, a very distinguished writer, of whom you have heard,—a philosopher, in short, whom it took centuries to learn, centuries to unlearn, and is now going to take a generation or more to learn over again. Regular dandy, he was. So was Marcus Antonius; and though he lost his game, he played for big stakes, and it wasn’t his dandyism that spoiled his chance. Petrarca was not to be despised as a scholar or a poet, but he was one of the same sort. So was Sir Humphrey Davy; so was Lord Palmerston, formerly, if I am not forgetful. Yes,—a dandy is good for something as such; and dandies such as I was just speaking of have rocked this planet like a cradle,—aye, and left it swinging to this day.—Still, if I were you, I wouldn’t go to the tailor’s, on the strength of these remarks, and run up a long bill which will render pockets a superfluity in your next suit. Elegans “nascitur, non fit.” A man is born a dandy, as he is born a poet. There are heads that can’t wear hats; there are necks that can’t fit cravats; there are jaws that can’t fill out collars—(Willis touched this last point in one of his earlier ambrotypes, if I remember rightly); there are tournures nothing can humanize, and movements nothing can subdue to the gracious suavity or elegant languor or stately serenity which belong to different styles of dandyism.

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We are forming an aristocracy, as you may observe, in this country,—not a gratia-Dei, nor a juredivino one,—but a de-facto upper stratum of being, which floats over the turbid waves of common life like the iridescent film you may have seen spreading over the water about our wharves,—very splendid, though its origin may have been tar, tallow, train-oil, or other such unctuous commodities. I say, then, we are forming an aristocracy; and, transitory as its individual life often is, it maintains itself tolerably, as a whole. Of course, money is its corner-stone. But now observe this. Money kept for two or three generations transforms a race,—I don't mean merely in manners and hereditary culture, but in blood and bone. Money buys air and sunshine, in which children grow up more kindly, of course, than in close, back streets; it buys country-places to give them happy and healthy summers, good nursing, good doctoring, and the best cuts of beef and mutton. When the spring-chickens come to market—I beg your pardon,—that is not what I was going to speak of. As the young females of each successive season come on, the finest specimens among them, other things being equal, are apt to attract those who can afford the expensive luxury of beauty. The physical character of the next generation rises in consequence. It is plain that certain families have in this way acquired an elevated type of face and figure, and that in a small circle of city-connections one may sometimes find models of both sexes which one of the rural counties would find it hard to match from all its townships put together. Because there is a good deal of running down, of degeneration and waste of life, among the richer classes, you must not overlook the equally obvious fact I have just spoken of,—which in one or two generations more will be, I think, much more patent than just now.

The weak point in our chryso-aristocracy is the same I have alluded to in connection with cheap dandyism. Its thorough manhood, its high-caste gallantry, are not so manifest as the plate-glass of its windows and the more or less legitimate heraldry of its coach-panels. It is very curious to observe of how small account military folks are held among our Northern people. Our young men must gild their spurs, but they need not win them. The equal division of property keeps the younger sons of rich people above the necessity of military service. Thus the army loses an element of refinement, and the moneyed upper class forgets what it is to count heroism among its virtues. Still I don't believe in any aristocracy without pluck as its backbone. Ours may show it when the time comes, if it ever does come.

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—These United States furnish the greatest market for intellectual *green fruit* of all the places in the world. I think so, at any rate. The demand for intellectual labor is so enormous and the market so far from nice, that young talent is apt to fare like unripe gooseberries,—get plucked to make a fool of. Think of a country which buys eighty thousand copies of the “Proverbial Philosophy,” while the author’s admiring countrymen have been buying twelve thousand! How can one let his fruit hang in the sun until it gets fully ripe, while there are eighty thousand such hungry mouths ready to swallow it and proclaim its praises? Consequently, there never was such a collection of crude pippins and half-grown windfalls as our native literature displays among its fruits. There are literary green-groceries at every corner, which will buy anything, from a button-pear to a pine-apple. It takes a long apprenticeship to train a whole people to reading and writing. The temptation of money and fame is too great for young people. Do I not remember that glorious moment when the late Mr.— we won’t say who,—editor of the —we won’t say what, offered me the sum of fifty cents per double-columned quarto page for shaking my young boughs over his foolscap apron? Was it not an intoxicating vision of gold and glory? I should doubtless have revelled in its wealth and splendor, but for learning that the *fifty cents* was to be considered a rhetorical embellishment, and by no means a literal expression of past fact or present intention.

—Beware of making your moral staple consist of the negative virtues. It is good to abstain, and teach others to abstain, from all that is sinful or hurtful. But making a business of it leads to emaciation of character, unless one feeds largely also on the more nutritious diet of active sympathetic benevolence.

—I don’t believe one word of what you are saying,—spoke up the angular female in black bombazine.

I am sorry you disbelieve it, Madam,—I said, and added softly to my next neighbor,—but you prove it.

The young fellow sitting near me winked; and the divinity-student said, in an undertone, —Optime dictum.

Your talking Latin,—said I,—reminds me of an odd trick of one of my old tutors. He read so much of that language, that his English half turned into it. He got caught in town, one hot summer, in pretty close quarters, and wrote, or began to write, a series of city pastorals. Eclogues he called them, and meant to have published them by subscription. I remember some of his verses, if you want to hear them.—You, Sir, (addressing myself to the divinity-student,) and all such as have been through college, or, what is the same thing, received an honorary degree, will understand them without a dictionary. The old man had a great deal to say about “aestivation,” as he called it, in opposition, as one might say, to hibernation. Intramural aestivation, or town-life in summer, he would say, is a peculiar form of suspended existence, or semi-asphyxia.

One wakes up from it about the beginning of the last week in September. This is what I remember of his poem:-



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AESTIVATION.

An Unpublished Poem, by my late Latin Tutor

In candent ire the solar splendor flames;
The foles, languescant, pend from arid rames;
His humid front the cive, anhelant, wipes,
And dreams of erring on ventiferous ripes.

How dulce to vive occult to mortal eyes,
Dorm on the herb with none to supervise,
Carp the suave berries from the crescent vine,
And bibe the flow from longicaudate kine!

To me, alas! no verdurous visions come,
Save yon exiguous pool's conferva-scum,—
No concave vast repeats the tender hue
That laves my milk-jug with celestial blue!

Me wretched! Let me curr to quercine shades
Effund your albid hausts, lactiferous maids!
Oh, might I vole to some umbrageous clump,—
Depart,—be off,—excede,—evade,—erump!

—I have lived by the sea-shore and by the mountains.—No, I am not going to say which is best. The one where your place is is the best for you. But this difference there is: you can domesticate mountains, but the sea is ferae naturae. You may have a hut, or know the owner of one, on the mountain-side; you see a light half-way up its ascent in the evening, and you know there is a home, and you might share it. You have noted certain trees, perhaps; you know the particular zone where the hemlocks look so black in October, when the maples and beeches have faded. All its reliefs and intaglios have electrotyped themselves in the medallions that hang round the walls of your memory's chamber.—The sea remembers nothing. It is feline. It licks your feet,—its huge flanks purr very pleasantly for you; but it will crack your bones and eat you, for all that, and wipe the crimsoned foam from its jaws as if nothing had happened. The mountains give their lost children berries and water; the sea mocks their thirst and lets them die. The mountains have a grand, stupid, lovable tranquillity; the sea has a fascinating, treacherous intelligence. The mountains lie about like huge ruminants, their broad backs awful to look upon, but safe to handle. The sea smooths its silver scales until you cannot see their joints,—but their shining is that of a snake's belly, after all.—In deeper suggestiveness I find as great a difference. The mountains dwarf mankind and foreshorten the procession of its long generations. The sea drowns out humanity and

time; it has no sympathy with either; for it belongs to eternity, and of that it sings its monotonous song forever and ever.

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Yet I should love to have a little box by the seashore. I should love to gaze out on the wild feline element from a front window of my own, just as I should love to look on a caged panther, and see it, stretch its shining length, and then curl over and lap its smooth sides, and by-and-by begin to lash itself into rage and show its white teeth and spring at its bars, and howl the cry of its mad, but, to me, harmless fury.—And then,—to look at it with that inward eye,—who does not love to shuffle off time and its concerns, at intervals,—to forget who is President and who is Governor, what race he belongs to, what language he speaks, which golden-headed nail of the firmament his particular planetary system is hung upon, and listen to the great liquid metronome as it beats its solemn measure, steadily swinging when the solo or duet of human life began, and to swing just as steadily after the human chorus has died out and man is a fossil on its shores?

—What should decide one, in choosing a summer residence? —Constitution, first of all. How much snow could you melt in an hour, if you were planted in a hogshead of it? Comfort is essential to enjoyment. All sensitive people should remember that persons in easy circumstances suffer much more cold in summer—that is, the warm half of the year—than in winter, or the other half. You must cut your climate to your constitution, as much as your clothing to your shape. After this, consult your taste and convenient. But if you would be happy in Berkshire, you must carry mountains in your brain; and if you would enjoy Nahant, you must have an ocean in your soul. Nature plays at dominos with you; you must match her piece, or she will never give it up to you.

—The schoolmistress said, in a rather mischievous way, that she was afraid some minds or souls would be a little crowded, if they took in the Rocky Mountains or the Atlantic.

Have you ever read the little book called “The Stars and the Earth?”—said I.—Have you seen the Declaration of Independence photographed in a surface that a fly’s foot would cover? The forms or conditions of Time and Space, as Kant will tell you, are nothing in themselves,—only our way of looking at things. You are right, I think, however, in recognizing the category of Space as being quite as applicable to minds as to the outer world. Every man of reflection is vaguely conscious of an imperfectly-defined circle which is drawn about his intellect. He has a perfectly clear sense that the fragments of his intellectual circle include the curves of many other minds of which he is cognizant. He often recognizes these as manifestly concentric with his own, but of less radius. On the other hand, when we find a portion of an arc on the outside of our own, we say it *intersects* ours, but are very slow to confess or to see that it *circumscribes* it. Every now and then a man’s mind is stretched by a new idea or sensation, and never shrinks back to its former dimensions. After looking at the Alps, I felt that my mind had been stretched beyond the limits of its elasticity, and fitted so loosely on my old ideas of space that I had to spread these to fit it.

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—If I thought I should ever see the Alps!—said the schoolmistress.

Perhaps you will, some time or other,—I said.

It is not very likely,—she answered.—I have had one or two opportunities, but I had rather be anything than governess in a rich family.

[Proud, too, you little soft-voiced woman! Well, I can't say I like you any the worse for it. How long will school-keeping take to kill you? Is it possible the poor thing works with her needle, too? I don't like those marks on the side of her forefinger.

Tableau. Chamouni. Mont Blanc in full view. Figures in the foreground; two of them standing apart; one of them a gentleman of—oh,—ah,—yes! the other a lady in a white cashmere, leaning on his shoulder.—The ingenuous reader will understand that this was an internal, private, personal, subjective diorama, seen for one instant on the background of my own consciousness, and abolished into black nonentity by the first question which recalled me to actual life, as suddenly as if one of those iron shop-blinds (which I always pass at dusk with a shiver, expecting to stumble over some poor but honest shop-boy's head, just taken off by its sudden and unexpected descent, and left outside upon the sidewalk) had come down in front of it “by the run.”]

—Should you like to hear what moderate wishes life brings one to at last? I used to be very ambitious,—wasteful, extravagant, and luxurious in all my fancies. Read too much in the “Arabian Nights.” Must have the lamp,—couldn't do without the ring. Exercise every morning on the brazen horse. Plump down into castles as full of little milk-white princesses as a nest is of young sparrows. All love me dearly at once.—Charming idea of life, but too high-colored for the reality. I have outgrown all this; my tastes have become exceedingly primitive,—almost, perhaps, ascetic. We carry happiness into our condition, but must not hope to find it there. I think you will be willing to hear some lines which embody the subdued and limited desires of my maturity.

CONTENTMENT.

“Man wants but little here below.”

Little I ask, my wants are few;
I only wish a hut of stone,
(A *very plain* brown stone will do,) *That I may call my own;—*
And close at hand is such a one,
In yonder street that fronts the sun.

Plain food is quite enough for me;
Three courses are as good as ten;—



If Nature can subsist on three,
Thank heaven for three. Amen!
I always thought cold victual nice;—
My *choice* would be vanilla-ice.

I care not much for gold or land;—
Give me a mortgage here and there,—
Some good bank-stock,—some note of hand,
Or trifling railroad share;—
I only ask that Fortune send
A *little* more than I shall spend.

Honors are silly toys, I know,
And titles are but empty names;—
I would, *perhaps*, be Plenipo,—
But only near St. James;—
I'm very sure I should not care
To fill our Gubernator's chair.



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Jewels are baubles; 'tis a sin
To care for such unfruitful things;—
One good-sized diamond in a pin,—
Some, *not so large*, in rings,—
A ruby and a pearl, or so,
Will do for me;—I laugh at show.

My dame should dress in cheap attire;
(Good, heavy silks are never dear;—
I own perhaps I *might* desire
Some shawls of true cashmere,—
Some marrowy crapes of China silk,
Like wrinkled skins on scalded milk.

I would not have the horse I drive
So fast that folks must stop and stare
An easy gait—two, forty-five—
Suits me; I do not care;—
Perhaps, for just a *single spurt*,
Some seconds less would do no hurt.

Of pictures, I should like to own
Titians and Raphaels three or four,—
I love so much their style and tone,—
One Turner, and no more,—
(A landscape,—foreground golden dirt
The sunshine painted with a squirt.)

Of books but few,—some fifty score
For daily use, and bound for wear;
The rest upon an upper floor;—
Some *little* luxury *there*
Of red morocco's gilded gleam,
And vellum rich as country cream.

Busts, cameos, gems,—such things as these,
Which others often show for pride,
I value for their power to please,
And selfish churls deride;—
one Stradivarius, I confess,
two Meerschauts, I would fain possess.

Wealth's wasteful tricks I will not learn,
Nor ape the glittering upstart fool;—



Shall not carved tables serve my turn,
But *all* must be of buhl?
Give grasping pomp its double share,—
I ask but *one* recumbent chair.

Thus humble let me live and die,
Nor long for Midas' golden touch,
If Heaven more generous gifts deny,
I shall not miss them *much*,—
Too grateful for the blessing lent
Of simple tastes and mind content!

MY LAST WALK WITH THE SCHOOLMISTRESS. (A Parenthesis.)

I can't say just how many walks she and I had taken together before this one. I found the effect of going out every morning was decidedly favorable on her health. Two pleasing dimples, the places for which were just marked when she came, played, shadowy, in her freshening cheeks when she smiled and nodded good-morning to me from the school-house-steps.

I am afraid I did the greater part of the talking. At any rate, if I should try to report all that I said during the first half-dozen walks we took together, I fear that I might receive a gentle hint from my friends the publishers, that a separate volume, at my own risk and expense, would be the proper method of bringing them before the public.



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—I would have a woman as true as Death. At the first real lie which works from the heart outward, she should be tenderly chloroformed into a better world, where she can have an angel for a governess, and feed on strange fruits which will make her all over again, even to her bones and marrow.—Whether gifted with the accident of beauty or not, she should have been moulded in the rose-red clay of Love, before the breath of life made a moving mortal of her. Love-capacity is a congenital endowment; and I think, after a while, one gets to know the warm-hued natures it belongs to from the pretty pipe-clay counterfeits of them.—Proud she may be, in the sense of respecting herself; but pride in the sense of contemning others less gifted than herself, deserves the two lowest circles of a vulgar woman's Inferno, where the punishments are Smallpox and Bankruptcy.—She who nips off the end of a brittle courtesy, as one breaks the tip of an icicle, to bestow upon those whom she ought cordially and kindly to recognize, proclaims the fact that she comes not merely of low blood, but of bad blood. Consciousness of unquestioned position makes people gracious in proper measure to all; but if a woman puts on airs with her real equals, she has something about herself or her family she is ashamed of, or ought to be. Middle, and more than middle-aged people, who know family histories, generally see through it. An official of standing was rude to me once. Oh, that is the maternal grandfather,—said a wise old friend to me,—he was a boor.—Better too few words, from the woman we love, than too many: while she is silent, Nature is working for her; while she talks, she is working for herself.—Love is sparingly soluble in the words of men; therefore they speak much of it; but one syllable of woman's speech can dissolve more of it than a man's heart can hold.

—Whether I said any or all of these things to the schoolmistress, or not,—whether I stole them out of Lord Bacon,—whether I cribbed them from Balzac,—whether I dipped them from the ocean of Tupperian wisdom,—or whether I have just found them in my head, laid there by that solemn fowl, Experience, (who, according to my observation, cackles oftener than she drops real live eggs,) I cannot say. Wise men have said more foolish things,—and foolish men, I don't doubt, have said as wise things. Anyhow, the schoolmistress and I had pleasant walks and long talks, all of which I do not feel bound to report.

—You are a stranger to me, Ma'am.—I don't doubt you would like to know all I said to the schoolmistress.—I sha'n't do it;—I had rather get the publishers to return the money you have invested in this. Besides, I have forgotten a good deal of it. I shall tell only what I like of what I remember.

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—My idea was, in the first place, to search out the picturesque spots which the city affords a sight of, to those who have eyes. I know a good many, and it was a pleasure to look at them in company with my young friend. There were the shrubs and flowers in the Franklin-Place front-yards or borders; Commerce is just putting his granite foot upon them. Then there are certain small seraglio-gardens, into which one can get a peep through the crevices of high fences,—one in Myrtle Street, or backing on it,—here and there one at the North and South Ends. Then the great elms in Essex Street. Then the stately horse-chestnuts in that vacant lot in Chambers Street, which hold their outspread hands over your head, (as I said in my poem the other day,) and look as if they were whispering, “May grace, mercy, and peace be with you!”—and the rest of that benediction. Nay, there are certain patches of ground, which, having lain neglected for a time, Nature, who always has her pockets full of seeds, and holes in all her pockets, has covered with hungry plebeian growths, which fight for life with each other, until some of them get broad-leaved and succulent, and you have a coarse vegetable tapestry which Raphael would not have disdained to spread over the foreground of his masterpiece. The Professor pretends that he found such a one in Charles Street, which, in its dare-devil impudence of rough-and-tumble vegetation, beat the pretty-behaved flower-beds of the Public Garden as ignominiously as a group of young tatterdemalions playing pitch-and-toss beats a row of Sunday-school-boys with their teacher at their head.

But then the Professor has one of his burrows in that region, and puts everything in high colors relating to it. That is his way about everything. I hold any man cheap,—he said,—of whom nothing stronger can be uttered than that all his geese are swans.—How is that, Professor?—said I;—I should have set you down for one of that sort.—Sir,—said he,—I am proud to say, that Nature has so far enriched me, that I cannot own so much as a duck without seeing in it as pretty a swan as ever swam the basin in the garden of the Luxembourg. And the Professor showed the whites of his eyes devoutly, like one returning thanks after a dinner of many courses.

I don’t know anything sweeter than this leaking in of Nature through all the cracks in the walls and floors of cities. You heap up a million tons of hewn rocks on a square mile or two of earth which was green once. The trees look down from the hill-sides and ask each other, as they stand on tiptoe,—“What are these people about?” And the small herbs at their feet look up and whisper back,—“We will go and see.” So the small herbs pack themselves up in the least possible bundles, and wait until the wind steals to them at night and whispers, “Come with me.” Then they go softly with it into the great city,—one to a cleft in the pavement, one to a spout on the roof, one to

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a seam in the marbles over a rich gentleman's bones, and one to the grave without a stone where nothing but a man is buried,—and there they grow, looking down on the generations of men from mouldy roofs, looking up from between the less-trodden pavements, looking out through iron cemetery-railings. Listen to them, when there is only a light breath stirring, and you will hear them saying to each other,—“Wait awhile!” The words run along the telegraph of those narrow green lines that border the roads leading from the city, until they reach the slope of the hills, and the trees repeat in low murmurs to each other,—“Wait awhile!” By-and-by the flow of life in the streets ebbs, and the old leafy inhabitants—the smaller tribes always in front—saunter in, one by one, very careless seemingly, but very tenacious, until they swarm so that the great stones gape from each other with the crowding of their roots, and the feldspar begins to be picked out of the granite to find them food. At last the trees take up their solemn line of march, and never rest until they have encamped in the market-place. Wait long enough and you will find an old dotting oak hugging a huge worn block in its yellow underground arms; that was the cornerstone of the State-House. Oh, so patient she is, this imperturbable Nature!

—Let us cry!—

But all this has nothing to do with my walks and talks with the schoolmistress. I did not say that I would not tell you something about them. Let me alone, and I shall talk to you more than I ought to, probably. We never tell our secrets to people that pump for them.

Books we talked about, and education. It was her duty to know something of these, and of course she did. Perhaps I was somewhat more learned than she, but I found that the difference between her reading and mine was like that of a man's and a woman's dusting a library. The man flaps about with a bunch of feathers; the woman goes to work softly with a cloth. She does not raise half the dust, nor fill her own eyes and mouth with it,—but she goes into all the corners, and attends to the leaves as much as the covers. —Books are the *negative* pictures of thought, and the more sensitive the mind that receives their images, the more nicely the finest lines are reproduced. A woman, (of the right kind,) reading after a man, follows him as Ruth followed the reapers of Boaz, and her gleanings are often the finest of the wheat.

But it was in talking of Life that we came most clearly together. I thought I knew something about that,—that I could speak or write about it somewhat to the purpose.

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To take up this fluid earthly being of ours as a sponge sucks up water,—to be steeped and soaked in its realities as a hide fills its pores lying seven years in a tan-pit,—to have winnowed every wave of it as a mill-wheel works up the stream that runs through the flume upon its float-boards,—to have curled up in the keenest spasms and flattened out in the laxest languors of this breathing-sickness, which keeps certain parcels of matter uneasy for three or four score years,—to have fought all the devils and clasped all the angels of its delirium,—and then, just at the point when the white-hot passions have cooled down to cherry-red, plunge our experience into the ice-cold stream of some human language or other, one might think would end in a rhapsody with something of spring and temper in it. All this I thought my power and province.

The schoolmistress had tried life, too. Once in a while one meets with a single soul greater than all the living pageant which passes before it. As the pale astronomer sits in his study with sunken eyes and thin fingers, and weighs Uranus or Neptune as in a balance, so there are meek, slight women who have weighed all which this planetary life can offer, and hold it like a bauble in the palm of their slender hands. This was one of them. Fortune had left her, sorrow had baptized her; the routine of labor and the loneliness of almost friendless city-life were before her. Yet, as I looked upon her tranquil face, gradually regaining a cheerfulness which was often sprightly, as she became interested in the various matters we talked about and places we visited, I saw that eye and lip and every shifting lineament were made for love,—unconscious of their sweet office as yet, and meeting the cold aspect of Duty with the natural graces which were meant for the reward of nothing less than the Great Passion.

—I never addressed one word of love to the schoolmistress in the course of these pleasant walks. It seemed to me that we talked of everything but love on that particular morning. There was, perhaps, a little more timidity and hesitancy on my part than I have commonly shown among our people at the boarding-house. In fact, I considered myself the master at the breakfast-table; but, somehow, I could not command myself just then so well as usual. The truth is, I had secured a passage to Liverpool in the steamer which was to leave at noon,—with the condition, however, of being released in case circumstances occurred to detain me. The schoolmistress knew nothing about all this, of course, as yet.

It was on the Common that we were walking. The *mall*, or boulevard of our Common, you know, has various branches leading from it in different directions. One of these runs down from opposite Joy Street southward across the whole length of the Common to Boylston Street. We called it the long path, and were fond of it.

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I felt very weak indeed (though of a tolerably robust habit) as we came opposite the head of this path on that morning. I think I tried to speak twice without making myself distinctly audible. At last I got out the question,—Will you take the long path with me? —Certainly,—said the schoolmistress,—with much pleasure.—Think, —I said,—before you answer; if you take the long path with me now, I shall interpret it that we are to part no more!—The schoolmistress stepped back with a sudden movement, as if an arrow had struck her.

One of the long granite blocks used as seats was hard by,—the one you may still see close by the Gingko-tree.—Pray, sit down,—I said.—No, no, she answered, softly,—I will walk the *long path* with you!

—The old gentleman who sits opposite met us walking, arm in arm, about the middle of the long path, and said, very charmingly, —“Good morning, my dears!”

CHAPTER XII

[I did not think it probable that I should have a great many more talks with our company, and therefore I was anxious to get as much as I could into every conversation. That is the reason why you will find some odd, miscellaneous facts here, which I wished to tell at least once, as I should not have a chance to tell them habitually at our breakfast-table.—We’re very free and easy, you know; we don’t read what we don’t like. Our parish is so large, one can’t pretend to preach to all the pews at once. One can’t be all the time trying to do the best of one’s best if a company works a steam fire-engine, the firemen needn’t be straining themselves all day to squirt over the top of the flagstaff. Let them wash some of those lower-story windows a little. Besides, there is no use in our quarrelling now, as you will find out when you get through this paper.]

—Travel, according to my experience, does not exactly correspond to the idea one gets of it out of most books of travels. I am thinking of travel as it was when I made the Grand Tour, especially in Italy. Memory is a net; one finds it full of fish when he takes it from the brook; but a dozen miles of water have run through it without sticking. I can prove some facts about travelling by a story or two. There are certain principles to be assumed,—such as these:—He who is carried by horses must deal with rogues. —To-day’s dinner subtends a larger visual angle than yesterday’s revolution. A mote in my eye is bigger to me than the biggest of Dr. Gould’s private planets.—Every traveller is a self-taught entomologist.—Old jokes are dynamometers of mental tension; an old joke tells better among friends travelling than at home,—which shows that their minds are in a state of diminished, rather than increased vitality. There was a story about “strahps to your pahnts,” which was vastly funny to us fellows—on the road from Milan to Venice. —Caelum, non animum,—travellers change their guineas,

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but not their characters. The bore is the same, eating dates under the cedars of Lebanon, as over a plate of baked beans in Beacon Street.—Parties of travellers have a morbid instinct for “establishing raws” upon each other.—A man shall sit down with his friend at the foot of the Great Pyramid and they will take up the question they had been talking about under “the great elm,” and forget all about Egypt. When I was crossing the Po, we were all fighting about the propriety of one fellow’s telling another that his argument was absurd; one maintaining it to be a perfectly admissible logical term, as proved by the phrase “*reductio ad absurdum*,” the rest badgering him as a conversational bully. Mighty little we troubled ourselves for Padus, the Po, “a river broader and more rapid than the Rhone,” and the times when Hannibal led his grim Africans to its banks, and his elephants thrust their trunks into the yellow waters over which that pendulum ferry-boat was swinging back and forward every ten minutes!

—Here are some of those reminiscences, with morals prefixed, or annexed, or implied.

Lively emotions very commonly do not strike us full in front, but obliquely from the side; a scene or incident in *undress* often affects us more than one in full costume.

“Is this the mighty ocean?—is this all?”

says the Princess in Gebir. The rush that should have flooded my soul in the Coliseum did not come. But walking one day in the fields about the city, I stumbled over a fragment of broken masonry, and lo! the World’s Mistress in her stone girdle—*alta maenia Romae*—rose before me and whitened my cheek with her pale shadow as never before or since.

I used very often, when coming home from my morning’s work at one of the public institutions of Paris, to stop in at the dear old church of St. Etienne du Mont. The tomb of St. Genevieve, surrounded by burning candles and votive tablets, was there; the mural tablet of Jacobus Benignus Winslow was there; there was a noble organ with carved figures; the pulpit was borne on the oaken shoulders of a stooping Samson; and there was a marvellous staircase like a coil of lace. These things I mention from memory, but not all of them together impressed me so much as an inscription on a small slab of marble fixed in one of the walls. It told how this church of St. Stephen was repaired and beautified in the year 16**, and how, during the celebration of its reopening, two girls of the parish (*filles de la paroisse*) fell from the gallery, carrying a part of the balustrade with them, to the pavement, but by a miracle escaped uninjured. Two young girls, nameless, but real presences to my imagination, as much as when they came fluttering down on the tiles with a cry that outscramed the sharpest treble in the *Te Deum*. (Look at Carlyle’s article on Boswell, and see how he speaks of the poor young woman Johnson talked with in the streets one evening.) All the crowd gone but these two “*filles de la paroisse*,”—gone as utterly as the dresses they wore, as the

shoes that were on their feet, as the bread and meat that were in the market on that day.

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Not the great historical events, but the personal incidents that call up single sharp pictures of some human being in its pang or struggle, reach us most nearly. I remember the platform at Berne, over the parapet of which Theobald Weinzapfli's restive horse sprung with him and landed him more than a hundred feet beneath in the lower town, not dead, but sorely broken, and no longer a wild youth, but God's servant from that day forward. I have forgotten the famous bears, and all else.—I remember the Percy lion on the bridge over the little river at Alnwick,—the leaden lion with his tail stretched out straight like a pump-handle,—and why? Because of the story of the village boy who must fain bstride the leaden tail, standing out over the water,—which breaking, he dropped into the stream far below, and was taken out an idiot for the rest of his life.

Arrow-heads must be brought to a sharp point, and the guillotine-axe must have a slanting edge. Something intensely human, narrow, and definate pierces to the seat of our sensibilities more readily than huge occurrences and catastrophes. A nail will pick a lock that defies hatchet and hammer. "The Royal George" went down with all her crew, and Cowper wrote an exquisitely simple poem about it; but the leaf which holds it is smooth, while that which bears the lines on his mother's portrait is blistered with tears.

My telling these recollections sets me thinking of others of the same kind which strike the imagination, especially when one is still young. You remember the monument in Devizes market to the woman struck dead with a lie in her mouth. I never saw that, but it is in the books. Here is one I never heard mentioned;—if any of the "Note and Query" tribe can tell the story, I hope they will. Where is this monument? I was riding on an English stage-coach when we passed a handsome marble column (as I remember it) of considerable size and pretensions.—What is that?—I said.—That, —answered the coachman,—is *the hangman's pillar*. Then he told me how a man went out one night, many years ago, to steal sheep. He caught one, tied its legs together, passed the rope over his head, and started for home. In climbing a fence, the rope slipped, caught him by the neck, and strangled him. Next morning he was found hanging dead on one side of the fence and the sheep on the other; in memory whereof the lord of the manor caused this monument to be erected as a warning to all who love mutton better than virtue. I will send a copy of this record to him or her who shall first set me right about this column and its locality.

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And telling over these old stories reminds me that I have something which may interest architects and perhaps some other persons. I once ascended the spire of Strasburg Cathedral, which is the highest, I think, in Europe. It is a shaft of stone filigree-work, frightfully open, so that the guide puts his arms behind you to keep you from falling. To climb it is a noonday nightmare, and to think of having climbed it crisps all the fifty-six joints of one's twenty digits. While I was on it, "pinnacled dim in the intense inane," a strong wind was blowing, and I felt sure that the spire was rocking. It swayed back and forward like a stalk of rye or a cat-o-nine-tails (bulrush) with a bobolink on it. I mentioned it to the guide, and he said that the spire did really swing back and forward, —I think he said some feet.

Keep any line of knowledge ten years and some other line will intersect it. Long afterwards I was hunting out a paper of Dumeril's in an old journal,—the "Magazin Encyclopedique" for l'an troisieme, (1795,) when I stumbled upon a brief article on the vibrations of the spire of Strasburg Cathedral. A man can shake it so that the movement shall be shown in a vessel of water nearly seventy feet below the summit, and higher up the vibration is like that of an earthquake. I have seen one of those wretched wooden spires with which we very shabbily finish some of our stone churches (thinking that the lidless blue eye of heaven cannot tell the counterfeit we try to pass on it,) swinging like a reed, in a wind, but one would hardly think of such a thing's happening in a stone spire. Does the Bunker-Hill Monument bend in the blast like a blade of grass? I suppose so.

You see, of course, that I am talking in a cheap way;—perhaps we will have some philosophy by and by;—let me work out this thin mechanical vein.—I have something more to say about trees. I have brought down this slice of hemlock to show you. Tree blew down in my woods (that were) in 1852. Twelve feet and a half round, fair girth;—nine feet, where I got my section, higher up. This is a wedge, going to the centre, of the general shape of a slice of apple-pie in a large and not opulent family. Length, about eighteen inches. I have studied the growth of this tree by its rings, and it is curious. Three hundred and forty-two rings. Started, therefore, about 1510. The thickness of the rings tells the rate at which it grew. For five or six years the rate was slow,—then rapid for twenty years. A little before the year 1550 it began to grow very slowly, and so continued for about seventy years. In 1620 it took a new start and grew fast until 1714 then for the most part slowly until 1786, when it started again and grew pretty well and uniformly until within the last dozen years, when it seems to have got on sluggishly.

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Look here. Here are some human lives laid down against the periods of its growth, to which they corresponded. This is Shakspeare's. The tree was seven inches in diameter when he was born; ten inches when he died. A little less than ten inches when Milton was born; seventeen when he died. Then comes a long interval, and this thread marks out Johnson's life, during which the tree increased from twenty-two to twenty-nine inches in diameter. Here is the span of Napoleon's career;—the tree doesn't seem to have minded it.

I never saw the man yet who was not startled at looking on this section. I have seen many wooden preachers,—never one like this. How much more striking would be the calendar counted on the rings of one of those awful trees which were standing when Christ was on earth, and where that brief mortal life is chronicled with the stolid apathy of vegetable being, which remembers all human history as a thing of yesterday in its own dateless existence!

I have something more to say about elms. A relative tells me there is one of great glory in Andover, near Bradford. I have some recollections of the former place, pleasant and other. [I wonder if the old Seminary clock strikes as slowly as it used to. My room-mate thought, when he first came, it was the bell tolling deaths, and people's ages, as they do in the country. He swore —(ministers' sons get so familiar with good words that they are apt to handle them carelessly)—that the children were dying by the dozen, of all ages, from one to twelve, and ran off next day in recess, when it began to strike eleven, but was caught before the clock got through striking.] At the foot of "the hill," down in town, is, or was, a tidy old elm, which was said to have been hooped with iron to protect it from Indian tomahawks, (Credat Hahnemannus,) and to have grown round its hoops and buried them in its wood. Of course, this is not the tree my relative means.

Also, I have a very pretty letter from Norwich, in Connecticut, telling me of two noble elms which are to be seen in that town. One hundred and twenty-seven feet from bough-end to bough-end! What do you say to that? And gentle ladies beneath it, that love it and celebrate its praises! And that in a town of such supreme, audacious, Alpine loveliness as Norwich!—Only the dear people there must learn to call it Norridge, and not be misled by the mere accident of spelling.

NorWICH.
PorCHmouth.
CincinnatiAH.

What a sad picture of our civilization!

I did not speak to you of the great tree on what used to be the Colman farm, in Deerfield, simply because I had not seen it for many years, and did not like to trust my recollection. But I had it in memory, and even noted down, as one of the finest trees in

symmetry and beauty I had ever seen. I have received a document, signed by two citizens of a neighboring town, certified by the postmaster and a selectman,

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and these again corroborated, reinforced, and sworn to by a member of that extraordinary college-class to which it is the good fortune of my friend the Professor to belong, who, though he has *formerly* been a member of Congress, is, I believe, fully worthy of confidence. The tree “girts” eighteen and a half feet, and spreads over a hundred, and is a real beauty. I hope to meet my friend under its branches yet; if we don’t have “youth at the prow,” we will have “pleasure at the ’elm.”

And just now, again, I have got a letter about some grand willows in Maine, and another about an elm in Wayland, but too late for anything but thanks.

[And this leads me to say, that I have received a great many communications, in prose and verse since I began printing these notes. The last came this very morning, in the shape of a neat and brief poem, from New Orleans. I could not make any of them public, though sometimes requested to do so. Some of them have given me great pleasure, and encouraged me to believe I had friends whose faces I had never seen. If you are pleased with anything a writer says, and doubt whether to tell him of it, do not hesitate; a pleasant word is a cordial to one, who perhaps thinks he is tiring you, and so becomes tired himself. I purr very loud over a good, honest letter that says pretty things to me.]

—Sometimes very young persons send communications which they want forwarded to editors; and these young persons do not always seem to have right conceptions of these same editors, and of the public, and of themselves. Here is a letter I wrote to one of these young folks, but, on the whole, thought it best not to send. It is not fair to single out one for such sharp advice, where there are hundreds that are in need of it.

Dear Sir,—You seem to be somewhat, but not a great deal, wiser than I was at your age. I don’t wish to be understood as saying too much, for I think, without committing myself to any opinion on my present state, that I was not a Solomon at that stage of development.

You long to “leap at a single bound into celebrity.” Nothing is so common-place as to wish to be remarkable. Fame usually comes to those who are thinking about something else,—very rarely to those who say to themselves, “Go to, now, let us be a celebrated individual!” The struggle for fame, as such, commonly ends in notoriety;—that ladder is easy to climb, but it leads to the pillory which is crowded with fools who could not hold their tongues and rogues who could not hide their tricks.

If you have the consciousness of genius, do something to show it. The world is pretty quick, nowadays, to catch the flavor of true originality; if you write anything remarkable, the magazines and newspapers will find you out, as the school-boys find out where the

ripe apples and pears are. Produce anything really good, and an intelligent editor will jump at it. Don't flatter yourself that any article

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of yours is rejected because you are unknown to fame. Nothing pleases an editor more than to get anything worth having from a new hand. There is always a dearth of really fine articles for a first-rate journal; for, of a hundred pieces received, ninety are at or below the sea-level; some have water enough, but no head; some head enough, but no water; only two or three are from full reservoirs, high up that hill which is so hard to climb.

You may have genius. The contrary is of course probable, but it is not demonstrated. If you have, the world wants you more than you want it. It has not only a desire, but a passion, for every spark of genius that shows itself among us; there is not a bull-calf in our national pasture that can bleat a rhyme but it is ten to one, among his friends, and no takers, that he is the real, genuine, no-mistake Osiris.

Qu'est ce qu'il a fait? What has he done? That was Napoleon's test. What have you done? Turn up the faces of your picture-cards, my boy! You need not make mouths at the public because it has not accepted you at your own fancy-valuation. Do the prettiest thing you can and wait your time.

For the verses you send me, I will not say they are hopeless, and I dare not affirm that they show promise. I am not an editor, but I know the standard of some editors. You must not expect to "leap with a single bound" into the society of those whom it is not flattery to call your betters. When "The Pactolian" has paid you for a copy of verses,—(I can furnish you a list of alliterative signatures, beginning with Annie Aureole and ending with Zoe Zenith,)—when "The Rag-bag" has stolen your piece, after carefully scratching your name out,—when "The Nut-cracker" has thought you worth shelling, and strung the kernel of your cleverest poem, —then, and not till then, you may consider the presumption against you, from the fact of your rhyming tendency, as called in question, and let our friends hear from you, if you think it worth while. You may possibly think me too candid, and even accuse me of incivility; but let me assure you that I am not half so plain-spoken as Nature, nor half so rude as Time. If you prefer the long jolting of public opinion to the gentle touch of friendship, try it like a man. Only remember this,—that, if a bushel of potatoes is shaken in a market-cart without springs to it, the small potatoes always get to the bottom. Believe me, *etc.*, *etc.*

I always think of verse-writers, when I am in this vein; for these are by far the most exacting, eager, self-weighting, restless, querulous, unreasonable literary persons one is like to meet with. Is a young man in the habit of writing verses? Then the presumption is that he is an inferior person. For, look you, there are at least nine chances in ten that he writes *poor* verses. Now the habit of chewing on rhymes without sense and soul to match them is, like that of using any other narcotic, at once a proof of feebleness and a debilitating agent. A young man can get rid of the presumption against him afforded by his writing verses only by convincing us that they are verses worth writing.

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All this sounds hard and rough, but, observe, it is not addressed to any individual, and of course does not refer to any reader of these pages. I would always treat any given young person passing through the meteoric showers which rain down on the brief period of adolescence with great tenderness. God forgive us if we ever speak harshly to young creatures on the strength of these ugly truths, and so sooner or later, smite some tender-souled poet or poetess on the lips who might have sung the world into sweet trances, had we not silenced the matin-song in its first low breathings! Just as my heart yearns over the unloved, just so it sorrows for the ungifted who are doomed to the pangs of an undeceived self-estimate. I have always tried to be gentle with the most hopeless cases. My experience, however, has not been encouraging.

—X. Y., aet. 18, a cheaply-got-up youth, with narrow jaws, and broad, bony, cold, red hands, having been laughed at by the girls in his village, and “got the mitten” (pronounced mittln) two or three times, falls to souling and controlling, and youthing and truthting, in the newspapers. Sends me some strings of verses, candidates for the Orthopedic Infirmary, all of them, in which I learn for the millionth time one of the following facts: either that something about a chime is sublime, or that something about time is sublime, or that something about a chime is concerned with time, or that something about a rhyme is sublime or concerned with time or with a chime. Wishes my opinion of the same, with advice as to his future course.

What shall I do about it? Tell him the whole truth, and send him a ticket of admission to the Institution for Idiots and Feeble-minded Youth? One doesn’t like to be cruel,—and yet one hates to lie. Therefore one softens down the ugly central fact of donkeyism, — recommends study of good models,—that writing verse should be an incidental occupation only, not interfering with the hoe, the needle, the lapstone, or the ledger,—and, above all that there should be no hurry in printing what is written. Not the least use in all this. The poetaster who has tasted type is done for. He is like the man who has once been a candidate for the Presidency. He feeds on the madder of his delusion all his days, and his very bones grow red with the glow of his foolish fancy. One of these young brains is like a bunch of India crackers; once touch fire to it and it is best to keep hands off until it has done popping,—if it ever stops. I have two letters on file; one is a pattern of adulation, the other of impertinence. My reply to the first, containing the best advice I could give, conveyed in courteous language, had brought out the second. There was some sport in this, but Dulness is not commonly a game fish, and only sulks after he is struck. You may set it down as a truth which admits of few exceptions, that those who ask your *opinion* really want your *praise*, and will be contented with nothing less.

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There is another kind of application to which editors, or those supposed to have access to them, are liable, and which often proves trying and painful. One is appealed to in behalf of some person in needy circumstances who wishes to make a living by the pen. A manuscript accompanying the letter is offered for publication. It is not commonly brilliant, too often lamentably deficient. If Rachel's saying is true, that "fortune is the measure of intelligence," then poverty is evidence of limited capacity which it too frequently proves to be, notwithstanding a noble exception here and there. Now an editor is a person under a contract with the public to furnish them with the best things he can afford for his money. Charity shown by the publication of an inferior article would be like the generosity of Claude Duval and the other gentlemen highwaymen, who pitied the poor so much they robbed the rich to have the means of relieving them.

Though I am not and never was an editor, I know something of the trials to which they are submitted. They have nothing to do but to develop enormous calluses at every point of contact with authorship. Their business is not a matter of sympathy, but of intellect. They must reject the unfit productions of those whom they long to befriend, because it would be a profligate charity to accept them. One cannot burn his house down to warm the hands even of the fatherless and the widow.

THE PROFESSOR UNDER CHLOROFORM.

—You haven't heard about my friend the Professor's first experiment in the use of anaesthetics, have you?

He was mightily pleased with the reception of that poem of his about the chaise. He spoke to me once or twice about another poem of similar character he wanted to read me, which I told him I would listen to and criticize.

One day, after dinner, he came in with his face tied up, looking very red in the cheeks and heavy about the eyes.—Hy'r'ye?—he said, and made for an arm-chair, in which he placed first his hat and then his person, going smack through the crown of the former as neatly as they do the trick at the circus. The Professor jumped at the explosion as if he had sat down on one of those small CALTHROPS our grandfathers used to sow round in the grass when there were Indians about,—iron stars, each ray a rusty thorn an inch and a half long,—stick through moccasins into feet,—cripple 'em on the spot, and give 'em lockjaw in a day or two.

At the same time he let off one of those big words which lie at the bottom of the best man's vocabulary, but perhaps never turn up in his life,—just as every man's hair *may* stand on end, but in most men it never does.

After he had got calm, he pulled out a sheet or two of manuscript, together with a smaller scrap, on which, as he said, he had just been writing an introduction or prelude

to the main performance. A certain suspicion had come into my mind that the Professor was not quite right, which was confirmed by the way he talked; but I let him begin. This is the way he read it:-

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Prelude.

I'm the fellah that tole one day
The tale of the won'erful one-hoss-shay.
Wan' to hear another? Say.
—Funny, wasn't it? Made *me* laugh,—
I'm too modest, I am, by half,—
Made me laugh'S *though* I *sh'd split*,—
Cahn' a fellah like fellah's own wit?—
—Fellahs keep sayin',—"Well, now that's nice;
Did it once, but cahn' do it twice."—
Don' you b'lieve the'z no more fat;
Lots in the kitch'n 'z good 'z that.
Fus'-rate throw, 'n' no mistake,—
Han' us the props for another shake;—
Know I'll try, 'n' guess I'll win;
Here sh' goes for hit 'm ag'in!

Here I thought it necessary to interpose.—Professor,—I said,—you are inebriated. The style of what you call your "Prelude" shows that it was written under cerebral excitement. Your articulation is confused. You have told me three times in succession, in exactly the same words, that I was the only true friend you had in the world that you would unbutton your heart to. You smell distinctly and decidedly of spirits.—I spoke, and paused; tender, but firm.

Two large tears orbed themselves beneath the Professor's lids,—in obedience to the principle of gravitation celebrated in that delicious bit of bladdery bathos, "The very law that moulds a tear," with which the "Edinburgh Review" attempted to put down Master George Gordon when that young man was foolishly trying to make himself conspicuous.

One of these tears peeped over the edge of the lid until it lost its balance,—slid an inch and waited for reinforcements,—swelled again,—rolled down a little further,—stopped,—moved on,—and at last fell on the back of the Professor's hand. He held it up for me to look at, and lifted his eyes, brimful, till they met mine.

I couldn't stand it,—I always break down when folks cry in my face,—so I hugged him, and said he was a dear old boy, and asked him kindly what was the matter with him, and what made him smell so dreadfully strong of spirits.

Upset his alcohol lamp,—he said,—and spilt the alcohol on his legs. That was it.—But what had he been doing to get his head into such a state?—had he really committed an excess? What was the matter?—Then it came out that he had been taking chloroform to have a tooth out, which had left him in a very queer state, in which he had written the "Prelude" given above, and under the influence of which he evidently was still.



I took the manuscript from his hands and read the following continuation of the lines he had begun to read me, while he made up for two or three nights' lost sleep as he best might.

*Parson TURELL'S legacy:
Or the president's old arm-chair.
A mathematical story.*

Facts respecting an old arm-chair.
At Cambridge. Is kept in the College there.
Seems but little the worse for wear.
That's remarkable when I say
It was old in President Holyoke's day.
(One of his boys, perhaps you know,
Died, *at one hundred*, years ago.)
He took lodging for rain or shine
Under green bed-clothes in '69.



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Know old Cambridge? Hope you do.—
Born there? Don't say so! I was, too.
(Born in a house with a gambrel-roof,—
Standing still, if you must have proof.—
“Gambrel?—Gambrel?”—Let me beg
You'll look at a horse's hinder leg,—
First great angle above the hoof,—
That's the gambrel; hence gambrel-roof.)
—Nicest place that ever was seen,—
Colleges red and Common green,
Sidewalks brownish with trees between.
Sweetest spot beneath the skies
When the canker-worms don't rise,—
When the dust, that sometimes flies
Into your mouth and ears and eyes.
In a quiet slumber lies,
not in the shape of unbaked pies
Such as barefoot children prize.

A kind of harbor it seems to be,
Facing the flow of a boundless sea.
Rows of gray old Tutors stand
Ranged like rocks above the sand;
Rolling beneath them, soft and green,
Breaks the tide of bright sixteen,—
One wave, two waves, three waves, four,
Sliding up the sparkling floor;
Then it ebbs to flow no more,
Wandering off from shore to shore
With its freight of golden ore!
—Pleasant place for boys to play;—
Better keep your girls away;
Hearts get rolled as pebbles do
Which countless fingering waves pursue,
And every classic beach is strown
With heart-shaped pebbles of blood-red stone.

But this is neither here nor there;—
I'm talking about an old arm-chair.
You've heard, no doubt, of *parson Turell*?
Over at Medford he used to dwell;
Married one of the Mathers' folk;
Got with his wife a chair of oak,—
Funny old chair, with seat like wedge,



Sharp behind and broad front edge,—
One of the oddest of human things,
Turned all over with knobs and rings,—
But heavy, and wide, and deep, and grand,—
Fit for the worthies of the land,—
Chief-Justice Sewall a cause to try in,
Or Cotton Mather to sit—and lie—in.
—Parson Turell bequeathed the same
To a certain student,—*Smith* by name;
These were the terms, as we are told:
“Saide Smith saide Chaire to have and holde;
When he doth graduate, then to passe
To ye oldest Youth in ye Senior Classe.
On Payment of”—(naming a certain sum)—
“By him to whom ye Chaire shall come;
He to ye oldest Senior next,
And soe forever,”—(thus runs the text,)—
“But one Crown lesse then he gave to claime,
That being his Debte for use of same.”

Smith transferred it to one of the *Browns*,
And took his money,—five silver crowns.
Brown delivered it up to *Moore*,
Who paid, it is plain, not five, but four.
Moore made over the chair to *lee*,
Who gave him crowns of silver three.
Lee conveyed it unto *drew*,
And now the payment, of course, was two.
Drew gave up the chair to *Dunn*,—
All he got, as you see, was one.



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Dunn released the chair to *hall*,
And got by the bargain no crown at all.
—And now it passed to a second *brown*,
Who took it, and likewise *claimed A crown*.
When *brown* conveyed it unto *ware*,
Having had one crown, to make it fair,
He paid him two crowns to take the chair;
And *ware*, being honest, (as all Wares be,)
He paid one *potter*, who took it, three.
Four got *Robinson*; five got DIX;
Johnson primus demanded six;
And so the sum kept gathering still
Till after the battle of Bunker's Hill
—When paper money became so cheap,
Folks wouldn't count it, but said "a heap,"

A certain *Richards*, the books declare,
(A. M. in '90? I've looked with care
Through the Triennial,—*name not there*.)
This person, *Richards*, was offered then
Eight score pounds, but would have ten;
Nine, I think, was the sum he took,—
Not quite certain,—but see the book.
—By and by the wars were still,
But nothing had altered the Parson's will.
The old arm-chair was solid yet,
But saddled with such a monstrous debt!
Things grew quite too bad to bear,
Paying such sums to get rid of the chair!
But dead men's fingers hold awful tight,
And there was the will in black and white,
Plain enough for a child to spell.
What should be done no man could tell,
For the chair was a kind of nightmare curse,
And every season but made it worse.

As a last resort, to clear the doubt,
They got old *governor Hancock* out.
The Governor came, with his Light-horse Troop
And his mounted truckmen, all cock-a-hoop;
Halberds glittered and colors flew,



French horns whinnied and trumpets blew,
The yellow fifes whistled between their teeth
And the bumble-bee bass-drums boomed beneath;
So he rode with all his band,
Till the President met him, cap in hand.
—The Governor “hefted” the crowns, and said,—
“A will is a will, and the Parson’s dead.”
The Governor hefted the crowns. Said he,—
“There is your p’int. And here’s my fee.
These are the terms you must fulfil,—
On such conditions I *break the will!*”
The Governor mentioned what these should be.
(Just wait a minute and then you’ll see.)
The President prayed. Then all was still,
And the Governor rose and *broke the will!*
—“About those conditions?” Well, now you go
And do as I tell you, and then you’ll know.
Once a year, on Commencement-day,
If you’ll only take the pains to stay,
You’ll see the President in the *chair*,
Likewise the Governor sitting there.
The President rises; both old and young
May hear his speech in a foreign tongue,
The meaning whereof, as lawyers swear,
Is this: Can I keep this old arm-chair?
And then his Excellency bows,

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As much as to say that he allows.
The Vice-Gub. next is called by name;
He bows like t'other, which means the same.
And all the officers round 'em bow,
As much as to say that *they* allow.
And a lot of parchments about the chair
Are handed to witnesses then and there,
And then the lawyers hold it clear
That the chair is safe for another year.

God bless you, Gentlemen! Learn to give
Money to colleges while you live.
Don't be silly and think you'll try
To bother the colleges, when you die,
With codicil this, and codicil that,
That Knowledge may starve while Law grows fat;
For there never was pitcher that wouldn't spill,
And there's always a flaw in a donkey's will!

—Hospitality is a good deal a matter of latitude, I suspect. The shade of a palm-tree serves an African for a hut; his dwelling is all door and no walls; everybody can come in. To make a morning call on an Esquimaux acquaintance, one must creep through a long tunnel; his house is all walls and no door, except such a one as an apple with a worm-hole has. One might, very probably, trace a regular gradation between these two extremes. In cities where the evenings are generally hot, the people have porches at their doors, where they sit, and this is, of course, a provocative to the interchange of civilities. A good deal, which in colder regions is ascribed to mean dispositions, belongs really to mean temperature.

Once in a while, even in our Northern cities, at noon, in a very hot summer's day, one may realize, by a sudden extension in his sphere of consciousness, how closely he is shut up for the most part.—Do you not remember something like this? July, between 1 and 2, P. M., Fahrenheit 96 degrees, or thereabout. Windows all gaping, like the mouths of panting dogs. Long, stinging cry of a locust comes in from a tree, half a mile off; had forgotten there was such a tree. Baby's screams from a house several blocks distant;—never knew there were any babies in the neighborhood before. Tinman pounding something that clatters dreadfully,—very distinct, but don't remember any tinman's shop near by. Horses stamping on pavement to get off flies. When you hear these four sounds, you may set it down as a warm day. Then it is that one would like to imitate the mode of life of the native at Sierra Leone, as somebody has described it:



stroll into the market in natural costume,—buy a water-melon for a halfpenny,—split it, and scoop out the middle,—sit down in one half of the empty rind, clap the other on one's head, and feast upon the pulp.

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—I see some of the London journals have been attacking some of their literary people for lecturing, on the ground of its being a public exhibition of themselves for money. A popular author can print his lecture; if he deliver it, it is a case of *quaestum corpore*, or making profit of his person. None but “snobs” do that. Ergo, *etc.* To this I reply,—Negatur minor. Her Most Gracious Majesty, the Queen, exhibits herself to the public as a part of the service for which she is paid. We do not consider it low-bred in her to pronounce her own speech, and should prefer it so to hearing it from any other person, or reading it. His Grace and his Lordship exhibit themselves very often for popularity, and their houses every day for money.—No, if a man shows himself other than he is, if he belittles himself before an audience for hire, then he acts unworthily. But a true word, fresh from the lips of a true man, is worth paying for, at the rate of eight dollars a day, or even of fifty dollars a lecture. The taunt must be an outbreak of jealousy against the renowned authors who have the audacity to be also orators. The sub-lieutenants (of the press) stick a too popular writer and speaker with an epithet in England, instead of with a rapier, as in France.—Poh! All England is one great menagerie, and, all at once, the jackal, who admires the gilded cage of the royal beast, must protest against the vulgarity of the talking-bird’s and the nightingale’s being willing to become a part of the exhibition!

THE LONG PATH. (Last of the Parentheses.)

Yes, that was my last walk with the *schoolmistress*. It happened to be the end of a term; and before the next began, a very nice young woman, who had been her assistant, was announced as her successor, and she was provided for elsewhere. So it was no longer the schoolmistress that I walked with, but—Let us not be in unseemly haste. I shall call her the schoolmistress still; some of you love her under that name.

When it became known among the boarders that two of their number had joined hands to walk down the long path of life side by side, there was, as you may suppose, no small sensation. I confess I pitied our landlady. It took her all of a suddin,—she said. Had not known that we was keepin company, and never mistrusted anything particular. Ma’am was right to better herself. Didn’t look very rugged to take care of a family, but could get hired haalp, she calc’lated.—The great maternal instinct came crowding up in her soul just then, and her eyes wandered until they settled on her daughter.

—No, poor, dear woman,—that could not have been. But I am dropping one of my internal tears for you, with this pleasant smile on my face all the time.

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The great mystery of God's providence is the permitted crushing out of flowering instincts. Life is maintained by the respiration of oxygen and of sentiments. In the long catalogue of scientific cruelties there is hardly anything quite so painful to think of as that experiment of putting an animal under the bell of an air-pump and exhausting the air from it. [I never saw the accursed trick performed. Laus Deo!] There comes a time when the souls of human beings, women, perhaps, more even than men, begin to faint for the atmosphere of the affections they were made to breathe. Then it is that Society places its transparent bell-glass over the young woman who is to be the subject of one of its fatal experiments. The element by which only the heart lives is sucked out of her crystalline prison. Watch her through its transparent walls;—her bosom is heaving; but it is in a vacuum. Death is no riddle, compared to this. I remember a poor girl's story in the "Book of Martyrs." The "dry-pan and the gradual fire" were the images that frightened her most. How many have withered and wasted under as slow a torment in the walls of that larger Inquisition which we call Civilization!

Yes, my surface-thought laughs at you, you foolish, plain, overdressed, mincing, cheaply-organized, self-saturated young person, whoever you may be, now reading this,—little thinking you are what I describe, and in blissful unconsciousness that you are destined to the lingering asphyxia of soul which is the lot of such multitudes worthier than yourself. But it is only my surface-thought which laughs. For that great procession of the *unloved*, who not only wear the crown of thorns, but must hide it under the locks of brown or gray,—under the snowy cap, under the chilling turban,—hide it even from themselves,—perhaps never know they wear it, though it kills them,—there is no depth of tenderness in my nature that Pity has not sounded. Somewhere,—somewhere,—love is in store for them,—the universe must not be allowed to fool them so cruelly. What infinite pathos in the small, half-unconscious artifices by which unattractive young persons seek to recommend themselves to the favor of those towards whom our dear sisters, the unloved, like the rest, are impelled by their God-given instincts!

Read what the singing-women—one to ten thousand of the suffering women—tell us, and think of the griefs that die unspoken! Nature is in earnest when she makes a woman; and there are women enough lying in the next churchyard with very commonplace blue slate-stones at their head and feet, for whom it was just as true that "all sounds of life assumed one tone of love," as for Letitia Landon, of whom Elizabeth Browning said it; but she could give words to her grief, and they could not.—Will you hear a few stanzas of mine?

THE VOICELESS.

We count the broken lyres that rest
Where the sweet wailing singers slumber,—
But o'er their silent sister's breast
The wild flowers who will stoop to number?



A few can touch the magic string,
And noisy Fame is proud to win them;—
Alas for those that never sing,
But die with all their music in them!



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Nay, grieve not for the dead alone
Whose song has told their hearts' sad story,—
Weep for the voiceless, who have known
The cross without the crown of glory!
Not where Leucadian breezes sweep
O'er Sappho's memory-haunted billow,
But where the glistening night-dews weep
On nameless sorrow's churchyard pillow.

O hearts that break and give no sign
Save whitening lip and fading tresses,
Till Death pours out his cordial wine
Slow-dropped from Misery's crushing presses,—
If singing breath or echoing chord
To every hidden pang were given,
What endless melodies were poured,
As sad as earth, as sweet as heaven!

I hope that our landlady's daughter is not so badly off, after all. That young man from another city who made the remark which you remember about Boston State-house and Boston folks, has appeared at our table repeatedly of late, and has seemed to me rather attentive to this young lady. Only last evening I saw him leaning over her while she was playing the accordion,—indeed, I undertook to join them in a song, and got as far as “Come rest in this boo-oo,” when, my voice getting tremulous, I turned off, as one steps out of a procession, and left the basso and soprano to finish it. I see no reason why this young woman should not be a very proper match for a man that laughs about Boston State-house. He can't be very particular.

The young fellow whom I have so often mentioned was a little free in his remarks, but very good-natured.—Sorry to have you go,—he said.—School-ma'am made a mistake not to wait for me. Haven't taken anything but mournin' fruit at breakfast since I heard of it.—*Mourning* fruit,—said I,—what's that?—Huckleberries and blackberries,—said he; —couldn't eat in colors, raspberries, currants, and such, after a solemn thing like this happening.—The conceit seemed to please the young fellow. If you will believe it, when we came down to breakfast the next morning, he had carried it out as follows. You know those odious little “saas-plates” that figure so largely at boarding-houses, and especially at taverns, into which a strenuous attendant female trowels little dabs, sombre of tint and heterogeneous of composition, which it makes you feel homesick to look at, and into which you poke the elastic coppery tea-spoon with the air of a cat dipping her foot into a wash-tub, —(not that I mean to say anything against them, for, when they are of tinted porcelain or starry many-faceted crystal, and hold clean bright berries, or pale virgin honey, or “lucent syrups tinct with cinnamon,” and the teaspoon is of white silver, with the Tower-stamp, solid, but not brutally heavy,—as people in the green stage of millionism will have them,—I can dally with their amber semi-fluids or



glossy spherules without a shiver,)—you know these small, deep dishes, I say. When we came down the next morning, each of these (two only excepted) was covered with a broad leaf. On lifting this, each boarder found a small heap of solemn black huckleberries. But one of those plates held red currants, and was covered with a red rose; the other held white currants, and was covered with a white rose. There was a laugh at this at first, and then a short silence, and I noticed that her lip trembled, and the old gentleman opposite was in trouble to get at his bandanna handkerchief

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—“What was the use in waiting? We should be too late for Switzerland, that season, if we waited much longer.”—The hand I held trembled in mine, and the eyes fell meekly, as Esther bowed herself before the feet of Ahasuerus.—She had been reading that chapter, for she looked up,—if there was a film of moisture over her eyes there was also the faintest shadow of a distant smile skirting her lips, but not enough to accent the dimples,—and said, in her pretty, still way,—“If it please the king, and if I have found favor in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes”—

I don’t remember what King Ahasuerus did or said when Esther got just to that point of her soft, humble words,—but I know what I did. That quotation from Scripture was cut short, anyhow. We came to a compromise on the great question, and the time was settled for the last day of summer.

In the mean time, I talked on with our boarders, much as usual, as you may see by what I have reported. I must say, I was pleased with a certain tenderness they all showed toward us, after the first excitement of the news was over. It came out in trivial matters,—but each one, in his or her way, manifested kindness. Our landlady, for instance, when we had chickens, sent the *liver* instead of the *gizzard*, with the wing, for the schoolmistress. This was not an accident; the two are never mistaken, though some landladies *appear* as if they did not know the difference. The whole of the company were even more respectfully attentive to my remarks than usual. There was no idle punning, and very little winking on the part of that lively young gentleman who, as the reader may remember, occasionally interposed some playful question or remark, which could hardly be considered relevant,—except when the least allusion was made to matrimony, when he would look at the landlady’s daughter, and wink with both sides of his face, until she would ask what he was pokin’ his fun at her for, and if he wasn’t ashamed of himself. In fact, they all behaved very handsomely, so that I really felt sorry at the thought of leaving my boarding-house.

I suppose you think, that, because I lived at a plain widow-woman’s plain table, I was of course more or less infirm in point of worldly fortune. You may not be sorry to learn, that, though not what *great merchants* call very rich, I was comfortable, —comfortable, —so that most of those moderate luxuries I described in my verses on *contentment*—most of them, I say—were within our reach, if we chose to have them. But I found out that the schoolmistress had a vein of charity about her, which had hitherto been worked on a small silver and copper basis, which made her think less, perhaps, of luxuries than even I did,—modestly as I have expressed my wishes.

It is a rather pleasant thing to tell a poor young woman, whom one has contrived to win without showing his rent-roll, that she has found what the world values so highly, in following the lead of her affections. That was an enjoyment I was now ready for.

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I began abruptly:—Do you know that you are a rich young person?

I know that I am very rich,—she said.—Heaven has given me more than I ever asked; for I had not thought love was ever meant for me.

It was a woman's confession, and her voice fell to a whisper as it threaded the last words.

I don't mean that,—I said,—you blessed little saint and seraph! —if there's an angel missing in the New Jerusalem, inquire for her at this boarding house!—I don't mean that! I mean that I—that is, you—am—are—confound it!—I mean that you'll be what most people call a lady of fortune. And I looked full in her eyes for the effect of the announcement.

There wasn't any. She said she was thankful that I had what would save me from drudgery, and that some other time I should tell her about it.—I never made a greater failure in an attempt to produce a sensation.

So the last day of summer came. It was our choice to go to the church, but we had a kind of reception at the boarding-house. The presents were all arranged, and among them none gave more pleasure than the modest tributes of our fellow-boarders,—for there was not one, I believe, who did not send something. The landlady would insist on making an elegant bride-cake, with her own hands; to which Master Benjamin Franklin wished to add certain embellishments out of his private funds,—namely, a Cupid in a mouse-trap, done in white sugar, and two miniature flags with the stars and stripes, which had a very pleasing effect, I assure you. The landlady's daughter sent a richly bound copy of Tupper's Poems. On a blank leaf was the following, written in a very delicate and careful hand:-

Presented to . . . by . . .

On the eve ere her union in holy matrimony.

May sunshine ever beam o'er her!

Even the poor relative thought she must do something, and sent a copy of "The Whole Duty of Man," bound in very attractive variegated sheepskin, the edges nicely marbled. From the divinity-student came the loveliest English edition of "Keble's Christian Year." I opened it, when it came, to the *fourth Sunday in lent*, and read that angelic poem, sweeter than anything I can remember since Xavier's "My God, I love thee."—I am not a Churchman,—I don't believe in planting oaks in flower-pots,—but such a poem as "The Rosebud" makes one's heart a proselyte to the culture it grows from. Talk about it as much as you like,—one's breeding shows itself nowhere more than in his religion. A man should be a gentleman in his hymns and prayers; the fondness for "scenes," among vulgar saints, contrasts so meanly with that—



"God only and good angels look
Behind the blissful scene,"-

and that other,—

"He could not trust his melting soul
But in his Maker's sight,"—

that I hope some of them will see this, and read the poem, and profit by it.

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My laughing and winking young friend undertook to procure and arrange the flowers for the table, and did it with immense zeal. I never saw him look happier than when he came in, his hat saucily on one side, and a cheroot in his mouth, with a huge bunch of tea-roses, which he said were for "Madam."

One of the last things that came was an old square box, smelling of camphor, tied and sealed. It bore, in faded ink, the marks, "Calcutta, 1805." On opening it, we found a white Cashmere shawl with a very brief note from the dear old gentleman opposite, saying that he had kept this some years, thinking he might want it, and many more, not knowing what to do with it,—that he had never seen it unfolded since he was a young supercargo,—and now, if she would spread it on her shoulders, it would make him feel young to look at it.

Poor Bridget, or Biddy, our red-armed maid of all work! What must she do but buy a small copper breast-pin and put it under "Schoolma'am's" plate that morning, at breakfast? And Schoolma'am would wear it,—though I made her cover it, as well as I could, with a tea-rose.

It was my last breakfast as a boarder, and I could not leave them in utter silence.

Good-by,—I said,—my dear friends, one and all of you! I have been long with you, and I find it hard parting. I have to thank you for a thousand courtesies, and above all for the patience and indulgence with which you have listened to me when I have tried to instruct or amuse you. My friend the Professor (who, as well as my friend the Poet, is unavoidably absent on this interesting occasion) has given me reason to suppose that he would occupy my empty chair about the first of January next. If he comes among you, be kind to him, as you have been to me. May the Lord bless you all!—And we shook hands all round the table.

Half an hour afterwards the breakfast things and the cloth were gone. I looked up and down the length of the bare boards over which I had so often uttered my sentiments and experiences—and —Yes, I am a man, like another.

All sadness vanished, as, in the midst of these old friends of mine, whom you know, and others a little more up in the world, perhaps, to whom I have not introduced you, I took the schoolmistress before the altar from the hands of the old gentleman who used to sit opposite, and who would insist on giving her away.

And now we two are walking the long path in peace together. The "schoolmistress" finds her skill in teaching called for again, without going abroad to seek little scholars. Those visions of mine have all come true.

I hope you all love me none the less for anything I have told you. Farewell!

THE PROFESSOR AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE

by Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.

PREFACE TO REVISED EDITION.

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The reader of to-day will not forget, I trust, that it is nearly a quarter of a century since these papers were written. Statements which were true then are not necessarily true now. Thus, the speed of the trotting horse has been so much developed that the record of the year when the fastest time to that date was given must be very considerably altered, as may be seen by referring to a note on page 49 of the "Autocrat." No doubt many other statements and opinions might be more or less modified if I were writing today instead of having written before the war, when the world and I were both more than a score of years younger.

These papers followed close upon the track of the "Autocrat." They had to endure the trial to which all second comers are subjected, which is a formidable ordeal for the least as well as the greatest. *Paradise Regained* and the Second Part of *Faust* are examples which are enough to warn every one who has made a jingle fair hit with his arrow of the danger of missing when he looses "his fellow of the selfsame flight."

There is good reason why it should be so. The first juice that runs of itself from the grapes comes from the heart of the fruit, and tastes of the pulp only; when the grapes are squeezed in the press the flow betrays the flavor of the skin. If there is any freshness in the original idea of the work, if there is any individuality in the method or style of a new author, or of an old author on a new track, it will have lost much of its first effect when repeated. Still, there have not been wanting readers who have preferred this second series of papers to the first. The new papers were more aggressive than the earlier ones, and for that reason found a heartier welcome in some quarters, and met with a sharper antagonism in others. It amuses me to look back on some of the attacks they called forth. Opinions which do not excite the faintest show of temper at this time from those who do not accept them were treated as if they were the utterances of a nihilist incendiary. It required the exercise of some forbearance not to recriminate.

How a stray sentence, a popular saying, the maxim of some wise man, a line accidentally fallen upon and remembered, will sometimes help one when he is all ready to be vexed or indignant! One day, in the time when I was young or youngish, I happened to open a small copy of "Tom Jones," and glance at the title-page. There was one of those little engravings opposite, which bore the familiar name of "T. Uwins," as I remember it, and under it the words "Mr. Partridge bore all this patiently." How many times, when, after rough usage from ill-mannered critics, my own vocabulary of vituperation was simmering in such a lively way that it threatened to boil and lift its lid and so boil over, those words have calmed the small internal effervescence! There is very little in them and very little of them; and so there is not much in a linchpin considered by itself, but it often

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keeps a wheel from coming off and prevents what might be a catastrophe. The chief trouble in offering such papers as these to the readers of to-day is that their heresies have become so familiar among intelligent people that they have too commonplace an aspect. All the lighthouses and land-marks of belief bear so differently from the way in which they presented themselves when these papers were written that it is hard to recognize that we and our fellow-passengers are still in the same old vessel sailing the same unfathomable sea and bound to the same as yet unseen harbor.

But after all, there is not enough theology, good or bad, in these papers to cause them to be inscribed on the Protestant Index Expurgatorius; and if they are medicated with a few questionable dogmas or antidogmas, the public has become used to so much rougher treatments, that what was once an irritant may now act as an anodyne, and the reader may nod over pages which, when they were first written, would have waked him into a paroxysm of protest and denunciation.

November, 1882.

PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

This book is one of those which, if it lives for a number of decades, and if it requires any Preface at all, wants a new one every ten years. The first Preface to a book is apt to be explanatory, perhaps apologetic, in the expectation of attacks from various quarters. If the book is in some points in advance of public opinion, it is natural that the writer should try to smooth the way to the reception of his more or less aggressive ideas. He wishes to convince, not to offend,—to obtain a hearing for his thought, not to stir up angry opposition in those who do not accept it. There is commonly an anxious look about a first Preface. The author thinks he shall be misapprehended about this or that matter, that his well-meant expressions will probably be invidiously interpreted by those whom he looks upon as prejudiced critics, and if he deals with living questions that he will be attacked as a destructive by the conservatives and reproached for his timidity by the noisier radicals. The first Preface, therefore, is likely to be the weakest part of a work containing the thoughts of an honest writer.

After a time the writer has cooled down from his excitement,—has got over his apprehensions, is pleased to find that his book is still read, and that he must write a new Preface. He comes smiling to his task. How many things have explained themselves in the ten or twenty or thirty years since he came before his untried public in those almost plaintive paragraphs in which he introduced himself to his readers,—for the Preface writer, no matter how fierce a combatant he may prove, comes on to the stage with his shield on his right arm and his sword in his left hand.

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The Professor at the Breakfast-Table came out in the "Atlantic Monthly" and introduced itself without any formal Preface. A quarter of a century later the Preface of 1882, which the reader has just had laid before him, was written. There is no mark of worry, I think, in that. Old opponents had come up and shaken hands with the author they had attacked or denounced. Newspapers which had warned their subscribers against him were glad to get him as a contributor to their columns. A great change had come over the community with reference to their beliefs. Christian believers were united as never before in the feeling that, after all, their common object was to elevate the moral and religious standard of humanity. But within the special compartments of the great Christian fold the marks of division have pronounced themselves in the most unmistakable manner. As an example we may take the lines of cleavage which have shown themselves in the two great churches, the Congregational and the Presbyterian, and the very distinct fissure which is manifest in the transplanted Anglican church of this country. Recent circumstances have brought out the fact of the great change in the dogmatic communities which has been going on silently but surely. The licensing of a missionary, the transfer of a Professor from one department to another, the election of a Bishop,—each of these movements furnishes evidence that there is no such thing as an air-tight reservoir of doctrinal finalities.

The folding-doors are wide open to every Protestant to enter all the privileged precincts and private apartments of the various exclusive religious organizations. We may demand the credentials of every creed and catechise all the catechisms. So we may discuss the gravest questions unblamed over our morning coffee-cups or our evening tea-cups. There is no rest for the Protestant until he gives up his legendary anthropology and all its dogmatic dependencies.

It is only incidentally, however, that the Professor at the Breakfast-Table handles matters which are the subjects of religious controversy. The reader who is sensitive about having his fixed beliefs dealt with as if they were open to question had better skip the pages which look as if they would disturb his complacency. "Faith" is the most precious of possessions, and it dislikes being meddled with. It means, of course, self-trust,—that is, a belief in the value of our, own opinion of a doctrine, of a church, of a religion, of a Being, a belief quite independent of any evidence that we can bring to convince a jury of our fellow beings. Its roots are thus inextricably entangled with those of self-love and bleed as mandrakes were said to, when pulled up as weeds. Some persons may even at this late day take offence at a few opinions expressed in the following pages, but most of these passages will be read without loss of temper by those who disagree with them, and by-and-by they may be found too timid and conservative for intelligent readers, if they are still read by any.

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Beverly farm, mass., June 18, 1891.
O. W. H.

The professor

*At the
breakfast-table.*

What he said, what he heard, and what he saw.

I

I intended to have signalized my first appearance by a certain large statement, which I flatter myself is the nearest approach to a universal formula, of life yet promulgated at this breakfast-table. It would have had a grand effect. For this purpose I fixed my eyes on a certain divinity-student, with the intention of exchanging a few phrases, and then forcing my court-card, namely, The great end of being.—I will thank you for the sugar,—I said.—Man is a dependent creature.

It is a small favor to ask,—said the divinity-student,—and passed the sugar to me.

—Life is a great bundle of little things,—I said.

The divinity-student smiled, as if that were the concluding epigram of the sugar question.

You smile,—I said.—Perhaps life seems to you a little bundle of great things?

The divinity-student started a laugh, but suddenly reined it back with a pull, as one throws a horse on his haunches.—Life is a great bundle of great things,—he said.

(*Now, then!*) The great end of being, after all, is....

Hold on!—said my neighbor, a young fellow whose name seems to be John, and nothing else,—for that is what they all call him,—hold on! the Sculpin is go'n' to say somethin'.

Now the Sculpin (*Cottus Virginianus*) is a little water-beast which pretends to consider itself a fish, and, under that pretext, hangs about the piles upon which West-Boston Bridge is built, swallowing the bait and hook intended for flounders. On being drawn from the water, it exposes an immense head, a diminutive bony carcass, and a surface so full of spines, ridges, ruffles, and frills, that the naturalists have not been able to count them without quarrelling about the number, and that the colored youth, whose

sport they spoil, do not like to touch them, and especially to tread on them, unless they happen to have shoes on, to cover the thick white soles of their broad black feet.

When, therefore, I heard the young fellow's exclamation, I looked round the table with curiosity to see what it meant. At the further end of it I saw a head, and a—a small portion of a little deformed body, mounted on a high chair, which brought the occupant up to a fair level enough for him to get at his food. His whole appearance was so grotesque, I felt for a minute as if there was a showman behind him who would pull him down presently and put up Judy, or the hangman, or the Devil, or some other wooden personage of the famous spectacle. I contrived to lose the first of his sentence, but what I heard began so:

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—by the Frog-Pond, when there were frogs in and the folks used to come down from the tents on section and Independence days with their pails to get water to make egg-pop with. Born in Boston; went to school in Boston as long as the boys would let me.—The little man groaned, turned, as if to look around, and went on.—Ran away from school one day to see Phillips hung for killing Denegri with a logger-head. That was in flip days, when there were always two three loggerheads in the fire. I'm a Boston boy, I tell you,—born at North End, and mean to be buried on Copp's Hill, with the good old underground people,—the Worthylakes, and the rest of 'em. Yes,—up on the old hill, where they buried Captain Daniel Malcolm in a stone grave, ten feet deep, to keep him safe from the red-coats, in those old times when the world was frozen up tight and there was n't but one spot open, and that was right over Faneuil all,—and black enough it looked, I tell you! There 's where my bones shall lie, Sir, and rattle away when the big guns go off at the Navy Yard opposite! You can't make me ashamed of the old place! Full crooked little streets;—I was born and used to run round in one of 'em—

—I should think so,—said that young man whom I hear them call “John,”—softly, not meaning to be heard, nor to be cruel, but thinking in a half-whisper, evidently.—I should think so; and got kinked up, turnin' so many corners.—The little man did not hear what was said, but went on,—

—full of crooked little streets; but I tell you Boston has opened, and kept open, more turnpikes that lead straight to free thought and free speech and free deeds than any other city of live men or dead men,—I don't care how broad their streets are, nor how high their steeples!

—How high is Bosting meet'n'-house?—said a person with black whiskers and imperial, a velvet waistcoat, a guard-chain rather too massive, and a diamond pin so very large that the most trusting nature might confess an inward suggestion,—of course, nothing amounting to a suspicion. For this is a gentleman from a great city, and sits next to the landlady's daughter, who evidently believes in him, and is the object of his especial attention.

How high?—said the little man.—As high as the first step of the stairs that lead to the New Jerusalem. Is n't that high enough?

It is,—I said.—The great end of being is to harmonize man with the order of things, and the church has been a good pitch-pipe, and may be so still. But who shall tune the pitch-pipe? Quis cus—(On the whole, as this quotation was not entirely new, and, being in a foreign language, might not be familiar to all the boarders, I thought I would not finish it.)

—Go to the Bible!—said a sharp voice from a sharp-faced, sharp-eyed, sharp-elbowed, strenuous-looking woman in a black dress, appearing as if it began as a piece of mourning and perpetuated itself as a bit of economy.

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You speak well, Madam,—I said;—yet there is room for a gloss or commentary on what you say. “He who would bring back the wealth of the Indies must carry out the wealth of the Indies.” What you bring away from the Bible depends to some extent on what you carry to it.—Benjamin Franklin! Be so good as to step up to my chamber and bring me down the small uncovered pamphlet of twenty pages which you will find lying under the “Cruden’s Concordance.” [The boy took a large bite, which left a very perfect crescent in the slice of bread-and-butter he held, and departed on his errand, with the portable fraction of his breakfast to sustain him on the way.]

—Here it is. “Go to the Bible. A Dissertation, *etc.*, *etc.* By J. J. Flournoy. Athens, Georgia, 1858.”

Mr. Flournoy, Madam, has obeyed the precept which you have judiciously delivered. You may be interested, Madam, to know what are the conclusions at which Mr. J. J. Flournoy of Athens, Georgia, has arrived. You shall hear, Madam. He has gone to the Bible, and he has come back from the Bible, bringing a remedy for existing social evils, which, if it is the real specific, as it professes to be, is of great interest to humanity, and to the female part of humanity in particular. It is what he calls *trigamy*, Madam, or the marrying of three wives, so that “good old men” may be solaced at once by the companionship of the wisdom of maturity, and of those less perfected but hardly less engaging qualities which are found at an earlier period of life. He has followed your precept, Madam; I hope you accept his conclusions.

The female boarder in black attire looked so puzzled, and, in fact, “all abroad,” after the delivery of this “counter” of mine, that I left her to recover her wits, and went on with the conversation, which I was beginning to get pretty well in hand.

But in the mean time I kept my eye on the female boarder to see what effect I had produced. First, she was a little stunned at having her argument knocked over. Secondly, she was a little shocked at the tremendous character of the triple matrimonial suggestion. Thirdly.—I don’t like to say what I thought. Something seemed to have pleased her fancy. Whether it was, that, if trigamy should come into fashion, there would be three times as many chances to enjoy the luxury of saying, “No!” is more than I, can tell you. I may as well mention that B. F. came to me after breakfast to borrow the pamphlet for “a lady,”—one of the boarders, he said,—looking as if he had a secret he wished to be relieved of.

—I continued.—If a human soul is necessarily to be trained up in the faith of those from whom it inherits its body, why, there is the end of all reason. If, sooner or later, every soul is to look for truth with its own eyes, the first thing is to recognize that no presumption in favor of any particular belief arises from the fact of our inheriting it. Otherwise you would not give the Mahometan a fair chance to become a convert to a better religion.

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The second thing would be to depolarize every fixed religious idea in the mind by changing the word which stands for it.

—I don't know what you mean by "depolarizing" an idea,—said the divinity-student.

I will tell you,—I said.—When a given symbol which represents a thought has lain for a certain length of time in the mind, it undergoes a change like that which rest in a certain position gives to iron. It becomes magnetic in its relations,—it is traversed by strange forces which did not belong to it. The word, and consequently the idea it represents, is polarized.

The religious currency of mankind, in thought, in speech, and in print, consists entirely of polarized words. Borrow one of these from another language and religion, and you will find it leaves all its magnetism behind it. Take that famous word, O'm, of the Hindoo mythology. Even a priest cannot pronounce it without sin; and a holy Pundit would shut his ears and run away from you in horror, if you should say it aloud. What do you care for O'm? If you wanted to get the Pundit to look at his religion fairly, you must first depolarize this and all similar words for him. The argument for and against new translations of the Bible really turns on this. Skepticism is afraid to trust its truths in depolarized words, and so cries out against a new translation. I think, myself, if every idea our Book contains could be shelled out of its old symbol and put into a new, clean, unmagnetic word, we should have some chance of reading it as philosophers, or wisdom-lovers, ought to read it,—which we do not and cannot now any more than a Hindoo can read the "Gayatri" as a fair man and lover of truth should do. When society has once fairly dissolved the New Testament, which it never has done yet, it will perhaps crystallize it over again in new forms of language.

I did n't know you was a settled minister over this parish,—said the young fellow near me.

A sermon by a lay-preacher may be worth listening—I replied, calmly. —It gives the parallax of thought and feeling as they appear to the observers from two very different points of view. If you wish to get the distance of a heavenly body, you know that you must take two observations from remote points of the earth's orbit,—in midsummer and midwinter, for instance. To get the parallax of heavenly truths, you must take an observation from the position of the laity as well as of the clergy. Teachers and students of theology get a certain look, certain conventional tones of voice, a clerical gait, a professional neckcloth, and habits of mind as professional as their externals. They are scholarly men and read Bacon, and know well enough what the "idols of the tribe" are. Of course they have their false gods, as all men that follow one exclusive calling are prone to do.—The clergy have played the part of the flywheel in our modern civilization. They have never suffered it to stop. They have

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often carried on its movement, when other moving powers failed, by the momentum stored in their vast body. Sometimes, too, they have kept it back by their vis inertia, when its wheels were like to grind the bones of some old canonized error into fertilizers for the soil that yields the bread of life. But the mainspring of the world's onward religious movement is not in them, nor in any one body of men, let me tell you. It is the people that makes the clergy, and not the clergy that makes the people. Of course, the profession reacts on its source with variable energy.—But there never was a guild of dealers or a company of craftsmen that did not need sharp looking after.

Our old friend, Dr. Holyoke, whom we gave the dinner to some time since, must have known many people that saw the great bonfire in Harvard College yard.

—Bonfire?—shrieked the little man.—The bonfire when Robert Calef's book was burned?

The same,—I said,—when Robert Calef the Boston merchant's book was burned in the yard of Harvard College, by order of Increase Mather, President of the College and Minister of the Gospel. You remember the old witchcraft revival of '92, and how stout Master Robert Calef, trader of Boston, had the pluck to tell the ministers and judges what a set of fools and worse than fools they were—

Remember it?—said the little man.—I don't think I shall forget it, as long as I can stretch this forefinger to point with, and see what it wears. There was a ring on it.

May I look at it?—I said.

Where it is,—said the little man;—it will never come off, till it falls off from the bone in the darkness and in the dust.

He pushed the high chair on which he sat slightly back from the table, and dropped himself, standing, to the floor,—his head being only a little above the level of the table, as he stood. With pain and labor, lifting one foot over the other, as a drummer handles his sticks, he took a few steps from his place,—his motions and the deadbeat of the misshapen boots announcing to my practised eye and ear the malformation which is called in learned language talipes varus, or inverted club-foot.

Stop! stop!—I said,—let me come to you.

The little man hobbled back, and lifted himself by the left arm, with an ease approaching to grace which surprised me, into his high chair. I walked to his side, and he stretched out the forefinger of his right hand, with the ring upon it. The ring had been put on long ago, and could not pass the misshapen joint. It was one of those funeral rings which used to be given to relatives and friends after the decease of persons of any note or

importance. Beneath a round fit of glass was a death's head. Engraved on one side of this, "L. B. AEt. 22,"—on the other, "Ob. 1692"

My grandmother's grandmother,—said the little man.—Hanged for a witch. It does n't seem a great while ago. I knew my grandmother, and loved her. Her mother was daughter to the witch that Chief Justice Sewall hanged and Cotton Mather delivered over to the Devil.—That was Salem, though, and not Boston. No, not Boston. Robert Calef, the Boston merchant, it was that blew them all to—

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Never mind where he blew them to,—I said; for the little man was getting red in the face, and I did n't know what might come next.

This episode broke me up, as the jockeys say, out of my square conversational trot; but I settled down to it again.

—A man that knows men, in the street, at their work, human nature in its shirt-sleeves, who makes bargains with deacons, instead of talking over texts with them, a man who has found out that there are plenty of praying rogues and swearing saints in the world, —above all, who has found out, by living into the pith and core of life, that all of the Deity which can be folded up between the sheets of any human book is to the Deity of the firmament, of the strata, of the hot aortic flood of throbbing human life, of this infinite, instantaneous consciousness in which the soul's being consists,—an incandescent point in the filament connecting the negative pole of a past eternity with the positive pole of an eternity that is to come,—that all of the Deity which any human book can hold is to this larger Deity of the working battery of the universe only as the films in a book of gold-leaf are to the broad seams and curdled lumps of ore that lie in unsunned mines and virgin placers,—Oh!—I was saying that a man who lives out-of-doors, among live people, gets some things into his head he might not find in the index of his “Body of Divinity.”

I tell you what,—the idea of the professions' digging a moat round their close corporations, like that Japanese one at Jeddo, on the bottom of which, if travellers do not lie, you could put Park Street Church and look over the vane from its side, and try to stretch another such spire across it without spanning the chasm,—that idea, I say, is pretty nearly worn out. Now when a civilization or a civilized custom falls into senile dementia, there is commonly a judgment ripe for it, and it comes as plagues come, from a breath,—as fires come, from a spark.

Here, look at medicine. Big wigs, gold-headed canes, Latin prescriptions, shops full of abominations, recipes a yard long, “curing” patients by drugging as sailors bring a wind by whistling, selling lies at a guinea apiece,—a routine, in short, of giving unfortunate sick people a mess of things either too odious to swallow or too acrid to hold, or, if that were possible, both at once.

—You don't know what I mean, indignant and not unintelligent country-practitioner? Then you don't know the history of medicine,—and that is not my fault. But don't expose yourself in any outbreak of eloquence; for, by the mortar in which Anaxarchus was pounded! I did not bring home Schenckius and Forestus and Hildanus, and all the old folios in calf and vellum I will show you, to be bullied by the proprietor, of a “Wood and Bache,” and a shelf of peppered sheepskin reprints by Philadelphia Editors. Besides, many of the profession and I know a little something of each other, and you don't think I am such a simpleton as to lose their good opinion by saying what the better

heads among them would condemn as unfair and untrue? Now mark how the great plague came on the generation of drugging doctors, and in what form it fell.

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A scheming drug-vender, (inventive genius,) an utterly untrustworthy and incompetent observer, (profound searcher of Nature,) a shallow dabbler in erudition, (sagacious scholar,) started the monstrous fiction (founded the immortal system) of Homoeopathy. I am very fair, you see,—you can help yourself to either of these sets of phrases.

All the reason in the world would not have had so rapid and general an effect on the public mind to disabuse it of the idea that a drug is a good thing in itself, instead of being, as it is, a bad thing, as was produced by the trick (system) of this German charlatan (theorist). Not that the wiser part of the profession needed him to teach them; but the routinists and their employers, the “general practitioners,” who lived by selling pills and mixtures, and their drug-consuming customers, had to recognize that people could get well, unpoisoned. These dumb cattle would not learn it of themselves, and so the murrain of Homoeopathy fell on them.

—You don’t know what plague has fallen on the practitioners of theology? I will tell you, then. It is Spiritualism. While some are crying out against it as a delusion of the Devil, and some are laughing at it as an hysteric folly, and some are getting angry with it as a mere trick of interested or mischievous persons, Spiritualism is quietly undermining the traditional ideas of the future state which have been and are still accepted,—not merely in those who believe in it, but in the general sentiment of the community, to a larger extent than most good people seem to be aware of. It need n’t be true, to do this, any more than Homoeopathy need, to do its work. The Spiritualists have some pretty strong instincts to pry over, which no doubt have been roughly handled by theologians at different times. And the Nemesis of the pulpit comes, in a shape it little thought of, beginning with the snap of a toe-joint, and ending with such a crack of old beliefs that the roar of it is heard in all the ministers’ studies of Christendom? Sir, you cannot have people of cultivation, of pure character, sensible enough in common things, large-hearted women, grave judges, shrewd business-men, men of science, professing to be in communication with the spiritual world and keeping up constant intercourse with it, without its gradually reacting on the whole conception of that other life. It is the folly of the world, constantly, which confounds its wisdom. Not only out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, but out of the mouths of fools and cheats, we may often get our truest lessons. For the fool’s judgment is a dog-vane that turns with a breath, and the cheat watches the clouds and sets his weathercock by them,—so that one shall often see by their pointing which way the winds of heaven are blowing, when the slow-wheeling arrows and feathers of what we call the Temples of Wisdom are turning to all points of the compass.

—Amen!—said the young fellow called John—Ten minutes by the watch. Those that are unanimous will please to signify by holding up their left foot!

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I looked this young man steadily in the face for about thirty seconds. His countenance was as calm as that of a reposing infant. I think it was simplicity, rather than mischief, with perhaps a youthful playfulness, that led him to this outbreak. I have often noticed that even quiet horses, on a sharp November morning, when their coats are beginning to get the winter roughness, will give little sportive demi-kicks, with slight sudden elevation of the subsequent region of the body, and a sharp short whinny,—by no means intending to put their heels through the dasher, or to address the driver rudely, but feeling, to use a familiar word, frisky. This, I think, is the physiological condition of the young person, John. I noticed, however, what I should call a palpebral spasm, affecting the eyelid and muscles of one side, which, if it were intended for the facial gesture called a wink, might lead me to suspect a disposition to be satirical on his part.

—Resuming the conversation, I remarked,—I am, ex officio, as a Professor, a conservative. For I don't know any fruit that clings to its tree so faithfully, not even a "froze-'n'-thaw" winter-apple, as a Professor to the bough of which his chair is made. You can't shake him off, and it is as much as you can do to pull him off. Hence, by a chain of induction I need not unwind, he tends to conservatism generally.

But then, you know, if you are sailing the Atlantic, and all at once find yourself in a current, and the sea covered with weeds, and drop your Fahrenheit over the side and find it eight or ten degrees higher than in the ocean generally, there is no use in flying in the face of facts and swearing there is no such thing as a Gulf-Stream, when you are in it.

You can't keep gas in a bladder, and you can't keep knowledge tight in a profession. Hydrogen will leak out, and air will leak in, through India-rubber; and special knowledge will leak out, and general knowledge will leak in, though a profession were covered with twenty thicknesses of sheepskin diplomas.

By Jove, Sir, till common sense is well mixed up with medicine, and common manhood with theology, and common honesty with law, We the people, Sir, some of us with nut-crackers, and some of us with trip-hammers, and some of us with pile-drivers, and some of us coming with a whish! like air-stones out of a lunar volcano, will crash down on the lumps of nonsense in all of them till we have made powder of them—like Aaron's calf.

If to be a conservative is to let all the drains of thought choke up and keep all the soul's windows down,—to shut out the sun from the east and the wind from the west,—to let the rats run free in the cellar, and the moths feed their fill in the chambers, and the spiders weave their lace before the mirrors, till the soul's typhus is bred out of our neglect, and we begin to snore in its coma or rave in its delirium,—I, Sir, am a bonnet-rouge, a red cap of the barricades, my friends, rather than a conservative.

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—Were you born in Boston, Sir?—said the little man,—looking eager and excited.

I was not,—I replied.

It's a pity,—it's a pity,—said the little man;—it 's the place to be born in. But if you can't fix it so as to be born here, you can come and live here. Old Ben Franklin, the father of American science and the American Union, was n't ashamed to be born here. Jim Otis, the father of American Independence, bothered about in the Cape Cod marshes awhile, but he came to Boston as soon as he got big enough. Joe Warren, the first bloody ruffed-shirt of the Revolution, was as good as born here. Parson Charming strolled along this way from Newport, and stayed here. Pity old Sam Hopkins hadn't come, too; —we'd have made a man of him,—poor, dear, good old Christian heathen! There he lies, as peaceful as a young baby, in the old burying-ground! I've stood on the slab many a time. Meant well,—meant well. Juggernaut. Parson Charming put a little oil on one linchpin, and slipped it out so softly, the first thing they knew about it was the wheel of that side was down. T' other fellow's at work now, but he makes more noise about it. When the linchpin comes out on his side, there'll be a jerk, I tell you! Some think it will spoil the old cart, and they pretend to say that there are valuable things in it which may get hurt. Hope not,—hope not. But this is the great Macadamizing place,—always cracking up something.

Cracking up Boston folks,—said the gentleman with the diamond-pin, whom, for convenience' sake, I shall hereafter call the Koh-i-noor.

The little man turned round mechanically towards him, as Maelzel's Turk used to turn, carrying his head slowly and horizontally, as if it went by cogwheels.—Cracking up all sorts of things,—native and foreign vermin included,—said the little man.

This remark was thought by some of us to have a hidden personal application, and to afford a fair opening for a lively rejoinder, if the Koh-i-noor had been so disposed. The little man uttered it with the distinct wooden calmness with which the ingenious Turk used to exclaim, E-chec! so that it must have been heard. The party supposed to be interested in the remark was, however, carrying a large knife-bladeful of something to his mouth just then, which, no doubt, interfered with the reply he would have made.

—My friend who used to board here was accustomed sometimes, in a pleasant way, to call himself the Autocrat of the table,—meaning, I suppose, that he had it all his own way among the boarders. I think our small boarder here is like to prove a refractory subject, if I undertake to use the sceptre my friend meant to bequeath me, too magisterially. I won't deny that sometimes, on rare occasions, when I have been in company with gentlemen who preferred listening, I have been guilty of the same kind of usurpation which my friend openly justified. But I maintain, that I, the Professor, am a good listener.

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If a man can tell me a fact which subtends an appreciable angle in the horizon of thought, I am as receptive as the contribution-box in a congregation of colored brethren. If, when I am exposing my intellectual dry-goods, a man will begin a good story, I will have them all in, and my shutters up, before he has got to the fifth “says he,” and listen like a three-years’ child, as the author of the “Old Sailor” says. I had rather hear one of those grand elemental laughs from either of our two Georges, (fictitious names, Sir or Madam,) glisten to one of those old playbills of our College days, in which “Tom and Jerry” (“Thomas and Jeremiah,” as the old Greek Professor was said to call it) was announced to be brought on the stage with whole force of the Faculty, read by our Frederick, (no such person, of course,) than say the best things I might by any chance find myself capable of saying. Of course, if I come across a real thinker, a suggestive, acute, illuminating, informing talker, I enjoy the luxury of sitting still for a while as much as another.

Nobody talks much that does n’t say unwise things,—things he did not mean to say; as no person plays much without striking a false note sometimes. Talk, to me, is only spading up the ground for crops of thought. I can’t answer for what will turn up. If I could, it would n’t be talking, but “speaking my piece.” Better, I think, the hearty abandonment of one’s self to the suggestions of the moment at the risk of an occasional slip of the tongue, perceived the instant it escapes, but just one syllable too late, than the royal reputation of never saying a foolish thing.

—What shall I do with this little man?—There is only one thing to do,—and that is to let him talk when he will. The day of the “Autocrat’s” monologues is over.

—My friend,—said I to the young fellow whom, as I have said, the boarders call “John,”—My friend,—I said, one morning, after breakfast,—can you give me any information respecting the deformed person who sits at the other end of the table?

What! the Sculpin?—said the young fellow.

The diminutive person, with angular curvature of the spine,—I said, —and double talipes varus,—I beg your pardon,—with two club-feet.

Is that long word what you call it when a fellah walks so?—said the young man, making his fists revolve round an imaginary axis, as you may have seen youth of tender age and limited pugilistic knowledge, when they show how they would punish an adversary, themselves protected by this rotating guard,—the middle knuckle, meantime, thumb-supported, fiercely prominent, death-threatening.

It is,—said I.—But would you have the kindness to tell me if you know anything about this deformed person?



About the Sculpin?—said the young fellow.

My good friend,—said I,—I am sure, by your countenance, you would not hurt the feelings of one who has been hardly enough treated by Nature to be spared by his fellows. Even in speaking of him to others, I could wish that you might not employ a term which implies contempt for what should inspire only pity.

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A fellah 's no business to be so crooked,—said the young man called John.

Yes, yes,—I said, thoughtfully,—the strong hate the weak. It's all right. The arrangement has reference to the race, and not to the individual. Infirmary must be kicked out, or the stock run down. Wholesale moral arrangements are so different from retail!—I understand the instinct, my friend,—it is cosmic,—it is planetary,—it is a conservative principle in creation.

The young fellow's face gradually lost its expression as I was speaking, until it became as blank of vivid significance as the countenance of a gingerbread rabbit with two currants in the place of eyes. He had not taken my meaning.

Presently the intelligence came back with a snap that made him wink, as he answered, —Jest so. All right. A 1. Put her through. That's the way to talk. Did you speak to me, Sir?—Here the young man struck up that well-known song which I think they used to sing at Masonic festivals, beginning, "Aldiborontiphoscophornio, Where left you Chrononhotonthologos?"

I beg your pardon,—I said;—all I meant was, that men, as temporary occupants of a permanent abode called human life, which is improved or injured by occupancy, according to the style of tenant, have a natural dislike to those who, if they live the life of the race as well as of the individual, will leave lasting injurious effects upon the abode spoken of, which is to be occupied by countless future generations. This is the final cause of the underlying brute instinct which we have in common with the herds.

—The gingerbread-rabbit expression was coming on so fast, that I thought I must try again.—It's a pity that families are kept up, where there are such hereditary infirmities. Still, let us treat this poor man fairly, and not call him names. Do you know what his name is?

I know what the rest of 'em call him,—said the young fellow.—They call him Little Boston. There's no harm in that, is there?

It is an honorable term,—I replied.—But why Little Boston, in a place where most are Bostonians?

Because nobody else is quite so Boston all over as he is,—said the young fellow.

"L. B. Ob. 1692."—Little Boston let him be, when we talk about him. The ring he wears labels him well enough. There is stuff in the little man, or he would n't stick so manfully by this crooked, crotchety old town. Give him a chance.—You will drop the Sculpin, won't you?—I said to the young fellow.

Drop him?—he answered,—I ha'n't took him up yet.



No, no,—the term,—I said,—the term. Don't call him so any more, if you please. Call him Little Boston, if you like.

All right,—said the young fellow.—I would n't be hard on the poor little—

The word he used was objectionable in point of significance and of grammar. It was a frequent termination of certain adjectives among the Romans,—as of those designating a person following the sea, or given to rural pursuits. It is classed by custom among the profane words; why, it is hard to say,—but it is largely used in the street by those who speak of their fellows in pity or in wrath.

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I never heard the young fellow apply the name of the odious pretended fish to the little man from that day forward.

—Here we are, then, at our boarding—house. First, myself, the Professor, a little way from the head of the table, on the right, looking down, where the “Autocrat” used to sit. At the further end sits the Landlady. At the head of the table, just now, the Koh-i-noor, or the gentleman with the diamond. Opposite me is a Venerable Gentleman with a bland countenance, who as yet has spoken little. The Divinity Student is my neighbor on the right,—and further down, that Young Fellow of whom I have repeatedly spoken. The Landlady’s Daughter sits near the Koh-i-noor, as I said. The Poor Relation near the Landlady. At the right upper corner is a fresh-looking youth of whose name and history I have as yet learned nothing. Next the further left-hand corner, near the lower end of the table, sits the deformed person. The chair at his side, occupying that corner, is empty. I need not specially mention the other boarders, with the exception of Benjamin Franklin, the landlady’s son, who sits near his mother. We are a tolerably assorted set,—difference enough and likeness enough; but still it seems to me there is something wanting. The Landlady’s Daughter is the prima donna in the way of feminine attractions. I am not quite satisfied with this young lady. She wears more “jewelry,” as certain young ladies call their trinkets, than I care to see on a person in her position. Her voice is strident, her laugh too much like a giggle, and she has that foolish way of dancing and bobbing like a quill-float with a “minnum” biting the hook below it, which one sees and weeps over sometimes in persons of more pretensions. I can’t help hoping we shall put something into that empty chair yet which will add the missing string to our social harp. I hear talk of a rare Miss who is expected. Something in the schoolgirl way, I believe. We shall see.

—My friend who calls himself The Autocrat has given me a caution which I am going to repeat, with my comment upon it, for the benefit of all concerned.

Professor,—said he, one day,—don’t you think your brain will run dry before a year’s out, if you don’t get the pump to help the cow? Let me tell you what happened to me once. I put a little money into a bank, and bought a check-book, so that I might draw it as I wanted, in sums to suit. Things went on nicely for a time; scratching with a pen was as easy as rubbing Aladdin’s Lamp; and my blank check-book seemed to be a dictionary of possibilities, in which I could find all the synonymes of happiness, and realize any one of them on the spot. A check came back to me at last with these two words on it,—*no funds*. My check-book was a volume of waste-paper.

Now, Professor,—said he,—I have drawn something out of your bank, you know; and just so sure as you keep drawing out your soul’s currency without making new deposits, the next thing will be, *no funds*,—and then where will you be, my boy? These little bits of paper mean your gold and your silver and your copper, Professor; and you will certainly break up and go to pieces, if you don’t hold on to your metallic basis.

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There is something in that,—said I.—Only I rather think life can coin thought somewhat faster than I can count it off in words. What if one shall go round and dry up with soft napkins all the dew that falls of a June evening on the leaves of his garden? Shall there be no more dew on those leaves thereafter? Marry, yea,—many drops, large and round and full of moonlight as those thou shalt have absterged!

Here am I, the Professor,—a man who has lived long enough to have plucked the flowers of life and come to the berries,—which are not always sad-colored, but sometimes golden-hued as the crocus of April, or rosy-cheeked as the damask of June; a man who staggered against books as a baby, and will totter against them, if he lives to decrepitude; with a brain full of tingling thoughts, such as they are, as a limb which we call “asleep,” because it is so particularly awake, is of pricking points; presenting a keyboard of nerve-pulps, not as yet tanned or ossified, to finger-touch of all outward agencies; knowing nothing of the filmy threads of this web of life in which we insects buzz awhile, waiting for the gray old spider to come along; contented enough with daily realities, but twirling on his finger the key of a private Bedlam of ideals; in knowledge feeding with the fox oftener than with the stork,—loving better the breadth of a fertilizing inundation than the depth of narrow artesian well; finding nothing too small for his contemplation in the markings of the *grammatophora subtilissima*, and nothing too large in the movement of the solar system towards the star Lambda of the constellation Hercules;—and the question is, whether there is anything left for me, the Professor, to suck out of creation, after my lively friend has had his straw in the bung-hole of the Universe!

A man's mental reactions with the atmosphere of life must go on, whether he will or no, as between his blood and the air he breathes. As to catching the residuum of the process, or what we call thought,—the gaseous ashes of burned-out thinking,—the excretion of mental respiration,—that will depend on many things, as, on having a favorable intellectual temperature about one, and a fitting receptacle.—I sow more thought-seeds in twenty-four hours' travel over the desert-sand along which my lonely consciousness paces day and night, than I shall throw into soil where it will germinate, in a year. All sorts of bodily and mental perturbations come between us and the due projection of our thought. The pulse-like “fits of easy and difficult transmission” seem to reach even the transparent medium through which our souls are seen. We know our humanity by its often intercepted rays, as we tell a revolving light from a star or meteor by its constantly recurring obscuration.

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An illustrious scholar once told me, that, in the first lecture he ever delivered, he spoke but half his allotted time, and felt as if he had told all he knew. Braham came forward once to sing one of his most famous and familiar songs, and for his life could not recall the first line of it;—he told his mishap to the audience, and they screamed it at him in a chorus of a thousand voices. Milton could not write to suit himself, except from the autumnal to the vernal equinox. One in the clothing-business, who, there is reason to suspect, may have inherited, by descent, the great poet's impressible temperament, let a customer slip through his fingers one day without fitting him with a new garment. "Ah!" said he to a friend of mine, who was standing by, "if it hadn't been for that confounded headache of mine this morning, I'd have had a coat on that man, in spite of himself, before he left-the store." A passing throb, only,—but it deranged the nice mechanism required to persuade the accidental human being, X, into a given piece of broadcloth, A.

We must take care not to confound this frequent difficulty of transmission of our ideas with want of ideas. I suppose that a man's mind does in time form a neutral salt with the elements in the universe for which it has special elective affinities. In fact, I look upon a library as a kind of mental chemist's shop filled with the crystals of all forms and hues which have come from the union of individual thought with local circumstances or universal principles.

When a man has worked out his special affinities in this way, there is an end of his genius as a real solvent. No more effervescence and hissing tumult—as he pours his sharp thought on the world's biting alkaline unbeliefs! No more corrosion of the old monumental tablets covered with lies! No more taking up of dull earths, and turning them, first into clear solutions, and then into lustrous prisms!

I, the Professor, am very much like other men: I shall not find out when I have used up my affinities. What a blessed thing it is, that Nature, when she invented, manufactured, and patented her authors, contrived to make critics out of the chips that were left! Painful as the task is, they never fail to warn the author, in the most impressive manner, of the probabilities of failure in what he has undertaken. Sad as the necessity is to their delicate sensibilities, they never hesitate to advertise him of the decline of his powers, and to press upon him the propriety of retiring before he sinks into imbecility. Trusting to their kind offices, I shall endeavor to fulfil—

—Bridget enters and begins clearing the table.

—The following poem is my (The Professor's) only contribution to the great department of Ocean-Cable literature. As all the poets of this country will be engaged for the next six weeks in writing for the premium offered by the Crystal-Palace Company for the Burns Centenary, (so called, according to our Benjamin Franklin, because there will be nary a cent for any of us,) poetry will be very scarce and dear. Consumers may,

consequently, be glad to take the present article, which, by the aid of a Latin tutor—and a Professor of Chemistry, will be found intelligible to the educated classes.



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De Sauty

An electro-chemical eclogue.

Professor. Blue-Nose.

Professor.

Tell me, O Provincial! speak, Ceruleo-Nasal!
Lives there one De Sauty extant now among you,
Whispering Boanerges, son of silent thunder,
Holding talk with nations? Is there a De Sauty, ambulant on Tellus,
Bifid-cleft like mortals, dormant in night-cap,
Having sight, smell, hearing, food-receiving feature
Three times daily patent?

Breathes there such a being, O Ceruleo-Nasal?
Or is he a mythus,—ancient word for “humbug,”
—Such as Livy told about the wolf that wet-nursed
Romulus and Remus?

Was he born of woman, this alleged De Sauty?
Or a living product of galvanic action,
Like the status bred in Crosses flint-solution?
Speak, thou Cyano-Rhinal!

Blue-nose.

Many things thou askest, jackknife-bearing stranger,
Much-conjecturing mortal, pork-and-treacle-waster!
Pretermitt thy whittling, wheel thine ear-flap toward me,
Thou shalt hear them answered.

When the charge galvanic tingled through the cable,
At the polar focus of the wire electric
Suddenly appeared a white-faced man among us
Called himself “*De Sauty*.”

As the small opossum held in pouch maternal
Grasps the nutrient organ whence the term mammalia,
So the unknown stranger held the wire electric,
Sucking in the current.

When the current strengthened, bloomed the pale-faced stranger,
Took no drink nor victual, yet grew fat and rosy,



And from time to time, in sharp articulation,
Said, "All right! *De Sauty.*"

From the lonely station passed the utterance, spreading
Through the pines and hemlocks to the groves of steeples
Till the land was filled with loud reverberations
Of "All right! *De Sauty.*"

When the current slackened, drooped the mystic stranger,
Faded, faded, faded, as the stream grew weaker,
Wasted to a shadow, with a hartshorn odor
Of disintegration.

Drops of deliquescence glistened on his forehead,
Whitened round his feet the dust of efflorescence,
Till one Monday morning, when the flow suspended,
There was no *De Sauty.*

Nothing but a cloud of elements organic,
C. O. H. N. Ferrum, Chor. Flu. Sil. Potassa,
Calc. Sod. Phosph. Mag. Sulphur, Mang.(?) Alumin.(?) Cuprum,(?)
Such as man is made of.

Born of stream galvanic, with it he had perished!
There is no *De Sauty* now there is no current!
Give us a new cable, then again we'll hear him
Cry, "All right! *De Sauty.*"

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II

Back again!—A turtle—which means a tortoise—is fond of his shell; but if you put a live coal on his back, he crawls out of it. So the boys say.

It is a libel on the turtle. He grows to his shell, and his shell is in his body as much as his body is in his shell.—I don't think there is one of our boarders quite so testudineous as I am. Nothing but a combination of motives, more peremptory than the coal on the turtle's back, could have got me to leave the shelter of my carapace; and after memorable interviews, and kindest hospitalities, and grand sights, and huge influx of patriotic pride,—for every American owns all America,—

“Creation's heir,—the world, the world is”

his, if anybody's,—I come back with the feeling which a boned turkey might experience, if, retaining his consciousness, he were allowed to resume his skeleton.

Welcome, O Fighting Gladiator, and Recumbent Cleopatra, and Dying Warrior, whose classic outlines (reproduced in the calcined mineral of Lutetia) crown my loaded shelves! Welcome, ye triumphs of pictorial art (repeated by the magic graver) that look down upon me from the walls of my sacred cell! Vesalius, as Titian drew him, high-fronted, still-eyed, thick-bearded, with signet-ring, as beseems a gentleman, with book and carelessly-held eyeglass, marking him a scholar; thou, too, Jan Kuyper, commonly called Jan Praktiseer, old man of a century and seven years besides, father of twenty sons and two daughters, cut in copper by Houbraken, bought from a portfolio on one of the Paris quais; and ye Three Trees of Rembrandt, black in shadow against the blaze of light; and thou Rosy Cottager of Sir Joshua, roses hinted by the peppery burin of Bartolozzi; ye, too, of lower grades in nature, yet not unlovely for unrenowned, Young Bull of Paulus Potter, and sleeping Cat of Cornelius Visscher; welcome once more to my eyes! The old books look out from the shelves, and I seem to read on their backs something asides their titles,—a kind of solemn greeting. The crimson carpet flushes warm under my feet. The arm-chair hugs me; the swivel-chair spins round with me, as if it were giddy with pleasure; the vast recumbent fauteuil stretches itself out under my weight, as one joyous with food and wine stretches in after-dinner laughter.

The boarders were pleased to say that they were glad to get me back. One of them ventured a compliment, namely,—that I talked as if I believed what I said.—This was apparently considered something unusual, by its being mentioned.

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One who means to talk with entire sincerity,—I said,—always feels himself in danger of two things, namely,—an affectation of bluntness, like that of which Cornwall accuses Kent in “Lear,” and actual rudeness. What a man wants to do, in talking with a stranger, is to get and to give as much of the best and most real life that belongs to the two talkers as the time will let him. Life is short, and conversation apt to run to mere words. Mr. Hue I think it is, who tells us some very good stories about the way in which two Chinese gentlemen contrive to keep up a long talk without saying a word which has any meaning in it. Something like this is occasionally heard on this side of the Great Wall. The best Chinese talkers I know are some pretty women whom I meet from time to time. Pleasant, airy, complimentary, the little flakes of flattery glimmering in their talk like the bits of gold-leaf in eau-de-vie de Dantzic; their accents flowing on in a soft ripple,—never a wave, and never a calm; words nicely fitted, but never a colored phrase or a highly-flavored epithet; they turn air into syllables so gracefully, that we find meaning for the music they make as we find faces in the coals and fairy palaces in the clouds. There is something very odd, though, about this mechanical talk.

You have sometimes been in a train on the railroad when the engine was detached a long way from the station you were approaching? Well, you have noticed how quietly and rapidly the cars kept on, just as if the locomotive were drawing them? Indeed, you would not have suspected that you were travelling on the strength of a dead fact, if you had not seen the engine running away from you on a side-track. Upon my conscience, I believe some of these pretty women detach their minds entirely, sometimes, from their talk,—and, what is more, that we never know the difference. Their lips let off the fluty syllables just as their fingers would sprinkle the music-drops from their pianos; unconscious habit turns the phrase of thought into words just as it does that of music into notes.—Well, they govern the world for all that, these sweet-lipped women,—because beauty is the index of a larger fact than wisdom.

—The Bombazine wanted an explanation.

Madam,—said I,—wisdom is the abstract of the past, but beauty is the promise of the future.

—All this, however, is not what I was going to say. Here am I, suppose, seated—we will say at a dinner-table—alongside of an intelligent Englishman. We look in each other’s faces,—we exchange a dozen words. One thing is settled: we mean not to offend each other,—to be perfectly courteous,—more than courteous; for we are the entertainer and the entertained, and cherish particularly amiable feelings, to each other. The claret is good; and if our blood reddens a little with its warm crimson, we are none the less kind for it.

I don’t think people that talk over their victuals are like to say anything very great, especially if they get their heads muddled with strong drink before they begin jabberin’.

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The Bombazine uttered this with a sugary sourness, as if the words had been steeped in a solution of acetate of lead.—The boys of my time used to call a hit like this a “side-winder.”

—I must finish this woman.—

Madam,—I said,—the Great Teacher seems to have been fond of talking as he sat at meat. Because this was a good while ago, in a far-off place, you forget what the true fact of it was,—that those were real dinners, where people were hungry and thirsty, and where you met a very miscellaneous company. Probably there was a great deal of loose talk among the guests; at any rate, there was always wine, we may believe.

Whatever may be the hygienic advantages or disadvantages of wine,—and I for one, except for certain particular ends, believe in water, and, I blush to say it, in black tea,—there is no doubt about its being the grand specific against dull dinners. A score of people come together in all moods of mind and body. The problem is, in the space of one hour, more or less, to bring them all into the same condition of slightly exalted life. Food alone is enough for one person, perhaps,—talk, alone, for another; but the grand equalizer and fraternizer, which works up the radiators to their maximum radiation, and the absorbents to their maximum receptivity, is now just where it was when

The conscious water saw its Lord and blushed,

—when six great vessels containing water, the whole amounting to more than a hogshead-full, were changed into the best of wine. I once wrote a song about wine, in which I spoke so warmly of it, that I was afraid some would think it was written inter pocula; whereas it was composed in the bosom of my family, under the most tranquillizing domestic influences.

—The divinity-student turned towards me, looking mischievous.—Can you tell me,—he said,—who wrote a song for a temperance celebration once, of which the following is a verse?

Alas for the loved one, too gentle and fair
The joys of the banquet to chasten and share!
Her eye lost its light that his goblet might shine,
And the rose of her cheek was dissolved in his wine!

I did,—I answered.—What are you going to do about it?—I will tell you another line I wrote long ago:—

Don't be “consistent,”—but be simply true.

The longer I live, the more I am satisfied of two things: first, that the truest lives are those that are cut rose-diamond-fashion, with many facets answering to the many-

planed aspects of the world about them; secondly, that society is always trying in some way or other to grind us down to a single flat surface. It is hard work to resist this grinding-down action.—Now give me a chance. Better eternal and universal abstinence than the brutalities of those days that made wives and mothers and daughters and sisters blush for those whom they should have honored, as they came

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reeling home from their debauches! Yet better even excess than lying and hypocrisy; and if wine is upon all our tables, let us praise it for its color and fragrance and social tendency, so far as it deserves, and not hug a bottle in the closet and pretend not to know the use of a wine-glass at a public dinner! I think you will find that people who honestly mean to be true really contradict themselves much more rarely than those who try to be “consistent.” But a great many things we say can be made to appear contradictory, simply because they are partial views of a truth, and may often look unlike at first, as a front view of a face and its profile often do.

Here is a distinguished divine, for whom I have great respect, for I owe him a charming hour at one of our literary anniversaries, and he has often spoken noble words; but he holds up a remark of my friend the “Autocrat,”—which I grieve to say he twice misquotes, by omitting the very word which gives it its significance,—the word fluid, intended to typify the mobility of the restricted will,—holds it up, I say, as if it attacked the reality of the self-determining principle, instead of illustrating its limitations by an image. Now I will not explain any farther, still less defend, and least of all attack, but simply quote a few lines from one of my friend’s poems, printed more than ten years ago, and ask the distinguished gentleman where he has ever asserted more strongly or absolutely the independent will of the “subcreative centre,” as my heretical friend has elsewhere called man.

—Thought, conscience, will, to make them all thy own
He rent a pillar from the eternal throne!
—Made in His image, thou must nobly dare
The thorny crown of sovereignty to share.
—Think not too meanly of thy low estate;
Thou hast a choice; to choose is to create!

If he will look a little closely, he will see that the profile and the full-face views of the will are both true and perfectly consistent!

Now let us come back, after this long digression, to the conversation with the intelligent Englishman. We begin skirmishing with a few light ideas,—testing for thoughts,—as our electro-chemical friend, De Sauty, if there were such a person, would test for his current; trying a little litmus-paper for acids, and then a slip of turmeric-paper for alkalies, as chemists do with unknown compounds; flinging the lead, and looking at the shells and sands it brings up to find out whether we are like to keep in shallow water, or shall have to drop the deep-sea line;—in short, seeing what we have to deal with. If the Englishman gets his H’s pretty well placed, he comes from one of the higher grades of the British social order, and we shall find him a good companion.

But, after all, here is a great fact between us. We belong to two different civilizations, and, until we recognize what separates us, we are talking like Pyramus and Thisbe, without any hole in the wall to talk through. Therefore, on the whole, if he were a superior fellow, incapable of mistaking it for personal conceit, I think I would let out the fact of the real American feeling about Old-World folks. They are children to us in certain points of view. They are playing with toys we have done with for whole-generations.

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-----Footnote:

The more I have observed and reflected, the more limited seems to me the field of action of the human will. Every act of choice involves a special relation between the ego and the conditions before it. But no man knows what forces are at work in the determination of his ego. The bias which decides his choice between two or more motives may come from some unsuspected ancestral source, of which he knows nothing at all. He is automatic in virtue of that hidden spring of reflex action, all the time having the feeling that he is self-determining. The Story of Elsie Yenner, written soon after this book was published, illustrates the direction in which my thought was moving. 'The imaginary subject of the story obeyed her will, but her will Obeyed the mysterious antenatal poisoning influence.

That silly little drum they are always beating on, and the trumpet and the feather they make so much noise and cut such a figure with, we have not quite outgrown, but play with much less seriously and constantly than they do. Then there is a whole museum of wigs, and masks, and lace-coats, and gold-sticks, and grimaces, and phrases, which we laugh at honestly, without affectation, that are still used in the Old-World puppet-shows. I don't think we on our part ever understand the Englishman's concentrated loyalty and specialized reverence. But then we do think more of a man, as such, (barring some little difficulties about race and complexion which the Englishman will touch us on presently,) than any people that ever lived did think of him. Our reverence is a great deal wider, if it is less intense. We have caste among us, to some extent; it is true; but there is never a collar on the American wolf-dog such as you often see on the English mastiff, notwithstanding his robust, hearty individuality.

This confronting of two civilizations is always a grand sensation to me; it is like cutting through the isthmus and letting the two oceans swim into each other's laps. The trouble is, it is so difficult to let out the whole American nature without its self-assertion seeming to take a personal character. But I never enjoy the Englishman so much as when he talks of church and king like Manco Capac among the Peruvians. Then you get the real British flavor, which the cosmopolite Englishman loses.

How much better this thorough interpenetration of ideas than a barren interchange of courtesies, or a bush-fighting argument, in which each man tries to cover as much of himself and expose as much of his opponent as the tangled thicket of the disputed ground will let him!

—My thoughts flow in layers or strata, at least three deep. I follow a slow person's talk, and keep a perfectly clear under-current of my own beneath it. Under both runs

obscurely a consciousness belonging to a third train of reflections, independent of the two others. I will try to write out a Mental movement in three parts.

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A.—First voice, or Mental Soprano,—thought follows a woman talking.

B.—Second voice, or Mental Barytone,—my running accompaniment.

C.—Third voice, or Mental Basso,—low grumble of importunate self-repeating idea.

A.—White lace, three skirts, looped with flowers, wreath of apple-blossoms, gold bracelets, diamond pin and ear-rings, the most delicious berth you ever saw, white satin slippers—

B.—Deuse take her! What a fool she is! Hear her chatter! (Look out of window just here.—Two pages and a half of description, if it were all written out, in one tenth of a second.)—Go ahead, old lady! (Eye catches picture over fireplace.) There's that infernal family nose! Came over in the "Mayflower" on the first old fool's face. Why don't they wear a ring in it?

C.—You 'll be late at lecture,—late at lecture,—late,—late—

I observe that a deep layer of thought sometimes makes itself felt through the superincumbent strata, thus:—The usual single or double currents shall flow on, but there shall be an influence blending with them, disturbing them in an obscure way, until all at once I say,—Oh, there! I knew there was something troubling me,—and the thought which had been working through comes up to the surface clear, definite, and articulates itself,—a disagreeable duty, perhaps, or an unpleasant recollection.

The inner world of thought and the outer world of events are alike in this, that they are both brimful. There is no space between consecutive thoughts, or between the never-ending series of actions. All pack tight, and mould their surfaces against each other, so that in the long run there is a wonderful average uniformity in the forms of both thoughts and actions, just as you find that cylinders crowded all become hexagonal prisms, and spheres pressed together are formed into regular polyhedra.

Every event that a man would master must be mounted on the run, and no man ever caught the reins of a thought except as it galloped by him. So, to carry out, with another comparison, my remark about the layers of thought, we may consider the mind as it moves among thoughts or events, like a circus-rider whirling round with a great troop of horses. He can mount a fact or an idea, and guide it more or less completely, but he cannot stop it. So, as I said in another way at the beginning, he can stride two or three thoughts at once, but not break their steady walk, trot, or gallop. He can only take his foot from the saddle of one thought and put it on that of another.

—What is the saddle of a thought? Why, a word, of course.—Twenty years after you have dismissed a thought, it suddenly wedges up to you through the press, as if it had been steadily galloping round and round all that time without a rider.

The will does not act in the interspaces of thought, for there are no such interspaces, but simply steps from the back of one moving thought upon that of another.

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—I should like to ask,—said the divinity-student,—since we are getting into metaphysics, how you can admit space, if all things are in contact, and how you can admit time, if it is always now to something?

—I thought it best not to hear this question.

—I wonder if you know this class of philosophers in books or elsewhere. One of them makes his bow to the public, and exhibits an unfortunate truth bandaged up so that it cannot stir hand or foot,—as helpless, apparently, and unable to take care of itself, as an Egyptian mummy. He then proceeds, with the air and method of a master, to take off the bandages. Nothing can be neater than the way in which he does it. But as he takes off layer after layer, the truth seems to grow smaller and smaller, and some of its outlines begin to look like something we have seen before. At last, when he has got them all off, and the truth struts out naked, we recognize it as a diminutive and familiar acquaintance whom we have known in the streets all our lives. The fact is, the philosopher has coaxed the truth into his study and put all those bandages on; or course it is not very hard for him to take them off. Still, a great many people like to watch the process,—he does it so neatly!

Dear! dear! I am ashamed to write and talk, sometimes, when I see how those functions of the large-brained, thumb-opposing plantigrade are abused by my fellow-vertebrates,—perhaps by myself. How they spar for wind, instead of hitting from the shoulder!

—The young fellow called John arose and placed himself in a neat fighting attitude.—Fetch on the fellah that makes them long words!—he said,—and planted a straight hit with the right fist in the concave palm of the left hand with a click like a cup and ball.—You small boy there, hurry up that “Webster’s Unabridged!”

The little gentleman with the malformation, before described, shocked the propriety of the breakfast-table by a loud utterance of three words, of which the two last were “Webster’s Unabridged,” and the first was an emphatic monosyllable.—Beg pardon,—he added,—forgot myself. But let us have an English dictionary, if we are to have any. I don’t believe in clipping the coin of the realm, Sir! If I put a weathercock on my house, Sir, I want it to tell which way the wind blows up aloft,—off from the prairies to the ocean, or off from the ocean to the prairies, or any way it wants to blow! I don’t want a weathercock with a winch in an old gentleman’s study that he can take hold of and turn, so that the vane shall point west when the great wind overhead is blowing east with all its might, Sir! Wait till we give you a dictionary; Sir! It takes Boston to do that thing, Sir!

—Some folks think water can’t run down-hill anywhere out of Boston, —remarked the Koh-i-noor.

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I don't know what some folks think so well as I know what some fools say,—rejoined the Little Gentleman.—If importing most dry goods made the best scholars, I dare say you would know where to look for 'em.—Mr. Webster could n't spell, Sir, or would n't spell, Sir,—at any rate, he did n't spell; and the end of it was a fight between the owners of some copyrights and the dignity of this noble language which we have inherited from our English fathers. Language!—the blood of the soul, Sir! into which our thoughts run and out of which they grow! We know what a word is worth here in Boston. Young Sam Adams got up on the stage at Commencement, out at Cambridge there, with his gown on, the Governor and Council looking on in the name of his Majesty, King George the Second, and the girls looking down out of the galleries, and taught people how to spell a word that was n't in the Colonial dictionaries! R-e, re, s-i-s, sis, t-a-n-c-e, tance, Resistance! That was in '43, and it was a good many years before the Boston boys began spelling it with their muskets;—but when they did begin, they spelt it so loud that the old bedridden women in the English almshouses heard every syllable! Yes, yes, yes,—it was a good while before those other two Boston boys got the class so far along that it could spell those two hard words, Independence and Union! I tell you what, Sir, there are a thousand lives, aye, sometimes a million, go to get a new word into a language that is worth speaking. We know what language means too well here in Boston to play tricks with it. We never make a new word til we have made a new thing or a new thought, Sir! then we shaped the new mould of this continent, we had to make a few. When, by God's permission, we abrogated the primal curse of maternity, we had to make a word or two. The cutwater of this great Leviathan clipper, the *occidental*,—this thirty-wasted wind-and-steam wave-crusher,—must throw a little spray over the human vocabulary as it splits the waters of a new world's destiny!

He rose as he spoke, until his stature seemed to swell into the fair human proportions. His feet must have been on the upper round of his high chair; that was the only way I could account for it.

Puts her through fast-rate,—said the young fellow whom the boarders call John.

The venerable and kind-looking old gentleman who sits opposite said he remembered Sam Adams as Governor. An old man in a brown coat. Saw him take the Chair on Boston Common. Was a boy then, and remembers sitting on the fence in front of the old Hancock house. Recollects he had a glazed 'lectionbun, and sat eating it and looking down on to the Common. Lalocks flowered late that year, and he got a great bunch off from the bushes in the Hancock front-yard.

Them 'lection-buns are no go,—said the young man John, so called.—I know the trick. Give a fellah a fo'penny bun in the mornin', an' he downs the whole of it. In about an hour it swells up in his stomach as big as a football, and his feedin' 's spilt for that day. That's the way to stop off a young one from eatin' up all the 'lection dinner.

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Salem! Salem! not Boston,—shouted the little man.

But the Koh-i-noor laughed a great rasping laugh, and the boy Benjamin Franklin looked sharp at his mother, as if he remembered the bun-experiment as a part of his past personal history.

The Little Gentleman was holding a fork in his left hand. He stabbed a boulder of home-made bread with it, mechanically, and looked at it as if it ought to shriek. It did not,—but he sat as if watching it.

—Language is a solemn thing,—I said.—It grows out of life,—out of its agonies and ecstasies, its wants and its weariness. Every language is a temple, in which the soul of those who speak it is enshrined. Because time softens its outlines and rounds the sharp angles of its cornices, shall a fellow take a pickaxe to help time? Let me tell you what comes of meddling with things that can take care of themselves.—A friend of mine had a watch given him, when he was a boy,—a “bull’s eye,” with a loose silver case that came off like an oyster-shell from its contents; you know them,—the cases that you hang on your thumb, while the core, or the real watch, lies in your hand as naked as a peeled apple. Well, he began with taking off the case, and so on from one liberty to another, until he got it fairly open, and there were the works, as good as if they were alive,—crown-wheel, balance-wheel, and all the rest. All right except one thing,—there was a confounded little hair had got tangled round the balance-wheel. So my young Solomon got a pair of tweezers, and caught hold of the hair very nicely, and pulled it right out, without touching any of the wheels,—when,—bzzzzZZZ! and the watch had done up twenty-four hours in double magnetic-telegraph time!—The English language was wound up to run some thousands of years, I trust; but if everybody is to be pulling at everything he thinks is a hair, our grandchildren will have to make the discovery that it is a hair-spring, and the old Anglo-Norman soul’s-timekeeper will run down, as so many other dialects have done before it. I can’t stand this meddling any better than you, Sir. But we have a great deal to be proud of in the lifelong labors of that old lexicographer, and we must n’t be ungrateful. Besides, don’t let us deceive ourselves,—the war of the dictionaries is only a disguised rivalry of cities, colleges, and especially of publishers. After all, it is likely that the language will shape itself by larger forces than phonography and dictionary-making. You may spade up the ocean as much as you like, and harrow it afterwards, if you can,—but the moon will still lead the tides, and the winds will form their surface.

—Do you know Richardson’s Dictionary?—I said to my neighbor the divinity-student.

Haow?—said the divinity-student.—He colored, as he noticed on my face a twitch in one of the muscles which tuck up the corner of the mouth, (zygomaticus major,) and which I could not hold back from making a little movement on its own account.

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It was too late.—A country-boy, lassoed when he was a half-grown colt. Just as good as a city-boy, and in some ways, perhaps, better,—but caught a little too old not to carry some marks of his earlier ways of life. Foreigners, who have talked a strange tongue half their lives, return to the language of their childhood in their dying hours. Gentlemen in fine linen, and scholars in large libraries, taken by surprise, or in a careless moment, will sometimes let slip a word they knew as boys in homespun and have not spoken since that time,—but it lay there under all their culture. That is one way you may know the country-boys after they have grown rich or celebrated; another is by the odd old family names, particularly those of the Hebrew prophets, which the good old people have saddled them with.

—Boston has enough of England about it to make a good English dictionary,—said that fresh-looking youth whom I have mentioned as sitting at the right upper corner of the table.

I turned and looked him full in the face,—for the pure, manly intonations arrested me. The voice was youthful, but full of character.—I suppose some persons have a peculiar susceptibility in the matter of voice.—Hear this.

Not long after the American Revolution, a young lady was sitting in her father's chaise in a street of this town of Boston. She overheard a little girl talking or singing, and was mightily taken with the tones of her voice. Nothing would satisfy her but she must have that little girl come and live in her father's house. So the child came, being then nine years old. Until her marriage she remained under the same roof with the young lady. Her children became successively inmates of the lady's dwelling; and now, seventy years, or thereabouts, since the young lady heard the child singing, one of that child's children and one of her grandchildren are with her in that home, where she, no longer young, except in heart, passes her peaceful days.—Three generations linked together by so light a breath of accident!

I liked—the sound of this youth's voice, I said, and his look when I came to observe him a little more closely. His complexion had something better than the bloom and freshness which had first attracted me;—it had that diffused tone which is a sure index of wholesome, lusty life. A fine liberal style of nature seemed to be: hair crisped, moustache springing thick and dark, head firmly planted, lips finished, as is commonly seen in gentlemen's families, a pupil well contracted, and a mouth that opened frankly with a white flash of teeth that looked as if they could serve him as they say Ethan Allen's used to serve their owner,—to draw nails with. This is the kind of fellow to walk a frigate's deck and bowl his broadsides into the "Gadlant Thudnder-bomb," or any forty-port-holed adventurer who would like to exchange a few tons of iron compliments. —I don't know what put this into my head, for it was not till some time afterward I learned the young fellow had been in the naval school at Annapolis. Something had happened to change his plan of life, and he was now studying engineering and architecture in Boston.

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When the youth made the short remark which drew my attention to him, the little deformed gentleman turned round and took a long look at him.

Good for the Boston boy!—he said.

I am not a Boston boy,—said the youth, smiling,—I am a Marylander.

I don't care where you come from,—we'll make a Boston man of you,—said the little gentleman. Pray, what part of Maryland did you come from, and how shall I call you?

The poor youth had to speak pretty loud, as he was at the right upper corner of the table, and the little gentleman next the lower left-hand corner. His face flushed a little, but he answered pleasantly, telling who he was, as if the little man's infirmity gave him a right to ask any questions he wanted to.

Here is the place for you to sit,—said the little gentleman, pointing to the vacant chair next his own, at the corner.

You're go'n' to have a young lady next you, if you wait till to-morrow,—said the landlady to him.

He did not reply, but I had a fancy that he changed color. It can't be that he has susceptibilities with reference to a contingent young lady! It can't be that he has had experiences which make him sensitive! Nature could not be quite so cruel as to set a heart throbbing in that poor little cage of ribs! There is no use in wasting notes of admiration. I must ask the landlady about him.

These are some of the facts she furnished.—Has not been long with her. Brought a sight of furniture,—could n't hardly get some of it upstairs. Has n't seemed particularly attentive to the ladies. The Bombazine (whom she calls Cousin something or other) has tried to enter into conversation with him, but retired with the impression that he was indifferent to ladies' society. Paid his bill the other day without saying a word about it. Paid it in gold,—had a great heap of twenty-dollar pieces. Hires her best room. Thinks he is a very nice little man, but lives dreadful lonely up in his chamber. Wants the care of some capable nuss. Never pitied anybody more in her life—never see a more interestin' person.

—My intention was, when I began making these notes, to let them consist principally of conversations between myself and the other boarders. So they will, very probably; but my curiosity is excited about this little boarder of ours, and my reader must not be disappointed, if I sometimes interrupt a discussion to give an account of whatever fact or traits I may discover about him. It so happens that his room is next to mine, and I have the opportunity of observing many of his ways without any active movements of curiosity. That his room contains heavy furniture, that he is a restless little body and is

apt to be up late, that he talks to himself, and keeps mainly to himself, is nearly all I have yet found out.

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One curious circumstance happened lately which I mention without drawing an absolute inference. Being at the studio of a sculptor with whom I am acquainted, the other day, I saw a remarkable cast of a left arm. On my asking where the model came from, he said it was taken direct from the arm of a deformed person, who had employed one of the Italian moulders to make the cast. It was a curious case, it should seem, of one beautiful limb upon a frame otherwise singularly imperfect—I have repeatedly noticed this little gentleman's use of his left arm. Can he have furnished the model I saw at the sculptor's?

—So we are to have a new boarder to-morrow. I hope there will be something pretty and pleasing about her. A woman with a creamy voice, and finished in alto rilievo, would be a variety in the boarding-house,—a little more marrow and a little less sinew than our landlady and her daughter and the bombazine-clad female, all of whom are of the turkey-drumstick style of organization. I don't mean that these are our only female companions; but the rest being conversational non-combatants, mostly still, sad feeders, who take in their food as locomotives take in wood and water, and then wither away from the table like blossoms that never came to fruit, I have not yet referred to them as individuals.

I wonder what kind of young person we shall see in that empty chair to-morrow!

—I read this song to the boarders after breakfast the other morning. It was written for our fellows;—you know who they are, of course.

The boys.

Has there any old fellow got mixed with the boys?
If there has, take him out, without making a noise!
Hang the Almanac's cheat and the Catalogue's spite!
Old Time is a liar! We're twenty to-night!

We're twenty! We're twenty! Who says we are more?
He's tipsy,—young jackanapes!—show him the door!
—"Gray temples at twenty?"—Yes! white, if we please;
Where the snow-flakes fall thickest there's nothing can freeze!

Was it snowing I spoke of? Excuse the mistake!
Look close,—you will see not a sign of a flake;
We want some new garlands for those we have shed,
And these are white roses in place of the red!

We've a trick, we young fellows, you may have been told.
Of talking (in public) as if we were old;

That boy we call Doctor, (1) and this we call Judge (2)
—It's a neat little fiction,—of course it's all fudge.

That fellow's the Speaker, (3)—the one on the right;
Mr. Mayor, (4) my young one, how are you to-night?
That's our "Member of Congress,"(5) we say when we chaff;
There's the "Reverend" (6) What's his name?—don't make me laugh!

That boy with the grave mathematical look(7)
Made believe he had written a wonderful book,
And the *royal society* thought it was true!
So they chose him right in; a good joke it was, too.

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There's a boy,—we pretend,—with a three-decker-brain
That could harness a team with a logical chain:
When he spoke for our manhood in syllabled fire,
We called him "The Justice,"—but now he's "The Squire."(1)

And there's a nice youngster of excellent pith,(2)
Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith,
But he shouted a song for the brave and the free,
—Just read on his medal,—“My country,—of thee!”

You hear that boy laughing?—you think he's all fun,
But the angels laugh, too, at the good he has done;
The children laugh loud as they troop to his call,
And the poor man that knows him laughs loudest of all!(3)

Yes, we're boys,—always playing with tongue or with pen,
—And I sometimes have asked,—Shall we ever be men?
Shall we always be youthful and laughing and gay,
Till the last dear companion drops smiling away?

Then here's to our boyhood, its gold and its gray!
The stars of its Winter, the dews of its May!
And when we have done with our life-lasting toys,
Dear Father, take care of thy children, the Boys!

1 Francis Thomas. 2 George Tyler Bigelow. 3 Francis Boardman Crowninshield. 4 G. W. Richardson. 5 George Thomas Davis. 6 James Freeman Clarke. 7 Benjamin Peirce.

III

[The Professor talks with the Reader. He tells a Young Girl's Story.]

When the elements that went to the making of the first man, father of mankind, had been withdrawn from the world of unconscious matter, the balance of creation was disturbed. The materials that go to the making of one woman were set free by the abstraction from inanimate nature of one man's-worth of masculine constituents. These combined to make our first mother, by a logical necessity involved in the previous creation of our common father. All this, mythically, illustratively, and by no means doctrinally or polemically.

The man implies the woman, you will understand. The excellent gentleman whom I had the pleasure of setting right in a trifling matter a few weeks ago believes in the frequent occurrence of miracles at the present day. So do I. I believe, if you could find an uninhabited coral-reef island, in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, with plenty of cocoa-

palms and bread-fruit on it, and put a handsome young fellow, like our Marylander, ashore upon it, if you touched there a year afterwards, you would find him walking under the palm-trees arm in arm with a pretty woman.

Where would she come from?

Oh, that 's the miracle!

—I was just as certain, when I saw that fine, high-colored youth at the upper right-hand corner of our table, that there would appear some fitting feminine counterpart to him, as if I had been a clairvoyant, seeing it all beforehand.

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—I have a fancy that those Marylanders are just about near enough to the sun to ripen well.—How some of us fellows remember Joe and Harry, Baltimoreans, both! Joe, with his cheeks like lady-apples, and his eyes like black-heart cherries, and his teeth like the whiteness of the flesh of cocoanuts, and his laugh that set the chandelier-drops rattling overhead, as we sat at our sparkling banquets in those gay times! Harry, champion, by acclamation, of the college heavy-weights, broad-shouldered, bull-necked, square-jawed, six feet and trimmings, a little science, lots of pluck, good-natured as a steer in peace, formidable as a red-eyed bison in the crack of hand-to-hand battle! Who forgets the great muster-day, and the collision of the classic with the democratic forces? The huge butcher, fifteen stone,—two hundred and ten pounds,—good weight,—steps out like Telamonian Ajax, defiant. No words from Harry, the Baltimorean,—one of the quiet sort, who strike first; and do the talking, if there is any, afterwards. No words, but, in the place thereof, a clean, straight, hard hit, which took effect with a spank like the explosion of a percussion-cap, knocking the slayer of beeves down a sand-bank,—followed, alas! by the too impetuous youth, so that both rolled down together, and the conflict terminated in one of those inglorious and inevitable Yankee clinches, followed by a general melee, which make our native fistic encounters so different from such admirably-ordered contests as that which I once saw at an English fair, where everything was done decently and in order; and the fight began and ended with such grave propriety, that a sporting parson need hardly have hesitated to open it with a devout petition, and, after it was over, dismiss the ring with a benediction.

I can't help telling one more story about this great field-day, though it is the most wanton and irrelevant digression. But all of us have a little speck of fight underneath our peace and good-will to men, just a speck, for revolutions and great emergencies, you know,—so that we should not submit to be trodden quite flat by the first heavy-heeled aggressor that came along. You can tell a portrait from an ideal head, I suppose, and a true story from one spun out of the writer's invention. See whether this sounds true or not.

Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin sent out two fine blood-horses, Barefoot and Serab by name, to Massachusetts, something before the time I am talking of. With them came a Yorkshire groom, a stocky little fellow, in velvet breeches, who made that mysterious hissing noise, traditionary in English stables, when he rubbed down the silken-skinned racers, in great perfection. After the soldiers had come from the muster-field, and some of the companies were on the village-common, there was still some skirmishing between a few individuals who had not had the fight taken out of them. The little Yorkshire groom thought he must serve out somebody. So he threw

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himself into an approved scientific attitude, and, in brief, emphatic language, expressed his urgent anxiety to accommodate any classical young gentleman who chose to consider himself a candidate for his attentions. I don't suppose there were many of the college boys that would have been a match for him in the art which Englishmen know so much more of than Americans, for the most part. However, one of the Sophomores, a very quiet, peaceable fellow, just stepped out of the crowd, and, running straight at the groom, as he stood there, sparring away, struck him with the sole of his foot, a straight blow, as if it had been with his fist, and knocked him heels over head and senseless, so that he had to be carried off from the field. This ugly way of hitting is the great trick of the French gavate, which is not commonly thought able to stand its ground against English pugilistic science. These are old recollections, with not much to recommend them, except, perhaps, a dash of life, which may be worth a little something.

The young Marylander brought them all up, you may remember. He recalled to my mind those two splendid pieces of vitality I told you of. Both have been long dead. How often we see these great red-flaring flambeaux of life blown out, as it were, by a puff of wind,—and the little, single-wicked night-lamp of being, which some white-faced and attenuated invalid shades with trembling fingers, flickering on while they go out one after another, until its glimmer is all that is left to us of the generation to which it belonged!

I told you that I was perfectly sure, beforehand, we should find some pleasing girlish or womanly shape to fill the blank at our table and match the dark-haired youth at the upper corner.

There she sits, at the very opposite corner, just as far off as accident could put her from this handsome fellow, by whose side she ought, of course, to be sitting. One of the “positive” blondes, as my friend, you may remember, used to call them. Tawny-haired, amber-eyed, full-throated, skin as white as a blanched almond. Looks dreamy to me, not self-conscious, though a black ribbon round her neck sets it off as a Marie-Antoinette's diamond-necklace could not do. So in her dress, there is a harmony of tints that looks as if an artist had run his eye over her and given a hint or two like the finishing touch to a picture. I can't help being struck with her, for she is at once rounded and fine in feature, looks calm, as blondes are apt to, and as if she might run wild, if she were trifled with. It is just as I knew it would be,—and anybody can see that our young Marylander will be dead in love with her in a week.

Then if that little man would only turn out immensely rich and have the good-nature to die and leave them all his money, it would be as nice as a three-volume novel.

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The Little Gentleman is in a flurry, I suspect, with the excitement of having such a charming neighbor next him. I judge so mainly by his silence and by a certain rapt and serious look on his face, as if he were thinking of something that had happened, or that might happen, or that ought to happen,—or how beautiful her young life looked, or how hardly Nature had dealt with him, or something which struck him silent, at any rate. I made several conversational openings for him, but he did not fire up as he often does. I even went so far as to indulge in, a fling at the State House, which, as we all know, is in truth a very imposing structure, covering less ground than St. Peter's, but of similar general effect. The little man looked up, but did not reply to my taunt. He said to the young lady, however, that the State House was the Parthenon of our Acropolis, which seemed to please her, for she smiled, and he reddened a little,—so I thought. I don't think it right to watch persons who are the subjects of special infirmity,—but we all do it.

I see that they have crowded the chairs a little at that end of the table, to make room for another newcomer of the lady sort. A well-mounted, middle-aged preparation, wearing her hair without a cap, —pretty wide in the parting, though,—contours vaguely hinted, —features very quiet,—says little as yet, but seems to keep her eye on the young lady, as if having some responsibility for her. My record is a blank for some days after this. In the mean time I have contrived to make out the person and the story of our young lady, who, according to appearances, ought to furnish us a heroine for a boarding-house romance before a year is out. It is very curious that she should prove connected with a person many of us have heard of. Yet, curious as it is, I have been a hundred times struck with the circumstance that the most remote facts are constantly striking each other; just as vessels starting from ports thousands of miles apart pass close to each other in the naked breadth of the ocean, nay, sometimes even touch, in the dark, with a crack of timbers, a gurgling of water, a cry of startled sleepers,—a cry mysteriously echoed in warning dreams, as the wife of some Gloucester fisherman, some coasting skipper, wakes with a shriek, calls the name of her husband, and sinks back to uneasy slumbers upon her lonely pillow,—a widow.

Oh, these mysterious meetings! Leaving all the vague, waste, endless spaces of the washing desert, the ocean-steamer and the fishing-smack sail straight towards each other as if they ran in grooves ploughed for them in the waters from the beginning of creation! Not only things and events, but our own thoughts, are so full of these surprises, that, if there were a reader in my parish who did not recognize the familiar occurrence of what I am now going to mention, I should think it a case for the missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of Intelligence among the Comfortable

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Classes. There are about as many twins in the births of thought as of children. For the first time in your lives you learn some fact or come across some idea. Within an hour, a day, a week, that same fact or idea strikes you from another quarter. It seems as if it had passed into space and bounded back upon you as an echo from the blank wall that shuts in the world of thought. Yet no possible connection exists between the two channels by which the thought or the fact arrived. Let me give an infinitesimal illustration.

One of the Boys mentioned, the other evening, in the course of a very pleasant poem he read us, a little trick of the Commons-table boarders, which I, nourished at the parental board, had never heard of. Young fellows being always hungry—Allow me to stop dead-short, in order to utter an aphorism which has been forming itself in one of the blank interior spaces of my intelligence, like a crystal in the cavity of a geode.

Aphorism by the Professor.

In order to know whether a human being is young or old, offer it food of different kinds at short intervals. If young, it will eat anything at any hour of the day or night. If old, it observes stated periods, and you might as well attempt to regulate the time of highwater to suit a fishing-party as to change these periods. The crucial experiment is this. Offer a bulky and boggy bun to the suspected individual just ten minutes before dinner. If this is eagerly accepted and devoured, the fact of youth is established. If the subject of the question starts back and expresses surprise and incredulity, as if you could not possibly be in earnest, the fact of maturity is no less clear.

—Excuse me,—I return to my story of the Commons-table.—Young fellows being always hungry, and tea and dry toast being the meagre fare of the evening meal, it was a trick of some of the Boys to impale a slice of meat upon a fork, at dinner-time, and stick the fork holding it beneath the table, so that they could get it at tea-time. The dragons that guarded this table of the Hesperides found out the trick at last, and kept a sharp look-out for missing forks;—they knew where to find one, if it was not in its place. —Now the odd thing was, that, after waiting so many years to hear of this college trick, I should hear it mentioned a second time within the same twenty-four hours by a college youth of the present generation. Strange, but true. And so it has happened to me and to every person, often and often, to be hit in rapid succession by these twinned facts or thoughts, as if they were linked like chain-shot.

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I was going to leave the simple reader to wonder over this, taking it as an unexplained marvel. I think, however, I will turn over a furrow of subsoil in it.—The explanation is, of course, that in a great many thoughts there must be a few coincidences, and these instantly arrest our attention. Now we shall probably never have the least idea of the enormous number of impressions which pass through our consciousness, until in some future life we see the photographic record of our thoughts and the stereoscopic picture of our actions. There go more pieces to make up a conscious life or a living body than you think for. Why, some of you were surprised when a friend of mine told you there were fifty-eight separate pieces in a fiddle. How many “swimming glands”—solid, organized, regularly formed, rounded disks taking an active part in all your vital processes, part and parcel, each one of them, of your corporeal being—do you suppose are whirled along, like pebbles in a stream, with the blood which warms your frame and colors your cheeks?—A noted German physiologist spread out a minute drop of blood, under the microscope, in narrow streaks, and counted the globules, and then made a calculation. The counting by the micrometer took him a week.—You have, my full-grown friend, of these little couriers in crimson or scarlet livery, running on your vital errands day and night as long as you live, sixty-five billions, five hundred and seventy thousand millions. Errors excepted.—Did I hear some gentleman say, “Doubted?”—I am the Professor. I sit in my chair with a petard under it that will blow me through the skylight of my lecture-room, if I do not know what I am talking about and whom I am quoting.

Now, my dear friends, who are putting your hands to your foreheads, and saying to yourselves that you feel a little confused, as if you had been waltzing until things began to whirl slightly round you, is it possible that you do not clearly apprehend the exact connection of all that I have been saying, and its bearing on what is now to come? Listen, then. The number of these living elements in our bodies illustrates the incalculable multitude of our thoughts; the number of our thoughts accounts for those frequent coincidences spoken of; these coincidences in the world of thought illustrate those which we constantly observe in the world of outward events, of which the presence of the young girl now at our table, and proving to be the daughter of an old acquaintance some of us may remember, is the special example which led me through this labyrinth of reflections, and finally lands me at the commencement of this young girl's story, which, as I said, I have found the time and felt the interest to learn something of, and which I think I can tell without wronging the unconscious subject of my brief delineation. *Iris.*

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You remember, perhaps, in some papers published awhile ago, an odd poem written by an old Latin tutor? He brought up at the verb *amo*, I love, as all of us do, and by and by Nature opened her great living dictionary for him at the word *filia*, a daughter. The poor man was greatly perplexed in choosing a name for her. *Lucretia* and *Virginia* were the first that he thought of; but then came up those pictured stories of *Titus Livius*, which he could never read without crying, though he had read them a hundred times.

—*Lucretia* sending for her husband and her father, each to bring one friend with him, and awaiting them in her chamber. To them her wrongs briefly. Let them see to the wretch,—she will take care of herself. Then the hidden knife flashes out and sinks into her heart. She slides from her seat, and falls dying. “Her husband and her father cry aloud.”—No, not *Lucretia*.

—*Virginius*,—a brown old soldier, father of a nice girl. She engaged to a very promising young man. *Decemvir Appius* takes a violent fancy to her,—must have her at any rate. Hires a lawyer to present the arguments in favor of the view that she was another man’s daughter. There used to be lawyers in Rome that would do such things.—All right. There are two sides to everything. *Audi alteram partem*. The legal gentleman has no opinion,—he only states the evidence.—A doubtful case. Let the young lady be under the protection of the Honorable *Decemvir* until it can be looked up thoroughly.—Father thinks it best, on the whole, to give in. Will explain the matter, if the young lady and her maid will step this way. That is the explanation,—a stab with a butcher’s knife, snatched from a stall, meant for other lambs than this poor bleeding *Virginia*.

The old man thought over the story. Then he must have one look at the original. So he took down the first volume and read it over. When he came to that part where it tells how the young gentleman she was engaged to and a friend of his took up the poor girl’s bloodless shape and carried it through the street, and how all the women followed, wailing, and asking if that was what their daughters were coming to,—if that was what they were to get for being good girls,—he melted down into his accustomed tears of pity and grief, and, through them all, of delight at the charming Latin of the narrative. But it was impossible to call his child *Virginia*. He could never look at her without thinking she had a knife sticking in her bosom.

Dido would be a good name, and a fresh one. She was a queen, and the founder of a great city. Her story had been immortalized by the greatest of poets,—for the old Latin tutor clove to “*Virgilius Maro*,” as he called him, as closely as ever *Dante* did in his memorable journey. So he took down his *Virgil*, it was the smooth-leafed, open-lettered quarto of *Baskerville*,—and began reading the loves and mishaps of *Dido*. It would n’t do. A lady who had not learned discretion by experience, and came to an evil end. He shook his head, as he sadly repeated,

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“—misera ante diem, subitoque accensa furore;”

but when he came to the lines,

“Ergo Iris croceis per coelum roscida pennis
Mille trahens varios adverso Sole colores,”

he jumped up with a great exclamation, which the particular recording angel who heard it pretended not to understand, or it might have gone hard with the Latin tutor some time or other.

“Iris shall be her name!”—he said. So her name was Iris.

—The natural end of a tutor is to perish by starvation. It is only a question of time, just as with the burning of college libraries. These all burn up sooner or later, provided they are not housed in brick or stone and iron. I don’t mean that you will see in the registry of deaths that this or that particular tutor died of well-marked, uncomplicated starvation. They may, even, in extreme cases, be carried off by a thin, watery kind of apoplexy, which sounds very well in the returns, but means little to those who know that it is only debility settling on the head. Generally, however, they fade and waste away under various pretexts,—calling it dyspepsia, consumption, and so on, to put a decent appearance upon the case and keep up the credit of the family and the institution where they have passed through the successive stages of inanition.

In some cases it takes a great many years to kill a tutor by the process in question. You see they do get food and clothes and fuel, in appreciable quantities, such as they are. You will even notice rows of books in their rooms, and a picture or two,—things that look as if they had surplus money; but these superfluities are the water of crystallization to scholars, and you can never get them away till the poor fellows effloresce into dust. Do not be deceived. The tutor breakfasts on coffee made of beans, edulcorated with milk watered to the verge of transparency; his mutton is tough and elastic, up to the moment when it becomes tired out and tasteless; his coal is a sullen, sulphurous anthracite, which rusts into ashes, rather than burns, in the shallow grate; his flimsy broadcloth is too thin for winter and too thick for summer. The greedy lungs of fifty hot-blooded boys suck the oxygen from the air he breathes in his recitation-room. In short, he undergoes a process of gentle and gradual starvation.

—The mother of little Iris was not called Electra, like hers of the old story, neither was her grandfather Oceanus. Her blood-name, which she gave away with her heart to the Latin tutor, was a plain old English one, and her water-name was Hannah, beautiful as recalling the mother of Samuel, and admirable as reading equally well from the initial letter forwards and from the terminal letter backwards. The poor lady, seated with her companion at the chessboard of matrimony, had but just pushed forward her one little white pawn upon an empty square, when the Black Knight, that cares nothing for

castles or kings or queens, swooped down upon her and swept her from the larger board of life.

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The old Latin tutor put a modest blue stone at the head of his late companion, with her name and age and Eheu! upon it,—a smaller one at her feet, with initials; and left her by herself, to be rained and snowed on,—which is a hard thing to do for those whom we have cherished tenderly.

About the time that the lichens, falling on the stone, like drops of water, had spread into fair, round rosettes, the tutor had starved into a slight cough. Then he began to draw the buckle of his black trousers a little tighter, and took in another reef in his never-ample waistcoat. His temples got a little hollow, and the contrasts of color in his cheeks more vivid than of old. After a while his walks fatigued him, and he was tired, and breathed hard after going up a flight or two of stairs. Then came on other marks of inward trouble and general waste, which he spoke of to his physician as peculiar, and doubtless owing to accidental causes; to all which the doctor listened with deference, as if it had not been the old story that one in five or six of mankind in temperate climates tells, or has told for him, as if it were something new. As the doctor went out, he said to himself,—“On the rail at last. Accommodation train. A good many stops, but will get to the station by and by.” So the doctor wrote a recipe with the astrological sign of Jupiter before it, (just as your own physician does, inestimable reader, as you will see, if you look at his next prescription,) and departed, saying he would look in occasionally. After this, the Latin tutor began the usual course of “getting better,” until he got so much better that his face was very sharp, and when he smiled, three crescent lines showed at each side of his lips, and when he spoke; it was in a muffled whisper, and the white of his eye glistened as pearly as the purest porcelain, —so much better, that he hoped—by spring—he—might be able--to--attend-----to his class again.--But he was recommended not to expose himself, and so kept his chamber, and occasionally, not having anything to do, his bed. The unmarried sister with whom he lived took care of him; and the child, now old enough to be manageable and even useful in trifling offices, sat in the chamber, or played, about.

Things could not go on so forever, of course. One morning his face was sunken and his hands were very, very cold. He was “better,” he whispered, but sadly and faintly. After a while he grew restless and seemed a little wandering. His mind ran on his classics, and fell back on the Latin grammar.

“Iris!” he said,—“filiola mea!”—The child knew this meant my dear little daughter as well as if it had been English.—“Rainbow!” for he would translate her name at times,—“come to me,—veni”—and his lips went on automatically, and murmured, “vel venito!”—The child came and sat by his bedside and took his hand, which she could not warm, but which shot its rays of cold all through her slender frame. But there

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she sat, looking steadily at him. Presently he opened his lips feebly, and whispered, "Moribundus." She did not know what that meant, but she saw that there was something new and sad. So she began to cry; but presently remembering an old book that seemed to comfort him at times, got up and brought a Bible in the Latin version, called the Vulgate. "Open it," he said,—“I will read, *segnius irritant*,—don't put the light out,—ah! *hoeret lateri*,—I am going,—*vale, vale, vale*, goodbye, good-bye,—the Lord take care of my child! *Domine, audi—vel audito!*" His face whitened suddenly, and he lay still, with open eyes and mouth. He had taken his last degree.

—Little Miss Iris could not be said to begin life with a very brilliant rainbow over her, in a worldly point of view. A limited wardrobe of man's attire, such as poor tutors wear,—a few good books, principally classics,—a print or two, and a plaster model of the Pantheon, with some pieces of furniture which had seen service,—these, and a child's heart full of tearful recollections and strange doubts and questions, alternating with the cheap pleasures which are the anodynes of childish grief; such were the treasures she inherited.—No,—I forgot. With that kindly sentiment which all of us feel for old men's first children,—frost-flowers of the early winter season, the old tutor's students had remembered him at a time when he was laughing and crying with his new parental emotions, and running to the side of the plain crib in which his alter egg, as he used to say, was swinging, to hang over the little heap of stirring clothes, from which looked the minute, red, downy, still, round face, with unfixed eyes and working lips,—in that unearthly gravity which has never yet been broken by a smile, and which gives to the earliest moon-year or two of an infant's life the character of a first old age, to counterpoise that second childhood which there is one chance in a dozen it may reach by and by. The boys had remembered the old man and young father at that tender period of his hard, dry life. There came to him a fair, silver goblet, embossed with classical figures, and bearing on a shield the graver words, *Ex dono pupillorum*. The handle on its side showed what use the boys had meant it for; and a kind letter in it, written with the best of feeling, in the worst of Latin, pointed delicately to its destination. Out of this silver vessel, after a long, desperate, strangling cry, which marked her first great lesson in the realities of life, the child took the blue milk, such as poor tutors and their children get, tempered with water, and sweetened a little, so as to bring it nearer the standard established by the touching indulgence and partiality of Nature,—who had mingled an extra allowance of sugar in the blameless food of the child at its mother's breast, as compared with that of its infant brothers and sisters of the bovine race.

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But a willow will grow in baked sand wet with rainwater. An air-plant will grow by feeding on the winds. Nay, those huge forests that overspread great continents have built themselves up mainly from the air-currents with which they are always battling. The oak is but a foliated atmospheric crystal deposited from the aerial ocean that holds the future vegetable world in solution. The storm that tears its leaves has paid tribute to its strength, and it breasts the tornado clad in the spoils of a hundred hurricanes.

Poor little Iris! What had she in common with the great oak in the shadow of which we are losing sight of her?—She lived and grew like that,—this was all. The blue milk ran into her veins and filled them with thin, pure blood. Her skin was fair, with a faint tinge, such as the white rosebud shows before it opens. The doctor who had attended her father was afraid her aunt would hardly be able to “raise” her,—“delicate child,”—hoped she was not consumptive,—thought there was a fair chance she would take after her father.

A very forlorn-looking person, dressed in black, with a white neckcloth, sent her a memoir of a child who died at the age of two years and eleven months, after having fully indorsed all the doctrines of the particular persuasion to which he not only belonged himself, but thought it very shameful that everybody else did not belong. What with foreboding looks and dreary death-bed stories, it was a wonder the child made out to live through it. It saddened her early years, of course,—it distressed her tender soul with thoughts which, as they cannot be fully taken in, should be sparingly used as instruments of torture to break down the natural cheerfulness of a healthy child, or, what is infinitely worse, to cheat a dying one out of the kind illusions with which the Father of All has strewed its downward path.

The child would have died, no doubt, and, if properly managed, might have added another to the long catalogue of wasting children who have been as cruelly played upon by spiritual physiologists, often with the best intentions, as ever the subject of a rare disease by the curious students of science.

Fortunately for her, however, a wise instinct had guided the late Latin tutor in the selection of the partner of his life, and the future mother of his child. The deceased tutoress was a tranquil, smooth woman, easily nourished, as such people are,—a quality which is inestimable in a tutor’s wife,—and so it happened that the daughter inherited enough vitality from the mother to live through childhood and infancy and fight her way towards womanhood, in spite of the tendencies she derived from her other parent.

—Two and two do not always make four, in this matter of hereditary descent of qualities. Sometimes they make three, and sometimes five. It seems as if the parental traits at one time showed separate, at another blended,—that occasionally, the force of two natures is represented in the derivative one by a diagonal of greater value than either original line of living movement,—that sometimes there is a loss of vitality hardly

to be accounted for, and again a forward impulse of variable intensity in some new and unforeseen direction.

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So it was with this child. She had glanced off from her parental probabilities at an unexpected angle. Instead of taking to classical learning like her father, or sliding quietly into household duties like her mother, she broke out early in efforts that pointed in the direction of Art. As soon as she could hold a pencil she began to sketch outlines of objects round her with a certain air and spirit. Very extraordinary horses, but their legs looked as if they could move. Birds unknown to Audubon, yet flying, as it were, with a rush. Men with impossible legs, which did yet seem to have a vital connection with their most improbable bodies. By-and-by the doctor, on his beast,—an old man with a face looking as if Time had kneaded it like dough with his knuckles, with a rhubarb tint and flavor pervading himself and his sorrel horse and all their appurtenances. A dreadful old man! Be sure she did not forget those saddle-bags that held the detestable bottles out of which he used to shake those loathsome powders which, to virgin childish palates that find heaven in strawberries and peaches, are— Well, I suppose I had better stop. Only she wished she was dead sometimes when she heard him coming. On the next leaf would figure the gentleman with the black coat and white cravat, as he looked when he came and entertained her with stories concerning the death of various little children about her age, to encourage her, as that wicked Mr. Arouet said about shooting Admiral Byng. Then she would take her pencil, and with a few scratches there would be the outline of a child, in which you might notice how one sudden sweep gave the chubby cheek, and two dots darted at the paper looked like real eyes.

By-and-by she went to school, and caricatured the schoolmaster on the leaves of her grammars and geographies, and drew the faces of her companions, and, from time to time, heads and figures from her fancy, with large eyes, far apart, like those of Raffaello's mothers and children, sometimes with wild floating hair, and then with wings and heads thrown back in ecstasy. This was at about twelve years old, as the dates of these drawings show, and, therefore, three or four years before she came among us. Soon after this time, the ideal figures began to take the place of portraits and caricatures, and a new feature appeared in her drawing-books in the form of fragments of verse and short poems.

It was dull work, of course, for such a young girl to live with an old spinster and go to a village school. Her books bore testimony to this; for there was a look of sadness in the faces she drew, and a sense of weariness and longing for some imaginary conditions of blessedness or other, which began to be painful. She might have gone through this flowering of the soul, and, casting her petals, subsided into a sober, human berry, but for the intervention of friendly assistance and counsel.

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In the town where she lived was a lady of honorable condition, somewhat past middle age, who was possessed of pretty ample means, of cultivated tastes, of excellent principles, of exemplary character, and of more than common accomplishments. The gentleman in black broadcloth and white neckerchief only echoed the common voice about her, when he called her, after enjoying, beneath her hospitable roof, an excellent cup of tea, with certain elegancies and luxuries he was unaccustomed to, "The Model of all the Virtues."

She deserved this title as well as almost any woman. She did really bristle with moral excellences. Mention any good thing she had not done; I should like to see you try! There was no handle of weakness to take hold of her by; she was as unseizable, except in her totality, as a billiard-ball; and on the broad, green, terrestrial table, where she had been knocked about, like all of us, by the cue of Fortune, she glanced from every human contact, and "caromed" from one relation to another, and rebounded from the stuffed cushion of temptation, with such exact and perfect angular movements, that the Enemy's corps of Reporters had long given up taking notes of her conduct, as there was no chance for their master.

What an admirable person for the patroness and directress of a slightly self-willed child, with the lightning zigzag line of genius running like a glittering vein through the marble whiteness of her virgin nature! One of the lady-patroness's peculiar virtues was calmness. She was resolute and strenuous, but still. You could depend on her for every duty; she was as true as steel. She was kind-hearted and serviceable in all the relations of life. She had more sense, more knowledge, more conversation, as well as more goodness, than all the partners you have waltzed with this winter put together.

Yet no man was known to have loved her, or even to have offered himself to her in marriage. It was a great wonder. I am very anxious to vindicate my character as a philosopher and an observer of Nature by accounting for this apparently extraordinary fact.

You may remember certain persons who have the misfortune of presenting to the friends whom they meet a cold, damp hand. There are states of mind in which a contact of this kind has a depressing effect on the vital powers that makes us insensible to all the virtues and graces of the proprietor of one of these life-absorbing organs. When they touch us, virtue passes out of us, and we feel as if our electricity had been drained by a powerful negative battery, carried about by an overgrown human torpedo.

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"The Model of all the Virtues" had a pair of searching eyes as clear as Wenham ice; but they were slower to melt than that fickle jewelry. Her features disordered themselves slightly at times in a surface-smile, but never broke loose from their corners and indulged in the riotous tumult of a laugh,—which, I take it, is the mob-law of the features;—and propriety the magistrate who reads the riot-act. She carried the brimming cup of her inestimable virtues with a cautious, steady hand, and an eye always on them, to see that they did not spill. Then she was an admirable judge of character. Her mind was a perfect laboratory of tests and reagents; every syllable you put into breath went into her intellectual eudiometer, and all your thoughts were recorded on litmus-paper. I think there has rarely been a more admirable woman. Of course, Miss Iris was immensely and passionately attached to her.—Well,—these are two highly oxygenated adverbs, —grateful,—suppose we say,—yes,—grateful, dutiful, obedient to her wishes for the most part,—perhaps not quite up to the concert pitch of such a perfect orchestra of the virtues.

We must have a weak spot or two in a character before we can love it much. People that do not laugh or cry, or take more of anything than is good for them, or use anything but dictionary-words, are admirable subjects for biographies. But we don't always care most for those flat-pattern flowers that press best in the herbarium.

This immaculate woman,—why could n't she have a fault or two? Is n't there any old whisper which will tarnish that wearisome aureole of saintly perfection? Does n't she carry a lump of opium in her pocket? Is n't her cologne-bottle replenished oftener than its legitimate use would require? It would be such a comfort!

Not for the world would a young creature like Iris have let such words escape her, or such thoughts pass through her mind. Whether at the bottom of her soul lies any uneasy consciousness of an oppressive presence, it is hard to say, until we know more about her. Iris sits between the Little Gentleman and the "Model of all the Virtues," as the black-coated personage called her.—I will watch them all.

—Here I stop for the present. What the Professor said has had to make way this time for what he saw and heard.

-And now you may read these lines, which were written for gentle souls who love music, and read in even tones, and, perhaps, with something like a smile upon the reader's lips, at a meeting where these musical friends had gathered. Whether they were written with smiles or not, you can guess better after you have read them.

The opening of the piano.

In the little southern parlor of the house you may have seen
With the gambrel-roof, and the gable looking westward to the green,

At the side toward the sunset, with the window on its right,
Stood the London-made piano I am dreaming of to-night.

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Ah me! how I remember the evening when it came!
What a cry of eager voices, what a group of cheeks in flame,
When the wondrous boa was opened that had come from over seas,
With its smell of mastic-varnish and its flash of ivory keys!

Then the children all grew fretful in the restlessness of joy,
For the boy would push his sister, and the sister crowd the boy,
Till the father asked for quiet in his grave paternal way,
But the mother hushed the tumult with the words, "Now, Mary, play."

For the dear soul knew that music was a very sovereign balm;
She had sprinkled it over Sorrow and seen its brow grow calm,
In the days of slender harpsichords with tapping tinkling quills,
Or caroling to her spinet with its thin metallic thrills.

So Mary, the household minstrel, who always loved to please,
Sat down to the new "Clementi," and struck the glittering keys.
Hushed were the children's voices, and every eye grew dim,
As, floating from lip and finger, arose the "Vesper Hymn."

—Catharine, child of a neighbor, curly and rosy-red,
(Wedded since, and a widow,—something like ten years dead,)
Hearing a gush of music such as none before,
Steals from her mother's chamber and peeps at the open door.

Just as the "Jubilate" in threaded whisper dies,
—"Open it! open it, lady!" the little maiden cries,
(For she thought 't was a singing creature caged in a box she heard,)
"Open it! open it, lady! and let me see the bird!"

IV

I don't know whether our literary or professional people are more amiable than they are in other places, but certainly quarrelling is out of fashion among them. This could never be, if they were in the habit of secret anonymous puffing of each other. That is the kind of underground machinery which manufactures false reputations and genuine hatreds. On the other hand, I should like to know if we are not at liberty to have a good time together, and say the pleasantest things we can think of to each other, when any of us reaches his thirtieth or fortieth or fiftieth or eightieth birthday.

We don't have "scenes," I warrant you, on these occasions. No "surprise" parties! You understand these, of course. In the rural districts, where scenic tragedy and melodrama cannot be had, as in the city, at the expense of a quarter and a white pocket-

handkerchief, emotional excitement has to be sought in the dramas of real life. Christenings, weddings, and funerals, especially the latter, are the main dependence; but babies, brides, and deceased citizens cannot be had at a day's notice. Now, then, for a surprise-party!

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A bag of flour, a barrel of potatoes, some strings of onions, a basket of apples, a big cake and many little cakes, a jug of lemonade, a purse stuffed with bills of the more modest denominations, may, perhaps, do well enough for the properties in one of these private theatrical exhibitions. The minister of the parish, a tender-hearted, quiet, hard-working man, living on a small salary, with many children, sometimes pinched to feed and clothe them, praying fervently every day to be blest in his “basket and store,” but sometimes fearing he asks amiss, to judge by the small returns, has the first role,—not, however, by his own choice, but forced upon him. The minister’s wife, a sharp-eyed, unsentimental body, is first lady; the remaining parts by the rest of the family. If they only had a playbill, it would run thus:

*On Tuesday next
will be presented
the affecting scene
called*

The surprise-party

Or

The overcome family;

With the following strong cast of characters.

The Rev. Mr. Overcome, by the Clergyman of this Parish. Mrs. Overcome, by his estimable lady. Masters Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John Overcome, Misses Dorcas, Tabitha, Rachel, and Hannah, Overcome, by their interesting children. Peggy, by the female help.

The poor man is really grateful;—it is a most welcome and unexpected relief. He tries to express his thanks,—his voice falters,—he chokes,—and bursts into tears. That is the great effect of the evening. The sharp-sighted lady cries a little with one eye, and counts the strings of onions, and the rest of the things, with the other. The children stand ready for a spring at the apples. The female help weeps after the noisy fashion of untutored handmaids.

Now this is all very well as charity, but do let the kind visitors remember they get their money’s worth. If you pay a quarter for dry crying, done by a second-rate actor, how much ought you to pay for real hot, wet tears, out of the honest eyes of a gentleman who is not acting, but sobbing in earnest?

All I meant to say, when I began, was, that this was not a surprise-party where I read these few lines that follow:



We will not speak of years to-night;
For what have years to bring,
But larger floods of love and light
And sweeter songs to sing?

We will not drown in wordy praise
The kindly thoughts that rise;
If friendship owns one tender phrase,
He reads it in our eyes.

We need not waste our schoolboy art
To gild this notch of time;
Forgive me, if my wayward heart
Has throbbed in artless rhyme.

Enough for him the silent grasp
That knits us hand in hand,
And he the bracelet's radiant clasp
That locks our circling band.

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Strength to his hours of manly toil!
Peace to his starlit dreams!
Who loves alike the furrowed soil,
The music-haunted streams!

Sweet smiles to keep forever bright
The sunshine on his lips,
And faith, that sees the ring of light
Round Nature's last eclipse!

—One of our boarders has been talking in such strong language that I am almost afraid to report it. However, as he seems to be really honest and is so very sincere in his local prejudices, I don't believe anybody will be very angry with him.

It is here, Sir! right here!—said the little deformed gentleman,—in this old new city of Boston,—this remote provincial corner of a provincial nation, that the Battle of the Standard is fighting, and was fighting before we were born, and will be fighting when we are dead and gone,—please God! The battle goes on everywhere throughout civilization; but here, here, here is the broad white flag flying which proclaims, first of all, peace and good-will to men, and, next to that, the absolute, unconditional spiritual liberty of each individual immortal soul! The three-hilled city against the seven-hilled city! That is it, Sir,—nothing less than that; and if you know what that means, I don't think you'll ask for anything more. I swear to you, Sir, I believe that these two centres of civilization are just exactly the two points that close the circuit in the battery of our planetary intelligence! And I believe there are spiritual eyes looking out from Uranus and unseen Neptune,—ay, Sir, from the systems of Sirius and Arcturus and Aldebaran, and as far as that faint stain of sprinkled worlds confluent in the distance that we call the nebula of Orion,—looking on, Sir, with what organs I know not, to see which are going to melt in that fiery fusion, the accidents and hindrances of humanity or man himself, Sir,—the stupendous abortion, the illustrious failure that he is, if the three-hilled city does not ride down and trample out the seven-hilled city!

—Steam 's up!—said the young man John, so called, in a low tone. —Three hundred and sixty-five tons to the square inch. Let him blow her off, or he'll bu'st his b'iler.

The divinity-student took it calmly, only whispering that he thought there was a little confusion of images between a galvanic battery and a charge of cavalry.

But the Koh-i-noor—the gentleman, you remember, with a very large diamond in his shirt-front laughed his scornful laugh, and made as if to speak.

Sail in, Metropolis!—said that same young man John, by name. And then, in a lower lane, not meaning to be heard,—Now, then, Ma'am Allen!

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But he was heard,—and the Koh-i-noor's face turned so white with rage, that his blue-black moustache and beard looked fearful, seen against it. He grinned with wrath, and caught at a tumbler, as if he would have thrown it or its contents at the speaker. The young Marylander fixed his clear, steady eye upon him, and laid his hand on his arm, carelessly almost, but the Jewel found it was held so that he could not move it. It was of no use. The youth was his master in muscle, and in that deadly Indian hug in which men wrestle with their eyes;—over in five seconds, but breaks one of their two backs, and is good for threescore years and ten;—one trial enough,—settles the whole matter,—just as when two feathered songsters of the barnyard, game and dunghill, come together,—after a jump or two at each other, and a few sharp kicks, there is the end of it; and it is, *Apres vous, Monsieur*, with the beaten party in all the social relations for all the rest of his days.

I cannot philosophically account for the Koh-i-noor's wrath. For though a cosmetic is sold, bearing the name of the lady to whom reference was made by the young person John, yet, as it is publicly asserted in respectable prints that this cosmetic is not a dye, I see no reason why he should have felt offended by any suggestion that he was indebted to it or its authoress.

I have no doubt that there are certain exceptional complexions to which the purple tinge, above alluded to, is natural. Nature is fertile in variety. I saw an albiness in London once, for sixpence, (including the inspection of a stuffed boa-constrictor,) who looked as if she had been boiled in milk. A young Hottentot of my acquaintance had his hair all in little pellets of the size of marrow-fat peas. One of my own classmates has undergone a singular change of late years,—his hair losing its original tint, and getting a remarkable discolored look; and another has ceased to cultivate any hair at all over the vertex or crown of the head. So I am perfectly willing to believe that the purple-black of the Koh-i-noor's moustache and whiskers is constitutional and not pigmentary. But I can't think why he got so angry.

The intelligent reader will understand that all this pantomime of the threatened onslaught and its suppression passed so quickly that it was all over by the time the other end of the table found out there was a disturbance; just as a man chopping wood half a mile off may be seen resting on his axe at the instant you hear the last blow he struck. So you will please to observe that the Little Gentleman was not, interrupted during the time implied by these ex-post-facto remarks of mine, but for some ten or fifteen seconds only.

He did not seem to mind the interruption at all, for he started again. The "Sir" of his harangue was no doubt addressed to myself more than anybody else, but he often uses it in discourse as if he were talking with some imaginary opponent.

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—America, Sir,—he exclaimed,—is the only place where man is full-grown!

He straightened himself up, as he spoke, standing on the top round of his high chair, I suppose, and so presented the larger part of his little figure to the view of the boarders.

It was next to impossible to keep from laughing. The commentary was so strange an illustration of the text! I thought it was time to put in a word; for I have lived in foreign parts, and am more or less cosmopolitan.

I doubt if we have more practical freedom in America than they have in England,—I said.—An Englishman thinks as he likes in religion and politics. Mr. Martineau speculates as freely as ever Dr. Channing did, and Mr. Bright is as independent as Mr. Seward.

Sir,—said he,—it is n't what a man thinks or says; but when and where and to whom he thinks and says it. A man with a flint and steel striking sparks over a wet blanket is one thing, and striking them over a tinder-box is another. The free Englishman is born under protest; he lives and dies under protest,—a tolerated, but not a welcome fact. Is not freethinker a term of reproach in England? The same idea in the soul of an Englishman who struggled up to it and still holds it antagonistically, and in the soul of an American to whom it is congenital and spontaneous, and often unrecognized, except as an element blended with all his thoughts, a natural movement, like the drawing of his breath or the beating of his heart, is a very different thing. You may teach a quadruped to walk on his hind legs, but he is always wanting to be on all fours. Nothing that can be taught a growing youth is like the atmospheric knowledge he breathes from his infancy upwards. The American baby sucks in freedom with the milk of the breast at which he hangs.

—That's a good joke,—said the young fellow John,—considerin' it commonly belongs to a female Paddy.

I thought—I will not be certain—that the Little Gentleman winked, as if he had been hit somewhere—as I have no doubt Dr. Darwin did when the wooden-spoon suggestion upset his theory about why, *etc.* If he winked, however, he did not dodge.

A lively comment!—he said.—But Rome, in her great founder, sucked the blood of empire out of the dugs of a brute, Sir! The Milesian wet-nurse is only a convenient vessel through which the American infant gets the life-blood of this virgin soil, Sir, that is making man over again, on the sunset pattern! You don't think what we are doing and going to do here. Why, Sir, while commentators are bothering themselves with interpretation of prophecies, we have got the new heavens and the new earth over us and under us! Was there ever anything in Italy, I should like to know, like a Boston sunset?

—This time there was a laugh, and the little man himself almost smiled.

Yes,—Boston sunsets;—perhaps they're as good in some other places, but I know 'em best here. Anyhow, the American skies are different from anything they see in the Old World. Yes, and the rocks are different, and the soil is different, and everything that comes out of the soil, from grass up to Indians, is different. And now that the provisional races are dying out—

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—What do you mean by the provisional races, Sir?—said the divinity-student, interrupting him.

Why, the aboriginal bipeds, to be sure,—he answered,—the red-crayon sketch of humanity laid on the canvas before the colors for the real manhood were ready.

I hope they will come to something yet,—said the divinity-student.

Irreclaimable, Sir,—irreclaimable!—said the Little Gentleman.—Cheaper to breed white men than domesticate a nation of red ones. When you can get the bitter out of the partridge's thigh, you can make an enlightened commonwealth of Indians. A provisional race, Sir,—nothing more. Exhaled carbonic acid for the use of vegetation, kept down the bears and catamounts, enjoyed themselves in scalping and being scalped, and then passed away or are passing away, according to the programme.

Well, Sir, these races dying out, the white man has to acclimate himself. It takes him a good while; but he will come all right by-and-by, Sir,—as sound as a woodchuck,—as sound as a musquash!

A new nursery, Sir, with Lake Superior and Huron and all the rest of 'em for wash-basins! A new race, and a whole new world for the new-born human soul to work in! And Boston is the brain of it, and has been any time these hundred years! That's all I claim for Boston,—that it is the thinking centre of the continent, and therefore of the planet.

—And the grand emporium of modesty,—said the divinity-student, a little mischievously.

Oh, don't talk to me of modesty!—answered the Little Gentleman,—I 'm past that! There is n't a thing that was ever said or done in Boston, from pitching the tea overboard to the last ecclesiastical lie it tore into tatters and flung into the dock, that was n't thought very indelicate by some fool or tyrant or bigot, and all the entrails of commercial and spiritual conservatism are twisted into colics as often as this revolutionary brain of ours has a fit of thinking come over it.—No, Sir,—show me any other place that is, or was since the megalosaurus has died out, where wealth and social influence are so fairly divided between the stationary and the progressive classes! Show me any other place where every other drawing-room is not a chamber of the Inquisition, with papas and mammas for inquisitors,—and the cold shoulder, instead of the “dry pan and the gradual fire,” the punishment of “heresy”!

—We think Baltimore is a pretty civilized kind of a village,—said the young Marylander, good-naturedly.—But I suppose you can't forgive it for always keeping a little ahead of Boston in point of numbers,—tell the truth now. Are we not the centre of something?

Ah, indeed, to be sure you are. You are the gastronomic metropolis of the Union. Why don't you put a canvas-back-duck on the top of the Washington column? Why don't you get that lady off from Battle Monument and plant a terrapin in her place? Why will you ask for other glories when you have soft crabs? No, Sir,—you live too well to think as hard as we do in Boston. Logic comes to us with the salt-fish of Cape Ann; rhetoric is born of the beans of Beverly; but you—if you open your mouths to speak, Nature stops them with a fat oyster, or offers a slice of the breast of your divine bird, and silences all your aspirations.

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And what of Philadelphia?—said the Marylander.

Oh, Philadelphia?—Waterworks,—killed by the Croton and Cochituate; —Ben Franklin,—borrowed from Boston;—David Rittenhouse,—made an orrery;—Benjamin Rush,—made a medical system;—both interesting to antiquarians;—great Red-river raft of medical students,—spontaneous generation of professors to match;—more widely known through the Moyamensing hose-company, and the Wistar parties;—for geological section of social strata, go to The Club.—Good place to live in,—first-rate market,—tip-top peaches.—What do we know about Philadelphia, except that the engine-companies are always shooting each other?

And what do you say to New York?—asked the Koh-i-noor.

A great city, Sir,—replied the Little Gentleman,—a very opulent, splendid city. A point of transit of much that is remarkable, and of permanence for much that is respectable. A great money-centre. San Francisco with the mines above-ground,—and some of 'em under the sidewalks. I have seen next to nothing grandiose, out of New York, in all our cities. It makes 'em all look paltry and petty. Has many elements of civilization. May stop where Venice did, though, for aught we know.—The order of its development is just this:—Wealth; architecture; upholstery; painting; sculpture. Printing, as a mechanical art,—just as Nicholas Jenson and the Aldi, who were scholars too, made Venice renowned for it. Journalism, which is the accident of business and crowded populations, in great perfection. Venice got as far as Titian and Paul Veronese and Tintoretto,—great colorists, mark you, magnificent on the flesh-and-blood side of Art,—but look over to Florence and see who lie in Santa Croce, and ask out of whose loins Dante sprung!

Oh, yes, to be sure, Venice built her Ducal Palace, and her Church of St. Mark, and her Casa d' Or, and the rest of her golden houses; and Venice had great pictures and good music; and Venice had a Golden Book, in which all the large tax-payers had their names written;—but all that did not make Venice the brain of Italy.

I tell you what, Sir,—with all these magnificent appliances of civilization, it is time we began to hear something from the djinnis donee whose names are on the Golden Book of our sumptuous, splendid, marble-placed Venice,—something in the higher walks of literature, —something in the councils of the nation. Plenty of Art, I grant you, Sir; now, then, for vast libraries, and for mighty scholars and thinkers and statesmen,—five for every Boston one, as the population is to ours,—ten to one more properly, in virtue of centralizing attraction as the alleged metropolis, and not call our people provincials, and have to come begging to us to write the lives of Hendrik Hudson and Gouverneur Morris!

—The Little Gentleman was on his hobby, exalting his own city at the expense of every other place. I have my doubts if he had been in either of the cities he had been talking

about. I was just going to say something to sober him down, if I could, when the young Marylander spoke up.

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Come, now,—he said,—what's the use of these comparisons? Did n't I hear this gentleman saying, the other day, that every American owns all America? If you have really got more brains in Boston than other folks, as you seem to think, who hates you for it, except a pack of scribbling fools? If I like Broadway better than Washington Street, what then? I own them both, as much as anybody owns either. I am an American,—and wherever I look up and see the stars and stripes overhead, that is home to me!

He spoke, and looked up as if he heard the emblazoned folds crackling over him in the breeze. We all looked up involuntarily, as if we should see the national flag by so doing. The sight of the dingy ceiling and the gas-fixture depending therefrom dispelled the illusion.

Bravo! bravo!—said the venerable gentleman on the other side of the table.—Those are the sentiments of Washington's Farewell Address. Nothing better than that since the last chapter in Revelations. Five-and-forty years ago there used to be Washington societies, and little boys used to walk in processions, each little boy having a copy of the Address, bound in red, hung round his neck by a ribbon. Why don't they now? Why don't they now? I saw enough of hating each other in the old Federal times; now let's love each other, I say,—let's love each other, and not try to make it out that there is n't any place fit to live in except the one we happen to be born in.

It dwarfs the mind, I think,—said I,—to feed it on any localism. The full stature of manhood is shrivelled—

The color burst up into my cheeks. What was I saying,—I, who would not for the world have pained our unfortunate little boarder by an allusion?

I will go,—he said,—and made a movement with his left arm to let himself down from his high chair.

No,—no,—he does n't mean it,—you must not go,—said a kind voice next him; and a soft, white hand was laid upon his arm.

Iris, my dear!—exclaimed another voice, as of a female, in accents that might be considered a strong atmospheric solution of duty with very little flavor of grace.

She did not move for this address, and there was a tableau that lasted some seconds. For the young girl, in the glory of half-blown womanhood, and the dwarf, the cripple, the misshapen little creature covered with Nature's insults, looked straight into each other's eyes.

Perhaps no handsome young woman had ever looked at him so in his life. Certainly the young girl never had looked into eyes that reached into her soul as these did. It was not



that they were in themselves supernaturally bright,—but there was the sad fire in them that flames up from the soul of one who looks on the beauty of woman without hope, but, alas! not without emotion. To him it seemed as if those amber gates had been translucent as the brown water of a mountain brook, and through them he had seen dimly into a virgin wilderness, only waiting for the sunrise of a great passion for all its buds to blow and all its bowers to ring with melody.

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That is my image, of course,—not his. It was not a simile that was in his mind, or is in anybody's at such a moment,—it was a pang of wordless passion, and then a silent, inward moan.

A lady's wish,—he said, with a certain gallantry of manner,—makes slaves of us all.—And Nature, who is kind to all her children, and never leaves the smallest and saddest of all her human failures without one little comfit of self-love at the bottom of his poor ragged pocket,—Nature suggested to him that he had turned his sentence well; and he fell into a reverie, in which the old thoughts that were always hovering dust outside the doors guarded by Common Sense, and watching for a chance to squeeze in, knowing perfectly well they would be ignominiously kicked out again as soon as Common Sense saw them, flocked in pell-mell,—misty, fragmentary, vague, half-ashamed of themselves, but still shouldering up against his inner consciousness till it warmed with their contact:—John Wilkes's—the ugliest man's in England—saying, that with half-an-hour's start he would cut out the handsomest man in all the land in any woman's good graces; Cadenus—old and savage—leading captive Stella and Vanessa; and then the stray line of a ballad, "And a winning tongue had he,"—as much as to say, it is n't looks, after all, but cunning words, that win our Eves over,—just as of old when it was the worst-looking brute of the lot that got our grandmother to listen to his stuff and so did the mischief.

Ah, dear me! We rehearse the part of Hercules with his club, subjugating man and woman in our fancy, the first by the weight of it, and the second by our handling of it,—we rehearse it, I say, by our own hearth-stones, with the cold poker as our club, and the exercise is easy. But when we come to real life, the poker is in the fore, and, ten to one, if we would grasp it, we find it too hot to hold;—lucky for us, if it is not white-hot, and we do not have to leave the skin of our hands sticking to it when we fling it down or drop it with a loud or silent cry!

—I am frightened when I find into what a labyrinth of human character and feeling I am winding. I meant to tell my thoughts, and to throw in a few studies of manner and costume as they pictured themselves for me from day to day. Chance has thrown together at the table with me a number of persons who are worth studying, and I mean not only to look on them, but, if I can, through them. You can get any man's or woman's secret, whose sphere is circumscribed by your own, if you will only look patiently on them long enough. Nature is always applying her reagents to character, if you will take the pains to watch her. Our studies of character, to change the image, are very much like the surveyor's triangulation of a geographical province. We get a base-line in organization, always; then we get an angle by sighting some distant object to which the passions or aspirations of the subject of our observation are tending; then another;—and so we construct our first triangle. Once fix a man's ideals, and for the most part the rest is easy. A wants to die worth half a million. Good. B (female) wants to catch him, —and outlive him. All right. Minor details at our leisure.

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What is it, of all your experiences, of all your thoughts, of all your misdoings, that lies at the very bottom of the great heap of acts of consciousness which make up your past life? What should you most dislike to tell your nearest friend?—Be so good as to pause for a brief space, and shut the volume you hold with your finger between the pages.—Oh, that is it!

What a confessional I have been sitting at, with the inward ear of my soul open, as the multitudinous whisper of my involuntary confidants came back to me like the reduplicated echo of a cry among the craggy bills!

At the house of a friend where I once passed the night was one of those stately upright cabinet desks and cases of drawers which were not rare in prosperous families during the last century. It had held the clothes and the books and the papers of generation after generation. The hands that opened its drawers had grown withered, shrivelled, and at last been folded in death. The children that played with the lower handles had got tall enough to open the desk, to reach the upper shelves behind the folding-doors, —grown bent after a while,—and then followed those who had gone before, and left the old cabinet to be ransacked by a new generation.

A boy of ten or twelve was looking at it a few years ago, and, being a quick-witted fellow, saw that all the space was not accounted for by the smaller drawers in the part beneath the lid of the desk. Prying about with busy eyes and fingers, he at length came upon a spring, on pressing which, a secret drawer flew from its hiding-place. It had never been opened but by the maker. The mahogany shavings and dust were lying in it as when the artisan closed it,—and when I saw it, it was as fresh as if that day finished.

Is there not one little drawer in your soul, my sweet reader, which no hand but yours has ever opened, and which none that have known you seem to have suspected? What does it hold?—A sin?—I hope not. What a strange thing an old dead sin laid away in a secret drawer of the soul is! Must it some time or other be moistened with tears, until it comes to life again and begins to stir in our consciousness,—as the dry wheel-animalcule, looking like a grain of dust, becomes alive, if it is wet with a drop of water?

Or is it a passion? There are plenty of withered men and women walking about the streets who have the secret drawer in their hearts, which, if it were opened, would show as fresh as it was when they were in the flush of youth and its first trembling emotions.

What it held will, perhaps, never be known, until they are dead and gone, and some curious eye lights on an old yellow letter with the fossil footprints of the extinct passion trodden thick all over it.

There is not a boarder at our table, I firmly believe, excepting the young girl, who has not a story of the heart to tell, if one could only get the secret drawer open. Even this arid female, whose armor of black bombazine looks stronger against the shafts of love

than any cuirass of triple brass, has had her sentimental history, if I am not mistaken. I will tell you my reason for suspecting it.

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Like many other old women, she shows a great nervousness and restlessness whenever I venture to express any opinion upon a class of subjects which can hardly be said to belong to any man or set of men as their strictly private property,—not even to the clergy, or the newspapers commonly called “religious.” Now, although it would be a great luxury to me to obtain my opinions by contract, ready-made, from a professional man, and although I have a constitutional kindly feeling to all sorts of good people which would make me happy to agree with all their beliefs, if that were possible, still I must have an idea, now and then, as to the meaning of life; and though the only condition of peace in this world is to have no ideas, or, at least, not to express them, with reference to such subjects, I can’t afford to pay quite so much as that even for peace.

I find that there is a very prevalent opinion among the dwellers on the shores of Sir Isaac Newton’s Ocean of Truth, that salt, fish, which have been taken from it a good while ago, split open, cured and dried, are the only proper and allowable food for reasonable people. I maintain, on the other hand, that there are a number of live fish still swimming in it, and that every one of us has a right to see if he cannot catch some of them. Sometimes I please myself with the idea that I have landed an actual living fish, small, perhaps, but with rosy gills and silvery scales. Then I find the consumers of nothing but the salted and dried article insist that it is poisonous, simply because it is alive, and cry out to people not to touch it. I have not found, however, that people mind them much.

The poor boarder in bombazine is my dynamometer. I try every questionable proposition on her. If she winces, I must be prepared for an outcry from the other old women. I frightened her, the other day, by saying that faith, as an intellectual state, was self-reliance, which, if you have a metaphysical turn, you will find is not so much of a paradox as it sounds at first. So she sent me a book to read which was to cure me of that error. It was an old book, and looked as if it had not been opened for a long time. What should drop out of it, one day, but a small heart-shaped paper, containing a lock of that straight, coarse, brown hair which sets off the sharp faces of so many thin-flanked, large-handed bumpkins! I read upon the paper the name “Hiram.”—Love! love! love!—everywhere! everywhere!—under diamonds and housemaids’ “jewelry,”—lifting the marrowy camel’s-hair, and rustling even the black bombazine!—No, no,—I think she never was pretty, but she was young once, and wore bright gingham, and, perhaps, gay merinos. We shall find that the poor little crooked man has been in love, or is in love, or will be in love before we have done with him, for aught that I know!

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Romance! Was there ever a boarding-house in the world where the seemingly prosaic table had not a living fresco for its background, where you could see, if you had eyes, the smoke and fire of some upheaving sentiment, or the dreary craters of smouldering or burnt-out passions? You look on the black bombazine and high-necked decorum of your neighbor, and no more think of the real life that underlies this despoiled and dismantled womanhood than you think of a stone trilobite as having once been full of the juices and the nervous thrills of throbbing and self-conscious being. There is a wild creature under that long yellow pin which serves as brooch for the bombazine cuirass,—a wild creature, which I venture to say would leap in his cage, if I should stir him, quiet as you think him. A heart which has been domesticated by matrimony and maternity is as tranquil as a tame bullfinch; but a wild heart which has never been fairly broken in flutters fiercely long after you think time has tamed it down,—like that purple finch I had the other day, which could not be approached without such palpitations and frantic flings against the bars of his cage, that I had to send him back and get a little orthodox canary which had learned to be quiet and never mind the wires or his keeper's handling. I will tell you my wicked, but half involuntary experiment on the wild heart under the faded bombazine.

Was there ever a person in the room with you, marked by any special weakness or peculiarity, with whom you could be two hours and not touch the infirm spot? I confess the most frightful tendency to do just this thing. If a man has a brogue, I am sure to catch myself imitating it. If another is lame, I follow him, or, worse than that, go before him, limping.

I could never meet an Irish gentleman—if it had been the Duke of Wellington himself—without stumbling upon the word “Paddy,”—which I use rarely in my common talk.

I have been worried to know whether this was owing to some innate depravity of disposition on my part, some malignant torturing instinct, which, under different circumstances, might have made a Fijian anthropophagus of me, or to some law of thought for which I was not answerable. It is, I am convinced, a kind of physical fact like endosmosis, with which some of you are acquainted. A thin film of politeness separates the unspoken and unspeakable current of thought from the stream of conversation. After a time one begins to soak through and mingle with the other.

We were talking about names, one day.—Was there ever anything,—I said,—like the Yankee for inventing the most uncouth, pretentious, detestable appellations,—inventing or finding them,—since the time of Praise-God Barebones? I heard a country-boy once talking of another whom he called Elpit, as I understood him. Elbridge is common enough, but this sounded oddly. It seems the boy was christened Lord Pitt,—and called for convenience, as above. I have heard

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a charming little girl, belonging to an intelligent family in the country, called Anges invariably; doubtless intended for Agnes. Names are cheap. How can a man name an innocent new-born child, that never did him any harm, Hiram?—The poor relation, or whatever she is, in bombazine, turned toward me, but I was stupid, and went on.—To think of a man going through life saddled with such an abominable name as that!—The poor relation grew very uneasy.—I continued; for I never thought of all this till afterwards.—I knew one young fellow, a good many years ago, by the name of Hiram —What's got into you, Cousin,—said our landlady,—to look so?—There! you 've upset your teacup!

It suddenly occurred to me what I had been doing, and I saw the poor woman had her hand at her throat; she was half-choking with the “hysteric ball,”—a very odd symptom, as you know, which nervous women often complain of. What business had I to be trying experiments on this forlorn old soul? I had a great deal better be watching that young girl.

Ah, the young girl! I am sure that she can hide nothing from me. Her skin is so transparent that one can almost count her heart-beats by the flushes they send into her cheeks. She does not seem to be shy, either. I think she does not know enough of danger to be timid. She seems to me like one of those birds that travellers tell of, found in remote, uninhabited islands, who, having never received any wrong at the hand of man, show no alarm at and hardly any particular consciousness of his presence.

The first thing will be to see how she and our little deformed gentleman get along together; for, as I have told you, they sit side by side. The next thing will be to keep an eye on the duenna,—the “Model” and so forth, as the white-neck-cloth called her. The intention of that estimable lady is, I understand, to launch her and leave her. I suppose there is no help for it, and I don't doubt this young lady knows how to take care of herself, but I do not like to see young girls turned loose in boarding-houses. Look here now! There is that jewel of his race, whom I have called for convenience the Koh-i-noor, (you understand it is quite out of the question for me to use the family names of our boarders, unless I want to get into trouble,)—I say, the gentleman with the diamond is looking very often and very intently, it seems to me, down toward the farther corner of the table, where sits our amber-eyed blonde. The landlady's daughter does not look pleased, it seems to me, at this, nor at those other attentions which the gentleman referred to has, as I have learned, pressed upon the newly-arrived young person. The landlady made a communication to me, within a few days after the arrival of Miss Iris, which I will repeat to the best of my remembrance.

He, (the person I have been speaking of,)—she said,—seemed to be kinder hankerin' round after that young woman. It had hurt her daughter's feelin's a good deal, that the gentleman she was a-keepin' company with should be offerin' tickets and tryin' to send

presents to them that he'd never know'd till jest a little spell ago,—and he as good as merried, so fur as solemn promises went, to as respectable a young lady, if she did say so, as any there was round, whosomever they might be.

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Tickets! presents!—said I.—What tickets, what presents has he had the impertinence to be offering to that young lady?

Tickets to the Museum,—said the landlady. There is them that's glad enough to go to the Museum, when tickets is given 'em; but some of 'em ha'n't had a ticket sence Cenderilla was played,—and now he must be offerin' 'em to this ridiculous young paintress, or whatever she is, that's come to make more mischief than her board's worth. But it a'n't her fault,—said the landlady, relenting;—and that aunt of hers, or whatever she is, served him right enough.

Why, what did she do?

Do? Why, she took it up in the tongs and dropped it out o' winder.

Dropped? dropped what?—I said.

Why, the soap,—said the landlady.

It appeared that the Koh-i-noor, to ingratiate himself, had sent an elegant package of perfumed soap, directed to Miss Iris, as a delicate expression of a lively sentiment of admiration, and that, after having met with the unfortunate treatment referred to, it was picked up by Master Benjamin Franklin, who appropriated it, rejoicing, and indulged in most unheard-of and inordinate ablutions in consequence, so that his hands were a frequent subject of maternal congratulation, and he smelt like a civet-cat for weeks after his great acquisition.

After watching daily for a time, I think I can see clearly into the relation which is growing up between the little gentleman and the young lady. She shows a tenderness to him that I can't help being interested in. If he was her crippled child, instead of being more than old enough to be her father, she could not treat him more kindly. The landlady's daughter said, the other day, she believed that girl was settin' her cap for the Little Gentleman.

Some of them young folks is very artful,—said her mother,—and there is them that would merry Lazarus, if he'd only picked up crumbs enough. I don't think, though, this is one of that sort; she's kinder childlike,—said the landlady,—and maybe never had any dolls to play with; for they say her folks was poor before Ma'am undertook to see to her teachin' and board her and clothe her.

I could not help overhearing this conversation. "Board her and clothe her!"—speaking of such a young creature! Oh, dear!—Yes,—she must be fed,—just like Bridget, maid-of-all-work at this establishment. Somebody must pay for it. Somebody has a right to watch her and see how much it takes to "keep" her, and growl at her, if she has too good an appetite. Somebody has a right to keep an eye on her and take care that she

does not dress too prettily. No mother to see her own youth over again in these fresh features and rising reliefs of half-sculptured womanhood, and, seeing its loveliness, forget her lessons of neutral-tinted propriety, and open the cases that hold her own ornaments to find for her a necklace or a bracelet or a pair of ear-rings,—those golden lamps that light up the deep, shadowy dimples on the cheeks of young beauties,—swinging in a semi-barbaric splendor that carries the wild fancy to Abyssinian queens and musky Odalisques! I don't believe any woman has utterly given up the great firm of Mundus & Co., so long as she wears ear-rings.

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I think Iris loves to hear the Little Gentleman talk. She smiles sometimes at his vehement statements, but never laughs at him. When he speaks to her, she keeps her eye always steadily upon him. This may be only natural good-breeding, so to speak, but it is worth noticing. I have often observed that vulgar persons, and public audiences of inferior collective intelligence, have this in common: the least thing draws off their minds, when you are speaking to them. I love this young creature's rapt attention to her diminutive neighbor while he is speaking.

He is evidently pleased with it. For a day or two after she came, he was silent and seemed nervous and excited. Now he is fond of getting the talk into his own hands, and is obviously conscious that he has at least one interested listener. Once or twice I have seen marks of special attention to personal adornment, a ruffled shirt-bosom, one day, and a diamond pin in it,—not so very large as the Koh-i-noor's, but more lustrous. I mentioned the death's-head ring he wears on his right hand. I was attracted by a very handsome red stone, a ruby or carbuncle or something of the sort, to notice his left hand, the other day. It is a handsome hand, and confirms my suspicion that the cast mentioned was taken from his arm. After all, this is just what I should expect. It is not very uncommon to see the upper limbs, or one of them, running away with the whole strength, and, therefore, with the whole beauty, which we should never have noticed, if it had been divided equally between all four extremities. If it is so, of course he is proud of his one strong and beautiful arm; that is human nature. I am afraid he can hardly help betraying his favoritism, as people who have any one showy point are apt to do,—especially dentists with handsome teeth, who always smile back to their last molars.

Sitting, as he does, next to the young girl, and next but one to the calm lady who has her in charge, he cannot help seeing their relations to each other.

That is an admirable woman, Sir,—he said to me one day, as we sat alone at the table after breakfast,—an admirable woman, Sir,—and I hate her.

Of course, I begged an explanation.

An admirable woman, Sir, because she does good things, and even kind things,—takes care of this—this—young lady—we have here, talks like a sensible person, and always looks as if she was doing her duty with all her might. I hate her because her voice sounds as if it never trembled and her eyes look as if she never knew what it was to cry. Besides, she looks at me, Sir, stares at me, as if she wanted to get an image of me for some gallery in her brain,—and we don't love to be looked at in this way, we that have—I hate her,—I hate her,—her eyes kill me,—it is like being stabbed with icicles to be looked at so,—the sooner she goes home, the better. I don't want a woman to weigh me in a balance; there are men

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enough for that sort of work. The judicial character is n't captivating in females, Sir. A woman fascinates a man quite as often by what she overlooks as by what she sees. Love prefers twilight to daylight; and a man doesn't think much of, nor care much for, a woman outside of his household, unless he can couple the idea of love, past, present, or future, with her. I don't believe the Devil would give half as much for the services of a sinner as he would for those of one of these folks that are always doing virtuous acts in a way to make them unpleasing.—That young girl wants a tender nature to cherish her and give her a chance to put out her leaves,—sunshine, and not east winds.

He was silent,—and sat looking at his handsome left hand with the red stone ring upon it.—Is he going to fall in love with Iris?

Here are some lines I read to the boarders the other day:—

The crooked footpath

Ah, here it is! the sliding rail
That marks the old remembered spot,
—The gap that struck our schoolboy trail,
—The crooked path across the lot. It left the road by school and church,
A pencilled shadow, nothing more,
That parted from the silver birch
And ended at the farmhouse door.

No line or compass traced its plan;
With frequent bends to left or right,
In aimless, wayward curves it ran,
But always kept the door in sight.

The gabled porch, with woodbine green,
—The broken millstone at the sill,
—Though many a rood might stretch between,
The truant child could see them still.

No rocks, across the pathway lie,
—No fallen trunk is o'er it thrown,
—And yet it winds, we know not why,
And turns as if for tree or stone.

Perhaps some lover trod the way
With shaking knees and leaping heart,

—And so it often runs astray
With sinuous sweep or sudden start.

Or one, perchance, with clouded brain
From some unholy banquet reeled,
—And since, our devious steps maintain
His track across the trodden field.

Nay, deem not thus,—no earthborn will
Could ever trace a faultless line;
Our truest steps are human still,
—To walk unswerving were divine!

Truants from love, we dream of wrath;
—Oh, rather let us trust the more!
Through all the wanderings of the path,
We still can see our Father's door!

V

The Professor finds a Fly in his Teacup.

I have a long theological talk to relate, which must be dull reading to some of my young and vivacious friends. I don't know, however, that any of them have entered into a contract to read all that I write, or that I have promised always to write to please them. What if I should sometimes write to please myself?

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Now you must know that there are a great many things which interest me, to some of which this or that particular class of readers may be totally indifferent. I love Nature, and human nature, its thoughts, affections, dreams, aspirations, delusions,—Art in all its forms,—virtu in all its eccentricities,—old stories from black-letter volumes and yellow manuscripts, and new projects out of hot brains not yet imbedded in the snows of age. I love the generous impulses of the reformer; but not less does my imagination feed itself upon the old litanies, so often warmed by the human breath upon which they were wafted to Heaven that they glow through our frames like our own heart's blood. I hope I love good men and women; I know that they never speak a word to me, even if it be of question or blame, that I do not take pleasantly, if it is expressed with a reasonable amount of human kindness.

I have before me at this time a beautiful and affecting letter, which I have hesitated to answer, though the postmark upon it gave its direction, and the name is one which is known to all, in some of its representatives. It contains no reproach, only a delicately-hinted fear. Speak gently, as this dear lady has spoken, and there is no heart so insensible that it does not answer to the appeal, no intellect so virile that it does not own a certain deference to the claims of age, of childhood, of sensitive and timid natures, when they plead with it not to look at those sacred things by the broad daylight which they see in mystic shadow. How grateful would it be to make perpetual peace with these pleading saints and their confessors, by the simple act that silences all complainings! Sleep, sleep, sleep! says the Arch-Enchantress of them all,—and pours her dark and potent anodyne, distilled over the fires that consumed her foes,—its large, round drops changing, as we look, into the beads of her convert's rosary! Silence! the pride of reason! cries another, whose whole life is spent in reasoning down reason.

I hope I love good people, not for their sake, but for my own. And most assuredly, if any deed of wrong or word of bitterness led me into an act of disrespect towards that enlightened and excellent class of men who make it their calling to teach goodness and their duty to practise it, I should feel that I had done myself an injury rather than them. Go and talk with any professional man holding any of the medieval creeds, choosing one who wears upon his features the mark of inward and outward health, who looks cheerful, intelligent, and kindly, and see how all your prejudices melt away in his presence! It is impossible to come into intimate relations with a large, sweet nature, such as you may often find in this class, without longing to be at one with it in all its modes of being and believing. But does it not occur to you that one may love truth as he sees it, and his race as he views it, better than even the sympathy and approbation of many good men whom he honors,—better than sleeping to the sound of the Miserere or listening to the repetition of an effete Confession of Faith?

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The three learned professions have but recently emerged from a state of quasi-barbarism. None of them like too well to be told of it, but it must be sounded in their ears whenever they put on airs. When a man has taken an overdose of laudanum, the doctors tell us to place him between two persons who shall make him walk up and down incessantly; and if he still cannot be kept from going to sleep, they say that a lash or two over his back is of great assistance.

So we must keep the doctors awake by telling them that they have not yet shaken off astrology and the doctrine of signatures, as is shown by the form of their prescriptions, and their use of nitrate of silver, which turns epileptics into Ethiopians. If that is not enough, they must be given over to the scourgers, who like their task and get good fees for it. A few score years ago, sick people were made to swallow burnt toads and powdered earthworms and the expressed juice of wood-lice. The physician of Charles I. and *ii.* prescribed abominations not to be named. Barbarism, as bad as that of Congo or Ashantee. Traces of this barbarism linger even in the greatly improved medical science of our century. So while the solemn farce of over-drugging is going on, the world over, the harlequin pseudo-science jumps on to the stage, whip in hand, with half-a-dozen somersets, and begins laying about him.

In 1817, perhaps you remember, the law of wager by battle was unrepealed, and the rascally murderous, and worse than murderous, clown, Abraham Thornton, put on his gauntlet in open court and defied the appellant to lift the other which he threw down. It was not until the reign of George *ii.* that the statutes against witchcraft were repealed. As for the English Court of Chancery, we know that its antiquated abuses form one of the staples of common proverbs and popular literature. So the laws and the lawyers have to be watched perpetually by public opinion as much as the doctors do.

I don't think the other profession is an exception. When the Reverend Mr. Cauvin and his associates burned my distinguished scientific brother,—he was burned with green fagots, which made it rather slow and painful,—it appears to me they were in a state of religious barbarism. The dogmas of such people about the Father of Mankind and his creatures are of no more account in my opinion than those of a council of Aztecs. If a man picks your pocket, do you not consider him thereby disqualified to pronounce any authoritative opinion on matters of ethics? If a man hangs my ancient female relatives for sorcery, as they did in this neighborhood a little while ago, or burns my instructor for not believing as he does, I care no more for his religious edicts than I should for those of any other barbarian.

Of course, a barbarian may hold many true opinions; but when the ideas of the healing art, of the administration of justice, of Christian love, could not exclude systematic poisoning, judicial duelling, and murder for opinion's sake, I do not see how we can trust the verdict of that time relating to any subject which involves the primal instincts violated in these abominations and absurdities.—What if we are even now in a state of semi-barbarism?

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[This physician believes we “are even now in a state of semi-barbarism”: invasive procedures for the prolongation of death rather than prolongation of life; “faith”, as slimly based as medieval faith in minute differences between control and treated groups; statistical manipulation to prove a prejudice. Medicine has a good deal to answer for! D.W.]

Perhaps some think we ought not to talk at table about such things.—I am not so sure of that. Religion and government appear to me the two subjects which of all others should belong to the common talk of people who enjoy the blessings of freedom. Think, one moment. The earth is a great factory-wheel, which, at every revolution on its axis, receives fifty thousand raw souls and turns off nearly the same number worked up more or less completely. There must be somewhere a population of two hundred thousand million, perhaps ten or a hundred times as many, earth-born intelligences. Life, as we call it, is nothing but the edge of the boundless ocean of existence where it comes on soundings. In this view, I do not see anything so fit to talk about, or half so interesting, as that which relates to the innumerable majority of our fellow-creatures, the dead-living, who are hundreds of thousands to one of the live-living, and with whom we all potentially belong, though we have got tangled for the present in some parcels of fibrine, albumen, and phosphates, that keep us on the minority side of the house. In point of fact, it is one of the many results of Spiritualism to make the permanent destiny of the race a matter of common reflection and discourse, and a vehicle for the prevailing disbelief of the Middle-Age doctrines on the subject. I cannot help thinking, when I remember how many conversations my friend and myself have sported, that it would be very extraordinary, if there were no mention of that class of subjects which involves all that we have and all that we hope, not merely for ourselves, but for the dear people whom we love best,—noble men, pure and lovely women, ingenuous children, about the destiny of nine tenths of whom you know the opinions that would have been taught by those old man-roasting, woman-strangling dogmatists.—However, I fought this matter with one of our boarders the other day, and I am going to report the conversation.

The divinity-student came down, one morning, looking rather more serious than usual. He said little at breakfast-time, but lingered after the others, so that I, who am apt to be long at the table, found myself alone with him.

When the rest were all gone, he turned his chair round towards mine, and began.

I am afraid,—he said,—you express yourself a little too freely on a most important class of subjects. Is there not danger in introducing discussions or allusions relating to matters of religion into common discourse?

Danger to what?—I asked.

Danger to truth,—he replied, after a slight pause.

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I didn't know Truth was such an invalid,' I said.—How long is it since she could only take the air in a close carriage, with a gentleman in a black coat on the box? Let me tell you a story, adapted to young persons, but which won't hurt older ones.

—There was a very little boy who had one of those balloons you may have seen, which are filled with light gas, and are held by a string to keep them from running off in aeronautic voyages on their own account. This little boy had a naughty brother, who said to him, one day,—Brother, pull down your balloon, so that I can look at it and take hold of it. Then the little boy pulled it down. Now the naughty brother had a sharp pin in his hand, and he thrust it into the balloon, and all the gas oozed out, so that there was nothing left but a shrivelled skin.

One evening, the little boy's father called him to the window to see the moon, which pleased him very much; but presently he said,—Father, do not pull the string and bring down the moon, for my naughty brother will prick it, and then it will all shrivel up and we shall not see it any more.

Then his father laughed, and told him how the moon had been shining a good while, and would shine a good while longer, and that all we could do was to keep our windows clean, never letting the dust get too thick on them, and especially to keep our eyes open, but that we could not pull the moon down with a string, nor prick it with a pin.—Mind you this, too, the moon is no man's private property, but is seen from a good many parlor-windows.

—Truth is tough. It will not break, like a bubble, at a touch; nay, you may kick it about all day, like a football, and it will be round and full at evening. Does not Mr. Bryant say, that Truth gets well if she is run over by a locomotive, while Error dies of lockjaw if she scratches her finger? [Would that this was so:—error, superstition, mysticism, authoritarianism, pseudo-science all have a tenacity that survives inexplicably. D.W.] I never heard that a mathematician was alarmed for the safety of a demonstrated proposition. I think, generally, that fear of open discussion implies feebleness of inward conviction, and great sensitiveness to the expression of individual opinion is a mark of weakness.

—I am not so much afraid for truth,—said the divinity-student,—as for the conceptions of truth in the minds of persons not accustomed to judge wisely the opinions uttered before them.

Would you, then, banish all allusions to matters of this nature from the society of people who come together habitually?

I would be very careful in introducing them,—said the divinity-student.



Yes, but friends of yours leave pamphlets in people's entries, to be picked up by nervous misses and hysteric housemaids, full of doctrines these people do not approve. Some of your friends stop little children in the street, and give them books, which their parents, who have had them baptized into the Christian fold and give them what they consider proper religious instruction, do not think fit for them. One would say it was fair enough to talk about matters thus forced upon people's attention.

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The divinity-student could not deny that this was what might be called opening the subject to the discussion of intelligent people.

But,—he said,—the greatest objection is this, that persons who have not made a professional study of theology are not competent to speak on such subjects. Suppose a minister were to undertake to express opinions on medical subjects, for instance, would you not think he was going beyond his province?

I laughed,—for I remembered John Wesley’s “sulphur and supplication,” and so many other cases where ministers had meddled with medicine,—sometimes well and sometimes ill, but, as a general rule, with a tremendous lurch to quackery, owing to their very loose way of admitting evidence,—that I could not help being amused.

I beg your pardon,—I said,—I do not wish to be impolite, but I was thinking of their certificates to patent medicines. Let us look at this matter.

If a minister had attended lectures on the theory and practice of medicine, delivered by those who had studied it most deeply, for thirty or forty years, at the rate of from fifty to one hundred a year,—if he had been constantly reading and hearing read the most approved text-books on the subject,—if he had seen medicine actually practised according to different methods, daily, for the same length of time,—I should think, that if a person of average understanding, he was entitled to express an opinion on the subject of medicine, or else that his instructors were a set of ignorant and incompetent charlatans.

If, before a medical practitioner would allow me to enjoy the full privileges of the healing art, he expected me to affirm my belief in a considerable number of medical doctrines, drugs, and formulae, I should think that he thereby implied my right to discuss the same, and my ability to do so, if I knew how to express myself in English.

Suppose, for instance, the Medical Society should refuse to give us an opiate, or to set a broken limb, until we had signed our belief in a certain number of propositions,—of which we will say this is the first:

I. All men’s teeth are naturally in a state of total decay or caries, and, therefore, no man can bite until every one of them is extracted and a new set is inserted according to the principles of dentistry adopted by this Society.

I, for one, should want to discuss that before signing my name to it, and I should say this:—Why, no, that is n’t true. There are a good many bad teeth, we all know, but a great many more good ones. You must n’t trust the dentists; they are all the time looking at the people who have bad teeth, and such as are suffering from toothache. The idea that you must pull out every one of every nice young man and young woman’s natural teeth! Poh, poh! Nobody believes that. This tooth must be straightened, that



must be filled with gold, and this other perhaps extracted, but it must be a very rare case, if they are all so bad as to require extraction; and if they are, don't blame the poor soul for it! Don't tell us, as some old dentists used to, that everybody not only always has every tooth in his head good for nothing, but that he ought to have his head cut off as a punishment for that misfortune! No, I can't sign Number One. Give us Number Two.

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II. We hold that no man can be well who does not agree with our views of the efficacy of calomel, and who does not take the doses of it prescribed in our tables, as there directed.

To which I demur, questioning why it should be so, and get for answer the two following:

III. Every man who does not take our prepared calomel, as prescribed by us in our Constitution and By-Laws, is and must be a mass of disease from head to foot; it being self-evident that he is simultaneously affected with Apoplexy, Arthritis, Ascites, Asphyxia, and Atrophy; with Borborygmus, Bronchitis, and Bulimia; with Cachexia, Carcinoma, and Cretinismus; and so on through the alphabet, to Xerophthahnia and Zona, with all possible and incompatible diseases which are necessary to make up a totally morbid state; and he will certainly die, if he does not take freely of our prepared calomel, to be obtained only of one of our authorized agents.

IV. No man shall be allowed to take our prepared calomel who does not give in his solemn adhesion to each and all of the above-named and the following propositions (from ten to a hundred) and show his mouth to certain of our apothecaries, who have not studied dentistry, to examine whether all his teeth have been extracted and a new set inserted according to our regulations.

Of course, the doctors have a right to say we sha'n't have any rhubarb, if we don't sign their articles, and that, if, after signing them, we express doubts (in public), about any of them, they will cut us off from our jalap and squills,—but then to ask a fellow not to discuss the propositions before he signs them is what I should call boiling it down a little too strong!

If we understand them, why can't we discuss them? If we can't understand them, because we have n't taken a medical degree, what the Father of Lies do they ask us to sign them for?

Just so with the graver profession. Every now and then some of its members seem to lose common sense and common humanity. The laymen have to keep setting the divines right constantly. Science, for instance,—in other words, knowledge,—is not the enemy of religion; for, if so, then religion would mean ignorance: But it is often the antagonist of school-divinity.

Everybody knows the story of early astronomy and the school-divines. Come down a little later, Archbishop Usher, a very learned Protestant prelate, tells us that the world was created on Sunday, the twenty-third of October, four thousand and four years before the birth of Christ. Deluge, December 7th, two thousand three hundred and forty-eight years B. C. Yes, and the earth stands on an elephant, and the elephant on a tortoise. One statement is as near the truth as the other.



Again, there is nothing so brutalizing to some natures as moral surgery. I have often wondered that Hogarth did not add one more picture to his four stages of Cruelty. Those wretched fools, reverend divines and others, who were strangling men and women for imaginary crimes a little more than a century ago among us, were set right by a layman, and very angry it made them to have him meddle.

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The good people of Northampton had a very remarkable man for their clergyman,—a man with a brain as nicely adjusted for certain mechanical processes as Babbage's calculating machine. The commentary of the laymen on the preaching and practising of Jonathan Edwards was, that, after twenty-three years of endurance, they turned him out by a vote of twenty to one, and passed a resolve that he should never preach for them again. A man's logical and analytical adjustments are of little consequence, compared to his primary relations with Nature and truth: and people have sense enough to find it out in the long ran; they know what "logic" is worth.

In that miserable delusion referred to above, the reverend Aztecs and Fijians argued rightly enough from their premises, no doubt, for many men can do this. But common sense and common humanity were unfortunately left out from their premises, and a layman had to supply them. A hundred more years and many of the barbarisms still lingering among us will, of course, have disappeared like witch-hanging. But people are sensitive now, as they were then. You will see by this extract that the Rev. Cotton Mather did not like intermeddling with his business very well.

"Let the Levites of the Lord keep close to their Instructions," he says, "and God will smite thro' the loins of those that rise up against them. I will report unto you a Thing which many Hundreds among us know to be true. The Godly Minister of a certain Town in Connecticut, when he had occasion to be absent on a Lord's Day from his Flock, employ'd an honest Neighbour of some small Talents for a Mechanick, to read a Sermon out of some good Book unto 'em. This Honest, whom they ever counted also a Pious Man, had so much conceit of his Talents, that instead of Reading a Sermon appointed, he to the Surprise of the People, fell to preaching one of his own. For his Text he took these Words, 'Despise not Prophecying'; and in his Preachment he betook himself to bewail the Envy of the Clergy in the Land, in that they did not wish all the Lord's People to be Prophets, and call forth Private Brethren publickly to prophesie. While he was thus in the midst of his Exercise, God smote him with horrible Madness; he was taken ravingly distracted; the People were forc'd with violent Hands to carry him home. I will not mention his Name: He was reputed a Pious Man."—This is one of Cotton Mather's "Remarkable Judgments of God, on Several Sorts of Offenders,"—and the next cases referred to are the Judgments on the "Abominable Sacrilege" of not paying the Ministers' Salaries.

This sort of thing does n't do here and now, you see, my young friend! We talk about our free institutions;—they are nothing but a coarse outside machinery to secure the freedom of individual thought. The President of the United States is only the engine driver of our broad-gauge mail-train; and every honest, independent thinker has a seat in the first-class cars behind him.

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—There is something in what you say,—replied the divinity-student; —and yet it seems to me there are places and times where disputed doctrines of religion should not be introduced. You would not attack a church dogma—say Total Depravity—in a lyceum-lecture, for instance?

Certainly not; I should choose another place,—I answered.—But, mind you, at this table I think it is very different. I shall express my ideas on any subject I like. The laws of the lecture-room, to which my friends and myself are always amenable, do not hold here. I shall not often give arguments, but frequently opinions,—I trust with courtesy and propriety, but, at any rate, with such natural forms of expression as it has pleased the Almighty to bestow upon me.

A man's opinions, look you, are generally of much more value than his arguments. These last are made by his brain, and perhaps he does not believe the proposition they tend to prove,—as is often the case with paid lawyers; but opinions are formed by our whole nature,—brain, heart, instinct, brute life, everything all our experience has shaped for us by contact with the whole circle of our being.

—There is one thing more,—said the divinity-student,—that I wished to speak of; I mean that idea of yours, expressed some time since, of depolarizing the text of sacred books in order to judge them fairly. May I ask why you do not try the experiment yourself?

Certainly,—I replied,—if it gives you any pleasure to ask foolish questions. I think the ocean telegraph-wire ought to be laid and will be laid, but I don't know that you have any right to ask me to go and lay it. But, for that matter, I have heard a good deal of Scripture depolarized in and out of the pulpit. I heard the Rev. Mr. F. once depolarize the story of the Prodigal Son in Park-Street Church. Many years afterwards, I heard him repeat the same or a similar depolarized version in Rome, New York. I heard an admirable depolarization of the story of the young man who "had great possessions" from the Rev. Mr. H. in another pulpit, and felt that I had never half understood it before. All paraphrases are more or less perfect depolarizations. But I tell you this: the faith of our Christian community is not robust enough to bear the turning of our most sacred language into its depolarized equivalents. You have only to look back to Dr. Channing's famous Baltimore discourse and remember the shrieks of blasphemy with which it was greeted, to satisfy yourself on this point. Time, time only, can gradually wean us from our Epeolatry, or word-worship, by spiritualizing our ideas of the thing signified. Man is an idolater or symbol-worshipper by nature, which, of course, is no fault of his; but sooner or later all his local and temporary symbols must be ground to powder, like the golden calf,—word-images as well as metal and wooden ones. Rough work, iconoclasm,—but the only way to get at truth. It is, indeed, as that quaint and rare old discourse, "A Summons for Sleepers," hath it, "no doubt a thankless office, and a verie unthriftee occupation; veritas odium parit, truth never goeth without a scratcht face; he that will be busie with voe vobis, let him looke shortly for coram nobas."

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The very aim and end of our institutions is just this: that we may think what we like and say what we think.

—Think what we like!—said the divinity-student;—think what we like! What! against all human and divine authority?

Against all human versions of its own or any other authority. At our own peril always, if we do not like the right,—but not at the risk of being hanged and quartered for political heresy, or broiled on green fagots for ecclesiastical treason! Nay, we have got so far, that the very word heresy has fallen into comparative disuse among us.

And now, my young friend, let-us shake hands and stop our discussion, which we will not make a quarrel. I trust you know, or will learn, a great many things in your profession which we common scholars do not know; but mark this: when the common people of New England stop talking politics and theology, it will be because they have got an Emperor to teach them the one, and a Pope to teach them the other!

That was the end of my long conference with the divinity-student. The next morning we got talking a little on the same subject, very good-naturedly, as people return to a matter they have talked out.

You must look to yourself,—said the divinity-student,—if your democratic notions get into print. You will be fired into from all quarters.

If it were only a bullet, with the marksman's name on it!—I said.—I can't stop to pick out the peep-shot of the anonymous scribblers.

Right, Sir! right!—said the Little Gentleman. The scamps! I know the fellows. They can't give fifty cents to one of the Antipodes, but they must have it jingled along through everybody's palms all the way, till it reaches him,—and forty cents of it gets spilt, like the water out of the fire-buckets passed along a "lane" at a fire;—but when it comes to anonymous defamation, putting lies into people's mouths, and then advertising those people through the country as the authors of them,—oh, then it is that they let not their left hand know what their right hand doeth!

I don't like Ehud's style of doing business, Sir. He comes along with a very sanctimonious look, Sir, with his "secret errand unto thee," and his "message from God unto thee," and then pulls out his hidden knife with that unsuspected hand of his,—(the Little Gentleman lifted his clenched left hand with the blood-red jewel on the ring-finger,)—and runs it, blade and haft, into a man's stomach! Don't meddle with these fellows, Sir. They are read mostly by persons whom you would not reach, if you were to write ever so much. Let 'em alone. A man whose opinions are not attacked is beneath contempt.

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I hope so,—I said.—I got three pamphlets and innumerable squibs flung at my head for attacking one of the pseudo-sciences, in former years. When, by the permission of Providence, I held up to the professional public the damnable facts connected with the conveyance of poison from one young mother's chamber to another's,—for doing which humble office I desire to be thankful that I have lived, though nothing else good should ever come of my life,—I had to bear the sneers of those whose position I had assailed, and, as I believe, have at last demolished, so that nothing but the ghosts of dead women stir among the ruins.—What would you do, if the folks without names kept at you, trying to get a San Benito on to your shoulders that would fit you?—Would you stand still in fly-time, or would you give a kick now and then?

Let 'em bite!—said the Little Gentleman,—let 'em bite! It makes 'em hungry to shake 'em off, and they settle down again as thick as ever and twice as savage. Do you know what meddling with the folks without names, as you call 'em, is like?—It is like riding at the quintaan. You run full tilt at the board, but the board is on a pivot, with a bag of sand on an arm that balances it. The board gives way as soon as you touch it; and before you have got by, the bag of sand comes round whack on the back of your neck. “Ananias,” for instance, pitches into your lecture, we will say, in some paper taken by the people in your kitchen. Your servants get saucy and negligent. If their newspaper calls you names, they need not be so particular about shutting doors softly or boiling potatoes. So you lose your temper, and come out in an article which you think is going to finish “Ananias,” proving him a booby who doesn't know enough to understand even a lyceum-lecture, or else a person that tells lies. Now you think you've got him! Not so fast. “Ananias” keeps still and winks to “Shimei,” and “Shimei” comes out in the paper which they take in your neighbor's kitchen, ten times worse than t'other fellow. If you meddle with “Shimei,” he steps out, and next week appears “Rab-shakeh,” an unsavory wretch; and now, at any rate, you find out what good sense there was in Hezekiah's “Answer him not.”—No, no,—keep your temper.—So saying, the Little Gentleman doubled his left fist and looked at it as if he should like to hit something or somebody a most pernicious punch with it.

Good!—said I.—Now let me give you some axioms I have arrived at, after seeing something of a great many kinds of good folks.

—Of a hundred people of each of the different leading religious sects, about the same proportion will be safe and pleasant persons to deal and to live with.

—There are, at least, three real saints among the women to one among the men, in every denomination.

—The spiritual standard of different classes I would reckon thus:

1. The comfortably rich.
2. The decently comfortable.
3. The very rich, who are apt to be irreligious.
4. The very poor, who are apt to be immoral.

—The cut nails of machine-divinity may be driven in, but they won't clinch.

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—The arguments which the greatest of our schoolmen could not refute were two: the blood in men's veins, and the milk in women's breasts.

—Humility is the first of the virtues—for other people.

—Faith always implies the disbelief of a lesser fact in favor of a greater. A little mind often sees the unbelief, without seeing the belief of a large one.

The Poor Relation had been fidgeting about and working her mouth while all this was going on. She broke out in speech at this point.

I hate to hear folks talk so. I don't see that you are any better than a heathen.

I wish I were half as good as many heathens have been,—I said.—Dying for a principle seems to me a higher degree of virtue than scolding for it; and the history of heathen races is full of instances where men have laid down their lives for the love of their kind, of their country, of truth, nay, even for simple manhood's sake, or to show their obedience or fidelity. What would not such beings have done for the souls of men, for the Christian commonwealth, for the King of Kings, if they had lived in days of larger light? Which seems to you nearest heaven, Socrates drinking his hemlock, Regulus going back to the enemy's camp, or that old New England divine sitting comfortably in his study and chuckling over his conceit of certain poor women, who had been burned to death in his own town, going “roaring out of one fire into another”?

I don't believe he said any such thing,—replied the Poor Relation.

It is hard to believe,—said I,—but it is true for all that. In another hundred years it will be as incredible that men talked as we sometimes hear them now.

Pectus est quod facit theologum. The heart makes the theologian. Every race, every civilization, either has a new revelation of its own or a new interpretation of an old one. Democratic America, has a different humanity from feudal Europe, and so must have a new divinity. See, for one moment, how intelligence reacts on our faiths. The Bible was a divining-book to our ancestors, and is so still in the hands of some of the vulgar. The Puritans went to the Old Testament for their laws; the Mormons go to it for their patriarchal institution. Every generation dissolves something new and precipitates something once held in solution from that great storehouse of temporary and permanent truths.

You may observe this: that the conversation of intelligent men of the stricter sects is strangely in advance of the formula that belong to their organizations. So true is this, that I have doubts whether a large proportion of them would not have been rather pleased than offended, if they could have overheard our talk. For, look you, I think there is hardly a professional teacher who will not in private conversation allow a large

part of what we have said, though it may frighten him in print; and I know well what an under-current of secret sympathy gives vitality to those poor words of mine which sometimes get a hearing.

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I don't mind the exclamation of any old stager who drinks Madeira worth from two to six Bibles a bottle, and burns, according to his own premises, a dozen souls a year in the cigars with which he muddles his brains. But as for the good and true and intelligent men whom we see all around us, laborious, self-denying, hopeful, helpful,—men who know that the active mind of the century is tending more and more to the two poles, Rome and Reason, the sovereign church or the free soul, authority or personality, God in us or God in our masters, and that, though a man may by accident stand half-way between these two points, he must look one way or the other,—I don't believe they would take offence at anything I have reported of our late conversation.

But supposing any one do take offence at first sight, let him look over these notes again, and see whether he is quite sure he does not agree with most of these things that were said amongst us. If he agrees with most of them, let him be patient with an opinion he does not accept, or an expression or illustration a little too vivacious. I don't know that I shall report any more conversations on these topics; but I do insist on the right to express a civil opinion on this class of subjects without giving offence, just when and where I please,—unless, as in the lecture-room, there is an implied contract to keep clear of doubtful matters. You did n't think a man could sit at a breakfast-table doing nothing but making puns every morning for a year or two, and never give a thought to the two thousand of his fellow-creatures who are passing into another state during every hour that he sits talking and laughing. Of course, the one matter that a real human being cares for is what is going to become of them and of him. And the plain truth is, that a good many people are saying one thing about it and believing another.

—How do I know that? Why, I have known and loved to talk with good people, all the way from Rome to Geneva in doctrine, as long as I can remember. Besides, the real religion of the world comes from women much more than from men,—from mothers most of all, who carry the key of our souls in their bosoms. It is in their hearts that the “sentimental” religion some people are so fond of sneering at has its source. The sentiment of love, the sentiment of maternity, the sentiment of the paramount obligation of the parent to the child as having called it into existence, enhanced just in proportion to the power and knowledge of the one and the weakness and ignorance of the other, —these are the “sentiments” that have kept our soulless systems from driving men off to die in holes like those that riddle the sides of the hill opposite the Monastery of St. Saba, where the miserable victims of a falsely-interpreted religion starved and withered in their delusion.

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I have looked on the face of a saintly woman this very day, whose creed many dread and hate, but whose life is lovely and noble beyond all praise. When I remember the bitter words I have heard spoken against her faith, by men who have an Inquisition which excommunicates those who ask to leave their communion in peace, and an Index Expurgatorius on which this article may possibly have the honor of figuring,—and, far worse than these, the reluctant, pharisaical confession, that it might perhaps be possible that one who so believed should be accepted of the Creator,—and then recall the sweet peace and love that show through all her looks, the price of untold sacrifices and labors, and again recollect how thousands of women, filled with the same spirit, die, without a murmur, to earthly life, die to their own names even, that they may know nothing but their holy duties,—while men are torturing and denouncing their fellows, and while we can hear day and night the clinking of the hammers that are trying, like the brute forces in the “Prometheus,” to rivet their adamantine wedges right through the breast of human nature,—I have been ready to believe that we have even now a new revelation, and the name of its Messiah is *woman*!

—I should be sorry,—I remarked, a day or two afterwards, to the divinity-student,—if anything I said tended in any way to foster any jealousy between the professions, or to throw disrespect upon that one on whose counsel and sympathies almost all of us lean in our moments of trial. But we are false to our new conditions of life, if we do not resolutely maintain our religious as well as our political freedom, in the face of any and all supposed monopolies. Certain men will, of course, say two things, if we do not take their views: first, that we don’t know anything about these matters; and, secondly, that we are not so good as they are. They have a polarized phraseology for saying these things, but it comes to precisely that. To which it may be answered, in the first place, that we have good authority for saying that even babes and sucklings know something; and, in the second, that, if there is a mote or so to be removed from our premises, the courts and councils of the last few years have found beams enough in some other quarters to build a church that would hold all the good people in Boston and have sticks enough left to make a bonfire for all the heretics.

As to that terrible depolarizing process of mine, of which we were talking the other day, I will give you a specimen of one way of managing it, if you like. I don’t believe it will hurt you or anybody. Besides, I had a great deal rather finish our talk with pleasant images and gentle words than with sharp sayings, which will only afford a text, if anybody repeats them, for endless relays of attacks from Messrs. Ananias, Shimei, and Rabshakeh.

[I must leave such gentry, if any of them show themselves, in the hands of my clerical friends, many of whom are ready to stand up for the rights of the laity,—and to those blessed souls, the good women, to whom this version of the story of a mother’s hidden hopes and tender anxieties is dedicated by their peaceful and loving servant.]

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A mother's secret.

How sweet the sacred legend—if unblamed
In my slight verse such holy things are named
—Of Mary's secret hours of hidden joy,
Silent, but pondering on her wondrous boy!
Ave, Maria! Pardon, if I wrong
Those heavenly words that shame my earthly song!

The choral host had closed the angel's strain
Sung to the midnight watch on Bethlehem's plain;
And now the shepherds, hastening on their way,
Sought the still hamlet where the Infant lay.
They passed the fields that gleaning Ruth toiled O'er,
They saw afar the ruined threshing-floor
Where Moab's daughter, homeless and forlorn,
Found Boaz slumbering by his heaps of corn;
And some remembered how the holy scribe,
Skilled in the lore of every jealous tribe,
Traced the warm blood of Jesse's royal son
To that fair alien, bravely wooed and won.
So fared they on to seek the promised sign
That marked the anointed heir of David's line.

At last, by forms of earthly semblance led,
They found the crowded inn, the oxen's shed.
No pomp was there, no glory shone around
On the coarse straw that strewed the reeking ground;
One dim retreat a flickering torch betrayed,
In that poor cell the Lord of Life was laid!

The wondering shepherds told their breathless tale
Of the bright choir that woke the sleeping vale;
Told how the skies with sudden glory flamed;
Told how the shining multitude proclaimed
"Joy, joy to earth! Behold the hallowed morn!
In David's city Christ the Lord is born!
'Glory to God!' let angels shout on high,
'Good-will to men!' the listening Earth reply!"

They spoke with hurried words and accents wild;
Calm in his cradle slept the heavenly child.
No trembling word the mother's joy revealed,
One sigh of rapture, and her lips were sealed;

Unmoved she saw the rustic train depart,
But kept their words to ponder in her heart.

Twelve years had passed; the boy was fair and tall,
Growing in wisdom, finding grace with all.
The maids of Nazareth, as they trooped to fill
Their balanced urns beside the mountain-rill,
The gathered matrons, as they sat and spun,
Spoke in soft words of Joseph's quiet son.
No voice had reached the Galilean vale
Of star-led kings or awe-struck shepherds' tale;
In the meek, studious child they only saw
The future Rabbi, learned in Israel's law.

So grew the boy; and now the feast was near,
When at the holy place the tribes appear.
Scarce had the home-bred child of Nazareth seen
Beyond the hills that girt the village-green,
Save when at midnight, o'er the star-lit sands,
Snatched from the steel of Herod's murdering bands,
A babe, close-folded to his mother's breast,
Through Edom's wilds he sought the sheltering West.

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Then Joseph spake: "Thy boy hath largely grown;
Weave him fine raiment, fitting to be shown;
Fair robes beseem the pilgrim, as the priest
Goes he not with us to the holy feast?"

And Mary culled the flaxen fibres white;
Till eve she spun; she spun till morning light.
The thread was twined; its parting meshes through
From hand to hand her restless shuttle flew,
Till the full web was wound upon the beam,
Love's curious toil,—a vest without a seam!

They reach the holy place, fulfil the days
To solemn feasting given, and grateful praise.
At last they turn, and far Moriah's height
Melts in the southern sky and fades from sight.
All day the dusky caravan has flowed
In devious trails along the winding road,
(For many a step their homeward path attends,
And all the sons of Abraham are as friends.)
Evening has come,—the hour of rest and joy;
Hush! hush!—that whisper,—"Where is Mary's boy?"

O weary hour! O aching days that passed
Filled with strange fears, each wilder than the last:
The soldier's lance,—the fierce centurion's sword,
The crushing wheels that whirl some Roman lord,
The midnight crypt that suck's the captive's breath,
The blistering sun on Hinnom's vale of death!

Thrice on his cheek had rained the morning light,
Thrice on his lips the mildewed kiss of night,
Crouched by some porphyry column's shining plinth,
Or stretched beneath the odorous terebinth.

At last, in desperate mood, they sought once more
The Temple's porches, searched in vain before;
They found him seated with the ancient men,
The grim old rufflers of the tongue and pen,
Their bald heads glistening as they clustered near;
Their gray beards slanting as they turned to hear,
Lost in half-envious wonder and surprise
That lips so fresh should utter words so wise.



And Mary said,—as one who, tried too long,
Tells all her grief and half her sense of wrong,
“What is this thoughtless thing which thou hast done?
Lo, we have sought thee sorrowing, O my son!”
Few words he spake, and scarce of filial tone,
Strange words, their sense a mystery yet unknown;
Then turned with them and left the holy hill,
To all their mild commands obedient still.

The tale was told to Nazareth’s sober men,
And Nazareth’s matrons told it oft again;
The maids retold it at the fountain’s side;
The youthful shepherds doubted or denied;
It passed around among the listening friends,
With all that fancy adds and fiction fends,
Till newer marvels dimmed the young renown
Of Joseph’s son, who talked the Rabbis down.

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But Mary, faithful to its lightest word,
Kept in her heart the sayings she had heard,
Till the dread morning rent the Temple's veil,
And shuddering Earth confirmed the wondrous tale.

Youth fades; love droops; the leaves of friendship fall;
A mother's secret hope outlives them all.

VI

You don't look so dreadful poor in the face as you did a while back. Bloated some, I expect.

This was the cheerful and encouraging and elegant remark with which the Poor Relation greeted the divinity-student one morning.

Of course every good man considers it a great sacrifice on his part to continue living in this transitory, unsatisfactory, and particularly unpleasant world. This is so much a matter of course, that I was surprised to see the divinity-student change color. He took a look at a small and uncertain-minded glass which hung slanting forward over the chapped sideboard. The image it returned to him had the color of a very young pea somewhat overboiled. The scenery of a long tragic drama flashed through his mind as the lightning-express-train whishes by a station: the gradual dismantling process of disease; friends looking on, sympathetic, but secretly chuckling over their own stomachs of iron and lungs of caoutchouc; nurses attentive, but calculating their crop, and thinking how soon it will be ripe, so that they can go to your neighbor, who is good for a year or so longer; doctors assiduous, but giving themselves a mental shake, as they go out of your door, which throws off your particular grief as a duck sheds a raindrop from his oily feathers; undertakers solemn, but happy; then the great subsoil cultivator, who plants, but never looks for fruit in his garden; then the stone-cutter, who puts your name on the slab which has been waiting for you ever since the birds or beasts made their tracks on the new red sandstone; then the grass and the dandelions and the buttercups,—Earth saying to the mortal body, with her sweet symbolism, "You have scarred my bosom, but you are forgiven"; then a glimpse of the soul as a floating consciousness without very definite form or place, but dimly conceived of as an upright column of vapor or mist several times larger than life-size, so far as it could be said to have any size at all, wandering about and living a thin and half-awake life for want of good old-fashioned solid matter to come down upon with foot and fist,—in fact, having neither foot nor fist, nor conveniences for taking the sitting posture.

And yet the divinity-student was a good Christian, and those heathen images which remind one of the childlike fancies of the dying Adrian were only the efforts of his imagination to give shape to the formless and position to the placeless. Neither did his

thoughts spread themselves out and link themselves as I have displayed them. They came confusedly into his mind like a heap of broken mosaics,—sometimes a part of the picture complete in itself, sometimes connected fragments, and sometimes only single severed stones.

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They did not diffuse a light of celestial joy over his countenance. On the contrary, the Poor Relation's remark turned him pale, as I have said; and when the terrible wrinkled and jaundiced looking-glass turned him green in addition, and he saw himself in it, it seemed to him as if it were all settled, and his book of life were to be shut not yet half-read, and go back to the dust of the under-ground archives. He coughed a mild short cough, as if to point the direction in which his downward path was tending. It was an honest little cough enough, so far as appearances went. But coughs are ungrateful things. You find one out in the cold, take it up and nurse it and make everything of it, dress it up warm, give it all sorts of balsams and other food it likes, and carry it round in your bosom as if it were a miniature lapdog. And by-and-by its little bark grows sharp and savage, and—confound the thing!—you find it is a wolf's whelp that you have got there, and he is gnawing in the breast where he has been nestling so long.—The Poor Relation said that somebody's surrup was good for folks that were gettin' into a bad way.—The landlady had heard of desperate cases cured by cherry-pictorial.

Whiskey's the fellah,—said the young man John.—Make it into punch, cold at dinner-time 'n' hot at bed-time. I'll come up 'n' show you how to mix it. Have n't any of you seen the wonderful fat man exhibitin' down in Hanover Street?

Master Benjamin Franklin rushed into the dialogue with a breezy exclamation, that he had seen a great picter outside of the place where the fat man was exhibitin'. Tried to get in at half-price, but the man at the door looked at his teeth and said he was more'n ten year old.

It is n't two years,—said the young man John, since that fat fellah was exhibitin' here as the Livin' Skeleton. Whiskey—that's what did it,—real Burbon's the stuff. Hot water, sugar, 'n' jest a little shavin' of lemon-skin in it,—skin, mind you, none o' your juice; take it off thin,—shape of one of them flat curls the factory-girls wear on the sides of their foreheads.

But I am a teetotaller,—said the divinity-student in a subdued tone;—not noticing the enormous length of the bow-string the young fellow had just drawn.

He took up his hat and went out.

I think you have worried that young man more than you meant,—I said.—I don't believe he will jump off one of the bridges, for he has too much principle; but I mean to follow him and see where he goes, for he looks as if his mind were made up to something.

I followed him at a reasonable distance. He walked doggedly along, looking neither to the right nor the left, turned into State Street, and made for a well-known Life-Insurance Office. Luckily, the doctor was there and overhauled him on the spot. There was nothing the matter with him, he said, and he could have his life insured as a sound one. He came out in good spirits, and told me this soon after.

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This led me to make some remarks the next morning on the manners of well-bred and ill-bred people.

I began,—The whole essence of true gentle-breeding (one does not like to say gentility) lies in the wish and the art to be agreeable. Good-breeding is surface-Christianity. Every look, movement, tone, expression, subject of discourse, that may give pain to another is habitually excluded from conversational intercourse. This is the reason why rich people are apt to be so much more agreeable than others.

—I thought you were a great champion of equality,—said the discreet and severe lady who had accompanied our young friend, the Latin Tutor's daughter.

I go politically for equality,—I said,—and socially for the quality.

Who are the "quality,"—said the Model, *etc.*, in a community like ours?

I confess I find this question a little difficult to answer,—I said. —Nothing is better known than the distinction of social ranks which exists in every community, and nothing is harder to define. The great gentlemen and ladies of a place are its real lords and masters and mistresses; they are the quality, whether in a monarchy or a republic; mayors and governors and generals and senators and ex-presidents are nothing to them. How well we know this, and how seldom it finds a distinct expression! Now I tell you truly, I believe in man as man, and I disbelieve in all distinctions except such as follow the natural lines of cleavage in a society which has crystallized according to its own true laws. But the essence of equality is to be able to say the truth; and there is nothing more curious than these truths relating to the stratification of society.

Of all the facts in this world that do not take hold of immortality, there is not one so intensely real, permanent, and engrossing as this of social position,—as you see by the circumstances that the core of all the great social orders the world has seen has been, and is still, for the most part, a privileged class of gentlemen and ladies arranged in a regular scale of precedence among themselves, but superior as a body to all else.

Nothing but an ideal Christian equality, which we have been getting farther away from since the days of the Primitive Church, can prevent this subdivision of society into classes from taking place everywhere,—in the great centres of our republic as much as in old European monarchies. Only there position is more absolutely hereditary,—here it is more completely elective.

—Where is the election held? and what are the qualifications? and who are the electors?—said the Model.

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Nobody ever sees when the vote is taken; there never is a formal vote. The women settle it mostly; and they know wonderfully well what is presentable, and what can't stand the blaze of the chandeliers and the critical eye and ear of people trained to know a staring shade in a ribbon, a false light in a jewel, an ill-bred tone, an angular movement, everything that betrays a coarse fibre and cheap training. As a general thing, you do not get elegance short of two or three removes from the soil, out of which our best blood doubtless comes,—quite as good, no doubt, as if it came from those old prize-fighters with iron pots on their heads, to whom some great people are so fond of tracing their descent through a line of small artisans and petty shopkeepers whose veins have held “base” fluid enough to fill the Cloaca Maxima!

Does not money go everywhere?—said the Model.

Almost. And with good reason. For though there are numerous exceptions, rich people are, as I said, commonly altogether the most agreeable companions. The influence of a fine house, graceful furniture, good libraries, well-ordered tables, trim servants, and, above all, a position so secure that one becomes unconscious of it, gives a harmony and refinement to the character and manners which we feel, if we cannot explain their charm. Yet we can get at the reason of it by thinking a little.

All these appliances are to shield the sensibility from disagreeable contacts, and to soothe it by varied natural and artificial influences. In this way the mind, the taste, the feelings, grow delicate, just as the hands grow white and soft when saved from toil and incased in soft gloves. The whole nature becomes subdued into suavity. I confess I like the quality ladies better than the common kind even of literary ones. They have n't read the last book, perhaps, but they attend better to you when you are talking to them. If they are never learned, they make up for it in tact and elegance. Besides, I think, on the whole, there is less self-assertion in diamonds than in dogmas. I don't know where you will find a sweeter portrait of humility than in Esther, the poor play-girl of King Ahasuerus; yet Esther put on her royal apparel when she went before her lord. I have no doubt she was a more gracious and agreeable person than Deborah, who judged the people and wrote the story of Sisera. The wisest woman you talk with is ignorant of something that you know, but an elegant woman never forgets her elegance.

Dowdiness is clearly an expression of imperfect vitality. The highest fashion is intensely alive,—not alive necessarily to the truest and best things, but with its blood tingling, as it were, in all its extremities and to the farthest point of its surface, so that the feather in its bonnet is as fresh as the crest of a fighting-cock, and the rosette on its slipper as clean-cut and pimpant (pronounce it English fashion,—it is a good word) as a dahlia. As a general rule, that society where flattery is acted is much more agreeable than that where it is spoken. Don't you see why? Attention and deference don't require you to make fine speeches expressing your sense of unworthiness (lies) and returning all the compliments paid you. This is one reason.

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—A woman of sense ought to be above flattering any man,—said the Model.

[My reflection. Oh! oh! no wonder you did n't get married. Served you right.] My remark. Surely, Madam,—if you mean by flattery telling people boldly to their faces that they are this or that, which they are not. But a woman who does not carry about with her wherever she goes a halo of good feeling and desire to make everybody contented, —an atmosphere of grace, mercy, and peace, of at least six feet radius, which wraps every human being upon whom she voluntarily bestows her presence, and so flatters him with the comfortable thought that she is rather glad he is alive than otherwise, isn't worth the trouble of talking to, as a woman; she may do well enough to hold discussions with.

—I don't think the Model exactly liked this. She said,—a little spitefully, I thought,—that a sensible man might stand a little praise, but would of course soon get sick of it, if he were in the habit of getting much.

Oh, yes,—I replied,—just as men get sick of tobacco. It is notorious how apt they are to get tired of that vegetable.

—That 's so!—said the young fellow John,—I've got tired of my cigars and burnt 'em all up.

I am heartily glad to hear it,—said the Model,—I wish they were all disposed of in the same way.

So do I,—said the young fellow John.

Can't you get your friends to unite with you in committing those odious instruments of debauchery to the flames in which you have consumed your own?

I wish I could,—said the young fellow John.

It would be a noble sacrifice,—said the Model, and every American woman would be grateful to you. Let us burn them all in a heap out in the yard.

That a'n't my way,—said the young fellow John;—I burn 'em one 't time,—little end in my mouth and big end outside.

—I watched for the effect of this sudden change of programme, when it should reach the calm stillness of the Model's interior apprehension, as a boy watches for the splash of a stone which he has dropped into a well. But before it had fairly reached the water, poor Iris, who had followed the conversation with a certain interest until it turned this sharp corner, (for she seems rather to fancy the young fellow John,) laughed out such a clear, loud laugh, that it started us all off, as the locust-cry of some full-throated soprano drags a multitudinous chorus after it. It was plain that some dam or other had broken in



the soul of this young girl, and she was squaring up old scores of laughter, out of which she had been cheated, with a grand flood of merriment that swept all before it. So we had a great laugh all round, in which the Model—who, if she had as many virtues as there are spokes to a wheel, all compacted with a personality as round and complete as its tire, yet wanted that one little addition of grace, which seems so small, and is as important as the linchpin in trundling over the rough ways of life—had not the tact to join. She seemed to be “stuffy” about it, as the young fellow John said. In fact, I was afraid the joke would have cost us both our new lady-boarders. It had no effect, however, except, perhaps, to hasten the departure of the elder of the two, who could, on the whole, be spared.

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—I had meant to make this note of our conversation a text for a few axioms on the matter of breeding. But it so happened, that, exactly at this point of my record, a very distinguished philosopher, whom several of our boarders and myself go to hear, and whom no doubt many of my readers follow habitually, treated this matter of manners. Up to this point, if I have been so fortunate as to coincide with him in opinion, and so unfortunate as to try to express what he has more felicitously said, nobody is to blame; for what has been given thus far was all written before the lecture was delivered. But what shall I do now? He told us it was childish to lay down rules for deportment,—but he could not help laying down a few.

Thus,—Nothing so vulgar as to be in a hurry. True, but hard of application. People with short legs step quickly, because legs are pendulums, and swing more times in a minute the shorter they are. Generally a natural rhythm runs through the whole organization: quick pulse, fast breathing, hasty speech, rapid trains of thought, excitable temper. Stillness of person and steadiness of features are signal marks of good-breeding. Vulgar persons can't sit still, or, at least, they must work their limbs or features.

Talking of one's own ails and grievances.—Bad enough, but not so bad as insulting the person you talk with by remarking on his ill-looks, or appealing to notice any of his personal peculiarities.

Apologizing.—A very desperate habit,—one that is rarely cured. Apology is only egotism wrong side out. Nine times out of ten, the first thing a man's companion knows of his shortcoming is from his apology. It is mighty presumptuous on your part to suppose your small failures of so much consequence that you must make a talk about them.

Good dressing, quiet ways, low tones of voice, lips that can wait, and eyes that do not wander,—shyness of personalities, except in certain intimate communions,—to be light in hand in conversation, to have ideas, but to be able to make talk, if necessary, without them,—to belong to the company you are in, and not to yourself,—to have nothing in your dress or furniture so fine that you cannot afford to spoil it and get another like it, yet to preserve the harmonies, throughout your person and—dwelling: I should say that this was a fair capital of manners to begin with.

Under bad manners, as under graver faults, lies very commonly an overestimate of our special individuality, as distinguished from our generic humanity. It is just here that the very highest society asserts its superior breeding. Among truly elegant people of the highest ton, you will find more real equality in social intercourse than in a country village. As nuns drop their birth-names and become Sister Margaret and Sister Mary, so high-bred people drop their personal distinctions and become brothers and sisters of conversational charity. Nor are fashionable people without

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their heroism. I believe there are men who have shown as much self-devotion in carrying a lone wall-flower down to the supper-table as ever saint or martyr in the act that has canonized his name. There are Florence Nightingales of the ballroom, whom nothing can hold back from their errands of mercy. They find out the red-handed, gloveless undergraduate of bucolic antecedents, as he squirms in his corner, and distill their soft words upon him like dew upon the green herb. They reach even the poor relation, whose dreary apparition saddens the perfumed atmosphere of the sumptuous drawing-room. I have known one of these angels ask, of her own accord, that a desolate middle-aged man, whom nobody seemed to know, should be presented to her by the hostess. He wore no shirt-collar,—he had on black gloves,—and was flourishing a red bandanna handkerchief! Match me this, ye proud children of poverty, who boast of your paltry sacrifices for each other! Virtue in humble life! What is that to the glorious self-renunciation of a martyr in pearls and diamonds? As I saw this noble woman bending gracefully before the social mendicant,—the white billows of her beauty heaving under the foam of the traitorous laces that half revealed them,—I should have wept with sympathetic emotion, but that tears, except as a private demonstration, are an ill-disguised expression of self-consciousness and vanity, which is inadmissible in good society.

I have sometimes thought, with a pang, of the position in which political chance or contrivance might hereafter place some one of our fellow-citizens. It has happened hitherto, so far as my limited knowledge goes, that the President of the United States has always been what might be called in general terms a gentleman. But what if at some future time the choice of the people should fall upon one on whom that lofty title could not, by any stretch of charity, be bestowed? This may happen,—how soon the future only knows. Think of this miserable man of coming political possibilities,—an unpresentable boor sucked into office by one of those eddies in the flow of popular sentiment which carry straws and chips into the public harbor, while the prostrate trunks of the monarchs of the forest hurry down on the senseless stream to the gulf of political oblivion! Think of him, I say, and of the concentrated gaze of good society through its thousand eyes, all confluent, as it were, in one great burning-glass of ice that shrivels its wretched object in fiery torture, itself cold as the glacier of an unsunned cavern! No,—there will be angels of good-breeding then as now, to shield the victim of free institutions from himself and from his torturers. I can fancy a lovely woman playfully withdrawing the knife which he would abuse by making it an instrument for the conveyance of food,—or, failing in this kind artifice, sacrificing herself by imitating his use of that implement; how much harder than to plunge it into her bosom, like Lucretia!

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I can see her studying in his provincial dialect until she becomes the Champollion of New England or Western or Southern barbarisms. She has learned that haow means what; that think-in' is the same thing as thinking, or she has found out the meaning of that extraordinary mono syllable, which no single-tongued phonographer can make legible, prevailing on the banks of the Hudson and at its embouchure, and elsewhere, —what they say when they think they say first, (fe-eest,—fe as in the French le),—or that cheer means chair,—or that urritation means irritation,—and so of other enormities. Nothing surprises her. The highest breeding, you know, comes round to the Indian standard,—to take everything coolly,—nil admirari,—if you happen to be learned and like the Roman phrase for the same thing.

If you like the company of people that stare at you from head to foot to see if there is a hole in your coat, or if you have not grown a little older, or if your eyes are not yellow with jaundice, or if your complexion is not a little faded, and so on, and then convey the fact to you, in the style in which the Poor Relation addressed the divinity-student,—go with them as much as you like. I hate the sight of the wretches. Don't for mercy's sake think I hate them; the distinction is one my friend or I drew long ago. No matter where you find such people; they are clowns.

The rich woman who looks and talks in this way is not half so much a lady as her Irish servant, whose pretty "saving your presence," when she has to say something which offends her natural sense of good manners, has a hint in it of the breeding of courts, and the blood of old Milesian kings, which very likely runs in her veins,—thinned by two hundred years of potato, which, being an underground fruit, tends to drag down the generations that are made of it to the earth from which it came, and, filling their veins with starch, turn them into a kind of human vegetable.

I say, if you like such people, go with them. But I am going to make a practical application of the example at the beginning of this particular record, which some young people who are going to choose professional advisers by-and-by may remember and thank me for. If you are making choice of a physician, be sure you get one, if possible, with a cheerful and serene countenance. A physician is not—at least, ought not to be—an executioner; and a sentence of death on his face is as bad as a warrant for execution signed by the Governor. As a general rule, no man has a right to tell another by word or look that he is going to die. It may be necessary in some extreme cases; but as a rule, it is the last extreme of impertinence which one human being can offer to another. "You have killed me," said a patient once to a physician who had rashly told him he was incurable. He ought to have lived six months, but he was dead in six' weeks. If we will only let Nature and the God of Nature alone, persons will commonly learn their condition as early as they ought to know it, and not be cheated out of their natural birthright of hope of recovery, which is intended to accompany sick people as

long as life is comfortable, and is graciously replaced by the hope of heaven, or at least of rest, when life has become a burden which the bearer is ready to let fall.

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Underbred people tease their sick and dying friends to death. The chance of a gentleman or lady with a given mortal ailment to live a certain time is as good again as that of the common sort of coarse people. As you go down the social scale, you reach a point at length where the common talk in sick rooms is of churchyards and sepulchres, and a kind of perpetual vivisection is forever carried on, upon the person of the miserable sufferer.

And so, in choosing your clergyman, other things being equal, prefer the one of a wholesome and cheerful habit of mind and body. If you can get along with people who carry a certificate in their faces that their goodness is so great as to make them very miserable, your children cannot. And whatever offends one of these little ones cannot be right in the eyes of Him who loved them so well.

After all, as you are a gentleman or a lady, you will probably select gentlemen for your bodily and spiritual advisers, and then all will be right.

This repetition of the above words,—gentleman and lady,—which could not be conveniently avoided, reminds me what strange uses are made of them by those who ought to know what they mean. Thus, at a marriage ceremony, once, of two very excellent persons who had been at service, instead of, Do you take this man, *etc.*? and, Do you take this woman? how do you think the officiating clergyman put the questions? It was, Do you, Miss So and So, take this *gentleman*? and, Do you, Mr. This or That, take this *lady*?! What would any English duchess, ay, or the Queen of England herself, have thought, if the Archbishop of Canterbury had called her and her bridegroom anything but plain woman and man at such a time?

I don't doubt the Poor Relation thought it was all very fine, if she happened to be in the church; but if the worthy man who uttered these monstrous words—monstrous in such a connection—had known the ludicrous surprise, the convulsion of inward disgust and contempt, that seized upon many of the persons who were present,—had guessed what a sudden flash of light it threw on the Dutch gilding, the pinchbeck, the shabby, perking pretension belonging to certain social layers,—so inherent in their whole mode of being, that the holiest offices of religion cannot exclude its impertinences,—the good man would have given his marriage-fee twice over to recall that superb and full-blown vulgarism. Any persons whom it could please could have no better notion of what the words referred to signify than of the meaning of apses and asymptotes.

Man! Sir! *Woman!* Sir! Gentility is a fine thing, not to be undervalued, as I have been trying to explain; but humanity comes before that.

“When Adam delved and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?”

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The beauty of that plainness of speech and manners which comes from the finest training is not to be understood by those whose habitat is below a certain level. Just as the exquisite sea-anemones and all the graceful ocean-flowers die out at some fathoms below the surface, the elegances and suavities of life die out one by one as we sink through the social scale. Fortunately, the virtues are more tenacious of life, and last pretty well until we get down to the mud of absolute pauperism, where they do not flourish greatly.

—I had almost forgotten about our boarders. As the Model of all the Virtues is about to leave us, I find myself wondering what is the reason we are not all very sorry. Surely we all like good persons. She is a good person. Therefore we like her.—Only we don't.

This brief syllogism, and its briefer negative, involving the principle which some English conveyancer borrowed from a French wit and embodied in the lines by which Dr. Fell is made unamiably immortal, this syllogism, I say, is one that most persons have had occasion to construct and demolish, respecting somebody or other, as I have done for the Model. "Pious and painefull." Why has that excellent old phrase gone out of use? Simply because these good painefull or painstaking persons proved to be such nuisances in the long run, that the word "painefull" came, before people thought of it, to mean pain-giving instead of painstaking.

—So, the old fellah's off to-morrah,—said the young man John.

Old fellow?—said I,—whom do you mean?

Why, the one that came with our little beauty, the old fellah in petticoats.

—Now that means something,—said I to myself.—These rough young rascals very often hit the nail on the head, if they do strike with their eyes shut. A real woman does a great many things without knowing why she does them; but these pattern machines mix up their intellects with everything they do, just like men. They can't help it, no doubt; but we can't help getting sick of them, either. Intellect is to a woman's nature what her watch-spring skirt is to her dress; it ought to underlie her silks and embroideries, but not to show itself too staringly on the outside.—You don't know, perhaps, but I will tell you; the brain is the palest of all the internal organs, and the heart the reddest. Whatever comes from the brain carries the hue of the place it came from, and whatever comes from the heart carries the heat and color of its birthplace.

The young man John did not hear my soliloquy, of course, but sent up one more bubble from our sinking conversation, in the form of a statement, that she was at liberty to go to a personage who receives no visits, as is commonly supposed, from virtuous people.

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Why, I ask again, (of my reader,) should a person who never did anybody any wrong, but, on the contrary, is an estimable and intelligent, nay, a particularly enlightened and exemplary member of society, fail to inspire interest, love, and devotion? Because of the reversed current in the flow of thought and emotion. The red heart sends all its instincts up to the white brain to be analyzed, chilled, blanched, and so become pure reason, which is just exactly what we do not want of woman as woman. The current should run the other-way. The nice, calm, cold thought, which in women shapes itself so rapidly that they hardly know it as thought, should always travel to the lips via the heart. It does so in those women whom all love and admire. It travels the wrong way in the Model. That is the reason why the Little Gentleman said "I hate her, I hate her." That is the reason why the young man John called her the "old fellah," and banished her to the company of the great Unpresentable. That is the reason why I, the Professor, am picking her to pieces with scalpel and forceps. That is the reason why the young girl whom she has befriended repays her kindness with gratitude and respect, rather than with the devotion and passionate fondness which lie sleeping beneath the calmness of her amber eyes. I can see her, as she sits between this estimable and most correct of personages and the misshapen, crotchety, often violent and explosive little man on the other side of her, leaning and swaying towards him as she speaks, and looking into his sad eyes as if she found some fountain in them at which her soul could quiet its thirst.

Women like the Model are a natural product of a chilly climate and high culture. It is not

"The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr with Aurora playing,"

when the two meet

"—on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,"

that claim such women as their offspring. It is rather the east wind, as it blows out of the fogs of Newfoundland, and clasps a clear-eyed wintry noon on the chill bridal couch of a New England ice-quarry.—Don't throw up your cap now, and hurrah as if this were giving up everything, and turning against the best growth of our latitudes,—the daughters of the soil. The brain-women never interest us like the heart women; white roses please less than red. But our Northern seasons have a narrow green streak of spring, as well as a broad white zone of winter,—they have a glowing band of summer and a golden stripe of autumn in their many-colored wardrobe; and women are born to us that wear all these hues of earth and heaven in their souls. Our ice-eyed brain-women are really admirable, if we only ask of them just what they can give, and no more. Only compare them, talking or writing, with one of those babbling, chattering dolls, of warmer latitudes, who do not know enough even to keep out of print, and who are interesting to us only as specimens of arrest of development for our psychological cabinets.

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Good-bye, Model of all the Virtues! We can spare you now. A little clear perfection, undiluted with human weakness, goes a great way. Go! be useful, be honorable and honored, be just, be charitable, talk pure reason, and help to disenchant the world by the light of an achromatic understanding. Goodbye! Where is my Beranger? I must read a verse or two of "Fretillon."

Fair play for all. But don't claim incompatible qualities for anybody. Justice is a very rare virtue in our community. Everything that public sentiment cares about is put into a Papin's digester, and boiled under high pressure till all is turned into one homogeneous pulp, and the very bones give up their jelly. What are all the strongest epithets of our dictionary to us now? The critics and politicians, and especially the philanthropists, have chewed them, till they are mere wads of syllable-fibre, without a suggestion of their old pungency and power.

Justice! A good man respects the rights even of brute matter and arbitrary symbols. If he writes the same word twice in succession, by accident, he always erases the one that stands second; has not the first-comer the prior right? This act of abstract justice, which I trust many of my readers, like myself, have often performed, is a curious anti-illustration, by the way, of the absolute wickedness of human dispositions. Why doesn't a man always strike out the first of the two words, to gratify his diabolical love of injustice?

So, I say, we owe a genuine, substantial tribute of respect to these filtered intellects which have left their womanhood on the strainer. They are so clear that it is a pleasure at times to look at the world of thought through them. But the rose and purple tints of richer natures they cannot give us, and it is not just to them to ask it.

Fashionable society gets at these rich natures very often in a way one would hardly at first think of. It loves vitality above all things, sometimes disguised by affected languor, always well kept under by the laws of good-breeding,—but still it loves abundant life, opulent and showy organizations,—the spherical rather than the plane trigonometry of female architecture,—plenty of red blood, flashing eyes, tropical voices, and forms that bear the splendors of dress without growing pale beneath their lustre. Among these you will find the most delicious women you will ever meet,—women whom dress and flattery and the round of city gayeties cannot spoil,—talking with whom, you forget their diamonds and laces,—and around whom all the nice details of elegance, which the cold-blooded beauty next them is scanning so nicely, blend in one harmonious whole, too perfect to be disturbed by the petulant sparkle of a jewel, or the yellow glare of a bangle, or the gay toss of a feather.

There are many things that I, personally, love better than fashion or wealth. Not to speak of those highest objects of our love and loyalty, I think I love ease and independence better than the golden slavery of perpetual matinees and soirees, or the pleasures of accumulation.

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But fashion and wealth are two very solemn realities, which the frivolous class of moralists have talked a great deal of silly stuff about. Fashion is only the attempt to realize Art in living forms and social intercourse. What business has a man who knows nothing about the beautiful, and cannot pronounce the word view, to talk about fashion to a set of people who, if one of the quality left a card at their doors, would contrive to keep it on the very top of their heap of the names of their two-story acquaintances, till it was as yellow as the Codex Vaticanus?

Wealth, too,—what an endless repetition of the same foolish trivialities about it! Take the single fact of its alleged uncertain tenure and transitory character. In old times, when men were all the time fighting and robbing each other,—in those tropical countries where the Sabeans and the Chaldeans stole all a man's cattle and camels, and there were frightful tornadoes and rains of fire from heaven, it was true enough that riches took wings to themselves not unfrequently in a very unexpected way. But, with common prudence in investments, it is not so now. In fact, there is nothing earthly that lasts so well, on the whole, as money. A man's learning dies with him; even his virtues fade out of remembrance, but the dividends on the stocks he bequeaths to his children live and keep his memory green.

I do not think there is much courage or originality in giving utterance to truths that everybody knows, but which get overlaid by conventional trumpery. The only distinction which it is necessary to point out to feeble-minded folk is this: that, in asserting the breadth and depth of that significance which gives to fashion and fortune their tremendous power, we do not indorse the extravagances which often disgrace the one, nor the meanness which often degrades the other.

A remark which seems to contradict a universally current opinion is not generally to be taken “neat,” but watered with the ideas of common-sense and commonplace people. So, if any of my young friends should be tempted to waste their substance on white kids and “all-rounds,” or to insist on becoming millionaires at once, by anything I have said, I will give them references to some of the class referred to, well known to the public as providers of literary diluents, who will weaken any truth so that there is not an old woman in the land who cannot take it with perfect impunity.

I am afraid some of the blessed saints in diamonds will think I mean to flatter them. I hope not;—if I do, set it down as a weakness. But there is so much foolish talk about wealth and fashion, (which, of course, draw a good many heartless and essentially vulgar people into the glare of their candelabra, but which have a real respectability and meaning, if we will only look at them stereoscopically, with both eyes instead of one,) that I thought it a duty to speak a few words for them. Why can't somebody give us a list of things that everybody thinks and nobody says, and another list of things that everybody says and nobody thinks?



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Lest my parish should suppose we have forgotten graver matters in these lesser topics, I beg them to drop these trifles and read the following lesson for the day.

Thetwo streams.

Behold the rocky wall
That down its sloping sides
Pours the swift rain-drops, blending, as they fall,
In rushing river-tides!

Yon stream, whose sources run
Turned by a pebble's edge,
Is Athabasca, rolling toward the sun
Through the cleft mountain-ledge.

The slender rill had strayed,
But for the slanting stone,
To evening's ocean, with the tangled braid
Of foam-flecked Oregon.

So from the heights of Will
Life's parting stream descends,
And, as a moment turns its slender rill,
Each widening torrent bends,

From the same cradle's side,
From the same mother's knee,
—One to long darkness and the frozen tide,
One to the Peaceful Sea!

VII

Our landlady's daughter is a young lady of some pretensions to gentility. She wears her bonnet well back on her head, which is known by all to be a mark of high breeding. She wears her trains very long, as the great ladies do in Europe. To be sure, their dresses are so made only to sweep the tapestried floors of chateaux and palaces; as those odious aristocrats of the other side do not go dragging through the mud in silks and satins, but, forsooth, must ride in coaches when they are in full dress. It is true, that, considering various habits of the American people, also the little accidents which the best-kept sidewalks are liable to, a lady who has swept a mile of them is not exactly in such a condition that one would care to be her neighbor. But then there is no need of being so hard on these slight weaknesses of the poor, dear women as our little deformed gentleman was the other day.

—There are no such women as the Boston women, Sir,—he said. Forty-two degrees, north latitude, Rome, Sir, Boston, Sir! They had grand women in old Rome, Sir,—and the women bore such men—children as never the world saw before. And so it was here, Sir. I tell you, the revolution the Boston boys started had to run in woman's milk before it ran in man's blood, Sir!

But confound the make-believe women we have turned loose in our streets!—where do they come from? Not out of Boston parlors, I trust. Why, there is n't a beast or a bird that would drag its tail through the dirt in the way these creatures do their dresses. Because a queen or a duchess wears long robes on great occasions, a maid-of-all-work or a factory-girl thinks she must make herself a nuisance by trailing through the street, picking up and carrying about with her pah!—that's what I call getting vulgarity into your bones and marrow.

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Making believe be what you are not is the essence of vulgarity. Show over dirt is the one attribute of vulgar people. If any man can walk behind one of these women and see what she rakes up as she goes, and not feel squeamish, he has got a tough stomach. I wouldn't let one of 'em into my room without serving 'em as David served Saul at the cave in the wilderness,—cut off his skirts, Sir! cut off his skirts!

I suggested, that I had seen some pretty stylish ladies who offended in the way he condemned.

Stylish women, I don't doubt,—said the Little Gentleman.—Don't tell me that a true lady ever sacrifices the duty of keeping all about her sweet and clean to the wish of making a vulgar show. I won't believe it of a lady. There are some things that no fashion has any right to touch, and cleanliness is one of those things. If a woman wishes to show that her husband or her father has got money, which she wants and means to spend, but doesn't know how, let her buy a yard or two of silk and pin it to her dress when she goes out to walk, but let her unpin it before she goes into the house;—there may be poor women that will think it worth disinfecting. It is an insult to a respectable laundress to carry such things into a house for her to deal with. I don't like the Bloomers any too well,—in fact, I never saw but one, and she—or he, or it—had a mob of boys after her, or whatever you call the creature, as if she had been a-----

The Little Gentleman stopped short,—flushed somewhat, and looked round with that involuntary, suspicious glance which the subjects of any bodily misfortune are very apt to cast round them. His eye wandered over the company, none of whom, excepting myself and one other, had, probably, noticed the movement. They fell at last on Iris,—his next neighbor, you remember.

—We know in a moment, on looking suddenly at a person, if that person's eyes have been fixed on us.

Sometimes we are conscious of it before we turn so as to see the person. Strange secrets of curiosity, of impertinence, of malice, of love, leak out in this way. There is no need of Mrs. Felix Lorraine's reflection in the mirror, to tell us that she is plotting evil for us behind our backs. We know it, as we know by the ominous stillness of a child that some mischief or other is going-on. A young girl betrays, in a moment, that her eyes have been feeding on the face where you find them fixed, and not merely brushing over it with their pencils of blue or brown light.

A certain involuntary adjustment assimilates us, you may also observe, to that upon which we look. Roses redden the cheeks of her who stoops to gather them, and buttercups turn little people's chins yellow. When we look at a vast landscape, our chests expand as if we would enlarge to fill it. When we examine a minute object, we

naturally contract, not only our foreheads, but all our dimensions. If I see two men wrestling, I wrestle too, with my

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limbs and features. When a country-fellow comes upon the stage, you will see twenty faces in the boxes putting on the bumpkin expression. There is no need of multiplying instances to reach this generalization; every person and thing we look upon puts its special mark upon us. If this is repeated often enough, we get a permanent resemblance to it, or, at least, a fixed aspect which we took from it. Husband and wife come to look alike at last, as has often been noticed. It is a common saying of a jockey, that he is "all horse"; and I have often fancied that milkmen get a stiff, upright carriage, and an angular movement of the arm, that remind one of a pump and the working of its handle.

All this came in by accident, just because I happened to mention that the Little Gentleman found that Iris had been looking at him with her soul in her eyes, when his glance rested on her after wandering round the company. What he thought, it is hard to say; but the shadow of suspicion faded off from his face, and he looked calmly into the amber eyes, resting his cheek upon the hand that wore the red jewel.

—If it were a possible thing,—women are such strange creatures! Is there any trick that love and their own fancies do not play them? Just see how they marry! A woman that gets hold of a bit of manhood is like one of those Chinese wood-carvers who work on any odd, fantastic root that comes to hand, and, if it is only bulbous above and bifurcated below, will always contrive to make a man—such as he is—out of it. I should like to see any kind of a man, distinguishable from a Gorilla, that some good and even pretty woman could not shape a husband out of.

—A child,—yes, if you choose to call her so, but such a child! Do you know how Art brings all ages together? There is no age to the angels and ideal human forms among which the artist lives, and he shares their youth until his hand trembles and his eye grows dim. The youthful painter talks of white-bearded Leonardo as if he were a brother, and the veteran forgets that Raphael died at an age to which his own is of patriarchal antiquity.

But why this lover of the beautiful should be so drawn to one whom Nature has wronged so deeply seems hard to explain. Pity, I suppose. They say that leads to love.

—I thought this matter over until I became excited and curious, and determined to set myself more seriously at work to find out what was going on in these wild hearts and where their passionate lives were drifting. I say wild hearts and passionate lives, because I think I can look through this seeming calmness of youth and this apparent feebleness of organization, and see that Nature, whom it is very hard to cheat, is only waiting as the sapper waits in his mine, knowing that all is in readiness and the slow-match burning quietly down to the powder. He will leave it by-and-by, and then it will take care of itself.

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One need not wait to see the smoke coming through the roof of a house and the flames breaking out of the windows to know that the building is on fire. Hark! There is a quiet, steady, unobtrusive, crisp, not loud, but very knowing little creeping crackle that is tolerably intelligible. There is a whiff of something floating about, suggestive of toasting shingles. Also a sharp pyroligneous-acid pungency in the air that stings one's eyes. Let us get up and see what is going on.—Oh,—oh,—oh! do you know what has got hold of you? It is the great red dragon that is born of the little red eggs we call sparks, with his hundred blowing red manes, and his thousand lashing red tails, and his multitudinous red eyes glaring at every crack and key-hole, and his countless red tongues lapping the beams he is going to crunch presently, and his hot breath warping the panels and cracking the glass and making old timber sweat that had forgotten it was ever alive with sap. Run for your life! leap! or you will be a cinder in five minutes, that nothing but a coroner would take for the wreck of a human being!

If any gentleman will have the kindness to stop this run-away comparison, I shall be much obliged to him. All I intended to say was, that we need not wait for hearts to break out in flames to know that they are full of combustibles and that a spark has got among them. I don't pretend to say or know what it is that brings these two persons together;—and when I say together, I only mean that there is an evident affinity of some kind or other which makes their commonest intercourse strangely significant, as that each seems to understand a look or a word of the other. When the young girl laid her hand on the Little Gentleman's arm,—which so greatly shocked the Model, you may remember,—I saw that she had learned the lion-tamer's secret. She masters him, and yet I can see she has a kind of awe of him, as the man who goes into the cage has of the monster that he makes a baby of.

One of two things must happen. The first is love, downright love, on the part of this young girl, for the poor little misshapen man. You may laugh, if you like. But women are apt to love the men who they think have the largest capacity of loving;—and who can love like one that has thirsted all his life long for the smile of youth and beauty, and seen it fly his presence as the wave ebbed from the parched lips of him whose fabled punishment is the perpetual type of human longing and disappointment? What would become of him, if this fresh soul should stoop upon him in her first young passion, as the flamingo drops out of the sky upon some lonely and dark lagoon in the marshes of Cagliari, with a flutter of scarlet feathers and a kindling of strange fires in the shadowy waters that hold her burning image?

—Marry her, of course?—Why, no, not of course. I should think the chance less, on the whole, that he would be willing to marry her than she to marry him.

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There is one other thing that might happen. If the interest he awakes in her gets to be a deep one, and yet has nothing of love in it, she will glance off from him into some great passion or other. All excitements run to love in women of a certain—let us not say age, but youth. An electrical current passing through a coil of wire makes a magnet of a bar of iron lying within it, but not touching it. So a woman is turned into a love-magnet by a tingling current of life running round her. I should like to see one of them balanced on a pivot properly adjusted, and watch if she did not turn so as to point north and south,—as she would, if the love-currents are like those of the earth our mother.

Pray, do you happen to remember Wordsworth's "Boy of Windermere"? This boy used to put his hands to his mouth, and shout aloud, mimicking the hooting of the owls, who would answer him

"with quivering peals,
And long halloos and screams, and echoes loud
Redoubled and redoubled."

When they failed to answer him, and he hung listening intently for their voices, he would sometimes catch the faint sound of far distant waterfalls, or the whole scene around him would imprint itself with new force upon his perceptions.—Read the sonnet, if you please;—it is Wordsworth all over,—trivial in subject, solemn in style, vivid in description, prolix in detail, true metaphysically, but immensely suggestive of "imagination," to use a mild term, when related as an actual fact of a sprightly youngster. All I want of it is to enforce the principle, that, when the door of the soul is once opened to a guest, there is no knowing who will come in next.

—Our young girl keeps up her early habit of sketching heads and characters. Nobody is, I should think, more faithful and exact in the drawing of the academical figures given her as lessons, but there is a perpetual arabesque of fancies that runs round the margin of her drawings, and there is one book which I know she keeps to run riot in, where, if anywhere, a shrewd eye would be most likely to read her thoughts. This book of hers I mean to see, if I can get at it honorably.

I have never yet crossed the threshold of the Little Gentleman's chamber. How he lives, when he once gets within it, I can only guess. His hours are late, as I have said; often, on waking late in the night, I see the light through cracks in his window-shutters on the wall of the house opposite. If the times of witchcraft were not over, I should be afraid to be so close a neighbor to a place from which there come such strange noises. Sometimes it is the dragging of something heavy over the floor, that makes me shiver to hear it,—it sounds so like what people that kill other people have to do now and then. Occasionally I hear very sweet strains of music,—whether of a wind or stringed instrument, or a human voice, strange as it may seem, I have often tried to find out, but through the partition

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I could not be quite sure. If I have not heard a woman cry and moan, and then again laugh as though she would die laughing, I have heard sounds so like them that—I am a fool to confess it—I have covered my head with the bedclothes; for I have had a fancy in my dreams, that I could hardly shake off when I woke up, about that so-called witch that was his great-grandmother, or whatever it was,—a sort of fancy that she visited the Little Gentleman,—a young woman in old-fashioned dress, with a red ring round her white neck,—not a neck-lace, but a dull-stain.

Of course you don't suppose that I have any foolish superstitions about the matter,—I, the Professor, who have seen enough to take all that nonsense out of any man's head! It is not our beliefs that frighten us half so much as our fancies. A man not only believes, but knows he runs a risk, whenever he steps into a railroad car; but it does n't worry him much. On the other hand, carry that man across a pasture a little way from some dreary country-village, and show him an old house where there were strange deaths a good many years ago, and there are rumors of ugly spots on the walls,—the old man hung himself in the garret, that is certain, and ever since the country-people have called it "the haunted house,"—the owners have n't been able to let it since the last tenants left on account of the noises,—so it has fallen into sad decay, and the moss grows on the rotten shingles of the roof, and the clapboards have turned black, and the windows rattle like teeth that chatter with fear, and the walls of the house begin to lean as if its knees were shaking, —take the man who did n't mind the real risk of the cars to that old house, on some dreary November evening, and ask him to sleep there alone, —how do you think he will like it? He doesn't believe one word of ghosts,—but then he knows, that, whether waking or sleeping, his imagination will people the haunted chambers with ghostly images. It is not what we believe, as I said before, that frightens us commonly, but what we conceive. A principle that reaches a good way if I am not mistaken. I say, then, that, if these odd sounds coming from the Little Gentleman's chamber sometimes make me nervous, so that I cannot get to sleep, it is not because I suppose he is engaged in any unlawful or mysterious way. The only wicked suggestion that ever came into my head was one that was founded on the landlady's story of his having a pile of gold; it was a ridiculous fancy; besides, I suspect the story of sweating gold was only one of the many fables got up to make the Jews odious and afford a pretext for plundering them. As for the sound like a woman laughing and crying, I never said it was a woman's voice; for, in the first place, I could only hear indistinctly; and, secondly, he may have an organ, or some queer instrument or other, with what they call the vox humana stop. If he moves his bed round to get away from the window,

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or for any such reason, there is nothing very frightful in that simple operation. Most of our foolish conceits explain themselves in some such simple way. And, yet, for all that, I confess, that, when I woke up the other evening, and heard, first a sweet complaining cry, and then footsteps, and then the dragging sound,—nothing but his bed, I am quite sure,—I felt a stirring in the roots of my hair as the feasters did in Keats's terrible poem of "Lamia."

There is nothing very odd in my feeling nervous when I happen to lie awake and get listening for sounds. Just keep your ears open any time after midnight, when you are lying in bed in a lone attic of a dark night. What horrid, strange, suggestive, unaccountable noises you will hear! The stillness of night is a vulgar error. All the dead things seem to be alive. Crack! That is the old chest of drawers; you never hear it crack in the daytime. Creak! There's a door ajar; you know you shut them all.

Where can that latch be that rattles so? Is anybody trying it softly? or, worse than any body, is——? (Cold shiver.) Then a sudden gust that jars all the windows;—very strange!—there does not seem to be any wind about that it belongs to. When it stops, you hear the worms boring in the powdery beams overhead. Then steps outside,—a stray animal, no doubt. All right,—but a gentle moisture breaks out all over you; and then something like a whistle or a cry,—another gust of wind, perhaps; that accounts for the rustling that just made your heart roll over and tumble about, so that it felt more like a live rat under your ribs than a part of your own body; then a crash of something that has fallen,—blown over, very likely——Pater noster, qui es in coelis! for you are damp and cold, and sitting bolt upright, and the bed trembling so that the death-watch is frightened and has stopped ticking!

No,—night is an awful time for strange noises and secret doings. Who ever dreamed, till one of our sleepless neighbors told us of it, of that Walpurgis gathering of birds and beasts of prey,—foxes, and owls, and crows, and eagles, that come from all the country round on moonshiny nights to crunch the clams and muscles, and pick out the eyes of dead fishes that the storm has thrown on Chelsea Beach? Our old mother Nature has pleasant and cheery tones enough for us when she comes in her dress of blue and gold over the eastern hill-tops; but when she follows us up-stairs to our beds in her suit of black velvet and diamonds, every creak of her sandals and every whisper of her lips is full of mystery and fear.

You understand, then, distinctly, that I do not believe there is anything about this singular little neighbor of mine which is as it should not be. Probably a visit to his room would clear up all that has puzzled me, and make me laugh at the notions which began, I suppose, in nightmares, and ended by keeping my imagination at work so as almost to make me uncomfortable at times. But it is not so easy to visit him as some of our other

boarders, for various reasons which I will not stop to mention. I think some of them are rather pleased to get “the Professor” under their ceilings.

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The young man John, for instance, asked me to come up one day and try some “old Bourbon,” which he said was A 1. On asking him what was the number of his room, he answered, that it was forty-'leven, sky-parlor floor, but that I shouldn't find it, if he did n't go ahead to show me the way. I followed him to his habitat, being very willing to see in what kind of warren he burrowed, and thinking I might pick up something about the boarders who had excited my curiosity.

Mighty close quarters they were where the young man John bestowed himself and his furniture; this last consisting of a bed, a chair, a bureau, a trunk, and numerous pegs with coats and “pants” and “vests,”—as he was in the habit of calling waist-coats and pantaloons or trousers,—hanging up as if the owner had melted out of them. Several prints were pinned up unframed,—among them that grand national portrait-piece, “Barnum presenting Ossian E. Dodge to Jenny Lind,” and a picture of a famous trot, in which I admired anew the cabalistic air of that imposing array of expressions, and especially the Italicized word, “Dan Mace names b. h. Major Slocum,” and “Hiram Woodruff names g. m. Lady Smith.” “Best three in five. Time: 2.40, 2.46, 2.50.”

That set me thinking how very odd this matter of trotting horses is, as an index of the mathematical exactness of the laws of living mechanism. I saw Lady Suffolk trot a mile in 2.26. Flora Temple has trotted close down to 2.20; and Ethan Allen in 2.25, or less. Many horses have trotted their mile under 2.30; none that I remember in public as low down as 2.20. From five to ten seconds, then, in about a hundred and sixty is the whole range of the maxima of the present race of trotting horses. The same thing is seen in the running of men. Many can run a mile in five minutes; but when one comes to the fractions below, they taper down until somewhere about 4.30 the maximum is reached. Averages of masses have been studied more than averages of maxima and minima. We know from the Registrar-General's Reports, that a certain number of children—say from one to two dozen—die every year in England from drinking hot water out of spouts of teakettles. We know, that, among suicides, women and men past a certain age almost never use fire-arms. A woman who has made up her mind to die is still afraid of a pistol or a gun. Or is it that the explosion would derange her costume?

I say, averages of masses we have, but our tables of maxima we owe to the sporting men more than to the philosophers. The lesson their experience teaches is, that Nature makes no leaps,—does nothing per saltum. The greatest brain that ever lived, no doubt, was only a small fraction of an idea ahead of the second best. Just look at the chess-players. Leaving out the phenomenal exceptions, the nice shades that separate the skilful ones show how closely their brains approximate,—almost as closely as chronometers. Such a person is

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a “knight-player,”—he must have that piece given him. Another must have two pawns. Another, “pawn and two,” or one pawn and two moves. Then we find one who claims “pawn and move,” holding himself, with this fractional advantage, a match for one who would be pretty sure to beat him playing even.—So much are minds alike; and you and I think we are “peculiar,”—that Nature broke her jelly-mould after shaping our cerebral convolutions. So I reflected, standing and looking at the picture.

—I say, Governor,—broke in the young man John,—them bosses ’11 stay jest as well, if you’ll only set down. I’ve had ’em this year, and they haven’t stirred.—He spoke, and handed the chair towards me,—seating himself, at the same time, on the end of the bed.

You have lived in this house some time?—I said,—with a note of interrogation at the end of the statement.

Do I look as if I’d lost much flesh—said he, answering my question by another.

No,—said I;—for that matter, I think you do credit to “the bountifully furnished table of the excellent lady who provides so liberally for the company that meets around her hospitable board.”

[The sentence in quotation-marks was from one of those disinterested editorials in small type, which I suspect to have been furnished by a friend of the landlady’s, and paid for as an advertisement. This impartial testimony to the superior qualities of the establishment and its head attracted a number of applicants for admission, and a couple of new boarders made a brief appearance at the table. One of them was of the class of people who grumble if they don’t get canvas-backs and woodcocks every day, for three-fifty per week. The other was subject to somnambulism, or walking in the night, when he ought to have been asleep in his bed. In this state he walked into several of the boarders’ chambers, his eyes wide open, as is usual with somnambulists, and, from some odd instinct or other, wishing to know what the hour was, got together a number of their watches, for the purpose of comparing them, as it would seem. Among them was a repeater, belonging to our young Marylander. He happened to wake up while the somnambulist was in his chamber, and, not knowing his infirmity, caught hold of him and gave him a dreadful shaking, after which he tied his hands and feet, and so left him till morning, when he introduced him to a gentleman used to taking care of such cases of somnambulism.]

If you, my reader, will please to skip backward, over this parenthesis, you will come to our conversation, which it has interrupted.



It a'n't the feed,—said the young man John,—it's the old woman's looks when a fellah lays it in too strong. The feed's well enough. After geese have got tough, 'n' turkeys have got strong, 'n' lamb's got old, 'n' veal's pretty nigh beef, 'n' sparragrass 's growin' tall 'n' slim 'n' scattery about the head, 'n' green peas are gettin' so big 'n' hard they'd

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be dangerous if you fired 'em out of a revolver, we get hold of all them delicacies of the season. But it's too much like feedin' on live folks and devourin' widdah's substance, to lay yourself out in the eatin' way, when a fellah 's as hungry as the chap that said a turkey was too much for one 'n' not enough for two. I can't help lookin' at the old woman. Corned-beef-days she's tolerable calm. Roastin'-days she worries some, 'n' keeps a sharp eye on the chap that carves. But when there's anything in the poultry line, it seems to hurt her feelin's so to see the knife goin' into the breast and joints comin' to pieces, that there's no comfort in eatin'. When I cut up an old fowl and help the boarders, I always feel as if I ought to say, Won't you have a slice of widdah?—instead of chicken.

The young man John fell into a train of reflections which ended in his producing a Bologna sausage, a plate of "crackers," as we Boston folks call certain biscuits, and the bottle of whiskey described as being A 1.

Under the influence of the crackers and sausage, he grew cordial and communicative.

It was time, I thought, to sound him as to those of our boarders who had excited my curiosity.

What do you think of our young Iris?—I began.

Fust-rate little filly;-he said.—Pootiest and nicest little chap I've seen since the schoolma'am left. Schoolma'am was a brown-haired one,—eyes coffee-color. This one has got wine-colored eyes,—'n' that 's the reason they turn a fellah's head, I suppose.

This is a splendid blonde,—I said,—the other was a brunette. Which style do you like best?

Which do I like best, boiled mutton or roast mutton?—said the young man John. Like 'em both,—it a'n't the color of 'em makes the goodness. I 've been kind of lonely since schoolma'am went away. Used to like to look at her. I never said anything particular to her, that I remember, but—

I don't know whether it was the cracker and sausage, or that the young fellow's feet were treading on the hot ashes of some longing that had not had time to cool, but his eye glistened as he stopped.

I suppose she wouldn't have looked at a fellah like me,—he said,—but I come pretty near tryin'. If she had said, Yes, though, I shouldn't have known what to have done with her. Can't marry a woman now-a-days till you're so deaf you have to cock your head like a parrot to hear what she says, and so longsighted you can't see what she looks like nearer than arm's-length.

Here is another chance for you,—I said.—What do you want nicer than such a young lady as Iris?

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It's no use,—he answered.—I look at them girls and feel as the fellah did when he missed catchin' the trout.—'To'od 'a' cost more butter to cook him 'n' he's worth,—says the fellah.—Takes a whole piece o' goods to cover a girl up now-a-days. I'd as lief undertake to keep a span of elephants,—and take an ostrich to board, too,—as to marry one of 'em. What's the use? Clerks and counter-jumpers ain't anything. Sparragrass and green peas a'n't for them,—not while they're young and tender. Hossback-ridin' a'n't for them,—except once a year, on Fast-day. And marryin' a'n't for them. Sometimes a fellah feels lonely, and would like to have a nice young woman, to tell her how lonely he feels. And sometimes a fellah,—here the young man John looked very confidential, and, perhaps, as if a little ashamed of his weakness,—sometimes a fellah would like to have one o' them small young ones to trot on his knee and push about in a little wagon,—a kind of a little Johnny, you know;—it's odd enough, but, it seems to me, nobody can afford them little articles, except the folks that are so rich they can buy everything, and the folks that are so poor they don't want anything. It makes nice boys of us young fellahs, no doubt! And it's pleasant to see fine young girls sittin', like shopkeepers behind their goods, waitin', and waitin', and waitin', 'n' no customers,—and the men lingerin' round and lookin' at the goods, like folks that want to be customers, but have n't the money!

Do you think the deformed gentleman means to make love to Iris?—I said.

What! Little Boston ask that girl to marry him! Well, now, that's cumin' of it a little too strong. Yes, I guess she will marry him and carry him round in a basket, like a lame bantam: Look here!—he said, mysteriously;—one of the boarders swears there's a woman comes to see him, and that he has heard her singin' and screechin'. I should like to know what he's about in that den of his. He lays low 'n' keeps dark,—and, I tell you, there's a good many of the boarders would like to get into his chamber, but he don't seem to want 'em. Biddy could tell somethin' about what she's seen when she's been to put his room to rights. She's a Paddy 'n' a fool, but she knows enough to keep her tongue still. All I know is, I saw her crossin' herself one day when she came out of that room. She looked pale enough, 'n' I heard her mutterin' somethin' or other about the Blessed Virgin. If it had n't been for the double doors to that chamber of his, I'd have had a squint inside before this; but, somehow or other, it never seems to happen that they're both open at once.

What do you think he employs himself about? said I.

The young man John winked.

I waited patiently for the thought, of which this wink was the blossom, to come to fruit in words.

I don't believe in witches,—said the young man John.

Nor I.

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We were both silent for a few minutes.

—Did you ever see the young girl's drawing-books,—I said, presently.

All but one,—he answered;—she keeps a lock on that, and won't show it. Ma'am Allen, (the young rogue sticks to that name, in speaking of the gentleman with the diamond,) Ma'am Allen tried to peek into it one day when she left it on the sideboard. "If you please," says she,—'n' took it from him, 'n' gave him a look that made him curl up like a caterpillar on a hot shovel. I only wished he had n't, and had jest given her a little sass, for I've been takin' boxin'-lessons, 'n' I've got a new way of counterin' I want to try on to somebody.

—The end of all this was, that I came away from the young fellow's room, feeling that there were two principal things that I had to live for, for the next six weeks or six months, if it should take so long. These were, to get a sight of the young girl's drawing-book, which I suspected had her heart shut up in it, and to get a look into the Little Gentleman's room.

I don't doubt you think it rather absurd that I should trouble myself about these matters. You tell me, with some show of reason, that all I shall find in the young girl's—book will be some outlines of angels with immense eyes, traceries of flowers, rural sketches, and caricatures, among which I shall probably have the pleasure of seeing my own features figuring. Very likely. But I'll tell you what I think I shall find. If this child has idealized the strange little bit of humanity over which she seems to have spread her wings like a brooding dove,—if, in one of those wild vagaries that passionate natures are so liable to, she has fairly sprung upon him with her clasping nature, as the sea-flowers fold about the first stray shell-fish that brushes their outspread tentacles, depend upon it, I shall find the marks of it in this drawing-book of hers,—if I can ever get a look at it,—fairly, of course, for I would not play tricks to satisfy my curiosity.

Then, if I can get into this Little Gentleman's room under any fair pretext, I shall, no doubt, satisfy myself in five minutes that he is just like other people, and that there is no particular mystery about him.

The night after my visit to the young man John, I made all these and many more reflections. It was about two o'clock in the morning,—bright starlight,—so light that I could make out the time on my alarm-clock,—when I woke up trembling and very moist. It was the heavy dragging sound, as I had often heard it before that waked me. Presently a window was softly closed. I had just begun to get over the agitation with which we always awake from nightmare dreams, when I heard the sound which seemed to me as of a woman's voice,—the clearest, purest soprano which one could well conceive of. It was not loud, and I could not distinguish a word, if it was a woman's voice; but there were recurring phrases of sound and snatches of rhythm that reached me, which suggested the idea of complaint, and sometimes, I thought, of passionate

grief and despair. It died away at last,—and then I heard the opening of a door, followed by a low, monotonous sound, as of one talking,—and then the closing of a door,—and presently the light on the opposite wall disappeared and all was still for the night.

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By George! this gets interesting,—I said, as I got out of bed for a change of night-clothes.

I had this in my pocket the other day, but thought I would n't read it at our celebration. So I read it to the boarders instead, and print it to finish off this record with.

Robinson of Leyden.

He sleeps not here; in hope and prayer
His wandering flock had gone before,
But he, the shepherd, might not share
Their sorrows on the wintry shore.

Before the Speedwell's anchor swung,
Ere yet the Mayflower's sail was spread,
While round his feet the Pilgrims clung,
The pastor spake, and thus he said:—

“Men, brethren, sisters, children dear!
God calls you hence from over sea;
Ye may not build by Haerlem Meer,
Nor yet along the Zuyder-Zee.

“Ye go to bear the saving word
To tribes unnamed and shores untrod:
Heed well the lessons ye have heard
From those old teachers taught of God.

“Yet think not unto them was lent
All light for all the coming days,
And Heaven's eternal wisdom spent
In making straight the ancient ways.

“The living fountain overflows
For every flock, for every lamb,
Nor heeds, though angry creeds oppose
With Luther's dike or Calvin's dam.”

He spake; with lingering, long embrace,
With tears of love and partings fond,
They floated down the creeping Maas,
Along the isle of Ysselmond.

They passed the frowning towers of Briel,
The “Hook of Holland's” shelf of sand,



And grated soon with lifting keel
The sullen shores of Fatherland.

No home for these!—too well they knew
The mitred king behind the throne;
The sails were set, the pennons flew,
And westward ho! for worlds unknown.

—And these were they who gave us birth,
The Pilgrims of the sunset wave,
Who won for us this virgin earth,
And freedom with the soil they gave.

The pastor slumbers by the Rhine,
—In alien earth the exiles lie,
—Their nameless graves our holiest shrine,
His words our noblest battle-cry!

Still cry them, and the world shall hear,
Ye dwellers by the storm-swept sea!
Ye have not built by Haerlem Meer,
Nor on the land-locked Zuyder-Zee!

VIII

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There has been a sort of stillness in the atmosphere of our boarding-house since my last record, as if something or other were going on. There is no particular change that I can think of in the aspect of things; yet I have a feeling as if some game of life were quietly playing and strange forces were at work, underneath this smooth surface of every-day boardinghouse life, which would show themselves some fine morning or other in events, if not in catastrophes. I have been watchful, as I said I should be, but have little to tell as yet. You may laugh at me, and very likely think me foolishly fanciful to trouble myself about what is going on in a middling-class household like ours. Do as you like. But here is that terrible fact to begin with,—a beautiful young girl, with the blood and the nerve-fibre that belong to Nature's women, turned loose among live men.

-Terrible fact?

Very terrible. Nothing more so. Do you forget the angels who lost heaven for the daughters of men? Do you forget Helen, and the fair women who made mischief and set nations by the ears before Helen was born? If jealousies that gnaw men's hearts out of their bodies,—if pangs that waste men to shadows and drive them into raving madness or moping melancholy,—if assassination and suicide are dreadful possibilities, then there is always something frightful about a lovely young woman.—I love to look at this "Rainbow," as her father used sometimes to call her, of ours. Handsome creature that she is in forms and colors,—the very picture, as it seems to me, of that "golden blonde" my friend whose book you read last year fell in love with when he was a boy, (as you remember, no doubt,)—handsome as she is, fit for a sea-king's bride, it is not her beauty alone that holds my eyes upon her. Let me tell you one of my fancies, and then you will understand the strange sort of fascination she has for me.

It is in the hearts of many men and women—let me add children—that there is a Great Secret waiting for them,—a secret of which they get hints now and then, perhaps oftener in early than in later years. These hints come sometimes in dreams, sometimes in sudden startling flashes,—second wakings, as it were,—a waking out of the waking state, which last is very apt to be a half-sleep. I have many times stopped short and held my breath, and felt the blood leaving my cheeks, in one of these sudden clairvoyant flashes. Of course I cannot tell what kind of a secret this is, but I think of it as a disclosure of certain relations of our personal being to time and space, to other intelligences, to the procession of events, and to their First Great Cause. This secret seems to be broken up, as it were, into fragments, so that we find here a word and there a syllable, and then again only a letter of it; but it never is written out for most of us as a complete sentence, in this life. I do not think it could be; for I am disposed to consider our beliefs about such a possible disclosure rather as a kind of premonition of an enlargement of our faculties in some future state than as an expectation to be fulfilled for most of us in this life. Persons, however, have fallen into trances,—as did the Reverend William Tennent, among many others,—and learned some things which they could not tell in our human words.

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Now among the visible objects which hint to us fragments of this infinite secret for which our souls are waiting, the faces of women are those that carry the most legible hieroglyphics of the great mystery. There are women's faces, some real, some ideal, which contain something in them that becomes a positive element in our creed, so direct and palpable a revelation is it of the infinite purity and love. I remember two faces of women with wings, such as they call angels, of Fra Angelico,—and I just now came across a print of Raphael's Santa Apollina, with something of the same quality,—which I was sure had their prototypes in the world above ours. No wonder the Catholics pay their vows to the Queen of Heaven! The unpoetical side of Protestantism is, that it has no women to be worshipped.

But mind you, it is not every beautiful face that hints the Great Secret to us, nor is it only in beautiful faces that we find traces of it. Sometimes it looks out from a sweet sad eye, the only beauty of a plain countenance; sometimes there is so much meaning in the lips of a woman, not otherwise fascinating, that we know they have a message for us, and wait almost with awe to hear their accents. But this young girl has at once the beauty of feature and the unspoken mystery of expression. Can she tell me anything?

Is her life a complement of mine, with the missing element in it which I have been groping after through so many friendships that I have tired of, and through—Hush! Is the door fast? Talking loud is a bad trick in these curious boarding-houses.

You must have sometimes noted this fact that I am going to remind you of and to use for a special illustration. Riding along over a rocky road, suddenly the slow monotonous grinding of the crushing gravel changes to a deep heavy rumble. There is a great hollow under your feet,—a huge unsunned cavern. Deep, deep beneath you in the core of the living rock, it arches its awful vault, and far away it stretches its winding galleries, their roofs dripping into streams where fishes have been swimming and spawning in the dark until their scales are white as milk and their eyes have withered out, obsolete and useless.

So it is in life. We jog quietly along, meeting the same faces, grinding over the same thoughts, the gravel of the soul's highway,—now and then jarred against an obstacle we cannot crush, but must ride over or round as we best may, sometimes bringing short up against a disappointment, but still working along with the creaking and rattling and grating and jerking that belong to the journey of life, even in the smoothest-rolling vehicle. Suddenly we hear the deep underground reverberation that reveals the unsuspected depth of some abyss of thought or passion beneath us.

I wish the girl would go. I don't like to look at her so much, and yet I cannot help it. Always that same expression of something that I ought to know,—something that she was made to tell and I to hear,—lying there ready to fall off from her lips, ready to leap out of her eyes and make a saint of me, or a devil or a lunatic, or perhaps a prophet to

tell the truth and be hated of men, or a poet whose words shall flash upon the dry
stubble-field of worn-out thoughts and burn over an age of lies in an hour of passion.

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It suddenly occurs to me that I may have put you on the wrong track. The Great Secret that I refer to has nothing to do with the Three Words. Set your mind at ease about that, —there are reasons I could give you which settle all that matter. I don't wonder, however, that you confounded the Great Secret with the Three Words.

I love you is all the secret that many, nay, most women have to tell. When that is said, they are like China-crackers on the morning of the fifth of July. And just as that little patriotic implement is made with a slender train which leads to the magazine in its interior, so a sharp eye can almost always see the train leading from a young girl's eye or lip to the "I love you" in her heart. But the Three Words are not the Great Secret I mean. No, women's faces are only one of the tablets on which that is written in its partial, fragmentary symbols. It lies deeper than Love, though very probably Love is a part of it. Some, I think,—Wordsworth might be one of them,—spell out a portion of it from certain beautiful natural objects, landscapes, flowers, and others. I can mention several poems of his that have shadowy hints which seem to me to come near the region where I think it lies. I have known two persons who pursued it with the passion of the old alchemists,—all wrong evidently, but infatuated, and never giving up the daily search for it until they got tremulous and feeble, and their dreams changed to visions of things that ran and crawled about their floor and ceilings, and so they died. The vulgar called them drunkards.

I told you that I would let you know the mystery of the effect this young girl's face produces on me. It is akin to those influences a friend of mine has described, you may remember, as coming from certain voices. I cannot translate it into words,—only into feelings; and these I have attempted to shadow by showing that her face hinted that revelation of something we are close to knowing, which all imaginative persons are looking for either in this world or on the very threshold of the next.

You shake your head at the vagueness and fanciful incomprehensibleness of my description of the expression in a young girl's face. You forget what a miserable surface-matter this language is in which we try to reproduce our interior state of being. Articulation is a shallow trick. From the light *Poh!* which we toss off from our lips as we fling a nameless scribbler's impertinence into our waste-baskets, to the gravest utterances which comes from our throats in our moments of deepest need, is only a space of some three or four inches. Words, which are a set of clickings, hissings, lispings, and so on, mean very little, compared to tones and expression of the features. I give it up; I thought I could shadow forth in some feeble way, by their aid, the effect this young girl's face produces on my imagination; but it is of no use. No doubt your head aches,

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trying to make something of my description. If there is here and there one that can make anything intelligible out of my talk about the Great Secret, and who has spelt out a syllable or two of it on some woman's face, dead or living, that is all I can expect. One should see the person with whom he converses about such matters. There are dreamy-eyed people to whom I should say all these things with a certainty of being understood;

That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me
To him my tale I teach.

—I am afraid some of them have not got a spare quarter of a dollar for this August number, so that they will never see it.

—Let us start again, just as if we had not made this ambitious attempt, which may go for nothing, and you can have your money refunded, if you will make the change.

This young girl, about whom I have talked so unintelligibly, is the unconscious centre of attraction to the whole solar system of our breakfast-table. The Little Gentleman leans towards her, and she again seems to be swayed as by some invisible gentle force towards him. That slight inclination of two persons with a strong affinity towards each other, throwing them a little out of plumb when they sit side by side, is a physical fact I have often noticed. Then there is a tendency in all the men's eyes to converge on her; and I do firmly believe, that, if all their chairs were examined, they would be found a little obliquely placed, so as to favor the direction in which their occupants love to look.

That bland, quiet old gentleman, of whom I have spoken as sitting opposite to me, is no exception to the rule. She brought down some mignonette one morning, which she had grown in her chamber. She gave a sprig to her little neighbor, and one to the landlady, and sent another by the hand of Bridget to this old gentleman.

—Sarvant, Ma'am I Much obleeged,—he said, and put it gallantly in his button-hole.—After breakfast he must see some of her drawings. Very fine performances,—very fine!—truly elegant productions, truly elegant!—Had seen Miss Linwood's needlework in London, in the year (eighteen hundred and little or nothing, I think he said,)—patronized by the nobility and gentry, and Her Majesty,—elegant, truly elegant productions, very fine performances; these drawings reminded him of them;—wonderful resemblance to Nature; an extraordinary art, painting; Mr. Copley made some very fine pictures that he remembered seeing when he was a boy. Used to remember some lines about a portrait Written by Mr. Cowper, beginning,

“Oh that those lips had language! Life has pass’d
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.”

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And with this the old gentleman fell to thinking about a dead mother of his that he remembered ever so much younger than he now was, and looking, not as his mother, but as his daughter should look. The dead young mother was looking at the old man, her child, as she used to look at him so many, many years ago. He stood still as if in a waking dream, his eyes fixed on the drawings till their outlines grew indistinct and they ran into each other, and a pale, sweet face shaped itself out of the glimmering light through which he saw them.—What is there quite so profoundly human as an old man's memory of a mother who died in his earlier years? Mother she remains till manhood, and by-and-by she grows to be as a sister; and at last, when, wrinkled and bowed and broken, he looks back upon her in her fair youth, he sees in the sweet image he caresses, not his parent, but, as it were, his child.

If I had not seen all this in the old gentleman's face, the words with which he broke his silence would have betrayed his train of thought.

—If they had only taken pictures then as they do now!—he said.—All gone! all gone! nothing but her face as she leaned on the arms of her great chair; and I would give a hundred pound for the poorest little picture of her, such as you can buy for a shilling of anybody that you don't want to see.—The old gentleman put his hand to his forehead so as to shade his eyes. I saw he was looking at the dim photograph of memory, and turned from him to Iris.

How many drawing-books have you filled,—I said,—since you began to take lessons? —This was the first,—she answered,—since she was here; and it was not full, but there were many separate sheets of large size she had covered with drawings.

I turned over the leaves of the book before us. Academic studies, principally of the human figure. Heads of sibyls, prophets, and so forth. Limbs from statues. Hands and feet from Nature. What a superb drawing of an arm! I don't remember it among the figures from Michel Angelo, which seem to have been her patterns mainly. From Nature, I think, or after a cast from Nature.—Oh!

—Your smaller studies are in this, I suppose,—I said, taking up the drawing-book with a lock on it,—Yes,—she said.—I should like to see her style of working on a small scale. —There was nothing in it worth showing,—she said; and presently I saw her try the lock, which proved to be fast. We are all caricatured in it, I haven't the least doubt. I think, though, I could tell by her way of dealing with us what her fancies were about us boarders. Some of them act as if they were bewitched with her, but she does not seem to notice it much. Her thoughts seem to be on her little neighbor more than on anybody else. The young fellow John appears to stand second in her good graces. I think he has once or twice sent her what the landlady's daughter calls bo-kays of flowers,—-somebody

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has, at any rate.—I saw a book she had, which must have come from the divinity-student. It had a dreary title-page, which she had enlivened with a fancy portrait of the author,—a face from memory, apparently,—one of those faces that small children loathe without knowing why, and which give them that inward disgust for heaven so many of the little wretches betray, when they hear that these are “good men,” and that heaven is full of such.—The gentleman with the diamond—the Koh-i-noor, so called by us—was not encouraged, I think, by the reception of his packet of perfumed soap. He pulls his purple moustache and looks appreciatingly at Iris, who never sees him, as it should seem. The young Marylander, who I thought would have been in love with her before this time, sometimes looks from his corner across the long diagonal of the table, as much as to say, I wish you were up here by me, or I were down there by you,—which would, perhaps, be a more natural arrangement than the present one. But nothing comes of all this,—and nothing has come of my sagacious idea of finding out the girl's fancies by looking into her locked drawing-book.

Not to give up all the questions I was determined to solve, I made an attempt also to work into the Little Gentleman's chamber. For this purpose, I kept him in conversation, one morning, until he was just ready to go up-stairs, and then, as if to continue the talk, followed him as he toiled back to his room. He rested on the landing and faced round toward me. There was something in his eye which said, Stop there! So we finished our conversation on the landing. The next day, I mustered assurance enough to knock at his door, having a pretext ready.—No answer.—Knock again. A door, as if of a cabinet, was shut softly and locked, and presently I heard the peculiar dead beat of his thick-soled, misshapen boots. The bolts and the lock of the inner door were unfastened,—with unnecessary noise, I thought,—and he came into the passage. He pulled the inner door after him and opened the outer one at which I stood. He had on a flowered silk dressing-gown, such as “Mr. Copley” used to paint his old-fashioned merchant-princes in; and a quaint-looking key in his hand. Our conversation was short, but long enough to convince me that the Little Gentleman did not want my company in his chamber, and did not mean to have it.

I have been making a great fuss about what is no mystery at all,—a schoolgirl's secrets and a whimsical man's habits. I mean to give up such nonsense and mind my own business.—Hark! What the deuse is that odd noise in his chamber?

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—I think I am a little superstitious. There were two things, when I was a boy, that diabolized my imagination,—I mean, that gave me a distinct apprehension of a formidable bodily shape which prowled round the neighborhood where I was born and bred. The first was a series of marks called the “Devil’s footsteps.” These were patches of sand in the pastures, where no grass grew, where the low-bush blackberry, the “dewberry,” as our Southern neighbors call it, in prettier and more Shakspearian language, did not spread its clinging creepers,—where even the pale, dry, sadly-sweet “everlasting” could not grow, but all was bare and blasted. The second was a mark in one of the public buildings near my home,—the college dormitory named after a Colonial Governor. I do not think many persons are aware of the existence of this mark, —little having been said about the story in print, as it was considered very desirable, for the sake of the Institution, to hush it up. In the northwest corner, and on the level of the third or fourth story, there are signs of a breach in the walls, mended pretty well, but not to be mistaken. A considerable portion of that corner must have been carried away, from within outward. It was an unpleasant affair; and I do not care to repeat the particulars; but some young men had been using sacred things in a profane and unlawful way, when the occurrence, which was variously explained, took place. The story of the Appearance in the chamber was, I suppose, invented afterwards; but of the injury to the building there could be no question; and the zig-zag line, where the mortar is a little thicker than before, is still distinctly visible. The queer burnt spots, called the “Devil’s footsteps,” had never attracted attention before this time, though there is no evidence that they had not existed previously, except that of the late Miss M., a “Goody,” so called, or sweeper, who was positive on the subject, but had a strange horror of referring to an affair of which she was thought to know something.—I tell you it was not so pleasant for a little boy of impressible nature to go up to bed in an old gambrel-roofed house, with untenanted, locked upper-chambers, and a most ghostly garret,—with the “Devil’s footsteps” in the fields behind the house and in front of it the patched dormitory where the unexplained occurrence had taken place which startled those godless youths at their mock devotions, so that one of them was epileptic from that day forward, and another, after a dreadful season of mental conflict, took holy orders and became renowned for his ascetic sanctity.

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There were other circumstances that kept up the impression produced by these two singular facts I have just mentioned. There was a dark storeroom, on looking through the key-hole of which, I could dimly see a heap of chairs and tables, and other four-footed things, which seemed to me to have rushed in there, frightened, and in their fright to have huddled together and climbed up on each other's backs,—as the people did in that awful crush where so many were killed, at the execution of Holloway and Haggerty. Then the Lady's portrait, up-stairs, with the sword-thrusts through it,—marks of the British officers' rapiers,—and the tall mirror in which they used to look at their red coats,—confound them for smashing its mate?—and the deep, cunningly wrought arm-chair in which Lord Percy used to sit while his hair was dressing;—he was a gentleman, and always had it covered with a large peignoir, to save the silk covering my grandmother embroidered. Then the little room downstairs from which went the orders to throw up a bank of earth on the hill yonder, where you may now observe a granite obelisk,—“the study” in my father's time, but in those days the council-chamber of armed men,—sometimes filled with soldiers; come with me, and I will show you the “dents” left by the butts of their muskets all over the floor. With all these suggestive objects round me, aided by the wild stories those awful country-boys that came to live in our service brought with them;—of contracts written in blood and left out over night, not to be found the next morning, (removed by the Evil One, who takes his nightly round among our dwellings, and filed away for future use,)—of dreams coming true,—of death-signs,—of apparitions, no wonder that my imagination got excited, and I was liable to superstitious fancies.

Jeremy Bentham's logic, by which he proved that he couldn't possibly see a ghost is all very well-in the day-time. All the reason in the world will never get those impressions of childhood, created by just such circumstances as I have been telling, out of a man's head. That is the only excuse I have to give for the nervous kind of curiosity with which I watch my little neighbor, and the obstinacy with which I lie awake whenever I hear anything going on in his chamber after midnight.

But whatever further observations I may have made must be deferred for the present. You will see in what way it happened that my thoughts were turned from spiritual matters to bodily ones, and how I got my fancy full of material images,—faces, heads, figures, muscles, and so forth,—in such a way that I should have no chance in this number to gratify any curiosity you may feel, if I had the means of so doing.

Indeed, I have come pretty near omitting my periodical record this time. It was all the work of a friend of mine, who would have it that I should sit to him for my portrait. When a soul draws a body in the great lottery of life, where every one is sure of a prize, such as it is, the said soul inspects the said body with the same curious interest with which one who has ventured into a “gift enterprise” examines the “massive silver pencil-case” with the coppery smell and impressible tube, or the “splendid gold ring” with the questionable specific gravity, which it has been his fortune to obtain in addition to his purchase.

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The soul, having studied the article of which it finds itself proprietor, thinks, after a time, it knows it pretty well. But there is this difference between its view and that of a person looking at us:—we look from within, and see nothing but the mould formed by the elements in which we are incased; other observers look from without, and see us as living statues. To be sure, by the aid of mirrors, we get a few glimpses of our outside aspect; but this occasional impression is always modified by that look of the soul from within outward which none but ourselves can take. A portrait is apt, therefore, to be a surprise to us. The artist looks only from without. He sees us, too, with a hundred aspects on our faces we are never likely to see. No genuine expression can be studied by the subject of it in the looking-glass.

More than this; he sees us in a way in which many of our friends or acquaintances never see us. Without wearing any mask we are conscious of, we have a special face for each friend. For, in the first place, each puts a special reflection of himself upon us, on the principle of assimilation you found referred to in my last record, if you happened to read that document. And secondly, each of our friends is capable of seeing just so far, and no farther, into our face, and each sees in it the particular thing that he looks for. Now the artist, if he is truly an artist, does not take any one of these special views. Suppose he should copy you as you appear to the man who wants your name to a subscription-list, you could hardly expect a friend who entertains you to recognize the likeness to the smiling face which sheds its radiance at his board. Even within your own family, I am afraid there is a face which the rich uncle knows, that is not so familiar to the poor relation. The artist must take one or the other, or something compounded of the two, or something different from either. What the daguerreotype and photograph do is to give the features and one particular look, the very look which kills all expression, that of self-consciousness. The artist throws you off your guard, watches you in movement and in repose, puts your face through its exercises, observes its transitions, and so gets the whole range of its expression. Out of all this he forms an ideal portrait, which is not a copy of your exact look at any one time or to any particular person. Such a portrait cannot be to everybody what the ungloved call “as nat’ral as life.” Every good picture, therefore, must be considered wanting in resemblance by many persons.

There is one strange revelation which comes out, as the artist shapes your features from his outline. It is that you resemble so many relatives to whom you yourself never had noticed any particular likeness in your countenance.

He is at work at me now, when I catch some of these resemblances, thus:

There! that is just the look my father used to have sometimes; I never thought I had a sign of it. The mother’s eyebrow and grayish-blue eye, those I knew I had. But there is a something which recalls a smile that faded away from my sister’s lips—how many years ago! I thought it so pleasant in her, that I love myself better for having a trace of it.

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Are we not young? Are we not fresh and blooming? Wait, a bit. The artist takes a mean little brush and draws three fine lines, diverging outwards from the eye over the temple. Five years.—The artist draws one tolerably distinct and two faint lines, perpendicularly between the eyebrows. Ten years.—The artist breaks up the contours round the mouth, so that they look a little as a hat does that has been sat upon and recovered itself, ready, as one would say, to crumple up again in the same creases, on smiling or other change of feature.—Hold on! Stop that! Give a young fellow a chance! Are we not whole years short of that interesting period of life when Mr. Balzac says that a man, *etc., etc., etc.*?

There now! That is ourself, as we look after finishing an article, getting a three-mile pull with the ten-foot sculls, redressing the wrongs of the toilet, and standing with the light of hope in our eye and the reflection of a red curtain on our cheek. Is he not a *poet* that painted us?

“Blest be the art that can immortalize!”

Cowper.

—Young folks look on a face as a unit; children who go to school with any given little John Smith see in his name a distinctive appellation, and in his features as special and definite an expression of his sole individuality as if he were the first created of his race: As soon as we are old enough to get the range of three or four generations well in hand, and to take in large family histories, we never see an individual in a face of any stock we know, but a mosaic copy of a pattern, with fragmentary tints from this and that ancestor. The analysis of a face into its ancestral elements requires that it should be examined in the very earliest infancy, before it has lost that ancient and solemn look it brings with it out of the past eternity; and again in that brief space when Life, the mighty sculptor, has done his work, and Death, his silent servant, lifts the veil and lets us look at the marble lines he has wrought so faithfully; and lastly, while a painter who can seize all the traits of a countenance is building it up, feature after feature, from the slight outline to the finished portrait.

—I am satisfied, that, as we grow older, we learn to look upon our bodies more and more as a temporary possession and less and less as identified with ourselves. In early years, while the child “feels its life in every limb,” it lives in the body and for the body to a very great extent. It ought to be so. There have been many very interesting children who have shown a wonderful indifference to the things of earth and an extraordinary development of the spiritual nature. There is a perfect literature of their biographies, all alike in their essentials; the same “disinclination to the usual amusements of childhood”; the same remarkable sensibility; the same docility; the same conscientiousness;

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in short, an almost uniform character, marked by beautiful traits, which we look at with a painful admiration. It will be found that most of these children are the subjects of some constitutional unfitness for living, the most frequent of which I need not mention. They are like the beautiful, blushing, half-grown fruit that falls before its time because its core is gnawed out. They have their meaning,—they do not live in vain,—but they are windfalls. I am convinced that many healthy children are injured morally by being forced to read too much about these little meek sufferers and their spiritual exercises. Here is a boy that loves to run, swim, kick football, turn somersets, make faces, whittle, fish, tear his clothes, coast, skate, fire crackers, blow squash “tooters,” cut his name on fences, read about Robinson Crusoe and Sinbad the Sailor, eat the widest-angled slices of pie and untold cakes and candies, crack nuts with his back teeth and bite out the better part of another boy’s apple with his front ones, turn up coppers, “stick” knives, call names, throw stones, knock off hats, set mousetraps, chalk doorsteps, “cut behind” anything on wheels or runners, whistle through his teeth, “holler” Fire! on slight evidence, run after soldiers, patronize an engine-company, or, in his own words, “blow for tub No. 11,” or whatever it may be;—isn’t that a pretty nice sort of a boy, though he has not got anything the matter with him that takes the taste of this world out? Now, when you put into such a hot-blooded, hard-fisted, round-cheeked little rogue’s hand a sad-looking volume or pamphlet, with the portrait of a thin, white-faced child, whose life is really as much a training for death as the last month of a condemned criminal’s existence, what does he find in common between his own overflowing and exulting sense of vitality and the experiences of the doomed offspring of invalid parents? The time comes when we have learned to understand the music of sorrow, the beauty of resigned suffering, the holy light that plays over the pillow of those who die before their time, in humble hope and trust. But it is not until he has worked his way through the period of honest hearty animal existence, which every robust child should make the most of,—not until he has learned the use of his various faculties, which is his first duty,—that a boy of courage and animal vigor is in a proper state to read these tearful records of premature decay. I have no doubt that disgust is implanted in the minds of many healthy children by early surfeits of pathological piety. I do verily believe that He who took children in His arms and blessed them loved the healthiest and most playful of them just as well as those who were richest in the tuberculous virtues. I know what I am talking about, and there are more parents in this country who will be willing to listen to what I say than there are fools to pick a quarrel with me. In the sensibility and the sanctity which

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often accompany premature decay I see one of the most beautiful instances of the principle of compensation which marks the Divine benevolence. But to get the spiritual hygiene of robust natures out of the exceptional regimen of invalids is just simply what we Professors call “bad practice”; and I know by experience that there are worthy people who not only try it on their own children, but actually force it on those of their neighbors.

—Having been photographed, and stereographed, and chromatographed, or done in colors, it only remained to be phrenologized. A polite note from Messrs. Bumpus and Crane, requesting our attendance at their Physiological Emporium, was too tempting to be resisted. We repaired to that scientific Golgotha.

Messrs. Bumpus and Crane are arranged on the plan of the man and the woman in the toy called a “weather-house,” both on the same wooden arm suspended on a pivot,—so that when one comes to the door, the other retires backwards, and vice versa. The more particular speciality of one is to lubricate your entrance and exit,—that of the other to polish you off phrenologically in the recesses of the establishment. Suppose yourself in a room full of casts and pictures, before a counterful of books with taking titles. I wonder if the picture of the brain is there, “approved” by a noted Phrenologist, which was copied from my, the Professor’s, folio plate, in the work of Gall and Spurzheim. An extra convolution, No. 9, Destructiveness, according to the list beneath, which was not to be seen in the plate, itself a copy of Nature, was very liberally supplied by the artist, to meet the wants of the catalogue of “organs.” Professor Bumpus is seated in front of a row of women, —horn-combers and gold-beaders, or somewhere about that range of life,—looking so credulous, that, if any Second-Advent Miller or Joe Smith should come along, he could string the whole lot of them on his cheapest lie, as a boy strings a dozen “shiners” on a stripped twig of willow.

The Professor (meaning ourselves) is in a hurry, as usual; let the horn-combers wait,—he shall be bumped without inspecting the antechamber.

Tape round the head,—22 inches. (Come on, old 23 inches, if you think you are the better man!)

Feels thorax and arm, and nuzzles round among muscles as those horrid old women poke their fingers into the salt-meat on the provision-stalls at the Quincy Market. Vitality, No. 5 or 6, or something or other. Victuality, (organ at epigastrium,) some other number equally significant.

Mild champooing of head now commences. ‘Extraordinary revelations! Cupidiphilous, 6! Hymeniphilous, 6 +! Paediphilous, 5! Deipniphilous, 6! Gelasmiphilous, 6! Musikiphilous, 5! Uraniphilous, 5! Glossiphilous, 8!! and so on. Meant for a linguist.—

Invaluable information. Will invest in grammars and dictionaries immediately.—I have nothing against the grand total of my phrenological endowments.

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I never set great store by my head, and did not think Messrs. Bumpus and Crane would give me so good a lot of organs as they did, especially considering that I was a dead-head on that occasion. Much obliged to them for their politeness. They have been useful in their way by calling attention to important physiological facts. (This concession is due to our immense bump of Candor.)

A short Lecture on Phrenology, read to the Boarders at our Breakfast-Table.

I shall begin, my friends, with the definition of a Pseudo-science. A Pseudo-science consists of a nomenclature, with a self-adjusting arrangement, by which all positive evidence, or such as favors its doctrines, is admitted, and all negative evidence, or such as tells against it, is excluded. It is invariably connected with some lucrative practical application. Its professors and practitioners are usually shrewd people; they are very serious with the public, but wink and laugh a good deal among themselves. The believing multitude consists of women of both sexes, feeble minded inquirers, poetical optimists, people who always get cheated in buying horses, philanthropists who insist on hurrying up the millennium, and others of this class, with here and there a clergyman, less frequently a lawyer, very rarely a physician, and almost never a horse-jockey or a member of the detective police.—I do not say that Phrenology was one of the Pseudo-sciences.

A Pseudo-science does not necessarily consist wholly of lies. It may contain many truths, and even valuable ones. The rottenest bank starts with a little specie. It puts out a thousand promises to pay on the strength of a single dollar, but the dollar is very commonly a good one. The practitioners of the Pseudo-sciences know that common minds, after they have been baited with a real fact or two, will jump at the merest rag of a lie, or even at the bare hook. When we have one fact found us, we are very apt to supply the next out of our own imagination. (How many persons can read Judges xv. 16 correctly the first time?) The Pseudo-sciences take advantage of this.—I did not say that it was so with Phrenology.

I have rarely met a sensible man who would not allow that there was something in Phrenology. A broad, high forehead, it is commonly agreed, promises intellect; one that is “villanous low” and has a huge hind-head back of it, is wont to mark an animal nature. I have as rarely met an unbiassed and sensible man who really believed in the bumps. It is observed, however, that persons with what the Phrenologists call “good heads” are more prone than others toward plenary belief in the doctrine.

It is so hard to prove a negative, that, if a man should assert that the moon was in truth a green cheese, formed by the coagulable substance of the Milky Way, and challenge me to prove the contrary, I might be puzzled. But if he offer to sell me a ton of this lunar cheese, I call on him to prove the truth of the Gaseous nature of our satellite, before I purchase.

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It is not necessary to prove the falsity of the phrenological statement. It is only necessary to show that its truth is not proved, and cannot be, by the common course of argument. The walls of the head are double, with a great air-chamber between them, over the smallest and most closely crowded “organs.” Can you tell how much money there is in a safe, which also has thick double walls, by kneading its knobs with your fingers? So when a man fumbles about my forehead, and talks about the organs of Individuality, Size, *etc.*, I trust him as much as I should if he felt of the outside of my strong-box and told me that there was a five-dollar or a ten-dollar-bill under this or that particular rivet. Perhaps there is; only he does n’t know anything about at. But this is a point that I, the Professor, understand, my friends, or ought to, certainly, better than you do. The next argument you will all appreciate.

I proceed, therefore, to explain the self-adjusting mechanism of Phrenology, which is very similar to that of the Pseudo-sciences. An example will show it most conveniently.

A. is a notorious thief. Messrs. Bumpus and Crane examine him and find a good-sized organ of Acquisitiveness. Positive fact for Phrenology. Casts and drawings of A. are multiplied, and the bump does not lose in the act of copying.—I did not say it gained.—What do you look so for? (to the boarders.)

Presently B. turns up, a bigger thief than A. But B. has no bump at all over Acquisitiveness. Negative fact; goes against Phrenology.—Not a bit of it. Don’t you see how small Conscientiousness is? That’s the reason B. stole.

And then comes C., ten times as much a thief as either A. or B.,—used to steal before he was weaned, and would pick one of his own pockets and put its contents in another, if he could find no other way of committing petty larceny. Unfortunately, C. has a hollow, instead of a bump, over Acquisitiveness. Ah, but just look and see what a bump of Alimentiveness! Did not C. buy nuts and gingerbread, when a boy, with the money he stole? Of course you see why he is a thief, and how his example confirms our noble science.

At last comes along a case which is apparently a settler, for there is a little brain with vast and varied powers,—a case like that of Byron, for instance. Then comes out the grand reserve-reason which covers everything and renders it simply impossible ever to corner a Phrenologist. “It is not the size alone, but the quality of an organ, which determines its degree of power.”

Oh! oh! I see.—The argument may be briefly stated thus by the Phrenologist: “Heads I win, tails you lose.” Well, that’s convenient.

It must be confessed that Phrenology has a certain resemblance to the Pseudo-sciences. I did not say it was a Pseudo-science.

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I have often met persons who have been altogether struck up and amazed at the accuracy with which some wandering Professor of Phrenology had read their characters written upon their skulls. Of course the Professor acquires his information solely through his cranial inspections and manipulations.—What are you laughing at? (to the boarders.)—But let us just suppose, for a moment, that a tolerably cunning fellow, who did not know or care anything about Phrenology, should open a shop and undertake to read off people's characters at fifty cents or a dollar apiece. Let us see how well he could get along without the "organs."

I will suppose myself to set up such a shop. I would invest one hundred dollars, more or less, in casts of brains, skulls, charts, and other matters that would make the most show for the money. That would do to begin with. I would then advertise myself as the celebrated Professor Brainey, or whatever name I might choose, and wait for my first customer. My first customer is a middle-aged man. I look at him,—ask him a question or two, so as to hear him talk. When I have got the hang of him, I ask him to sit down, and proceed to fumble his skull, dictating as follows: *Scale from 1 to 10.*

List of faculties for private notes for my pupil.

Customer.

Each to be accompanied with a wink.

Amativeness, 7. Most men love the conflicting sex, and all men love to be told they do.

Alimentiveness, 8. Don't you see that he has burst off his lowest waistcoat-button with feeding,—hey

Acquisitiveness, 8. Of course. A middle-aged Yankee.

Approbativeness 7+. Hat well brushed. Hair ditto. Mark the effect of that plus sign.

Self-Esteem 6. His face shows that.

Benevolence 9. That'll please him.

Conscientiousness 8 1/2 That fraction looks first-rate.

Mirthfulness 7 Has laughed twice since he came in.

Ideality 9 That sounds well.

Form, Size, Weight, 4 to 6. Average everything that Color, Locality, cannot be guessed. Eventuality, *etc. etc.*

And so of the other faculties.

Of course, you know, that isn't the way the Phrenologists do. They go only by the bumps.—What do you keep laughing so for? (to the boarders.) I only said that is the way I should practise “Phrenology” for a living.

End of my Lecture.

—The Reformers have good heads, generally. Their faces are commonly serene enough, and they are lambs in private intercourse, even though their voices may be like

The wolf's long howl from Oonalaska's shore,

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when heard from the platform. Their greatest spiritual danger is from the perpetual flattery of abuse to which they are exposed. These lines are meant to caution them.

Saint Anthony the reformer.

His temptation.

No fear lest praise should make us proud!
We know how cheaply that is won;
The idle homage of the crowd
Is proof of tasks as idly done.

A surface-smile may pay the toil
That follows still the conquering Right,
With soft, white hands to dress the spoil
That sunbrowned valor clutched in fight.

Sing the sweet song of other days,
Serenely placid, safely true,
And o'er the present's parching ways
Thy verse distils like evening dew.

But speak in words of living power,
—They fall like drops of scalding rain
That plashed before the burning shower
Swept o'er the cities of the plain!

Then scowling Hate turns deadly pale,
—Then Passion's half-coiled adders spring,
And, smitten through their leprous mail,
Strike right and left in hope to sting.

If thou, unmoved by poisoning wrath,
Thy feet on earth, thy heart above,
Canst walk in peace thy kingly path,
Unchanged in trust, unchilled in love,—

Too kind for bitter words to grieve,
Too firm for clamor to dismay,
When Faith forbids thee to believe,
And Meekness calls to disobey,—

Ah, then beware of mortal pride!
The smiling pride that calmly scorns

Those foolish fingers, crimson dyed
In laboring on thy crown of thorns!

IX

One of our boarders—perhaps more than one was concerned in it—sent in some questions to me, the other day, which, trivial as some of them are, I felt bound to answer.

1.—Whether a lady was ever known to write a letter covering only a single page?

To this I answered, that there was a case on record where a lady had but half a sheet of paper and no envelope; and being obliged to send through the post-office, she covered only one side of the paper (crosswise, lengthwise, and diagonally).

2.—What constitutes a man a gentleman?

To this I gave several answers, adapted to particular classes of questioners.

- a. Not trying to be a gentleman.
- b. Self-respect underlying courtesy.
- c. Knowledge and observance of the fitness of things in social intercourse.
- d. f. s. d. (as many suppose.)

3.—Whether face or figure is most attractive in the female sex?

Answered in the following epigram, by a young man about town:

Quoth Tom, "Though fair her features be,
It is her figure pleases me."
"What may her figure be?" I cried.
"One hundred thousand!" he replied.

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When this was read to the boarders, the young man John said he should like a chance to “step up” to a figger of that kind, if the girl was one of the right sort.

The landlady said them that merried for money didn’t deserve the blessin’ of a good wife. Money was a great thing when them that had it made a good use of it. She had seen better days herself, and knew what it was never to want for anything. One of her cousins merried a very rich old gentleman, and she had heerd that he said he lived ten year longer than if he’d staid by himself without anybody to take care of him. There was nothin’ like a wife for nussin’ sick folks and them that couldn’t take care of themselves.

The young man John got off a little wink, and pointed slyly with his thumb in the direction of our diminutive friend, for whom he seemed to think this speech was intended.

If it was meant for him, he did n’t appear to know that it was. Indeed, he seems somewhat listless of late, except when the conversation falls upon one of those larger topics that specially interest him, and then he grows excited, speaks loud and fast, sometimes almost savagely,—and, I have noticed once or twice, presses his left hand to his right side, as if there were something that ached, or weighed, or throbbed in that region.

While he speaks in this way, the general conversation is interrupted, and we all listen to him. Iris looks steadily in his face, and then he will turn as if magnetized and meet the amber eyes with his own melancholy gaze. I do believe that they have some kind of understanding together, that they meet elsewhere than at our table, and that there is a mystery, which is going to break upon us all of a sudden, involving the relations of these two persons. From the very first, they have taken to each other. The one thing they have in common is the heroic will. In him, it shows itself in thinking his way straightforward, in doing battle for “free trade and no right of search” on the high seas of religious controversy, and especially in fighting the battles of his crooked old city. In her, it is standing up for her little friend with the most queenly disregard of the code of boarding-house etiquette. People may say or look what they like,—she will have her way about this sentiment of hers.

The Poor Relation is in a dreadful fidget whenever the Little Gentleman says anything that interferes with her own infallibility. She seems to think Faith must go with her face tied up, as if she had the toothache,—and that if she opens her mouth to the quarter the wind blows from, she will catch her “death o’ cold.”

The landlady herself came to him one day, as I have found out, and tried to persuade him to hold his tongue.—The boarders was gettin’ uneasy,—she said,—and some of ’em would go, she mistrusted, if he talked any more about things that belonged to the ministers to settle. She was a poor woman, that had known better days, but all her livin’ depended on her boarders, and she was sure there was n’t any of ’em she set so much

by as she did by him; but there was them that never liked to hear about sech things, except on Sundays.

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The Little Gentleman looked very smiling at the landlady, who smiled even more cordially in return, and adjusted her cap-ribbon with an unconscious movement,—a reminiscence of the long-past pairing-time, when she had smoothed her locks and softened her voice, and won her mate by these and other bird-like graces.—My dear Madam,—he said,—I will remember your interests, and speak only of matters to which I am totally indifferent.—I don't doubt he meant this; but a day or two after, something stirred him up, and I heard his voice uttering itself aloud, thus:

—It must be done, Sir!—he was saying,—it must be done! Our religion has been Judaized, it has been Romanized, it has been Orientalized, it has been Anglicized, and the time is at hand when it must be *americanized*! Now, Sir, you see what Americanizing is in politics;—it means that a man shall have a vote because he is a man,—and shall vote for whom he pleases, without his neighbor's interference. If he chooses to vote for the Devil, that is his lookout;—perhaps he thinks the Devil is better than the other candidates; and I don't doubt he's often right, Sir. Just so a man's soul has a vote in the spiritual community; and it doesn't do, Sir, or it won't do long, to call him “schismatic” and “heretic” and those other wicked names that the old murderous Inquisitors have left us to help along “peace and goodwill to men”!

As long as you could catch a man and drop him into an oubliette, or pull him out a few inches longer by machinery, or put a hot iron through his tongue, or make him climb up a ladder and sit on a board at the top of a stake so that he should be slowly broiled by the fire kindled round it, there was some sense in these words; they led to something. But since we have done with those tools, we had better give up those words. I should like to see a Yankee advertisement like this!—(the Little Gentleman laughed fiercely as he uttered the words,—)

—Patent thumb-screws,—will crush the bone in three turns.

—The cast-iron boot, with wedge and mallet, only five dollars!

—The celebrated extension-rack, warranted to stretch a man six inches in twenty minutes,—money returned, if it proves unsatisfactory.

I should like to see such an advertisement, I say, Sir! Now, what's the use of using the words that belonged with the thumb-screws, and the Blessed Virgin with the knives under her petticoats and sleeves and bodice, and the dry pan and gradual fire, if we can't have the things themselves, Sir? What's the use of painting the fire round a poor fellow, when you think it won't do to kindle one under him,—as they did at Valencia or Valladolid, or wherever it was?

—What story is that?—I said.

Why,—he answered,—at the last auto-da-fe, in 1824 or '5, or somewhere there,—it's a traveller's story, but a mighty knowing traveller he is,—they had a “heretic” to use up according to the statutes provided for the crime of private opinion. They could n't quite make up their minds to burn him, so they only hung him in a hogshead painted all over with flames!

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No, Sir! when a man calls you names because you go to the ballot-box and vote for your candidate, or because you say this or that is your opinion, he forgets in which half of the world he was born, Sir! It won't be long, Sir, before we have Americanized religion as we have Americanized government; and then, Sir, every soul God sends into the world will be good in the face of all men for just so much of His "inspiration" as "giveth him understanding"!—None of my words, Sir! none of my words!

—If Iris does not love this Little Gentleman, what does love look like when one sees it? She follows him with her eyes, she leans over toward him when he speaks, her face changes with the changes of his speech, so that one might think it was with her as with Christabel,—

That all her features were resigned
To this sole image in her mind.

But she never looks at him with such intensity of devotion as when he says anything about the soul and the soul's atmosphere, religion.

Women are twice as religious as men;—all the world knows that. Whether they are any better, in the eyes of Absolute Justice, might be questioned; for the additional religious element supplied by sex hardly seems to be a matter of praise or blame. But in all common aspects they are so much above us that we get most of our religion from them, —from their teachings, from their example,—above all, from their pure affections.

Now this poor little Iris had been talked to strangely in her childhood. Especially she had been told that she hated all good things,—which every sensible parent knows well enough is not true of a great many children, to say the least. I have sometimes questioned whether many libels on human nature had not been a natural consequence of the celibacy of the clergy, which was enforced for so long a period.

The child had met this and some other equally encouraging statements as to her spiritual conditions, early in life, and fought the battle of spiritual independence prematurely, as many children do. If all she did was hateful to God, what was the meaning of the approving or else the disapproving conscience, when she had done "right" or "wrong"? No "shoulder-striker" hits out straighter than a child with its logic. Why, I can remember lying in my bed in the nursery and settling questions which all that I have heard since and got out of books has never been able to raise again. If a child does not assert itself in this way in good season, it becomes just what its parents or teachers were, and is no better than a plastic image.—How old was I at the time?—I suppose about 5823 years old,—that is, counting from Archbishop Usher's date of the Creation, and adding the life of the race, whose accumulated intelligence is a part of my inheritance, to my own. A good deal older than Plato, you see, and much more experienced than my Lord Bacon and most of the world's teachers.—Old books, as you well know, are books of the world's youth, and new books are fruits of its age. How

many of all these ancient folios round me are like so many old cupels! The gold has passed out of them long ago, but their pores are full of the dross with which it was mingled.

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And so Iris—having thrown off that first lasso which not only fetters, but chokes those whom it can hold, so that they give themselves up trembling and breathless to the great soul-subduer, who has them by the windpipe had settled a brief creed for herself, in which love of the neighbor, whom we have seen, was the first article, and love of the Creator, whom we have not seen, grew out of this as its natural development, being necessarily second in order of time to the first unselfish emotions which we feel for the fellow-creatures who surround us in our early years.

The child must have some place of worship. What would a young girl be who never mingled her voice with the songs and prayers that rose all around her with every returning day of rest? And Iris was free to choose. Sometimes one and sometimes another would offer to carry her to this or that place of worship; and when the doors were hospitably opened, she would often go meekly in by herself. It was a curious fact, that two churches as remote from each other in doctrine as could well be divided her affections.

The Church of Saint Polycarp had very much the look of a Roman Catholic chapel. I do not wish to run the risk of giving names to the ecclesiastical furniture which gave it such a Romish aspect; but there were pictures, and inscriptions in antiquated characters, and there were reading-stands, and flowers on the altar, and other elegant arrangements. Then there were boys to sing alternately in choirs responsive to each other, and there was much bowing, with very loud responding, and a long service and a short sermon, and a bag, such as Judas used to hold in the old pictures, was carried round to receive contributions. Everything was done not only “decently and in order,” but, perhaps one might say, with a certain air of magnifying their office on the part of the dignified clergymen, often two or three in number. The music and the free welcome were grateful to Iris, and she forgot her prejudices at the door of the chapel. For this was a church with open doors, with seats for all classes and all colors alike,—a church of zealous worshippers after their faith, of charitable and serviceable men and women, one that took care of its children and never forgot its poor, and whose people were much more occupied in looking out for their own souls than in attacking the faith of their neighbors. In its mode of worship there was a union of two qualities,—the taste and refinement, which the educated require just as much in their churches as elsewhere, and the air of stateliness, almost of pomp, which impresses the common worshipper, and is often not without its effect upon those who think they hold outward forms as of little value. Under the half-Romish aspect of the Church of Saint Polycarp, the young girl found a devout and loving and singularly cheerful religious spirit. The artistic sense, which betrayed itself in the dramatic proprieties of its ritual, harmonized with

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her taste. The mingled murmur of the loud responses, in those rhythmic phrases, so simple, yet so fervent, almost as if every tenth heart-beat, instead of its dull tic-tac, articulated itself as “Good Lord, deliver us! “—the sweet alternation of the two choirs, as their holy song floated from side to side, the keen young voices rising like a flight of singing-birds that passes from one grove to another, carrying its music with it back and forward,—why should she not love these gracious outward signs of those inner harmonies which none could deny made beautiful the lives of many of her fellow-worshippers in the humble, yet not inelegant Chapel of Saint Polycarp?

The young Marylander, who was born and bred to that mode of worship, had introduced her to the chapel, for which he did the honors for such of our boarders as were not otherwise provided for. I saw them looking over the same prayer-book one Sunday, and I could not help thinking that two such young and handsome persons could hardly worship together in safety for a great while. But they seemed to mind nothing but their prayer-book. By-and-by the silken bag was handed round.—I don’t believe she will; so awkward, you know;—besides, she only came by invitation. There she is, with her hand in her pocket, though,—and sure enough, her little bit of silver tinkled as it struck the coin beneath. God bless her! she has n’t much to give; but her eye glistens when she gives it, and that is all Heaven asks.—That was the first time I noticed these young people together, and I am sure they behaved with the most charming propriety,—in fact, there was one of our silent lady-boarders with them, whose eyes would have kept Cupid and Psyche to their good behavior. A day or two after this I noticed that the young gentleman had left his seat, which you may remember was at the corner diagonal to that of Iris, so that they have been as far removed from each other as they could be at the table. His new seat is three or four places farther down the table. Of course I made a romance out of this, at once. So stupid not to see it! How could it be otherwise?—Did you speak, Madam? I beg your pardon. (To my lady-reader.)

I never saw anything like the tenderness with which this young girl treats her little deformed neighbor. If he were in the way of going to church, I know she would follow him. But his worship, if any, is not with the throng of men and women and staring children.

I, the Professor, on the other hand, am a regular church-goer. I should go for various reasons if I did not love it; but I am happy enough to find great pleasure in the midst of devout multitudes, whether I can accept all their creeds or not. One place of worship comes nearer than the rest to my ideal standard, and to this it was that I carried our young girl.

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The Church of the Galileans, as it is called, is even humbler in outside pretensions than the Church of Saint Polycarp. Like that, it is open to all comers. The stranger who approaches it looks down a quiet street and sees the plainest of chapels,—a kind of wooden tent, that owes whatever grace it has to its pointed windows and the high, sharp roofs—traces, both, of that upward movement of ecclesiastical architecture which soared aloft in cathedral-spires, shooting into the sky as the spike of a flowering aloe from the cluster of broad, sharp-wedged leaves below. This suggestion of medieval symbolism, aided by a minute turret in which a hand-bell might have hung and found just room enough to turn over, was all of outward show the small edifice could boast. Within there was very little that pretended to be attractive. A small organ at one side, and a plain pulpit, showed that the building was a church; but it was a church reduced to its simplest expression:

Yet when the great and wise monarch of the East sat upon his throne, in all the golden blaze of the spoils of Ophir and the freights of the navy of Tarshish, his glory was not like that of this simple chapel in its Sunday garniture. For the lilies of the field, in their season, and the fairest flowers of the year, in due succession, were clustered every Sunday morning over the preacher's desk. Slight, thin-tissued blossoms of pink and blue and virgin white in early spring, then the full-breasted and deep-hearted roses of summer, then the velvet-robed crimson and yellow flowers of autumn, and in the winter delicate exotics that grew under skies of glass in the false summers of our crystal palaces without knowing that it was the dreadful winter of New England which was rattling the doors and frosting the panes,—in their language the whole year told its history of life and growth and beauty from that simple desk. There was always at least one good sermon,—this floral homily. There was at least one good prayer,—that brief space when all were silent, after the manner of the Friends at their devotions.

Here, too, Iris found an atmosphere of peace and love. The same gentle, thoughtful faces, the same cheerful but reverential spirit, the same quiet, the same life of active benevolence. But in all else how different from the Church of Saint Polycarp! No clerical costume, no ceremonial forms, no carefully trained choirs. A liturgy they have, to be sure, which does not scruple to borrow from the time-honored manuals of devotion, but also does not hesitate to change its expressions to its own liking.

Perhaps the good people seem a little easy with each other;—they are apt to nod familiarly, and have even been known to whisper before the minister came in. But it is a relief to get rid of that old Sunday—no,—Sabbath face, which suggests the idea that the first day of the week is commemorative of some most mournful event. The truth is, these brethren and sisters meet very

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much as a family does for its devotions, not putting off their humanity in the least, considering it on the whole quite a delightful matter to come together for prayer and song and good counsel from kind and wise lips. And if they are freer in their demeanor than some very precise congregations, they have not the air of a worldly set of people. Clearly they have not come to advertise their tailors and milliners, nor for the sake of exchanging criticisms on the literary character of the sermon they may hear. There is no restlessness and no restraint among these quiet, cheerful worshippers. One thing that keeps them calm and happy during the season so evidently trying to many congregations is, that they join very generally in the singing. In this way they get rid of that accumulated nervous force which escapes in all sorts of fidgety movements, so that a minister trying to keep his congregation still reminds one of a boy with his hand over the nose of a pump which another boy is working,—this spiriting impatience of the people is so like the jets that find their way through his fingers, and the grand rush out at the final Amen! has such a wonderful likeness to the gush that takes place when the boy pulls his hand away, with immense relief, as it seems, to both the pump and the officiating youngster.

How sweet is this blending of all voices and all hearts in one common song of praise! Some will sing a little loud, perhaps,—and now and then an impatient chorister will get a syllable or two in advance, or an enchanted singer so lose all thought of time and place in the luxury of a closing cadence that he holds on to the last semi-breve upon his private responsibility; but how much more of the spirit of the old Psalmist in the music of these imperfectly trained voices than in the academic niceties of the paid performers who take our musical worship out of our hands!

I am of the opinion that the creed of the Church of the Galileans is not laid down in as many details as that of the Church of Saint Polycarp. Yet I suspect, if one of the good people from each of those churches had met over the bed of a suffering fellow-creature, or for the promotion of any charitable object, they would have found they had more in common than all the special beliefs or want of beliefs that separated them would amount to. There are always many who believe that the fruits of a tree afford a better test of its condition than a statement of the composts with which it is dressed, though the last has its meaning and importance, no doubt.

Between these two churches, then, our young Iris divides her affections. But I doubt if she listens to the preacher at either with more devotion than she does to her little neighbor when he talks of these matters.

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What does he believe? In the first place, there is some deep-rooted disquiet lying at the bottom of his soul, which makes him very bitter against all kinds of usurpation over the right of private judgment. Over this seems to lie a certain tenderness for humanity in general, bred out of life-long trial, I should say, but sharply streaked with fiery lines of wrath at various individual acts of wrong, especially if they come in an ecclesiastical shape, and recall to him the days when his mother's great-grandmother was strangled on Witch Hill, with a text from the Old Testament for her halter. With all this, he has a boundless belief in the future of this experimental hemisphere, and especially in the destiny of the free thought of its northeastern metropolis.

—A man can see further, Sir,—he said one day,—from the top of Boston State House, and see more that is worth seeing, than from all the pyramids and turrets and steeples in all the places in the world! No smoke, Sir; no fog, Sir; and a clean sweep from the Outer Light and the sea beyond it to the New Hampshire mountains! Yes, Sir,—and there are great truths that are higher than mountains and broader than seas, that people are looking for from the tops of these hills of ours;—such as the world never saw, though it might have seen them at Jerusalem, if its eyes had been open!—Where do they have most crazy people? Tell me that, Sir!

I answered, that I had heard it said there were more in New England than in most countries, perhaps more than in any part of the world.

Very good, Sir,—he answered.—When have there been most people killed and wounded in the course of this century?

During the wars of the French Empire, no doubt,—I said.

That's it! that's it!—said the Little Gentleman;—where the battle of intelligence is fought, there are most minds bruised and broken! We're battling for a faith here, Sir.

The divinity-student remarked, that it was rather late in the world's history for men to be looking out for a new faith.

I did n't say a new faith,—said the Little Gentleman;—old or new, it can't help being different here in this American mind of ours from anything that ever was before; the people are new, Sir, and that makes the difference. One load of corn goes to the sty, and makes the fat of swine,—another goes to the farm-house, and becomes the muscle that clothes the right arms of heroes. It is n't where a pawn stands on the board that makes the difference, but what the game round it is when it is on this or that square.

Can any man look round and see what Christian countries are now doing, and how they are governed, and what is the general condition of society, without seeing that Christianity is the flag under which the world sails, and not the rudder that steers its

course? No, Sir! There was a great raft built about two thousand years ago,—call it an ark, rather,—the world's great ark! big

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enough to hold all mankind, and made to be launched right out into the open waves of life,—and here it has been lying, one end on the shore and one end bobbing up and down in the water, men fighting all the time as to who should be captain and who should have the state-rooms, and throwing each other over the side because they could not agree about the points of compass, but the great vessel never getting afloat with its freight of nations and their rulers;—and now, Sir, there is and has been for this long time a fleet of “heretic” lighters sailing out of Boston Bay, and they have been saying, and they say now, and they mean to keep saying, “Pump out your bilge-water, shovel over your loads of idle ballast, get out your old rotten cargo, and we will carry it out into deep waters and sink it where it will never be seen again; so shall the ark of the world’s hope float on the ocean, instead of sticking in the dock-mud where it is lying!”

It’s a slow business, this of getting the ark launched. The Jordan was n’t deep enough, and the Tiber was n’t deep enough, and the Rhone was n’t deep enough, and the Thames was n’t deep enough, and perhaps the Charles is n’t deep enough; but I don’t feel sure of that, Sir, and I love to hear the workmen knocking at the old blocks of tradition and making the ways smooth with the oil of the Good Samaritan. I don’t know, Sir,—but I do think she stirs a little,—I do believe she slides;—and when I think of what a work that is for the dear old three-breasted mother of American liberty, I would not take all the glory of all the greatest cities in the world for my birthright in the soil of little Boston!

—Some of us could not help smiling at this burst of local patriotism, especially when it finished with the last two words.

And Iris smiled, too. But it was the radiant smile of pleasure which always lights up her face when her little neighbor gets excited on the great topics of progress in freedom and religion, and especially on the part which, as he pleases himself with believing, his own city is to take in that consummation of human development to which he looks forward.

Presently she looked into his face with a changed expression,—the anxiety of a mother that sees her child suffering.

You are not well,—she said.

I am never well,—he answered.—His eyes fell mechanically on the death’s-head ring he wore on his right hand. She took his hand as if it had been a baby’s, and turned the grim device so that it should be out of sight. One slight, sad, slow movement of the head seemed to say, “The death-symbol is still there!”

A very odd personage, to be sure! Seems to know what is going on, —reads books, old and new,—has many recent publications sent him, they tell me, but, what is more



curious, keeps up with the everyday affairs of the world, too. Whether he hears everything that is said with preternatural acuteness, or whether some confidential friend visits him in a quiet way, is more than I can tell. I can make nothing more of the noises I hear in his room than my old conjectures. The movements I mention are less frequent, but I often hear the plaintive cry,—I observe that it is rarely laughing of late;—I never have detected one articulate word, but I never heard such tones from anything but a human voice.

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There has been, of late, a deference approaching to tenderness, on the part of the boarders generally so far as he is concerned. This is doubtless owing to the air of suffering which seems to have saddened his look of late. Either some passion is gnawing at him inwardly, or some hidden disease is at work upon him.

—What 's the matter with Little Boston?—said the young man John to me one day.—There a'n't much of him, anyhow; but 't seems to me he looks peakeder than ever. The old woman says he's in a bad way, 'n' wants a puss to take care of him. Them pusses that take care of old rich folks marry 'em sometimes,—'n' they don't commonly live a great while after that. No, Sir! I don't see what he wants to die for, after he's taken so much trouble to live in such poor accommodations as that crooked body of his. I should like to know how his soul crawled into it, 'n' how it's goin' to get out. What business has he to die, I should like to know? Let Ma'am Allen (the gentleman with the diamond) die, if he likes, and be (this is a family-magazine); but we a'n't goin' to have him dyin'. Not by a great sight. Can't do without him anyhow. A'n't it fun to hear him blow off his steam?

I believe the young fellow would take it as a personal insult, if the Little Gentleman should show any symptoms of quitting our table for a better world.

—In the mean time, what with going to church in company with our young lady, and taking every chance I could get to talk with her, I have found myself becoming, I will not say intimate, but well acquainted with Miss Iris. There is a certain frankness and directness about her that perhaps belong to her artist nature. For, you see, the one thing that marks the true artist is a clear perception and a firm, bold hand, in distinction from that imperfect mental vision and uncertain touch which give us the feeble pictures and the lumpy statues of the mere artisans on canvas or in stone. A true artist, therefore, can hardly fail to have a sharp, well-defined mental physiognomy. Besides this, many young girls have a strange audacity blended with their instinctive delicacy. Even in physical daring many of them are a match for boys; whereas you will find few among mature women, and especially if they are mothers, who do not confess, and not unfrequently proclaim, their timidity. One of these young girls, as many of us hereabouts remember, climbed to the top of a jagged, slippery rock lying out in the waves,—an ugly height to get up, and a worse one to get down, even for a bold young fellow of sixteen. Another was in the way of climbing tall trees for crows' nests,—and crows generally know about how far boys can "shin up," and set their household establishments above that high-water mark. Still another of these young ladies I saw for the first time in an open boat, tossing on the ocean ground-swell, a mile or two from shore, off a lonely island. She lost all her daring, after she had some girls of her own to look out for.

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Many blondes are very gentle, yielding in character, impressible, unelastic. But the positive blondes, with the golden tint running through them, are often full of character. They come, probably enough, from those deep-bosomed German women that Tacitus portrayed in such strong colors. The negative blondes, or those women whose tints have faded out as their line of descent has become impoverished, are of various blood, and in them the soul has often become pale with that blanching of the hair and loss of color in the eyes which makes them approach the character of Albinesses.

I see in this young girl that union of strength and sensibility which, when directed and impelled by the strong instinct so apt to accompany this combination of active and passive capacity, we call genius. She is not an accomplished artist, certainly, as yet; but there is always an air in every careless figure she draws, as it were of upward aspiration,—the elan of John of Bologna's Mercury,—a lift to them, as if they had on winged sandals, like the herald of the Gods. I hear her singing sometimes; and though she evidently is not trained, yet is there a wild sweetness in her fitful and sometimes fantastic melodies,—such as can come only from the inspiration of the moment,—strangely enough, reminding me of those long passages I have heard from my little neighbor's room, yet of different tone, and by no means to be mistaken for those weird harmonies.

I cannot pretend to deny that I am interested in the girl. Alone, unprotected, as I have seen so many young girls left in boarding-houses, the centre of all the men's eyes that surround the table, watched with jealous sharpness by every woman, most of all by that poor relation of our landlady, who belongs to the class of women that like to catch others in mischief when they themselves are too mature for indiscretions, (as one sees old rogues turn to thief-catchers,) one of Nature's gendarmerie, clad in a complete suit of wrinkles, the cheapest coat-of-mail against the shafts of the great little enemy,—so surrounded, Iris spans this commonplace household-life of ours with her arch of beauty, as the rainbow, whose name she borrows, looks down on a dreary pasture with its feeding flocks and herds of indifferent animals.

These young girls that live in boarding-houses can do pretty much as they will. The female gendarmes are off guard occasionally. The sitting-room has its solitary moments, when any two boarders who wish to meet may come together accidentally, (accidentally, I said, Madam, and I had not the slightest intention of italicizing the word,) and discuss the social or political questions of the day, or any other subject that may prove interesting. Many charming conversations take place at the foot of the stairs, or while one of the parties is holding the latch of a door,—in the shadow of porticoes, and especially on those outside balconies which some of our Southern neighbors call "stoops," the most charming places in the world when the moon is just right and the roses and honeysuckles are in full blow,—as we used to think in eighteen hundred and never mention it.



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On such a balcony or “stoop,” one evening, I walked with Iris. We were on pretty good terms now, and I had coaxed her arm under mine,—my left arm, of course. That leaves one’s right arm free to defend the lovely creature, if the rival—odious wretch! attempt, to ravish her from your side. Likewise if one’s heart should happen to beat a little, its mute language will not be without its meaning, as you will perceive when the arm you hold begins to tremble, a circumstance like to occur, if you happen to be a good-looking young fellow, and you two have the “stoop” to yourselves.

We had it to ourselves that evening. The Koh-inoor, as we called him, was in a corner with our landlady’s daughter. The young fellow John was smoking out in the yard. The gendarme was afraid of the evening air, and kept inside. The young Marylander came to the door, looked out and saw us walking together, gave his hat a pull over his forehead and stalked off. I felt a slight spasm, as it were, in the arm I held, and saw the girl’s head turn over her shoulder for a second. What a kind creature this is! She has no special interest in this youth, but she does not like to see a young fellow going off because he feels as if he were not wanted.

She had her locked drawing-book under her arm.—Let me take it,—I said.

She gave it to me to carry.

This is full of caricatures of all of us, I am sure,—said I.

She laughed, and said,—No,—not all of you.

I was there, of course?

Why, no,—she had never taken so much pains with me.

Then she would let me see the inside of it?

She would think of it.

Just as we parted, she took a little key from her pocket and handed it to me. This unlocks my naughty book,—she said,—you shall see it. I am not afraid of you.

I don’t know whether the last words exactly pleased me. At any rate, I took the book and hurried with it to my room. I opened it, and saw, in a few glances, that I held the heart of Iris in my hand.

—I have no verses for you this month, except these few lines suggested by the season.

Midsummer.



Here! sweep these foolish leaves away,
I will not crush my brains to-day!
Look! are the southern curtains drawn?
Fetch me a fan, and so begone!

Not that,—the palm-tree's rustling leaf
Brought from a parching coral-reef!
Its breath is heated;—I would swing
The broad gray plumes,—the eagle's wing.

I hate these roses' feverish blood!
Pluck me a half-blown lily-bud,
A long-stemmed lily from the lake,
Cold as a coiling water-snake.

Rain me sweet odors on the air,
And wheel me up my Indian chair,
And spread some book not otherwise
Flat out before my sleepy eyes.

—Who knows it not,—this dead recoil
Of weary fibres stretched with toil,
The pulse that flutters faint and low
When Summer's seething breezes blow?

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O Nature! bare thy loving breast
And give thy child one hour of rest,
One little hour to lie unseen
Beneath thy scarf of leafy green!

So, curtained by a singing pine,
Its murmuring voice shall blend with mine,
Till, lost in dreams, my faltering lay
In sweeter music dies away.

X

Iris, her book

I pray thee by the soul of her that bore thee,
By thine own sister's spirit I implore thee,
Deal gently with the leaves that lie before thee!

For Iris had no mother to infold her,
Nor ever leaned upon a sister's shoulder,
Telling the twilight thoughts that Nature told her.

She had not learned the mystery of awaking
Those chorded keys that soothe a sorrow's aching,
Giving the dumb heart voice, that else were breaking.

Yet lived, wrought, suffered. Lo, the pictured token!
Why should her fleeting day-dreams fade unspoken,
Like daffodils that die with sheaths unbroken?

She knew not love, yet lived in maiden fancies,
Walked simply clad, a queen of high romances,
And talked strange tongues with angels in her trances.

Twin-souled she seemed, a twofold nature wearing,
Sometimes a flashing falcon in her daring,
Then a poor mateless dove that droops despairing.

Questioning all things: Why her Lord had sent her?
What were these torturing gifts, and wherefore lent her?
Scornful as spirit fallen, its own tormentor.



And then all tears and anguish: Queen of Heaven,
Sweet Saints, and Thou by mortal sorrows riven,
Save me! oh, save me! Shall I die forgiven?

And then—Ah, God! But nay, it little matters
Look at the wasted seeds that autumn scatters,
The myriad germs that Nature shapes and shatters!

If she had—Well! She longed, and knew not wherefore
Had the world nothing she might live to care for?
No second self to say her evening prayer for?

She knew the marble shapes that set men dreaming,
Yet with her shoulders bare and tresses streaming
Showed not unlovely to her simple seeming.

Vain? Let it be so! Nature was her teacher.
What if a lonely and unsistered creature
Loved her own harmless gift of pleasing feature,

Saying, unsaddened,—This shall soon be faded,
And double-hued the shining tresses braided,
And all the sunlight of the morning shaded?

—This her poor book is full of saddest follies,
Of tearful smiles and laughing melancholies,
With summer roses twined and wintry hollies.

In the strange crossing of uncertain chances,
Somewhere, beneath some maiden's tear-dimmed glances
May fall her little book of dreams and fancies.



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Sweet sister! Iris, who shall never name thee,
Trembling for fear her open heart may shame thee,
Speaks from this vision-haunted page to claim thee.

Spare her, I pray thee! If the maid is sleeping,
Peace with her! she has had her hour of weeping.
No more! She leaves her memory in thy keeping.

These verses were written in the first leaves of the locked volume. As I turned the pages, I hesitated for a moment. Is it quite fair to take advantage of a generous, trusting impulse to read the unsunned depths of a young girl's nature, which I can look through, as the balloon-voyagers tell us they see from their hanging-baskets through the translucent waters which the keenest eye of such as sail over them in ships might strive to pierce in vain? Why has the child trusted me with such artless confessions,—self-revelations, which might be whispered by trembling lips, under the veil of twilight, in sacred confessionals, but which I cannot look at in the light of day without a feeling of wronging a sacred confidence?

To all this the answer seemed plain enough after a little thought. She did not know how fearfully she had disclosed herself; she was too profoundly innocent. Her soul was no more ashamed than the fair shapes that walked in Eden without a thought of over-liberal loveliness. Having nobody to tell her story to,—having, as she said in her verses, no musical instrument to laugh and cry with her,—nothing, in short, but the language of pen and pencil,—all the veinings of her nature were impressed on these pages as those of a fresh leaf are transferred to the blank sheets which inclose it. It was the same thing which I remember seeing beautifully shown in a child of some four or five years we had one day at our boarding-house. The child was a deaf mute. But its soul had the inner sense that answers to hearing, and the shaping capacity which through natural organs realizes itself in words. Only it had to talk with its face alone; and such speaking eyes, such rapid alternations of feeling and shifting expressions of thought as flitted over its face, I have never seen in any other human countenance.

I wonder if something of spiritual transparency is not typified in the golden-blond organization. There are a great many little creatures,—many small fishes, for instance,—which are literally transparent, with the exception of some of the internal organs. The heart can be seen beating as if in a case of clouded crystal. The central nervous column with its sheath runs as a dark stripe through the whole length of the diaphanous muscles of the body. Other little creatures are so darkened with pigment that we can see only their surface. Conspirators and poisoners are painted with black, beady-eyes and swarthy hue; Judas, in Leonardo's picture, is the model of them all.

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However this may be, I should say there never had been a book like this of Iris,—so full of the heart's silent language, so transparent that the heart itself could be seen beating through it. I should say there never could have been such a book, but for one recollection, which is not peculiar to myself, but is shared by a certain number of my former townsmen. If you think I over-color this matter of the young girl's book, hear this, which there are others, as I just said, besides myself, will tell you is strictly true.

THE BOOK OF THE THREE MAIDEN SISTERS.

In the town called Cantabridge, now a city, water-veined and gas windpiped, in the street running down to the Bridge, beyond which dwelt Sally, told of in a book of a friend of mine, was of old a house inhabited by three maidens. They left no near kinsfolk, I believe; whether they did or not, I have no ill to speak of them; for they lived and died in all good report and maidenly credit. The house they lived in was of the small, gambrel-roofed cottage pattern, after the shape of Esquires' houses, but after the size of the dwellings of handicraftsmen. The lower story was fitted up as a shop. Specially was it provided with one of those half-doors now so rarely met with, which are to whole doors as spencers worn by old folk are to coats. They speak of limited commerce united with a social or observing disposition—on the part of the shopkeeper,—allowing, as they do, talk with passers-by, yet keeping off such as have not the excuse of business to cross the threshold. On the door-posts, at either side, above the half-door, hung certain perennial articles of merchandise, of which my memory still has hanging among its faded photographs a kind of netted scarf and some pairs of thick woollen stockings. More articles, but not very many, were stored inside; and there was one drawer, containing children's books, out of which I once was treated to a minute quarto ornamented with handsome cuts. This was the only purchase I ever knew to be made at the shop kept by the three maiden ladies, though it is probable there were others. So long as I remember the shop, the same scarf and, I should say, the same stockings hung on the door-posts.—You think I am exaggerating again, and that shopkeepers would not keep the same article exposed for years. Come to me, the Professor, and I will take you in five minutes to a shop in this city where I will show you an article hanging now in the very place where more than thirty years ago I myself inquired the price of it of the present head of the establishment. [This was a glass alembic, which hung up in Daniel Henchman's apothecary shop, corner of Cambridge and Chambers streets.]

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The three maidens were of comely presence, and one of them had had claims to be considered a Beauty. When I saw them in the old meeting-house on Sundays, as they rustled in through the aisles in silks and satins, not gay, but more than decent, as I remember them, I thought of My Lady Bountiful in the history of "Little King Pippin," and of the Madam Blaize of Goldsmith (who, by the way, must have taken the hint of it from a pleasant poem, "Monsieur de la Palisse," attributed to De la Monnoye, in the collection of French songs before me). There was some story of an old romance in which the Beauty had played her part. Perhaps they all had had lovers; for, as I said, they were shapely and seemly personages, as I remember them; but their lives were out of the flower and in the berry at the time of my first recollections.

One after another they all three dropped away, objects of kindly attention to the good people round, leaving little or almost nothing, and nobody to inherit it. Not absolutely nothing, of course. There must have been a few old dresses—perhaps some bits of furniture, a Bible, and the spectacles the good old souls read it through, and little keepsakes, such as make us cry to look at, when we find them in old drawers;—such relics there must have been. But there was more. There was a manuscript of some hundred pages, closely written, in which the poor things had chronicled for many years the incidents of their daily life. After their death it was passed round somewhat freely, and fell into my hands. How I have cried and laughed and colored over it! There was nothing in it to be ashamed of, perhaps there was nothing in it to laugh at, but such a picture of the mode of being of poor simple good old women I do believe was never drawn before. And there were all the smallest incidents recorded, such as do really make up humble life, but which die out of all mere literary memoirs, as the houses where the Egyptians or the Athenians lived crumble and leave only their temples standing. I know, for instance, that on a given day of a certain year, a kindly woman, herself a poor widow, now, I trust, not without special mercies in heaven for her good deeds,—for I read her name on a proper tablet in the churchyard a week ago,—sent a fractional pudding from her own table to the Maiden Sisters, who, I fear, from the warmth and detail of their description, were fasting, or at least on short allowance, about that time. I know who sent them the segment of melon, which in her riotous fancy one of them compared to those huge barges to which we give the ungracious name of mudscows. But why should I illustrate further what it seems almost a breach of confidence to speak of? Some kind friend, who could challenge a nearer interest than the curious strangers into whose hands the book might fall, at last claimed it, and I was glad that it should be henceforth sealed to common eyes. I learned from it that every good

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and, alas! every evil act we do may slumber unforgotten even in some earthly record. I got a new lesson in that humanity which our sharp race finds it so hard to learn. The poor widow, fighting hard to feed and clothe and educate her children, had not forgotten the poorer ancient maidens. I remembered it the other day, as I stood by her place of rest, and I felt sure that it was remembered elsewhere. I know there are prettier words than pudding, but I can't help it,—the pudding went upon the record, I feel sure, with the mite which was cast into the treasury by that other poor widow whose deed the world shall remember forever, and with the coats and garments which the good women cried over, when Tabitha, called by interpretation Dorcas, lay dead in the upper chamber, with her charitable needlework strewed around her.

—Such was the Book of the Maiden Sisters. You will believe me more readily now when I tell you that I found the soul of Iris in the one that lay open before me. Sometimes it was a poem that held it, sometimes a drawing, angel, arabesque, caricature, or a mere hieroglyphic symbol of which I could make nothing. A rag of cloud on one page, as I remember, with a streak of red zigzagging out of it across the paper as naturally as a crack runs through a China bowl. On the next page a dead bird,—some little favorite, I suppose; for it was worked out with a special love, and I saw on the leaf that sign with which once or twice in my life I have had a letter sealed,—a round spot where the paper is slightly corrugated, and, if there is writing there, the letters are somewhat faint and blurred. Most of the pages were surrounded with emblematic tracteries. It was strange to me at first to see how often she introduced those homelier wild-flowers which we call weeds,—for it seemed there was none of them too humble for her to love, and none too little cared for by Nature to be without its beauty for her artist eye and pencil. By the side of the garden-flowers,—of Spring's curled darlings, the hyacinths, of rosebuds, dear to sketching maidens, of flower-de-luces and morning-glories, nay, oftener than these, and more tenderly caressed by the colored brush that rendered them,—were those common growths which fling themselves to be crushed under our feet and our wheels, making themselves so cheap in this perpetual martyrdom that we forget each of them is a ray of the Divine beauty.

Yellow jappanned buttercups and star-disked dandelions,—just as we see them lying in the grass, like sparks that have leaped from the kindling sun of summer; the profuse daisy-like flower which whitens the fields, to the great disgust of liberal shepherds, yet seems fair to loving eyes, with its button-like mound of gold set round with milk-white rays; the tall-stemmed succory, setting its pale blue flowers aflame, one after another, sparingly, as the lights are kindled in the candelabra of decaying palaces where the heirs of dethroned monarchs

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are dying out; the red and white clovers, the broad, flat leaves of the plantain,—“the white man’s foot,” as the Indians called it,—the wiry, jointed stems of that iron creeping plant which we call “knot-grass,” and which loves its life so dearly that it is next to impossible to murder it with a hoe, as it clings to the cracks of the pavement;—all these plants, and many more, she wove into her fanciful garlands and borders.—On one of the pages were some musical notes. I touched them from curiosity on a piano belonging to one of our boarders. Strange! There are passages that I have heard before, plaintive, full of some hidden meaning, as if they were gasping for words to interpret them. She must have heard the strains that have so excited my curiosity, coming from my neighbor’s chamber. The illuminated border she had traced round the page that held these notes took the place of the words they seemed to be aching for. Above, a long monotonous sweep of waves, leaden-hued, anxious and jaded and sullen, if you can imagine such an expression in water. On one side an Alpine needle, as it were, of black basalt, girdled with snow. On the other a threaded waterfall. The red morning-tint that shone in the drops had a strange look,—one would say the cliff was bleeding;—perhaps she did not mean it. Below, a stretch of sand, and a solitary bird of prey, with his wings spread over some unseen object.—And on the very next page a procession wound along, after the fashion of that on the title-page of Fuller’s “Holy War,” in which I recognized without difficulty every boarder at our table in all the glory of the most resplendent caricature—three only excepted,—the Little Gentleman, myself, and one other.

I confess I did expect to see something that would remind me of the girl’s little deformed neighbor, if not portraits of him.—There is a left arm again, though;—no,—that is from the “Fighting Gladiator,” the “Jeune Heros combattant” of the Louvre;—there is the broad ring of the shield. From a cast, doubtless. [The separate casts of the “Gladiator’s” arm look immense; but in its place the limb looks light, almost slender,—such is the perfection of that miraculous marble. I never felt as if I touched the life of the old Greeks until I looked on that statue.]—Here is something very odd, to be sure. An Eden of all the humped and crooked creatures! What could have been in her head when she worked out such a fantasy? She has contrived to give them all beauty or dignity or melancholy grace. A Bactrian camel lying under a palm. A dromedary flashing up the sands,—spray of the dry ocean sailed by the “ship of the desert.” A herd of buffaloes, uncouth, shaggy-maned, heavy in the forehead, light in the hind-quarter. [The buffalo is the lion of the ruminants.] And there is a Norman horse, with his huge, rough collar, echoing, as it were, the natural form of the other beast. And here are twisted serpents; and stately swans, with

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answering curves in their bowed necks, as if they had snake's blood under their white feathers; and grave, high-shouldered herons standing on one foot like cripples, and looking at life round them with the cold stare of monumental effigies.—A very odd page indeed! Not a creature in it without a curve or a twist, and not one of them a mean figure to look at. You can make your own comment; I am fanciful, you know. I believe she is trying to idealize what we vulgarly call deformity, which she strives to look at in the light of one of Nature's eccentric curves, belonging to her system of beauty, as the hyperbola, and parabola belong to the conic sections, though we cannot see them as symmetrical and entire figures, like the circle and ellipse. At any rate, I cannot help referring this paradise of twisted spines to some idea floating in her head connected with her friend whom Nature has warped in the moulding.—That is nothing to another transcendental fancy of mine. I believe her soul thinks itself in his little crooked body at times,—if it does not really get freed or half freed from her own. Did you ever see a case of catalepsy? You know what I mean,—transient loss of sense, will, and motion; body and limbs taking any position in which they are put, as if they belonged to a lay-figure. She had been talking with him and listening to him one day when the boarders moved from the table nearly all at once. But she sat as before, her cheek resting on her hand, her amber eyes wide open and still. I went to her, she was breathing as usual, and her heart was beating naturally enough,—but she did not answer. I bent her arm; it was as plastic as softened wax, and kept the place I gave it.—This will never do, though, and I sprinkled a few drops of water on her forehead. She started and looked round.—I have been in a dream,—she said;—I feel as if all my strength were in this arm;—give me your hand!—She took my right hand in her left, which looked soft and white enough, but—Good Heaven! I believe she will crack my bones! All the nervous power in her body must have flashed through those muscles; as when a crazy lady snaps her iron window-bars,—she who could hardly glove herself when in her common health. Iris turned pale, and the tears came to her eyes;—she saw she had given pain. Then she trembled, and might have fallen but for me;—the poor little soul had been in one of those trances that belong to the spiritual pathology of higher natures, mostly those of women.

To come back to this wondrous book of Iris. Two pages faced each other which I took for symbolical expressions of two states of mind. On the left hand, a bright blue sky washed over the page, specked with a single bird. No trace of earth, but still the winged creature seemed to be soaring upward and upward. Facing it, one of those black dungeons such as Piranesi alone of all men has pictured. I am sure she must have seen those awful prisons of

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his, out of which the Opium-Eater got his nightmare vision, described by another as “cemeteries of departed greatness, where monstrous and forbidden things are crawling and twining their slimy convolutions among mouldering bones, broken sculpture, and mutilated inscriptions.” Such a black dungeon faced the page that held the blue sky and the single bird; at the bottom of it something was coiled,—what, and whether meant for dead or alive, my eyes could not make out.

I told you the young girl’s soul was in this book. As I turned over the last leaves I could not help starting. There were all sorts of faces among the arabesques which laughed and scowled in the borders that ran round the pages. They had mostly the outline of childish or womanly or manly beauty, without very distinct individuality. But at last it seemed to me that some of them were taking on a look not wholly unfamiliar to me; there were features that did not seem new.—Can it be so? Was there ever such innocence in a creature so full of life? She tells her heart’s secrets as a three-years-old child betrays itself without need of being questioned! This was no common miss, such as are turned out in scores from the young-lady-factories, with parchments warranting them accomplished and virtuous,—in case anybody should question the fact. I began to understand her;—and what is so charming as to read the secret of a real femme incomprise?—for such there are, though they are not the ones who think themselves uncomprehended women.

Poets are never young, in one sense. Their delicate ear hears the far-off whispers of eternity, which coarser souls must travel towards for scores of years before their dull sense is touched by them. A moment’s insight is sometimes worth a life’s experience. I have frequently seen children, long exercised by pain and exhaustion, whose features had a strange look of advanced age. Too often one meets such in our charitable institutions. Their faces are saddened and wrinkled, as if their few summers were threescore years and ten.

And so, many youthful poets have written as if their hearts were old before their time; their pensive morning twilight has been as cool and saddening as that of evening in more common lives. The profound melancholy of those lines of Shelley,

“I could lie down like a tired child
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne and yet must bear.”

came from a heart, as he says, “too soon grown old,”—at twenty-six years, as dull people count time, even when they talk of poets.

I know enough to be prepared for an exceptional nature,—only this gift of the hand in rendering every thought in form and color, as well as in words, gives a richness to this

young girl's alphabet of feeling and imagery that takes me by surprise. And then besides, and most of all, I am puzzled at her sudden and seemingly easy confidence in me. Perhaps I owe it to my—Well, no matter! How one must love the editor who first calls him the venerable So-and-So!

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—I locked the book and sighed as I laid it down. The world is always ready to receive talent with open arms. Very often it does not know what to do with genius. Talent is a docile creature. It bows its head meekly while the world slips the collar over it. It backs into the shafts like a lamb. It draws its load cheerfully, and is patient of the bit and of the whip. But genius is always impatient of its harness; its wild blood makes it hard to train.

Talent seems, at first, in one sense, higher than genius,—namely, that it is more uniformly and absolutely submitted to the will, and therefore more distinctly human in its character. Genius, on the other hand, is much more like those instincts which govern the admirable movements of the lower creatures, and therefore seems to have something of the lower or animal character. A goose flies by a chart which the Royal Geographical Society could not mend. A poet, like the goose, sails without visible landmarks to unexplored regions of truth, which philosophy has yet to lay down on its atlas. The philosopher gets his track by observation; the poet trusts to his inner sense, and makes the straighter and swifter line.

And yet, to look at it in another light, is not even the lowest instinct more truly divine than any voluntary human act done by the suggestion of reason? What is a bee's architecture but an unobstructed divine thought?—what is a builder's approximative rule but an obstructed thought of the Creator, a mutilated and imperfect copy of some absolute rule Divine Wisdom has established, transmitted through a human soul as an image through clouded glass?

Talent is a very common family-trait; genius belongs rather to individuals;—just as you find one giant or one dwarf in a family, but rarely a whole brood of either. Talent is often to be envied, and genius very commonly to be pitied. It stands twice the chance of the other of dying in hospital, in jail, in debt, in bad reputation. It is a perpetual insult to mediocrity; its every word is a trespass against somebody's vested ideas,—blasphemy against somebody's O'm, or intangible private truth.

—What is the use of my weighing out antitheses in this way, like a rhetorical grocer?—You know twenty men of talent, who are making their way in the world; you may, perhaps, know one man of genius, and very likely do not want to know any more. For a divine instinct, such as drives the goose southward and the poet heavenward, is a hard thing to manage, and proves too strong for many whom it possesses. It must have been a terrible thing to have a friend like Chatterton or Burns. And here is a being who certainly has more than talent, at once poet and artist in tendency, if not yet fairly developed,—a woman, too;—and genius grafted on womanhood is like to overgrow it and break its stem, as you may see a grafted fruit-tree spreading over the stock which cannot keep pace with its evolution.

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I think now you know something of this young person. She wants nothing but an atmosphere to expand in. Now and then one meets with a nature for which our hard, practical New England life is obviously utterly incompetent. It comes up, as a Southern seed, dropped by accident in one of our gardens, finds itself trying to grow and blow into flower among the homely roots and the hardy shrubs that surround it. There is no question that certain persons who are born among us find themselves many degrees too far north. Tropical by organization, they cannot fight for life with our eastern and northwestern breezes without losing the color and fragrance into which their lives would have blossomed in the latitude of myrtles and oranges. Strange effects are produced by suffering any living thing to be developed under conditions such as Nature had not intended for it. A French physiologist confined some tadpoles under water in the dark. Removed from the natural stimulus of light, they did not develop legs and arms at the proper period of their growth, and so become frogs; they swelled and spread into gigantic tadpoles. I have seen a hundred colossal human tadpoles, overgrown Zarvce or embryos; nay, I am afraid we Protestants should look on a considerable proportion of the Holy Father's one hundred and thirty-nine millions as spiritual larvae, sculling about in the dark by the aid of their caudal extremities, instead of standing on their legs, and breathing by gills, instead of taking the free air of heaven into the lungs made to receive it. Of course we never try to keep young souls in the tadpole state, for fear they should get a pair or two of legs by-and-by and jump out of the pool where they have been bred and fed! Never! Never. Never?

Now to go back to our plant. You may know, that, for the earlier stages of development of almost any vegetable, you only want air, water, light, and warmth. But by-and-by, if it is to have special complex principles as a part of its organization, they must be supplied by the soil;—your pears will crack, if the root of the tree gets no iron,—your asparagus-bed wants salt as much as you do. Just at the period of adolescence, the mind often suddenly begins to come into flower and to set its fruit. Then it is that many young natures, having exhausted the spiritual soil round them of all it contains of the elements they demand, wither away, undeveloped and uncolored, unless they are transplanted.

Pray for these dear young souls! This is the second natural birth;—for I do not speak of those peculiar religious experiences which form the point of transition in many lives between the consciousness of a general relation to the Divine nature and a special personal relation. The litany should count a prayer for them in the list of its supplications; masses should be said for them as for souls in purgatory; all good Christians should remember them as they remember those in peril through travel or sickness or in warfare.

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I would transport this child to Rome at once, if I had my will. She should ripen under an Italian sun. She should walk under the frescoed vaults of palaces, until her colors deepened to those of Venetian beauties, and her forms were perfected into rivalry with the Greek marbles, and the east wind was out of her soil. Has she not exhausted this lean soil of the elements her growing nature requires?

I do not know. The magnolia grows and comes into full flower on Cape Ann, many degrees out of its proper region. I was riding once along that delicious road between the hills and the sea, when we passed a thicket where there seemed to be a chance of finding it. In five minutes I had fallen on the trees in full blossom, and filled my arms with the sweet, resplendent flowers. I could not believe I was in our cold, northern Essex, which, in the dreary season when I pass its slate-colored, unpainted farm-houses, and huge, square, windy, 'squire-built "mansions," looks as brown and unvegetating as an old rug with its patterns all trodden out and the colored fringe worn from all its border.

If the magnolia can bloom in northern New England, why should not a poet or a painter come to his full growth here just as well? Yes, but if the gorgeous tree-flower is rare, and only as if by a freak of Nature springs up in a single spot among the beeches and alders, is there not as much reason to think the perfumed flower of imaginative genius will find it hard to be born and harder to spread its leaves in the clear, cold atmosphere of our ultra-temperate zone of humanity?

Take the poet. On the one hand, I believe that a person with the poetical faculty finds material everywhere. The grandest objects of sense and thought are common to all climates and civilizations. The sky, the woods, the waters, the storms, life, death love, the hope and vision of eternity,—these are images that write themselves in poetry in every soul which has anything of the divine gift.

On the other hand, there is such a thing as a lean, impoverished life, in distinction from a rich and suggestive one. Which our common New England life might be considered, I will not decide. But there are some things I think the poet misses in our western Eden. I trust it is not unpatriotic to mention them in this point of view as they come before us in so many other aspects.

There is no sufficient flavor of humanity in the soil out of which we grow. At Cantabridge, near the sea, I have once or twice picked up an Indian arrowhead in a fresh furrow. At Canoe Meadow, in the Berkshire Mountains, I have found Indian arrowheads. So everywhere Indian arrowheads. Whether a hundred or a thousand years old, who knows? who cares? There is no history to the red race,—there is hardly an individual in it;—a few instincts on legs and holding a tomahawk—there is the Indian of all time. The story of one red ant is the story of all red ants. So, the poet, in trying to wing his way back through the life that has kindled, flitted, and faded along our

watercourses and on our southern hillsides for unknown generations, finds nothing to breathe or fly in; he meets

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“A vast vacuity! all unawares,
Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb down he drops
Ten thousand fathom deep.”

But think of the Old World,—that part of it which is the seat of ancient civilization! The stakes of the Britons’ stockades are still standing in the bed of the Thames. The ploughman turns up an old Saxon’s bones, and beneath them is a tessellated pavement of the time of the Caesars. In Italy, the works of mediaeval Art seem to be of yesterday,—Rome, under her kings, is but an intruding newcomer, as we contemplate her in the shadow of the Cyclopean walls of Fiesole or Volterra. It makes a man human to live on these old humanized soils. He cannot help marching in step with his kind in the rear of such a procession. They say a dead man’s hand cures swellings, if laid on them. There is nothing like the dead cold hand of the Past to take down our tumid egotism and lead us into the solemn flow of the life of our race. Rousseau came out of one of his sad self-torturing fits, as he cast his eye on the arches of the old Roman aqueduct, the Pont du Gard.

I am far from denying that there is an attraction in a thriving railroad village. The new “depot,” the smartly-painted pine houses, the spacious brick hotel, the white meeting-house, and the row of youthful and leggy trees before it, are exhilarating. They speak of progress, and the time when there shall be a city, with a His Honor the Mayor, in the place of their trim but transient architectural growths. Pardon me, if I prefer the pyramids. They seem to me crystals formed from a stronger solution of humanity than the steeple of the new meeting-house. I may be wrong, but the Tiber has a voice for me, as it whispers to the piers of the Pons Alius, even more full of meaning than my well-beloved Charles eddying round the piles of West Boston Bridge.

Then, again, we Yankees are a kind of gypsies,—a mechanical and migratory race. A poet wants a home. He can dispense with an apple-parer and a reaping-machine. I feel this more for others than for myself, for the home of my birth and childhood has been as yet exempted from the change which has invaded almost everything around it.

—Pardon me a short digression. To what small things our memory and our affections attach themselves! I remember, when I was a child, that one of the girls planted some Star-of-Bethlehem bulbs in the southwest corner of our front-yard. Well, I left the paternal roof and wandered in other lands, and learned to think in the words of strange people. But after many years, as I looked on the little front-yard again, it occurred to me that there used to be some Star-of-Bethlehems in the southwest corner. The grass was tall there, and the blade of the plant is very much like grass, only thicker and glossier. Even as Tully parted the briers and brambles when he hunted for the sphere-containing cylinder that marked the grave of Archimedes, so did I comb the grass with my fingers for my monumental memorial-flower. Nature had stored my keepsake tenderly in her bosom; the glossy, faintly streaked blades were there; they are there still, though they

never flower, darkened as they are by the shade of the elms and rooted in the matted turf.

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Our hearts are held down to our homes by innumerable fibres, trivial as that I have just recalled; but Gulliver was fixed to the soil, you remember, by pinning his head a hair at a time. Even a stone with a whitish band crossing it, belonging to the pavement of the back-yard, insisted on becoming one of the talismans of memory. This intussusception of the ideas of inanimate objects, and their faithful storing away among the sentiments, are curiously prefigured in the material structure of the thinking centre itself. In the very core of the brain, in the part where Des Cartes placed the soul, is a small mineral deposit, consisting, as I have seen it in the microscope, of grape-like masses of crystalline matter.

But the plants that come up every year in the same place, like the Star-of-Bethlehems, of all the lesser objects, give me the liveliest home-feeling. Close to our ancient gambrel-roofed house is the dwelling of pleasant old Neighbor Walrus. I remember the sweet honeysuckle that I saw in flower against the wall of his house a few months ago, as long as I remember the sky and stars. That clump of peonies, butting their purple heads through the soil every spring in just the same circle, and by-and-by unpacking their hard balls of buds in flowers big enough to make a double handful of leaves, has come up in just that place, Neighbor Walrus tells me, for more years than I have passed on this planet. It is a rare privilege in our nomadic state to find the home of one's childhood and its immediate neighborhood thus unchanged. Many born poets, I am afraid, flower poorly in song, or not at all, because they have been too often transplanted.

Then a good many of our race are very hard and unimaginative;—their voices have nothing caressing; their movements are as of machinery without elasticity or oil. I wish it were fair to print a letter a young girl, about the age of our Iris, wrote a short time since. “I am *** **,” she says, and tells her whole name outright. Ah!—said I, when I read that first frank declaration,—you are one of the right sort!—She was. A winged creature among close-clipped barn door fowl. How tired the poor girl was of the dull life about her,—the old woman's “skeleton hand” at the window opposite, drawing her curtains,—“Ma'am shooin' away the hens,”—the vacuous country eyes staring at her as only country eyes can stare,—a routine of mechanical duties, and the soul's half-articulated cry for sympathy, without an answer! Yes,—pray for her, and for all such! Faith often cures their longings; but it is so hard to give a soul to heaven that has not first been trained in the fullest and sweetest human affections! Too often they fling their hearts away on unworthy objects. Too often they pine in a secret discontent, which spreads its leaden cloud over the morning of their youth. The immeasurable distance between one of these delicate natures and the average youths among whom is like to be her only choice makes one's heart ache. How many women are born too finely organized in sense and soul for the highway they must walk with feet unshod! Life is adjusted to the wants of the stronger sex. There are plenty of torrents to be crossed in its journey; but their stepping-stones are measured by the stride of man, and not of woman.

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Women are more subject than men to atrophy of the heart. So says the great medical authority, Laennec. Incurable cases of this kind used to find their hospitals in convents. We have the disease in New England,—but not the hospitals. I don't like to think of it. I will not believe our young Iris is going to die out in this way. Providence will find her some great happiness, or affliction, or duty,—and which would be best for her, I cannot tell. One thing is sure: the interest she takes in her little neighbor is getting to be more engrossing than ever. Something is the matter with him, and she knows it, and I think worries herself about it.

I wonder sometimes how so fragile and distorted a frame has kept the fiery spirit that inhabits it so long its tenant. He accounts for it in his own way.

The air of the Old World is good for nothing, he said, one day.—Used up, Sir,—breathed over and over again. You must come to this side, Sir, for an atmosphere fit to breathe nowadays. Did not worthy Mr. Higginson say that a breath of New England's air is better than a sup of Old England's ale? I ought to have died when I was a boy, Sir; but I could n't die in this Boston air,—and I think I shall have to go to New York one of these days, when it's time for me to drop this bundle,—or to New Orleans, where they have the yellow fever,—or to Philadelphia, where they have so many doctors.

This was some time ago; but of late he has seemed, as I have before said, to be ailing. An experienced eye, such as I think I may call mine, can tell commonly whether a man is going to die, or not, long before he or his friends are alarmed about him. I don't like it.

Iris has told me that the Scottish gift of second-sight runs in her family, and that she is afraid she has it. Those who are so endowed look upon a well man and see a shroud wrapt about him. According to the degree to which it covers him, his death will be near or more remote. It is an awful faculty; but science gives one too much like it. Luckily for our friends, most of us who have the scientific second-sight school ourselves not to betray our knowledge by word or look.

Day by day, as the Little Gentleman comes to the table, it seems to me that the shadow of some approaching change falls darker and darker over his countenance. Nature is struggling with something, and I am afraid she is under in the wrestling-match. You do not care much, perhaps, for my particular conjectures as to the nature of his difficulty. I should say, however, from the sudden flushes to which he is subject, and certain other marks which, as an expert, I know how to interpret, that his heart was in trouble; but then he presses his hand to the right side, as if there were the centre of his uneasiness.

When I say difficulty about the heart, I do not mean any of those sentimental maladies of that organ which figure more largely in romances than on the returns which furnish our Bills of Mortality. I mean some actual change in the organ itself, which may carry him off by slow and painful degrees, or strike him down with one huge pang and only time for a single shriek,—as when the shot broke through the brave Captain Nolan's

breast, at the head of the Light Brigade at Balaklava, and with a loud cry he dropped dead from his saddle.

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I thought it only fair to say something of what I apprehended to some who were entitled to be warned. The landlady's face fell when I mentioned my fears.

Poor man!—she said.—And will leave the best room empty! Has n't he got any sisters or nieces or anybody to see to his things, if he should be took away? Such a sight of cases, full of everything! Never thought of his failin' so suddin. A complication of diseases, she expected. Liver-complaint one of 'em?

After this first involuntary expression of the too natural selfish feelings, (which we must not judge very harshly, unless we happen to be poor widows ourselves, with children to keep filled, covered, and taught,—rents high,—beef eighteen to twenty cents per pound,)—after this first squeak of selfishness, followed by a brief movement of curiosity, so invariable in mature females, as to the nature of the complaint which threatens the life of a friend or any person who may happen to be mentioned as ill,—the worthy soul's better feelings struggled up to the surface, and she grieved for the doomed invalid, until a tear or two came forth and found their way down a channel worn for them since the early days of her widowhood.

Oh, this dreadful, dreadful business of being the prophet of evil! Of all the trials which those who take charge of others' health and lives have to undergo, this is the most painful. It is all so plain to the practised eye!—and there is the poor wife, the doting mother, who has never suspected anything, or at least has clung always to the hope which you are just going to wrench away from her!—I must tell Iris that I think her poor friend is in a precarious state. She seems nearer to him than anybody.

I did tell her. Whatever emotion it produced, she kept a still face, except, perhaps, a little trembling of the lip.—Could I be certain that there was any mortal complaint?—Why, no, I could not be certain; but it looked alarming to me.—He shall have some of my life,—she said.

I suppose this to have been a fancy of hers, or a kind of magnetic power she could give out;—at any rate, I cannot help thinking she wills her strength away from herself, for she has lost vigor and color from that day. I have sometimes thought he gained the force she lost; but this may have been a whim, very probably.

One day she came suddenly to me, looking deadly pale. Her lips moved, as if she were speaking; but I could not at first hear a word. Her hair looked strangely, as if lifting itself, and her eyes were full of wild light. She sunk upon a chair, and I thought was falling into one of her trances. Something had frozen her blood with fear; I thought, from what she said, half audibly, that she believed she had seen a shrouded figure.

That night, at about eleven o'clock, I was sent for to see the Little Gentleman, who was taken suddenly ill. Bridget, the servant, went before me with a light. The doors were

both unfastened, and I found myself ushered, without hindrance, into the dim light of the mysterious apartment I had so longed to enter.

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I found these stanzas in the young girl's book among many others. I give them as characterizing the tone of her sadder moments.

Under the violets.

Her hands are cold; her face is white;
No more her pulses come and go;
Her eyes are shut to life and light;
Fold the white vesture, snow on snow,
And lay her where the violets blow.

But not beneath a graven stone,
To plead for tears with alien eyes;
A slender cross of wood alone
Shall say, that here a maiden lies
In peace beneath the peaceful skies.

And gray old trees of hugest limb
Shall wheel their circling shadows round
To make the scorching sunlight dim
That drinks the greenness from the ground,
And drop their dead leaves on her mound.

When o'er their boughs the squirrels run,
And through their leaves the robins call,
And, ripening in the autumn sun,
The acorns and the chestnuts fall,
Doubt not that she will heed them all.

For her the morning choir shall sing
Its matins from the branches high,
And every minstrel voice of spring,
That trills beneath the April sky,
Shall greet her with its earliest cry.

When, turning round their dial-track,
Eastward the lengthening shadows pass,
Her little mourners, clad in black,
The crickets, sliding through the grass,
Shall pipe for her an evening mass.

At last the rootlets of the trees
Shall find the prison where she lies,
And bear the buried dust they seize



In leaves and blossoms to the skies.
So may the soul that warmed it rise!

If any, born of kindlier blood,
Should ask, What maiden lies below?
Say only this: A tender bud,
That tried to blossom in the snow,
Lies withered where the violets blow.

XI

You will know, perhaps, in the course of half an hour's reading, what has been haunting my hours of sleep and waking for months. I cannot tell, of course, whether you are a nervous person or not. If, however, you are such a person,—if it is late at night,—if all the rest of the household have gone off to bed,—if the wind is shaking your windows as if a human hand were rattling the sashes,—if your candle or lamp is low and will soon burn out,—let me advise you to take up some good quiet sleepy volume, or attack the “Critical Notices” of the last Quarterly and leave this to be read by daylight, with cheerful voices round, and people near by who would hear you, if you slid from your chair and came down in a lump on the floor.

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I do not say that your heart will beat as mine did, I am willing to confess, when I entered the dim chamber. Did I not tell you that I was sensitive and imaginative, and that I had lain awake with thinking what were the strange movements and sounds which I heard late at night in my little neighbor's apartment? It had come to that pass that I was truly unable to separate what I had really heard from what I had dreamed in those nightmares to which I have been subject, as before mentioned. So, when I walked into the room, and Bridget, turning back, closed the door and left me alone with its tenant, I do believe you could have grated a nutmeg on my skin, such a "goose-flesh" shiver ran over it. It was not fear, but what I call nervousness,—unreasoning, but irresistible; as when, for instance, one looking at the sun going down says, "I will count fifty before it disappears"; and as he goes on and it becomes doubtful whether he will reach the number, he gets strangely flurried, and his imagination pictures life and death and heaven and hell as the issues depending on the completion or non-completion of the fifty he is counting. Extreme curiosity will excite some people as much as fear, or what resembles fear, acts on some other less impressible natures.

I may find myself in the midst of strange facts in this little conjurer's room. Or, again, there may be nothing in this poor invalid's chamber but some old furniture, such as they say came over in the Mayflower. All this is just what I mean to, find out while I am looking at the Little Gentleman, who has suddenly become my patient. The simplest things turn out to be unfathomable mysteries; the most mysterious appearances prove to be the most commonplace objects in disguise.

I wonder whether the boys who live in Roxbury and Dorchester are ever moved to tears or filled with silent awe as they look upon the rocks and fragments of "puddingstone" abounding in those localities. I have my suspicions that those boys "heave a stone" or "fire a brickbat," composed of the conglomerate just mentioned, without any more tearful or philosophical contemplations than boys of less favored regions expend on the same performance. Yet a lump of puddingstone is a thing to look at, to think about, to study over, to dream upon, to go crazy with, to beat one's brains out against. Look at that pebble in it. From what cliff was it broken? On what beach rolled by the waves of what ocean? How and when imbedded in soft ooze, which itself became stone, and by-and-by was lifted into bald summits and steep cliffs, such as you may see on Meetinghouse-Hill any day—yes, and mark the scratches on their faces left when the boulder-carrying glaciers planed the surface of the continent with such rough tools that the storms have not worn the marks out of it with all the polishing of ever so many thousand years?

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Or as you pass a roadside ditch or pool in springtime, take from it any bit of stick or straw which has lain undisturbed for a time. Some little worm-shaped masses of clear jelly containing specks are fastened to the stick: eggs of a small snail-like shell-fish. One of these specks magnified proves to be a crystalline sphere with an opaque mass in its centre. And while you are looking, the opaque mass begins to stir, and by-and-by slowly to turn upon its axis like a forming planet,—life beginning in the microcosm, as in the great worlds of the firmament, with the revolution that turns the surface in ceaseless round to the source of life and light.

A pebble and the spawn of a mollusk! Before you have solved their mysteries, this earth where you first saw them may be a vitrified slag, or a vapor diffused through the planetary spaces. Mysteries are common enough, at any rate, whatever the boys in Roxbury and Dorchester think of “brickbats” and the spawn of creatures that live in roadside puddles.

But then a great many seeming mysteries are relatively perfectly plain, when we can get at them so as to turn them over. How many ghosts that “thick men’s blood with cold” prove to be shirts hung out to dry! How many mermaids have been made out of seals! How many times have horse-mackerels been taken for the sea-serpent!

—Let me take the whole matter coolly, while I see what is the matter with the patient. That is what I say to myself, as I draw a chair to the bedside. The bed is an old-fashioned, dark mahogany four-poster. It was never that which made the noise of something moving. It is too heavy to be pushed about the room.—The Little Gentleman was sitting, bolstered up by pillows, with his hands clasped and their united palms resting on the back of the head, one of the three or four positions specially affected by persons whose breathing is difficult from disease of the heart or other causes.

Sit down, Sir,—he said,—sit down! I have come to the hill Difficulty, Sir, and am fighting my way up.—His speech was laborious and interrupted.

Don’t talk,—I said,—except to answer my questions.—And I proceeded to “prospect” for the marks of some local mischief, which you know is at the bottom of all these attacks, though we do not always find it. I suppose I go to work pretty much like other professional folks of my temperament. Thus:

Wrist, if you please.—I was on his right side, but he presented his left wrist, crossing it over the other.—I begin to count, holding watch in left hand. One, two, three, four,—What a handsome hand! wonder if that splendid stone is a carbuncle.—One, two, three, four, five, six, seven,—Can’t see much, it is so dark, except one white object.—One, two, three, four,—Hang it! eighty or ninety in the minute, I guess.—Tongue, if you please.—Tongue is put out. Forget to look at it, or, rather, to take any particular

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notice of it;—but what is that white object, with the long arm stretching up as if pointing to the sky, just as Vesalius and Spigelius and those old fellows used to put their skeletons? I don't think anything of such objects, you know; but what should he have it in his chamber for? As I had found his pulse irregular and intermittent, I took out a stethoscope, which is a pocket-spyglass for looking into people's chests with your ears, and laid it over the place where the heart beats. I missed the usual beat of the organ. —How is this?—I said,—where is your heart gone to?—He took the stethoscope and shifted it across to the right side; there was a displacement of the organ.—I am ill-packed,—he said;—there was no room for my heart in its place as it is with other men. —God help him!

It is hard to draw the line between scientific curiosity and the desire for the patient's sake to learn all the details of his condition. I must look at this patient's chest, and thump it and listen to it. For this is a case of *ectopia cordis*, my boy,—displacement of the heart; and it is n't every day you get a chance to overhaul such an interesting malformation. And so I managed to do my duty and satisfy my curiosity at the same time. The torso was slight and deformed; the right arm attenuated,—the left full, round, and of perfect symmetry. It had run away with the life of the other limbs,—a common trick enough of Nature's, as I told you before. If you see a man with legs withered from childhood, keep out of the way of his arms, if you have a quarrel with him. He has the strength of four limbs in two; and if he strikes you, it is an arm-blow plus a kick administered from the shoulder instead of the haunch, where it should have started from.

Still examining him as a patient, I kept my eyes about me to search all parts of the chamber and went on with the double process, as before.—Heart hits as hard as a fist,—bellows-sound over mitral valves (professional terms you need not attend to).—What the deuse is that long case for? Got his witch grandmother mummied in it? And three big mahogany presses,—hey?—A diabolical suspicion came over me which I had had once before,—that he might be one of our modern alchemists,—you understand, make gold, you know, or what looks like it, sometimes with the head of a king or queen or of Liberty to embellish one side of the piece.—Don't I remember hearing him shut a door and lock it once? What do you think was kept under that lock? Let's have another look at his hand, to see if there are any calluses.

One can tell a man's business, if it is a handicraft, very often by just taking a look at his open hand. Ah! Four calluses at the end of the fingers of the right hand. None on those of the left. Ah, ha! What do those mean?

All this seems longer in the telling, of course, than it was in fact. While I was making these observations of the objects around me, I was also forming my opinion as to the kind of case with which I had to deal.

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There are three wicks, you know, to the lamp of a man's life: brain, blood, and breath. Press the brain a little, its light goes out, followed by both the others. Stop the heart a minute and out go all three of the wicks. Choke the air out of the lungs, and presently the fluid ceases to supply the other centres of flame, and all is soon stagnation, cold, and darkness. The "tripod of life" a French physiologist called these three organs. It is all clear enough which leg of the tripod is going to break down here. I could tell you exactly what the difficulty is;—which would be as intelligible and amusing as a watchmaker's description of a diseased timekeeper to a ploughman. It is enough to say, that I found just what I expected to, and that I think this attack is only the prelude of more serious consequences,—which expression means you very well know what.

And now the secrets of this life hanging on a thread must surely come out. If I have made a mystery where there was none, my suspicions will be shamed, as they have often been before. If there is anything strange, my visits will clear it up.

I sat an hour or two by the side of the Little Gentleman's bed, after giving him some henbane to quiet his brain, and some foxglove, which an imaginative French professor has called the "Opium of the Heart." Under their influence he gradually fell into an uneasy, half-waking slumber, the body fighting hard for every breath, and the mind wandering off in strange fancies and old recollections, which escaped from his lips in broken sentences.

—The last of 'em,—he said,—the last of 'em all,—thank God! And the grave he lies in will look just as well as if he had been straight. Dig it deep, old Martin, dig it deep,—and let it be as long as other folks' graves. And mind you get the sods flat, old man,—flat as ever a straight-backed young fellow was laid under. And then, with a good tall slab at the head, and a foot-stone six foot away from it, it'll look just as if there was a man underneath.

A man! Who said he was a man? No more men of that pattern to bear his name!—Used to be a good-looking set enough.—Where 's all the manhood and womanhood gone to since his great-grandfather was the strongest man that sailed out of the town of Boston, and poor Leah there the handsomest woman in Essex, if she was a witch?

—Give me some light,—he said,—more light. I want to see the picture.

He had started either from a dream or a wandering reverie. I was not unwilling to have more light in the apartment, and presently had lighted an astral lamp that stood on a table.—He pointed to a portrait hanging against the wall.—Look at her,—he said,—look at her! Wasn't that a pretty neck to slip a hangman's noose over?

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The portrait was of a young woman, something more than twenty years old, perhaps. There were few pictures of any merit painted in New England before the time of Smibert, and I am at a loss to know what artist could have taken this half-length, which was evidently from life. It was somewhat stiff and flat, but the grace of the figure and the sweetness of the expression reminded me of the angels of the early Florentine painters. She must have been of some consideration, for she was dressed in paduasoy and lace with hanging sleeves, and the old carved frame showed how the picture had been prized by its former owners. A proud eye she had, with all her sweetness.—I think it was that which hanged her, as his strong arm hanged Minister George Burroughs;—but it may have been a little mole on one cheek, which the artist had just hinted as a beauty rather than a deformity. You know, I suppose, that nursling imps addict themselves, after the fashion of young opossums, to these little excrescences. “Witch-marks” were good evidence that a young woman was one of the Devil’s wet-nurses;—I should like to have seen you make fun of them in those days!—Then she had a brooch in her bodice, that might have been taken for some devilish amulet or other; and she wore a ring upon one of her fingers, with a red stone in it, that flamed as if the painter had dipped his pencil in fire;—who knows but that it was given her by a midnight suitor fresh from that fierce element, and licensed for a season to leave his couch of flame to tempt the unsanctified hearts of earthly maidens and brand their cheeks with the print of his scorching kisses?

She and I,—he said, as he looked steadfastly at the canvas,—she and I are the last of ’em.—She will stay, and I shall go. They never painted me,—except when the boys used to make pictures of me with chalk on the board-fences. They said the doctors would want my skeleton when I was dead.—You are my friend, if you are a doctor,—a’n’t you?

I just gave him my hand. I had not the heart to speak.

I want to lie still,—he said,—after I am put to bed upon the hill yonder. Can’t you have a great stone laid over me, as they did over the first settlers in the old burying-ground at Dorchester, so as to keep the wolves from digging them up? I never slept easy over the sod;—I should like to lie quiet under it. And besides,—he said, in a kind of scared whisper,—I don’t want to have my bones stared at, as my body has been. I don’t doubt I was a remarkable case; but, for God’s sake, oh, for God’s sake, don’t let ’em make a show of the cage I have been shut up in and looked through the bars of for so many years.

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I have heard it said that the art of healing makes men hard-hearted and indifferent to human suffering. I am willing to own that there is often a professional hardness in surgeons, just as there is in theologians,—only much less in degree than in these last. It does not commonly improve the sympathies of a man to be in the habit of thrusting knives into his fellow-creatures and burning them with red-hot irons, any more than it improves them to hold the blinding-white cantery of Gehenna by its cool handle and score and crisp young souls with it until they are scorched into the belief of—Transubstantiation or the Immaculate Conception. And, to say the plain truth, I think there are a good many coarse people in both callings. A delicate nature will not commonly choose a pursuit which implies the habitual infliction of suffering, so readily as some gentler office. Yet, while I am writing this paragraph, there passes by my window, on his daily errand of duty, not seeing me, though I catch a glimpse of his manly features through the oval glass of his chaise, as he drives by, a surgeon of skill and standing, so friendly, so modest, so tenderhearted in all his ways, that, if he had not approved himself at once adroit and firm, one would have said he was of too kindly a mould to be the minister of pain, even if he were saving pain.

You may be sure that some men, even among those who have chosen the task of pruning their fellow-creatures, grow more and more thoughtful and truly compassionate in the midst of their cruel experience. They become less nervous, but more sympathetic. They have a truer sensibility for others' pain, the more they study pain and disease in the light of science. I have said this without claiming any special growth in humanity for myself, though I do hope I grow tenderer in my feelings as I grow older. At any rate, this was not a time in which professional habits could keep down certain instincts of older date than these.

This poor little man's appeal to my humanity against the supposed rapacity of Science, which he feared would have her "specimen," if his ghost should walk restlessly a thousand years, waiting for his bones to be laid in the dust, touched my heart. But I felt bound to speak cheerily.

—We won't die yet awhile, if we can help it,—I said,—and I trust we can help it. But don't be afraid; if I live longest, I will see that your resting place is kept sacred till the dandelions and buttercups blow over you.

He seemed to have got his wits together by this time, and to have a vague consciousness that he might have been saying more than he meant for anybody's ears. —I have been talking a little wild, Sir, eh? he said.—There is a great buzzing in my head with those drops of yours, and I doubt if my tongue has not been a little looser than I would have it, Sir. But I don't much want to live, Sir; that's the truth of the matter, and it does rather please me to think that fifty years

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from now nobody will know that the place where I lie does n't hold as stout and straight a man as the best of 'em that stretch out as if they were proud of the room they take. You may get me well, if you can, Sir, if you think it worth while to try; but I tell you there has been no time for this many a year when the smell of fresh earth was not sweeter to me than all the flowers that grow out of it. There's no anodyne like your good clean gravel, Sir. But if you can keep me about awhile, and it amuses you to try, you may show your skill upon me, if you like. There is a pleasure or two that I love the daylight for, and I think the night is not far off, at best.—I believe I shall sleep now; you may leave me, and come, if you like, in the morning.

Before I passed out, I took one more glance round the apartment. The beautiful face of the portrait looked at me, as portraits often do, with a frightful kind of intelligence in its eyes. The drapery fluttered on the still outstretched arm of the tall object near the window;—a crack of this was open, no doubt, and some breath of wind stirred the hanging folds. In my excited state, I seemed to see something ominous in that arm pointing to the heavens. I thought of the figures in the Dance of Death at Basle, and that other on the panels of the covered Bridge at Lucerne, and it seemed to me that the grim mask who mingles with every crowd and glides over every threshold was pointing the sick man to his far home, and would soon stretch out his bony hand and lead him or drag him on the unmeasured journey towards it.

The fancy had possession of me, and I shivered again as when I first entered the chamber. The picture and the shrouded shape; I saw only these two objects. They were enough. The house was deadly still, and the night-wind, blowing through an open window, struck me as from a field of ice, at the moment I passed into the creaking corridor. As I turned into the common passage, a white figure, holding a lamp, stood full before me. I thought at first it was one of those images made to stand in niches and hold a light in their hands. But the illusion was momentary, and my eyes speedily recovered from the shock of the bright flame and snowy drapery to see that the figure was a breathing one. It was Iris, in one of her statue-trances. She had come down, whether sleeping or waking, I knew not at first, led by an instinct that told her she was wanted,—or, possibly, having overheard and interpreted the sound of our movements,—or, it may be, having learned from the servant that there was trouble which might ask for a woman's hand. I sometimes think women have a sixth sense, which tells them that others, whom they cannot see or hear, are in suffering. How surely we find them at the bedside of the dying! How strongly does Nature plead for them, that we should draw our first breath in their arms, as we sigh away our last upon their faithful breasts!

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With white, bare feet, her hair loosely knotted, clad as the starlight knew her, and the morning when she rose from slumber, save that she had twisted a scarf round her long dress, she stood still as a stone before me, holding in one hand a lighted coil of wxtaper, and in the other a silver goblet. I held my own lamp close to her, as if she had been a figure of marble, and she did not stir. There was no breach of propriety then, to scare the Poor Relation with and breed scandal out of. She had been “warned in a dream,” doubtless suggested by her waking knowledge and the sounds which had reached her exalted sense. There was nothing more natural than that she should have risen and girdled her waist, and lighted her taper, and found the silver goblet with “Ex dono pupillorum” on it, from which she had taken her milk and possets through all her childish years, and so gone blindly out to find her place at the bedside,—a Sister of Charity without the cap and rosary; nay, unknowing whither her feet were leading her, and with wide blank eyes seeing nothing but the vision that beckoned her along.—Well, I must wake her from her slumber or trance.—I called her name, but she did not heed my voice.

The Devil put it into my head that I would kiss one handsome young girl before I died, and now was my chance. She never would know it, and I should carry the remembrance of it with me into the grave, and a rose perhaps grow out of my dust, as a brier did out of Lord Lovers, in memory of that immortal moment! Would it wake her from her trance? and would she see me in the flush of my stolen triumph, and hate and despise me ever after? Or should I carry off my trophy undetected, and always from that time say to myself, when I looked upon her in the glory of youth and the splendor of beauty, “My lips have touched those roses and made their sweetness mine forever”? You think my cheek was flushed, perhaps, and my eyes were glittering with this midnight flash of opportunity. On the contrary, I believe I was pale, very pale, and I know that I trembled. Ah, it is the pale passions that are the fiercest,—it is the violence of the chill that gives the measure of the fever! The fighting-boy of our school always turned white when he went out to a pitched battle with the bully of some neighboring village; but we knew what his bloodless cheeks meant,—the blood was all in his stout heart,—he was a slight boy, and there was not enough to redden his face and fill his heart both at once.

Perhaps it is making a good deal of a slight matter, to tell the internal conflicts in the heart of a quiet person something more than juvenile and something less than senile, as to whether he should be guilty of an impropriety, and, if he were, whether he would get caught in his indiscretion. And yet the memory of the kiss that Margaret of Scotland gave to Alain Chartier has lasted four hundred years, and put it into the head of many an ill-favored poet,

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whether Victoria, or Eugenie, would do as much by him, if she happened to pass him when he was asleep. And have we ever forgotten that the fresh cheek of the young John Milton tingled under the lips of some high-born Italian beauty, who, I believe, did not think to leave her card by the side of the slumbering youth, but has bequeathed the memory of her pretty deed to all coming time? The sound of a kiss is not so loud as that of a cannon, but its echo lasts a deal longer.

There is one disadvantage which the man of philosophical habits of mind suffers, as compared with the man of action. While he is taking an enlarged and rational view of the matter before him, he lets his chance slip through his fingers. Iris woke up, of her own accord, before I had made up my mind what I was going to do about it.

When I remember how charmingly she looked, I don't blame myself at all for being tempted; but if I had been fool enough to yield to the impulse, I should certainly have been ashamed to tell of it. She did not know what to make of it, finding herself there alone, in such guise, and me staring at her. She looked down at her white robe and bare feet, and colored,—then at the goblet she held in her hand, then at the taper; and at last her thoughts seemed to clear up.

I know it all,—she said.—He is going to die, and I must go and sit by him. Nobody will care for him as I shall, and I have nobody else to care for.

I assured her that nothing was needed for him that night but rest, and persuaded her that the excitement of her presence could only do harm. Let him sleep, and he would very probably awake better in the morning. There was nothing to be said, for I spoke with authority; and the young girl glided away with noiseless step and sought her own chamber.

The tremor passed away from my limbs, and the blood began to burn in my cheeks. The beautiful image which had so bewitched me faded gradually from my imagination, and I returned to the still perplexing mysteries of my little neighbor's chamber.

All was still there now. No plaintive sounds, no monotonous murmurs, no shutting of windows and doors at strange hours, as if something or somebody were coming in or going out, or there was something to be hidden in those dark mahogany presses. Is there an inner apartment that I have not seen? The way in which the house is built might admit of it. As I thought it over, I at once imagined a Bluebeard's chamber. Suppose, for instance, that the narrow bookshelves to the right are really only a masked door, such as we remember leading to the private study of one of our most distinguished townsmen, who loved to steal away from his stately library to that little silent cell. If this were lighted from above, a person or persons might pass their days there without attracting attention from the household, and wander where they pleased at



night,—to Copp's-Hill burial-ground, if they liked,—I said to myself, laughing, and pulling the bed-clothes over my head. There is no logic in superstitious-fancies any more than in dreams. A she-ghost wouldn't want an inner chamber to herself. A live woman, with a valuable soprano voice, wouldn't start off at night to sprain her ankles over the old graves of the North-End cemetery.

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It is all very easy for you, middle-aged reader, sitting over this page in the broad daylight, to call me by all manner of asinine and anserine unchristian names, because I had these fancies running through my head. I don't care much for your abuse. The question is not, what it is reasonable for a man to think about, but what he actually does think about, in the dark, and when he is alone, and his whole body seems but one great nerve of hearing, and he sees the phosphorescent flashes of his own eyeballs as they turn suddenly in the direction of the last strange noise,—what he actually does think about, as he lies and recalls all the wild stories his head is full of, his fancy hinting the most alarming conjectures to account for the simplest facts about him, his common-sense laughing them to scorn the next minute, but his mind still returning to them, under one shape or another, until he gets very nervous and foolish, and remembers how pleasant it used to be to have his mother come and tuck him up and go and sit within call, so that she could hear him at any minute, if he got very much scared and wanted her. Old babies that we are!

Daylight will clear up all that lamp-light has left doubtful. I longed for the morning to come, for I was more curious than ever. So, between my fancies and anticipations, I had but a poor night of it, and came down tired to the breakfast-table. My visit was not to be made until after this morning hour; there was nothing urgent, so the servant was ordered to tell me.

It was the first breakfast at which the high chair at the side of Iris had been unoccupied. —You might jest as well take away that chair,—said our landlady,—he'll never want it again. He acts like a man that 's struck with death, 'n' I don't believe he 'll ever come out of his chamber till he 's laid out and brought down a corpse.—These good women do put things so plainly! There were two or three words in her short remark that always sober people, and suggest silence or brief moral reflections.

—Life is dreadful uncerting,—said the Poor Relation,—and pulled in her social tentacles to concentrate her thoughts on this fact of human history.

—If there was anything a fellah could do,—said the young man John, so called,—a fellah 'd like the chance o' helpin' a little cripple like that. He looks as if he couldn't turn over any handier than a turtle that's laid on his back; and I guess there a'n't many people that know how to lift better than I do. Ask him if he don't want any watchers. I don't mind settin' up any more 'n a cat-owl. I was up all night twice last month.

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[My private opinion is, that there was no small amount of punch absorbed on those two occasions, which I think I heard of at the time];—but the offer is a kind one, and it is n't fair to question how he would like sitting up without the punch and the company and the songs and smoking. He means what he says, and it would be a more considerable achievement for him to sit quietly all night by a sick man than for a good many other people. I tell you this odd thing: there are a good many persons, who, through the habit of making other folks uncomfortable, by finding fault with all their cheerful enjoyments, at last get up a kind of hostility to comfort in general, even in their own persons. The correlative to loving our neighbors as ourselves is hating ourselves as we hate our neighbors. Look at old misers; first they starve their dependants, and then themselves. So I think it more for a lively young fellow to be ready to play nurse than for one of those useful but forlorn martyrs who have taken a spite against themselves and love to gratify it by fasting and watching.

—The time came at last for me to make my visit. I found Iris sitting by the Little Gentleman's pillow. To my disappointment, the room was darkened. He did not like the light, and would have the shutters kept nearly closed. It was good enough for me; what business had I to be indulging my curiosity, when I had nothing to do but to exercise such skill as I possessed for the benefit of my patient? There was not much to be said or done in such a case; but I spoke as encouragingly as I could, as I think we are always bound to do. He did not seem to pay any very anxious attention, but the poor girl listened as if her own life and more than her own life were depending on the words I uttered. She followed me out of the room, when I had got through my visit.

How long?—she said.

Uncertain. Any time; to-day,—next week, next month,—I answered.—One of those cases where the issue is not doubtful, but may be sudden or slow.

The women of the house were kind, as women always are in trouble. But Iris pretended that nobody could spare the time as well as she, and kept her place, hour after hour, until the landlady insisted that she'd be killin' herself, if she begun at that rate, 'n' haf to give up, if she didn't want to be clean beat out in less 'n a week.

At the table we were graver than common. The high chair was set back against the wall, and a gap left between that of the young girl and her nearest neighbor's on the right. But the next morning, to our great surprise, that good-looking young Marylander had very quietly moved his own chair to the vacant place. I thought he was creeping down that way, but I was not prepared for a leap spanning such a tremendous parenthesis of boarders as this change of position included. There was no denying that the youth and maiden were a handsome pair, as they sat side by

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side. But whatever the young girl may have thought of her new neighbor she never seemed for a moment to forget the poor little friend who had been taken from her side. There are women, and even girls, with whom it is of no use to talk. One might as well reason with a bee as to the form of his cell, or with an oriole as to the construction of his swinging nest, as try to stir these creatures from their own way of doing their own work. It was not a question with Iris, whether she was entitled by any special relation or by the fitness of things to play the part of a nurse. She was a wilful creature that must have her way in this matter. And it so proved that it called for much patience and long endurance to carry through the duties, say rather the kind offices, the painful pleasures, which she had chosen as her share in the household where accident had thrown her. She had that genius of ministration which is the special province of certain women, marked even among their helpful sisters by a soft, low voice, a quiet footfall, a light hand, a cheering smile, and a ready self-surrender to the objects of their care, which such trifles as their own food, sleep, or habits of any kind never presume to interfere with. Day after day, and too often through the long watches of the night, she kept her place by the pillow.

That girl will kill herself over me, Sir,—said the poor Little Gentleman to me, one day,—she will kill herself, Sir, if you don't call in all the resources of your art to get me off as soon as may be. I shall wear her out, Sir, with sitting in this close chamber and watching when she ought to be sleeping, if you leave me to the care of Nature without dosing me.

This was rather strange pleasantry, under the circumstances. But there are certain persons whose existence is so out of parallel with the larger laws in the midst of which it is moving, that life becomes to them as death and death as life.—How am I getting along?—he said, another morning. He lifted his shrivelled hand, with the death's-head ring on it, and looked at it with a sad sort of complacency. By this one movement, which I have seen repeatedly of late, I know that his thoughts have gone before to another condition, and that he is, as it were, looking back on the infirmities of the body as accidents of the past. For, when he was well, one might see him often looking at the handsome hand with the flaming jewel on one of its fingers. The single well-shaped limb was the source of that pleasure which in some form or other Nature almost always grants to her least richly endowed children. Handsome hair, eyes, complexion, feature, form, hand, foot, pleasant voice, strength, grace, agility, intelligence,—how few there are that have not just enough of one at least of these gifts to show them that the good Mother, busy with her millions of children, has not quite forgotten them! But now he was thinking of that other state, where, free from all mortal impediments, the memory of his sorrowful burden should be only as that of the case he has shed to the insect whose “deep-damasked wings” beat off the golden dust of the lily-anthers, as he flutters in the ecstasy of his new life over their full-blown summer glories.

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No human being can rest for any time in a state of equilibrium, where the desire to live and that to depart just balance each other. If one has a house, which he has lived and always means to live in, he pleases himself with the thought of all the conveniences it offers him, and thinks little of its wants and imperfections. But once having made up his mind to move to a better, every incommodity starts out upon him, until the very ground-plan of it seems to have changed in his mind, and his thoughts and affections, each one of them packing up its little bundle of circumstances, have quitted their several chambers and nooks and migrated to the new home, long before its apartments are ready to receive their coming tenant. It is so with the body. Most persons have died before they expire,—died to all earthly longings, so that the last breath is only, as it were, the locking of the door of the already deserted mansion. The fact of the tranquillity with which the great majority of dying persons await this locking of those gates of life through which its airy angels have been going and coming, from the moment of the first cry, is familiar to those who have been often called upon to witness the last period of life. Almost always there is a preparation made by Nature for unearthing a soul, just as on the smaller scale there is for the removal of a milktooth. The roots which hold human life to earth are absorbed before it is lifted from its place. Some of the dying are weary and want rest, the idea of which is almost inseparable in the universal mind from death. Some are in pain, and want to be rid of it, even though the anodyne be dropped, as in the legend, from the sword of the Death-Angel. Some are stupid, mercifully narcotized that they may go to sleep without long tossing about. And some are strong in faith and hope, so that, as they draw near the next world, they would fair hurry toward it, as the caravan moves faster over the sands when the foremost travellers send word along the file that water is in sight. Though each little party that follows in a foot-track of its own will have it that the water to which others think they are hastening is a mirage, not the less has it been true in all ages and for human beings of every creed which recognized a future, that those who have fallen worn out by their march through the Desert have dreamed at least of a River of Life, and thought they heard its murmurs as they lay dying.

The change from the clinging to the present to the welcoming of the future comes very soon, for the most part, after all hope of life is extinguished, provided this be left in good degree to Nature, and not insolently and cruelly forced upon those who are attacked by illness, on the strength of that odious foreknowledge often imparted by science, before the white fruit whose core is ashes, and which we call death, has set beneath the pallid and drooping flower of sickness. There is a singular sagacity very often shown in a patient's estimate of his own vital force. His physician knows the state of his material frame well enough, perhaps,—that this or that organ is more or less impaired or disintegrated; but the patient has a sense that he can hold out so much longer,—sometimes that he must and will live for a while, though by the logic of disease he ought to die without any delay.

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The Little Gentleman continued to fail, until it became plain that his remaining days were few. I told the household what to expect. There was a good deal of kind feeling expressed among the boarders, in various modes, according to their characters and style of sympathy. The landlady was urgent that he should try a certain nostrum which had saved somebody's life in jest sech a case. The Poor Relation wanted me to carry, as from her, a copy of "Allein's Alarm," etc. I objected to the title, reminding her that it offended people of old, so that more than twice as many of the book were sold when they changed the name to "A Sure Guide to Heaven." The good old gentleman whom I have mentioned before has come to the time of life when many old men cry easily, and forget their tears as children do.—He was a worthy gentleman,—he said,—a very worthy gentleman, but unfortunate,—very unfortunate. Sadly deformed about the spine and the feet. Had an impression that the late Lord Byron had some malformation of this kind. Had heard there was something the matter with the ankle-j'int's of that nobleman, but he was a man of talents. This gentleman seemed to be a man of talents. Could not always agree with his statements,—thought he was a little over-partial to this city, and had some free opinions; but was sorry to lose him,—and if—there was anything—he—could—. In the midst of these kind expressions, the gentleman with the diamond, the Koh-i-noor, as we called him, asked, in a very unpleasant sort of way, how the old boy was likely to cut up,—meaning what money our friend was going to leave behind.

The young fellow John spoke up, to the effect that this was a diabolish snobby question, when a man was dying and not dead.—To this the Koh-i-noor replied, by asking if the other meant to insult him. Where to the young man John rejoined that he had no particul'r intentions one way or t'other.—The Kohi-noor then suggested the young man's stepping out into the yard, that he, the speaker, might "slap his chops."—Let 'em alone, said young Maryland,—it 'll soon be over, and they won't hurt each other much.—So they went out.

The Koh-i-noor entertained the very common idea, that, when one quarrels with another, the simple thing to do is to knock the man down, and there is the end of it. Now those who have watched such encounters are aware of two things: first, that it is not so easy to knock a man down as it is to talk about it; secondly, that, if you do happen to knock a man down, there is a very good chance that he will be angry, and get up and give you a thrashing.

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So the Koh-i-noor thought he would begin, as soon as they got into the yard, by knocking his man down, and with this intention swung his arm round after the fashion of rustics and those unskilled in the noble art, expecting the young fellow John to drop when his fist, having completed a quarter of a circle, should come in contact with the side of that young man's head. Unfortunately for this theory, it happens that a blow struck out straight is as much shorter, and therefore as much quicker than the rustic's swinging blow, as the radius is shorter than the quarter of a circle. The mathematical and mechanical corollary was, that the Koh-i-noor felt something hard bring up suddenly against his right eye, which something he could have sworn was a paving-stone, judging by his sensations; and as this threw his person somewhat backwards, and the young man John jerked his own head back a little, the swinging blow had nothing to stop it; and as the Jewel staggered between the hit he got and the blow he missed, he tripped and "went to grass," so far as the back-yard of our boardinghouse was provided with that vegetable. It was a signal illustration of that fatal mistake, so frequent in young and ardent natures with inconspicuous calves and negative pectorals, that they can settle most little quarrels on the spot by "knocking the man down."

We are in the habit of handling our faces so carefully, that a heavy blow, taking effect on that portion of the surface, produces a most unpleasant surprise, which is accompanied with odd sensations, as of seeing sparks, and a kind of electrical or ozone-like odor, half-sulphurous in character, and which has given rise to a very vulgar and profane threat sometimes heard from the lips of bullies. A person not used to pugilistic gestures does not instantly recover from this surprise. The Koh-i-noor exasperated by his failure, and still a little confused by the smart hit he had received, but furious, and confident of victory over a young fellow a good deal lighter than himself, made a desperate rush to bear down all before him and finish the contest at once. That is the way all angry greenhorns and incompetent persons attempt to settle matters. It does n't do, if the other fellow is only cool, moderately quick, and has a very little science. It didn't do this time; for, as the assailant rushed in with his arms flying everywhere, like the vans of a windmill, he ran a prominent feature of his face against a fist which was travelling in the other direction, and immediately after struck the knuckles of the young man's other fist a severe blow with the part of his person known as the epigastrium to one branch of science and the bread-basket to another. This second round closed the battle. The Koh-i-noor had got enough, which in such cases is more than as good as a feast. The young fellow asked him if he was satisfied, and held out his hand. But the other sulked, and muttered something about revenge.—Jest



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as ye like,—said the young man John.—Clap a slice o’ raw beefsteak on to that mouse o’ yours ‘n’ ‘t’ll take down the swellin’. (Mouse is a technical term for a bluish, oblong, rounded elevation occasioned by running one’s forehead or eyebrow against another’s knuckles.) The young fellow was particularly pleased that he had had an opportunity of trying his proficiency in the art of self-defence without the gloves. The Koh-i-noor did not favor us with his company for a day or two, being confined to his chamber, it was said, by a slight feverish, attack. He was chop-fallen always after this, and got negligent in his person. The impression must have been a deep one; for it was observed, that, when he came down again, his moustache and whiskers had turned visibly white about the roots. In short, it disgraced him, and rendered still more conspicuous a tendency to drinking, of which he had been for some time suspected. This, and the disgust which a young lady naturally feels at hearing that her lover has been “licked by a fellah not half his size,” induced the landlady’s daughter to take that decided step which produced a change in the programme of her career I may hereafter allude to.

I never thought he would come to good, when I heard him attempting to sneer at an unoffending city so respectable as Boston. After a man begins to attack the State-House, when he gets bitter about the Frog-Pond, you may be sure there is not much left of him. Poor Edgar Poe died in the hospital soon after he got into this way of talking; and so sure as you find an unfortunate fellow reduced to this pass, you had better begin praying for him, and stop lending him money, for he is on his last legs. Remember poor Edgar! He is dead and gone; but the State-House has its cupola fresh-gilded, and the Frog-Pond has got a fountain that squirts up a hundred feet into the air and glorifies that humble sheet with a fine display of provincial rainbows.

—I cannot fulfil my promise in this number. I expected to gratify your curiosity, if you have become at all interested in these puzzles, doubts, fancies, whims, or whatever you choose to call them, of mine. Next month you shall hear all about it.

—It was evening, and I was going to the sick-chamber. As I paused at the door before entering, I heard a sweet voice singing. It was not the wild melody I had sometimes heard at midnight:—no, this was the voice of Iris, and I could distinguish every word. I had seen the verses in her book; the melody was new to me. Let me finish my page with them.

Hymn of trust.

O Love Divine, that stooped to share
Our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear,
On Thee we cast each earthborn care,
We smile at pain while Thou art near!

Though long the weary way we tread,
And sorrow crown each lingering year,
No path we shun, no darkness dread,
Our hearts still whispering, Thou art near!



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When drooping pleasure turns to grief,
And trembling faith is changed to fear,
The murmuring wind, the quivering leaf
Shall softly tell us, Thou art near!

On Thee we fling our burdening woe,
O Love Divine, forever dear,
Content to suffer, while we know,
Living and dying, Thou art near!

XII

A young fellow, born of good stock, in one of the more thoroughly civilized portions of these United States of America, bred in good principles, inheriting a social position which makes him at his ease everywhere, means sufficient to educate him thoroughly without taking away the stimulus to vigorous exertion, and with a good opening in some honorable path of labor, is the finest sight our private satellite has had the opportunity of inspecting on the planet to which she belongs. In some respects it was better to be a young Greek. If we may trust the old marbles, my friend with his arm stretched over my head, above there, (in plaster of Paris,) or the discobolus, whom one may see at the principal sculpture gallery of this metropolis,—those Greek young men were of supreme beauty. Their close curls, their elegantly set heads, column-like necks, straight noses, short, curled lips, firm chins, deep chests, light flanks, large muscles, small joints, were finer than anything we ever see. It may well be questioned whether the human shape will ever present itself again in a race of such perfect symmetry. But the life of the youthful Greek was local, not planetary, like that of the young American. He had a string of legends, in place of our Gospels. He had no printed books, no newspaper, no steam caravans, no forks, no soap, none of the thousand cheap conveniences which have become matters of necessity to our modern civilization. Above all things, if he aspired to know as well as to enjoy, he found knowledge not diffused everywhere about him, so that a day's labor would buy him more wisdom than a year could master, but held in private hands, hoarded in precious manuscripts, to be sought for only as gold is sought in narrow fissures, and in the beds of brawling streams. Never, since man came into this atmosphere of oxygen and azote, was there anything like the condition of the young American of the nineteenth century. Having in possession or in prospect the best part of half a world, with all its climates and soils to choose from; equipped with wings of fire and smoke than fly with him day and night, so that he counts his journey not in miles, but in degrees, and sees the seasons change as the wild fowl sees them in his annual flights; with huge leviathans always ready to take him on their broad backs and push behind them with their pectoral or caudal fins the waters that seam the continent or separate the hemispheres; heir of all old civilizations, founder of that new one which, if all the prophecies of the human heart are not lies, is to be the noblest,

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as it is the last; isolated in space from the races that are governed by dynasties whose divine right grows out of human wrong, yet knit into the most absolute solidarity with mankind of all times and places by the one great thought he inherits as his national birthright; free to form and express his opinions on almost every subject, and assured that he will soon acquire the last franchise which men withhold from man,—that of stating the laws of his spiritual being and the beliefs he accepts without hindrance except from clearer views of truth,—he seems to want nothing for a large, wholesome, noble, beneficent life. In fact, the chief danger is that he will think the whole planet is made for him, and forget that there are some possibilities left in the debris of the old-world civilization which deserve a certain respectful consideration at his hands.

The combing and clipping of this shaggy wild continent are in some measure done for him by those who have gone before. Society has subdivided itself enough to have a place for every form of talent. Thus, if a man show the least sign of ability as a sculptor or a painter, for instance, he finds the means of education and a demand for his services. Even a man who knows nothing but science will be provided for, if he does not think it necessary to hang about his birthplace all his days,—which is a most unAmerican weakness. The apron-strings of an American mother are made of India-rubber. Her boy belongs where he is wanted; and that young Marylander of ours spoke for all our young men, when he said that his home was wherever the stars and stripes blew over his head.

And that leads me to say a few words of this young gentleman, who made that audacious movement lately which I chronicled in my last record,—jumping over the seats of I don't know how many boarders to put himself in the place which the Little Gentleman's absence had left vacant at the side of Iris. When a young man is found habitually at the side of any one given young lady,—when he lingers where she stays, and hastens when she leaves,—when his eyes follow her as she moves and rest upon her when she is still,—when he begins to grow a little timid, he who was so bold, and a little pensive, he who was so gay, whenever accident finds them alone,—when he thinks very often of the given young lady, and names her very seldom,—

What do you say about it, my charming young expert in that sweet science in which, perhaps, a long experience is not the first of qualifications?

—But we don't know anything about this young man, except that he is good-looking, and somewhat high-spirited, and strong-limbed, and has a generous style of nature,—all very promising, but by no means proving that he is a proper lover for Iris, whose heart we turned inside out when we opened that sealed book of hers.

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Ah, my dear young friend! When your mamma then, if you will believe it, a very slight young lady, with very pretty hair and figure—came and told her mamma that your papa had—had—asked No, no, no! she could n't say it; but her mother—oh the depth of maternal sagacity!—guessed it all without another word!—When your mother, I say, came and told her mother she was engaged, and your grandmother told your grandfather, how much did they know of the intimate nature of the young gentleman to whom she had pledged her existence? I will not be so hard as to ask how much your respected mamma knew at that time of the intimate nature of your respected papa, though, if we should compare a young girl's man-as-she-thinks-him with a forty-summured matron's man-as-she-finds-him, I have my doubts as to whether the second would be a facsimile of the first in most cases.

The idea that in this world each young person is to wait until he or she finds that precise counterpart who alone of all creation was meant for him or her, and then fall instantly in love with it, is pretty enough, only it is not Nature's way. It is not at all essential that all pairs of human beings should be, as we sometimes say of particular couples, "born for each other." Sometimes a man or a woman is made a great deal better and happier in the end for having had to conquer the faults of the one beloved, and make the fitness not found at first, by gradual assimilation. There is a class of good women who have no right to marry perfectly good men, because they have the power of saving those who would go to ruin but for the guiding providence of a good wife. I have known many such cases. It is the most momentous question a woman is ever called upon to decide, whether the faults of the man she loves are beyond remedy and will drag her down, or whether she is competent to be his earthly redeemer and lift him to her own level.

A person of genius should marry a person of character. Genius does not herd with genius. The musk-deer and the civet-cat are never found in company. They don't care for strange scents,—they like plain animals better than perfumed ones. Nay, if you will have the kindness to notice, Nature has not gifted my lady musk-deer with the personal peculiarity by which her lord is so widely known.

Now when genius allies itself with character, the world is very apt to think character has the best of the bargain. A brilliant woman marries a plain, manly fellow, with a simple intellectual mechanism;—we have all seen such cases. The world often stares a good deal and wonders. She should have taken that other, with a far more complex mental machinery. She might have had a watch with the philosophical compensation-balance, with the metaphysical index which can split a second into tenths, with the musical chime which can turn every quarter of an hour into melody. She has chosen a plain one, that keeps good time, and that is all.

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Let her alone! She knows what she is about. Genius has an infinitely deeper reverence for character than character can have for genius. To be sure, genius gets the world's praise, because its work is a tangible product, to be bought, or had for nothing. It bribes the common voice to praise it by presents of speeches, poems, statues, pictures, or whatever it can please with. Character evolves its best products for home consumption; but, mind you, it takes a deal more to feed a family for thirty years than to make a holiday feast for our neighbors once or twice in our lives. You talk of the fire of genius. Many a blessed woman, who dies unsung and unremembered, has given out more of the real vital heat that keeps the life in human souls, without a spark flitting through her humble chimney to tell the world about it, than would set a dozen theories smoking, or a hundred odes simmering, in the brains of so many men of genius. It is in latent caloric, if I may borrow a philosophical expression, that many of the noblest hearts give out the life that warms them. Cornelia's lips grow white, and her pulse hardly warms her thin fingers,—but she has melted all the ice out of the hearts of those young Gracchi, and her lost heat is in the blood of her youthful heroes. We are always valuing the soul's temperature by the thermometer of public deed or word. Yet the great sun himself, when he pours his noonday beams upon some vast hyaline boulder, rent from the eternal ice-quarries, and floating toward the tropics, never warms it a fraction above the thirty-two degrees of Fahrenheit that marked the moment when the first drop trickled down its side.

How we all like the spiriting up of a fountain, seemingly against the law that makes water everywhere slide, roll, leap, tumble headlong, to get as low as the earth will let it! That is genius. But what is this transient upward movement, which gives us the glitter and the rainbow, to that unsleeping, all-present force of gravity, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, (if the universe be eternal,)—the great outspread hand of God himself, forcing all things down into their places, and keeping them there? Such, in smaller proportion, is the force of character to the fitful movements of genius, as they are or have been linked to each other in many a household, where one name was historic, and the other, let me say the nobler, unknown, save by some faint reflected ray, borrowed from its lustrous companion.

Oftentimes, as I have lain swinging on the water, in the swell of the Chelsea ferry-boats, in that long, sharp-pointed, black cradle in which I love to let the great mother rock me, I have seen a tall ship glide by against the tide, as if drawn by some invisible towline, with a hundred strong arms pulling it. Her sails hung unfilled, her streamers were drooping, she had neither side-wheel nor stern-wheel; still she moved on, stately, in serene triumph, as if with her

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own life. But I knew that on the other side of the ship, hidden beneath the great hulk that swam so majestically, there was a little toiling steam-tug, with heart of fire and arms of iron, that was hugging it close and dragging it bravely on; and I knew, that, if the little steam-tug untwined her arms and left the tall ship, it would wallow and roll about, and drift hither and thither, and go off with the reflux tide, no man knows whither. And so I have known more than one genius, high-decked, full-freighted, wide-sailed, gay-pennoned, that, but for the bare toiling arms, and brave, warm, beating heart of the faithful little wife, that nestled close in his shadow, and clung to him, so that no wind or wave could part them, and dragged him on against all the tide of circumstance, would soon have gone down the stream and been heard of no more.—No, I am too much a lover of genius, I sometimes think, and too often get impatient with dull people, so that, in their weak talk, where nothing is taken for granted, I look forward to some future possible state of development, when a gesture passing between a beatified human soul and an archangel shall signify as much as the complete history of a planet, from the time when it curdled to the time when its sun was burned out. And yet, when a strong brain is weighed with a true heart, it seems to me like balancing a bubble against a wedge of gold.

—It takes a very true man to be a fitting companion for a woman of genius, but not a very great one. I am not sure that she will not embroider her ideal better on a plain ground than on one with a brilliant pattern already worked in its texture. But as the very essence of genius is truthfulness, contact with realities, (which are always ideas behind shows of form or language,) nothing is so contemptible as falsehood and pretence in its eyes. Now it is not easy to find a perfectly true woman, and it is very hard to find a perfectly true man. And a woman of genius, who has the sagacity to choose such a one as her companion, shows more of the divine gift in so doing than in her finest talk or her most brilliant work of letters or of art.

I have been a good while coming at a secret, for which I wished to prepare you before telling it. I think there is a kindly feeling growing up between Iris and our young Marylander. Not that I suppose there is any distinct understanding between them, but that the affinity which has drawn him from the remote corner where he sat to the side of the young girl is quietly bringing their two natures together. Just now she is all given up to another; but when he no longer calls upon her daily thoughts and cares, I warn you not to be surprised, if this bud of friendship open like the evening primrose, with a sound as of a sudden stolen kiss, and lo! the flower of full-blown love lies unfolded before you.

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And now the days had come for our little friend, whose whims and weaknesses had interested us, perhaps, as much as his better traits, to make ready for that long journey which is easier to the cripple than to the strong man, and on which none enters so willingly as he who has borne the life-long load of infirmity during his earthly pilgrimage. At this point, under most circumstances, I would close the doors and draw the veil of privacy before the chamber where the birth which we call death, out of life into the unknown world, is working its mystery. But this friend of ours stood alone in the world, and, as the last act of his life was mainly in harmony with the rest of its drama, I do not here feel the force of the objection commonly lying against that death-bed literature which forms the staple of a certain portion of the press. Let me explain what I mean, so that my readers may think for themselves a little, before they accuse me of hasty expressions.

The Roman Catholic Church has certain formulas for its dying children, to which almost all of them attach the greatest importance. There is hardly a criminal so abandoned that he is not anxious to receive the “consolations of religion” in his last hours. Even if he be senseless, but still living, I think that the form is gone through with, just as baptism is administered to the unconscious new-born child. Now we do not quarrel with these forms. We look with reverence and affection upon all symbols which give peace and comfort to our fellow-creatures. But the value of the new-born child’s passive consent to the ceremony is null, as testimony to the truth of a doctrine. The automatic closing of a dying man’s lips on the consecrated wafer proves nothing in favor of the Real Presence, or any other dogma. And, speaking generally, the evidence of dying men in favor of any belief is to be received with great caution.

They commonly tell the truth about their present feelings, no doubt. A dying man’s deposition about anything he knows is good evidence. But it is of much less consequence what a man thinks and says when he is changed by pain, weakness, apprehension, than what he thinks when he is truly and wholly himself. Most murderers die in a very pious frame of mind, expecting to go to glory at once; yet no man believes he shall meet a larger average of pirates and cut-throats in the streets of the New Jerusalem than of honest folks that died in their beds.

Unfortunately, there has been a very great tendency to make capital of various kinds out of dying men’s speeches. The lies that have been put into their mouths for this purpose are endless. The prime minister, whose last breath was spent in scolding his nurse, dies with a magnificent apothegm on his lips, manufactured by a reporter. Addison gets up a tableau and utters an admirable sentiment,—or somebody makes the posthumous dying epigram for him. The incoherent babble of green fields is translated into the language of stately sentiment. One would think, all that dying men had to do was to say the prettiest thing they could,—to make their rhetorical point,—and then bow themselves politely out of the world.

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Worse than this is the torturing of dying people to get their evidence in favor of this or that favorite belief. The camp-followers of proselyting sects have come in at the close of every life where they could get in, to strip the languishing soul of its thoughts, and carry them off as spoils. The Roman Catholic or other priest who insists on the reception of his formula means kindly, we trust, and very commonly succeeds in getting the acquiescence of the subject of his spiritual surgery, but do not let us take the testimony of people who are in the worst condition to form opinions as evidence of the truth or falsehood of that which they accept. A lame man's opinion of dancing is not good for much. A poor fellow who can neither eat nor drink, who is sleepless and full of pains, whose flesh has wasted from him, whose blood is like water, who is gasping for breath, is not in a condition to judge fairly of human life, which in all its main adjustments is intended for men in a normal, healthy condition. It is a remark I have heard from the wise Patriarch of the Medical Profession among us, that the moral condition of patients with disease above the great breathing-muscle, the diaphragm, is much more hopeful than that of patients with disease below it, in the digestive organs. Many an honest ignorant man has given us pathology when he thought he was giving us psychology. With this preliminary caution I shall proceed to the story of the Little Gentleman's leaving us.

When the divinity-student found that our fellow-boarder was not likely to remain long with us, he, being a young man of tender conscience and kindly nature, was not a little exercised on his behalf. It was undeniable that on several occasions the Little Gentleman had expressed himself with a good deal of freedom on a class of subjects which, according to the divinity-student, he had no right to form an opinion upon. He therefore considered his future welfare in jeopardy.

The Muggletonian sect have a very odd way of dealing with people. If I, the Professor, will only give in to the Muggletonian doctrine, there shall be no question through all that persuasion that I am competent to judge of that doctrine; nay, I shall be quoted as evidence of its truth, while I live, and cited, after I am dead, as testimony in its behalf. But if I utter any ever so slight Anti-Muggletonian sentiment, then I become incompetent to form any opinion on the matter. This, you cannot fail to observe, is exactly the way the pseudo-sciences go to work, as explained in my Lecture on Phrenology. Now I hold that he whose testimony would be accepted in behalf of the Muggletonian doctrine has a right to be heard against it. Whoso offers me any article of belief for my signature implies that I am competent to form an opinion upon it; and if my positive testimony in its favor is of any value, then my negative testimony against it is also of value.

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I thought my young friend's attitude was a little too much like that of the Muggletonians. I also remarked a singular timidity on his part lest somebody should "unsettle" somebody's faith,—as if faith did not require exercise as much as any other living thing, and were not all the better for a shaking up now and then. I don't mean that it would be fair to bother Bridget, the wild Irish girl, or Joice Heth, the centenarian, or any other intellectual non-combatant; but all persons who proclaim a belief which passes judgment on their neighbors must be ready to have it "unsettled," that is, questioned, at all times and by anybody,—just as those who set up bars across a thoroughfare must expect to have them taken down by every one who wants to pass, if he is strong enough.

Besides, to think of trying to water-proof the American mind against the questions that Heaven rains down upon it shows a misapprehension of our new conditions. If to question everything be unlawful and dangerous, we had better undeclare our independence at once; for what the Declaration means is the right to question everything, even the truth of its own fundamental proposition.

The old-world order of things is an arrangement of locks and canals, where everything depends on keeping the gates shut, and so holding the upper waters at their level; but the system under which the young republican American is born trusts the whole unimpeded tide of life to the great elemental influences, as the vast rivers of the continent settle their own level in obedience to the laws that govern the planet and the spheres that surround it.

The divinity-student was not quite up to the idea of the commonwealth, as our young friend the Marylander, for instance, understood it. He could not get rid of that notion of private property in truth, with the right to fence it in, and put up a sign-board, thus:

*All trespassers are warned off these
grounds!*

He took the young Marylander to task for going to the Church of the Galileans, where he had several times accompanied Iris of late.

I am a Churchman,—the young man said,—by education and habit. I love my old Church for many reasons, but most of all because I think it has educated me out of its own forms into the spirit of its highest teachings. I think I belong to the "Broad Church," if any of you can tell what that means.

I had the rashness to attempt to answer the question myself.—Some say the Broad Church means the collective mass of good people of all denominations. Others say that such a definition is nonsense; that a church is an organization, and the scattered good folks are no organization at all. They think that men will eventually come together on

the basis of one or two or more common articles of belief, and form a great unity. Do they see what this amounts

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to? It means an equal division of intellect! It is mental agrarianism! a thing that never was and never will be until national and individual idiosyncrasies have ceased to exist. The man of thirty-nine beliefs holds the man of one belief a pauper; he is not going to give up thirty-eight of them for the sake of fraternizing with the other in the temple which bears on its front, "Deo erexit Voltaire." A church is a garden, I have heard it said, and the illustration was neatly handled. Yes, and there is no such thing as a broad garden. It must be fenced in, and whatever is fenced in is narrow. You cannot have arctic and tropical plants growing together in it, except by the forcing system, which is a mighty narrow piece of business. You can't make a village or a parish or a family think alike, yet you suppose that you can make a world pinch its beliefs or pad them to a single pattern! Why, the very life of an ecclesiastical organization is a life of induction, a state of perpetually disturbed equilibrium kept up by another charged body in the neighborhood. If the two bodies touch and share their respective charges, down goes the index of the electrometer!

Do you know that every man has a religious belief peculiar to himself? Smith is always a Smithite. He takes in exactly Smith's-worth of knowledge, Smith's-worth of truth, of beauty, of divinity. And Brown has from time immemorial been trying to burn him, to excommunicate him, to anonymous-article him, because he did not take in Brown's-worth of knowledge, truth, beauty, divinity. He cannot do it, any more than a pint-pot can hold a quart, or a quart-pot be filled by a pint. Iron is essentially the same everywhere and always; but the sulphate of iron is never the same as the carbonate of iron. Truth is invariable; but the Smithate of truth must always differ from the Brownate of truth.

The wider the intellect, the larger and simpler the expressions in which its knowledge is embodied. The inferior race, the degraded and enslaved people, the small-minded individual, live in the details which to larger minds and more advanced tribes of men reduce themselves to axioms and laws. As races and individual minds must always differ just as sulphates and carbonates do, I cannot see ground for expecting the Broad Church to be founded on any fusion of intellectual beliefs, which of course implies that those who hold the larger number of doctrines as essential shall come down to those who hold the smaller number. These doctrines are to the negative aristocracy what the quarterings of their coats are to the positive orders of nobility.

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The Broad Church, I think, will never be based on anything that requires the use of language. Freemasonry gives an idea of such a church, and a brother is known and cared for in a strange land where no word of his can be understood. The apostle of this church may be a deaf mute carrying a cup of cold water to a thirsting fellow-creature. The cup of cold water does not require to be translated for a foreigner to understand it. I am afraid the only Broad Church possible is one that has its creed in the heart, and not in the head,—that we shall know its members by their fruits, and not by their words. If you say this communion of well-doers is no church, I can only answer, that all organized bodies have their limits of size, and that when we find a man a hundred feet high and thirty feet broad across the shoulders, we will look out for an organization that shall include all Christendom.

Some of us do practically recognize a Broad Church and a Narrow Church, however. The Narrow Church may be seen in the ship's boats of humanity, in the long boat, in the jolly boat, in the captain's gig, lying off the poor old vessel, thanking God that they are safe, and reckoning how soon the hulk containing the mass of their fellow-creatures will go down. The Broad Church is on board, working hard at the pumps, and very slow to believe that the ship will be swallowed up with so many poor people in it, fastened down under the hatches ever since it floated.

—All this, of course, was nothing but my poor notion about these matters. I am simply an “outsider,” you know; only it doesn't do very well for a nest of Hingham boxes to talk too much about outsiders and insiders!

After this talk of ours, I think these two young people went pretty regularly to the Church of the Galileans. Still they could not keep away from the sweet harmonies and rhythmic litanies of Saint Polycarp on the great Church festival-days; so that, between the two, they were so much together, that the boarders began to make remarks, and our landlady said to me, one day, that, though it was noon of her business, them that had eyes couldn't help seein' that there was somethin' goin', on between them two young people; she thought the young man was a very likely young man, though jest what his prospects was was unbeknown to her; but she thought he must be doing well, and rather guessed he would be able to take care of a family, if he didn't go to takin' a house; for a gentleman and his wife could board a great deal cheaper than they could keep house; —but then that girl was nothin' but a child, and wouldn't think of bein' married this five year. They was good boarders, both of 'em, paid regular, and was as pooty a couple as she ever laid eyes on.

—To come back to what I began to speak of before,—the divinity-student was exercised in his mind about the Little Gentleman, and, in the kindness of his heart,—for he was a good young man,—and in the strength of his convictions,—for he took it for granted that he and his crowd were right, and other folks and their crowd were wrong,—he determined to bring the Little Gentleman round to his faith before he died, if he could.

So he sent word to the sick man, that he should be pleased to visit him and have some conversation with him; and received for answer that he would be welcome.

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The divinity-student made him a visit, therefore and had a somewhat remarkable interview with him, which I shall briefly relate, without attempting to justify the positions taken by the Little Gentleman. He found him weak, but calm. Iris sat silent by his pillow.

After the usual preliminaries, the divinity-student said; in a kind way, that he was sorry to find him in failing health, that he felt concerned for his soul, and was anxious to assist him in making preparations for the great change awaiting him.

I thank you, Sir,—said the Little Gentleman, permit me to ask you, what makes you think I am not ready for it, Sir, and that you can do anything to help me, Sir?

I address you only as a fellow-man,—said the divinity-student,—and therefore a fellow-sinner.

I am not a man, Sir!—said the Little Gentleman.—I was born into this world the wreck of a man, and I shall not be judged with a race to which I do not belong. Look at this!—he said, and held up his withered arm.—See there!—and he pointed to his misshapen extremities.—Lay your hand here!—and he laid his own on the region of his misplaced heart.—I have known nothing of the life of your race. When I first came to my consciousness, I found myself an object of pity, or a sight to show. The first strange child I ever remember hid its face and would not come near me. I was a broken-hearted as well as broken-bodied boy. I grew into the emotions of ripening youth, and all that I could have loved shrank from my presence. I became a man in years, and had nothing in common with manhood but its longings. My life is the dying pang of a worn-out race, and I shall go down alone into the dust, out of this world of men and women, without ever knowing the fellowship of the one or the love of the other. I will not die with a lie rattling in my throat. If another state of being has anything worse in store for me, I have had a long apprenticeship to give me strength that I may bear it. I don't believe it, Sir! I have too much faith for that. God has not left me wholly without comfort, even here. I love this old place where I was born;—the heart of the world beats under the three hills of Boston, Sir! I love this great land, with so many tall men in it, and so many good, noble women.—His eyes turned to the silent figure by his pillow.—I have learned to accept meekly what has been allotted to me, but I cannot honestly say that I think my sin has been greater than my suffering. I bear the ignorance and the evil-doing of whole generations in my single person. I never drew a breath of air nor took a step that was not a punishment for another's fault. I may have had many wrong thoughts, but I cannot have done many wrong deeds,—for my cage has been a narrow one, and I have paced it alone. I have looked through the bars and seen the great world of men busy and happy, but I had no part in their doings. I have known what it was to dream of the great passions; but since my mother kissed me before she died, no woman's lips have pressed my cheek,—nor ever will.

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—The young girl's eyes glittered with a sudden film, and almost without a thought, but with a warm human instinct that rushed up into her face with her heart's blood, she bent over and kissed him. It was the sacrament that washed out the memory of long years of bitterness, and I should hold it an unworthy thought to defend her. The Little Gentleman repaid her with the only tear any of us ever saw him shed.

The divinity-student rose from his place, and, turning away from the sick man, walked to the other side of the room, where he bowed his head and was still. All the questions he had meant to ask had faded from his memory. The tests he had prepared by which to judge of his fellow-creature's fitness for heaven seemed to have lost their virtue. He could trust the crippled child of sorrow to the Infinite Parent. The kiss of the fair-haired girl had been like a sign from heaven, that angels watched over him whom he was presuming but a moment before to summon before the tribunal of his private judgment. Shall I pray with you?—he said, after a pause. A little before he would have said, Shall I pray for you?—The Christian religion, as taught by its Founder, is full of sentiment. So we must not blame the divinity-student, if he was overcome by those yearnings of human sympathy which predominate so much more in the sermons of the Master than in the writings of his successors, and which have made the parable of the Prodigal Son the consolation of mankind, as it has been the stumbling-block of all exclusive doctrines.

Pray!—said the Little Gentleman.

The divinity-student prayed, in low, tender tones,

Iris and the Little Gentleman that God would look on his servant lying helpless at the feet of his mercy; that He would remember his long years of bondage in the flesh; that He would deal gently with the bruised reed. Thou hast visited the sins of the fathers upon this their child. Oh, turn away from him the penalties of his own transgressions! Thou hast laid upon him, from infancy, the cross which thy stronger children are called upon to take up; and now that he is fainting under it, be Thou his stay, and do Thou succor him that is tempted! Let his manifold infirmities come between him and Thy judgment; in wrath remember mercy! If his eyes are not opened to all Thy truth, let Thy compassion lighten the darkness that rests upon him, even as it came through the word of thy Son to blind Bartimeus, who sat by the wayside, begging!

Many more petitions he uttered, but all in the same subdued tone of tenderness. In the presence of helpless suffering, and in the fast-darkening shadow of the Destroyer, he forgot all but his Christian humanity, and cared more about consoling his fellow-man than making a proselyte of him.

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This was the last prayer to which the Little Gentleman ever listened. Some change was rapidly coming over him during this last hour of which I have been speaking. The excitement of pleading his cause before his self-elected spiritual adviser,—the emotion which overcame him, when the young girl obeyed the sudden impulse of her feelings and pressed her lips to his cheek,—the thoughts that mastered him while the divinity-student poured out his soul for him in prayer, might well hurry on the inevitable moment. When the divinity-student had uttered his last petition, commending him to the Father through his Son's intercession, he turned to look upon him before leaving his chamber. His face was changed.—There is a language of the human countenance which we all understand without an interpreter, though the lineaments belong to the rudest savage that ever stammered in an unknown barbaric dialect. By the stillness of the sharpened features, by the blankness of the tearless eyes, by the fixedness of the smileless mouth, by the deadening tints, by the contracted brow, by the dilating nostril, we know that the soul is soon to leave its mortal tenement, and is already closing up its windows and putting out its fires.—Such was the aspect of the face upon which the divinity-student looked, after the brief silence which followed his prayer. The change had been rapid, though not that abrupt one which is liable to happen at any moment in these cases.—The sick man looked towards him.—Farewell,—he said,—I thank you. Leave me alone with her.

When the divinity-student had gone, and the Little Gentleman found himself alone with Iris, he lifted his hand to his neck, and took from it, suspended by a slender chain, a quaint, antique-looking key,—the same key I had once seen him holding. He gave this to her, and pointed to a carved cabinet opposite his bed, one of those that had so attracted my curious eyes and set me wondering as to what it might contain.

Open it,—he said,—and light the lamp.—The young girl walked to the cabinet and unlocked the door. A deep recess appeared, lined with black velvet, against which stood in white relief an ivory crucifix. A silver lamp hung over it. She lighted the lamp and came back to the bedside. The dying man fixed his eyes upon the figure of the dying Saviour.—Give me your hand, he said; and Iris placed her right hand in his left. So they remained, until presently his eyes lost their meaning, though they still remained vacantly fixed upon the white image. Yet he held the young girl's hand firmly, as if it were leading him through some deep-shadowed valley and it was all he could cling to. But presently an involuntary muscular contraction stole over him, and his terrible dying grasp held the poor girl as if she were wedged in an engine of torture. She pressed her lips together and sat still. The inexorable hand held her tighter and tighter, until she felt as if her own slender fingers would be crushed

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in its gripe. It was one of the tortures of the Inquisition she was suffering, and she could not stir from her place. Then, in her great anguish, she, too, cast her eyes upon that dying figure, and, looking upon its pierced hands and feet and side and lacerated forehead, she felt that she also must suffer uncomplaining. In the moment of her sharpest pain she did not forget the duties of her under office, but dried the dying man's moist forehead with her handkerchief, even while the dew of agony were glistening on her own. How long this lasted she never could tell. Time and thirst are two things you and I talk about; but the victims whom holy men and righteous judges used to stretch on their engines knew better what they meant than you or I!—What is that great bucket of water for? said the Marchioness de Brinvilliers, before she was placed on the rack.—For you to drink,—said the torturer to the little woman.—She could not think that it would take such a flood to quench the fire in her and so keep her alive for her confession. The torturer knew better than she.

After a time not to be counted in minutes, as the clock measures, —without any warning,—there came a swift change of his features; his face turned white, as the waters whiten when a sudden breath passes over their still surface; the muscles instantly relaxed, and Iris, released at once from her care for the sufferer and from his unconscious grasp, fell senseless, with a feeble cry,—the only utterance of her long agony.

Perhaps you sometimes wander in through the iron gates of the Copp's Hill burial-ground. You love to stroll round among the graves that crowd each other in the thickly peopled soil of that breezy summit. You love to lean on the freestone slab which lies over the bones of the Mathers,—to read the epitaph of stout William Clark, "Despiser of Sorry Persons and little Actions,"—to stand by the stone grave of sturdy Daniel Malcolm and look upon the splintered slab that tells the old rebel's story,—to kneel by the triple stone that says how the three Worthylakes, father, mother, and young daughter, died on the same day and lie buried there; a mystery; the subject of a moving ballad, by the late *Benjamin Franklin*, as may be seen in his autobiography, which will explain the secret of the triple gravestone; though the old philosopher has made a mistake, unless the stone is wrong.

Not very far from that you will find a fair mound, of dimensions fit to hold a well-grown man. I will not tell you the inscription upon the stone which stands at its head; for I do not wish you to be sure of the resting-place of one who could not bear to think that he should be known as a cripple among the dead, after being pointed at so long among the living. There is one sign, it is true, by which, if you have been a sagacious reader of these papers, you will at once know it; but I fear you read carelessly, and must study them more diligently before you will detect the hint to which I allude.

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The Little Gentleman lies where he longed to lie, among the old names and the old bones of the old Boston people. At the foot of his resting-place is the river, alive with the wings and antennae of its colossal water-insects; over opposite are the great war-ships, and the heavy guns, which, when they roar, shake the soil in which he lies; and in the steeple of Christ Church, hard by, are the sweet chimes which are the Boston boy's Ranz des Vaches, whose echoes follow him all the world over.

In Pace!

I, told you a good while ago that the Little Gentleman could not do a better thing than to leave all his money, whatever it might be, to the young girl who has since that established such a claim upon him. He did not, however. A considerable bequest to one of our public institutions keeps his name in grateful remembrance. The telescope through which he was fond of watching the heavenly bodies, and the movements of which had been the source of such odd fancies on my part, is now the property of a Western College. You smile as you think of my taking it for a fleshless human figure, when I saw its tube pointing to the sky, and thought it was an arm, under the white drapery thrown over it for protection. So do I smile now; I belong to the numerous class who are prophets after the fact, and hold my nightmares very cheap by daylight.

I have received many letters of inquiry as to the sound resembling a woman's voice, which occasioned me so many perplexities. Some thought there was no question that he had a second apartment, in which he had made an asylum for a deranged female relative. Others were of opinion that he was, as I once suggested, a "Bluebeard" with patriarchal tendencies, and I have even been censured for introducing so Oriental an element into my record of boarding-house experience.

Come in and see me, the Professor, some evening when I have nothing else to do, and ask me to play you Tartini's Devil's Sonata on that extraordinary instrument in my possession, well known to amateurs as one of the masterpieces of Joseph Guarnerius. The vox humana of the great Haerlem organ is very lifelike, and the same stop in the organ of the Cambridge chapel might be mistaken in some of its tones for a human voice; but I think you never heard anything come so near the cry of a prima donna as the A string and the E string of this instrument. A single fact will illustrate the resemblance. I was executing some tours de force upon it one evening, when the policeman of our district rang the bell sharply, and asked what was the matter in the house. He had heard a woman's screams,—he was sure of it. I had to make the instrument sing before his eyes before he could be satisfied that he had not heard the cries of a woman. The instrument was bequeathed to me by the Little Gentleman. Whether it had anything to do with the sounds I heard coming from his chamber, you can form your own opinion;—I have no other conjecture to offer. It is not true that a second apartment with a secret entrance was found; and the story of the veiled lady is the invention of one of the Reporters.

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Bridget, the housemaid, always insisted that he died a Catholic. She had seen the crucifix, and believed that he prayed on his knees before it. The last circumstance is very probably true; indeed, there was a spot worn on the carpet just before this cabinet which might be thus accounted for. Why he, whose whole life was a crucifixion, should not love to look on that divine image of blameless suffering, I cannot see; on the contrary, it seems to me the most natural thing in the world that he should. But there are those who want to make private property of everything, and can't make up their minds that people who don't think as they do should claim any interest in that infinite compassion expressed in the central figure of the Christendom which includes us all.

The divinity-student expressed a hope before the boarders that he should meet him in heaven.—The question is, whether he'll meet you,—said the young fellow John, rather smartly. The divinity-student had n't thought of that.

However, he is a worthy young man, and I trust I have shown him in a kindly and respectful light. He will get a parish by-and-by; and, as he is about to marry the sister of an old friend,—the Schoolmistress, whom some of us remember,—and as all sorts of expensive accidents happen to young married ministers, he will be under bonds to the amount of his salary, which means starvation, if they are forfeited, to think all his days as he thought when he was settled,—unless the majority of his people change with him or in advance of him. A hard ease, to which nothing could reconcile a man, except that the faithful discharge of daily duties in his personal relations with his parishioners will make him useful enough in his way, though as a thinker he may cease to exist before he has reached middle age.

—Iris went into mourning for the Little Gentleman. Although, as I have said, he left the bulk of his property, by will, to a public institution, he added a codicil, by which he disposed of various pieces of property as tokens of kind remembrance. It was in this way I became the possessor of the wonderful instrument I have spoken of, which had been purchased for him out of an Italian convent. The landlady was comforted with a small legacy. The following extract relates to Iris: “in consideration of her manifold acts of kindness, but only in token of grateful remembrance, and by no means as a reward for services which cannot be compensated, a certain messuage, with all the land thereto appertaining, situated in _____ Street, at the North End, so called, of Boston, aforesaid, the same being the house in which I was born, but now inhabited by several families, and known as ‘The Rookery.’” Iris had also the crucifix, the portrait, and the red-jewelled ring. The funeral or death's-head ring was buried with him.

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It was a good while, after the Little Gentleman was gone, before our boarding-house recovered its wonted cheerfulness. There was a flavor in his whims and local prejudices that we liked, even while we smiled at them. It was hard to see the tall chair thrust away among useless lumber, to dismantle his room, to take down the picture of Leah, the handsome Witch of Essex, to move away the massive shelves that held the books he loved, to pack up the tube through which he used to study the silent stars, looking down at him like the eyes of dumb creatures, with a kind of stupid half-consciousness that did not worry him as did the eyes of men and women,—and hardest of all to displace that sacred figure to which his heart had always turned and found refuge, in the feelings it inspired, from all the perplexities of his busy brain. It was hard, but it had to be done.

And by-and-by we grew cheerful again, and the breakfast-table wore something of its old look. The Koh-i-noor, as we named the gentleman with the diamond, left us, however, soon after that “little mill,” as the young fellow John called it, where he came off second best. His departure was no doubt hastened by a note from the landlady’s daughter, inclosing a lock of purple hair which she “had valued as a pledge of affection, ere she knew the hollowness of the vows he had breathed,” speedily followed by another, inclosing the landlady’s bill. The next morning he was missing, as were his limited wardrobe and the trunk that held it. Three empty bottles of Mrs. Allen’s celebrated preparation, each of them asserting, on its word of honor as a bottle, that its former contents were “not a dye,” were all that was left to us of the Koh-i-noor.

From this time forward, the landlady’s daughter manifested a decided improvement in her style of carrying herself before the boarders. She abolished the odious little flat, gummy side-curl. She left off various articles of “jewelry.” She began to help her mother in some of her household duties. She became a regular attendant on the ministrations of a very worthy clergyman, having been attracted to his meetin’ by witnessing a marriage ceremony in which he called a man and a woman a “gentleman” and a “lady,”—a stroke of gentility which quite overcame her. She even took a part in what she called a Sabbath school, though it was held on Sunday, and by no means on Saturday, as the name she intended to utter implied. All this, which was very sincere, as I believe, on her part, and attended with a great improvement in her character, ended in her bringing home a young man, with straight, sandy hair, brushed so as to stand up steeply above his forehead, wearing a pair of green spectacles, and dressed in black broadcloth. His personal aspect, and a certain solemnity of countenance, led me to think he must be a clergyman; and as Master Benjamin Franklin blurted out before several of us boarders, one day, that “Sis had got a beau,”

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I was pleased at the prospect of her becoming a minister's wife. On inquiry, however, I found that the somewhat solemn look which I had noticed was indeed a professional one, but not clerical. He was a young undertaker, who had just succeeded to a thriving business. Things, I believe, are going on well at this time of writing, and I am glad for the landlady's daughter and her mother. Sextons and undertakers are the cheerfulest people in the world at home, as comedians and circus-clowns are the most melancholy in their domestic circle.

As our old boarding-house is still in existence, I do not feel at liberty to give too minute a statement of the present condition of each and all of its inmates. I am happy to say, however, that they are all alive and well, up to this time. That amiable old gentleman who sat opposite to me is growing older, as old men will, but still smiles benignantly on all the boarders, and has come to be a kind of father to all of them,—so that on his birthday there is always something like a family festival. The Poor Relation, even, has warmed into a filial feeling towards him, and on his last birthday made him a beautiful present, namely, a very handsomely bound copy of Blair's celebrated poem, "The Grave."

The young man John is still, as he says, "in frustrate fettle." I saw him spar, not long since, at a private exhibition, and do himself great credit in a set-to with Henry Finnegass, Esq., a professional gentleman of celebrity. I am pleased to say that he has been promoted to an upper clerkship, and, in consequence of his rise in office, has taken an apartment somewhat lower down than number "forty-'leven," as he facetiously called his attic. Whether there is any truth, or not, in the story of his attachment to, and favorable reception by, the daughter of the head of an extensive wholesale grocer's establishment, I will not venture an opinion; I may say, however, that I have met him repeatedly in company with a very well-nourished and high-colored young lady, who, I understand, is the daughter of the house in question.

Some of the boarders were of opinion that Iris did not return the undisguised attentions of the handsome young Marylander. Instead of fixing her eyes steadily on him, as she used to look upon the Little Gentleman, she would turn them away, as if to avoid his own. They often went to church together, it is true; but nobody, of course, supposes there is any relation between religious sympathy and those wretched "sentimental" movements of the human heart upon which it is commonly agreed that nothing better is based than society, civilization, friendship, the relation of husband and wife, and of parent and child, and which many people must think were singularly overrated by the Teacher of Nazareth, whose whole life, as I said before, was full of sentiment, loving this or that young man, pardoning this or that sinner, weeping over the dead, mourning for the doomed city, blessing, and perhaps kissing, the little children, so that the Gospels are still cried over almost as often as the last work of fiction!

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But one fine June morning there rumbled up to the door of our boarding-house a hack containing a lady inside and a trunk on the outside. It was our friend the lady-patroness of Miss Iris, the same who had been called by her admiring pastor "The Model of all the Virtues." Once a week she had written a letter, in a rather formal hand, but full of good advice, to her young charge. And now she had come to carry her away, thinking that she had learned all she was likely to learn under her present course of teaching. The Model, however, was to stay awhile,—a week, or more,—before they should leave together.

Iris was obedient, as she was bound to be. She was respectful, grateful, as a child is with a just, but not tender parent. Yet something was wrong. She had one of her trances, and became statue-like, as before, only the day after the Model's arrival. She was wan and silent, tasted nothing at table, smiled as if by a forced effort, and often looked vaguely away from those who were looking at her, her eyes just glazed with the shining moisture of a tear that must not be allowed to gather and fall. Was it grief at parting from the place where her strange friendship had grown up with the Little Gentleman? Yet she seemed to have become reconciled to his loss, and rather to have a deep feeling of gratitude that she had been permitted to care for him in his last weary days.

The Sunday after the Model's arrival, that lady had an attack of headache, and was obliged to shut herself up in a darkened room alone. Our two young friends took the opportunity to go together to the Church of the Galileans. They said but little going,— "collecting their thoughts" for the service, I devoutly hope. My kind good friend the pastor preached that day one of his sermons that make us all feel like brothers and sisters, and his text was that affectionate one from John, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." When Iris and her friend came out of church, they were both pale, and walked a space without speaking.

At last the young man said,—You and I are not little children, Iris!

She looked in his face an instant, as if startled, for there was something strange in the tone of his voice. She smiled faintly, but spoke never a word.

In deed and in truth, Iris,——

What shall a poor girl say or do, when a strong man falters in his speech before her, and can do nothing better than hold out his hand to finish his broken sentence?

The poor girl said nothing, but quietly laid her ungloved hand in his,—the little soft white hand which had ministered so tenderly and suffered so patiently.

The blood came back to the young man's cheeks, as he lifted it to his lips, even as they walked there in the street, touched it gently with them, and said, "It is mine!"

Iris did not contradict him.

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The seasons pass by so rapidly, that I am startled to think how much has happened since these events I was describing. Those two young people would insist on having their own way about their own affairs, notwithstanding the good lady, so justly called the Model, insisted that the age of twenty-five years was as early as any discreet young lady should think of incurring the responsibilities, *etc.*, *etc.* Long before Iris had reached that age, she was the wife of a young Maryland engineer, directing some of the vast constructions of his native State,—where he was growing rich fast enough to be able to decline that famous Russian offer which would have made him a kind of nabob in a few years. Iris does not write verse often, nowadays, but she sometimes draws. The last sketch of hers I have seen in my Southern visits was of two children, a boy and girl, the youngest holding a silver goblet, like the one she held that evening when I—I was so struck with her statue-like beauty. If in the later, summer months you find the grass marked with footsteps around that grave on Copp's Hill I told you of, and flowers scattered over it, you may be sure that Iris is here on her annual visit to the home of her childhood and that excellent lady whose only fault was, that Nature had written out her list of virtues on ruled paper, and forgotten to rub out the lines.

One thing more I must mention. Being on the Common, last Sunday, I was attracted by the cheerful spectacle of a well-dressed and somewhat youthful papa wheeling a very elegant little carriage containing a stout baby. A buxom young lady watched them from one of the stone seats, with an interest which could be nothing less than maternal. I at once recognized my old friend, the young fellow whom we called John. He was delighted to see me, introduced me to "Madam," and would have the lusty infant out of the carriage, and hold him up for me to look at.

Now, then,—he said to the two-year-old,—show the gentleman how you hit from the shoulder. Whereupon the little imp pushed his fat fist straight into my eye, to his father's intense satisfaction.

Fust-rate little chap,—said the papa.—Chip of the old block. Regl'r little Johnny, you know.

I was so much pleased to find the young fellow settled in life, and pushing about one of "them little articles" he had seemed to want so much, that I took my "punishment" at the hands of the infant pugilist with great equanimity.—And how is the old boarding-house?—I asked.

A 1,—he answered.—Painted and papered as good as new. Gabs in all the rooms up to the skyparlors. Old woman's layin' up money, they say. Means to send Ben Franklin to college. Just then the first bell rang for church, and my friend, who, I understand, has become a most exemplary member of society, said he must be off to get ready for meetin', and told the young one to "shake dada," which he did with his closed fist, in a somewhat menacing manner. And so the young man John, as we used to call him, took the pole of the miniature carriage, and pushed the small pugilist before him homewards,

followed, in a somewhat leisurely way, by his pleasant-looking lady-companion, and I sent a sigh and a smile after him.

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That evening, as soon as it was dark, I could not help going round by the old boarding-house. The “gahs” was lighted, but the curtains, or more properly, the painted shades; were not down. And so I stood there and looked in along the table where the boarders sat at the evening meal,—our old breakfast-table, which some of us feel as if we knew so well. There were new faces at it, but also old and familiar ones.—The landlady, in a wonderfully smart cap, looking young, comparatively speaking, and as if half the wrinkles had been ironed out of her forehead.—Her daughter, in rather dressy half-mourning, with a vast brooch of jet, got up, apparently, to match the gentleman next her, who was in black costume and sandy hair,—the last rising straight from his forehead, like the marble flame one sometimes sees at the top of a funeral urn.—The Poor Relation, not in absolute black, but in a stuff with specks of white; as much as to say, that, if there were any more Hiram left to sigh for her, there were pin-holes in the night of her despair, through which a ray of hope might find its way to an adorer. —Master Benjamin Franklin, grown taller of late, was in the act of splitting his face open with a wedge of pie, so that his features were seen to disadvantage for the moment.—The good old gentleman was sitting still and thoughtful. All at once he turned his face toward the window where I stood, and, just as if he had seen me, smiled his benignant smile. It was a recollection of some past pleasant moment; but it fell upon me like the blessing of a father.

I kissed my hand to them all, unseen as I stood in the outer darkness; and as I turned and went my way, the table and all around it faded into the realm of twilight shadows and of midnight dreams.

And so my year's record is finished. The Professor has talked less than his predecessor, but he has heard and seen more. Thanks to all those friends who from time to time have sent their messages of kindly recognition and fellow-feeling! Peace to all such as may have been vexed in spirit by any utterance these pages have repeated! They will, doubtless, forget for the moment the difference in the hues of truth we look at through our human prisms, and join in singing (inwardly) this hymn to the Source of the light we all need to lead us, and the warmth which alone can make us all brothers.

A sun-day hymn.

Lord of all being! throned afar,
Thy glory flames from sun and star,
Centre and soul of every sphere,
Yet to each loving heart how near!



Sun of our life, thy quickening ray
Sheds on our path the glow of day;
Star of our hope, thy softened light
Cheers the long watches of the night.

Our midnight is thy smile withdrawn;
Our noontide is thy gracious dawn;
Our rainbow arch thy mercy's sign;
All, save the clouds of sin, are thine!



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Lord of all life, below, above,
Whose light is truth, whose warmth is love,
Before thy ever-blazing throne
We ask no lustre of our own.

Grant us thy truth to make us free,
And kindling hearts that burn for thee,
Till all thy living altars claim
One holy light, one heavenly flame.
One holy light, one heavenly flame.

THE POET AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE

by Oliver Wendell Holmes

PREFACE.

In this, the third series of Breakfast-Table conversations, a slight dramatic background shows off a few talkers and writers, aided by certain silent supernumeraries. The machinery is much like that of the two preceding series. Some of the characters must seem like old acquaintances to those who have read the former papers. As I read these over for the first time for a number of years, I notice one character; presenting a class of beings who have greatly multiplied during the interval which separates the earlier and later Breakfast-Table papers,—I mean the scientific specialists. The entomologist, who confines himself rigidly to the study of the coleoptera, is intended to typify this class. The subdivision of labor, which, as we used to be told, required fourteen different workmen to make a single pin, has reached all branches of knowledge. We find new terms in all the Professions, implying that special provinces have been marked off, each having its own school of students. In theology we have many curious subdivisions; among the rest eschatology, that is to say, the geography, geology, *etc.*, of the “undiscovered country;” in medicine, if the surgeon who deals with dislocations of the right shoulder declines to meddle with a displacement on the other side, we are not surprised, but ring the bell of the practitioner who devotes himself to injuries of the left shoulder.

On the other hand, we have had or have the encyclopaedic intelligences like Cuvier, Buckle, and more emphatically Herbert Spencer, who take all knowledge, or large fields of it, to be their province. The author of “Thoughts on the Universe” has something in common with these, but he appears also to have a good deal about him of what we call the humorist; that is, an individual with a somewhat heterogeneous personality, in which various distinctly human elements are mixed together, so as to form a kind of coherent

and sometimes pleasing whole, which is to a symmetrical character as a breccia is to a mosaic.

As for the Young Astronomer, his rhythmical discourse may be taken as expressing the reaction of what some would call “the natural man” against the unnatural beliefs which he found in that lower world to which he descended by day from his midnight home in the firmament.

I have endeavored to give fair play to the protest of gentle and reverential conservatism in the letter of the Lady, which was not copied from, but suggested by, one which I received long ago from a lady bearing an honored name, and which I read thoughtfully and with profound respect.

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December, 1882.

PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION.

It is now nearly twenty years since this book was published. Being the third of the Breakfast-Table series, it could hardly be expected to attract so much attention as the earlier volumes. Still, I had no reason to be disappointed with its reception. It took its place with the others, and was in some points a clearer exposition of my views and feelings than either of the other books, its predecessors. The poems "Homesick in Heaven" and the longer group of passages coming from the midnight reveries of the Young Astronomer have thoughts in them not so fully expressed elsewhere in my writings.

The first of these two poems is at war with our common modes of thought. In looking forward to rejoining in a future state those whom we have loved on earth,—as most of us hope and many of us believe we shall,—we are apt to forget that the same individuality is remembered by one relative as a babe, by another as an adult in the strength of maturity, and by a third as a wreck with little left except its infirmities and its affections. The main thought of this poem is a painful one to some persons. They have so closely associated life with its accidents that they expect to see their departed friends in the costume of the time in which they best remember them, and feel as if they should meet the spirit of their grandfather with his wig and cane, as they habitually recall him to memory.

The process of scientific specialization referred to and illustrated in this record has been going on more actively than ever during these last twenty years. We have only to look over the lists of the Faculties and teachers of our Universities to see the subdivision of labor carried out as never before. The movement is irresistible; it brings with it exactness, exhaustive knowledge, a narrow but complete self-satisfaction, with such accompanying faults as pedantry, triviality, and the kind of partial blindness which belong to intellectual myopia. The specialist is idealized almost into sublimity in Browning's "Burial of the Grammarian." We never need fear that he will undervalue himself. To be the supreme authority on anything is a satisfaction to self-love next door to the precious delusions of dementia. I have never pictured a character more contented with himself than the "Scarabee" of this story.

Beverly farms, mass., August 1, 1891.
O. W. H.

The poet

At the

Breakfast-table.

I

The idea of a man's "interviewing" himself is rather odd, to be sure. But then that is what we are all of us doing every day. I talk half the time to find out my own thoughts, as a school-boy turns his pockets inside out to see what is in them. One brings to light all sorts of personal property he had forgotten in his inventory.

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—You don't know what your thoughts are going to be beforehand? said the "Member of the Haouse," as he calls himself.

—Why, of course I don't. Bless your honest legislative soul, I suppose I have as many bound volumes of notions of one kind and another in my head as you have in your Representatives' library up there at the State House. I have to tumble them over and over, and open them in a hundred places, and sometimes cut the leaves here and there, to find what I think about this and that. And a good many people who flatter themselves they are talking wisdom to me, are only helping me to get at the shelf and the book and the page where I shall find my own opinion about the matter in question.

—The Member's eyes began to look heavy.

—It 's a very queer place, that receptacle a man fetches his talk out of. The library comparison does n't exactly hit it. You stow away some idea and don't want it, say for ten years. When it turns up at last it has got so jammed and crushed out of shape by the other ideas packed with it, that it is no more like what it was than a raisin is like a grape on the vine, or a fig from a drum like one hanging on the tree. Then, again, some kinds of thoughts breed in the dark of one's mind like the blind fishes in the Mammoth Cave. We can't see them and they can't see us; but sooner or later the daylight gets in and we find that some cold, fishy little negative has been spawning all over our beliefs, and the brood of blind questions it has given birth to are burrowing round and under and butting their blunt noses against the pillars of faith we thought the whole world might lean on. And then, again, some of our old beliefs are dying out every year, and others feed on them and grow fat, or get poisoned as the case may be. And so, you see, you can't tell what the thoughts are that you have got salted down, as one may say, till you run a streak of talk through them, as the market people run a butterscoop through a firkin.

Don't talk, thinking you are going to find out your neighbor, for you won't do it, but talk to find out yourself. There is more of you—and less of you, in spots, very likely—than you know.

—The Member gave a slight but unequivocal start just here. It does seem as if perpetual somnolence was the price of listening to other people's wisdom. This was one of those transient nightmares that one may have in a doze of twenty seconds. He thought a certain imaginary Committee of Safety of a certain imaginary Legislature was proceeding to burn down his haystack, in accordance with an Act, entitled an Act to make the Poor Richer by making the Rich Poorer. And the chairman of the committee was instituting a forcible exchange of hats with him, to his manifest disadvantage, for he had just bought him a new beaver. He told this dream afterwards to one of the boarders.

There was nothing very surprising, therefore, in his asking a question not very closely related to what had gone before.

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—Do you think they mean business?

—I beg your pardon, but it would be of material assistance to me in answering your question if I knew who “they” might happen to be.

—Why, those chaps that are setting folks on to burn us all up in our beds. Political firebugs we call ’em up our way. Want to substitoot the match-box for the ballot-box. Scare all our old women half to death.

—Oh—ah—yes—to be sure. I don’t believe they say what the papers put in their mouths any more than that a friend of mine wrote the letter about Worcester’s and Webster’s Dictionaries, that he had to disown the other day. These newspaper fellows are half asleep when they make up their reports at two or three o’clock in the morning, and fill out the speeches to suit themselves. I do remember some things that sounded pretty bad,—about as bad as nitro-glycerine, for that matter. But I don’t believe they ever said ’em, when they spoke their pieces, or if they said ’em I know they did n’t mean ’em. Something like this, wasn’t it? If the majority didn’t do something the minority wanted ’em to, then the people were to burn up our cities, and knock us down and jump on our stomachs. That was about the kind of talk, as the papers had it; I don’t wonder it scared the old women.

—The Member was wide awake by this time.

—I don’t seem to remember of them partickler phrases, he said.

—Dear me, no; only levelling everything smack, and trampling us under foot, as the reporters made it out. That means *fire*, I take it, and knocking you down and stamping on you, whichever side of your person happens to be uppermost. Sounded like a threat; meant, of course, for a warning. But I don’t believe it was in the piece as they spoke it,—could n’t have been. Then, again, Paris wasn’t to blame,—as much as to say—so the old women thought—that New York or Boston would n’t be to blame if it did the same thing. I’ve heard of political gatherings where they barbecued an ox, but I can’t think there ’s a party in this country that wants to barbecue a city. But it is n’t quite fair to frighten the old women. I don’t doubt there are a great many people wiser than I am that would n’t be hurt by a hint I am going to give them. It’s no matter what you say when you talk to yourself, but when you talk to other people, your business is to use words with reference to the way in which those other people are like to understand them. These pretended inflammatory speeches, so reported as to seem full of combustibles, even if they were as threatening as they have been represented, would do no harm if read or declaimed in a man’s study to his books, or by the sea-shore to the waves. But they are not so wholesome moral entertainment for the dangerous classes. Boys must not touch off their squibs and crackers too near the powder-magazine. This kind of speech does n’t help on the millennium much.

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—It ain't jest the thing to grease your ex with ile o' vitrul, said the Member.

—No, the wheel of progress will soon stick fast if you do. You can't keep a dead level long, if you burn everything down flat to make it. Why, bless your soul, if all the cities of the world were reduced ashes, you'd have a new set of millionnaires in a couple of years or so, out of the trade in potash. In the mean time, what is the use of setting the man with the silver watch against the man with the gold watch, and the man without any watch against them both?

—You can't go agin human natur', said the Member

—You speak truly. Here we are travelling through desert together like the children of Israel. Some pick up more manna and catch more quails than others and ought to help their hungry neighbors more than they do; that will always be so until we come back to primitive Christianity, the road to which does not seem to be via Paris, just now; but we don't want the incendiary's pillar of a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night to lead us in the march to civilization, and we don't want a Moses who will smite rock, not to bring out water for our thirst, but petroleum to burn us all up with.

—It is n't quite fair to run an opposition to the other funny speaker, Rev. Petroleum V. What 's-his-name,—spoke up an anonymous boarder.

—You may have been thinking, perhaps, that it was I,—I, the Poet, who was the chief talker in the one-sided dialogue to which you have been listening. If so, you were mistaken. It was the old man in the spectacles with large round glasses and the iron-gray hair. He does a good deal of the talking at our table, and, to tell the truth, I rather like to hear him. He stirs me up, and finds me occupation in various ways, and especially, because he has good solid prejudices, that one can rub against, and so get up and let off a superficial intellectual irritation, just as the cattle rub their backs against a rail (you remember Sydney Smith's contrivance in his pasture) or their sides against an apple-tree (I don't know why they take to these so particularly, but you will often find the trunk of an apple-tree as brown and smooth as an old saddle at the height of a cow's ribs). I think they begin rubbing in cold blood, and then, you know, l'appetit vient en mangeant, the more they rub the more they want to. That is the way to use your friend's prejudices. This is a sturdy-looking personage of a good deal more than middle age, his face marked with strong manly furrows, records of hard thinking and square stand-up fights with life and all its devils. There is a slight touch of satire in his discourse now and then, and an odd way of answering one that makes it hard to guess how much more or less he means than he seems to say. But he is honest, and always has a twinkle in his eye to put you on your guard when he does not mean to be taken quite literally. I think old Ben Franklin had just that look. I know his great-grandson (in pace!) had it, and I don't doubt he took it in the straight line of descent, as he did his grand intellect.

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The Member of the Haouse evidently comes from one of the lesser inland centres of civilization, where the flora is rich in checkerberries and similar bounties of nature, and the fauna lively with squirrels, wood-chucks, and the like; where the leading sportsmen snare partridges, as they are called, and “hunt” foxes with guns; where rabbits are entrapped in “figgery fours,” and trout captured with the unpretentious earth-worm, instead of the gorgeous fly; where they bet prizes for butter and cheese, and rag-carpets executed by ladies more than seventy years of age; where whey wear dress-coats before dinner, and cock their hats on one side when they feel conspicuous and distinsed; where they say—Sir to you in their common talk and have other Arcadian and bucolic ways which are highly unobjectionable, but are not so much admired in cities, where the people are said to be not half so virtuous.

There is with us a boy of modest dimensions, not otherwise especially entitled to the epithet, who ought be six or seven years old, to judge by the gap left by his front milk teeth, these having resigned in favor of their successors, who have not yet presented their credentials. He is rather old for an enfant terrible, and quite too young to have grown into the bashfulness of adolescence; but he has some of the qualities of both these engaging periods of development, The member of the Haouse calls him “Bub,” invariably, such term I take to be an abbreviation of “Beelzeb,” as “bus” is the short form of “omnibus.” Many eminently genteel persons, whose manners make them at home anywhere, being evidently unaware of true derivation of this word, are in the habit of addressing all unknown children by one of the two terms, “bub” and “sis,” which they consider endears them greatly to the young people, and recommends them to the acquaintance of their honored parents, if these happen to accompany them. The other boarders commonly call our diminutive companion That Boy. He is a sort of expletive at the table, serving to stop gaps, taking the same place a washer does that makes a loose screw fit, and contriving to get driven in like a wedge between any two chairs where there is a crevice. I shall not call that boy by the monosyllable referred to, because, though he has many impish traits at present, he may become civilized and humanized by being in good company. Besides, it is a term which I understand is considered vulgar by the nobility and gentry of the Mother Country, and it is not to be found in Mr. Worcester’s Dictionary, on which, as is well known, the literary men of this metropolis are by special statute allowed to be sworn in place of the Bible. I know one, certainly, who never takes his oath on any other dictionary, any advertising fiction to the contrary, notwithstanding.

I wanted to write out my account of some of the other boarders, but a domestic occurrence—a somewhat prolonged visit from the landlady, who is rather too anxious that I should be comfortable broke in upon the continuity of my thoughts, and occasioned—in short, I gave up writing for that day.

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—I wonder if anything like this ever happened. Author writing, jacks?”

“To be, or not to be: that is the question
Whether ’t is nobl—”

—“William, shall we have pudding to-day, or flapjacks?”

—“Flapjacks, an’ it please thee, Anne, or a pudding, for that matter; or what thou wilt, good woman, so thou come not betwixt me and my thought.”

—Exit Mistress Anne, with strongly accented closing of the door and murmurs to the effect: “Ay, marry, ’t is well for thee to talk as if thou hadst no stomach to fill. We poor wives must swink for our masters, while they sit in their arm-chairs growing as great in the girth through laziness as that ill-mannered fat man William hath writ of in his books of players’ stuff. One had as well meddle with a porkpen, which hath thorns all over him, as try to deal with William when his eyes be rolling in that mad way.”

William—writing once more—after an exclamation in strong English of the older pattern,
—

“Whether ’t is nobler—nobler—nobler—”

To do what? O these women! these women! to have puddings or flapjacks! Oh!—

“Whether ’t is nobler—in the mind—to suffer
The slings—and arrows—of—”

Oh! Oh! these women! I will e’en step over to the parson’s and have a cup of sack with His Reverence for methinks Master Hamlet hath forgot that which was just now on his lips to speak.

So I shall have to put off making my friends acquainted with the other boarders, some of whom seem to me worth studying and describing. I have something else of a graver character for my readers. I am talking, you know, as a poet; I do not say I deserve the name, but I have taken it, and if you consider me at all it must be in that aspect. You will, therefore, be willing to run your eyes over a few pages read, of course by request, to a select party of the boarders.

Thegambrel-roofed house and its outlook.

A panorama, with side-shows.

My birthplace, the home of my childhood and earlier and later boyhood, has within a few months passed out of the ownership of my family into the hands of that venerable Alma Mater who seems to have renewed her youth, and has certainly repainted her

dormitories. In truth, when I last revisited that familiar scene and looked upon the flammantia mania of the old halls, “Massachusetts” with the dummy clock-dial, “Harvard” with the garrulous belfry, little “Holden” with the sculptured unpunishable cherub over its portal, and the rest of my early brick-and-mortar acquaintances, I could not help saying to myself that I had lived to see the peaceable establishment of the Red Republic of Letters.

Many of the things I shall put down I have no doubt told before in a fragmentary way, how many I cannot be quite sure, as I do not very often read my own prose works. But when a man dies a great deal is said of him which has often been said in other forms, and now this dear old house is dead to me in one sense, and I want to gather up my recollections and wind a string of narrative round them, tying them up like a nosegay for the last tribute: the same blossoms in it I have often laid on its threshold while it was still living for me.

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We Americans are all cuckoos,—we make our homes in the nests of other birds. I have read somewhere that the lineal descendants of the man who carted off the body of William Rufus, with Walter Tyrrel's arrow sticking in it, have driven a cart (not absolutely the same one, I suppose) in the New Forest, from that day to this. I don't quite understand Mr. Ruskin's saying (if he said it) that he couldn't get along in a country where there were no castles, but I do think we lose a great deal in living where there are so few permanent homes. You will see how much I parted with which was not reckoned in the price paid for the old homestead.

I shall say many things which an uncharitable reader might find fault with as personal. I should not dare to call myself a poet if I did not; for if there is anything that gives one a title to that name, it is that his inner nature is naked and is not ashamed. But there are many such things I shall put in words, not because they are personal, but because they are human, and are born of just such experiences as those who hear or read what I say are like to have had in greater or less measure. I find myself so much like other people that I often wonder at the coincidence. It was only the other day that I sent out a copy of verses about my great-grandmother's picture, and I was surprised to find how many other people had portraits of their great-grandmothers or other progenitors, about which they felt as I did about mine, and for whom I had spoken, thinking I was speaking for myself only. And so I am not afraid to talk very freely with you, my precious reader or listener. You too, Beloved, were born somewhere and remember your birthplace or your early home; for you some house is haunted by recollections; to some roof you have bid farewell. Your hand is upon mine, then, as I guide my pen. Your heart frames the responses to the litany of my remembrance. For myself it is a tribute of affection I am rendering, and I should put it on record for my own satisfaction, were there none to read or to listen.

I hope you will not say that I have built a pillared portico of introduction to a humble structure of narrative. For when you look at the old gambrel-roofed house, you will see an unpretending mansion, such as very possibly you were born in yourself, or at any rate such a place of residence as your minister or some of your well-to-do country cousins find good enough, but not at all too grand for them. We have stately old Colonial palaces in our ancient village, now a city, and a thriving one,—square-fronted edifices that stand back from the vulgar highway, with folded arms, as it were; social fortresses of the time when the twilight lustre of the throne reached as far as our half-cleared settlement, with a glacis before them in the shape of a long broad gravel-walk, so that in King George's time they looked as formidably to any but the silk-stockings gentry as Gibraltar or Ehrenbreitstein to a visitor without

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the password. We forget all this in the kindly welcome they give us to-day; for some of them are still standing and doubly famous, as we all know. But the gambrel-roofed house, though stately enough for college dignitaries and scholarly clergymen, was not one of those old Tory, Episcopal-church-goer's strongholds. One of its doors opens directly upon the green, always called the Common; the other, facing the south, a few steps from it, over a paved foot-walk, on the other side of which is the miniature front yard, bordered with lilacs and syringas. The honest mansion makes no pretensions. Accessible, companionable, holding its hand out to all, comfortable, respectable, and even in its way dignified, but not imposing, not a house for his Majesty's Counsellor, or the Right Reverend successor of Him who had not where to lay his head, for something like a hundred and fifty years it has stood in its lot, and seen the generations of men come and go like the leaves of the forest. I passed some pleasant hours, a few years since, in the Registry of Deeds and the Town Records, looking up the history of the old house. How those dear friends of mine, the antiquarians, for whose grave councils I compose my features on the too rare Thursdays when I am at liberty to meet them, in whose human herbarium the leaves and blossoms of past generations are so carefully spread out and pressed and laid away, would listen to an expansion of the following brief details into an Historical Memoir!

The estate was the third lot of the eighth "Squadron" (whatever that might be), and in the year 1707 was allotted in the distribution of undivided lands to "Mr. ffox," the Reverend Jabez Fox of Woburn, it may be supposed, as it passed from his heirs to the first Jonathan Hastings; from him to his son, the long remembered College Steward; from him in the year 1792 to the Reverend Eliphalet Pearson, Professor of Hebrew and other Oriental languages in Harvard College, whose large personality swam into my ken when I was looking forward to my teens; from him the progenitors of my unborn self.

I wonder if there are any such beings nowadays as the great Eliphalet, with his large features and conversational basso profundo, seemed to me. His very name had something elephantine about it, and it seemed to me that the house shook from cellar to garret at his footfall. Some have pretended that he had Olympian aspirations, and wanted to sit in the seat of Jove and bear the academic thunderbolt and the aegis inscribed *Christo et Ecclesiae*. It is a common weakness enough to wish to find one's self in an empty saddle; Cotton Mather was miserable all his days, I am afraid, after that entry in his Diary: "This Day Dr. Sewall was chosen President, for his Piety."

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There is no doubt that the men of the older generation look bigger and more formidable to the boys whose eyes are turned up at their venerable countenances than the race which succeeds them, to the same boys grown older. Everything is twice as large, measured on a three-year-olds three-foot scale as on a thirty-year-olds six-foot scale; but age magnifies and aggravates persons out of due proportion. Old people are a kind of monsters to little folks; mild manifestations of the terrible, it may be, but still, with their white locks and ridged and grooved features, which those horrid little eyes exhaust of their details, like so many microscopes not exactly what human beings ought to be. The middle-aged and young men have left comparatively faint impressions in my memory, but how grandly the procession of the old clergymen who filled our pulpit from time to time, and passed the day under our roof, marches before my closed eyes! At their head the most venerable David Osgood, the majestic minister of Medford, with massive front and shaggy over-shadowing eyebrows; following in the train, mild-eyed John Foster of Brighton, with the lambent aurora of a smile about his pleasant mouth, which not even the "Sabbath" could subdue to the true Levitical aspect; and bulky Charles Steams of Lincoln, author of "The Ladies' Philosophy of Love. A Poem. 1797" (how I stared at him! he was the first living person ever pointed out to me as a poet); and Thaddeus Mason Harris of Dorchester (the same who, a poor youth, trudging along, staff in hand, being then in a stress of sore need, found all at once that somewhat was adhering to the end of his stick, which somewhat proved to be a gold ring of price, bearing the words, "God speed thee, Friend!"), already in decadence as I remember him, with head slanting forward and downward as if looking for a place to rest in after his learned labors; and that other Thaddeus, the old man of West Cambridge, who outwatched the rest so long after they had gone to sleep in their own churchyards, that it almost seemed as if he meant to sit up until the morning of the resurrection; and bringing up the rear, attenuated but vivacious little Jonathan Homer of Newton, who was, to look upon, a kind of expurgated, reduced and Americanized copy of Voltaire, but very unlike him in wickedness or wit. The good-humored junior member of our family always loved to make him happy by setting him chirruping about Miles Coverdale's Version, and the Bishop's Bible, and how he wrote to his friend Sir Isaac (Coffin) about something or other, and how Sir Isaac wrote back that he was very much pleased with the contents of his letter, and so on about Sir Isaac, ad libitum,—for the admiral was his old friend, and he was proud of him. The kindly little old gentleman was a collector of Bibles, and made himself believe he thought he should publish a learned Commentary some day or other; but his friends looked for it only in the Greek Calends,—say

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on the 31st of April, when that should come round, if you would modernize the phrase. I recall also one or two exceptional and infrequent visitors with perfect distinctness: cheerful Elijah Kellogg, a lively missionary from the region of the Quoddy Indians, with much hopeful talk about Sock Bason and his tribe; also poor old Poor-house-Parson Isaac Smith, his head going like a China mandarin, as he discussed the possibilities of the escape of that distinguished captive whom he spoke of under the name, if I can reproduce phonetically its vibrating nasalities of "General Mmbongaparty,"—a name suggestive to my young imagination of a dangerous, loose-jointed skeleton, threatening us all like the armed figure of Death in my little New England Primer.

I have mentioned only the names of those whose images come up pleasantly before me, and I do not mean to say anything which any descendant might not read smilingly. But there were some of the black-coated gentry whose aspect was not so agreeable to me. It is very curious to me to look back on my early likes and dislikes, and see how as a child I was attracted or repelled by such and such ministers, a good deal, as I found out long afterwards, according to their theological beliefs. On the whole, I think the old-fashioned New England divine softening down into Arminianism was about as agreeable as any of them. And here I may remark, that a mellowing rigorist is always a much pleasanter object to contemplate than a tightening liberal, as a cold day warming up to 32 Fahrenheit is much more agreeable than a warm one chilling down to the same temperature. The least pleasing change is that kind of mental hemiplegia which now and then attacks the rational side of a man at about the same period of life when one side of the body is liable to be palsied, and in fact is, very probably, the same thing as palsy, in another form. The worst of it is that the subjects of it never seem to suspect that they are intellectual invalids, stammerers and cripples at best, but are all the time hitting out at their old friends with the well arm, and calling them hard names out of their twisted mouths.

It was a real delight to have one of those good, hearty, happy, benignant old clergymen pass the Sunday, with us, and I can remember some whose advent made the day feel almost like "Thanksgiving." But now and then would come along a clerical visitor with a sad face and a wailing voice, which sounded exactly as if somebody must be lying dead up stairs, who took no interest in us children, except a painful one, as being in a bad way with our cheery looks, and did more to unchristianize us with his woebegone ways than all his sermons were like to accomplish in the other direction. I remember one in particular, who twitted me so with my blessings as a Christian child, and whined so to me about the naked black children who, like the "Little Vulgar Boy," "had n't got no supper and hadn't got no ma,"

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and hadn't got no Catechism, (how I wished for the moment I was a little black boy!) that he did more in that one day to make me a heathen than he had ever done in a month to make a Christian out of an infant Hottentot. What a debt we owe to our friends of the left centre, the Brooklyn and the Park Street and the Summer street ministers; good, wholesome, sound-bodied, one-minded, cheerful-spirited men, who have taken the place of those wailing poitrinaires with the bandanna handkerchiefs round their meagre throats and a funeral service in their forlorn physiognomies! I might have been a minister myself, for aught I know, if this clergyman had not looked and talked so like an undertaker.

All this belongs to one of the side-shows, to which I promised those who would take tickets to the main exhibition should have entrance gratis. If I were writing a poem you would expect, as a matter of course, that there would be a digression now and then.

To come back to the old house and its former tenant, the Professor of Hebrew and other Oriental languages. Fifteen years he lived with his family under its roof. I never found the slightest trace of him until a few years ago, when I cleaned and brightened with pious hands the brass lock of "the study," which had for many years been covered with a thick coat of paint. On that I found scratched; as with a nail or fork, the following inscription:

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Only that and nothing more, but the story told itself. Master Edward Pearson, then about as high as the lock, was disposed to immortalize himself in monumental brass, and had got so far towards it, when a sudden interruption, probably a smart box on the ear, cheated him of his fame, except so far as this poor record may rescue it. Dead long ago. I remember him well, a grown man, as a visitor at a later period; and, for some reason, I recall him in the attitude of the Colossus of Rhodes, standing full before a generous wood-fire, not facing it, but quite the contrary, a perfect picture of the content afforded by a blazing hearth contemplated from that point of view, and, as the heat stole through his person and kindled his emphatic features, seeming to me a pattern of manly beauty. What a statue gallery of posturing friends we all have in our memory! The old Professor himself sometimes visited the house after it had changed hands. Of course, my recollections are not to be wholly trusted, but I always think I see his likeness in a profile face to be found among the illustrations of Rees's Cyclopaedia. (See Plates, Vol. IV., Plate 2, Painting, Diversities of the Human Face, Fig. 4.)

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And now let us return to our chief picture. In the days of my earliest remembrance, a row of tall Lombardy poplars mounted guard on the western side of the old mansion. Whether, like the cypress, these trees suggest the idea of the funeral torch or the monumental spire, whether their tremulous leaves make wits afraid by sympathy with their nervous thrills, whether the faint balsamic smell of their foliage and their closely swathed limbs have in them vague hints of dead Pharaohs stiffened in their cerements, I will guess; but they always seemed to me to give an of sepulchral sadness to the house before which stood sentries. Not so with the row of elms which you may see leading up towards the western entrance. I think the patriarch of them all went over in the great gale of 1815; I know I used to shake the youngest of them with my hands, stout as it is now, with a trunk that would defy the bully of Crotona, or the strong man whose liaison with the Lady Delilah proved so disastrous.

The College plain would be nothing without its elms. As the long hair of a woman is a glory to her, are these green tresses that bank themselves against sky in thick clustered masses the ornament and the pride of the classic green. You know the "Washington elm," or if you do not, you had better rekindle our patriotism by reading the inscription, which tells you that under its shadow the great leader first drew his sword at the head of an American army. In a line with that you may see two others: the coral fan, as I always called it from its resemblance in form to that beautiful marine growth, and a third a little farther along. I have heard it said that all three were planted at the same time, and that the difference of their growth is due to the slope of the ground,—the Washington elm being lower than either of the others. There is a row of elms just in front of the old house on the south. When I was a child the one at the southwest corner was struck by lightning, and one of its limbs and a long ribbon of bark torn away. The tree never fully recovered its symmetry and vigor, and forty years and more afterwards a second thunderbolt crashed upon it and set its heart on fire, like those of the lost souls in the Hall of Eblis. Heaven had twice blasted it, and the axe finished what the lightning had begun.

The soil of the University town is divided into patches of sandy and of clayey ground. The Common and the College green, near which the old house stands, are on one of the sandy patches. Four curses are the local inheritance: droughts, dust, mud, and canker-worms. I cannot but think that all the characters of a region help to modify the children born in it. I am fond of making apologies for human nature, and I think I could find an excuse for myself if I, too, were dry and barren and muddy-witted and "cantankerous,"—disposed to get my back up, like those other natives of the soil.



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I know this, that the way Mother Earth treats a boy shapes out a kind of natural theology for him. I fell into Manichean ways of thinking from the teaching of my garden experiences. Like other boys in the country, I had my patch of ground, to which, in the spring-time, I entrusted the seeds furnished me, with a confident trust in their resurrection and glorification in the better world of summer. But I soon found that my lines had fallen in a place where a vegetable growth had to run the gauntlet of as many foes and dials as a Christian pilgrim. Flowers would not Blow; daffodils perished like criminals in their cone demned caps, without their petals ever seeing daylight; roses were disfigured with monstrous protrusions through their very centres,—something that looked like a second bud pushing through the middle of the corolla; lettuces and cabbages would not head; radishes knotted themselves until they looked like centenerians' fingers; and on every stem, on every leaf, and both sides of it, and at the root of everything that dew, was a professional specialist in the shape of grub, caterpillar, aphis, or other expert, whose business it was to devour that particular part, and help order the whole attempt at vegetation. Such experiences must influence a child born to them. A sandy soil, where nothing flourishes but weeds and evil beasts of small dimensions, must breed different qualities in its human offspring from one of those fat and fertile spots which the wit whom I have once before noted described so happily that, if I quoted the passage, its brilliancy would spoil one of my pages, as a diamond breastpin sometimes kills the social effect of the wearer, who might have passed for a gentleman without it. Your arid patch of earth should seem to the natural birthplace of the leaner virtues and the abler vices,—of temperance and the domestic proprieties on the one hand, with a tendency to light weights in groceries and provisions, and to clandestine abstraction from the person on the other, as opposed to the free hospitality, the broadly planned burglaries, and the largely conceived homicides of our rich Western alluvial regions. Yet Nature is never wholly unkind. Economical as she was in my unparadised Eden, hard as it was to make some of my floral houris unveil, still the damask roses sweetened the June breezes, the bladed and plumed flower-de-luces unfolded their close-wrapped cones, and larkspurs and lupins, lady's delights,—plebeian manifestations of the pansy,—self-sowing marigolds, hollyhocks, the forest flowers of two seasons, and the perennial lilacs and syringas,—all whispered to' the winds blowing over them that some caressing presence was around me.

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Beyond the garden was “the field,” a vast domain of four acres or thereabout, by the measurement of after years, bordered to the north by a fathomless chasm,—the ditch the base-ball players of the present era jump over; on the east by unexplored territory; on the south by a barren enclosure, where the red sorrel proclaimed liberty and equality under its drapeau rouge, and succeeded in establishing a vegetable commune where all were alike, poor, mean, sour, and uninteresting; and on the west by the Common, not then disgraced by jealous enclosures, which make it look like a cattle-market. Beyond, as I looked round, were the Colleges, the meeting-house, the little square market-house, long vanished; the burial-ground where the dead Presidents stretched their weary bones under epitaphs stretched out at as full length as their subjects; the pretty church where the gouty Tories used to kneel on their hassocks; the district schoolhouse, and hard by it Ma’am Hancock’s cottage, never so called in those days, but rather “tenfooter”; then houses scattered near and far, open spaces, the shadowy elms, round hilltops in the distance, and over all the great bowl of the sky. Mind you, this was the *world*, as I first knew it; terra veteribus cognita, as Mr. Arrowsmith would have called it, if he had mapped the universe of my infancy:

But I am forgetting the old house again in the landscape. The worst of a modern stylish mansion is, that it has no place for ghosts. I watched one building not long since. It had no proper garret, to begin with, only a sealed interval between the roof and attics, where a spirit could not be accommodated, unless it were flattened out like Ravel, Brother, after the millstone had fallen on him. There was not a nook or a corner in the whole horse fit to lodge any respectable ghost, for every part was as open to observation as a literary man’s character and condition, his figure and estate, his coat and his countenance, are to his (or her) Bohemian Majesty on a tour of inspection through his (or her) subjects’ keyholes.

Now the old house had wainscots, behind which the mice were always scampering and squeaking and rattling down the plaster, and enacting family scenes and parlor theatricals. It had a cellar where the cold slug clung to the walls, and the misanthropic spider withdrew from the garish day; where the green mould loved to grow, and the long white potato-shoots went feeling along the floor, if haply they might find the daylight; it had great brick pillars, always in a cold sweat with holding up the burden they had been aching under day and night far a century and more; it had sepulchral arches closed by rough doors that hung on hinges rotten with rust, behind which doors, if there was not a heap of bones connected with a mysterious disappearance of long ago, there well might have been, for it was just the place to look for them. It had a garret; very nearly such a one as it seems to

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me one of us has described in one of his books; but let us look at this one as I can reproduce it from memory. It has a flooring of laths with ridges of mortar squeezed up between them, which if you tread on you will go to—the Lord have mercy on you! where will you go to?—the same being crossed by narrow bridges of boards, on which you may put your feet, but with fear and trembling. Above you and around you are beams and joists, on some of which you may see, when the light is let in, the marks of the conchoidal clippings of the broadaxe, showing the rude way in which the timber was shaped as it came, full of sap, from the neighboring forest. It is a realm of darkness and thick dust, and shroud-like cobwebs and dead things they wrap in their gray folds. For a garret is like a seashore, where wrecks are thrown up and slowly go to pieces. There is the cradle which the old man you just remember was rocked in; there is the ruin of the bedstead he died on; that ugly slanting contrivance used to be put under his pillow in the days when his breath came hard; there is his old chair with both arms gone, symbol of the desolate time when he had nothing earthly left to lean on; there is the large wooden reel which the blear-eyed old deacon sent the minister's lady, who thanked him graciously, and twirled it smilingly, and in fitting season bowed it out decently to the limbo of troublesome conveniences. And there are old leather portmanteaus, like stranded porpoises, their mouths gaping in gaunt hunger for the food with which they used to be gorged to bulging repletion; and old brass andirons, waiting until time shall revenge them on their paltry substitutes, and they shall have their own again, and bring with them the fore-stick and the back-log of ancient days; and the empty churn, with its idle dasher, which the Nancys and Phoebes, who have left their comfortable places to the Bridgets and Norahs, used to handle to good purpose; and the brown, shaky old spinning-wheel, which was running, it may be, in the days when they were hinging the Salem witches.

Under the dark and haunted garret were attic chambers which themselves had histories. On a pane in the northeastern chamber may be read these names:

“John Tracy,” “Robert Roberts,” “Thomas Prince;” “Stultus” another hand had added. When I found these names a few years ago (wrong side up, for the window had been reversed), I looked at once in the Triennial to find them, for the epithet showed that they were probably students. I found them all under the years 1771 and 1773. Does it please their thin ghosts thus to be dragged to the light of day? Has “Stultus” forgiven the indignity of being thus characterized?

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The southeast chamber was the Library Hospital. Every scholar should have a book infirmary attached his library. There should find a peaceable refuge the many books, invalids from their birth, which are sent "with the best regards of the Author"; the respected, but unpresentable cripples which have lost cover; the odd volumes of honored sets which go mourning all their days for their lost brother; the school-books which have been so often the subjects of assault and battery, that they look as if the police must know them by heart; these and still more the pictured story-books, beginning with Mother Goose (which a dear old friend of mine has just been amusing his philosophic leisure with turning most ingeniously and happily into the tongues of Virgil and Homer), will be precious mementos by and by, when children and grandchildren come along. What would I not give for that dear little paper-bound quarto, in large and most legible type, on certain pages of which the tender hand that was the shield of my infancy had crossed out with deep black marks something awful, probably about *bears*, such as once tare two-and-forty of us little folks for making faces, and the very name of which made us hide our heads under the bedclothes.

I made strange acquaintances in that book infirmary up in the southeast attic. The "Negro Plot" at New York helped to implant a feeling in me which it took Mr. Garrison a good many years to root out. "Thinks I to Myself," an old novel, which has been attributed to a famous statesman, introduced me to a world of fiction which was not represented on the shelves of the library proper, unless perhaps by Coelebs in Search of a Wife, or allegories of the bitter tonic class, as the young doctor that sits on the other side of the table would probably call them. I always, from an early age, had a keen eye for a story with a moral sticking out of it, and gave it a wide berth, though in my later years I have myself written a couple of "medicated novels," as one of my dearest and pleasantest old friends wickedly called them, when somebody asked her if she had read the last of my printed performances. I forgave the satire for the charming esprit of the epithet. Besides the works I have mentioned, there was an old, old Latin alchemy book, with the manuscript annotations of some ancient Rosicrucian, in the pages of which I had a vague notion that I might find the mighty secret of the Lapis Philosophorum, otherwise called Chaos, the Dragon, the Green Lion, the Quinta Essentia, the Soap of Sages, the Vinegar of Philosophers, the Dew of Heavenly Grace, the Egg, the Old Man, the Sun, the Moon, and by all manner of odd aliases, as I am assured by the plethoric little book before me, in parchment covers browned like a meerschaum with the smoke of furnaces and the thumbing of dead gold seekers, and the fingering of bony-handed book-misers, and the long intervals of dusty slumber on the shelves of the bouquiniste; for next year it

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will be three centuries old, and it had already seen nine generations of men when I caught its eye (*Alchemiae Doctrina*) and recognized it at pistol-shot distance as a prize, among the breviaries and Heures and trumpery volumes of the old open-air dealer who exposed his treasures under the shadow of St. Sulpice. I have never lost my taste for alchemy since I first got hold of the *Palladium Spagyricum* of Peter John Faber, and sought—in vain, it is true—through its pages for a clear, intelligible, and practical statement of how I could turn my lead sinkers and the weights of tall kitchen clock into good yellow gold, specific gravity 19.2, and exchangeable for whatever I then wanted, and for many more things than I was then aware of. One of the greatest pleasures of childhood found in the mysteries which it hides from the skepticism of the elders, and works up into small mythologies of its own. I have seen all this played over again in adult life,—the same delightful bewilderment semi-emotional belief in listening to the gaseous praises of this or that fantastic system, that I found in the pleasing mirages conjured up for me by the ragged old volume I used to pore over in the southeast attic-chamber.

The rooms of the second story, the chambers of birth and death, are sacred to silent memories.

Let us go down to the ground-floor. I should have begun with this, but that the historical reminiscences of the old house have been recently told in a most interesting memoir by a distinguished student of our local history. I retain my doubts about those “dents” on the floor of the right-hand room, “the study” of successive occupants, said to have been made by the butts of the Continental militia’s firelocks, but this was the cause to which the story told me in childhood laid them. That military consultations were held in that room when the house was General Ward’s headquarters, that the Provincial generals and colonels and other men of war there planned the movement which ended in the fortifying of Bunker’s Hill, that Warren slept in the house the night before the battle, that President Langdon went forth from the western door and prayed for God’s blessing on the men just setting forth on their bloody expedition,—all these things have been told, and perhaps none of them need be doubted.

But now for fifty years and more that room has been a meeting-ground for the platoons and companies which range themselves at the scholar’s word of command. Pleasant it is to think that the retreating host of books is to give place to a still larger army of volumes, which have seen service under the eye of a great commander. For here the noble collection of him so freshly remembered as our silver-tongued orator, our erudite scholar, our honored College President, our accomplished statesman, our courtly ambassador, are to be reverently gathered by the heir of his name, himself not unworthy to be surrounded by that august assembly of the wise of all ages and of various lands and languages.



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Could such a many-chambered edifice have stood a century and a half and not have had its passages of romance to bequeath their lingering legends to the after-time? There are other names on some of the small window-panes, which must have had young flesh-and-blood owners, and there is one of early date which elderly persons have whispered was borne by a fair woman, whose graces made the house beautiful in the eyes of the youth of that time. One especially—you will find the name of Fortescue Vernon, of the class of 1780, in the Triennial Catalogue—was a favored visitor to the old mansion; but he went over seas, I think they told me, and died still young, and the name of the maiden which is scratched on the windowpane was never changed. I am telling the story honestly, as I remember it, but I may have colored it unconsciously, and the legendary pane may be broken before this for aught I know. At least, I have named no names except the beautiful one of the supposed hero of the romantic story.

It was a great happiness to have been born in an old house haunted by such recollections, with harmless ghosts walking its corridors, with fields of waving grass and trees and singing birds, and that vast territory of four or five acres around it to give a child the sense that he was born to a noble principality. It has been a great pleasure to retain a certain hold upon it for so many years; and since in the natural course of things it must at length pass into other hands, it is a gratification to see the old place making itself tidy for a new tenant, like some venerable dame who is getting ready to entertain a neighbor of condition. Not long since a new cap of shingles adorned this ancient mother among the village—now city—mansions. She has dressed herself in brighter colors than she has hitherto worn, so they tell me, within the last few days. She has modernized her aspects in several ways; she has rubbed bright the glasses through which she looks at the Common and the Colleges; and as the sunsets shine upon her through the flickering leaves or the wiry spray of the elms I remember from my childhood, they will glorify her into the aspect she wore when President Holyoke, father of our long since dead centenarian, looked upon her in her youthful comeliness.

The quiet corner formed by this and the neighboring residences has changed less than any place I can remember. Our kindly, polite, shrewd, and humorous old neighbor, who in former days has served the town as constable and auctioneer, and who bids fair to become the oldest inhabitant of the city, was there when I was born, and is living there to-day. By and by the stony foot of the great University will plant itself on this whole territory, and the private recollections which clung so tenaciously and fondly to the place and its habitations will have died with those who cherished them.

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Shall they ever live again in the memory of those who loved them here below? What is this life without the poor accidents which made it our own, and by which we identify ourselves? Ah me! I might like to be a winged chorister, but still it seems to me I should hardly be quite happy if I could not recall at will the Old House with the Long Entry, and the White Chamber (where I wrote the first verses that made me known, with a pencil, stans pede in uno, pretty, nearly), and the Little Parlor, and the Study, and the old books in uniforms as varied as those of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company used to be, if my memory serves me right, and the front yard with the Star-of-Bethlehems growing, flowerless, among the grass, and the dear faces to be seen no more there or anywhere on this earthly place of farewells.

I have told my story. I do not know what special gifts have been granted or denied me; but this I know, that I am like so many others of my fellow-creatures, that when I smile, I feel as if they must; when I cry, I think their eyes fill; and it always seems to me that when I am most truly myself I come nearest to them and am surest of being listened to by the brothers and sisters of the larger family into which I was born so long ago. I have often feared they might be tired of me and what I tell them. But then, perhaps, would come a letter from some quiet body in some out-of-the-way place, which showed me that I had said something which another had often felt but never said, or told the secret of another's heart in unburdening my own. Such evidences that one is in the highway of human experience and feeling lighten the footsteps wonderfully. So it is that one is encouraged to go on writing as long as the world has anything that interests him, for he never knows how many of his fellow-beings he may please or profit, and in how many places his name will be spoken as that of a friend.

In the mood suggested by my story I have ventured on the poem that follows. Most people love this world more than they are willing to confess, and it is hard to conceive ourselves weaned from it so as to feel no emotion at the thought of its most sacred recollections, even after a sojourn of years, as we should count the lapse of earthly time,—in the realm where, sooner or later, all tears shall be wiped away. I hope, therefore, the title of my lines will not frighten those who are little accustomed to think of men and women as human beings in any state but the present.

Homesick in heaven.

The divine voice.

Go seek thine earth-born sisters,—thus the Voice
That all obey,—the sad and silent three;
These only, while the hosts of heaven rejoice,
Smile never: ask them what their sorrows be:

And when the secret of their griefs they tell,
Look on them with thy mild, half-human eyes;

Say what thou wast on earth; thou knowest well;
So shall they cease from unavailing sighs.

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The angel.

—Why thus, apart,—the swift-winged herald spake,
—Sit ye with silent lips and unstrung lyres
While the trisagion's blending chords awake
In shouts of joy from all the heavenly choirs?

The first spirit.

—Chide not thy sisters,—thus the answer came;
—Children of earth, our half-weaned nature clings
To earth's fond memories, and her whispered name
Untunes our quivering lips, our saddened strings;

For there we loved, and where we love is home,
Home that our feet may leave, but not our hearts,
Though o'er us shine the jasper-lighted dome:—

The chain may lengthen, but it never parts!

Sometimes a sunlit sphere comes rolling by,
And then we softly whisper,—can it be?
And leaning toward the silvery orb, we try
To hear the music of its murmuring sea;

To catch, perchance, some flashing glimpse of green,
Or breathe some wild-wood fragrance, wafted through
The opening gates of pearl, that fold between
The blinding splendors and the changeless blue.

The angel.

—Nay, sister, nay! a single healing leaf
Plucked from the bough of yon twelve-fruited tree,
Would soothe such anguish,—deeper stabbing grief
Has pierced thy throbbing heart—

The first spirit.

—Ah, woe is me!
I from my clinging babe was rudely torn;
His tender lips a loveless bosom pressed
Can I forget him in my life new born?
O that my darling lay upon my breast!

The angel.

—And thou?

The second spirit.

I was a fair and youthful bride,

The kiss of love still burns upon my cheek,
He whom I worshipped, ever at my side,
—Him through the spirit realm in vain I seek.

Sweet faces turn their beaming eyes on mine;
Ah! not in these the wished-for look I read;
Still for that one dear human smile I pine;
Thou and none other!—is the lover's creed.

The angel.

—And whence thy sadness in a world of bliss
Where never parting comes, nor mourner's tear?
Art thou, too, dreaming of a mortal's kiss
Amid the seraphs of the heavenly sphere?

The third spirit.

—Nay, tax not me with passion's wasting fire;
When the swift message set my spirit free,
Blind, helpless, lone, I left my gray-haired sire;
My friends were many, he had none save me.

I left him, orphaned, in the starless night;
Alas, for him no cheerful morning's dawn!
I wear the ransomed spirit's robe of white,
Yet still I hear him moaning, She is gone!

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The angel.

—Ye know me not, sweet sisters?—All in vain
Ye seek your lost ones in the shapes they wore;
The flower once opened may not bud again,
The fruit once fallen finds the stem no more.

Child, lover, sire,—yea, all things loved below,
Fair pictures damasked on a vapor's fold,
Fade like the roseate flush, the golden glow,
When the bright curtain of the day is rolled.

I was the babe that slumbered on thy breast.
—And, sister, mine the lips that called thee bride.
—Mine were the silvered locks thy hand caressed,
That faithful hand, my faltering footstep's guide!

Each changing form, frail vesture of decay,
The soul unclad forgets it once hath worn,
Stained with the travel of the weary day,
And shamed with rents from every wayside thorn.

To lie, an infant, in thy fond embrace,
To come with love's warm kisses back to thee,
To show thine eyes thy gray-haired father's face,
Not Heaven itself could grant; this may not be!

Then spread your folded wings, and leave to earth
The dust once breathing ye have mourned so long,
Till Love, new risen, owns his heavenly birth,
And sorrow's discords sweeten into song!

II

I am going to take it for granted now and henceforth, in my report of what was said and what was to be seen at our table, that I have secured one good, faithful, loving reader, who never finds fault, who never gets sleepy over my pages, whom no critic can bully out of a liking for me, and to whom I am always safe in addressing myself. My one elect may be man or woman, old or young, gentle or simple, living in the next block or on a slope of Nevada, my fellow-countryman or an alien; but one such reader I shall assume to exist and have always in my thought when I am writing.

A writer is so like a lover! And a talk with the right listener is so like an arm-in-arm walk in the moonlight with the soft heartbeat just felt through the folds of muslin and

broadcloth! But it takes very little to spoil everything for writer, talker, lover. There are a great many cruel things besides poverty that freeze the genial current of the soul, as the poet of the Elegy calls it. Fire can stand any wind, but is easily blown out, and then come smouldering and smoke, and profitless, slow combustion without the cheerful blaze which sheds light all round it. The one Reader's hand may shelter the flame; the one blessed ministering spirit with the vessel of oil may keep it bright in spite of the stream of cold water on the other side doing its best to put it out.

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I suppose, if any writer, of any distinguishable individuality, could look into the hearts of all his readers, he might very probably find one in his parish of a thousand or a million who honestly preferred him to any other of his kind. I have no doubt we have each one of us, somewhere, our exact facsimile, so like us in all things except the accidents of condition, that we should love each other like a pair of twins, if our natures could once fairly meet. I know I have my counterpart in some State of this Union. I feel sure that there is an Englishman somewhere precisely like myself. (I hope he does not drop his h's, for it does not seem to me possible that the Royal Dane could have remained faithful to his love for Ophelia, if she had addressed him as 'Amlet.) There is also a certain Monsieur, to me at this moment unknown, and likewise a Herr Von Something, each of whom is essentially my double. An Arab is at this moment eating dates, a mandarin is just sipping his tea, and a South-Sea-Islander (with undeveloped possibilities) drinking the milk of a cocoa-nut, each one of whom, if he had been born in the gambrel-roofed house, and cultivated my little sand-patch, and grown up in "the study" from the height of Walton's Polyglot Bible to that of the shelf which held the Elzevir Tacitus and Casaubon's Polybius, with all the complex influences about him that surrounded me, would have been so nearly what I am that I should have loved him like a brother,—always provided that I did not hate him for his resemblance to me, on the same principle as that which makes bodies in the same electric condition repel each other.

For, perhaps after all, my One Reader is quite as likely to be not the person most resembling myself, but the one to whom my nature is complementary. Just as a particular soil wants some one element to fertilize it, just as the body in some conditions has a kind of famine—for one special food, so the mind has its wants, which do not always call for what is best, but which know themselves and are as peremptory as the salt-sick sailor's call for a lemon or a raw potato, or, if you will, as those capricious "longings," which have a certain meaning, we may suppose, and which at any rate we think it reasonable to satisfy if we can.

I was going to say something about our boarders the other day when I got run away with by my local reminiscences. I wish you to understand that we have a rather select company at the table of our boarding-house.

Our Landlady is a most respectable person, who has seen better days, of course,—all landladies have,—but has also, I feel sure, seen a good deal worse ones. For she wears a very handsome silk dress on state occasions, with a breastpin set, as I honestly believe, with genuine pearls, and appears habitually with a very smart cap, from under which her gray curls come out with an unmistakable expression, conveyed in the hieratic language of the feminine priesthood, to the effect that while there is life there is hope. And when I come to reflect on the many circumstances which go to the making of matrimonial happiness, I cannot help thinking that a personage of her present able exterior, thoroughly experienced in all the domestic arts which render life comfortable,

might make the later years of some hitherto companionless bachelor very endurable, not to say pleasant.

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The condition of the Landlady's family is, from what I learn, such as to make the connection I have alluded to, I hope with delicacy, desirable for incidental as well as direct reasons, provided a fitting match could be found. I was startled at hearing her address by the familiar name of Benjamin the young physician I have referred to, until I found on inquiry, what I might have guessed by the size of his slices of pie and other little marks of favoritism, that he was her son. He has recently come back from Europe, where he has topped off his home training with a first-class foreign finish. As the Landlady could never have educated him in this way out of the profits of keeping boarders, I was not surprised when I was told that she had received a pretty little property in the form of a bequest from a former boarder, a very kind-hearted, worthy old gentleman who had been long with her and seen how hard she worked for food and clothes for herself and this son of hers, Benjamin Franklin by his baptismal name. Her daughter had also married well, to a member of what we may call the post-medical profession, that, namely, which deals with the mortal frame after the practitioners of the healing art have done with it and taken their leave. So thriving had this son-in-law of hers been in his business, that his wife drove about in her own carriage, drawn by a pair of jet-black horses of most dignified demeanor, whose only fault was a tendency to relapse at once into a walk after every application of a stimulus that quickened their pace to a trot; which application always caused them to look round upon the driver with a surprised and offended air, as if he had been guilty of a grave indecorum.

The Landlady's daughter had been blessed with a number of children, of great sobriety of outward aspect, but remarkably cheerful in their inward habit of mind, more especially on the occasion of the death of a doll, which was an almost daily occurrence, and gave them immense delight in getting up a funeral, for which they had a complete miniature outfit. How happy they were under their solemn aspect! For the head mourner, a child of remarkable gifts, could actually make the tears run down her cheeks,—as real ones as if she had been a grown person following a rich relative, who had not forgotten his connections, to his last unfurnished lodgings.

So this was a most desirable family connection for the right man to step into,—a thriving, thrifty mother-in-law, who knew what was good for the sustenance of the body, and had no doubt taught it to her daughter; a medical artist at hand in case the luxuries of the table should happen to disturb the physiological harmonies; and in the worst event, a sweet consciousness that the last sad offices would be attended to with affectionate zeal, and probably a large discount from the usual charges.

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It seems as if I could hardly be at this table for a year, if I should stay so long, without seeing some romance or other work itself out under my eyes; and I cannot help thinking that the Landlady is to be the heroine of the love-history like to unfold itself. I think I see the little cloud in the horizon, with a silvery lining to it, which may end in a rain of cards tied round with white ribbons. Extremes meet, and who so like to be the other party as the elderly gentleman at the other end of the table, as far from her now as the length of the board permits? I may be mistaken, but I think this is to be the romantic episode of the year before me. Only it seems so natural it is improbable, for you never find your dropped money just where you look for it, and so it is with these a priori matches.

This gentleman is a tight, tidy, wiry little man, with a small, brisk head, close-cropped white hair, a good wholesome complexion, a quiet, rather kindly face, quick in his movements, neat in his dress, but fond of wearing a short jacket over his coat, which gives him the look of a pickled or preserved schoolboy. He has retired, they say, from a thriving business, with a snug property, suspected by some to be rather more than snug, and entitling him to be called a capitalist, except that this word seems to be equivalent to highway robber in the new gospel of Saint Petroleum. That he is economical in his habits cannot be denied, for he saws and splits his own wood, for exercise, he says,—and makes his own fires, brushes his own shoes, and, it is whispered, darns a hole in a stocking now and then,—all for exercise, I suppose. Every summer he goes out of town for a few weeks. On a given day of the month a wagon stops at the door and takes up, not his trunks, for he does not indulge in any such extravagance, but the stout brown linen bags in which he packs the few conveniences he carries with him.

I do not think this worthy and economical personage will have much to do or to say, unless he marries the Landlady. If he does that, he will play a part of some importance,—but I don't feel sure at all. His talk is little in amount, and generally ends in some compact formula condensing much wisdom in few words, as that a man, should not put all his eggs in one basket; that there are as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it; and one in particular, which he surprised me by saying in pretty good French one day, to the effect that the inheritance of the world belongs to the phlegmatic people, which seems to me to have a good deal of truth in it.

The other elderly personage, the old man with iron-gray hair and large round spectacles, sits at my right at table. He is a retired college officer, a man of books and observation, and himself an author. Magister Artium is one of his titles on the College Catalogue, and I like best to speak of him as the Master, because he has a certain air of authority which none of us feel inclined to dispute. He

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has given me a copy of a work of his which seems to me not wanting in suggestiveness, and which I hope I shall be able to make some use of in my records by and by. I said the other day that he had good solid prejudices, which is true, and I like him none the worse for it; but he has also opinions more or less original, valuable, probable, fanciful; fantastic, or whimsical, perhaps, now and then; which he promulgates at table somewhat in the tone of imperial edicts. Another thing I like about him is, that he takes a certain intelligent interest in pretty much everything that interests other people. I asked him the other day what he thought most about in his wide range of studies.

—Sir,—said he,—I take stock in everything that concerns anybody. Humani nihil,—you know the rest. But if you ask me what is my specialty, I should say, I applied myself more particularly to the contemplation of the Order of Things.

—A pretty wide subject,—I ventured to suggest.

—Not wide enough, sir,—not wide enough to satisfy the desire of a mind which wants to get at absolute truth, without reference to the empirical arrangements of our particular planet and its environments. I want to subject the formal conditions of space and time to a new analysis, and project a possible universe outside of the Order of Things. But I have narrowed myself by studying the actual facts of being. By and by—by and by—perhaps—perhaps. I hope to do some sound thinking in heaven—if I ever get there,—he said seriously, and it seemed to me not irreverently.

—I rather like that,—I said. I think your telescopic people are, on the whole, more satisfactory than your microscopic ones.

—My left-hand neighbor fidgeted about a little in his chair as I said this. But the young man sitting not far from the Landlady, to whom my attention had been attracted by the expression of his eyes, which seemed as if they saw nothing before him, but looked beyond everything, smiled a sort of faint starlight smile, that touched me strangely; for until that moment he had appeared as if his thoughts were far away, and I had been questioning whether he had lost friends lately, or perhaps had never had them, he seemed so remote from our boarding-house life. I will inquire about him, for he interests me, and I thought he seemed interested as I went on talking.

—No,—I continued,—I don't want to have the territory of a man's mind fenced in. I don't want to shut out the mystery of the stars and the awful hollow that holds them. We have done with those hypaethral temples, that were open above to the heavens, but we can have attics and skylights to them. Minds with skylights,—yes,—stop, let us see if we can't get something out of that.

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One-story intellects, two—story intellects, three story intellects with skylights. All fact—collectors, who have no aim beyond their facts, are one-story men. Two-story men compare, reason, generalize, using the labors of the fact-collectors as well as their own. Three-story men idealize, imagine, predict; their best illumination comes from above, through the skylight. There are minds with large ground floors, that can store an infinite amount of knowledge; some librarians, for instance, who know enough of books to help other people, without being able to make much other use of their knowledge, have intellects of this class. Your great working lawyer has two spacious stories; his mind is clear, because his mental floors are large, and he has room to arrange his thoughts so that he can get at them,—facts below, principles above, and all in ordered series; poets are often narrow below, incapable of clear statement, and with small power of consecutive reasoning, but full of light, if sometimes rather bare of furniture, in the attics.

—The old Master smiled. I think he suspects himself of a three-story intellect, and I don't feel sure that he is n't right.

—Is it dark meat or white meat you will be helped to?—said the Landlady, addressing the Master.

—Dark meat for me, always,—he answered. Then turning to me, he began one of those monologues of his, such as that which put the Member of the Haouse asleep the other day.

—It 's pretty much the same in men and women and in books and everything, that it is in turkeys and chickens. Why, take your poets, now, say Browning and Tennyson. Don't you think you can say which is the dark-meat and which is the white-meat poet? And so of the people you know; can't you pick out the full-flavored, coarse-fibred characters from the delicate, fine-fibred ones? And in the same person, don't you know the same two shades in different parts of the character that you find in the wing and thigh of a partridge? I suppose you poets may like white meat best, very probably; you had rather have a wing than a drumstick, I dare say.

—Why, yes,—said I,—I suppose some of us do. Perhaps it is because a bird flies with his white-fleshed limbs and walks with the dark-fleshed ones. Besides, the wing-muscles are nearer the heart than the leg-muscles.

I thought that sounded mighty pretty, and paused a moment to pat myself on the back, as is my wont when I say something that I think of superior quality. So I lost my innings; for the Master is apt to strike in at the end of a bar, instead of waiting for a rest, if I may borrow a musical phrase. No matter, just at this moment, what he said; but he talked the Member of the Haouse asleep again.

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They have a new term nowadays (I am speaking to you, the Reader) for people that do a good deal of talking; they call them “conversationists,” or “conversationalists”; talkists, I suppose, would do just as well. It is rather dangerous to get the name of being one of these phenomenal manifestations, as one is expected to say something remarkable every time one opens one’s mouth in company. It seems hard not to be able to ask for a piece of bread or a tumbler of water, without a sensation running round the table, as if one were an electric eel or a torpedo, and couldn’t be touched without giving a shock. A fellow is n’t all battery, is he? The idea that a *Gymnotus* can’t swallow his worm without a coruscation of animal lightning is hard on that brilliant but sensational being. Good talk is not a matter of will at all; it depends—you know we are all half-materialists nowadays—on a certain amount of active congestion of the brain, and that comes when it is ready, and not before. I saw a man get up the other day in a pleasant company, and talk away for about five minutes, evidently by a pure effort of will. His person was good, his voice was pleasant, but anybody could see that it was all mechanical labor; he was sparring for wind, as the Hon. John Morrissey, M. C., would express himself. Presently,—

Do you,—Beloved, I am afraid you are not old enough,—but do you remember the days of the tin tinder-box, the flint, and steel? Click! click! click!—Al-h-h! knuckles that time! click! click! *Click!* a spark has taken, and is eating into the black tinder, as a six-year-old eats into a sheet of gingerbread.

Presently, after hammering away for his five minutes with mere words, the spark of a happy expression took somewhere among the mental combustibles, and then for ten minutes we had a pretty, wandering, scintillating play of eloquent thought, that enlivened, if it did not kindle, all around it. If you want the real philosophy of it, I will give it to you. The chance thought or expression struck the nervous centre of consciousness, as the rowel of a spur stings the flank of a racer. Away through all the telegraphic radiations of the nervous cords flashed the intelligence that the brain was kindling, and must be fed with something or other, or it would burn itself to ashes.

And all the great hydraulic engines poured in their scarlet blood, and the fire kindled, and the flame rose; for the blood is a stream that, like burning rock-oil, at once kindles, and is itself the fuel. You can’t order these organic processes, any more than a milliner can make a rose. She can make something that looks like a rose, more or less, but it takes all the forces of the universe to finish and sweeten that blossom in your button-hole; and you may be sure that when the orator’s brain is in a flame, when the poet’s heart is in a tumult, it is something mightier than he and his will that is dealing with him! As I have looked from

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one of the northern windows of the street which commands our noble estuary,—the view through which is a picture on an illimitable canvas and a poem in innumerable cantos,—I have sometimes seen a pleasure-boat drifting along, her sail flapping, and she seeming as if she had neither will nor aim. At her stern a man was laboring to bring her head round with an oar, to little purpose, as it seemed to those who watched him pulling and tugging. But all at once the wind of heaven, which had wandered all the way from Florida or from Labrador, it may be, struck full upon the sail, and it swelled and rounded itself, like a white bosom that had burst its bodice, and—

—You are right; it is too true! but how I love these pretty phrases! I am afraid I am becoming an epicure in words, which is a bad thing to be, unless it is dominated by something infinitely better than itself. But there is a fascination in the mere sound of articulated breath; of consonants that resist with the firmness of a maid of honor, or half or wholly yield to the wooing lips; of vowels that flow and murmur, each after its kind; the peremptory b and p, the brittle k, the vibrating r, the insinuating s, the feathery f, the velvety v, the bell-voiced m, the tranquil broad a, the penetrating e, the cooing u, the emotional o, and the beautiful combinations of alternate rock and stream, as it were, that they give to the rippling flow of speech,—there is a fascination in the skilful handling of these, which the great poets and even prose-writers have not disdained to acknowledge and use to recommend their thought. What do you say to this line of Homer as a piece of poetical full-band music? I know you read the Greek characters with perfect ease, but permit me, just for my own satisfaction, to put it into English letters:—

Aigle pamphanoosa di' aitheros ouranon ike!

as if he should have spoken in our poorer phrase of

Splendor far shining through ether to heaven ascending.

That Greek line, which I do not remember having heard mention of as remarkable, has nearly every consonantal and vowel sound in the language. Try it by the Greek and by the English alphabet; it is a curiosity. Tell me that old Homer did not roll his sightless eyeballs about with delight, as he thundered out these ringing syllables! It seems hard to think of his going round like a hand-organ man, with such music and such thought as his to earn his bread with. One can't help wishing that Mr. Pugh could have got at him for a single lecture, at least, of the "Star Course," or that he could have appeared in the Music Hall, "for this night only."

—I know I have rambled, but I hope you see that this is a delicate way of letting you into the nature of the individual who is, officially, the principal personage at our table. It

would hardly do to describe him directly, you know. But you must not think, because the lightning zigzags, it does not know where to strike.

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I shall try to go through the rest of my description of our boarders with as little of digression as is consistent with my nature. I think we have a somewhat exceptional company. Since our Landlady has got up in the world, her board has been decidedly a favorite with persons a little above the average in point of intelligence and education. In fact, ever since a boarder of hers, not wholly unknown to the reading public, brought her establishment into notice, it has attracted a considerable number of literary and scientific people, and now and then a politician, like the Member of the House of Representatives, otherwise called the Great and General Court of the State of Massachusetts. The consequence is, that there is more individuality of character than in a good many similar boardinghouses, where all are business-men, engrossed in the same pursuit of money-making, or all are engaged in politics, and so deeply occupied with the welfare of the community that they can think and talk of little else.

At my left hand sits as singular-looking a human being as I remember seeing outside of a regular museum or tent-show. His black coat shines as if it had been polished; and it has been polished on the wearer's back, no doubt, for the arms and other points of maximum attrition are particularly smooth and bright. Round shoulders,—stooping over some minute labor, I suppose. Very slender limbs, with bends like a grasshopper's; sits a great deal, I presume; looks as if he might straighten them out all of a sudden, and jump instead of walking. Wears goggles very commonly; says it rests his eyes, which he strains in looking at very small objects. Voice has a dry creak, as if made by some small piece of mechanism that wanted oiling. I don't think he is a botanist, for he does not smell of dried herbs, but carries a camphorated atmosphere about with him, as if to keep the moths from attacking him. I must find out what is his particular interest. One ought to know something about his immediate neighbors at the table. This is what I said to myself, before opening a conversation with him. Everybody in our ward of the city was in a great stir about a certain election, and I thought I might as well begin with that as anything.

—How do you think the vote is likely to go tomorrow?—I said.

—It isn't to-morrow,—he answered,—it 's next month.

—Next month!—said I.—Why, what election do you mean?

—I mean the election to the Presidency of the Entomological Society, sir,—he creaked, with an air of surprise, as if nobody could by any possibility have been thinking of any other. Great competition, sir, between the dipterists and the lepidopterists as to which shall get in their candidate. Several close ballottings already; adjourned for a fortnight. Poor concerns, both of 'em. Wait till our turn comes.

—I suppose you are an entomologist?—I said with a note of interrogation.

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-Not quite so ambitious as that, sir. I should like to put my eyes on the individual entitled to that name! A society may call itself an Entomological Society, but the man who arrogates such a broad title as that to himself, in the present state of science, is a pretender, sir, a dilettante, an impostor! No man can be truly called an entomologist, sir; the subject is too vast for any single human intelligence to grasp.

—May I venture to ask,—I said, a little awed by his statement and manner,—what is your special province of study?

I am often spoken of as a Coleopterist,—he said,—but I have no right to so comprehensive a name. The genus *Scarabaeus* is what I have chiefly confined myself to, and ought to have studied exclusively. The beetles proper are quite enough for the labor of one man's life. Call me a *Scarabaeist* if you will; if I can prove myself worthy of that name, my highest ambition will be more than satisfied.

I think, by way of compromise and convenience, I shall call him the Scarabee. He has come to look wonderfully like those creatures,—the beetles, I mean,—by being so much among them. His room is hung round with cases of them, each impaled on a pin driven through him, something as they used to bury suicides. These cases take the place for him of pictures and all other ornaments. That Boy steals into his room sometimes, and stares at them with great admiration, and has himself undertaken to form a rival cabinet, chiefly consisting of flies, so far, arranged in ranks superintended by an occasional spider.

The old Master, who is a bachelor, has a kindly feeling for this little monkey, and those of his kind.

—I like children,—he said to me one day at table,—I like 'em, and I respect 'em. Pretty much all the honest truth-telling there is in the world is done by them. Do you know they play the part in the household which the king's jester, who very often had a mighty long head under his cap and bells, used to play for a monarch? There 's no radical club like a nest of little folks in a nursery. Did you ever watch a baby's fingers? I have, often enough, though I never knew what it was to own one.—The Master paused half a minute or so,—sighed,—perhaps at thinking what he had missed in life,—looked up at me a little vacantly. I saw what was the matter; he had lost the thread of his talk.

—Baby's fingers,—I intercalated.

-Yes, yes; did you ever see how they will poke those wonderful little fingers of theirs into every fold and crack and crevice they can get at? That is their first education, feeling their way into the solid facts of the material world. When they begin to talk it is the same thing over again in another shape. If there is a crack or a flaw in your answer to their confounded shoulder-hitting questions, they will poke and poke until they have got it gaping just as the baby's fingers have made a rent out of that atom of a hole in his



pinafore that your old eyes never took notice of. Then they make such fools of us by copying on a small scale what we do in the grand manner. I wonder if it ever occurs to our dried-up neighbor there to ask himself whether That Boy's collection of flies is n't about as significant in the Order of Things as his own Museum of Beetles?

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—I couldn't help thinking that perhaps That Boy's questions about the simpler mysteries of life might have a good deal of the same kind of significance as the Master's inquiries into the Order of Things.

—On my left, beyond my next neighbor the Scarabee, at the end of the table, sits a person of whom we know little, except that he carries about him more palpable reminiscences of tobacco and the allied sources of comfort than a very sensitive organization might find acceptable. The Master does not seem to like him much, for some reason or other,—perhaps he has a special aversion to the odor of tobacco. As his forefinger shows a little too distinctly that he uses a pen, I shall compliment him by calling him the Man of Letters, until I find out more about him.

—The Young Girl who sits on my right, next beyond the Master, can hardly be more than nineteen or twenty years old. I wish I could paint her so as to interest others as much as she does me. But she has not a profusion of sunny tresses wreathing a neck of alabaster, and a cheek where the rose and the lily are trying to settle their old quarrel with alternating victory. Her hair is brown, her cheek is delicately pallid, her forehead is too ample for a ball-room beauty's. A single faint line between the eyebrows is the record of long—continued anxious efforts to please in the task she has chosen, or rather which has been forced upon her. It is the same line of anxious and conscientious effort which I saw not long since on the forehead of one of the sweetest and truest singers who has visited us; the same which is so striking on the masks of singing women painted upon the facade of our Great Organ,—that Himalayan home of harmony which you are to see and then die, if you don't live where you can see and hear it often. Many deaths have happened in a neighboring large city from that well-known complaint, *Icterus Invidiosorum*, after returning from a visit to the Music Hall. The invariable symptom of a fatal attack is the *Risus Sardonicus*.—But the Young Girl. She gets her living by writing stories for a newspaper. Every week she furnishes a new story. If her head aches or her heart is heavy, so that she does not come to time with her story, she falls behindhand and has to live on credit. It sounds well enough to say that “she supports herself by her pen,” but her lot is a trying one; it repeats the doom of the Danaides. The “Weekly Bucket” has no bottom, and it is her business to help fill it. Imagine for one moment what it is to tell a tale that must flow on, flow ever, without pausing; the lover miserable and happy this week, to begin miserable again next week and end as before; the villain scowling, plotting, punished; to scowl, plot, and get punished again in our next; an endless series of woes and busses, into each paragraph of which the forlorn artist has to throw all the liveliness, all the emotion, all the graces of style she is mistress of, for the wages of

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a maid of all work, and no more recognition or thanks from anybody than the apprentice who sets the types for the paper that prints her ever-ending and ever-beginning stories. And yet she has a pretty talent, sensibility, a natural way of writing, an ear for the music of verse, in which she sometimes indulges to vary the dead monotony of everlasting narrative, and a sufficient amount of invention to make her stories readable. I have found my eyes dimmed over them oftener than once, more with thinking about her, perhaps, than about her heroes and heroines. Poor little body! Poor little mind! Poor little soul! She is one of that great company of delicate, intelligent, emotional young creatures, who are waiting, like that sail I spoke of, for some breath of heaven to fill their white bosoms,—love, the right of every woman; religious emotion, sister of love, with the same passionate eyes, but cold, thin, bloodless hands,—some enthusiasm of humanity or divinity; and find that life offers them, instead, a seat on a wooden bench, a chain to fasten them to it, and a heavy oar to pull day and night. We read the Arabian tales and pity the doomed lady who must amuse her lord and master from day to day or have her head cut off; how much better is a mouth without bread to fill it than no mouth at all to fill, because no head? We have all round us a weary-eyed company of Scheherezades! This is one of them, and I may call her by that name when it pleases me to do so.

The next boarder I have to mention is the one who sits between the Young Girl and the Landlady. In a little chamber into which a small thread of sunshine finds its way for half an hour or so every day during a month or six weeks of the spring or autumn, at all other times obliged to content itself with ungilded daylight, lives this boarder, whom, without wronging any others of our company, I may call, as she is very generally called in the household, The Lady. In giving her this name it is not meant that there are no other ladies at our table, or that the handmaids who serve us are not ladies, or to deny the general proposition that everybody who wears the unbifurcated garment is entitled to that appellation. Only this lady has a look and manner which there is no mistaking as belonging to a person always accustomed to refined and elegant society. Her style is perhaps a little more courtly and gracious than some would like. The language and manner which betray the habitual desire of pleasing, and which add a charm to intercourse in the higher social circles, are liable to be construed by sensitive beings unused to such amenities as an odious condescension when addressed to persons of less consideration than the accused, and as a still more odious—you know the word—when directed to those who are esteemed by the world as considerable person ages. But of all this the accused are fortunately wholly unconscious, for there is nothing so entirely natural and unaffected as the highest breeding.

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From an aspect of dignified but undisguised economy which showed itself in her dress as well as in her limited quarters, I suspected a story of shipwrecked fortune, and determined to question our Landlady. That worthy woman was delighted to tell the history of her most distinguished boarder. She was, as I had supposed, a gentlewoman whom a change of circumstances had brought down from her high estate.

—Did I know the Goldenrod family?—Of course I did.—Well, the Lady, was first cousin to Mrs. Midas Goldenrod. She had been here in her carriage to call upon her,—not very often.—Were her rich relations kind and helpful to her?—Well, yes; at least they made her presents now and then. Three or four years ago they sent her a silver waiter, and every Christmas they sent her a boquet,—it must cost as much as five dollars, the Landlady thought.

—And how did the Lady receive these valuable and useful gifts?

—Every Christmas she got out the silver waiter and borrowed a glass tumbler and filled it with water, and put the boquet in it and set it on the waiter. It smelt sweet enough and looked pretty for a day or two, but the Landlady thought it wouldn't have hurt 'em if they'd sent a piece of goods for a dress, or at least a pocket-handkercher or two, or something or other that she could 'a' made some kind of use of; but beggars must n't be choosers; not that she was a beggar, for she'd sooner die than do that if she was in want of a meal of victuals. There was a lady I remember, and she had a little boy and she was a widow, and after she'd buried her husband she was dreadful poor, and she was ashamed to let her little boy go out in his old shoes, and copper-toed shoes they was too, because his poor little ten—toes—was a coming out of 'em; and what do you think my husband's rich uncle,—well, there now, it was me and my little Benjamin, as he was then, there's no use in hiding of it,—and what do you think my husband's uncle sent me but a plaster of Paris image of a young woman, that was,—well, her appearance wasn't respectable, and I had to take and wrap her up in a towel and poke her right into my closet, and there she stayed till she got her head broke and served her right, for she was n't fit to show folks. You need n't say anything about what I told you, but the fact is I was desperate poor before I began to support myself taking boarders, and a lone woman without her—her—

The sentence plunged into the gulf of her great remembered sorrow, and was lost to the records of humanity.

—Presently she continued in answer to my questions: The Lady was not very sociable; kept mostly to herself. The Young Girl (our Scheherezade) used to visit her sometimes, and they seemed to like each other, but the Young Girl had not many spare hours for visiting. The Lady never found fault, but she was very nice in her tastes, and kept everything about her looking as neat and pleasant as she could.

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—What did she do?—Why, she read, and she drew pictures, and she did needlework patterns, and played on an old harp she had; the gilt was mostly off, but it sounded very sweet, and she sung to it sometimes, those old songs that used to be in fashion twenty or thirty years ago, with words to 'em that folks could understand.

Did she do anything to help support herself?—The Landlady couldn't say she did, but she thought there was rich people enough that ought to buy the flowers and things she worked and painted.

All this points to the fact that she was bred to be an ornamental rather than what is called a useful member of society. This is all very well so long as fortune favors those who are chosen to be the ornamental personages; but if the golden tide recedes and leaves them stranded, they are more to be pitied than almost any other class. "I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed."

I think it is unpopular in this country to talk much about gentlemen and gentlewomen. People are touchy about social distinctions, which no doubt are often invidious and quite arbitrary and accidental, but which it is impossible to avoid recognizing as facts of natural history. Society stratifies itself everywhere, and the stratum which is generally recognized as the uppermost will be apt to have the advantage in easy grace of manner and in unassuming confidence, and consequently be more agreeable in the superficial relations of life. To compare these advantages with the virtues and utilities would be foolish. Much of the noblest work in life is done by ill-dressed, awkward, ungainly persons; but that is no more reason for undervaluing good manners and what we call high-breeding, than the fact that the best part of the sturdy labor of the world is done by men with exceptionable hands is to be urged against the use of Brown Windsor as a preliminary to appearance in cultivated society.

I mean to stand up for this poor lady, whose usefulness in the world is apparently problematical. She seems to me like a picture which has fallen from its gilded frame and lies, face downward, on the dusty floor. The picture never was as needful as a window or a door, but it was pleasant to see it in its place, and it would be pleasant to see it there again, and I, for one, should be thankful to have the Lady restored by some turn of fortune to the position from which she has been so cruelly cast down.

—I have asked the Landlady about the young man sitting near her, the same who attracted my attention the other day while I was talking, as I mentioned. He passes most of his time in a private observatory, it appears; a watcher of the stars. That I suppose gives the peculiar look to his lustrous eyes. The Master knows him and was pleased to tell me something about him.

You call yourself a Poet,—he said,—and we call you so, too, and so you are; I read your verses and like 'em. But that young man lives in a world beyond the imagination of poets, let me tell you. The daily home of his thought is in illimitable space, hovering

between the two eternities. In his contemplations the divisions of time run together, as in the thought of his Maker. With him also,—I say it not profanely,—one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day.

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This account of his occupation increased the interest his look had excited in me, and I have observed him more particularly and found out more about him. Sometimes, after a long night's watching, he looks so pale and worn, that one would think the cold moonlight had stricken him with some malign effluence such as it is fabled to send upon those who sleep in it. At such times he seems more like one who has come from a planet farther away from the sun than our earth, than like one of us terrestrial creatures. His home is truly in the heavens, and he practises an asceticism in the cause of science almost comparable to that of Saint Simeon Stylites. Yet they tell me he might live in luxury if he spent on himself what he spends on science. His knowledge is of that strange, remote character, that it seems sometimes almost superhuman. He knows the ridges and chasms of the moon as a surveyor knows a garden-plot he has measured. He watches the snows that gather around the poles of Mars; he is on the lookout for the expected comet at the moment when its faint stain of diffused light first shows itself; he analyzes the ray that comes from the sun's photosphere; he measures the rings of Saturn; he counts his asteroids to see that none are missing, as the shepherd counts the sheep in his flock. A strange unearthly being; lonely, dwelling far apart from the thoughts and cares of the planet on which he lives,—an enthusiast who gives his life to knowledge; a student of antiquity, to whom the records of the geologist are modern pages in the great volume of being, and the pyramids a memorandum of yesterday, as the eclipse or occultation that is to take place thousands of years hence is an event of to-morrow in the diary without beginning and without end where he enters the aspect of the passing moment as it is read on the celestial dial.

In very marked contrast with this young man is the something more than middle-aged Register of Deeds, a rusty, sallow, smoke-dried looking personage, who belongs to this earth as exclusively as the other belongs to the firmament. His movements are as mechanical as those of a pendulum,—to the office, where he changes his coat and plunges into messages and building-lots; then, after changing his coat again, back to our table, and so, day by day, the dust of years gradually gathering around him as it does on the old folios that fill the shelves all round the great cemetery of past transactions of which he is the sexton.

Of the Salesman who sits next him, nothing need be said except that he is good-looking, rosy, well-dressed, and of very polite manners, only a little more brisk than the approved style of carriage permits, as one in the habit of springing with a certain alacrity at the call of a customer.

You would like to see, I don't doubt, how we sit at the table, and I will help you by means of a diagram which shows the present arrangement of our seats.

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4	3	2	1	14	13

O	O	O	O	O	O
5 O		Breakfast-Table			O 12
O	O	O	O	O	O

6	7	8	9	10	11

1. The Poet.
2. The Master Of Arts.
3. The Young Girl (Scheherezade).
4. The Lady.
5. The Landlady.
6. Dr. B. Franklin.
7. That Boy.
8. The Astronomer.
9. The Member of the Haouse.
10. The Register of Deeds.
11. The Salesman.
12. The Capitalist.
13. The Man of Letters(?).
14. The Scarabee.

Our young Scheherezade varies her prose stories now and then, as I told you, with compositions in verse, one or two of which she has let me look over. Here is one of them, which she allowed me to copy. It is from a story of hers, "The Sun-Worshipper's Daughter," which you may find in the periodical before mentioned, to which she is a contributor, if your can lay your hand upon a file of it. I think our Scheherezade has never had a lover in human shape, or she would not play so lightly with the firebrands of the great passion.

Fantasia.

Kiss mine eyelids, beauteous Morn,
 Blushing into life new-born!
 Lend me violets for my hair,
 And thy russet robe to wear,
 And thy ring of rosiest hue
 Set in drops of diamond dew!



Kiss my cheek, thou noontide ray,
From my Love so far away!
Let thy splendor streaming down
Turn its pallid lilies brown,
Till its darkening shades reveal
Where his passion pressed its seal!

Kiss my lips, thou Lord of light,
Kiss my lips a soft good night!
Westward sinks thy golden car;
Leave me but the evening star,
And my solace that shall be,
Borrowing all its light from thee!

III

The old Master was talking about a concert he had been to hear.—I don't like your chopped music anyway. That woman—she had more sense in her little finger than forty medical societies—Florence Nightingale—says that the music you pour out is good for sick folks, and the music you pound out isn't. Not that exactly, but something like it. I have been to hear some music-pounding. It was a young woman, with as many white muslin flounces round her as the planet Saturn has rings, that did it. She—gave the music-stool a twirl or two and fluffed down on to it like a whirl of soap-suds in a hand-basin. Then she pushed up her cuffs as if she was going to fight for the champion's belt. Then she worked her wrists and her hands, to limber 'em, I suppose, and spread out her fingers till they looked as though they would pretty much cover the key-board, from the growling end to

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the little squeaky one. Then those two hands of hers made a jump at the keys as if they were a couple of tigers coming down on a flock of black and white sheep, and the piano gave a great howl as if its tail had been trod on. Dead stop,—so still you could hear your hair growing. Then another jump, and another howl, as if the piano had two tails and you had trod on both of 'em at once, and, then a grand clatter and scramble and string of jumps, up and down, back and forward, one hand over the other, like a stampede of rats and mice more than like anything I call music. I like to hear a woman sing, and I like to hear a fiddle sing, but these noises they hammer out of their wood and ivory anvils—don't talk to me, I know the difference between a bullfrog and a woodthrush and—

Pop! went a small piece of artillery such as is made of a stick of elder and carries a pellet of very moderate consistency. That Boy was in his seat and looking demure enough, but there could be no question that he was the artillery-man who had discharged the missile. The aim was not a bad one, for it took the Master full in the forehead, and had the effect of checking the flow of his eloquence. How the little monkey had learned to time his interruptions I do not know, but I have observed more than once before this, that the popgun would go off just at the moment when some one of the company was getting too energetic or prolix. The Boy isn't old enough to judge for himself when to intervene to change the order of conversation; no, of course he isn't. Somebody must give him a hint. Somebody.—Who is it? I suspect Dr. B. Franklin. He looks too knowing. There is certainly a trick somewhere. Why, a day or two ago I was myself discoursing, with considerable effect, as I thought, on some of the new aspects of humanity, when I was struck full on the cheek by one of these little pellets, and there was such a confounded laugh that I had to wind up and leave off with a preposition instead of a good mouthful of polysyllables. I have watched our young Doctor, however, and have been entirely unable to detect any signs of communication between him and this audacious child, who is like to become a power among us, for that popgun is fatal to any talker who is hit by its pellet. I have suspected a foot under the table as the prompter, but I have been unable to detect the slightest movement or look as if he were making one, on the part of Dr. Benjamin Franklin. I cannot help thinking of the flappers in Swift's *Laputa*, only they gave one a hint when to speak and another a hint to listen, whereas the popgun says unmistakably, "Shut up!"

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—I should be sorry to lose my confidence in Dr. B. Franklin, who seems very much devoted to his business, and whom I mean to consult about some small symptoms I have had lately. Perhaps it is coming to a new boarding-house. The young people who come into Paris from the provinces are very apt—so I have been told by one that knows—to have an attack of typhoid fever a few weeks or months after their arrival. I have not been long enough at this table to get well acclimated; perhaps that is it. Boarding-House Fever. Something like horse-ail, very likely,—horses get it, you know, when they are brought to city stables. A little “off my feed,” as Hiram Woodruff would say. A queer discoloration about my forehead. Query, a bump? Cannot remember any. Might have got it against bedpost or something while asleep. Very unpleasant to look so. I wonder how my portrait would look, if anybody should take it now! I hope not quite so badly as one I saw the other day, which I took for the end man of the Ethiopian Serenaders, or some traveller who had been exploring the sources of the Niger, until I read the name at the bottom and found it was a face I knew as well as my own.

I must consult somebody, and it is nothing more than fair to give our young Doctor a chance. Here goes for Dr. Benjamin Franklin.

The young Doctor has a very small office and a very large sign, with a transparency at night big enough for an oyster-shop. These young doctors are particularly strong, as I understand, on what they call diagnosis,—an excellent branch of the healing art, full of satisfaction to the curious practitioner, who likes to give the right Latin name to one's complaint; not quite so satisfactory to the patient, as it is not so very much pleasanter to be bitten by a dog with a collar round his neck telling you that he is called Snap or Teaser, than by a dog without a collar. Sometimes, in fact, one would a little rather not know the exact name of his complaint, as if he does he is pretty sure to look it out in a medical dictionary, and then if he reads, This terrible disease is attended with vast suffering and is inevitably mortal, or any such statement, it is apt to affect him unpleasantly.

I confess to a little shakiness when I knocked at Dr. Benjamin's office door. “Come in!” exclaimed Dr. B. F. in tones that sounded ominous and sepulchral. And I went in.

I don't believe the chambers of the Inquisition ever presented a more alarming array of implements for extracting a confession, than our young Doctor's office did of instruments to make nature tell what was the matter with a poor body.

There were Ophthalmoscopes and Rhinoscopes and Otoscopes and Laryngoscopes and Stethoscopes; and Thermometers and Spirometers and Dynamometers and Sphygmometers and Pleximeters; and Probes and Probangs and all sorts of frightful inquisitive exploring contrivances; and scales to weigh you in, and tests and balances and pumps and electro-magnets and magneto-electric machines; in short, apparatus for doing everything but turn you inside out.



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Dr. Benjamin set me down before his one window and began looking at me with such a superhuman air of sagacity, that I felt like one of those open-breasted clocks which make no secret of their inside arrangements, and almost thought he could see through me as one sees through a shrimp or a jelly-fish. First he looked at the place inculpated, which had a sort of greenish-brown color, with his naked eyes, with much corrugation of forehead and fearful concentration of attention; then through a pocket-glass which he carried. Then he drew back a space, for a perspective view. Then he made me put out my tongue and laid a slip of blue paper on it, which turned red and scared me a little. Next he took my wrist; but instead of counting my pulse in the old-fashioned way, he fastened a machine to it that marked all the beats on a sheet of paper,—for all the world like a scale of the heights of mountains, say from Mount Tom up to Chimborazo and then down again, and up again, and so on. In the mean time he asked me all sorts of questions about myself and all my relatives, whether we had been subject to this and that malady, until I felt as if we must some of us have had more or less of them, and could not feel quite sure whether Elephantiasis and Beriberi and Progressive Locomotor Ataxy did not run in the family.

After all this overhauling of myself and my history, he paused and looked puzzled. Something was suggested about what he called an “exploratory puncture.” This I at once declined, with thanks. Suddenly a thought struck him. He looked still more closely at the discoloration I have spoken of.

—Looks like—I declare it reminds me of—very rare! very curious! It would be strange if my first case—of this kind—should be one of our boarders!

What kind of a case do you call it?—I said, with a sort of feeling that he could inflict a severe or a light malady on me, as if he were a judge passing sentence.

—The color reminds me,—said Dr. B. Franklin,—of what I have seen in a case of Addison’s Disease, Morbus Addisonii.

—But my habits are quite regular,—I said; for I remembered that the distinguished essayist was too fond of his brandy and water, and I confess that the thought was not pleasant to me of following Dr. Johnson’s advice, with the slight variation of giving my days and my nights to trying on the favorite maladies of Addison.

—Temperance people are subject to it!—exclaimed Dr. Benjamin, almost exultingly, I thought.

—But I had the impression that the author of the Spectator was afflicted with a dropsy, or some such inflated malady, to which persons of sedentary and bibacious habits are liable. [A literary swell,—I thought to myself, but I did not say it. I felt too serious.]

—The author of the Spectator!—cried out Dr. Benjamin,—I mean the celebrated Dr. Addison, inventor, I would say discoverer, of the wonderful new disease called after him.

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—And what may this valuable invention or discovery consist in?—I asked, for I was curious to know the nature of the gift which this benefactor of the race had bestowed upon us.

—A most interesting affection, and rare, too. Allow me to look closely at that discoloration once more for a moment. *Cutis cenea*, bronze skin, they call it sometimes—extraordinary pigmentation—a little more to the light, if you please—ah! now I get the bronze coloring admirably, beautifully! Would you have any objection to showing your case to the Societies of Medical Improvement and Medical Observation?

[—My case! O dear!] May I ask if any vital organ is commonly involved in this interesting complaint?—I said, faintly.

—Well, sir,—the young Doctor replied,—there is an organ which is —sometimes—a little touched, I may say; a very curious and ingenious little organ or pair of organs. Did you ever hear of the *Capsulae*, *Suprarenales*?

—No,—said I,—is it a mortal complaint?—I ought to have known better than to ask such a question, but I was getting nervous and thinking about all sorts of horrid maladies people are liable to, with horrid names to match.

—It is n't a complaint,—I mean they are not a complaint,—they are two small organs, as I said, inside of you, and nobody knows what is the use of them. The most curious thing is that when anything is the matter with them you turn of the color of bronze. After all, I didn't mean to say I believed it was *Morbus Addisonii*; I only thought of that when I saw the discoloration.

So he gave me a recipe, which I took care to put where it could do no hurt to anybody, and I paid him his fee (which he took with the air of a man in the receipt of a great income) and said Good-morning.

—What in the name of a thousand diablos is the reason these confounded doctors will mention their guesses about “a case,” as they call it, and all its conceivable possibilities, out loud before their patients? I don't suppose there is anything in all this nonsense about “Addison's Disease,” but I wish he hadn't spoken of that very interesting ailment, and I should feel a little easier if that discoloration would leave my forehead. I will ask the Landlady about it,—these old women often know more than the young doctors just come home with long names for everything they don't know how to cure. But the name of this complaint sets me thinking. Bronzed skin! What an odd idea! Wonder if it spreads all over one. That would be picturesque and pleasant, now, wouldn't it? To be made a living statue of,—nothing to do but strike an attitude. Arm up—so—like the one in the Garden. John of Bologna's Mercury—thus on one foot. Needy knife-grinder in the Tribune at Florence. No, not “needy,” come to think of it. Marcus Aurelius on

horseback. Query. Are horses subject to the Morbus Addisonii? Advertise for a bronzed living horse—Lyceum

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invitations and engagements—bronze versus brass.—What 's the use in being frightened? Bet it was a bump. Pretty certain I bumped my forehead against something. Never heard of a bronzed man before. Have seen white men, black men, red men, yellow men, two or three blue men, stained with doctor's stuff; some green ones, from the country; but never a bronzed man. Poh, poh! Sure it was a bump. Ask Landlady to look at it.

—Landlady did look at it. Said it was a bump, and no mistake. Recommended a piece of brown paper dipped in vinegar. Made the house smell as if it were in quarantine for the plague from Smyrna, but discoloration soon disappeared,—so I did not become a bronzed man after all,—hope I never shall while I am alive. Should n't mind being done in bronze after I was dead. On second thoughts not so clear about it, remembering how some of them look that we have got stuck up in public; think I had rather go down to posterity in an Ethiopian Minstrel portrait, like our friend's the other day.

—You were kind enough to say, I remarked to the Master, that you read my poems and liked them. Perhaps you would be good enough to tell me what it is you like about them?

The Master harpooned a breakfast-roll and held it up before me.—Will you tell me,—he said,—why you like that breakfast-roll?—I suppose he thought that would stop my mouth in two senses. But he was mistaken.

—To be sure I will,—said I.—First, I like its mechanical consistency; brittle externally,—that is for the teeth, which want resistance to be overcome; soft, spongy, well tempered and flavored internally, that is for the organ of taste; wholesome, nutritious,—that is for the internal surfaces and the system generally.

—Good,—said the Master, and laughed a hearty terrestrial laugh.

I hope he will carry that faculty of an honest laugh with him wherever he goes,—why shouldn't he? The "order of things," as he calls it, from which hilarity was excluded, would be crippled and one-sided enough. I don't believe the human gamut will be cheated of a single note after men have done breathing this fatal atmospheric mixture and die into the ether of immortality!

I did n't say all that; if I had said it, it would have brought a pellet from the popgun, I feel quite certain.

The Master went on after he had had out his laugh.—There is one thing I am His Imperial Majesty about, and that is my likes and dislikes. What if I do like your verses,—you can't help yourself. I don't doubt somebody or other hates 'em and hates you



and everything you do, or ever did, or ever can do. He is all right; there is nothing you or I like that somebody does n't hate. Was there ever anything wholesome that was not poison to somebody? If you hate honey or cheese, or the products of the dairy,—I know a family a good many of whose members can't touch milk, butter, cheese, and the like, why, say so, but don't find fault with the bees and the cows. Some are afraid of roses, and I have known those who thought a pond-lily a disagreeable neighbor. That Boy will give you the metaphysics of likes and dislikes. Look here,—you young philosopher over there,—do you like candy?

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That Boy.—You bet! Give me a stick and see if I don't.

And can you tell me why you like candy?

That Boy.—Because I do.

—There, now, that is the whole matter in a nutshell. Why do your teeth like crackling crust, and your organs of taste like spongy crumb, and your digestive contrivances take kindly to bread rather than toadstools—

That Boy (thinking he was still being catechised).—Because they do.

Whereupon the Landlady said, Sh! and the Young Girl laughed, and the Lady smiled; and Dr. Ben Franklin kicked him, moderately, under the table, and the Astronomer looked up at the ceiling to see what had happened, and the Member of the Haouse cried, Order! Order! and the Salesman said, Shut up, cash-boy! and the rest of the boarders kept on feeding; except the Master, who looked very hard but half approvingly at the small intruder, who had come about as nearly right as most professors would have done.

—You poets,—the Master said after this excitement had calmed down, —you poets have one thing about you that is odd. You talk about everything as if you knew more about it than the people whose business it is to know all about it. I suppose you do a little of what we teachers used to call “cramming” now and then?

—If you like your breakfast you must n't ask the cook too many questions,—I answered.

—Oh, come now, don't be afraid of letting out your secrets. I have a notion I can tell a poet that gets himself up just as I can tell a make-believe old man on the stage by the line where the gray skullcap joins the smooth forehead of the young fellow of seventy. You'll confess to a rhyming dictionary anyhow, won't you?

—I would as lief use that as any other dictionary, but I don't want it. When a word comes up fit to end a line with I can feel all the rhymes in the language that are fit to go with it without naming them. I have tried them all so many times, I know all the polygamous words and all the monogamous ones, and all the unmarried ones,—the whole lot that have no mates,—as soon as I hear their names called. Sometimes I run over a string of rhymes, but generally speaking it is strange what a short list it is of those that are good for anything. That is the pitiful side of all rhymed verse. Take two such words as home and world. What can you do with chrome or loam or gnome or tome? You have dome, foam, and roam, and not much more to use in your pome, as some of our fellow-countrymen call it. As for world, you know that in all human probability somebody or something will be hurled into it or out of it; its clouds may be furled or its grass impearled; possibly something may be whirled, or curled, or have swirled, one of

Leigh Hunt's words, which with lush, one of Keats's, is an important part of the stock in trade of some dealers in rhyme.

—And how much do you versifiers know of all those arts and sciences you refer to as if you were as familiar with them as a cobbler is with his wax and lapstone?



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—Enough not to make too many mistakes. The best way is to ask some expert before one risks himself very far in illustrations from a branch he does not know much about. Suppose, for instance, I wanted to use the double star to illustrate anything, say the relation of two human souls to each other, what would I—do? Why, I would ask our young friend there to let me look at one of those loving celestial pairs through his telescope, and I don't doubt he'd let me do so, and tell me their names and all I wanted to know about them.

—I should be most happy to show any of the double stars or whatever else there might be to see in the heavens to any of our friends at this table,—the young man said, so cordially and kindly that it was a real invitation.

—Show us the man in the moon,—said That Boy.—I should so like to see a double star!—said Scheherezade, with a very pretty air of smiling modesty.

—Will you go, if we make up a party?—I asked the Master.

—A cold in the head lasts me from three to five days,—answered the Master.—I am not so very fond of being out in the dew like Nebuchadnezzar: that will do for you young folks.

—I suppose I must be one of the young folks, not so young as our Scheherezade, nor so old as the Capitalist,—young enough at any rate to want to be of the party. So we agreed that on some fair night when the Astronomer should tell us that there was to be a fine show in the skies, we would make up a party and go to the Observatory. I asked the Scarabee whether he would not like to make one of us.

—Out of the question, sir, out of the question. I am altogether too much occupied with an important scientific investigation to devote any considerable part of an evening to star-gazing.

—Oh, indeed,—said I,—and may I venture to ask on what particular point you are engaged just at present?

—Certainly, sir, you may. It is, I suppose, as difficult and important a matter to be investigated as often comes before a student of natural history. I wish to settle the point once for all whether the *Pediculus Mellitae* is or is not the larva of *Meloe*.

[—Now is n't this the drollest world to live in that one could imagine, short of being in a fit of delirium tremens? Here is a fellow-creature of mine and yours who is asked to see all the glories of the firmament brought close to him, and he is too busy with a little unmentionable parasite that infests the bristly surface of a bee to spare an hour or two of a single evening for the splendors of the universe! I must get a peep through that microscope of his and see the pediculus which occupies a larger space in his mental



vision than the midnight march of the solar systems.—The creature, the human one, I mean, interests me.]

—I am very curious,—I said,—about that *pediculus melittae*,—(just as if I knew a good deal about the little wretch and wanted to know more, whereas I had never heard him spoken of before, to my knowledge,)—could you let me have a sight of him in your microscope?

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—You ought to have seen the way in which the poor dried-up little Scarabee turned towards me. His eyes took on a really human look, and I almost thought those antennae-like arms of his would have stretched themselves out and embraced me. I don't believe any of the boarders had ever shown any interest in—him, except the little monkey of a Boy, since he had been in the house. It is not strange; he had not seemed to me much like a human being, until all at once I touched the one point where his vitality had concentrated itself, and he stood revealed a man and a brother.

—Come in,—said he,—come in, right after breakfast, and you shall see the animal that has convulsed the entomological world with questions as to his nature and origin.

—So I went into the Scarabee's parlor, lodging-room, study, laboratory, and museum,—a—single apartment applied to these various uses, you understand.

—I wish I had time to have you show me all your treasures,—I said, —but I am afraid I shall hardly be able to do more than look at the bee-parasite. But what a superb butterfly you have in that case!

—Oh, yes, yes, well enough,—came from South America with the beetle there; look at him! These Lepidoptera are for children to play with, pretty to look at, so some think. Give me the Coleoptera, and the kings of the Coleoptera are the beetles! Lepidoptera and Neuroptera for little folks; Coleopteras for men, sir!

—The particular beetle he showed me in the case with the magnificent butterfly was an odious black wretch that one would say, Ugh! at, and kick out of his path, if he did not serve him worse than that. But he looked at it as a coin-collector would look at a Pescennius Niger, if the coins of that Emperor are as scarce as they used to be when I was collecting half-penny tokens and pine-tree shillings and battered bits of Roman brass with the head of Gallienus or some such old fellow on them.

—A beauty!—he exclaimed,—and the only specimen of the kind in this country, to the best of my belief. A unique, sir, and there is a pleasure in exclusive possession. Not another beetle like that short of South America, sir.

—I was glad to hear that there were no more like it in this neighborhood, the present supply of cockroaches answering every purpose, so far as I am concerned, that such an animal as this would be likely to serve.

—Here are my bee-parasites,—said the Scarabee, showing me a box full of glass slides, each with a specimen ready mounted for the microscope. I was most struck with one little beast flattened out like a turtle, semi-transparent, six-legged, as I remember him, and every leg terminated by a single claw hooked like a lion's and as formidable for the size of the creature as that of the royal beast.

—Lives on a bumblebee, does he?—I said. That's the way I call it. Bumblebee or bumblybee and huckleberry. Humblebee and whortleberry for people that say Woos-ses-ter and Nor-wich.

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—The Scarabee did not smile; he took no interest in trivial matters like this.

—Lives on a bumblebee. When you come to think of it, he must lead a pleasant kind of life. Sails through the air without the trouble of flying. Free pass everywhere that the bee goes. No fear of being dislodged; look at those six grappling-hooks. Helps himself to such juices of the bee as he likes best; the bee feeds on the choicest vegetable nectars, and he feeds on the bee. Lives either in the air or in the perfumed pavilion of the fairest and sweetest flowers. Think what tents the hollyhocks and the great lilies spread for him! And wherever he travels a band of music goes with him, for this hum which wanders by us is doubtless to him a vast and inspiring strain of melody.—I thought all this, while the Scarabee supposed I was studying the minute characters of the enigmatical specimen.

—I know what I consider your *pediculus melittae*, I said at length.

Do you think it really the larva of meloe?

—Oh, I don't know much about that, but I think he is the best cared for, on the whole, of any animal that I know of; and if I wasn't a man I believe I had rather be that little sybarite than anything that feasts at the board of nature.

—The question is, whether he is the larva of meloe,—the Scarabee said, as if he had not heard a word of what I had just been saying.—If I live a few years longer it shall be settled, sir; and if my epitaph can say honestly that I settled it, I shall be willing to trust my posthumous fame to that achievement.

I said good morning to the specialist, and went off feeling not only kindly, but respectfully towards him. He is an enthusiast, at any rate, as "earnest" a man as any philanthropic reformer who, having passed his life in worrying people out of their misdoings into good behavior, comes at last to a state in which he is never contented except when he is making somebody uncomfortable. He does certainly know one thing well, very likely better than anybody in the world.

I find myself somewhat singularly placed at our table between a minute philosopher who has concentrated all his faculties on a single subject, and my friend who finds the present universe too restricted for his intelligence. I would not give much to hear what the Scarabee says about the old Master, for he does not pretend to form a judgment of anything but beetles, but I should like to hear what the Master has to say about the Scarabee. I waited after breakfast until he had gone, and then asked the Master what he could make of our dried-up friend.

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—Well,—he said,—I am hospitable enough in my feelings to him and all his tribe. These specialists are the coral-insects that build up a reef. By and by it will be an island, and for aught we know may grow into a continent. But I don't want to be a coral-insect myself. I had rather be a voyager that visits all the reefs and islands the creatures build, and sails over the seas where they have as yet built up nothing. I am a little afraid that science is breeding us down too fast into coral-insects. A man like Newton or Leibnitz or Haller used to paint a picture of outward or inward nature with a free hand, and stand back and look at it as a whole and feel like an archangel; but nowadays you have a Society, and they come together and make a great mosaic, each man bringing his little bit and sticking it in its place, but so taken up with his petty fragment that he never thinks of looking at the picture the little bits make when they are put together. You can't get any talk out of these specialists away from their own subjects, any more than you can get help from a policeman outside of his own beat.

—Yes,—said I,—but why should n't we always set a man talking about the thing he knows best?

—No doubt, no doubt, if you meet him once; but what are you going to do with him if you meet him every day? I travel with a man and we want to make change very often in paying bills. But every time I ask him to change a pistareen, or give me two fo'pencehappennies for a ninepence, or help me to make out two and thrippence (mark the old Master's archaisms about the currency), what does the fellow do but put his hand in his pocket and pull out an old Roman coin; I have no change, says he, but this assarion of Diocletian. Mighty deal of good that'll do me!

—It isn't quite so handy as a few specimens of the modern currency would be, but you can pump him on numismatics.

—To be sure, to be sure. I've pumped a thousand men of all they could teach me, or at least all I could learn from 'em; and if it comes to that, I never saw the man that couldn't teach me something. I can get along with everybody in his place, though I think the place of some of my friends is over there among the feeble-minded pupils, and I don't believe there's one of them, I couldn't go to school to for half an hour and be the wiser for it. But people you talk with every day have got to have feeders for their minds, as much as the stream that turns a millwheel has. It isn't one little rill that's going to keep the float-boards turning round. Take a dozen of the brightest men you can find in the brightest city, wherever that may be,—perhaps you and I think we know,—and let 'em come together once a month, and you'll find out in the course of a year or two the ones that have feeders from all the hillsides. Your common talkers, that exchange the gossip of the day, have no wheel in particular to turn, and the wash of the rain as it runs down the street is enough for them.

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—Do you mean you can always see the sources from which a man fills his mind,—his feeders, as you call them?

—I don't go quite so far as that,—the Master said.—I've seen men whose minds were always overflowing, and yet they did n't read much nor go much into the world. Sometimes you'll find a bit of a pond-hole in a pasture, and you'll plunge your walking-stick into it and think you are going to touch bottom. But you find you are mistaken. Some of these little stagnant pond-holes are a good deal deeper than you think; you may tie a stone to a bed-cord and not get soundings in some of 'em. The country boys will tell you they have no bottom, but that only means that they are mighty deep; and so a good many stagnant, stupid-seeming people are a great deal deeper than the length of your intellectual walking-stick, I can tell you. There are hidden springs that keep the little pond-holes full when the mountain brooks are all dried up. You poets ought to know that.

—I can't help thinking you are more tolerant towards the specialists than I thought at first, by the way you seemed to look at our dried-up neighbor and his small pursuits.

—I don't like the word tolerant,—the Master said.—As long as the Lord can tolerate me I think I can stand my fellow-creatures. Philosophically, I love 'em all; empirically, I don't think I am very fond of all of 'em. It depends on how you look at a man or a woman. Come here, Youngster, will you? he said to That Boy.

The Boy was trying to catch a blue-bottle to add to his collection, and was indisposed to give up the chase; but he presently saw that the Master had taken out a small coin and laid it on the table, and felt himself drawn in that direction.

Read that,—said the Master.

U-n-i-ni United States of America 5 cents.

The Master turned the coin over. Now read that.

In God is our t-r-u-s-t—trust. 1869.

—Is that the same piece of money as the other one?

—There ain't any other one,—said the Boy, there ain't but one, but it's got two sides to it with different reading.

—That 's it, that 's it,—said the Master,—two sides to everybody, as there are to that piece of money. I've seen an old woman that wouldn't fetch five cents if you should put her up for sale at public auction; and yet come to read the other side of her, she had a trust in God Almighty that was like the bow anchor of a three-decker. It's faith in something and enthusiasm for something that makes a life worth looking at. I don't

think your ant-eating specialist, with his sharp nose and pin-head eyes, is the best every-day companion; but any man who knows one thing well is worth listening to for once; and if you are of the large-brained variety of the race, and want to fill out your programme of the Order of Things in a systematic and exhaustive way, and get all the half-notes and flats and sharps of humanity into your scale, you'd a great deal better shut your front door and open your two side ones when you come across a fellow that has made a real business of doing anything.

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—That Boy stood all this time looking hard at the five-cent piece.

—Take it,—said the Master, with a good-natured smile.

—The Boy made a snatch at it and was off for the purpose of investing it.

—A child naturally snaps at a thing as a dog does at his meat,—said the Master.—If you think of it, we've all been quadrupeds. A child that can only crawl has all the instincts of a four-footed beast. It carries things in its mouth just as cats and dogs do. I've seen the little brutes do it over and over again. I suppose a good many children would stay quadrupeds all their lives, if they didn't learn the trick of walking on their hind legs from seeing all the grown people walking in that way.

—Do you accept Mr. Darwin's notions about the origin of the race?—said I.

The Master looked at me with that twinkle in his eye which means that he is going to parry a question.

—Better stick to Blair's Chronology; that settles it. Adam and Eve, created Friday, October 28th, B. C. 4004. You've been in a ship for a good while, and here comes Mr. Darwin on deck with an armful of sticks and says, "Let's build a raft, and trust ourselves to that."

If your ship springs a leak, what would you do?

He looked me straight in the eyes for about half a minute.—If I heard the pumps going, I'd look and see whether they were gaining on the leak or not. If they were gaining I'd stay where I was.—Go and find out what's the matter with that young woman.

I had noticed that the Young Girl—the storywriter, our Scheherezade, as I called her—looked as if she had been crying or lying awake half the night. I found on asking her,—for she is an honest little body and is disposed to be confidential with me for some reason or other,—that she had been doing both.

—And what was the matter now, I questioned her in a semi-paternal kind of way, as soon as I got a chance for a few quiet words with her.

She was engaged to write a serial story, it seems, and had only got as far as the second number, and some critic had been jumping upon it, she said, and grinding his heel into it, till she couldn't bear to look at it. He said she did not write half so well as half a dozen other young women. She did n't write half so well as she used to write herself. She hadn't any characters and she had n't any incidents. Then he went to work to show how her story was coming out, trying to anticipate everything she could make of it, so that her readers should have nothing to look forward to, and he should have credit for his sagacity in guessing, which was nothing so very wonderful, she seemed to think.

Things she had merely hinted and left the reader to infer, he told right out in the bluntest and coarsest way. It had taken all the life out of her, she said. It was just as if at a dinner-party one of the guests should take a spoonful of soup and get up and say to the company, "Poor stuff, poor stuff; you won't get anything better; let's go somewhere else where things are fit to eat."

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What do you read such things for, my dear? said I.

The film glistened in her eyes at the strange sound of those two soft words; she had not heard such very often, I am afraid.

—I know I am a foolish creature to read them, she answered,—but I can't help it; somebody always sends me everything that will make me wretched to read, and so I sit down and read it, and ache all over for my pains, and lie awake all night.

—She smiled faintly as she said this, for she saw the sub-ridiculous side of it, but the film glittered still in her eyes. There are a good many real miseries in life that we cannot help smiling at, but they are the smiles that make wrinkles and not dimples. “Somebody always sends her everything that will make her wretched.” Who can those creatures be who cut out the offensive paragraph and send it anonymously to us, who mail the newspaper which has the article we had much better not have seen, who take care that we shall know everything which can, by any possibility, help to make us discontented with ourselves and a little less light-hearted than we were before we had been fools enough to open their incendiary packages? I don't like to say it to myself, but I cannot help suspecting, in this instance, the doubtful-looking personage who sits on my left, beyond the Scarabee. I have some reason to think that he has made advances to the Young Girl which were not favorably received, to state the case in moderate terms, and it may be that he is taking his revenge in cutting up the poor girl's story. I know this very well, that some personal pique or favoritism is at the bottom of half the praise and dispraise which pretend to be so very ingenuous and discriminating. (Of course I have been thinking all this time and telling you what I thought.)

—What you want is encouragement, my dear, said I,—I know that as well, as you. I don't think the fellows that write such criticisms as you tell me of want to correct your faults. I don't mean to say that you can learn nothing from them, because they are not all fools by any means, and they will often pick out your weak points with a malignant sagacity, as a pettifogging lawyer will frequently find a real flaw in trying to get at everything he can quibble about. But is there nobody who will praise you generously when you do well,—nobody that will lend you a hand now while you want it,—or must they all wait until you have made yourself a name among strangers, and then all at once find out that you have something in you? Oh,—said the girl, and the bright film gathered too fast for her young eyes to hold much longer,—I ought not to be ungrateful! I have found the kindest friend in the world. Have you ever heard the Lady—the one that I sit next to at the table—say anything about me?

I have not really made her acquaintance, I said. She seems to me a little distant in her manners and I have respected her pretty evident liking for keeping mostly to herself.

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—Oh, but when you once do know her! I don't believe I could write stories all the time as I do, if she didn't ask me up to her chamber, and let me read them to her. Do you know, I can make her laugh and cry, reading my poor stories? And sometimes, when I feel as if I had written out all there is in me, and want to lie down and go to sleep and never wake up except in a world where there are no weekly papers,—when everything goes wrong, like a car off the track,—she takes hold and sets me on the rails again all right.

—How does she go to work to help you?

—Why, she listens to my stories, to begin with, as if she really liked to hear them. And then you know I am dreadfully troubled now and then with some of my characters, and can't think how to get rid of them. And she'll say, perhaps, Don't shoot your villain this time, you've shot three or four already in the last six weeks; let his mare stumble and throw him and break his neck. Or she'll give me a hint about some new way for my lover to make a declaration. She must have had a good many offers, it's my belief, for she has told me a dozen different ways for me to use in my stories. And whenever I read a story to her, she always laughs and cries in the right places; and that's such a comfort, for there are some people that think everything pitiable is so funny, and will burst out laughing when poor Rip Van Winkle—you've seen Mr. Jefferson, haven't you? —is breaking your heart for you if you have one. Sometimes she takes a poem I have written and reads it to me so beautifully, that I fall in love with it, and sometimes she sets my verses to music and sings them to me.

—You have a laugh together sometimes, do you?

—Indeed we do. I write for what they call the "Comic Department" of the paper now and then. If I did not get so tired of story-telling, I suppose I should be gayer than I am; but as it is, we two get a little fun out of my comic pieces. I begin them half-crying sometimes, but after they are done they amuse me. I don't suppose my comic pieces are very laughable; at any rate the man who makes a business of writing me down says the last one I wrote is very melancholy reading, and that if it was only a little better perhaps some bereaved person might pick out a line or two that would do to put on a gravestone.

—Well, that is hard, I must confess. Do let me see those lines which excite such sad emotions.

—Will you read them very good-naturedly? If you will, I will get the paper that has "Aunt Tabitha." That is the one the fault-finder said produced such deep depression of feeling. It was written for the "Comic Department." Perhaps it will make you cry, but it was n't meant to.

—I will finish my report this time with our Scheherezade’s poem, hoping that—any critic who deals with it will treat it with the courtesy due to all a young lady’s literary efforts.

Aunt Tabitha.

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Whatever I do, and whatever I say,
Aunt Tabitha tells me that isn't the way;
When she was a girl (forty summers ago)
Aunt Tabitha tells me they never did so.

Dear aunt! If I only would take her advice!
But I like my own way, and I find it so nice!
And besides, I forget half the things I am told;
But they all will come back to me—when I am old.

If a youth passes by, it may happen, no doubt,
He may chance to look in as I chance to look out;
She would never endure an impertinent stare,
It is horrid, she says, and I mustn't sit there.

A walk in the moonlight has pleasures, I own,
But it is n't quite safe to be walking alone;
So I take a lad's arm,—just for safety, you know,
But Aunt Tabitha tells me they didn't do so.

How wicked we are, and how good they were then!
They kept at arm's length those detestable men;
What an era of virtue she lived in!—But stay
Were the men all such rogues in Aunt Tabitha's day?

If the men were so wicked, I'll ask my papa
How he dared to propose to my darling mamma;
Was he like the rest of them? Goodness! Who knows
And what shall I say if a wretch should propose?

I am thinking if aunt knew so little of sin,
What a wonder Aunt Tabitha's aunt must have been!
And her grand-aunt—it scares me—how shockingly sad.
That we girls of to-day are so frightfully bad!

A martyr will save us, and nothing else can;
Let me perish—to rescue some wretched young man!
Though when to the altar a victim I go,
Aunt Tabitha'll tell me she never did so!

IV

The old Master has developed one quality of late for which I am afraid I hardly gave him credit. He has turned out to be an excellent listener.

—I love to talk,—he said,—as a goose loves to swim. Sometimes I think it is because I am a goose. For I never talked much at any one time in my life without saying something or other I was sorry for.

—You too!—said I—Now that is very odd, for it is an experience I have habitually. I thought you were rather too much of a philosopher to trouble yourself about such small matters as to whether you had said just what you meant to or not; especially as you know that the person you talk to does not remember a word of what you said the next morning, but is thinking, it is much more likely, of what she said, or how her new dress looked, or some other body's new dress which made—hers look as if it had been patched together from the leaves of last November. That's what she's probably thinking about.

—She!—said the Master, with a look which it would take at least half a page to explain to the entire satisfaction of thoughtful readers of both sexes.

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—I paid the respect due to that most significant monosyllable, which, as the old Rabbi spoke it, with its targum of tone and expression, was not to be answered flippantly, but soberly, advisedly, and after a pause long enough for it to unfold its meaning in the listener's mind. For there are short single words (all the world remembers Rachel's *Helas!*) which are like those Japanese toys that look like nothing of any significance as you throw them on the water, but which after a little time open out into various strange and unexpected figures, and then you find that each little shred had a complicated story to tell of itself.

-Yes,—said I, at the close of this silent interval, during which the monosyllable had been opening out its meanings,—She. When I think of talking, it is of course with a woman. For talking at its best being an inspiration, it wants a corresponding divine quality of receptiveness; and where will you find this but in woman?

The Master laughed a pleasant little laugh,—not a harsh, sarcastic one, but playful, and tempered by so kind a look that it seemed as if every wrinkled line about his old eyes repeated, “God bless you,” as the tracings on the walls of the Alhambra repeat a sentence of the Koran.

I said nothing, but looked the question, What are you laughing at?

—Why, I laughed because I couldn't help saying to myself that a woman whose mind was taken up with thinking how she looked, and how her pretty neighbor looked, wouldn't have a great deal of thought to spare for all your fine discourse.

—Come, now,—said I,—a man who contradicts himself in the course of two minutes must have a screw loose in his mental machinery. I never feel afraid that such a thing can happen to me, though it happens often enough when I turn a thought over suddenly, as you did that five-cent piece the other day, that it reads differently on its two sides. What I meant to say is something like this. A woman, notwithstanding she is the best of listeners, knows her business, and it is a woman's business to please. I don't say that it is not her business to vote, but I do say that a woman who does not please is a false note in the harmonies of nature. She may not have youth, or beauty, or even manner; but she must have something in her voice or expression, or both, which it makes you feel better disposed towards your race to look at or listen to. She knows that as well as we do; and her first question after you have been talking your soul into her consciousness is, Did I please? A woman never forgets her sex. She would rather talk with a man than an angel, any day.

—This frightful speech of mine reached the ear of our Scheherezade, who said that it was perfectly shocking and that I deserved to be shown up as the outlaw in one of her bandit stories.

Hush, my dear,—said the Lady,—you will have to bring John Milton into your story with our friend there, if you punish everybody who says naughty things like that. Send the little boy up to my chamber for *Paradise Lost*, if you please. He will find it lying on my table. The little old volume,—he can't mistake it.

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So the girl called That Boy round and gave him the message; I don't know why she should give it, but she did, and the Lady helped her out with a word or two.

The little volume—its cover protected with soft white leather from a long kid glove, evidently suggesting the brilliant assemblies of the days when friends and fortune smiled-came presently and the Lady opened it.—You may read that, if you like, she said,—it may show you that our friend is to be pilloried in good company.

The Young Girl ran her eye along the passage the Lady pointed out, blushed, laughed, and slapped the book down as though she would have liked to box the ears of Mr. John Milton, if he had been a contemporary and fellow-contributor to the “Weekly Bucket.”—I won't touch the thing,—she said.—He was a horrid man to talk so: and he had as many wives as Blue-Beard.

—Fair play,—said the Master.—Bring me the book, my little fractional superfluity,—I mean you, my nursling,—my boy, if that suits your small Highness better.

The Boy brought the book.

The old Master, not unfamiliar with the great epic opened pretty nearly to the place, and very soon found the passage: He read, aloud with grand scholastic intonation and in a deep voice that silenced the table as if a prophet had just uttered Thus saith the Lord:

—
“So spake our sire, and by his countenance seemed
Entering on studious thoughts abstruse; which Eve
Perceiving—”

went to water her geraniums, to make a short story of it, and left the two “conversationists,” to wit, the angel Raphael and the gentleman,—there was but one gentleman in society then, you know,—to talk it out.

“Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
Delighted, or not capable her ear
Of what was high; such pleasure she reserved,
Adam relating, she sole auditress;
Her husband the relater she preferred
Before the angel, and of him to ask
Chose rather; he she knew would intermix
Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
With conjugal caresses: from his lips
Not words alone pleased her.”



Everybody laughed, except the Capitalist, who was a little hard of hearing, and the Scarabee, whose life was too earnest for demonstrations of that kind. He had his eyes fixed on the volume, however, with eager interest.

—The p'int 's carried,—said the Member of the Haouse.

Will you let me look at that book a single minute?—said the Scarabee. I passed it to him, wondering what in the world he wanted of Paradise Lost.

Dermestes lardarius,—he said, pointing to a place where the edge of one side of the outer cover had been slightly tasted by some insect.—Very fond of leather while they 're in the larva state.

—Damage the goods as bad as mice,—said the Salesman.

—Eat half the binding off Folio 67,—said the Register of Deeds. Something did, anyhow, and it was n't mice. Found the shelf covered with little hairy cases belonging to something or other that had no business there.

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Skins of the *Dermestes lardarius*,—said the Scarabee,—you can always tell them by those brown hairy coats. That 's the name to give them.

—What good does it do to give 'em a name after they 've eat the binding off my folios?
—asked the Register of Deeds.

The Scarabee had too much respect for science to answer such a question as that; and the book, having served its purposes, was passed back to the Lady.

I return to the previous question,—said I,—if our friend the Member of the House of Representatives will allow me to borrow the phrase. Womanly women are very kindly critics, except to themselves and now and then to their own sex. The less there is of sex about a woman, the more she is to be dreaded. But take a real woman at her best moment,—well dressed enough to be pleased with herself, not so resplendent as to be a show and a sensation, with those varied outside influences which set vibrating the harmonic notes of her nature stirring in the air about her, and what has social life to compare with one of those vital interchanges of thought and feeling with her that make an hour memorable? What can equal her tact, her delicacy, her subtlety of apprehension, her quickness to feel the changes of temperature as the warm and cool currents of talk blow by turns? At one moment she is microscopically intellectual, critical, scrupulous in judgment as an analyst's balance, and the next as sympathetic as the open rose that sweetens the wind from whatever quarter it finds its way to her bosom. It is in the hospitable soul of a woman that a man forgets he is a stranger, and so becomes natural and truthful, at the same time that he is mesmerized by all those divine differences which make her a mystery and a bewilderment to—

If you fire your popgun at me, you little chimpanzee, I will stick a pin right through the middle of you and put you into one of this gentleman's beetle-cases!

I caught the imp that time, but what started him was more than I could guess. It is rather hard that this spoiled child should spoil such a sentence as that was going to be; but the wind shifted all at once, and the talk had to come round on another tack, or at least fall off a point or two from its course.

—I'll tell you who I think are the best talkers in all probability, —said I to the Master, who, as I mentioned, was developing interesting talent as a listener,—poets who never write verses. And there are a good many more of these than it would seem at first sight. I think you may say every young lover is a poet, to begin with. I don't mean either that all young lovers are good talkers,—they have an eloquence all their own when they are with the beloved object, no doubt, emphasized after the fashion the solemn bard of Paradise refers to with such delicious humor in the passage we just heard,—but a little talk goes a good way in most of these cooing matches, and it wouldn't do to report them too

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literally. What I mean is, that a man with the gift of musical and impassioned phrase (and love often deeds that to a young person for a while), who “wreaks” it, to borrow Byron’s word, on conversation as the natural outlet of his sensibilities and spiritual activities, is likely to talk better than the poet, who plays on the instrument of verse. A great pianist or violinist is rarely a great singer. To write a poem is to expend the vital force which would have made one brilliant for an hour or two, and to expend it on an instrument with more pipes, reeds, keys, stops, and pedals than the Great Organ that shakes New England every time it is played in full blast.

Do you mean that it is hard work to write a poem?—said the old Master.—I had an idea that a poem wrote itself, as it were, very often; that it came by influx, without voluntary effort; indeed, you have spoken of it as an inspiration rather than a result of volition.

—Did you ever see a great ballet-dancer?—I asked him.

—I have seen Taglioni,—he answered.—She used to take her steps rather prettily. I have seen the woman that danced the capstone on to Bunker Hill Monument, as Orpheus moved the rocks by music, the Elssler woman,—Fanny Elssler. She would dance you a rigadon or cut a pigeon’s wing for you very respectably.

(Confound this old college book-worm,—he has seen everything!)

Well, did these two ladies dance as if it was hard work to them?

—Why no, I should say they danced as if they liked it and couldn’t help dancing; they looked as if they felt so “corky” it was hard to keep them down.

—And yet they had been through such work to get their limbs strong and flexible and obedient, that a cart-horse lives an easy life compared to theirs while they were in training.

—The Master cut in just here—I had sprung the trap of a reminiscence.

—When I was a boy,—he said,—some of the mothers in our small town, who meant that their children should know what was what as well as other people’s children, laid their heads together and got a dancing-master to come out from the city and give instruction at a few dollars a quarter to the young folks of condition in the village. Some of their husbands were ministers and some were deacons, but the mothers knew what they were about, and they did n’t see any reason why ministers’ and deacons’ wives’ children shouldn’t have as easy manners as the sons and daughters of Belial. So, as I tell you, they got a dancing-master to come out to our place,—a man of good repute, a most respectable man,—madam (to the Landlady), you must remember the worthy old



citizen, in his advanced age, going about the streets, a most gentlemanly bundle of infirmities,—only he always cocked his hat a little too much on one side, as they do here and there along the Connecticut River, and sometimes on our city sidewalks, when they've got a new beaver; they got him, I say, to give us

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boys and girls lessons in dancing and deportment. He was as gray and as lively as a squirrel, as I remember him, and used to spring up in the air and “cross his feet,” as we called it, three times before he came down. Well, at the end of each term there was what they called an “exhibition ball,” in which the scholars danced cotillons and country-dances; also something called a “gavotte,” and I think one or more walked a minuet. But all this is not what—I wanted to say. At this exhibition ball he used to bring out a number of hoops wreathed with roses, of the perennial kind, by the aid of which a number of amazingly complicated and startling evolutions were exhibited; and also his two daughters, who figured largely in these evolutions, and whose wonderful performances to us, who had not seen Miss Taglioni or Miss Elssler, were something quite bewildering, in fact, surpassing the natural possibilities of human beings. Their extraordinary powers were, however, accounted for by the following explanation, which was accepted in the school as entirely satisfactory. A certain little bone in the ankles of each of these young girls had been broken intentionally, *secundum artem*, at a very early age, and thus they had been fitted to accomplish these surprising feats which threw the achievements of the children who were left in the condition of the natural man into ignominious shadow.

—Thank you,—said I,—you have helped out my illustration so as to make it better than I expected. Let me begin again. Every poem that is worthy of the name, no matter how easily it seems to be written, represents a great amount of vital force expended at some time or other. When you find a beach strewn with the shells and other spoils that belonged once to the deep sea, you know the tide has been there, and that the winds and waves have wrestled over its naked sands. And so, if I find a poem stranded in my soul and have nothing to do but seize it as a wrecker carries off the treasure he finds cast ashore, I know I have paid at some time for that poem with some inward commotion, were it only an excess of enjoyment, which has used up just so much of my vital capital. But besides all the impressions that furnished the stuff of the poem, there has been hard work to get the management of that wonderful instrument I spoke of,—the great organ, language. An artist who works in marble or colors has them all to himself and his tribe, but the man who moulds his thought in verse has to employ the materials vulgarized by everybody’s use, and glorify them by his handling. I don’t know that you must break any bones in a poet’s mechanism before his thought can dance in rhythm, but read your Milton and see what training, what patient labor, it took before he could shape our common speech into his majestic harmonies.

It is rather singular, but the same kind of thing has happened to me not very rarely before, as I suppose it has to most persons, that just when I happened to be thinking about poets and their conditions, this very morning, I saw a paragraph or two from a foreign paper which is apt to be sharp, if not cynical, relating to the same matter. I can’t help it; I want to have my talk about it, and if I say the same things that writer did, somebody else can have the satisfaction of saying I stole them all.

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[I thought the person whom I have called hypothetically the Man of Letters changed color a little and betrayed a certain awkward consciousness that some of us were looking at him or thinking of him; but I am a little suspicious about him and may do him wrong.]

That poets are treated as privileged persons by their admirers and the educated public can hardly be disputed. That they consider themselves so there is no doubt whatever. On the whole, I do not know so easy a way of shirking all the civic and social and domestic duties, as to settle it in one's mind that one is a poet. I have, therefore, taken great pains to advise other persons laboring under the impression that they were gifted beings, destined to soar in the atmosphere of song above the vulgar realities of earth, not to neglect any homely duty under the influence of that impression. The number of these persons is so great that if they were suffered to indulge their prejudice against every-day duties and labors, it would be a serious loss to the productive industry of the country. My skirts are clear (so far as other people are concerned) of countenancing that form of intellectual opium-eating in which rhyme takes the place of the narcotic. But what are you going to do when you find John Keats an apprentice to a surgeon or apothecary? Is n't it rather better to get another boy to sweep out the shop and shake out the powders and stir up the mixtures, and leave him undisturbed to write his Ode on a Grecian Urn or to a Nightingale? Oh yes, the critic I have referred to would say, if he is John Keats; but not if he is of a much lower grade, even though he be genuine, what there is of him. But the trouble is, the sensitive persons who belong to the lower grades of the poetical hierarchy do not—know their own poetical limitations, while they do feel a natural unfitness and disinclination for many pursuits which young persons of the average balance of faculties take to pleasantly enough. What is forgotten is this, that every real poet, even of the humblest grade, is an artist. Now I venture to say that any painter or sculptor of real genius, though he may do nothing more than paint flowers and fruit, or carve cameos, is considered a privileged person. It is recognized perfectly that to get his best work he must be insured the freedom from disturbances which the creative power absolutely demands, more absolutely perhaps in these slighter artists than in the great masters. His nerves must be steady for him to finish a rose-leaf or the fold of a nymph's drapery in his best manner; and they will be unsteadied if he has to perform the honest drudgery which another can do for him quite as well. And it is just so with the poet, though he were only finishing an epigram; you must no more meddle roughly with him than you would shake a bottle of Chambertin and expect the "sunset glow" to redden your glass unclouded. On the other hand, it may be said that poetry is not an article of prime necessity, and potatoes are. There is a disposition in many persons just now to deny the poet his benefit of clergy, and to hold him no better than other people. Perhaps he is not, perhaps he is not so good, half the time; but he is a luxury, and if you want him you must pay for him, by not trying to make a drudge of him while he is all his lifetime struggling with the chills and heats of his artistic intermittent fever.

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There may have been some lesser interruptions during the talk I have reported as if it was a set speech, but this was the drift of what I said and should have said if the other man, in the Review I referred to, had not seen fit to meddle with the subject, as some fellow always does, just about the time when I am going to say something about it. The old Master listened beautifully, except for cutting in once, as I told you he did. But now he had held in as long as it was in his nature to contain himself, and must have his say or go off in an apoplexy, or explode in some way.—I think you're right about the poets,—he said.—They are to common folks what repeaters are to ordinary watches. They carry music in their inside arrangements, but they want to be handled carefully or you put them out of order. And perhaps you must n't expect them to be quite as good timekeepers as the professional chronometer watches that make a specialty of being exact within a few seconds a month. They think too much of themselves. So does everybody that considers himself as having a right to fall back on what he calls his idiosyncrasy. Yet a man has such a right, and it is no easy thing to adjust the private claim to the fair public demand on him. Suppose you are subject to tic douloureux, for instance. Every now and then a tiger that nobody can see catches one side of your face between his jaws and holds on till he is tired and lets go. Some concession must be made to you on that score, as everybody can see. It is fair to give you a seat that is not in the draught, and your friends ought not to find fault with you if you do not care to join a party that is going on a sleigh-ride. Now take a poet like Cowper. He had a mental neuralgia, a great deal worse in many respects than tic douloureux confined to the face. It was well that he was sheltered and relieved, by the cares of kind friends, especially those good women, from as many of the burdens of life as they could lift off from him. I am fair to the poets,—don't you agree that I am?

Why, yes,—I said,—you have stated the case fairly enough, a good deal as I should have put it myself.

Now, then,—the Master continued,—I 'll tell you what is necessary to all these artistic idiosyncrasies to bring them into good square human relations outside of the special province where their ways differ from those of other people. I am going to illustrate what I mean by a comparison. I don't know, by the way, but you would be disposed to think and perhaps call me a wine-bibber on the strength of the freedom with which I deal with that fluid for the purposes of illustration. But I make mighty little use of it, except as it furnishes me an image now and then, as it did, for that matter, to the Disciples and their Master. In my younger days they used to bring up the famous old wines, the White-top, the Juno, the Eclipse, the Essex Junior, and the rest, in their old cobwebbed, dusty bottles.

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The resurrection of one of these old sepulchred dignitaries had something of solemnity about it; it was like the disinterment of a king; the bringing to light of the Royal Martyr King Charles I., for instance, that Sir Henry Halford gave such an interesting account of. And the bottle seemed to inspire a personal respect; it was wrapped in a napkin and borne tenderly and reverently round to the guests, and sometimes a dead silence went before the first gush of its amber flood, and

“The boldest held his breath
For a time.”

But nowadays the precious juice of a long-dead vintage is transferred carefully into a cut-glass decanter, and stands side by side with the sherry from a corner grocery, which looks just as bright and apparently thinks just as well of itself. The old historic Madeiras, which have warmed the periods of our famous rhetoricians of the past and burned in the impassioned eloquence of our earlier political demigods, have nothing to mark them externally but a bit of thread, it may be, round the neck of the decanter, or a slip of ribbon, pink on one of them and blue on another.

Go to a London club,—perhaps I might find something nearer home that would serve my turn,—but go to a London club, and there you will see the celebrities all looking alike modern, all decanted off from their historic antecedents and their costume of circumstance into the every-day aspect of the gentleman of common cultivated society. That is Sir Coeur de Lion Plantagenet in the mutton-chop whiskers and the plain gray suit; there is the Laureate in a frockcoat like your own, and the leader of the House of Commons in a necktie you do not envy. That is the kind of thing you want to take the nonsense out of you. If you are not decanted off from yourself every few days or weeks, you will think it sacrilege to brush a cobweb from your cork by and by. O little fool, that has published a little book full of little poems or other sputtering tokens of an uneasy condition, how I love you for the one soft nerve of special sensibility that runs through your exiguous organism, and the one phosphorescent particle in your unilluminated intelligence! But if you don't leave your spun-sugar confectionery business once in a while, and come out among lusty men,—the bristly, pachydermatous fellows that hew out the highways for the material progress of society, and the broad-shouldered, out-of-door men that fight for the great prizes of life,—you will come to think that the spun-sugar business is the chief end of man, and begin to feel and look as if you believed yourself as much above common people as that personage of whom Tourgueneff says that “he had the air of his own statue erected by national subscription.”

—The Master paused and fell into a deep thinking fit, as he does sometimes. He had had his own say, it is true, but he had established his character as a listener to my own perfect satisfaction, for I, too, was conscious of having preached with a certain prolixity.

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—I am always troubled when I think of my very limited mathematical capacities. It seems as if every well-organized mind should be able to handle numbers and quantities through their symbols to an indefinite extent; and yet, I am puzzled by what seems to a clever boy with a turn for calculation as plain as counting his fingers. I don't think any man feels well grounded in knowledge unless he has a good basis of mathematical certainties, and knows how to deal with them and apply them to every branch of knowledge where they can come in to advantage.

Our Young Astronomer is known for his mathematical ability, and I asked him what he thought was the difficulty in the minds that are weak in that particular direction, while they may be of remarkable force in other provinces of thought, as is notoriously the case with some men of great distinction in science.

The young man smiled and wrote a few letters and symbols on a piece of paper.—Can you see through that at once?—he said.

I puzzled over it for some minutes and gave it up.

—He said, as I returned it to him, You have heard military men say that such a person had an eye for country, have n't you? One man will note all the landmarks, keep the points of compass in his head, observe how the streams run, in short, carry a map in his brain of any region that he has marched or galloped through. Another man takes no note of any of these things; always follows somebody else's lead when he can, and gets lost if he is left to himself; a mere owl in daylight. Just so some men have an eye for an equation, and would read at sight the one that you puzzled over. It is told of Sir Isaac Newton that he required no demonstration of the propositions in Euclid's Geometry, but as soon as he had read the enunciation the solution or answer was plain at once. The power may be cultivated, but I think it is to a great degree a natural gift, as is the eye for color, as is the ear for music.

—I think I could read equations readily enough,—I said,—if I could only keep my attention fixed on them; and I think I could keep my attention on them if I were imprisoned in a thinking-cell, such as the Creative Intelligence shapes for its studio when at its divinest work.

The young man's lustrous eyes opened very widely as he asked me to explain what I meant.

—What is the Creator's divinest work?—I asked.

—Is there anything more divine than the sun; than a sun with its planets revolving about it, warming them, lighting them, and giving conscious life to the beings that move on them?

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—You agree, then, that conscious life is the grand aim and end of all this vast mechanism. Without life that could feel and enjoy, the splendors and creative energy would all be thrown away. You know Harvey's saying, *omnia animalia ex ovo*,—all animals come from an egg. You ought to know it, for the great controversy going on about spontaneous generation has brought it into special prominence lately. Well, then, the ovum, the egg, is, to speak in human phrase, the Creator's more private and sacred studio, for his magnum opus. Now, look at a hen's egg, which is a convenient one to study, because it is large enough and built solidly enough to look at and handle easily. That would be the form I would choose for my thinking-cell. Build me an oval with smooth, translucent walls, and put me in the centre of it with Newton's "Principia" or Kant's "Kritik," and I think I shall develop "an eye for an equation," as you call it, and a capacity for an abstraction.

But do tell me,—said the Astronomer, a little incredulously,—what there is in that particular form which is going to help you to be a mathematician or a metaphysician?

—It is n't help I want, it is removing hindrances. I don't want to see anything to draw off my attention. I don't want a cornice, or an angle, or anything but a containing curve. I want diffused light and no single luminous centre to fix my eye, and so distract my mind from its one object of contemplation. The metaphysics of attention have hardly been sounded to their depths. The mere fixing the look on any single object for a long time may produce very strange effects. Gibbon's well-known story of the monks of Mount Athos and their contemplative practice is often laughed over, but it has a meaning. They were to shut the door of the cell, recline the beard and chin on the breast, and contemplate the abdominal centre.

"At first all will be dark and comfortless; but if you persevere day and night, you will feel an ineffable joy; and no sooner has the soul discovered the place of the heart, than it is involved in a mystic and ethereal light." And Mr. Braid produces absolute anaesthesia, so that surgical operations can be performed without suffering to the patient, only by making him fix his eyes and his mind on a single object; and Newton is said to have said, as you remember, "I keep the subject constantly before me, and wait till the first dawnings open slowly by little and little into a full and clear light." These are different, but certainly very wonderful, instances of what can be done by attention. But now suppose that your mind is in its nature discursive, erratic, subject to electric attractions and repulsions, volage; it may be impossible for you to compel your attention except by taking away all external disturbances. I think the poets have an advantage and a disadvantage as compared with the steadier-going people. Life is so vivid to the poet, that he is too eager to seize

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and exhaust its multitudinous impressions. Like Sindbad in the valley of precious stones, he wants to fill his pockets with diamonds, but, lo! there is a great ruby like a setting sun in its glory, and a sapphire that, like Bryant's blue gentian, seems to have dropped from the cerulean walls of heaven, and a nest of pearls that look as if they might be unhatched angel's eggs, and so he hardly knows what to seize, and tries for too many, and comes out of the enchanted valley with more gems than he can carry, and those that he lets fall by the wayside we call his poems. You may change the image a thousand ways to show you how hard it is to make a mathematician or a logician out of a poet. He carries the tropics with him wherever he goes; he is in the true sense *filius naturae*, and Nature tempts him, as she tempts a child walking through a garden where all the finest fruits are hanging over him and dropping round him, where

The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon (his) mouth do crush their wine,
The nectarine and curious peach,
Into (his) hands themselves do reach;

and he takes a bite out of the sunny side of this and the other, and, ever stimulated and never satisfied, is hurried through the garden, and, before he knows it, finds himself at an iron gate which opens outward, and leaves the place he knows and loves—

—For one he will perhaps soon learn to love and know better,—said the Master.—But I can help you out with another comparison, not quite so poetical as yours. Why did not you think of a railway-station, where the cars stop five minutes for refreshments? Is n't that a picture of the poet's hungry and hurried feast at the banquet of life? The traveller flings himself on the bewildering miscellany of delicacies spread before him, the various tempting forms of ambrosia and seducing draughts of nectar, with the same eager hurry and restless ardor that you describe in the poet. Dear me! If it wasn't for All aboard! that summons of the deaf conductor which tears one away from his half-finished sponge-cake and coffee, how I, who do not call myself a poet, but only a questioner, should have enjoyed a good long stop—say a couple of thousand years—at this way-station on the great railroad leading to the unknown terminus!

—You say you are not a poet,—I said, after a little pause, in which I suppose both of us were thinking where the great railroad would land us after carrying us into the dark tunnel, the farther end of which no man has seen and taken a return train to bring us news about it,—you say you are not a poet, and yet it seems to me you have some of the elements which go to make one.



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—I don't think you mean to flatter me,—the Master answered,—and, what is more, for I am not afraid to be honest with you, I don't think you do flatter me. I have taken the inventory of my faculties as calmly as if I were an appraiser. I have some of the qualities, perhaps I may say many of the qualities, that make a man a poet, and yet I am not one. And in the course of a pretty wide experience of men—and women—(the Master sighed, I thought, but perhaps I was mistaken)—I have met a good many poets who were not rhymesters and a good many rhymesters who were not poets. So I am only one of the Voiceless, that I remember one of you singers had some verses about. I think there is a little music in me, but it has not found a voice, and it never will. If I should confess the truth, there is no mere earthly immortality that I envy so much as the poet's. If your name is to live at all, it is so much more to have it live in people's hearts than only in their brains! I don't know that one's eyes fill with tears when he thinks of the famous inventor of logarithms, but song of Burns's or a hymn of Charles Wesley's goes straight to your heart, and you can't help loving both of them, the sinner as well as the saint. The works of other men live, but their personality dies out of their labors; the poet, who reproduces himself in his creation, as no other artist does or can, goes down to posterity with all his personality blended with whatever is imperishable in his song. We see nothing of the bees that built the honeycomb and stored it with its sweets, but we can trace the veining in the wings of insects that flitted through the forests which are now coal-beds, kept unchanging in the amber that holds them; and so the passion of Sappho, the tenderness of Simonides, the purity of holy George Herbert, the lofty contemplativeness of James Shirley, are before us to-day as if they were living, in a few tears of amber verse. It seems, when one reads,

“Sweet day! so cool, so calm, so bright,”

or,

“The glories of our birth and state,”

as if it were not a very difficult matter to gain immortality,—such an immortality at least as a perishable language can give. A single lyric is enough, if one can only find in his soul and finish in his intellect one of those jewels fit to sparkle “on the stretched forefinger of all time.” A coin, a ring, a string of verses. These last, and hardly anything else does. Every century is an overloaded ship that must sink at last with most of its cargo. The small portion of its crew that get on board the new vessel which takes them off don't pretend to save a great many of the bulky articles. But they must not and will not leave behind the hereditary jewels of the race; and if you have found and cut a diamond, were it only a spark with a single polished facet, it will stand a better chance of being saved from the wreck than anything, no matter what, that wants much room for stowage.

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The pyramids last, it is true, but most of them have forgotten their builders' names. But the ring of Thothmes *iii.*, who reigned some fourteen hundred years before our era, before Homer sang, before the Argonauts sailed, before Troy was built, is in the possession of Lord Ashburnham, and proclaims the name of the monarch who wore it more than three thousand years ago. The gold coins with the head of Alexander the Great are some of them so fresh one might think they were newer than much of the silver currency we were lately handling. As we have been quoting from the poets this morning, I will follow the precedent, and give some lines from an epistle of Pope to Addison after the latter had written, but not yet published, his Dialogue on Medals. Some of these lines have been lingering in my memory for a great many years, but I looked at the original the other day and was so pleased with them that I got them by heart. I think you will say they are singularly pointed and elegant.

"Ambition sighed; she found it vain to trust
The faithless column and the crumbling bust;
Huge moles, whose shadows stretched from shore to shore,
Their ruins perished, and their place no more!
Convinced, she now contracts her vast design,
And all her triumphs shrink into a coin.
A narrow orb each crowded conquest keeps,
Beneath her palm here sad Judaea weeps;
Now scantier limits the proud arch confine,
And scarce are seen the prostrate Nile or Rhine;
A small Euphrates through the piece is rolled,
And little eagles wave their wings in gold."

It is the same thing in literature. Write half a dozen folios full of other people's ideas (as all folios are pretty sure to be), and you serve as ballast to the lower shelves of a library, about as like to be disturbed as the kentledge in the hold of a ship. Write a story, or a dozen stories, and your book will be in demand like an oyster while it is freshly opened, and after tha—. The highways of literature are spread over with the shells of dead novels, each of which has been swallowed at a mouthful by the public, and is done with. But write a volume of poems. No matter if they are all bad but one, if that one is very good. It will carry your name down to posterity like the ring of Thothmes, like the coin of Alexander. I don't suppose one would care a great deal about it a hundred or a thousand years after he is dead, but I don't feel quite sure. It seems as if, even in heaven, King David might remember "The Lord is my Shepherd" with a certain twinge of earthly pleasure. But we don't know, we don't know.

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—What in the world can have become of That Boy and his popgun while all this somewhat extended sermonizing was going on? I don't wonder you ask, beloved Reader, and I suppose I must tell you how we got on so long without interruption. Well, the plain truth is, the youngster was contemplating his gastric centre, like the monks of Mount Athos, but in a less happy state of mind than those tranquil recluses, in consequence of indulgence in the heterogeneous assortment of luxuries procured with the five-cent piece given him by the kind-hearted old Master. But you need not think I am going to tell you every time his popgun goes off, making a Selah of him whenever I want to change the subject. Occasionally he was ill-timed in his artillery practice and ignominiously rebuked, sometimes he was harmlessly playful and nobody minded him, but every now and then he came in so apropos that I am morally certain he gets a hint from somebody who watches the course of the conversation, and means through him to have a hand in it and stop any of us when we are getting prosy. But in consequence of That Boy's indiscretion, we were without a check upon our expansiveness, and ran on in the way you have observed and may be disposed to find fault with.

One other thing the Master said before we left the table, after our long talk of that day.

—I have been tempted sometimes,—said he, to envy the immediate triumphs of the singer. He enjoys all that praise can do for him and at the very moment of exerting his talent. And the singing women! Once in a while, in the course of my life, I have found myself in the midst of a tulip-bed of full-dressed, handsome women in all their glory, and when some one among them has shaken her gauzy wings, and sat down before the piano, and then, only giving the keys a soft touch now and then to support her voice, has warbled some sweet, sad melody intertwined with the longings or regrets of some tender-hearted poet, it has seemed to me that so to hush the rustling of the silks and silence the babble of the buds, as they call the chicks of a new season, and light up the flame of romance in cold hearts, in desolate ones, in old burnt-out ones,—like mine, I was going to say, but I won't, for it isn't so, and you may laugh to hear me say it isn't so, if you like,—was perhaps better than to be remembered a few hundred years by a few perfect stanzas, when your gravestone is standing aslant, and your name is covered over with a lichen as big as a militia colonel's cockade, and nobody knows or cares enough about you to scrape it off and set the tipsy old slate-stone upright again.

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—I said nothing in reply to this, for I was thinking of a sweet singer to whose voice I had listened in its first freshness, and which is now only an echo in my memory. If any reader of the periodical in which these conversations are recorded can remember so far back as the first year of its publication, he will find among the papers contributed by a friend not yet wholly forgotten a few verses, lively enough in their way, headed “The Boys.” The sweet singer was one of this company of college classmates, the constancy of whose friendship deserves a better tribute than the annual offerings, kindly meant, as they are, which for many years have not been wanting at their social gatherings. The small company counts many noted personages on its list, as is well known to those who are interested in such local matters, but it is not known that every fifth man of the whole number now living is more or less of a poet,—using that word with a generous breadth of significance. But it should seem that the divine gift it implies is more freely dispensed than some others, for while there are (or were, for one has taken his Last Degree) eight musical quills, there was but one pair of lips which could claim any special consecration to vocal melody. Not that one that should undervalue the half-recitative of doubtful barytones, or the brilliant escapades of slightly unmanageable falsettos, or the concentrated efforts of the proprietors of two or three effective notes, who may be observed lying in wait for them, and coming down on them with all their might, and the look on their countenances of “I too am a singer.” But the voice that led all, and that all loved to listen to, the voice that was at once full, rich, sweet, penetrating, expressive, whose ample overflow drowned all the imperfections and made up for all the shortcomings of the others, is silent henceforth forevermore for all earthly listeners.

And these were the lines that one of “The Boys,” as they have always called themselves for ever so many years, read at the first meeting after the voice which had never failed them was hushed in the stillness of death.

J. A.

1871.

One memory trembles on our lips
It throbs in every breast;
In tear-dimmed eyes, in mirth's eclipse,
The shadow stands confessed.

O silent voice, that cheered so long
Our manhood's marching day,
Without thy breath of heavenly song,
How weary seems the way!

Vain every pictured phrase to tell
Our sorrowing hearts' desire;



The shattered harp, the broken shell,
The silent unstrung lyre;

For youth was round us while he sang;
It glowed in every tone;
With bridal chimes the echoes rang,
And made the past our own.

O blissful dream! Our nursery joys
We know must have an end,
But love and friendships broken toys
May God's good angels mend!

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The cheering smile, the voice of mirth
And laughter's gay surprise
That please the children born of earth,
Why deem that Heaven denies?

Methinks in that refulgent sphere
That knows not sun or moon,
An earth-born saint might long to hear
One verse of "Bonny Doon";

Or walking through the streets of gold
In Heaven's unclouded light,
His lips recall the song of old
And hum "The sky is bright."

And can we smile when thou art dead?
Ah, brothers, even so!
The rose of summer will be red,
In spite of winter's snow.

Thou wouldst not leave us all in gloom
Because thy song is still,
Nor blight the banquet-garland's bloom
With grief's untimely chill.

The sighing wintry winds complain,
The singing bird has flown,
—Hark! heard I not that ringing strain,
That clear celestial tone?

How poor these pallid phrases seem,
How weak this tinkling line,
As warbles through my waking dream
That angel voice of thine!

Thy requiem asks a sweeter lay;
It falters on my tongue;
For all we vainly strive to say,
Thou shouldst thyself have sung!

V

I fear that I have done injustice in my conversation and my report of it to a most worthy and promising young man whom I should be very sorry to injure in any way. Dr.



Benjamin Franklin got hold of my account of my visit to him, and complained that I had made too much of the expression he used. He did not mean to say that he thought I was suffering from the rare disease he mentioned, but only that the color reminded him of it. It was true that he had shown me various instruments, among them one for exploring the state of a part by means of a puncture, but he did not propose to make use of it upon my person. In short, I had colored the story so as to make him look ridiculous.

—I am afraid I did,—I said,—but was n't I colored myself so as to look ridiculous? I've heard it said that people with the jaundice see everything yellow; perhaps I saw things looking a little queerly, with that black and blue spot I could n't account for threatening to make a colored man and brother of me. But I am sorry if I have done you any wrong. I hope you won't lose any patients by my making a little fun of your meters and scopes and contrivances. They seem so odd to us outside people. Then the idea of being bronzed all over was such an alarming suggestion. But I did not mean to damage your business, which I trust is now considerable, and I shall certainly come to you again if I have need of the services of a physician. Only don't mention the names of any diseases in English or Latin before me next time. I dreamed about cutis oenea half the night after I came to see you.

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Dr. Benjamin took my apology very pleasantly. He did not want to be touchy about it, he said, but he had his way to make in the world, and found it a little hard at first, as most young men did. People were afraid to trust them, no matter how much they knew. One of the old doctors asked him to come in and examine a patient's heart for him the other day. He went with him accordingly, and when they stood by the bedside, he offered his stethoscope to the old doctor. The old doctor took it and put the wrong end to his ear and the other to the patient's chest, and kept it there about two minutes, looking all the time as wise as an old owl. Then he, Dr. Benjamin, took it and applied it properly, and made out where the trouble was in no time at all. But what was the use of a young man's pretending to know anything in the presence of an old owl? I saw by their looks, he said, that they all thought I used the, stethoscope wrong end up, and was nothing but a 'prentice hand to the old doctor.

—I am much pleased to say that since Dr. Benjamin has had charge of a dispensary district, and been visiting forty or fifty patients a day, I have reason to think he has grown a great deal more practical than when I made my visit to his office. I think I was probably one of his first patients, and that he naturally made the most of me. But my second trial was much more satisfactory. I got an ugly cut from the carving-knife in an affair with a goose of iron constitution in which I came off second best. I at once adjourned with Dr. Benjamin to his small office, and put myself in his hands. It was astonishing to see what a little experience of miscellaneous practice had done for him. He did not ask me anymore questions about my hereditary predispositions on the paternal and maternal sides. He did not examine me with the stethoscope or the laryngoscope. He only strapped up my cut, and informed me that it would speedily get well by the “first intention,”—an odd phrase enough, but sounding much less formidable than *cutis oenea*.

I am afraid I have had something of the French prejudice which embodies itself in the maxim “young surgeon, old physician.” But a young physician who has been taught by great masters of the profession, in ample hospitals, starts in his profession knowing more than some old doctors have learned in a lifetime. Give him a little time to get the use of his wits in emergencies, and to know the little arts that do so much for a patient's comfort,—just as you give a young sailor time to get his sea-legs on and teach his stomach to behave itself,—and he will do well enough.

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The old Master knows ten times more about this matter and about all the professions, as he does about everything else, than I do. My opinion is that he has studied two, if not three, of these professions in a regular course. I don't know that he has ever preached, except as Charles Lamb said Coleridge always did, for when he gets the bit in his teeth he runs away with the conversation, and if he only took a text his talk would be a sermon; but if he has not preached, he has made a study of theology, as many laymen do. I know he has some shelves of medical books in his library, and has ideas on the subject of the healing art. He confesses to having attended law lectures and having had much intercourse with lawyers. So he has something to say on almost any subject that happens to come up. I told him my story about my visit to the young doctor, and asked him what he thought of youthful practitioners in general and of Dr. Benjamin in particular.

I'll tell you what,—the Master said,—I know something about these young fellows that come home with their heads full of "science," as they call it, and stick up their signs to tell people they know how to cure their headaches and stomach-aches. Science is a first-rate piece of furniture for a man's upper chamber, if he has common sense on the ground-floor. But if a man has n't got plenty of good common sense, the more science he has the worse for his patient.

—I don't know that I see exactly how it is worse for the patient,—I said.

—Well, I'll tell you, and you'll find it's a mighty simple matter. When a person is sick, there is always something to be done for him, and done at once. If it is only to open or shut a window, if it is only to tell him to keep on doing just what he is doing already, it wants a man to bring his mind right down to the fact of the present case and its immediate needs. Now the present case, as the doctor sees it, is just exactly such a collection of paltry individual facts as never was before,—a snarl and tangle of special conditions which it is his business to wind as much thread out of as he can. It is a good deal as when a painter goes to take the portrait of any sitter who happens to send for him. He has seen just such noses and just such eyes and just such mouths, but he never saw exactly such a face before, and his business is with that and no other person's,—with the features of the worthy father of a family before him, and not with the portraits he has seen in galleries or books, or Mr. Copley's grand pictures of the fine old Tories, or the Apollos and Jupiters of Greek sculpture. It is the same thing with the patient. His disease has features of its own; there never was and never will be another case in all respects exactly like it. If a doctor has science without common sense, he treats a fever, but not this man's fever. If he has common sense without science, he treats this man's fever without knowing the

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general laws that govern all fevers and all vital movements. I'll tell you what saves these last fellows. They go for weakness whenever they see it, with stimulants and strengtheners, and they go for overaction, heat, and high pulse, and the rest, with cooling and reducing remedies. That is three quarters of medical practice. The other quarter wants science and common sense too. But the men that have science only, begin too far back, and, before they get as far as the case in hand, the patient has very likely gone to visit his deceased relatives. You remember Thomas Prince's "Chronological History of New England," I suppose? He begins, you recollect, with Adam, and has to work down five thousand six hundred and twenty-four years before he gets to the Pilgrim fathers and the Mayflower. It was all very well, only it did n't belong there, but got in the way of something else. So it is with "science" out of place. By far the larger part of the facts of structure and function you find in the books of anatomy and physiology have no immediate application to the daily duties of the practitioner. You must learn systematically, for all that; it is the easiest way and the only way that takes hold of the memory, except mere empirical repetition, like that of the handicraftsman. Did you ever see one of those Japanese figures with the points for acupuncture marked upon it?

—I had to own that my schooling had left out that piece of information.

Well, I'll tell you about it. You see they have a way of pushing long, slender needles into you for the cure of rheumatism and other complaints, and it seems there is a choice of spots for the operation, though it is very strange how little mischief it does in a good many places one would think unsafe to meddle with. So they had a doll made, and marked the spots where they had put in needles without doing any harm. They must have had accidents from sticking the needles into the wrong places now and then, but I suppose they did n't say a great deal about those. After a time, say a few centuries of experience, they had their doll all spotted over with safe places for sticking in the needles. That is their way of registering practical knowledge: We, on the other hand, study the structure of the body as a whole, systematically, and have no difficulty at all in remembering the track of the great vessels and nerves, and knowing just what tracks will be safe and what unsafe. It is just the same thing with the geologists. Here is a man close by us boring for water through one of our ledges, because somebody else got water somewhere else in that way; and a person who knows geology or ought to know it, because he has given his life to it, tells me he might as well bore there for lager-beer as for water.

—I thought we had had enough of this particular matter, and that I should like to hear what the Master had to say about the three professions he knew something about, each compared with the others.

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What is your general estimate of doctors, lawyers, and ministers?—said I.

—Wait a minute, till I have got through with your first question,—said the Master.—One thing at a time. You asked me about the young doctors, and about our young doctor. They come home *tres biens chausses*, as a Frenchman would say, mighty well shod with professional knowledge. But when they begin walking round among their poor patients, they don't commonly start with millionnaires,—they find that their new shoes of scientific acquirements have got to be broken in just like a pair of boots or brogans. I don't know that I have put it quite strong enough. Let me try again. You've seen those fellows at the circus that get up on horseback so big that you wonder how they could climb into the saddle. But pretty soon they throw off their outside coat, and the next minute another one, and then the one under that, and so they keep peeling off one garment after another till people begin to look queer and think they are going too far for strict propriety. Well, that is the way a fellow with a real practical turn serves a good many of his scientific wrappers, flings 'em off for other people to pick up, and goes right at the work of curing stomach-aches and all the other little mean unscientific complaints that make up the larger part of every doctor's business. I think our Dr. Benjamin is a worthy young man, and if you are in need of a doctor at any time I hope you will go to him; and if you come off without harm, I will recommend some other friend to try him.

—I thought he was going to say he would try him in his own person, but the Master is not fond of committing himself.

Now, I will answer your other question, he said. The lawyers are the cleverest men, the ministers are the most learned, and the doctors are the most sensible.

The lawyers are a picked lot, "first scholars" and the like, but their business is as unsympathetic as Jack Ketch's. There is nothing humanizing in their relations with their fellow-creatures. They go for the side that retains them. They defend the man they know to be a rogue, and not very rarely throw suspicion on the man they know to be innocent. Mind you, I am not finding fault with them; every side of a case has a right to the best statement it admits of; but I say it does not tend to make them sympathetic. Suppose in a case of *Fever vs. Patient*, the doctor should side with either party according to whether the old miser or his expectant heir was his employer. Suppose the minister should side with the Lord or the Devil, according to the salary offered and other incidental advantages, where the soul of a sinner was in question. You can see what a piece of work it would make of their sympathies. But the lawyers are quicker witted than either of the other professions, and abler men generally. They are good-natured, or, if they quarrel, their quarrels are above-board.

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I don't think they are as accomplished as the ministers, but they have a way of cramming with special knowledge for a case which leaves a certain shallow sediment of intelligence in their memories about a good many things. They are apt to talk law in mixed company, and they have a way of looking round when they make a point, as if they were addressing a jury, that is mighty aggravating, as I once had occasion to see when one of 'em, and a pretty famous one, put me on the witness-stand at a dinner-party once.

The ministers come next in point of talent. They are far more curious and widely interested outside of their own calling than either of the other professions. I like to talk with 'em. They are interesting men, full of good feelings, hard workers, always foremost in good deeds, and on the whole the most efficient civilizing class, working downwards from knowledge to ignorance, that is,—not so much upwards, perhaps,—that we have. The trouble is, that so many of 'em work in harness, and it is pretty sure to chafe somewhere. They feed us on canned meats mostly. They cripple our instincts and reason, and give us a crutch of doctrine. I have talked with a great many of 'em of all sorts of belief, and I don't think they are quite so easy in their minds, the greater number of them; nor so clear in their convictions, as one would think to hear 'em lay down the law in the pulpit. They used to lead the intelligence of their parishes; now they do pretty well if they keep up with it, and they are very apt to lag behind it. Then they must have a colleague. The old minister thinks he can hold to his old course, sailing right into the wind's eye of human nature, as straight as that famous old skipper John Bunyan; the young minister falls off three or four points and catches the breeze that left the old man's sails all shivering. By and by the congregation will get ahead of him, and then it must, have another new skipper. The priest holds his own pretty well; the minister is coming down every generation nearer and nearer to the common level of the useful citizen,—no oracle at all, but a man of more than average moral instincts, who, if he knows anything, knows how little he knows. The ministers are good talkers, only the struggle between nature and grace makes some of 'em a little awkward occasionally. The women do their best to spoil 'em, as they do the poets; you find it very pleasant to be spoiled, no doubt; so do they. Now and then one of 'em goes over the dam; no wonder, they're always in the rapids.

By this time our three ladies had their faces all turned toward the speaker, like the weathercocks in a northeaster, and I thought it best to switch off the talk on to another rail.

How about the doctors?—I said.

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—Theirs is the least learned of the professions, in this country at least. They have not half the general culture of the lawyers, nor a quarter of that of the ministers. I rather think, though, they are more agreeable to the common run of people than the men with black coats or the men with green bags. People can swear before 'em if they want to, and they can't very well before ministers. I don't care whether they want to swear or not, they don't want to be on their good behavior. Besides, the minister has a little smack of the sexton about him; he comes when people are in extremis, but they don't send for him every time they make a slight moral slip, tell a lie for instance, or smuggle a silk dress through the customhouse; but they call in the doctor when a child is cutting a tooth or gets a splinter in its finger. So it does n't mean much to send for him, only a pleasant chat about the news of the day; for putting the baby to rights does n't take long. Besides, everybody does n't like to talk about the next world; people are modest in their desires, and find this world as good as they deserve; but everybody loves to talk physic. Everybody loves to hear of strange cases; people are eager to tell the doctor of the wonderful cures they have heard of; they want to know what is the matter with somebody or other who is said to be suffering from "a complication of diseases," and above all to get a hard name, Greek or Latin, for some complaint which sounds altogether too commonplace in plain English. If you will only call a headache a Cephalgia, it acquires dignity at once, and a patient becomes rather proud of it. So I think doctors are generally welcome in most companies.

In old times, when people were more afraid of the Devil and of witches than they are now, they liked to have a priest or a minister somewhere near to scare 'em off; but nowadays, if you could find an old woman that would ride round the room on a broomstick, Barnum would build an amphitheatre to exhibit her in; and if he could come across a young imp, with hoofs, tail, and budding horns, a lineal descendant of one of those "daemons" which the good people of Gloucester fired at, and were fired at by "for the best part of a month together" in the year 1692, the, great showman would have him at any cost for his museum or menagerie. Men are cowards, sir, and are driven by fear as the sovereign motive. Men are idolaters, and want something to look at and kiss and hug, or throw themselves down before; they always did, they always will; and if you don't make it of wood, you must make it of words, which are just as much used for idols as promissory notes are used for values. The ministers have a hard time of it without bell and book and holy water; they are dismounted men in armor since Luther cut their saddle-girths, and you can see they are quietly taking off one piece of iron after another until some of the best of 'em are fighting the devil (not the zoological Devil with the big D) with the sword

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of the Spirit, and precious little else in the way of weapons of offence or defence. But we couldn't get on without the spiritual brotherhood, whatever became of our special creeds. There is a genius for religion, just as there is for painting or sculpture. It is half-sister to the genius for music, and has some of the features which remind us of earthly love. But it lifts us all by its mere presence. To see a good man and hear his voice once a week would be reason enough for building churches and pulpits. The Master stopped all at once, and after about half a minute laughed his pleasant laugh.

What is it?—I asked him.

I was thinking of the great coach and team that is carrying us fast enough, I don't know but too fast, somewhere or other. The D. D.'s used to be the leaders, but now they are the wheel-horses. It's pretty hard to tell how much they pull, but we know they can hold back like the——

—When we're going down hill,—I said, as neatly as if I had been a High-Church curate trained to snap at the last word of the response, so that you couldn't wedge in the tail of a comma between the end of the congregation's closing syllable and the beginning of the next petition. They do it well, but it always spoils my devotion. To save my life, I can't help watching them, as I watch to see a duck dive at the flash of a gun, and that is not what I go to church for. It is a juggler's trick, and there is no more religion in it than in catching a ball on the fly.

I was looking at our Scheherezade the other day, and thinking what a pity it was that she had never had fair play in the world. I wish I knew more of her history. There is one way of learning it,—making love to her. I wonder whether she would let me and like it. It is an absurd thing, and I ought not to confess, but I tell you and you only, Beloved, my heart gave a perceptible jump when it heard the whisper of that possibility overhead! Every day has its ebb and flow, but such a thought as that is like one of those tidal waves they talk about, that rolls in like a great wall and overtops and drowns out all your landmarks, and you, too, if you don't mind what you are about and stand ready to run or climb or swim. Not quite so bad as that, though, this time. I take an interest in our Scheherezade. I am glad she did n't smile on the pipe and the Bohemian-looking fellow that finds the best part of his life in sucking at it. A fine thing, isn't it; for a young woman to marry a man who will hold her

“Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse,”

but not quite so good as his meerschaum? It is n't for me to throw stones, though, who have been a Nicotian a good deal more than half my days. Cigar-stump out now, and consequently have become very bitter on more persevering sinners. I say I take an interest in our Scheherezade, but I rather think it is more paternal than anything else,

though my heart did give that jump. It has jumped a good many times without anything very remarkable coming of it.

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This visit to the Observatory is going to bring us all, or most of us, together in a new way, and it wouldn't be very odd if some of us should become better acquainted than we ever have been. There is a chance for the elective affinities. What tremendous forces they are, if two subjects of them come within range! There lies a bit of iron. All the dynamic agencies of the universe are pledged to hold it just in that position, and there it will lie until it becomes a heap of red-brown rust. But see, I hold a magnet to it,—it looks to you like just such a bit of iron as the other,—and lo! it leaves them all,—the tugging of the mighty earth; of the ghostly moon that walks in white, trailing the snaky waves of the ocean after her; of the awful sun, twice as large as a sphere that the whole orbit of the moon would but just girdle,—it leaves the wrestling of all their forces, which are at a dead lock with each other, all fighting for it, and springs straight to the magnet. What a lucky thing it is for well-conducted persons that the maddening elective affinities don't come into play in full force very often!

I suppose I am making a good deal more of our prospective visit than it deserves. It must be because I have got it into my head that we are bound to have some kind of sentimental outbreak amongst us, and that this will give a chance for advances on the part of anybody disposed in that direction. A little change of circumstance often hastens on a movement that has been long in preparation. A chemist will show you a flask containing a clear liquid; he will give it a shake or two, and the whole contents of the flask will become solid in an instant. Or you may lay a little heap of iron-filings on a sheet of paper with a magnet beneath it, and they will be quiet enough as they are, but give the paper a slight jar and the specks of metal will suddenly find their way to the north or the south pole of the magnet and take a definite shape not unpleasing to contemplate, and curiously illustrating the laws of attraction, antagonism, and average, by which the worlds, conscious and unconscious, are alike governed. So with our little party, with any little party of persons who have got used to each other; leave them undisturbed and they might remain in a state of equilibrium forever; but let anything give them a shake or a jar, and the long-striving but hindered affinities come all at once into play and finish the work of a year in five minutes.

We were all a good deal excited by the anticipation of this visit. The Capitalist, who for the most part keeps entirely to himself, seemed to take an interest in it and joined the group in the parlor who were making arrangements as to the details of the eventful expedition, which was very soon to take place. The Young Girl was full of enthusiasm; she is one of those young persons, I think, who are impressible, and of necessity depressible when their nervous systems are overtasked, but elastic, recovering easily from

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mental worries and fatigues, and only wanting a little change of their conditions to get back their bloom and cheerfulness. I could not help being pleased to see how much of the child was left in her, after all the drudgery she had been through. What is there that youth will not endure and triumph over? Here she was; her story for the week was done in good season; she had got rid of her villain by a new and original catastrophe; she had received a sum of money for an extra string of verses,—painfully small, it is true, but it would buy her a certain ribbon she wanted for the great excursion; and now her eyes sparkled so that I forgot how tired and hollow they sometimes looked when she had been sitting up half the night over her endless manuscript.

The morning of the day we had looked forward to—promised as good an evening as we could wish. The Capitalist, whose courteous and bland demeanor would never have suggested the thought that he was a robber and an enemy of his race, who was to be trampled underfoot by the beneficent regenerators of the social order as preliminary to the universal reign of peace on earth and good-will to men, astonished us all with a proposal to escort the three ladies and procure a carriage for their conveyance. The Lady thanked him in a very cordial way, but said she thought nothing of the walk. The Landlady looked disappointed at this answer. For her part she was on her legs all day and should be glad enough to ride, if so be he was going to have a carriage at any rate. It would be a sight pleasanter than to trudge afoot, but she would n't have him go to the expense on her account. Don't mention it, madam,—r—said the Capitalist, in a generous glow of enthusiasm. As for the Young Girl, she did not often get a chance for a drive, and liked the idea of it for its own sake, as children do, and she insisted that the Lady should go in the carriage with her. So it was settled that the Capitalist should take the three ladies in a carriage, and the rest of us go on foot.

The evening behaved as it was bound to do on so momentous an occasion. The Capitalist was dressed with almost suspicious nicety. We pedestrians could not help waiting to see them off, and I thought he handed the ladies into the carriage with the air of a French marquis.

I walked with Dr. Benjamin and That Boy, and we had to keep the little imp on the trot a good deal of the way in order not to be too long behind the carriage party. The Member of the Haouse walked with our two dummies,—I beg their pardon, I mean the Register of Deeds and the Salesman.

The Man of Letters, hypothetically so called, walked by himself, smoking a short pipe which was very far from suggesting the spicy breezes that blow soft from Ceylon's isle.

I suppose everybody who reads this paper has visited one or more observatories, and of course knows all about them. But as it may hereafter be translated into some foreign tongue and circulated among barbarous, but rapidly improving people, people who have

as yet no astronomers among them, it may be well to give a little notion of what kind of place an observatory is.

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To begin then: a deep and solid stone foundation is laid in the earth, and a massive pier of masonry is built up on it. A heavy block of granite forms the summit of this pier, and on this block rests the equatorial telescope. Around this structure a circular tower is built, with two or more floors which come close up to the pier, but do not touch it at any point. It is crowned with a hemispherical dome, which, I may remark, half realizes the idea of my egg-shell studio. This dome is cleft from its base to its summit by a narrow, ribbon-like opening, through which is seen the naked sky. It revolves on cannon-balls, so easily that a single hand can move it, and thus the opening may be turned towards any point of the compass. As the telescope can be raised or depressed so as to be directed to any elevation from the horizon to the zenith, and turned around the entire circle with the dome, it can be pointed to any part of the heavens. But as the star or other celestial object is always apparently moving, in consequence of the real rotatory movement of the earth, the telescope is made to follow it automatically by an ingenious clock-work arrangement. No place, short of the temple of the living God, can be more solemn. The jars of the restless life around it do not disturb the serene intelligence of the half-reasoning apparatus. Nothing can stir the massive pier but the shocks that shake the solid earth itself. When an earthquake thrills the planet, the massive turret shudders with the shuddering rocks on which it rests, but it pays no heed to the wildest tempest, and while the heavens are convulsed and shut from the eye of the far-seeing instrument it waits without a tremor for the blue sky to come back. It is the type of the true and steadfast man of the Roman poet, whose soul remains unmoved while the firmament cracks and tumbles about him. It is the material image of the Christian; his heart resting on the Rock of Ages, his eye fixed on the brighter world above.

I did not say all this while we were looking round among these wonders, quite new to many of us. People don't talk in straight-off sentences like that. They stumble and stop, or get interrupted, change a word, begin again, miss connections of verbs and nouns, and so on, till they blunder out their meaning. But I did let fall a word or two, showing the impression the celestial laboratory produced upon me. I rather think I must own to the "Rock of Ages" comparison. Thereupon the "Man of Letters," so called, took his pipe from his mouth, and said that he did n't go in "for sentiment and that sort of thing. Gush was played out."

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The Member of the Haouse, who, as I think, is not wanting in that homely good sense which one often finds in plain people from the huckleberry districts, but who evidently supposes the last speaker to be what he calls “a tahlented mahn,” looked a little puzzled. My remark seemed natural and harmless enough to him, I suppose, but I had been distinctly snubbed, and the Member of the Haouse thought I must defend myself, as is customary in the deliberative body to which he belongs, when one gentleman accuses another gentleman of mental weakness or obliquity. I could not make up my mind to oblige him at that moment by showing fight. I suppose that would have pleased my assailant, as I don’t think he has a great deal to lose, and might have made a little capital out of me if he could have got a laugh out of the Member or either of the dummies,—I beg their pardon again, I mean the two undemonstrative boarders. But I will tell you, Beloved, just what I think about this matter.

We poets, you know, are much given to indulging in sentiment, which is a mode of consciousness at a discount just now with the new generation of analysts who are throwing everything into their crucibles. Now we must not claim too much for sentiment. It does not go a great way in deciding questions of arithmetic, or algebra, or geometry. Two and two will undoubtedly make four, irrespective of the emotions or other idiosyncrasies of the calculator; and the three angles of a triangle insist on being equal to two right angles, in the face of the most impassioned rhetoric or the most inspired verse. But inasmuch as religion and law and the whole social order of civilized society, to say nothing of literature and art, are so founded on and pervaded by sentiment that they would all go to pieces without it, it is a word not to be used too lightly in passing judgment, as if it were an element to be thrown out or treated with small consideration. Reason may be the lever, but sentiment gives you the fulcrum and the place to stand on if you want to move the world. Even “sentimentality,” which is sentiment overdone, is better than that affectation of superiority to human weakness which is only tolerable as one of the stage properties of full-blown dandyism, and is, at best, but half-blown cynicism; which participle and noun you can translate, if you happen to remember the derivation of the last of them, by a single familiar word. There is a great deal of false sentiment in the world, as there is of bad logic and erroneous doctrine; but—it is very much less disagreeable to hear a young poet overdo his emotions, or even deceive himself about them, than to hear a caustic-epithet flinger repeating such words as “sentimentality” and “entusymusy,”—one of the least admirable of Lord Byron’s bequests to our language,—for the purpose of ridiculing him into silence. An overdressed woman is not so pleasing as she might be, but at any rate she is better than the oil of vitriol squirter, whose profession it is to teach young ladies to avoid vanity by spoiling their showy silks and satins.

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The Lady was the first of our party who was invited to look through the equatorial. Perhaps this world had proved so hard to her that she was pained to think that other worlds existed, to be homes of suffering and sorrow. Perhaps she was thinking it would be a happy change when she should leave this dark planet for one of those brighter spheres. She sighed, at any rate, but thanked the Young Astronomer for the beautiful sights he had shown her, and gave way to the next comer, who was That Boy, now in a state of irrepressible enthusiasm to see the Man in the Moon. He was greatly disappointed at not making out a colossal human figure moving round among the shining summits and shadowy ravines of the "spotty globe."

The Landlady came next and wished to see the moon also, in preference to any other object. She was astonished at the revelations of the powerful telescope. Was there any live creatures to be seen on the moon? she asked. The Young Astronomer shook his head, smiling a little at the question.—Was there any meet'n'-houses? There was no evidence, he said, that the moon was inhabited. As there did not seem to be either air or water on its surface, the inhabitants would have a rather hard time of it, and if they went to meeting the sermons would be apt to be rather dry. If there were a building on it as big as York minster, as big as the Boston Coliseum, the great telescopes like Lord Rosse's would make it out. But it seemed to be a forlorn place; those who had studied it most agreed in considering it a "cold, crude, silent, and desolate" ruin of nature, without the possibility, if life were on it, of articulate speech, of music, even of sound. Sometimes a greenish tint was seen upon its surface, which might have been taken for vegetation, but it was thought not improbably to be a reflection from the vast forests of South America. The ancients had a fancy, some of them, that the face of the moon was a mirror in which the seas and shores of the earth were imaged. Now we know the geography of the side toward us about as well as that of Asia, better than that of Africa. The Astronomer showed them one of the common small photographs of the moon. He assured them that he had received letters inquiring in all seriousness if these alleged lunar photographs were not really taken from a peeled orange. People had got angry with him for laughing at them for asking such a question. Then he gave them an account of the famous moon-hoax which came out, he believed, in 1835. It was full of the most bare-faced absurdities, yet people swallowed it all, and even Arago is said to have treated it seriously as a thing that could not well be true, for Mr. Herschel would have certainly notified him of these marvellous discoveries. The writer of it had not troubled himself to invent probabilities, but had borrowed his scenery from the Arabian Nights and his lunar inhabitants from Peter Wilkins.

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After this lecture the Capitalist stepped forward and applied his eye to the lens. I suspect it to have been shut most of the time, for I observe a good many elderly people adjust the organ of vision to any optical instrument in that way. I suppose it is from the instinct of protection to the eye, the same instinct as that which makes the raw militia-man close it when he pulls the trigger of his musket the first time. He expressed himself highly gratified, however, with what he saw, and retired from the instrument to make room for the Young Girl.

She threw her hair back and took her position at the instrument. Saint Simeon Stylites the Younger explained the wonders of the moon to her,—Tycho and the grooves radiating from it, Kepler and Copernicus with their craters and ridges, and all the most brilliant shows of this wonderful little world. I thought he was more diffuse and more enthusiastic in his descriptions than he had been with the older members of the party. I don't doubt the old gentleman who lived so long on the top of his pillar would have kept a pretty sinner (if he could have had an elevator to hoist her up to him) longer than he would have kept her grandmother. These young people are so ignorant, you know. As for our Scheherezade, her delight was unbounded, and her curiosity insatiable. If there were any living creatures there, what odd things they must be. They could n't have any lungs, nor any hearts. What a pity! Did they ever die? How could they expire if they didn't breathe? Burn up? No air to burn in. Tumble into some of those horrid pits, perhaps, and break all to bits. She wondered how the young people there liked it, or whether there were any young people there; perhaps nobody was young and nobody was old, but they were like mummies all of them—what an idea—two mummies making love to each other! So she went on in a rattling, giddy kind of way, for she was excited by the strange scene in which she found herself, and quite astonished the Young Astronomer with her vivacity. All at once she turned to him.

Will you show me the double star you said I should see?

With the greatest pleasure,—he said, and proceeded to wheel the ponderous dome, and then to adjust the instrument, I think to the one in Andromeda, or that in Cygnus, but I should not know one of them from the other.

How beautiful!—she said as she looked at the wonderful object.—One is orange red and one is emerald green.

The young man made an explanation in which he said something about complementary colors.

Goodness!—exclaimed the Landlady.—What! complimentary to our party?

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Her wits must have been a good deal confused by the strange sights of the evening. She had seen tickets marked complimentary, she remembered, but she could not for the life of her understand why our party should be particularly favored at a celestial exhibition like this. On the whole, she questioned inwardly whether it might not be some subtle pleasantry, and smiled, experimentally, with a note of interrogation in the smile, but, finding no encouragement, allowed her features to subside gradually as if nothing had happened. I saw all this as plainly as if it had all been printed in great-primer type, instead of working itself out in her features. I like to see other people muddled now and then, because my own occasional dulness is relieved by a good solid background of stupidity in my neighbors.

—And the two revolve round each other?—said the Young Girl.

—Yes,—he answered,—two suns, a greater and a less, each shining, but with a different light, for the other.

—How charming! It must be so much pleasanter than to be alone in such a great empty space! I should think one would hardly care to shine if its light wasted itself in the monstrous solitude of the sky. Does not a single star seem very lonely to you up there?

—Not more lonely than I am myself,—answered the Young Astronomer.

—I don't know what there was in those few words, but I noticed that for a minute or two after they, were uttered I heard the ticking of the clock-work that moved the telescope as clearly as if we had all been holding our breath, and listening for the music of the spheres.

The Young Girl kept her eye closely applied to the eye-piece of the telescope a very long time, it seemed to me. Those double stars interested her a good deal, no doubt. When she looked off from the glass I thought both her eyes appeared very much as if they had been a little strained, for they were suffused and glistening. It may be that she pitied the lonely young man.

I know nothing in the world tenderer than the pity that a kind-hearted young girl has for a young man who feels lonely. It is true that these dear creatures are all compassion for every form of human woe, and anxious to alleviate all human misfortunes. They will go to Sunday-schools through storms their brothers are afraid of, to teach the most unpleasant and intractable classes of little children the age of Methuselah and the dimensions of Og the King of Bashan's bedstead. They will stand behind a table at a fair all day until they are ready to drop, dressed in their prettiest clothes and their sweetest smiles, and lay hands upon you, like—so many Lady Potiphars,—perfectly correct ones, of course,—to make you buy what you do not want, at prices which you cannot afford; all this as cheerfully as if it were not martyrdom to them as well as to you. Such is their love for all good objects, such their eagerness to sympathize with all

their suffering fellow-creatures! But there is nothing they pity as they pity a lonely young man.

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I am sure, I sympathize with her in this instance. To see a pale student burning away, like his own midnight lamp, with only dead men's hands to hold, stretched out to him from the sepulchres of books, and dead men's souls imploring him from their tablets to warm them over again just for a little while in a human consciousness, when all this time there are soft, warm, living hands that would ask nothing better than to bring the blood back into those cold thin fingers, and gently caressing natures that would wind all their tendrils about the unawakened heart which knows so little of itself, is pitiable enough and would be sadder still if we did not have the feeling that sooner or later the pale student will be pretty sure to feel the breath of a young girl against his cheek as she looks over his shoulder; and that he will come all at once to an illuminated page in his book that never writer traced in characters, and never printer set up in type, and never binder enclosed within his covers! But our young man seems farther away from life than any student whose head is bent downwards over his books. His eyes are turned away from all human things. How cold the moonlight is that falls upon his forehead, and how white he looks in it! Will not the rays strike through to his brain at last, and send him to a narrower cell than this egg-shell dome which is his workshop and his prison?

I cannot say that the Young Astronomer seemed particularly impressed with a sense of his miserable condition. He said he was lonely, it is true, but he said it in a manly tone, and not as if he were repining at the inevitable condition of his devoting himself to that particular branch of science. Of course, he is lonely, the most lonely being that lives in the midst of our breathing world. If he would only stay a little longer with us when we get talking; but he is busy almost always either in observation or with his calculations and studies, and when the nights are fair loses so much sleep that he must make it up by day. He wants contact with human beings. I wish he would change his seat and come round and sit by our Scheherezade!

The rest of the visit went off well enough, except that the "Man of Letters," so called, rather snubbed some of the heavenly bodies as not quite up to his standard of brilliancy. I thought myself that the double-star episode was the best part of it.

I have an unexpected revelation to make to the reader. Not long after our visit to the Observatory, the Young Astronomer put a package into my hands, a manuscript, evidently, which he said he would like to have me glance over. I found something in it which interested me, and told him the next day that I should like to read it with some care. He seemed rather pleased at this, and said that he wished I would criticise it as roughly as I liked, and if I saw anything in it which might be dressed to better advantage to treat it freely, just as if it were my own production.

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It had often happened to him, he went on to say, to be interrupted in his observations by clouds covering the objects he was examining for a longer or shorter time. In these idle moments he had put down many thoughts, unskilfully he feared, but just as they came into his mind. His blank verse he suspected was often faulty. His thoughts he knew must be crude, many of them. It would please him to have me amuse myself by putting them into shape. He was kind enough to say that I was an artist in words, but he held himself as an unskilled apprentice.

I confess I was appalled when I cast my eye upon the title of the manuscript, "Cirri and Nebulae."

—Oh! oh!—I said,—that will never do. People don't know what Cirri are, at least not one out of fifty readers. "Wind-Clouds and Star-Drifts" will do better than that.

—Anything you like,—he answered,—what difference does it make how you christen a foundling? These are not my legitimate scientific offspring, and you may consider them left on your doorstep.

—I will not attempt to say just how much of the diction of these lines belongs to him, and how much to me. He said he would never claim them, after I read them to him in my version. I, on my part, do not wish to be held responsible for some of his more daring thoughts, if I should see fit to reproduce them hereafter. At this time I shall give only the first part of the series of poetical outbreaks for which the young devotee of science must claim his share of the responsibility. I may put some more passages into shape by and by.

Wind-clouds and star-drifts.

I

Another clouded night; the stars are hid,
The orb that waits my search is hid with them.
Patience! Why grudge an hour, a month, a year,
To plant my ladder and to gain the round
That leads my footsteps to the heaven of fame,
Where waits the wreath my sleepless midnights won?
Not the stained laurel such as heroes wear
That withers when some stronger conqueror's heel
Treads down their shrivelling trophies in the dust;
But the fair garland whose undying green
Not time can change, nor wrath of gods or men!



With quickened heart-beats I shall hear the tongues
That speak my praise; but better far the sense
That in the unshaped ages, buried deep
In the dark mines of unaccomplished time
Yet to be stamped with morning's royal die
And coined in golden days,—in those dim years
I shall be reckoned with the undying dead,
My name emblazoned on the fiery arch,
Unfading till the stars themselves shall fade.
Then, as they call the roll of shining worlds,
Sages of race unborn in accents new
Shall count me with the Olympian ones of old,
Whose glories kindle

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through the midnight sky

Here glows the God of Battles; this recalls
The Lord of Ocean, and yon far-off sphere
The Sire of Him who gave his ancient name
To the dim planet with the wondrous rings;
Here flames the Queen of Beauty's silver lamp,
And there the moon-girt orb of mighty Jove;
But this, unseen through all earth's aeons past,
A youth who watched beneath the western star
Sought in the darkness, found, and showed to men;
Linked with his name thenceforth and evermore!
So shall that name be syllabled anew
In all the tongues of all the tribes of men:
I that have been through immemorial years
Dust in the dust of my forgotten time
Shall live in accents shaped of blood-warm breath,
Yea, rise in mortal semblance, newly born
In shining stone, in undecaying bronze,
And stand on high, and look serenely down
On the new race that calls the earth its own.

Is this a cloud, that, blown athwart my soul,
Wears a false seeming of the pearly stain
Where worlds beyond the world their mingling rays
Blend in soft white,—a cloud that, born of earth,
Would cheat the soul that looks for light from heaven?
Must every coral-insect leave his sign
On each poor grain he lent to build the reef,
As Babel's builders stamped their sunburnt clay,
Or deem his patient service all in vain?
What if another sit beneath the shade
Of the broad elm I planted by the way,
—What if another heed the beacon light
I set upon the rock that wrecked my keel,
Have I not done my task and served my kind?
Nay, rather act thy part, unnamed, unknown,
And let Fame blow her trumpet through the world
With noisy wind to swell a fool's renown,
Joined with some truth be stumbled blindly o'er,
Or coupled with some single shining deed
That in the great account of all his days
Will stand alone upon the bankrupt sheet



His pitying angel shows the clerk of Heaven.
The noblest service comes from nameless hands,
And the best servant does his work unseen.
Who found the seeds of fire and made them shoot,
Fed by his breath, in buds and flowers of flame?
Who forged in roaring flames the ponderous stone,
And shaped the moulded metal to his need?
Who gave the dragging car its rolling wheel,
And tamed the steed that whirls its circling round?
All these have left their work and not their names,
Why should I murmur at a fate like theirs?
This is the heavenly light; the pearly stain
Was but a wind-cloud drifting o'er the stars!

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I find I have so many things in common with the old Master of Arts, that I do not always know whether a thought was originally his or mine. That is what always happens where two persons of a similar cast of mind talk much together. And both of them often gain by the interchange. Many ideas grow better when transplanted into another mind than in the one where they sprang up. That which was a weed in one intelligence becomes a flower in the other. A flower, on the other hand, may dwindle down to a mere weed by the same change. Healthy growths may become poisonous by falling upon the wrong mental soil, and what seemed a night-shade in one mind unfold as a morning-glory in the other.

—I thank God,—the Master said,—that a great many people believe a great deal more than I do. I think, when it comes to serious matters, I like those who believe more than I do better than those who believe less.

—Why,—said I,—you have got hold of one of my own working axioms. I should like to hear you develop it.

The Member of the Haouse said he should be glad to listen to the debate. The gentleman had the floor. The Scarabee rose from his chair and departed;—I thought his joints creaked as he straightened himself.

The Young Girl made a slight movement; it was a purely accidental coincidence, no doubt, but I saw That Boy put his hand in his pocket and pull out his popgun, and begin loading it. It cannot be that our Scheherezade, who looks so quiet and proper at the table, can make use of That Boy and his catapult to control the course of conversation and change it to suit herself! She certainly looks innocent enough; but what does a blush prove, and what does its absence prove, on one of these innocent faces? There is nothing in all this world that can lie and cheat like the face and the tongue of a young girl. Just give her a little touch of hysteria,—I don't mean enough of it to make her friends call the doctor in, but a slight hint of it in the nervous system,—and "Machiavel the waiting-maid" might take lessons of her. But I cannot think our Scheherezade is one of that kind, and I am ashamed of myself for noting such a trifling coincidence as that which excited my suspicion.

—I say,—the Master continued,—that I had rather be in the company of those who believe more than I do, in spiritual matters at least, than of those who doubt what I accept as a part of my belief.

—To tell the truth,—said I,—I find that difficulty sometimes in talking with you. You have not quite so many hesitations as I have in following out your logical conclusions. I suppose you would bring some things out into daylight questioning that I had rather leave in that twilight of half-belief peopled with shadows—if they are only shadows—more sacred to me than many realities.

There is nothing I do not question,—said the Master;—I not only begin with the precept of Descartes, but I hold all my opinions involving any chain of reasoning always open to revision.

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—I confess that I smiled internally to hear him say that. The old Master thinks he is open to conviction on all subjects; but if you meddle with some of his notions and don't get tossed on his horns as if a bull had hold of you, I should call you lucky.

—You don't mean you doubt everything?—I said.

—What do you think I question everything for, the Master replied,—if I never get any answers? You've seen a blind man with a stick, feeling his way along? Well, I am a blind man with a stick, and I find the world pretty full of men just as blind as I am, but without any stick. I try the ground to find out whether it is firm or not before I rest my weight on it; but after it has borne my weight, that question at least is answered. It very certainly was strong enough once; the presumption is that it is strong enough now. Still the soil may have been undermined, or I may have grown heavier. Make as much of that as you will. I say I question everything; but if I find Bunker Hill Monument standing as straight as when I leaned against it a year or ten years ago, I am not very much afraid that Bunker Hill will cave in if I trust myself again on the soil of it.

I glanced off, as one often does in talk.

The Monument is an awful place to visit,—I said.—The waves of time are like the waves of the ocean; the only thing they beat against without destroying it is a rock; and they destroy that at last. But it takes a good while. There is a stone now standing in very good order that was as old as a monument of Louis XIV. and Queen Anne's day is now when Joseph went down into Egypt. Think of the shaft on Bunker Hill standing in the sunshine on the morning of January 1st in the year 5872!

It won't be standing,—the Master said.—We are poor bunglers compared to those old Egyptians. There are no joints in one of their obelisks. They are our masters in more ways than we know of, and in more ways than some of us are willing to know. That old Lawgiver wasn't learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians for nothing. It scared people well a couple of hundred years ago when Sir John Marsham and Dr. John Spencer ventured to tell their stories about the sacred ceremonies of the Egyptian priesthood. People are beginning to find out now that you can't study any religion by itself to any good purpose. You must have comparative theology as you have comparative anatomy. What would you make of a cat's foolish little good-for-nothing collar-bone, if you did not know how the same bone means a good deal in other creatures,—in yourself, for instance, as you 'll find out if you break it? You can't know too much of your race and its beliefs, if you want to know anything about your Maker. I never found but one sect large enough to hold the whole of me.

—And may I ask what that was?—I said.

—The Human sect,—the Master answered. That has about room enough for me,—at present, I mean to say.

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—Including cannibals and all?—said I.

-Oh, as to that, the eating of one's kind is a matter of taste, but the roasting of them has been rather more a specialty of our own particular belief than of any other I am acquainted with. If you broil a saint, I don't see why, if you have a mind, you shouldn't serve him up at your—

Pop! went the little piece of artillery. Don't tell me it was accident. I know better. You can't suppose for one minute that a boy like that one would time his interruptions so cleverly. Now it so happened that at that particular moment Dr. B. Franklin was not at the table. You may draw your own conclusions. I say nothing, but I think a good deal.

—I came back to the Bunker Hill Monument.—I often think—I said—of the dynasty which is to reign in its shadow for some thousands of years, it may be.

The “Man of Letters,” so called, asked me, in a tone I did not exactly like, whether I expected to live long enough to see a monarchy take the place of a republic in this country.

—No,—said I,—I was thinking of something very different. I was indulging a fancy of mine about the Man who is to sit at the foot of the monument for one, or it may be two or three thousand years. As long as the monument stands and there is a city near it, there will always be a man to take the names of visitors and extract some small tribute from their pockets, I suppose. I sometimes get thinking of the long, unbroken succession of these men, until they come to look like one Man; continuous in being, unchanging as the stone he watches, looking upon the successive generations of human beings as they come and go, and outliving all the dynasties of the world in all probability. It has come to such a pass that I never speak to the Man of the Monument without wanting to take my hat off and feeling as if I were looking down a vista of twenty or thirty centuries.

The “Man of Letters,” so called, said, in a rather contemptuous way, I thought, that he had n't got so far as that. He was n't quite up to moral reflections on toll-men and ticket-takers. Sentiment was n't his tap.

He looked round triumphantly for a response: but the Capitalist was a little hard of hearing just then; the Register of Deeds was browsing on his food in the calm bovine abstraction of a quadruped, and paid no attention; the Salesman had bolted his breakfast, and whisked himself away with that peculiar alacrity which belongs to the retail dealer's assistant; and the Member of the Haouse, who had sometimes seemed to be impressed with his “tahlented mahn's” air of superiority to the rest of us, looked as if he thought the speaker was not exactly parliamentary. So he failed to make his point, and reddened a little, and was not in the best humor, I thought, when he left the table. I hope he will not let off any of his irritation on our poor little Scheherezade; but the truth

is, the first person a man of this sort (if he is what I think him) meets, when he is out of humor, has to be made a victim of, and I only hope our Young Girl will not have to play Jephthah's daughter.

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And that leads me to say, I cannot help thinking that the kind of criticism to which this Young Girl has been subjected from some person or other, who is willing to be smart at her expense, is hurtful and not wholesome. The question is a delicate one. So many foolish persons are rushing into print, that it requires a kind of literary police to hold them back and keep them in order. Where there are mice there must be cats, and where there are rats we may think it worth our while to keep a terrier, who will give them a shake and let them drop, with all the mischief taken out of them. But the process is a rude and cruel one at best, and it too often breeds a love of destructiveness for its own sake in those who get their living by it. A poor poem or essay does not do much harm after all; nobody reads it who is like to be seriously hurt by it. But a sharp criticism with a drop of witty venom in it stings a young author almost to death, and makes an old one uncomfortable to no purpose. If it were my business to sit in judgment on my neighbors, I would try to be courteous, at least, to those who had done any good service, but, above all, I would handle tenderly those young authors who are coming before the public in the flutter of their first or early appearance, and are in the trembling delirium of stage-fright already. Before you write that brilliant notice of some alliterative Angelina's book of verses, I wish you would try this experiment.

Take half a sheet of paper and copy upon it any of Angelina's stanzas,—the ones you were going to make fun of, if you will. Now go to your window, if it is a still day, open it, and let the half-sheet of paper drop on the outside. How gently it falls through the soft air, always tending downwards, but sliding softly, from side to side, wavering, hesitating, balancing, until it settles as noiselessly as a snow-flake upon the all-receiving bosom of the earth! Just such would have been the fate of poor Angelina's fluttering effort, if you had left it to itself. It would have slanted downward into oblivion so sweetly and softly that she would have never known when it reached that harmless consummation.

Our epizotic literature is becoming so extensive that nobody is safe from its ad infinitum progeny. A man writes a book of criticisms. A Quarterly Review criticises the critic. A Monthly Magazine takes up the critic's critic. A Weekly Journal criticises the critic of the critic's critic, and a daily paper favors us with some critical remarks on the performance of the writer in the Weekly, who has criticised the critical notice in the Monthly of the critical essay in the Quarterly on the critical work we started with. And thus we see that as each flea "has smaller fleas that on him prey," even the critic himself cannot escape the common lot of being bitten. Whether all this is a blessing or a curse, like that one which made Pharaoh and all his household run to their toilet-tables, is a question about which opinions might differ. The physiologists of the time of Moses—if there were vivisectioners other than priests in those days—would probably have considered that other plague, of the frogs, as a fortunate opportunity for science, as this poor little beast has been the souffre-douleur of experimenters and schoolboys from time immemorial.

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But there is a form of criticism to which none will object. It is impossible to come before a public so alive with sensibilities as this we live in, with the smallest evidence of a sympathetic disposition, without making friends in a very unexpected way. Everywhere there are minds tossing on the unquiet waves of doubt. If you confess to the same perplexities and uncertainties that torture them, they are grateful for your companionship. If you have groped your way out of the wilderness in which you were once wandering with them, they will follow your footsteps, it may be, and bless you as their deliverer. So, all at once, a writer finds he has a parish of devout listeners, scattered, it is true, beyond the reach of any summons but that of a trumpet like the archangel's, to whom his slight discourse may be of more value than the exhortations they hear from the pulpit, if these last do not happen to suit their special needs. Young men with more ambition and intelligence than force of character, who have missed their first steps in life and are stumbling irresolute amidst vague aims and changing purposes, hold out their hands, imploring to be led into, or at least pointed towards, some path where they can find a firm foothold. Young women born into a chilling atmosphere of circumstance which keeps all the buds of their nature unopened and always striving to get to a ray of sunshine, if one finds its way to their neighborhood, tell their stories, sometimes simply and touchingly, sometimes in a more or less affected and rhetorical way, but still stories of defeated and disappointed instincts which ought to make any moderately impressible person feel very tenderly toward them.

In speaking privately to these young persons, many of whom have literary aspirations, one should be very considerate of their human feelings. But addressing them collectively a few plain truths will not give any one of them much pain. Indeed, almost every individual among them will feel sure that he or she is an exception to those generalities which apply so well to the rest.

If I were a literary Pope sending out an Encyclical, I would tell these inexperienced persons that nothing is so frequent as to mistake an ordinary human gift for a special and extraordinary endowment. The mechanism of breathing and that of swallowing are very wonderful, and if one had seen and studied them in his own person only, he might well think himself a prodigy. Everybody knows these and other bodily faculties are common gifts; but nobody except editors and school-teachers and here and there a literary man knows how common is the capacity of rhyming and prattling in readable prose, especially among young women of a certain degree of education. In my character of Pontiff, I should tell these young persons that most of them labored under a delusion. It is very hard to believe it; one feels so full of intelligence and so decidedly superior to one's dull relations and schoolmates; one writes so easily and the lines sound so prettily to one's self; there are such felicities of expression, just like those we hear quoted from the great poets; and besides one has been told by so many friends that all one had to do was to print and be famous! Delusion, my poor dear, delusion at least nineteen times out of twenty, yes, ninety-nine times in a hundred.

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But as private father confessor, I always allow as much as I can for the one chance in the hundred. I try not to take away all hope, unless the case is clearly desperate, and then to direct the activities into some other channel.

Using kind language, I can talk pretty freely. I have counselled more than one aspirant after literary fame to go back to his tailor's board or his lapstone. I have advised the dilettanti, whose foolish friends praised their verses or their stories, to give up all their deceptive dreams of making a name by their genius, and go to work in the study of a profession which asked only for the diligent use of average; ordinary talents. It is a very grave responsibility which these unknown correspondents throw upon their chosen counsellors. One whom you have never seen, who lives in a community of which you know nothing, sends you specimens more or less painfully voluminous of his writings, which he asks you to read over, think over, and pray over, and send back an answer informing him whether fame and fortune are awaiting him as the possessor of the wonderful gifts his writings manifest, and whether you advise him to leave all,—the shop he sweeps out every morning, the ledger he posts, the mortar in which he pounds, the bench at which he urges the reluctant plane,—and follow his genius whithersoever it may lead him. The next correspondent wants you to mark out a whole course of life for him, and the means of judgment he gives you are about as adequate as the brick which the simpleton of old carried round as an advertisement of the house he had to sell. My advice to all the young men that write to me depends somewhat on the handwriting and spelling. If these are of a certain character, and they have reached a mature age, I recommend some honest manual calling, such as they have very probably been bred to, and which will, at least, give them a chance of becoming President of the United States by and by, if that is any object to them. What would you have done with the young person who called on me a good many years ago, so many that he has probably forgotten his literary effort,—and read as specimens of his literary workmanship lines like those which I will favor you with presently? He was an able-bodied, grown-up young person, whose ingenuousness interested me; and I am sure if I thought he would ever be pained to see his maiden effort in print, I would deny myself the pleasure of submitting it to the reader. The following is an exact transcript of the lines he showed me, and which I took down on the spot:

“Are you in the vein for cider?
Are you in the tune for pork?
Hist! for Betty's cleared the larder
And turned the pork to soap.”

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Do not judge too hastily this sincere effort of a maiden muse. Here was a sense of rhythm, and an effort in the direction of rhyme; here was an honest transcript of an occurrence of daily life, told with a certain idealizing expression, recognizing the existence of impulses, mysterious instincts, impelling us even in the selection of our bodily sustenance. But I had to tell him that it wanted dignity of incident and grace of narrative, that there was no atmosphere to it, nothing of the light that never was and so forth. I did not say this in these very words, but I gave him to understand, without being too hard upon him, that he had better not desert his honest toil in pursuit of the poet's bays. This, it must be confessed, was a rather discouraging case. A young person like this may pierce, as the Frenchmen say, by and by, but the chances are all the other way.

I advise aimless young men to choose some profession without needless delay, and so get into a good strong current of human affairs, and find themselves bound up in interests with a compact body of their fellow-men.

I advise young women who write to me for counsel,—perhaps I do not advise them at all, only sympathize a little with them, and listen to what they have to say (eight closely written pages on the average, which I always read from beginning to end, thinking of the widow's cruse and myself in the character of Elijah) and—and—come now, I don't believe Methuselah would tell you what he said in his letters to young ladies, written when he was in his nine hundred and sixty-ninth year.

But, dear me! how much work all this private criticism involves! An editor has only to say "respectfully declined," and there is the end of it. But the confidential adviser is expected to give the reasons of his likes and dislikes in detail, and sometimes to enter into an argument for their support. That is more than any martyr can stand, but what trials he must go through, as it is! Great bundles of manuscripts, verse or prose, which the recipient is expected to read, perhaps to recommend to a publisher, at any rate to express a well-digested and agreeably flavored opinion about; which opinion, nine times out of ten, disguise it as we may, has to be a bitter draught; every form of egotism, conceit, false sentiment, hunger for notoriety, and eagerness for display of anserine plumage before the admiring public;—all these come in by mail or express, covered with postage-stamps of so much more cost than the value of the waste words they overlie, that one comes at last to groan and change color at the very sight of a package, and to dread the postman's knock as if it were that of the other visitor whose naked knuckles rap at every door.

Still there are experiences which go far towards repaying all these inflictions. My last young man's case looked desperate enough; some of his sails had blown from the rigging, some were backing in the wind, and some were flapping and shivering, but I told him which way to head, and to my surprise he promised to do just as I directed, and I do not doubt is under full sail at this moment.

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What if I should tell my last, my very recent experience with the other sex? I received a paper containing the inner history of a young woman's life, the evolution of her consciousness from its earliest record of itself, written so thoughtfully, so sincerely, with so much firmness and yet so much delicacy, with such truth of detail and such grace in the manner of telling, that I finished the long manuscript almost at a sitting, with a pleasure rarely, almost never experienced in voluminous communications which one has to spell out of handwriting. This was from a correspondent who made my acquaintance by letter when she was little more than a child, some years ago. How easy at that early period to have silenced her by indifference, to have wounded her by a careless epithet, perhaps even to have crushed her as one puts his heel on a weed! A very little encouragement kept her from despondency, and brought back one of those overflows of gratitude which make one more ashamed of himself for being so overpaid than he would be for having committed any of the lesser sins. But what pleased me most in the paper lately received was to see how far the writer had outgrown the need of any encouragement of mine; that she had strengthened out of her tremulous questionings into a self-reliance and self-poise which I had hardly dared to anticipate for her. Some of my readers who are also writers have very probably had more numerous experiences of this kind than I can lay claim to; self-revelations from unknown and sometimes nameless friends, who write from strange corners where the winds have wafted some stray words of theirs which have lighted in the minds and reached the hearts of those to whom they were as the angel that stirred the pool of Bethesda. Perhaps this is the best reward authorship brings; it may not imply much talent or literary excellence, but it means that your way of thinking and feeling is just what some one of your fellow-creatures needed.

—I have been putting into shape, according to his request, some further passages from the Young Astronomer's manuscript, some of which the reader will have a chance to read if he is so disposed. The conflict in the young man's mind between the desire for fame and the sense of its emptiness as compared with nobler aims has set me thinking about the subject from a somewhat humbler point of view. As I am in the habit of telling you, Beloved, many of my thoughts, as well as of repeating what was said at our table, you may read what follows as if it were addressed to you in the course of an ordinary conversation, where I claimed rather more than my share, as I am afraid I am a little in the habit of doing.

I suppose we all, those of us who write in verse or prose, have the habitual feeling that we should like to be remembered. It is to be awake when all of those who were round us have been long wrapped in slumber. It is a pleasant thought enough that the name by which we have been called shall be familiar on the lips of those who come after us, and the thoughts that wrought themselves out in our intelligence, the emotions that trembled through our frames, shall live themselves over again in the minds and hearts of others.

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But is there not something of rest, of calm, in the thought of gently and gradually fading away out of human remembrance? What line have we written that was on a level with our conceptions? What page of ours that does not betray some weakness we would fain have left unrecorded? To become a classic and share the life of a language is to be ever open to criticisms, to comparisons, to the caprices of successive generations, to be called into court and stand a trial before a new jury, once or more than once in every century. To be forgotten is to sleep in peace with the undisturbed myriads, no longer subject to the chills and heats, the blasts, the sleet, the dust, which assail in endless succession that shadow of a man which we call his reputation. The line which dying we could wish to blot has been blotted out for us by a hand so tender, so patient, so used to its kindly task, that the page looks as fair as if it had never borne the record of our infirmity or our transgression. And then so few would be wholly content with their legacy of fame. You remember poor Monsieur Jacques's complaint of the favoritism shown to Monsieur Berthier,—it is in that exquisite "Week in a French Country-House." "Have you seen his room? Have you seen how large it is? Twice as large as mine! He has two jugs, a large one and a little one. I have only one small one. And a tea-service and a gilt Cupid on the top of his looking-glass." The famous survivor of himself has had his features preserved in a medallion, and the slice of his countenance seems clouded with the thought that it does not belong to a bust; the bust ought to look happy in its niche, but the statue opposite makes it feel as if it had been cheated out of half its personality, and the statue looks uneasy because another stands on a loftier pedestal. But "Ignotus" and "Miserrimus" are of the great majority in that vast assembly, that House of Commons whose members are all peers, where to be forgotten is the standing rule. The dignity of a silent memory is not to be undervalued. Fame is after all a kind of rude handling, and a name that is often on vulgar lips seems to borrow something not to be desired, as the paper money that passes from hand to hand gains somewhat which is a loss thereby. O sweet, tranquil refuge of oblivion, so far as earth is concerned, for us poor blundering, stammering, misbehaving creatures who cannot turn over a leaf of our life's diary without feeling thankful that its failure can no longer stare us in the face! Not unwelcome shall be the baptism of dust which hides forever the name that was given in the baptism of water! We shall have good company whose names are left unspoken by posterity. "Who knows whether the best of men be known, or whether there be not more remarkable persons forgot than any that stand remembered in the known account of time? The greater part must be content to be as though they had not been; to be found in the register of God, not in the record of man. Twenty-seven names make up the first story before the flood, and the recorded names ever since contain not one living century."

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I have my moods about such things as the Young Astronomer has, as we all have. There are times when the thought of becoming utterly nothing to the world we knew so well and loved so much is painful and oppressive; we gasp as if in a vacuum, missing the atmosphere of life we have so long been in the habit of breathing. Not the less are there moments when the aching need of repose comes over us and the requiescat in pace, heathen benediction as it is, sounds more sweetly in our ears than all the promises that Fame can hold out to us.

I wonder whether it ever occurred to you to reflect upon another horror there must be in leaving a name behind you. Think what a horrid piece of work the biographers make of a man's private history! Just imagine the subject of one of those extraordinary fictions called biographies coming back and reading the life of himself, written very probably by somebody or other who thought he could turn a penny by doing it, and having the pleasure of seeing

"His little bark attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph and partake the gale."

The ghost of the person condemned to walk the earth in a biography glides into a public library, and goes to the shelf where his mummied life lies in its paper cerements. I can see the pale shadow glancing through the pages and hear the comments that shape themselves in the bodiless intelligence as if they were made vocal by living lips.

"Born in July, 1776!" And my honored father killed at the battle of Bunker Hill! Atrocious libeller! to slander one's family at the start after such a fashion!

"The death of his parents left him in charge of his Aunt Nancy, whose tender care took the place of those parental attentions which should have guided and protected his infant years, and consoled him for the severity of another relative."

—Aunt Nancy! It was Aunt Betsey, you fool! Aunt Nancy used to—she has been dead these eighty years, so there is no use in mincing matters—she used to keep a bottle and a stick, and when she had been tasting a drop out of the bottle the stick used to come off the shelf and I had to taste that. And here she is made a saint of, and poor Aunt Betsey, that did everything for me, is slandered by implication as a horrid tyrant.

"The subject of this commemorative history was remarkable for a precocious development of intelligence. An old nurse who saw him at the very earliest period of his existence is said to have spoken of him as one of the most promising infants she had seen in her long experience. At school he was equally remarkable, and at a tender age he received a paper adorned with a cut, inscribed *reward of merit*."

—I don't doubt the nurse said that,—there were several promising children born about that time. As for cuts, I got more from the schoolmaster's rattan than in any other

shape. Didn't one of my teachers split a Gunter's scale into three pieces over the palm of my hand? And didn't I grin when I saw the pieces fly? No humbug, now, about my boyhood!

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“His personal appearance was not singularly prepossessing. Inconspicuous in stature and unattractive in features”

—You misbegotten son of an ourang and grandson of an ascidian (ghosts keep up with science, you observe), what business have you to be holding up my person to the contempt of my posterity? Haven't I been sleeping for this many a year in quiet, and don't the dandelions and buttercups look as yellow over me as over the best-looking neighbor I have in the dormitory? Why do you want to people the minds of everybody that reads your good-for-nothing libel which you call a “biography” with your impudent caricatures of a man who was a better-looking fellow than yourself, I'll bet you ten to one, a man whom his Latin tutor called fommosus puer when he was only a freshman? If that's what it means to make a reputation,—to leave your character and your person, and the good name of your sainted relatives, and all you were, and all you had and thought and felt, so far as can be gathered by digging you out of your most private records, to be manipulated and bandied about and cheapened in the literary market as a chicken or a turkey or a goose is handled and bargained over at a provision stall, is n't it better to be content with the honest blue slate-stone and its inscription informing posterity that you were a worthy citizen and a respected father of a family?

—I should like to see any man's biography with corrections and emendations by his ghost. We don't know each other's secrets quite so well as we flatter ourselves we do. We don't always know our own secrets as well as we might. You have seen a tree with different grafts upon it, an apple or a pear tree we will say. In the late summer months the fruit on one bough will ripen; I remember just such a tree, and the early ripening fruit was the Jargonelle. By and by the fruit of another bough will begin to come into condition; the lovely Saint Michael, as I remember, grew on the same stock as the Jargonelle in the tree I am thinking of; and then, when these have all fallen or been gathered, another, we will say the Winter Nelis, has its turn, and so out of the same juices have come in succession fruits of the most varied aspects and flavors. It is the same thing with ourselves, but it takes us a long while to find it out. The various inherited instincts ripen in succession. You may be nine tenths paternal at one period of your life, and nine tenths maternal at another. All at once the traits of some immediate ancestor may come to maturity unexpectedly on one of the branches of your character, just as your features at different periods of your life betray different resemblances to your nearer or more remote relatives.

But I want you to let me go back to the Bunker Hill Monument and the dynasty of twenty or thirty centuries whose successive representatives are to sit in the gate, like the Jewish monarchs, while the people shall come by hundreds and by thousands to visit the memorial shaft until the story of Bunker's Hill is as old as that of Marathon.

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Would not one like to attend twenty consecutive soirees, at each one of which the lion of the party should be the Man of the Monument, at the beginning of each century, all the way, we will say, from Anno Domini 2000 to Ann. Dom. 4000,—or, if you think the style of dating will be changed, say to Ann. Darwinii (we can keep A. D. you see) 1872? Will the Man be of the Indian type, as President Samuel Stanhope Smith and others have supposed the transplanted European will become by and by? Will he have shortened down to four feet and a little more, like the Esquimaux, or will he have been bred up to seven feet by the use of new chemical diets, ozonized and otherwise improved atmospheres, and animal fertilizers? Let us summon him in imagination and ask him a few questions.

Is n't it like splitting a toad out of a rock to think of this man of nineteen or twenty centuries hence coming out from his stony dwelling-place and speaking with us? What are the questions we should ask him? He has but a few minutes to stay. Make out your own list; I will set down a few that come up to me as I write.

—What is the prevalent religious creed of civilization?

—Has the planet met with any accident of importance?

—How general is the republican form of government?

—Do men fly yet?

—Has the universal language come into use?

—Is there a new fuel since the English coal-mines have given out?

—Is the euthanasia a recognized branch of medical science?

—Is the oldest inhabitant still living?

—Is the Daily Advertiser still published?

—And the Evening Transcript?

—Is there much inquiry for the works of a writer of the nineteenth century (Old Style) by
—the name of—of—

My tongue cleaves to the roof of my mouth. I cannot imagine the putting of that question without feeling the tremors which shake a wooer as he falters out the words the answer to which will make him happy or wretched.

Whose works was I going to question him about, do you ask me? Oh, the writings of a friend of mine, much esteemed by his relatives and others. But it's of no consequence, after all; I think he says he does not care much for posthumous reputation.

I find something of the same interest in thinking about one of the boarders at our table that I find in my waking dreams concerning the Man of the Monument. This personage is the Register of Deeds. He is an unemotional character, living in his business almost as exclusively as the Scarabee, but without any of that eagerness and enthusiasm which belong to our scientific specialist. His work is largely, principally, I may say, mechanical. He has developed, however, a certain amount of taste for the antiquities of his department, and once in a while brings out some curious result of his investigations into ancient documents. He too belongs to a dynasty which will last as long as there is such a thing as property in land and dwellings. When that is done away with, and we return to the state of villanage, holding our tenement-houses, all to be of the same pattern, of the State, that is to say, of the Tammany Ring which is to take the place of the feudal lord,—the office of Register of Deeds will, I presume, become useless, and the dynasty will be deposed.

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As we grow older we think more and more of old persons and of old things and places. As to old persons, it seems as if we never know how much they have to tell until we are old ourselves and they have been gone twenty or thirty years. Once in a while we come upon some survivor of his or her generation that we have overlooked, and feel as if we had recovered one of the lost books of Livy or fished up the golden candlestick from the ooze of the Tiber. So it was the other day after my reminiscences of the old gambrel-roofed house and its visitors. They found an echo in the recollections of one of the brightest and liveliest of my suburban friends, whose memory is exact about everything except her own age, which, there can be no doubt, she makes out a score or two of years more than it really is. Still she was old enough to touch some lights—and a shadow or two—into the portraits I had drawn, which made me wish that she and not I had been the artist who sketched the pictures. Among the lesser regrets that mingle with graver sorrows for the friends of an earlier generation we have lost, are our omissions to ask them so many questions they could have answered easily enough, and would have been pleased to be asked. There! I say to myself sometimes, in an absent mood, I must ask her about that. But she of whom I am now thinking has long been beyond the reach of any earthly questioning, and I sigh to think how easily I could have learned some fact which I should have been happy to have transmitted with pious care to those who are to come after me. How many times I have heard her quote the line about blessings brightening as they take their flight, and how true it proves in many little ways that one never thinks of until it is too late.

The Register of Deeds is not himself advanced in years. But he borrows an air of antiquity from the ancient records which are stored in his sepulchral archives. I love to go to his ossuary of dead transactions, as I would visit the catacombs of Rome or Paris. It is like wandering up the Nile to stray among the shelves of his monumental folios. Here stands a series of volumes, extending over a considerable number of years, all of which volumes are in his handwriting. But as you go backward there is a break, and you come upon the writing of another person, who was getting old apparently, for it is beginning to be a little shaky, and then you know that you have gone back as far as the last days of his predecessor. Thirty or forty years more carry you to the time when this incumbent began the duties of his office; his hand was steady then; and the next volume beyond it in date betrays the work of a still different writer. All this interests me, but I do not see how it is going to interest my reader. I do not feel very happy about the Register of Deeds. What can I do with him? Of what use is he going to be in my record of what I have seen and heard at the breakfast-table? The fact of his being one of the boarders was not so important that I was obliged to speak of him, and I might just as well have drawn on my imagination and not allowed this dummy to take up the room which another guest might have profitably filled at our breakfast-table.

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I suppose he will prove a superfluity, but I have got him on my hands, and I mean that he shall be as little in the way as possible. One always comes across people in actual life who have no particular business to be where we find them, and whose right to be at all is somewhat questionable.

I am not going to get rid of the Register of Deeds by putting him out of the way; but I confess I do not see of what service he is going to be to me in my record. I have often found, however, that the Disposer of men and things understands much better than we do how to place his pawns and other pieces on the chess-board of life. A fish more or less in the ocean does not seem to amount to much. It is not extravagant to say that any one fish may be considered a supernumerary. But when Captain Coram's ship sprung a leak and the carpenter could not stop it, and the passengers had made up their minds that it was all over with them, all at once, without any apparent reason, the pumps began gaining on the leak, and the sinking ship to lift herself out of the abyss which was swallowing her up. And what do you think it was that saved the ship, and Captain Coram, and so in due time gave to London that Foundling Hospital which he endowed, and under the floor of which he lies buried? Why, it was that very supernumerary fish, which we held of so little account, but which had wedged itself into the rent of the yawning planks, and served to keep out the water until the leak was finally stopped.

I am very sure it was Captain Coram, but I almost hope it was somebody else, in order to give some poor fellow who is lying in wait for the periodicals a chance to correct me. That will make him happy for a month, and besides, he will not want to pick a quarrel about anything else if he has that splendid triumph. You remember Alcibiades and his dog's tail.

Here you have the extracts I spoke of from the manuscript placed in my hands for revision and emendation. I can understand these alternations of feeling in a young person who has been long absorbed in a single pursuit, and in whom the human instincts which have been long silent are now beginning to find expression. I know well what he wants; a great deal better, I think, than he knows himself.

Wind-clouds and star-drifts.

II

Brief glimpses of the bright celestial spheres,
False lights, false shadows, vague, uncertain gleams,
Pale vaporous mists, wan streaks of lurid flame,
The climbing of the upward-sailing cloud,
The sinking of the downward-falling star,
All these are pictures of the changing moods
Borne through the midnight stillness of my soul.

Here am I, bound upon this pillared rock,
Prey to the vulture of a vast desire
That feeds upon my life. I burst my bands
And steal a moment's freedom from the beak,

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The clinging talons and the shadowing plumes;
Then comes the false enchantress, with her song;
"Thou wouldst not lay thy forehead in the dust
Like the base herd that feeds and breeds and dies!
Lo, the fair garlands that I weave for thee,
Unchanging as the belt Orion wears,
Bright as the jewels of the seven-starred Crown,
The spangled stream of Berenice's hair!"
And so she twines the fetters with the flowers
Around my yielding limbs, and the fierce bird
Stoops to his quarry,—then to feed his rage
Of ravening hunger I must drain my blood
And let the dew-drenched, poison-breeding night
Steal all the freshness from my fading cheek,
And leave its shadows round my caverned eyes.
All for a line in some unheeded scroll;
All for a stone that tells to gaping clowns,
"Here lies a restless wretch beneath a clod
Where squats the jealous nightmare men call Fame!"

I marvel not at him who scorns his kind
And thinks not sadly of the time foretold
When the old hulk we tread shall be a wreck,
A slag, a cinder drifting through the sky
Without its crew of fools! We live too long
And even so are not content to die,
But load the mould that covers up our bones
With stones that stand like beggars by the road
And show death's grievous wound and ask for tears;
Write our great books to teach men who we are,
Sing our fine songs that tell in artful phrase
The secrets of our lives, and plead and pray
For alms of memory with the after time,
Those few swift seasons while the earth shall wear
Its leafy summers, ere its core grows cold
And the moist life of all that breathes shall die;
Or as the new-born seer, perchance more wise,
Would have us deem, before its growing mass,
Pelted with stardust, atoned with meteor-balls,
Heats like a hammered anvil, till at last Man

and his works and all that stirred itself
Of its own motion, in the fiery glow
Turns to a flaming vapor, and our orb
Shines a new sun for earths that shall be born.

I am as old as Egypt to myself,
Brother to them that squared the pyramids
By the same stars I watch. I read the page
Where every letter is a glittering world,
With them who looked from Shinar's clay-built towers,
Ere yet the wanderer of the Midland sea
Had missed the fallen sister of the seven.
I dwell in spaces vague, remote, unknown,
Save to the silent few, who, leaving earth,
Quit all communion with their living time.
I lose myself in that ethereal void,
Till I have tired my wings and long to fill
My breast with denser air, to stand, to walk

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With eyes not raised above my fellow-men.
Sick of my unwall'd, solitary realm,
I ask to change the myriad lifeless worlds
I visit as mine own for one poor patch
Of this dull spheroid and a little breath
To shape in word or deed to serve my kind.

Was ever giant's dungeon dug so deep,
Was ever tyrant's fetter forged so strong,
Was e'er such deadly poison in the draught
The false wife mingles for the trusting fool,
As he whose willing victim is himself,
Digs, forges, mingles, for his captive soul?

VII

I was very sure that the old Master was hard at work about something,—he is always very busy with something,—but I mean something particular.

Whether it was a question of history or of cosmogony, or whether he was handling a test-tube or a blow-pipe; what he was about I did not feel sure; but I took it for granted that it was some crucial question or other he was at work on, some point bearing on the thought of the time. For the Master, I have observed, is pretty sagacious in striking for the points where his work will be like to tell. We all know that class of scientific laborers to whom all facts are alike nourishing mental food, and who seem to exercise no choice whatever, provided only they can get hold of these same indiscriminate facts in quantity sufficient. They browse on them, as the animal to which they would not like to be compared browses on his thistles. But the Master knows the movement of the age he belongs to; and if he seems to be busy with what looks like a small piece of trivial experimenting, one may feel pretty sure that he knows what he is about, and that his minute operations are looking to a result that will help him towards attaining his great end in life,—an insight, so far as his faculties and opportunities will allow, into that order of things which he believes he can study with some prospect of taking in its significance.

I became so anxious to know what particular matter he was busy with, that I had to call upon him to satisfy my curiosity. It was with a little trepidation that I knocked at his door. I felt a good deal as one might have felt on disturbing an alchemist at his work, at the very moment, it might be, when he was about to make projection.



—Come in!—said the Master in his grave, massive tones.

I passed through the library with him into a little room evidently devoted to his experiments.

—You have come just at the right moment,—he said.—Your eyes are better than mine. I have been looking at this flask, and I should like to have you look at it.

It was a small matrass, as one of the elder chemists would have called it, containing a fluid, and hermetically sealed. He held it up at the window; perhaps you remember the physician holding a flask to the light in Gerard Douw's "Femme hydropique"; I thought of that fine figure as I looked at him. Look!—said he,—is it clear or cloudy?

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—You need not ask me that,—I answered. It is very plainly turbid. I should think that some sediment had been shaken up in it. What is it, Elixir Vitae or Aurum potable?

—Something that means more than alchemy ever did! Boiled just three hours, and as clear as a bell until within the last few days; since then has been clouding up.

—I began to form a pretty shrewd guess at the meaning of all this, and to think I knew very nearly what was coming next. I was right in my conjecture. The Master broke off the sealed end of his little flask, took out a small portion of the fluid on a glass rod, and placed it on a slip of glass in the usual way for a microscopic examination.

—One thousand diameters,—he said, as he placed it on the stage of the microscope.

—We shall find signs of life, of course.—He bent over the instrument and looked but an instant.

—There they are!—he exclaimed,—look in.

I looked in and saw some objects:

The straight linear bodies were darting backward and forward in every direction. The wavy ones were wriggling about like eels or water-snakes. The round ones were spinning on their axes and rolling in every direction. All of them were in a state of incessant activity, as if perpetually seeking something and never finding it.

They are tough, the germs of these little bodies, said the Master. —Three hours' boiling has n't killed 'em. Now, then, let us see what has been the effect of six hours' boiling.

He took up another flask just like the first, containing fluid and hermetically sealed in the same way.

—Boiled just three hours longer than the other, he said,—six hours in all. This is the experimentum crucis. Do you see any cloudiness in it?

—Not a sign of it; it is as clear as crystal, except that there may be a little sediment at the bottom.

—That is nothing. The liquid is clear. We shall find no signs of life.—He put a minute drop of the liquid under the microscope as before. Nothing stirred. Nothing to be seen but a clear circle of light. We looked at it again and again, but with the same result.

—Six hours kill 'em all, according to this experiment,—said the Master.—Good as far as it goes. One more negative result. Do you know what would have happened if that liquid had been clouded, and we had found life in the sealed flask? Sir, if that liquid had held life in it the Vatican would have trembled to hear it, and there would have been

anxious questionings and ominous whisperings in the halls of Lambeth palace! The accepted cosmogonies on trial, sir!

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Traditions, sanctities, creeds, ecclesiastical establishments, all shaking to know whether my little sixpenny flask of fluid looks muddy or not! I don't know whether to laugh or shudder. The thought of an oecumenical council having its leading feature dislocated by my trifling experiment! The thought, again, of the mighty revolution in human beliefs and affairs that might grow out of the same insignificant little phenomenon. A wine-glassful of clear liquid growing muddy. If we had found a wriggle, or a zigzag, or a shoot from one side to the other, in this last flask, what a scare there would have been, to be sure, in the schools of the prophets! Talk about your megatherium and your megalosaurus,—what are these to the bacterium and the vibrio? These are the dreadful monsters of today. If they show themselves where they have no business, the little rascals frighten honest folks worse than ever people were frightened by the Dragon of Rhodes!

The Master gets going sometimes, there is no denying it, until his imagination runs away with him. He had been trying, as the reader sees, one of those curious experiments in spontaneous generation, as it is called, which have been so often instituted of late years, and by none more thoroughly than by that eminent American student of nature (Professor Jeffries Wyman) whose process he had imitated with a result like his.

We got talking over these matters among us the next morning at the breakfast-table.

We must agree they couldn't stand six hours' boiling,—I said.

—Good for the Pope of Rome!—exclaimed the Master.

—The Landlady drew back with a certain expression of dismay in her countenance. She hoped he did n't want the Pope to make any more converts in this country. She had heard a sermon only last Sabbath, and the minister had made it out, she thought, as plain as could be, that the Pope was the Man of Sin and that the Church of Rome was—Well, there was very strong names applied to her in Scripture.

What was good for the Pope was good for your minister, too, my dear madam,—said the Master. Good for everybody that is afraid of what people call "science." If it should prove that dead things come to life of themselves, it would be awkward, you know, because then somebody will get up and say if one dead thing made itself alive another might, and so perhaps the earth peopled itself without any help. Possibly the difficulty wouldn't be so great as many people suppose. We might perhaps find room for a Creator after all, as we do now, though we see a little brown seed grow till it sucks up the juices of half an acre of ground, apparently all by its own inherent power. That does not stagger us; I am not sure that it would if Mr. Crosses or Mr. Weekes's acarus should show himself all of a sudden, as they said he did, in certain mineral mixtures acted on by electricity.

The Landlady was off soundings, and looking vacant enough by this time.

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The Master turned to me.—Don't think too much of the result of our one experiment. It means something, because it confirms those other experiments of which it was a copy; but we must remember that a hundred negatives don't settle such a question. Life does get into the world somehow. You don't suppose Adam had the cutaneous unpleasantness politely called psora, do you?

—Hardly,—I answered.—He must have been a walking hospital if he carried all the maladies about him which have plagued his descendants.

—Well, then, how did the little beast which is peculiar to that special complaint intrude himself into the Order of Things? You don't suppose there was a special act of creation for the express purpose of bestowing that little wretch on humanity, do you?

I thought, on the whole, I would n't answer that question.

—You and I are at work on the same problem, said the Young Astronomer to the Master. —I have looked into a microscope now and then, and I have seen that perpetual dancing about of minute atoms in a fluid, which you call molecular motion. Just so, when I look through my telescope I see the star-dust whirling about in the infinite expanse of ether; or if I do not see its motion, I know that it is only on account of its immeasurable distance. Matter and motion everywhere; void and rest nowhere. You ask why your restless microscopic atoms may not come together and become self-conscious and self-moving organisms. I ask why my telescopic star-dust may not come together and grow and organize into habitable worlds,—the ripened fruit on the branches of the tree Yggdrasil, if I may borrow from our friend the Poet's province. It frightens people, though, to hear the suggestion that worlds shape themselves from star-mist. It does not trouble them at all to see the watery spheres that round themselves into being out of the vapors floating over us; they are nothing but raindrops. But if a planet can grow as a rain-drop grows, why then—It was a great comfort to these timid folk when Lord Rosse's telescope resolved certain nebula into star-clusters. Sir John Herschel would have told them that this made little difference in accounting for the formation of worlds by aggregation, but at any rate it was a comfort to them.

—These people have always been afraid of the astronomers,—said the Master.—They were shy, you know, of the Copernican system, for a long while; well they might be with an oubliette waiting for them if they ventured to think that the earth moved round the sun. Science settled that point finally for them, at length, and then it was all right,—when there was no use in disputing the fact any longer. By and by geology began turning up fossils that told extraordinary stories about the duration of life upon our planet. What subterfuges were not used to get rid of their evidence! Think of a man seeing the fossilized skeleton of an animal split out of

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a quarry, his teeth worn down by mastication, and the remains of food still visible in his interior, and, in order to get rid of a piece of evidence contrary to the traditions he holds to, seriously maintaining that this skeleton never belonged to a living creature, but was created with just these appearances; a make-believe, a sham, a Barnum's-mermaid contrivance to amuse its Creator and impose upon his intelligent children! And now people talk about geological epochs and hundreds of millions of years in the planet's history as calmly as if they were discussing the age of their deceased great-grandmothers. Ten or a dozen years ago people said Sh! Sh! if you ventured to meddle with any question supposed to involve a doubt of the generally accepted Hebrew traditions. To-day such questions are recognized as perfectly fair subjects for general conversation; not in the basement story, perhaps, or among the rank and file of the curbstone congregations, but among intelligent and educated persons. You may preach about them in your pulpit, you may lecture about them, you may talk about them with the first sensible-looking person you happen to meet, you may write magazine articles about them, and the editor need not expect to receive remonstrances from angry subscribers and withdrawals of subscriptions, as he would have been sure to not a great many years ago. Why, you may go to a tea-party where the clergyman's wife shows her best cap and his daughters display their shining ringlets, and you will hear the company discussing the Darwinian theory of the origin of the human race as if it were as harmless a question as that of the lineage of a spinster's lapdog. You may see a fine lady who is as particular in her genuflections as any Buddhist or Mahometan saint in his manifestations of reverence, who will talk over the anthropoid ape, the supposed founder of the family to which we belong, and even go back with you to the acephalous mollusk, first cousin to the clams and mussels, whose rudimental spine was the hinted prophecy of humanity; all this time never dreaming, apparently, that what she takes for a matter of curious speculation involves the whole future of human progress and destiny.

I can't help thinking that if we had talked as freely as we can and do now in the days of the first boarder at this table,—I mean the one who introduced it to the public,—it would have sounded a good deal more aggressively than it does now.—The old Master got rather warm in talking; perhaps the consciousness of having a number of listeners had something to do with it.

—This whole business is an open question,—he said,—and there is no use in saying, "Hush! don't talk about such things!" People do talk about 'em everywhere; and if they don't talk about 'em they think about 'em, and that is worse,—if there is anything bad about such questions, that is. If for the Fall of man, science comes to substitute the *rise* of man, sir, it means the utter disintegration of all the spiritual pessimisms which have been like a spasm in the heart and a cramp in the intellect of men for so many centuries. And yet who dares to say that it is not a perfectly legitimate and proper question to be discussed, without the slightest regard to the fears or the threats of Pope or prelate?

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Sir, I believe,—the Master rose from his chair as he spoke, and said in a deep and solemn tone, but without any declamatory vehemence,—sir, I believe that we are at this moment in what will be recognized not many centuries hence as one of the late watches in the night of the dark ages. There is a twilight ray, beyond question. We know something of the universe, a very little, and, strangely enough, we know most of what is farthest from us. We have weighed the planets and analyzed the flames of the—sun and stars. We predict their movements as if they were machines we ourselves had made and regulated. We know a good deal about the earth on which we live. But the study of man has been so completely subjected to our preconceived opinions, that we have got to begin all over again. We have studied anthropology through theology; we have now to begin the study of theology through anthropology. Until we have exhausted the human element in every form of belief, and that can only be done by what we may call comparative spiritual anatomy, we cannot begin to deal with the alleged extra-human elements without blundering into all imaginable puerilities. If you think for one moment that there is not a single religion in the world which does not come to us through the medium of a preexisting language; and if you remember that this language embodies absolutely nothing but human conceptions and human passions, you will see at once that every religion presupposes its own elements as already existing in those to whom it is addressed. I once went to a church in London and heard the famous Edward Irving preach, and heard some of his congregation speak in the strange words characteristic of their miraculous gift of tongues. I had a respect for the logical basis of this singular phenomenon. I have always thought it was natural that any celestial message should demand a language of its own, only to be understood by divine illumination. All human words tend, of course, to stop short in human meaning. And the more I hear the most sacred terms employed, the more I am satisfied that they have entirely and radically different meanings in the minds of those who use them. Yet they deal with them as if they were as definite as mathematical quantities or geometrical figures. What would become of arithmetic if the figure 2 meant three for one man and five for another and twenty for a third, and all the other numerals were in the same way variable quantities? Mighty intelligent correspondence business men would have with each other! But how is this any worse than the difference of opinion which led a famous clergyman to say to a brother theologian, “Oh, I see, my dear sir, your God is my Devil.”

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Man has been studied proudly, contemptuously, rather, from the point of view supposed to be authoritatively settled. The self-sufficiency of egotistic natures was never more fully shown than in the expositions of the worthlessness and wretchedness of their fellow-creatures given by the dogmatists who have “gone back,” as the vulgar phrase is, on their race, their own flesh and blood. Did you ever read what Mr. Bancroft says about Calvin in his article on Jonathan Edwards?—and mighty well said it is too, in my judgment. Let me remind you of it, whether you have read it or not. “Setting himself up over against the privileged classes, he, with a loftier pride than theirs, revealed the power of a yet higher order of nobility, not of a registered ancestry of fifteen generations, but one absolutely spotless in its escutcheon, preordained in the council chamber of eternity.” I think you’ll find I have got that sentence right, word for word, and there’s a great deal more in it than many good folks who call themselves after the reformer seem to be aware of. The Pope put his foot on the neck of kings, but Calvin and his cohort crushed the whole human race under their heels in the name of the Lord of Hosts. Now, you see, the point that people don’t understand is the absolute and utter humility of science, in opposition to this doctrinal self-sufficiency. I don’t doubt this may sound a little paradoxical at first, but I think you will find it is all right. You remember the courtier and the monarch,—Louis the Fourteenth, wasn’t it?—never mind, give the poor fellows that live by setting you right a chance. “What o’clock is it?” says the king. “Just whatever o’clock your Majesty pleases,” says the courtier. I venture to say the monarch was a great deal more humble than the follower, who pretended that his master was superior to such trifling facts as the revolution of the planet. It was the same thing, you remember, with King Canute and the tide on the sea-shore. The king accepted the scientific fact of the tide’s rising. The loyal hangers-on, who believed in divine right, were too proud of the company they found themselves in to make any such humiliating admission. But there are people, and plenty of them, to-day, who will dispute facts just as clear to those who have taken the pains to learn what is known about them, as that of the tide’s rising. They don’t like to admit these facts, because they throw doubt upon some of their cherished opinions. We are getting on towards the last part of this nineteenth century. What we have gained is not so much in positive knowledge, though that is a good deal, as it is in the freedom of discussion of every subject that comes within the range of observation and inference. How long is it since Mrs. Piozzi wrote,—“Let me hope that you will not pursue geology till it leads you into doubts destructive of all comfort in this world and all happiness in the next”?

The Master paused and I remained silent, for I was thinking things I could not say.

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—It is well always to have a woman near by when one is talking on this class of subjects. Whether there will be three or four women to one man in heaven is a question which I must leave to those who talk as if they knew all about the future condition of the race to answer. But very certainly there is much more of hearty faith, much more of spiritual life, among women than among men, in this world. They need faith to support them more than men do, for they have a great deal less to call them out of themselves, and it comes easier to them, for their habitual state of dependence teaches them to trust in others. When they become voters, if they ever do, it may be feared that the pews will lose what the ward-rooms gain. Relax a woman's hold on man, and her knee-joints will soon begin to stiffen. Self-assertion brings out many fine qualities, but it does not promote devotional habits.

I remember some such thoughts as this were passing through my mind while the Master was talking. I noticed that the Lady was listening to the conversation with a look of more than usual interest. We men have the talk mostly to ourselves at this table; the Master, as you have found out, is fond of monologues, and I myself—well, I suppose I must own to a certain love for the reverberated music of my own accents; at any rate, the Master and I do most of the talking. But others help us do the listening. I think I can show that they listen to some purpose. I am going to surprise my reader with a letter which I received very shortly after the conversation took place which I have just reported. It is of course by a special license, such as belongs to the supreme prerogative of an author, that I am enabled to present it to him. He need ask no questions: it is not his affair how I obtained the right to give publicity to a private communication. I have become somewhat more intimately acquainted with the writer of it than in the earlier period of my connection with this establishment, and I think I may say have gained her confidence to a very considerable degree.

My dear sir: The conversations I have had with you, limited as they have been, have convinced me that I am quite safe in addressing you with freedom on a subject which interests me, and others more than myself. We at our end of the table have been listening, more or less intelligently, to the discussions going on between two or three of you gentlemen on matters of solemn import to us all. This is nothing very new to me. I have been used, from an early period of my life, to hear the discussion of grave questions, both in politics and religion. I have seen gentlemen at my father's table get as warm over a theological point of dispute as in talking over their political differences. I rather think it has always been very much so, in bad as well as in good company; for you remember how Milton's fallen angels amused themselves with disputing on "providence, foreknowledge, will,

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and fate,” and it was the same thing in that club Goldsmith writes so pleasantly about. Indeed, why should not people very often come, in the course of conversation, to the one subject which lies beneath all else about which our thoughts are occupied? And what more natural than that one should be inquiring about what another has accepted and ceased to have any doubts concerning? It seems to me all right that at the proper time, in the proper place, those who are less easily convinced than their neighbors should have the fullest liberty of calling to account all the opinions which others receive without question. Somebody must stand sentry at the outposts of belief, and it is a sentry’s business, I believe, to challenge every one who comes near him, friend or foe.

I want you to understand fully that I am not one of those poor nervous creatures who are frightened out of their wits when any question is started that implies the disturbance of their old beliefs. I manage to see some of the periodicals, and now and then dip a little way into a new book which deals with these curious questions you were talking about, and others like them. You know they find their way almost everywhere. They do not worry me in the least. When I was a little girl, they used to say that if you put a horsehair into a tub of water it would turn into a snake in the course of a few days. That did not seem to me so very much stranger than it was that an egg should turn into a chicken. What can I say to that? Only that it is the Lord’s doings, and marvellous in my eyes; and if our philosophical friend should find some little live creatures, or what seem to be live creatures, in any of his messes, I should say as much, and no more. You do not think I would shut up my Bible and Prayer-Book because there is one more thing I do not understand in a world where I understand so very little of all the wonders that surround me?

It may be very wrong to pay any attention to those speculations about the origin of mankind which seem to conflict with the Sacred Record. But perhaps there is some way of reconciling them, as there is of making the seven days of creation harmonize with modern geology. At least, these speculations are curious enough in themselves; and I have seen so many good and handsome children come of parents who were anything but virtuous and comely, that I can believe in almost any amount of improvement taking place in a tribe of living beings, if time and opportunity favor it. I have read in books of natural history that dogs came originally from wolves. When I remember my little Flora, who, as I used to think, could do everything but talk, it does not seem to me that she was much nearer her savage ancestors than some of the horrid cannibal wretches are to their neighbors the great apes.

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You see that I am tolerably liberal in my habit of looking at all these questions. We women drift along with the current of the times, listening, in our quiet way, to the discussions going on round us in books and in conversation, and shift the phrases in which we think and talk with something of the same ease as that with which we change our style of dress from year to year. I doubt if you of the other sex know what an effect this habit of accommodating our tastes to changing standards has upon us. Nothing is fixed in them, as you know; the very law of fashion is change. I suspect we learn from our dressmakers to shift the costume of our minds, and slip on the new fashions of thinking all the more easily because we have been accustomed to new styles of dressing every season.

It frightens me to see how much I have written without having yet said a word of what I began this letter on purpose to say. I have taken so much space in "defining my position," to borrow the politicians' phrase, that I begin to fear you will be out of patience before you come to the part of my letter I care most about your reading.

What I want to say is this. When these matters are talked about before persons of different ages and various shades of intelligence, I think one ought to be very careful that his use of language does not injure the sensibilities, perhaps blunt the reverential feelings, of those who are listening to him. You of the sterner sex say that we women have intuitions, but not logic, as our birthright. I shall not commit my sex by conceding this to be true as a whole, but I will accept the first half of it, and I will go so far as to say that we do not always care to follow out a train of thought until it ends in a blind cul de sac, as some of what are called the logical people are fond of doing.

Now I want to remind you that religion is not a matter of intellectual luxury to those of us who are interested in it, but something very different. It is our life, and more than our life; for that is measured by pulse-beats, but our religious consciousness partakes of the Infinite, towards which it is constantly yearning. It is very possible that a hundred or five hundred years from now the forms of religious belief may be so altered that we should hardly know them. But the sense of dependence on Divine influence and the need of communion with the unseen and eternal will be then just what they are now. It is not the geologist's hammer, or the astronomer's telescope, or the naturalist's microscope, that is going to take away the need of the human soul for that Rock to rest upon which is higher than itself, that Star which never sets, that all-pervading Presence which gives life to all the least moving atoms of the immeasurable universe.

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I have no fears for myself, and listen very quietly to all your debates. I go from your philosophical discussions to the reading of Jeremy Taylor's "Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying" without feeling that I have unfitted myself in the least degree for its solemn reflections. And, as I have mentioned his name, I cannot help saying that I do not believe that good man himself would have ever shown the bitterness to those who seem to be at variance with the received doctrines which one may see in some of the newspapers that call themselves "religious." I have kept a few old books from my honored father's library, and among them is another of his which I always thought had more true Christianity in its title than there is in a good many whole volumes. I am going to take the book down, or up,—for it is not a little one,—and write out the title, which, I dare say, you remember, and very likely you have the book. "Discourse of the Liberty of Propheying, showing the Unreasonableness of prescribing to other Men's Faith, and the Iniquity of persecuting Different Opinions."

Now, my dear sir, I am sure you believe that I want to be liberal and reasonable, and not to act like those weak alarmists who, whenever the silly sheep begin to skip as if something was after them, and huddle together in their fright, are sure there must be a bear or a lion coming to eat them up. But for all that, I want to beg you to handle some of these points, which are so involved in the creed of a good many well-intentioned persons that you cannot separate them from it without picking their whole belief to pieces, with more thought for them than you might think at first they were entitled to. I have no doubt you gentlemen are as wise as serpents, and I want you to be as harmless as doves.

The Young Girl who sits by me has, I know, strong religious instincts. Instead of setting her out to ask all sorts of questions, I would rather, if I had my way, encourage her to form a habit of attending to religious duties, and make the most of the simple faith in which she was bred. I think there are a good many questions young persons may safely postpone to a more convenient season; and as this young creature is overworked, I hate to have her excited by the fever of doubt which it cannot be denied is largely prevailing in our time.

I know you must have looked on our other young friend, who has devoted himself to the sublimest of the sciences, with as much interest as I do. When I was a little girl I used to write out a line of Young's as a copy in my writing-book,

"An undevout astronomer is mad";

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but I do not now feel quite so sure that the contemplation of all the multitude of remote worlds does not tend to weaken the idea of a personal Deity. It is not so much that nebular theory which worries me, when I think about this subject, as a kind of bewilderment when I try to conceive of a consciousness filling all those frightful blanks of space they talk about. I sometimes doubt whether that young man worships anything but the stars. They tell me that many young students of science like him never see the inside of a church. I cannot help wishing they did. It humanizes people, quite apart from any higher influence it exerts upon them. One reason, perhaps, why they do not care to go to places of worship is that they are liable to hear the questions they know something about handled in sermons by those who know very much less about them. And so they lose a great deal. Almost every human being, however vague his notions of the Power addressed, is capable of being lifted and solemnized by the exercise of public prayer. When I was a young girl we travelled in Europe, and I visited Ferney with my parents; and I remember we all stopped before a chapel, and I read upon its front, I knew Latin enough to understand it, I am pleased to say,—Deo erexit Voltaire. I never forgot it; and knowing what a sad scoffer he was at most sacred things, I could not but be impressed with the fact that even he was not satisfied with himself, until he had shown his devotion in a public and lasting form.

We all want religion sooner or later. I am afraid there are some who have no natural turn for it, as there are persons without an ear for music, to which, if I remember right, I heard one of you comparing what you called religious genius. But sorrow and misery bring even these to know what it means, in a great many instances. May I not say to you, my friend, that I am one who has learned the secret of the inner life by the discipline of trials in the life of outward circumstance? I can remember the time when I thought more about the shade of color in a ribbon, whether it matched my complexion or not, than I did about my spiritual interests in this world or the next. It was needful that I should learn the meaning of that text, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

Since I have been taught in the school of trial I have felt, as I never could before, how precious an inheritance is the smallest patrimony of faith. When everything seemed gone from me, I found I had still one possession. The bruised reed that I had never leaned on became my staff. The smoking flax which had been a worry to my eyes burst into flame, and I lighted the taper at it which has since guided all my footsteps. And I am but one of the thousands who have had the same experience. They have been through the depths of affliction, and know the needs of the human soul. It will find its God in the unseen,—Father, Saviour, Divine Spirit, Virgin Mother, it must and will breathe its longings and its griefs into the heart of a Being capable of understanding all its necessities and sympathizing with all its woes.

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I am jealous, yes, I own I am jealous of any word, spoken or written, that would tend to impair that birthright of reverence which becomes for so many in after years the basis of a deeper religious sentiment. And yet, as I have said, I cannot and will not shut my eyes to the problems which may seriously affect our modes of conceiving the eternal truths on which, and by which, our souls must live. What a fearful time is this into which we poor sensitive and timid creatures are born! I suppose the life of every century has more or less special resemblance to that of some particular Apostle. I cannot help thinking this century has Thomas for its model. How do you suppose the other Apostles felt when that experimental philosopher explored the wounds of the Being who to them was divine with his inquisitive forefinger? In our time that finger has multiplied itself into ten thousand thousand implements of research, challenging all mysteries, weighing the world as in a balance, and sifting through its prisms and spectroscopes the light that comes from the throne of the Eternal.

Pity us, dear Lord, pity us! The peace in believing which belonged to other ages is not for us. Again Thy wounds are opened that we may know whether it is the blood of one like ourselves which flows from them, or whether it is a Divinity that is bleeding for His creatures. Wilt Thou not take the doubt of Thy children whom the time commands to try all things in the place of the unquestioning faith of earlier and simpler-hearted generations? We too have need of Thee. Thy martyrs in other ages were cast into the flames, but no fire could touch their immortal and indestructible faith. We sit in safety and in peace, so far as these poor bodies are concerned; but our cherished beliefs, the hopes, the trust that stayed the hearts of those we loved who have gone before us, are cast into the fiery furnace of an age which is fast turning to dross the certainties and the sanctities once prized as our most precious inheritance. You will understand me, my dear sir, and all my solitudes and apprehensions. Had I never been assailed by the questions that meet all thinking persons in our time, I might not have thought so anxiously about the risk of perplexing others. I know as well as you must that there are many articles of belief clinging to the skirts of our time which are the bequests of the ages of ignorance that God winked at. But for all that I would train a child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, according to the simplest and best creed I could disentangle from those barbarisms, and I would in every way try to keep up in young persons that standard of reverence for all sacred subjects which may, without any violent transition, grow and ripen into the devotion of later years. Believe me,

Very sincerely yours,

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I have thought a good deal about this letter and the writer of it lately. She seemed at first removed to a distance from all of us, but here I find myself in somewhat near relations with her. What has surprised me more than that, however, is to find that she is becoming so much acquainted with the Register of Deeds. Of all persons in the world, I should least have thought of him as like to be interested in her, and still less, if possible, of her fancying him. I can only say they have been in pretty close conversation several times of late, and, if I dared to think it of so very calm and dignified a personage, I should say that her color was a little heightened after one or more of these interviews. No! that would be too absurd! But I begin to think nothing is absurd in the matter of the relations of the two sexes; and if this high-bred woman fancies the attentions of a piece of human machinery like this elderly individual, it is none of my business.

I have been at work on some more of the Young Astronomer's lines. I find less occasion for meddling with them as he grows more used to versification. I think I could analyze the processes going on in his mind, and the conflict of instincts which he cannot in the nature of things understand. But it is as well to give the reader a chance to find out for himself what is going on in the young man's heart and intellect.

Wind-clouds and star-drifts.

III

The snows that glittered on the disk of Mars
Have melted, and the planet's fiery orb
Rolls in the crimson summer of its year;
But what to me the summer or the snow
Of worlds that throb with life in forms unknown,
If life indeed be theirs; I heed not these.
My heart is simply human; all my care
For them whose dust is fashioned like mine own;
These ache with cold and hunger, live in pain,
And shake with fear of worlds more full of woe;
There may be others worthier of my love,
But such I know not save through these I know.

There are two veils of language, hid beneath
Whose sheltering folds, we dare to be ourselves;
And not that other self which nods and smiles
And babbles in our name; the one is Prayer,
Lending its licensed freedom to the tongue
That tells our sorrows and our sins to Heaven;
The other, Verse, that throws its spangled web
Around our naked speech and makes it bold.
I, whose best prayer is silence; sitting dumb



In the great temple where I nightly serve
Him who is throned in light, have dared to claim
The poet's franchise, though I may not hope
To wear his garland; hear me while I tell
My story in such form as poets use,
But breathed in fitful whispers, as the wind
Sighs and then slumbers, wakes and sighs again.



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Thou Vision, floating in the breathless air
Between me and the fairest of the stars,
I tell my lonely thoughts as unto thee.
Look not for marvels of the scholar's pen
In my rude measure; I can only show
A slender-margined, unilluminated page,
And trust its meaning to the flattering eye
That reads it in the gracious light of love.
Ah, wouldst thou clothe thyself in breathing shape
And nestle at my side, my voice should lend
Whate'er my verse may lack of tender rhythm
To make thee listen.

I have stood entranced
When, with her fingers wandering o'er the keys,
The white enchantress with the golden hair
Breathed all her soul through some unvalued rhyme;
Some flower of song that long had lost its bloom;
Lo! its dead summer kindled as she sang!
The sweet contralto, like the ringdove's coo,
Thrilled it with brooding, fond, caressing tones,
And the pale minstrel's passion lived again,
Tearful and trembling as a dewy rose
The wind has shaken till it fills the air
With light and fragrance. Such the wondrous charm
A song can borrow when the bosom throbs
That lends it breath.

So from the poet's lips
His verse sounds doubly sweet, for none like him
Feels every cadence of its wave-like flow;
He lives the passion over, while he reads,
That shook him as he sang his lofty strain,
And pours his life through each resounding line,
As ocean, when the stormy winds are hushed,
Still rolls and thunders through his billowy caves.

Let me retrace the record of the years
That made me what I am. A man most wise,
But overworn with toil and bent with age,
Sought me to be his scholar,—me, run wild
From books and teachers,—kindled in my soul
The love of knowledge; led me to his tower,
Showed me the wonders of the midnight realm



His hollow sceptre ruled, or seemed to rule,
Taught me the mighty secrets of the spheres,
Trained me to find the glimmering specks of light
Beyond the unaided sense, and on my chart
To string them one by one, in order due,
As on a rosary a saint his beads.

I was his only scholar; I became
The echo to his thought; whate'er he knew
Was mine for asking; so from year to year
We wrought together, till there came a time
When I, the learner, was the master half
Of the twinned being in the dome-crowned tower.

Minds roll in paths like planets; they revolve
This in a larger, that a narrower ring,
But round they come at last to that same phase,
That self-same light and shade they showed before.
I learned his annual

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and his monthly tale,
His weekly axiom and his daily phrase,
I felt them coming in the laden air,
And watched them laboring up to vocal breath,
Even as the first-born at his father's board
Knows ere he speaks the too familiar jest
Is on its way, by some mysterious sign
Forewarned, the click before the striking bell.

He shrivelled as I spread my growing leaves,
Till trust and reverence changed to pitying care;
He lived for me in what he once had been,
But I for him, a shadow, a defence,
The guardian of his fame, his guide, his staff,
Leaned on so long he fell if left alone.
I was his eye, his ear, his cunning hand,
Love was my spur and longing after fame,
But his the goading thorn of sleepless age
That sees its shortening span, its lengthening shades,
That clutches what it may with eager grasp,
And drops at last with empty, outstretched hands.

All this he dreamed not. He would sit him down
Thinking to work his problems as of old,
And find the star he thought so plain a blur,
The columned figures labyrinthine wilds
Without my comment, blind and senseless scrawls
That vexed him with their riddles; he would strive
And struggle for a while, and then his eye
Would lose its light, and over all his mind
The cold gray mist would settle; and erelong
The darkness fell, and I was left alone.

Alone! no climber of an Alpine cliff,
No Arctic venturer on the waveless sea,
Feels the dread stillness round him as it chills
The heart of him who leaves the slumbering earth
To watch the silent worlds that crowd the sky.

Alone! And as the shepherd leaves his flock
To feed upon the hillside, he meanwhile
Finds converse in the warblings of the pipe



Himself has fashioned for his vacant hour,
So have I grown companion to myself,
And to the wandering spirits of the air
That smile and whisper round us in our dreams.
Thus have I learned to search if I may know
The whence and why of all beneath the stars
And all beyond them, and to weigh my life
As in a balance, poising good and ill
Against each other,-asking of the Power
That flung me forth among the whirling worlds,
If I am heir to any inborn right,
Or only as an atom of the dust
That every wind may blow where'er it will.

I am not humble; I was shown my place,
Clad in such robes as Nature had at hand;
Took what she gave, not chose; I know no shame,
No fear for being simply what I am.
I am not proud, I hold my every breath
At Nature's mercy. I am as a babe
Borne in a giant's

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arms, he knows not where;

Each several heart-beat, counted like the coin
A miser reckons, is a special gift
As from an unseen hand; if that withhold
Its bounty for a moment, I am left
A clod upon the earth to which I fall.

Something I find in me that well might claim
The love of beings in a sphere above
This doubtful twilight world of right and wrong;
Something that shows me of the self-same clay
That creeps or swims or flies in humblest form.
Had I been asked, before I left my bed
Of shapeless dust, what clothing I would wear,
I would have said, More angel and less worm;
But for their sake who are even such as I,
Of the same mingled blood, I would not choose
To hate that meaner portion of myself
Which makes me brother to the least of men.

I dare not be a coward with my lips
Who dare to question all things in my soul;
Some men may find their wisdom on their knees,
Some prone and grovelling in the dust like slaves;
Let the meek glow-worm glisten in the dew;
I ask to lift my taper to the sky
As they who hold their lamps above their heads,
Trusting the larger currents up aloft,
Rather than crossing eddies round their breast,
Threatening with every puff the flickering blaze.

My life shall be a challenge, not a truce!
This is my homage to the mightier powers,
To ask my boldest question, undismayed
By muttered threats that some hysteric sense
Of wrong or insult will convulse the throne
Where wisdom reigns supreme; and if I err,
They all must err who have to feel their way
As bats that fly at noon; for what are we
But creatures of the night, dragged forth by day,
Who needs must stumble, and with stammering steps
Spell out their paths in syllables of pain?

Thou wilt not hold in scorn the child who dares
Look up to Thee, the Father,—dares to ask
More than Thy wisdom answers. From Thy hand
The worlds were cast; yet every leaflet claims
From that same hand its little shining sphere
Of star-lit dew; thine image, the great sun,
Girt with his mantle of tempestuous flame,

Glares in mid-heaven; but to his noontide blaze
The slender violet lifts its lidless eye,
And from his splendor steals its fairest hue,
Its sweetest perfume from his scorching fire.

I may just as well stop here as anywhere, for there is more of the manuscript to come,
and I can only give it in instalments.

The Young Astronomer had told me I might read any portions of his manuscript I saw fit
to certain friends. I tried this last extract on the old Master.

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It's the same story we all have to tell,—said he, when I had done reading.—We are all asking questions nowadays. I should like to hear him read some of his verses himself, and I think some of the other boarders would like to. I wonder if he wouldn't do it, if we asked him! Poets read their own compositions in a singsong sort of way; but they do seem to love 'em so, that I always enjoy it. It makes me laugh a little inwardly to see how they dandle their poetical babies, but I don't let them know it. We must get up a select party of the boarders to hear him read. We'll send him a regular invitation. I will put my name at the head of it, and you shall write it.

—That was neatly done. How I hate writing such things! But I suppose I must do it.

VIII

The Master and I had been thinking for some time of trying to get the Young Astronomer round to our side of the table. There are many subjects on which both of us like to talk with him, and it would be convenient to have him nearer to us. How to manage it was not quite so clear as it might have been. The Scarabee wanted to sit with his back to the light, as it was in his present position. He used his eyes so much in studying minute objects, that he wished to spare them all fatigue, and did not like facing a window. Neither of us cared to ask the Man of Letters, so called, to change his place, and of course we could not think of making such a request of the Young Girl or the Lady. So we were at a stand with reference to this project of ours.

But while we were proposing, Fate or Providence disposed everything for us. The Man of Letters, so called, was missing one morning, having folded his tent—that is, packed his carpet-bag—with the silence of the Arabs, and encamped—that is, taken lodgings—in some locality which he had forgotten to indicate.

The Landlady bore this sudden bereavement remarkably well. Her remarks and reflections; though borrowing the aid of homely imagery and doing occasional violence to the nicer usages of speech, were not without philosophical discrimination.

—I like a gentleman that is a gentleman. But there's a difference in what folks call gentlemen as there is in what you put on table. There is cabbages and there is cauliflowers. There is clams and there is oysters. There is mackerel and there is salmon. And there is some that knows the difference and some that doos n't. I had a little account with that boarder that he forgot to settle before he went off, so all of a suddin. I sha'n't say anything about it. I've seen the time when I should have felt bad about losing what he owed me, but it was no great matter; and if he 'll only stay away now he 's gone, I can stand losing it, and not cry my eyes out nor lay awake all night neither. I never had ought to have took him. Where he come from and where he's gone to is unbeknown to me. If he'd only smoked good tobacco, I wouldn't have said a word;

but it was such dreadful stuff, it 'll take a week to get his chamber sweet enough to show them that asks for rooms. It doos smell like all possest.

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—Left any goods?—asked the Salesman.

—Or dockermunts?—added the Member of the Haouse.

The Landlady answered with a faded smile, which implied that there was no hope in that direction. Dr. Benjamin, with a sudden recurrence of youthful feeling, made a fan with the fingers of his right hand, the second phalanx of the thumb resting on the tip of the nose, and the remaining digits diverging from each other, in the plane of the median line of the face,—I suppose this is the way he would have described the gesture, which is almost a specialty of the Parisian gamin. That Boy immediately copied it, and added greatly to its effect by extending the fingers of the other hand in a line with those of the first, and vigorously agitating those of the two hands,—a gesture which acts like a puncture on the distended self-esteem of one to whom it is addressed, and cheapens the memory of the absent to a very low figure.

I wish the reader to observe that I treasure up with interest all the words uttered by the Salesman. It must have been noticed that he very rarely speaks. Perhaps he has an inner life, with its own deep emotional, and lofty contemplative elements, but as we see him, he is the boarder reduced to the simplest expression of that term. Yet, like most human creatures, he has generic and specific characters not unworthy of being studied. I notice particularly a certain electrical briskness of movement, such as one may see in a squirrel, which clearly belongs to his calling. The dry-goodsman's life behind his counter is a succession of sudden, snappy perceptions and brief series of coordinate spasms; as thus:

“Purple calico, three quarters wide, six yards.”

Up goes the arm; bang! tumbles out the flat roll and turns half a dozen somersets, as if for the fun of the thing; the six yards of calico hurry over the measuring nails, hunching their backs up, like six cankerworms; out jump the scissors; snip, clip, rip; the stuff is wisped up, brown—papered, tied, labelled, delivered, and the man is himself again, like a child just come out of a convulsion-fit. Think of a man's having some hundreds of these semi-epileptic seizures every day, and you need not wonder that he does not say much; these fits take the talk all out of him.

But because he, or any other man, does not say much, it does not follow that he may not have, as I have said, an exalted and intense inner life. I have known a number of cases where a man who seemed thoroughly commonplace and unemotional has all at once surprised everybody by telling the story of his hidden life far more pointedly and dramatically than any playwright or novelist or poet could have told it for him. I will not insult your intelligence, Beloved, by saying how he has told it.

—We had been talking over the subjects touched upon in the Lady's letter.

—I suppose one man in a dozen—said the Master—ought to be born a skeptic. That was the proportion among the Apostles, at any rate.

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—So there was one Judas among them,—I remarked.

—Well,—said the Master,—they 've been whitewashing Judas of late. But never mind him. I did not say there was not one rogue on the average among a dozen men. I don't see how that would interfere with my proposition. If I say that among a dozen men you ought to find one that weighs over a hundred and fifty pounds, and you tell me that there were twelve men in your club, and one of 'em had red hair, I don't see that you have materially damaged my statement.

—I thought it best to let the old Master have his easy victory, which was more apparent than real, very evidently, and he went on.

—When the Lord sends out a batch of human beings, say a hundred—Did you ever read my book, the new edition of it, I mean?

It is rather awkward to answer such a question in the negative, but I said, with the best grace I could, "No, not the last edition."

—Well, I must give you a copy of it. My book and I are pretty much the same thing. Sometimes I steal from my book in my talk without mentioning it, and then I say to myself, "Oh, that won't do; everybody has read my book and knows it by heart." And then the other I says,—you know there are two of us, right and left, like a pair of shoes,—the other I says, "You're a—something or other—fool. They have n't read your confounded old book; besides, if they have, they have forgotten all about it." Another time, I say, thinking I will be very honest, "I have said something about that in my book"; and then the other I says, "What a Balaam's quadruped you are to tell 'em it's in your book; they don't care whether it is or not, if it's anything worth saying; and if it isn't worth saying, what are you braying for?" That is a rather sensible fellow, that other chap we talk with, but an impudent whelp. I never got such abuse from any blackguard in my life as I have from that No. 2 of me, the one that answers the other's questions and makes the comments, and does what in demotic phrase is called the "sarsing."

—I laughed at that. I have just such a fellow always with me, as wise as Solomon, if I would only heed him; but as insolent as Shimei, cursing, and throwing stones and dirt, and behaving as if he had the traditions of the "ape-like human being" born with him rather than civilized instincts. One does not have to be a king to know what it is to keep a king's jester.

—I mentioned my book,—the Master said, because I have something in it on the subject we were talking about. I should like to read you a passage here and there out of it, where I have expressed myself a little more freely on some of those matters we handle in conversation. If you don't quarrel with it, I must give you a copy of the book. It's a rather serious thing to get a copy of a book from the writer of it. It has made my adjectives sweat pretty hard, I know, to put together an answer returning thanks and not

lying beyond the twilight of veracity, if one may use a figure. Let me try a little of my book on you, in divided doses, as my friends the doctors say.

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-Fiat experimentum in corpore vili,—I said, laughing at my own expense. I don't doubt the medicament is quite as good as the patient deserves, and probably a great deal better,—I added, reinforcing my feeble compliment.

[When you pay a compliment to an author, don't qualify it in the next sentence so as to take all the goodness out of it. Now I am thinking of it, I will give you one or two pieces of advice. Be careful to assure yourself that the person you are talking with wrote the article or book you praise. It is not very pleasant to be told, "Well, there, now! I always liked your writings, but you never did anything half so good as this last piece," and then to have to tell the blunderer that this last piece is n't yours, but t' other man's. Take care that the phrase or sentence you commend is not one that is in quotation-marks. "The best thing in your piece, I think, is a line I do not remember meeting before; it struck me as very true and well expressed:

"An honest man's the noblest work of God.'

"But, my dear lady, that line is one which is to be found in a writer of the last century, and not original with me." One ought not to have undeceived her, perhaps, but one is naturally honest, and cannot bear to be credited with what is not his own. The lady blushes, of course, and says she has not read much ancient literature, or some such thing. The pearl upon the Ethiop's arm is very pretty in verse, but one does not care to furnish the dark background for other persons' jewelry.]

I adjourned from the table in company with the old Master to his apartments. He was evidently in easy circumstances, for he had the best accommodations the house afforded. We passed through a reception room to his library, where everything showed that he had ample means for indulging the modest tastes of a scholar.

—The first thing, naturally, when one enters a scholar's study or library, is to look at his books. One gets a notion very speedily of his tastes and the range of his pursuits by a glance round his bookshelves.

Of course, you know there are many fine houses where the library is a part of the upholstery, so to speak. Books in handsome binding kept locked under plate-glass in showy dwarf bookcases are as important to stylish establishments as servants in livery; who sit with folded arms, are to stylish equipages. I suppose those wonderful statues with the folded arms do sometimes change their attitude, and I suppose those books with the gilded backs do sometimes get opened, but it is nobody's business whether they do or not, and it is not best to ask too many questions.

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This sort of thing is common enough, but there is another case that may prove deceptive if you undertake to judge from appearances. Once in a while you will come on a house where you will find a family of readers and almost no library. Some of the most indefatigable devourers of literature have very few books. They belong to book clubs, they haunt the public libraries, they borrow of friends, and somehow or other get hold of everything they want, scoop out all it holds for them, and have done with it. When I want a book, it is as a tiger wants a sheep. I must have it with one spring, and, if I miss it, go away defeated and hungry. And my experience with public libraries is that the first volume of the book I inquire for is out, unless I happen to want the second, when that is out.

—I was pretty well prepared to understand the Master's library and his account of it. We seated ourselves in two very comfortable chairs, and I began the conversation.

-I see you have a large and rather miscellaneous collection of books. Did you get them together by accident or according to some preconceived plan?

—Both, sir, both,—the Master answered. When Providence throws a good book in my way, I bow to its decree and purchase it as an act of piety, if it is reasonably or unreasonably cheap. I adopt a certain number of books every year, out of a love for the foundlings and stray children of other people's brains that nobody seems to care for. Look here.

He took down a Greek Lexicon finely bound in calf, and spread it open.

Do you see that Hedericus? I had Greek dictionaries enough and to spare, but I saw that noble quarto lying in the midst of an ignoble crowd of cheap books, and marked with a price which I felt to be an insult to scholarship, to the memory of Homer, sir, and the awful shade of AEschylus. I paid the mean price asked for it, and I wanted to double it, but I suppose it would have been a foolish sacrifice of coin to sentiment: I love that book for its looks and behavior. None of your "half-calf" economies in that volume, sir! And see how it lies open anywhere! There is n't a book in my library that has such a generous way of laying its treasures before you. From Alpha to Omega, calm, assured rest at any page that your choice or accident may light on. No lifting of a rebellious leaf like an upstart servant that does not know his place and can never be taught manners, but tranquil, well-bred repose. A book may be a perfect gentleman in its aspect and demeanor, and this book would be good company for personages like Roger Ascham and his pupils the Lady Elizabeth and the Lady Jane Grey.

The Master was evidently riding a hobby, and what I wanted to know was the plan on which he had formed his library. So I brought him back to the point by asking him the question in so many words.

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Yes,—he said,—I have a kind of notion of the way in which a library ought to be put together—no, I don't mean that, I mean ought to grow. I don't pretend to say that mine is a model, but it serves my turn well enough, and it represents me pretty accurately. A scholar must shape his own shell, secrete it one might almost say, for secretion is only separation, you know, of certain elements derived from the materials of the world about us. And a scholar's study, with the books lining its walls, is his shell. It is n't a mollusk's shell, either; it's a caddice-worm's shell. You know about the caddice-worm?

—More or less; less rather than more,—was my humble reply.

Well, sir, the caddice-worm is the larva of a fly, and he makes a case for himself out of all sorts of bits of everything that happen to suit his particular fancy, dead or alive, sticks and stones and small shells with their owners in 'em, living as comfortable as ever. Every one of these caddice-worms has his special fancy as to what he will pick up and glue together, with a kind of natural cement he provides himself, to make his case out of. In it he lives, sticking his head and shoulders out once in a while, that is all. Don't you see that a student in his library is a caddice-worm in his case? I've told you that I take an interest in pretty much everything, and don't mean to fence out any human interests from the private grounds of my intelligence. Then, again, there is a subject, perhaps I may say there is more than one, that I want to exhaust, to know to the very bottom. And besides, of course I must have my literary harem, my *pare aux cerfs*, where my favorites await my moments of leisure and pleasure,—my scarce and precious editions, my luxurious typographical masterpieces; my *Delilahs*, that take my head in their lap: the pleasant story-tellers and the like; the books I love because they are fair to look upon, prized by collectors, endeared by old associations, secret treasures that nobody else knows anything about; books, in short, that I like for insufficient reasons it may be, but peremptorily, and mean to like and to love and to cherish till death us do part.

Don't you see I have given you a key to the way my library is made up, so that you can apriorize the plan according to which I have filled my bookcases? I will tell you how it is carried out.

In the first place, you see, I have four extensive cyclopaedias. Out of these I can get information enough to serve my immediate purpose on almost any subject. These, of course, are supplemented by geographical, biographical, bibliographical, and other dictionaries, including of course lexicons to all the languages I ever meddle with. Next to these come the works relating to my one or two specialties, and these collections I make as perfect as I can. Every library should try to be complete on something, if it were only on the history of pin-heads. I don't mean that I buy all the trashy compilations on my special subjects, but I try to have all the works of any real importance relating to them, old as well as new. In the following compartment you will find the great authors in all the languages I have mastered, from Homer and Hesiod downward to the last great English name.

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This division, you see, you can make almost as extensive or as limited as you choose. You can crowd the great representative writers into a small compass; or you can make a library consisting only of the different editions of Horace, if you have space and money enough. Then comes the Harem, the shelf or the bookcase of Delilahs, that you have paid wicked prices for, that you love without pretending to be reasonable about it, and would bag in case of fire before all the rest, just as Mr. Townley took the Clytie to his carriage when the anti-Catholic mob threatened his house in 1780. As for the foundlings like my Hedericus, they go among their peers; it is a pleasure to take them, from the dusty stall where they were elbowed by plebeian school-books and battered odd volumes, and give them Alduses and Elzevirs for companions.

Nothing remains but the Infirmary. The most painful subjects are the unfortunates that have lost a cover. Bound a hundred years ago, perhaps, and one of the rich old browned covers gone—what a pity! Do you know what to do about it? I'll tell you,—no, I'll show you. Look at this volume. M. T. Ciceronis Opera,—a dozen of 'em,—one of 'em minus half his cover, a poor one-legged cripple, six months ago,—now see him.

—He looked very respectably indeed, both covers dark, ancient, very decently matched; one would hardly notice the fact that they were not twins.

—I'll tell you what I did. You poor devil, said I, you are a disgrace to your family. We must send you to a surgeon and have some kind of a Taliacotian operation performed on you. (You remember the operation as described in Hudibras, of course.) The first thing was to find a subject of similar age and aspect ready to part with one of his members. So I went to Quidlibet's,—you know Quidlibet and that hieroglyphic sign of his with the omniscient-looking eye as its most prominent feature,—and laid my case before him. I want you, said I, to look up an old book of mighty little value,—one of your ten-cent vagabonds would be the sort of thing,—but an old beggar, with a cover like this, and lay it by for me.

And Quidlibet, who is a pleasant body to deal with,—only he has insulted one or two gentlemanly books by selling them to me at very low-bred and shamefully insufficient prices,—Quidlibet, I say, laid by three old books for me to help myself from, and did n't take the trouble even to make me pay the thirty cents for 'em. Well, said I to myself, let us look at our three books that have undergone the last insult short of the trunkmaker's or the paper-mills, and see what they are. There may be something worth looking at in one or the other of 'em.

Now do you know it was with a kind of a tremor that I untied the package and looked at these three unfortunates, too humble for the companionable dime to recognize as its equal in value. The same sort of feeling you know if you ever tried the Bible-and-key, or the Sortes Virgilianae. I think you will like to know what the three books were which had been bestowed upon me gratis, that I might tear away one of the covers of the one that best matched my Cicero, and give it to the binder to cobble my crippled volume with.

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The Master took the three books from a cupboard and continued.

No. I. An odd volume of *The Adventurer*. It has many interesting things enough, but is made precious by containing Simon Browne's famous Dedication to the Queen of his Answer to Tindal's "Christianity as old as the Creation." Simon Browne was the Man without a Soul. An excellent person, a most worthy dissenting minister, but lying under a strange delusion.

Here is a paragraph from his Dedication:

"He was once a man; and of some little name; but of no worth, as his present unparalleled case makes but too manifest; for by the immediate hand of an avenging *god*, his very thinking substance has, for more than seven years, been continually wasting away, till it is wholly perished out of him, if it be not utterly come to nothing. None, no, not the least remembrance of its very ruins, remains, not the shadow of an idea is left, nor any sense that so much as one single one, perfect or imperfect, whole or diminished, ever did appear to a mind within him, or was perceived by it."

Think of this as the Dedication of a book "universally allowed to be the best which that controversy produced," and what a flood of light it pours on the insanities of those self-analyzing diarists whose morbid reveries have been so often mistaken for piety! No. I. had something for me, then, besides the cover, which was all it claimed to have worth offering.

No. II. was "A View of Society and Manners in Italy." Vol. III. By John Moore, M. D. (Zeluco Moore.) You know his pleasant book. In this particular volume what interested me most, perhaps, was the very spirited and intelligent account of the miracle of the liquefaction of the blood of Saint Januarius, but it gave me an hour's mighty agreeable reading. So much for Number Two.

No. III. was "An essay On the Great *effects* of Even Languid and Unheeded *local motion*." By the Hon. Robert Boyle. Published in 1685, and, as appears from other sources, "received with great and general applause." I confess I was a little startled to find how near this earlier philosopher had come to the modern doctrines, such as are illustrated in Tyndall's "Heat considered as a Mode of Motion." He speaks of "Us, who endeavor to resolve the Phenomena of Nature into Matter and Local motion." That sounds like the nineteenth century, but what shall we say to this? "As when a bar of iron or silver, having been well hammered, is newly taken off of the anvil; though the eye can discern no motion in it, yet the touch will readily perceive it to be very hot, and if you spit upon it, the brisk agitation of the insensible parts will become visible in that which they will produce in the liquor." He takes a bar of tin, and tries whether by bending it to and fro two or three times he cannot "procure a considerable internal commotion among the parts"; and having by this means broken or cracked it in the middle, finds, as he expected, that the middle parts had considerably heated each other. There are many

other curious and interesting observations in the volume which I should like to tell you of, but these will serve my purpose.

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—Which book furnished you the old cover you wanted?—said I.

—Did he kill the owl?—said the Master, laughing. [I suppose you, the reader, know the owl story.]—It was Number Two that lent me one of his covers. Poor wretch! He was one of three, and had lost his two brothers. From him that hath not shall be taken even that which he hath. The Scripture had to be fulfilled in his case. But I couldn't help saying to myself, What do you keep writing books for, when the stalls are covered all over with 'em, good books, too, that nobody will give ten cents apiece for, lying there like so many dead beasts of burden, of no account except to strip off their hides? What is the use, I say? I have made a book or two in my time, and I am making another that perhaps will see the light one of these days. But if I had my life to live over again, I think I should go in for silence, and get as near to Nirvana as I could. This language is such a paltry tool! The handle of it cuts and the blade doesn't. You muddle yourself by not knowing what you mean by a word, and send out your unanswered riddles and rebuses to clear up other people's difficulties. It always seems to me that talk is a ripple and thought is a ground swell. A string of words, that mean pretty much anything, helps you in a certain sense to get hold of a thought, just as a string of syllables that mean nothing helps you to a word; but it's a poor business, it's a poor business, and the more you study definition the more you find out how poor it is. Do you know I sometimes think our little entomological neighbor is doing a sounder business than we people that make books about ourselves and our slippery abstractions? A man can see the spots on a bug and count 'em, and tell what their color is, and put another bug alongside of him and see whether the two are alike or different. And when he uses a word he knows just what he means. There is no mistake as to the meaning and identity of *pulex irritans*, confound him!

—What if we should look in, some day, on the Scarabeeist, as he calls himself?—said I.
—The fact is the Master had got agoing at such a rate that I was willing to give a little turn to the conversation.

—Oh, very well,—said the Master,—I had some more things to say, but I don't doubt they'll keep. And besides, I take an interest in entomology, and have my own opinion on the meloe question.

—You don't mean to say you have studied insects as well as solar systems and the order of things generally?

—He looked pleased. All philosophers look pleased when people say to them virtually, "Ye are gods." The Master says he is vain constitutionally, and thanks God that he is. I don't think he has enough vanity to make a fool of himself with it, but the simple truth is he cannot help knowing that he has a wide and lively intelligence, and it pleases him to know it, and to be reminded of it, especially in an oblique and tangential sort of way, so as not to look like downright flattery.

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Yes, yes, I have amused a summer or two with insects, among other things. I described a new tabanus,—horsefly, you know,—which, I think, had escaped notice. I felt as grand when I showed up my new discovery as if I had created the beast. I don't doubt Herschel felt as if he had made a planet when he first showed the astronomers Georgium Sidus, as he called it. And that reminds me of something. I was riding on the outside of a stagecoach from London to Windsor in the year—never mind the year, but it must have been in June, I suppose, for I bought some strawberries. England owes me a sixpence with interest from date, for I gave the woman a shilling, and the coach contrived to start or the woman timed it so that I just missed getting my change. What an odd thing memory is, to be sure, to have kept such a triviality, and have lost so much that was invaluable! She is a crazy wench, that Mnemosyne; she throws her jewels out of the window and locks up straws and old rags in her strong box.

[De profundis! said I to myself, the bottom of the bushel has dropped out! Sancta—
Maria, ora pro nobis!]

—But as I was saying, I was riding on the outside of a stage-coach from London to Windsor, when all at once a picture familiar to me from my New England village childhood came upon me like a reminiscence rather than a revelation. It was a mighty bewilderment of slanted masts and spars and ladders and ropes, from the midst of which a vast tube, looking as if it might be a piece of ordnance such as the revolted angels battered the walls of Heaven with, according to Milton, lifted its muzzle defiantly towards the sky. Why, you blessed old rattletrap, said I to myself, I know you as well as I know my father's spectacles and snuff-box! And that same crazy witch of a Memory, so divinely wise and foolish, travels thirty-five hundred miles or so in a single pulse-beat, makes straight for an old house and an old library and an old corner of it, and whisks out a volume of an old cyclopaedia, and there is the picture of which this is the original. Sir William Herschel's great telescope! It was just about as big, as it stood there by the roadside, as it was in the picture, not much different any way. Why should it be? The pupil of your eye is only a gimlet-hole, not so very much bigger than the eye of a sail-needle, and a camel has to go through it before you can see him. You look into a stereoscope and think you see a miniature of a building or a mountain; you don't, you're made a fool of by your lying intelligence, as you call it; you see the building and the mountain just as large as with your naked eye looking straight at the real objects. Doubt it, do you? Perhaps you'd like to doubt it to the music of a couple of gold five-dollar pieces. If you would, say the word, and man and money, as Messrs. Heenan and Morrissey have it, shall be forthcoming; for I will make you look at a real landscape with your right eye, and a stereoscopic view of it with your left eye, both at once, and you can slide one over the other by a little management and see how exactly the picture overlies the true landscape. We won't try it now, because I want to read you something out of my book.

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—I have noticed that the Master very rarely fails to come back to his original proposition, though he, like myself, is fond of zigzagging in order to reach it. Men's minds are like the pieces on a chess-board in their way of moving. One mind creeps from the square it is on to the next, straight forward, like the pawns. Another sticks close to its own line of thought and follows it as far as it goes, with no heed for others' opinions, as the bishop sweeps the board in the line of his own color. And another class of minds break through everything that lies before them, ride over argument and opposition, and go to the end of the board, like the castle. But there is still another sort of intellect which is very apt to jump over the thought that stands next and come down in the unexpected way of the knight. But that same knight, as the chess manuals will show you, will contrive to get on to every square of the board in a pretty series of moves that looks like a pattern of embroidery, and so these zigzagging minds like the Master's, and I suppose my own is something like it, will sooner or later get back to the square next the one they started from.

The Master took down a volume from one of the shelves. I could not help noticing that it was a shelf near his hand as he sat, and that the volume looked as if he had made frequent use of it. I saw, too, that he handled it in a loving sort of way; the tenderness he would have bestowed on a wife and children had to find a channel somewhere, and what more natural than that he should look fondly on the volume which held the thoughts that had rolled themselves smooth and round in his mind like pebbles on a beach, the dreams which, under cover of the simple artifices such as all writers use, told the little world of readers his secret hopes and aspirations, the fancies which had pleased him and which he could not bear to let die without trying to please others with them? I have a great sympathy with authors, most of all with unsuccessful ones. If one had a dozen lives or so, it would all be very well, but to have only a single ticket in the great lottery, and have that drawn a blank, is a rather sad sort of thing. So I was pleased to see the affectionate kind of pride with which the Master handled his book; it was a success, in its way, and he looked on it with a cheerful sense that he had a right to be proud of it. The Master opened the volume, and, putting on his large round glasses, began reading, as authors love to read that love their books.

—The only good reason for believing in the stability of the moral order of things is to be found in the tolerable steadiness of human averages. Out of a hundred human beings fifty-one will be found in the long run on the side of the right, so far as they know it, and against the wrong. They will be organizers rather than disorganizers, helpers and not hinderers in the upward movement of the race. This is the main fact we have to depend on. The right hand of the great organism is a little stronger than the left, that is all.

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Now and then we come across a left-handed man. So now and then we find a tribe or a generation, the subject of what we may call moral left-handedness, but that need not trouble us about our formula. All we have to do is to spread the average over a wider territory or a longer period of time. Any race or period that insists on being left-handed must go under if it comes in contact with a right-handed one. If there were, as a general rule, fifty-one rogues in the hundred instead of forty-nine, all other qualities of mind and body being equally distributed between the two sections, the order of things would sooner or later end in universal disorder. It is the question between the leak and the pumps.

It does not seem very likely that the Creator of all things is taken by surprise at witnessing anything any of his creatures do or think. Men have sought out many inventions, but they can have contrived nothing which did not exist as an idea in the omniscient consciousness to which past, present, and future are alike Now.

We read what travellers tell us about the King of Dahomey, or the Fejee Island people, or the short and simple annals of the celebrities recorded in the Newgate Calendar, and do not know just what to make of these brothers and sisters of the race; but I do not suppose an intelligence even as high as the angelic beings, to stop short there, would see anything very peculiar or wonderful about them, except as everything is wonderful and unlike everything else.

It is very curious to see how science, that is, looking at and arranging the facts of a case with our own eyes and our own intelligence, without minding what somebody else has said, or how some old majority vote went in a pack of intriguing ecclesiastics,—I say it is very curious to see how science is catching up with one superstition after another.

There is a recognized branch of science familiar to all those who know anything of the studies relating to life, under the name of Teratology. It deals with all sorts of monstrosities which are to be met with in living beings, and more especially in animals. It is found that what used to be called *lusus naturae*, or freaks of nature, are just as much subject to laws as the naturally developed forms of living creatures.

The rustic looks at the Siamese twins, and thinks he is contemplating an unheard-of anomaly; but there are plenty of cases like theirs in the books of scholars, and though they are not quite so common as double cherries, the mechanism of their formation is not a whit more mysterious than that of the twinned fruits. Such cases do not disturb the average arrangement; we have Changs and Engs at one pole, and Cains and Abels at the other. One child is born with six fingers on each hand, and another falls short by one or more fingers of his due allowance; but the glover puts his faith in the great law of averages, and makes his gloves with five fingers apiece, trusting nature for their counterparts.

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Thinking people are not going to be scared out of explaining or at least trying to explain things by the shrieks of persons whose beliefs are disturbed thereby. Comets were portents to Increase Mather, President of Harvard College; “preachers of Divine wrath, heralds and messengers of evil tidings to the world.” It is not so very long since Professor Winthrop was teaching at the same institution. I can remember two of his boys very well, old boys, it is true, they were, and one of them wore a three-cornered cocked hat; but the father of these boys, whom, as I say, I can remember, had to defend himself against the minister of the Old South Church for the impiety of trying to account for earthquakes on natural principles. And his ancestor, Governor Winthrop, would probably have shaken his head over his descendant’s dangerous audacity, if one may judge by the solemn way in which he mentions poor Mrs. Hutchinson’s unpleasant experience, which so grievously disappointed her maternal expectations. But people used always to be terribly frightened by those irregular vital products which we now call “interesting specimens” and carefully preserve in jars of alcohol. It took next to nothing to make a panic; a child was born a few centuries ago with six teeth in its head, and about that time the Turks began gaining great advantages over the Christians. Of course there was an intimate connection between the prodigy and the calamity. So said the wise men of that day.

—All these out-of-the-way cases are studied connectedly now, and are found to obey very exact rules. With a little management one can even manufacture living monstrosities. Malformed salmon and other fish can be supplied in quantity, if anybody happens to want them. Now, what all I have said is tending to is exactly this, namely, that just as the celestial movements are regulated by fixed laws, just as bodily monstrosities are produced according to rule, and with as good reason as normal shapes, so obliquities of character are to be accounted for on perfectly natural principles; they are just as capable of classification as the bodily ones, and they all diverge from a certain average or middle term which is the type of its kind. If life had been a little longer I would have written a number of essays for which, as it is, I cannot expect to have time. I have set down the titles of a hundred or more, and I have often been tempted to publish these, for according to my idea, the title of a book very often renders the rest of it unnecessary. “Moral Teratology,” for instance, which is marked No. 67 on my list of “Essays Potential, not Actual,” suggests sufficiently well what I should be like to say in the pages it would preface. People hold up their hands at a moral monster as if there was no reason for his existence but his own choice. That was a fine specimen we read of in the papers a few years ago, the Frenchman, it may be remembered, who used to waylay and murder young

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women, and after appropriating their effects, bury their bodies in a private cemetery he kept for that purpose. It is very natural, and I do not say it is not very proper, to hang such eccentric persons as this; but it is not clear whether his vagaries produce any more sensation at Headquarters than the meek enterprises of the mildest of city missionaries. For the study of Moral Teratology will teach you that you do not get such a malformed character as that without a long chain of causes to account for it; and if you only knew those causes, you would know perfectly well what to expect.

You may feel pretty sure that our friend of the private cemetery was not the child of pious and intelligent parents; that he was not nurtured by the best of mothers, and educated by the most judicious teachers; and that he did not come of a lineage long known and honored for its intellectual and moral qualities. Suppose that one should go to the worst quarter of the city and pick out the worst-looking child of the worst couple he could find, and then train him up successively at the School for Infant Rogues, the Academy for Young Scamps, and the College for Complete Criminal Education, would it be reasonable to expect a Francois Xavier or a Henry Martyn to be the result of such a training? The traditionists, in whose presumptuous hands the science of anthropology has been trusted from time immemorial, have insisted on eliminating cause and effect from the domain of morals. When they have come across a moral monster they have seemed to think that he put himself together, having a free choice of all the constituents which make up manhood, and that consequently no punishment could be too bad for him.

I say, hang him and welcome, if that is the best thing for society; hate him, in a certain sense, as you hate a rattlesnake, but, if you pretend to be a philosopher, recognize the fact that what you hate in him is chiefly misfortune, and that if you had been born with his villanous low forehead and poisoned instincts, and bred among creatures of the Races Maudites whose natural history has to be studied like that of beasts of prey and vermin, you would not have been sitting there in your gold-bowed spectacles and passing judgment on the peccadilloes of your fellow-creatures.

I have seen men and women so disinterested and noble, and devoted to the best works, that it appeared to me if any good and faithful servant was entitled to enter into the joys of his Lord, such as these might be. But I do not know that I ever met with a human being who seemed to me to have a stronger claim on the pitying consideration and kindness of his Maker than a wretched, puny, crippled, stunted child that I saw in Newgate, who was pointed out as one of the most notorious and inveterate little thieves in London. I have no doubt that some of those who were looking at this pitiable morbid secretion of the diseased social organism thought they were very virtuous for hating him so heartily.

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It is natural, and in one sense is all right enough. I want to catch a thief and put the extinguisher on an incendiary as much as my neighbors do; but I have two sides to my consciousness as I have two sides to my heart, one carrying dark, impure blood, and the other the bright stream which has been purified and vivified by the great source of life and death,—the oxygen of the air which gives all things their vital heat, and burns all things at last to ashes.

One side of me loves and hates; the other side of me judges, say rather pleads and suspends judgment. I think, if I were left to myself, I should hang a rogue and then write his apology and subscribe to a neat monument, commemorating, not his virtues, but his misfortunes. I should, perhaps, adorn the marble with emblems, as is the custom with regard to the more regular and normally constituted members of society. It would not be proper to put the image of a lamb upon the stone which marked the resting-place of him of the private cemetery. But I would not hesitate to place the effigy of a wolf or a hyena upon the monument. I do not judge these animals, I only kill them or shut them up. I presume they stand just as well with their Maker as lambs and kids, and the existence of such beings is a perpetual plea for God Almighty's poor, yelling, scalping Indians, his weasand-stopping Thugs, his despised felons, his murdering miscreants, and all the unfortunates whom we, picked individuals of a picked class of a picked race, scrubbed, combed, and catechized from our cradles upward, undertake to find accommodations for in another state of being where it is to be hoped they will have a better chance than they had in this.

The Master paused, and took off his great round spectacles. I could not help thinking that he looked benevolent enough to pardon Judas Iscariot just at that moment, though his features can knot themselves up pretty, formidably on occasion.

—You are somewhat of a phrenologist, I judge, by the way you talk of instinctive and inherited tendencies—I said.

—They tell me I ought to be,—he answered, parrying my question, as I thought.—I have had a famous chart made out of my cerebral organs, according to which I ought to have been—something more than a poor Magister Artaum.

—I thought a shade of regret deepened the lines on his broad, antique-looking forehead, and I began talking about all the sights I had seen in the way of monstrosities, of which I had a considerable list, as you will see when I tell you my weakness in that direction. This, you understand, Beloved, is private and confidential.

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I pay my quarter of a dollar and go into all the side-shows that follow the caravans and circuses round the country. I have made friends of all the giants and all the dwarfs. I became acquainted with Monsieur Bihin, le plus bel homme du monde, and one of the biggest, a great many years ago, and have kept up my agreeable relations with him ever since. He is a most interesting giant, with a softness of voice and tenderness of feeling which I find very engaging. I was on friendly terms with Mr. Charles Freeman, a very superior giant of American birth, seven feet four, I think, in height, "double-jointed," of mylodon muscularity, the same who in a British prize-ring tossed the Tipton Slasher from one side of the rope to the other, and now lies stretched, poor fellow! in a mighty grave in the same soil which holds the sacred ashes of Cribb, and the honored dust of Burke,—not the one "commonly called the sublime," but that other Burke to whom Nature had denied the sense of hearing lest he should be spoiled by listening to the praises of the admiring circles which looked on his dear-bought triumphs. Nor have I despised those little ones whom that devout worshipper of Nature in her exceptional forms, the distinguished Barnum, has introduced to the notice of mankind. The General touches his chapeau to me, and the Commodore gives me a sailor's greeting. I have had confidential interviews with the double-headed daughter of Africa,—so far, at least, as her twofold personality admitted of private confidences. I have listened to the touching experiences of the Bearded Lady, whose rough cheeks belie her susceptible heart. Miss Jane Campbell has allowed me to question her on the delicate subject of avoirdupois equivalents; and the armless fair one, whose embrace no monarch could hope to win, has wrought me a watch-paper with those despised digits which have been degraded from gloves to boots in our evolution from the condition of quadrumana.

I hope you have read my experiences as good-naturedly as the old Master listened to them. He seemed to be pleased with my whim, and promised to go with me to see all the side-shows of the next caravan. Before I left him he wrote my name in a copy of the new edition of his book, telling me that it would not all be new to me by a great deal, for he often talked what he had printed to make up for having printed a good deal of what he had talked.

Here is the passage of his Poem the Young Astronomer read to us.

Wind-clouds and star-drifts.

IV

From my lone turret as I look around
O'er the green meadows to the ring of blue,
From slope, from summit, and from half-hid vale
The sky is stabbed with dagger-pointed spires,
Their gilded symbols whirling in the wind,
Their brazen tongues proclaiming to the world,
Here truth is sold, the only genuine ware;

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See that it has our trade-mark!
You will buy Poison instead of food across the way,
The lies of—this or that, each several name
The standard's blazon and the battle-cry
Of some true-gospel faction, and again
The token of the Beast to all beside.
And grouped round each I see a huddling crowd
Alike in all things save the words they use;
In love, in longing, hate and fear the same.

Whom do we trust and serve? We speak of one
And bow to many; Athens still would find
The shrines of all she worshipped safe within
Our tall barbarian temples, and the thrones
That crowned Olympus mighty as of old.
The god of music rules the Sabbath choir;
The lyric muse must leave the sacred nine
To help us please the dilettante's ear;
Plutus limps homeward with us, as we leave
The portals of the temple where we knelt
And listened while the god of eloquence
(Hermes of ancient days, but now disguised
In sable vestments) with that other god
Somnus, the son of Erebus and Nog,
Fights in unequal contest for our souls;
The dreadful sovereign of the under world
Still shakes his sceptre at us, and we hear
The baying of the triple-throated hound;
Eros-is young as ever, and as fair
The lovely Goddess born of ocean's foam.

These be thy gods, O Israel! Who is he,
The one ye name and tell us that ye serve,
Whom ye would call me from my lonely tower
To worship with the many-headed throng?
Is it the God that walked in Eden's grove
In the cool hour to seek our guilty sire?
The God who dealt with Abraham as the sons
Of that old patriarch deal with other men?
The jealous God of Moses, one who feels



An image as an insult, and is wroth
With him who made it and his child unborn?
The God who plagued his people for the sin
Of their adulterous king, beloved of him,
The same who offers to a chosen few
The right to praise him in eternal song
While a vast shrieking world of endless woe
Blends its dread chorus with their rapturous hymn?
Is this the God ye mean, or is it he
Who heeds the sparrow's fall, whose loving heart
Is as the pitying father's to his child,
Whose lesson to his children is, "Forgive,"
Whose plea for all, "They know not what they do"

I claim the right of knowing whom I serve,
Else is my service idle; He that asks
My homage asks it from a reasoning soul.
To crawl is not to worship; we have learned
A drill of eyelids, bended neck and knee,
Hanging our prayers on binges, till we ape
The flexures of the many-jointed worm.
Asia has taught her

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Aliabs and salaams

To the world's children,—we have grown to men!
We who have rolled the sphere beneath our feet
To find a virgin forest, as we lay
The beams of our rude temple, first of all
Must frame its doorway high enough for man
To pass unstooping; knowing as we do
That He who shaped us last of living forms
Has long enough been served by creeping things,
Reptiles that left their foot-prints in the sand
Of old sea-margins that have turned to stone,
And men who learned their ritual; we demand
To know him first, then trust him and then love
When we have found him worthy of our love,
Tried by our own poor hearts and not before;
He must be truer than the truest friend,
He must be tenderer than a woman's love,
A father better than the best of sires;
Kinder than she who bore us, though we sin
Often than did the brother we are told,
We-poor ill-tempered mortals-must forgive,
Though seven times sinning threescore times and ten.

This is the new world's gospel: Be ye men!
Try well the legends of the children's time;
Ye are the chosen people, God has led
Your steps across the desert of the deep
As now across the desert of the shore;
Mountains are cleft before you as the sea
Before the wandering tribe of Israel's sons;
Still onward rolls the thunderous caravan,
Its coming printed on the western sky,
A cloud by day, by night a pillared flame;
Your prophets are a hundred unto one
Of them of old who cried, "Thus saith the Lord";
They told of cities that should fall in heaps,
But yours of mightier cities that shall rise
Where yet the lonely fishers spread their nets,
Where hides the fox and hoots the midnight owl;
The tree of knowledge in your garden grows
Not single, but at every humble door;
Its branches lend you their immortal food,



That fills you with the sense of what ye are,
No servants of an altar hewed and carved
From senseless stone by craft of human hands,
Rabbi, or dervish, Brahmin, bishop, bonze,
But masters of the charm with which they work
To keep your hands from that forbidden tree!

Ye that have tasted that divinest fruit,
Look on this world of yours with opened eyes!
Ye are as gods! Nay, makers of your gods,
Each day ye break an image in your shrine
And plant a fairer image where it stood
Where is the Moloch of your fathers' creed,
Whose fires of torment burned for span-long babes?
Fit object for a tender mother's love!
Why not? It was a bargain duly made
For these same infants through the surety's act
Intrusted with their

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all for earth and heaven,
By Him who chose their guardian, knowing well
His fitness for the task,—this, even this,
Was the true doctrine only yesterday
As thoughts are reckoned,—and to-day you hear
In words that sound as if from human tongues
Those monstrous, uncouth horrors of the past
That blot the blue of heaven and shame the earth
As would the saurians of the age of slime,
Awaking from their stony sepulchres
And wallowing hateful in the eye of day!

Four of us listened to these lines as the young man read them,—the Master and myself and our two ladies. This was the little party we got up to hear him read. I do not think much of it was very new to the Master or myself. At any rate, he said to me when we were alone, That is the kind of talk the “natural man,” as the theologians call him, is apt to fall into.

—I thought it was the Apostle Paul, and not the theologians, that used the term “natural man”, I ventured to suggest.

—I should like to know where the Apostle Paul learned English?—said the Master, with the look of one who does not mean to be tripped up if he can help himself.—But at any rate,—he continued,—the “natural man,” so called, is worth listening to now and then, for he didn’t make his nature, and the Devil did n’t make it; and if the Almighty made it, I never saw or heard of anything he made that wasn’t worth attending to.

The young man begged the Lady to pardon anything that might sound harshly in these crude thoughts of his. He had been taught strange things, he said, from old theologies, when he was a child, and had thought his way out of many of his early superstitions. As for the Young Girl, our Scheherezade, he said to her that she must have got dreadfully tired (at which she colored up and said it was no such thing), and he promised that, to pay for her goodness in listening, he would give her a lesson in astronomy the next fair evening, if she would be his scholar, at which she blushed deeper than before, and said something which certainly was not No.

IX

There was no sooner a vacancy on our side of the table, than the Master proposed a change of seats which would bring the Young Astronomer into our immediate neighborhood. The Scarabee was to move into the place of our late unlamented



associate, the Man of Letters, so called. I was to take his place, the Master to take mine, and the young man that which had been occupied by the Master. The advantages of this change were obvious. The old Master likes an audience, plainly enough; and with myself on one side of him, and the young student of science, whose speculative turn is sufficiently shown in the passages from his poem, on the other side, he may feel quite sure of being listened to. There is only one trouble in the arrangement, and that is that it brings this young man not only close to us, but also next to our Scheherezade.

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I am obliged to confess that he has shown occasional marks of inattention even while the Master was discoursing in a way that I found agreeable enough. I am quite sure it is no intentional disrespect to the old Master. It seems to me rather that he has become interested in the astronomical lessons he has been giving the Young Girl. He has studied so much alone, that it is naturally a pleasure to him to impart some of his knowledge. As for his young pupil, she has often thought of being a teacher herself, so that she is of course very glad to acquire any accomplishment that may be useful to her in that capacity. I do not see any reason why some of the boarders should have made such remarks as they have done. One cannot teach astronomy to advantage, without going out of doors, though I confess that when two young people go out by daylight to study the stars, as these young folks have done once or twice, I do not so much wonder at a remark or suggestion from those who have nothing better to do than study their neighbors.

I ought to have told the reader before this that I found, as I suspected, that our innocent-looking Scheherezade was at the bottom of the popgun business. I watched her very closely, and one day, when the little monkey made us all laugh by stopping the Member of the Haouse in the middle of a speech he was repeating to us,—it was his great effort of the season on a bill for the protection of horn-pout in Little Muddy River,—I caught her making the signs that set him going. At a slight tap of her knife against her plate, he got all ready, and presently I saw her cross her knife and fork upon her plate, and as she did so, pop! went the small piece of artillery. The Member of the Haouse was just saying that this bill hit his constitoents in their most vital—when a pellet hit him in the feature of his countenance most exposed to aggressions and least tolerant of liberties. The Member resented this unparliamentary treatment by jumping up from his chair and giving the small aggressor a good shaking, at the same time seizing the implement which had caused his wrath and breaking it into splinters. The Boy blubbered, the Young Girl changed color, and looked as if she would cry, and that was the last of these interruptions.

I must own that I have sometimes wished we had the popgun back, for it answered all the purpose of “the previous question” in a deliberative assembly. No doubt the Young Girl was capricious in setting the little engine at work, but she cut short a good many disquisitions that threatened to be tedious. I find myself often wishing for her and her small fellow-conspirator’s intervention, in company where I am supposed to be enjoying myself. When my friend the politician gets too far into the personal details of the quorum pars magna fui, I find myself all at once exclaiming in mental articulation, Popgun! When my friend the story-teller begins that protracted narrative which has often emptied me of all my voluntary laughter for the evening, he has got but a very little way when I say to myself, What wouldn’t I give for a pellet from that popgun! In short, so useful has that trivial implement proved as a jaw-stopper and a boricide, that I never go to a club or a dinner-party, without wishing the company included our Scheherezade and That Boy with his popgun.



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How clearly I see now into the mechanism of the Young Girl's audacious contrivance for regulating our table-talk! Her brain is tired half the time, and she is too nervous to listen patiently to what a quieter person would like well enough, or at least would not be annoyed by. It amused her to invent a scheme for managing the headstrong talkers, and also let off a certain spirit of mischief which in some of these nervous girls shows itself in much more questionable forms. How cunning these half-hysteric young persons are, to be sure! I had to watch a long time before I detected the telegraphic communication between the two conspirators. I have no doubt she had sedulously schooled the little monkey to his business, and found great delight in the task of instruction.

But now that our Scheherezade has become a scholar instead of a teacher, she seems to be undergoing a remarkable transformation. Astronomy is indeed a noble science. It may well kindle the enthusiasm of a youthful nature. I fancy at times that I see something of that starry light which I noticed in the young man's eyes gradually kindling in hers. But can it be astronomy alone that does it? Her color comes and goes more readily than when the old Master sat next her on the left. It is having this young man at her side, I suppose. Of course it is. I watch her with great, I may say tender interest. If he would only fall in love with her, seize upon her wandering affections and fancies as the Romans seized the Sabine virgins, lift her out of herself and her listless and weary drudgeries, stop the outflow of this young life which is draining itself away in forced literary labor—dear me, dear me—if, if, if—

“If I were God
An' ye were Martin Elginbrod!”

I am afraid all this may never be. I fear that he is too much given to lonely study, to self-companionship, to all sorts of questionings, to looking at life as at a solemn show where he is only a spectator. I dare not build up a romance on what I have yet seen. My reader may, but I will answer for nothing. I shall wait and see.

The old Master and I have at last made that visit to the Scarabee which we had so long promised ourselves.

When we knocked at his door he came and opened it, instead of saying, Come in. He was surprised, I have no doubt, at the sound of our footsteps; for he rarely has a visitor, except the little monkey of a boy, and he may have thought a troop of marauders were coming to rob him of his treasures. Collectors feel so rich in the possession of their rarer specimens, that they forget how cheap their precious things seem to common eyes, and are as afraid of being robbed as if they were dealers in diamonds. They have the name of stealing from each other now and then, it is true, but many of their priceless possessions would hardly tempt a beggar. Values are artificial: you will not be able to get ten cents of the year 1799 for a dime.

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The Scarabee was reassured as soon as he saw our faces, and he welcomed us not ungraciously into his small apartment. It was hard to find a place to sit down, for all the chairs were already occupied by cases and boxes full of his favorites. I began, therefore, looking round the room. Bugs of every size and aspect met my eyes wherever they turned. I felt for the moment as I suppose a man may feel in a fit of delirium tremens. Presently my attention was drawn towards a very odd-looking insect on the mantelpiece. This animal was incessantly raising its arms as if towards heaven and clasping them together, as though it were wrestling in prayer.

Do look at this creature,—I said to the Master, he seems to be very hard at work at his devotions.

Mantas religiosa,—said the Master,—I know the praying rogue. Mighty devout and mighty cruel; crushes everything he can master, or impales it on his spiny shanks and feeds upon it, like a gluttonous wretch as he is. I have seen the Mantis religiosa on a larger scale than this, now and then. A sacred insect, sir,—sacred to many tribes of men; to the Hottentots, to the Turks, yes, sir, and to the Frenchmen, who call the rascal prie dieu, and believe him to have special charge of children that have lost their way.

Doesn't it seem as if there was a vein of satire as well as of fun that ran through the solemn manifestations of creative wisdom? And of deception too—do you see how nearly those dried leaves resemble an insect?

They do, indeed,—I answered,—but not so closely as to deceive me. They remind me of an insect, but I could not mistake them for one.

—Oh, you couldn't mistake those dried leaves for an insect, hey? Well, how can you mistake that insect for dried leaves? That is the question; for insect it is,—*phyllum siccifolium*, the "walking leaf," as some have called it.—The Master had a hearty laugh at my expense.

The Scarabee did not seem to be amused at the Master's remarks or at my blunder. Science is always perfectly serious to him; and he would no more laugh over anything connected with his study, than a clergyman would laugh at a funeral.

They send me all sorts of trumpery,—he said, Orthoptera and Lepidoptera; as if a coleopterist—a scarabeeist—cared for such things. This business is no boy's play to me. The insect population of the world is not even catalogued yet, and a lifetime given to the scarabees is a small contribution enough to their study. I like your men of general intelligence well enough,—your Linnwuses and your Buffons and your Cuviers; but Cuvier had to go to Latreille for his insects, and if Latreille had been able to consult me, —yes, me, gentlemen!—he would n't have made the blunders he did about some of the coleoptera.

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The old Master, as I think you must have found out by this time,—you, Beloved, I mean, who read every word,—has a reasonably good opinion, as perhaps he has a right to have, of his own intelligence and acquirements. The Scarabee's exultation and glow as he spoke of the errors of the great entomologist which he himself could have corrected, had the effect on the old Master which a lusty crow has upon the feathered champion of the neighboring barnyard. He too knew something about insects. Had he not discovered a, new tabanus? Had he not made preparations of the very coleoptera the Scarabee studied so exclusively,—preparations which the illustrious Swammerdam would not have been ashamed of, and dissected a melolontha as exquisitely as Strauss Durckheim himself ever did it? So the Master, recalling these studies of his and certain difficult and disputed points at which he had labored in one of his entomological paroxysms, put a question which there can be little doubt was intended to puzzle the Scarabee, and perhaps,—for the best of us is human (I am beginning to love the old Master, but he has his little weaknesses, thank Heaven, like the rest of us),—I say perhaps, was meant to show that some folks knew as much about some things as some other folks.

The little dried-up specialist did not dilate into fighting dimensions as—perhaps, again—the Master may have thought he would. He looked a mild surprise, but remained as quiet as one of his own beetles when you touch him and he makes believe he is dead. The blank silence became oppressive. Was the Scarabee crushed, as so many of his namesakes are crushed, under the heel of this trampling omniscient?

At last the Scarabee creaked out very slowly, “Did I understand you to ask the following question, to wit?” and so forth; for I was quite out of my depth, and only know that he repeated the Master's somewhat complex inquiry, word for word.

—That was exactly my question,—said the Master,—and I hope it is not uncivil to ask one which seems to me to be a puzzler.

Not uncivil in the least,—said the Scarabee, with something as much like a look of triumph as his dry face permitted,—not uncivil at all, but a rather extraordinary question to ask at this date of entomological history. I settled that question some years ago, by a series of dissections, six-and-thirty in number, reported in an essay I can show you and would give you a copy of, but that I am a little restricted in my revenue, and our Society has to be economical, so I have but this one. You see, sir,—and he went on with elytra and antennae and tarsi and metatarsi and tracheae and stomata and wing-muscles and leg-muscles and ganglions,—all plain enough, I do not doubt, to those accustomed to handling dor-bugs and squash-bugs and such undesirable objects of affection to all but naturalists.

He paused when he got through, not for an answer, for there evidently was none, but to see how the Master would take it. The Scarabee had had it all his own way.

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The Master was loyal to his own generous nature. He felt as a peaceful citizen might feel who had squared off at a stranger for some supposed wrong, and suddenly discovered that he was undertaking to chastise Mr. Dick Curtis, “the pet of the Fancy,” or Mr. Joshua Hudson; “the John Bull fighter.”

He felt the absurdity of his discomfiture, for he turned to me good-naturedly, and said,

“Poor Johnny Raw! What madness could impel
So rum a flat to face so prime a swell?”

To tell the truth, I rather think the Master enjoyed his own defeat. The Scarabee had a right to his victory; a man does not give his life to the study of a single limited subject for nothing, and the moment we come across a first-class expert we begin to take a pride in his superiority. It cannot offend us, who have no right at all to be his match on his own ground. Besides, there is a very curious sense of satisfaction in getting a fair chance to sneer at ourselves and scoff at our own pretensions. The first person of our dual consciousness has been smirking and rubbing his hands and felicitating himself on his innumerable superiorities, until we have grown a little tired of him. Then, when the other fellow, the critic, the cynic, the Shimei, who has been quiet, letting self-love and self-glorification have their perfect work, opens fire upon the first half of our personality and overwhelms it with that wonderful vocabulary of abuse of which he is the unrivalled master, there is no denying that he enjoys it immensely; and as he is ourself for the moment, or at least the chief portion of ourself (the other half-self retiring into a dim corner of semiconsciousness and cowering under the storm of sneers and contumely, —you follow me perfectly, Beloved,—the way is as plain as the path of the babe to the maternal fount), as, I say, the abusive fellow is the chief part of us for the time, and he likes to exercise his slanderous vocabulary, we on the whole enjoy a brief season of self-depreciation and self-scolding very heartily.

It is quite certain that both of us, the Master and myself, conceived on the instant a respect for the Scarabee which we had not before felt. He had grappled with one difficulty at any rate and mastered it. He had settled one thing, at least, so it appeared, in such a way that it was not to be brought up again. And now he was determined, if it cost him the effort of all his remaining days, to close another discussion and put forever to rest the anxious doubts about the larva of meloe.

—Your thirty-six dissections must have cost you a deal of time and labor,—the Master said.

—What have I to do with time, but to fill it up with labor?—answered the Scarabee.—It is my meat and drink to work over my beetles. My holidays are when I get a rare specimen. My rest is to watch the habits of insects, those that I do not pretend to study. Here is my muscarium, my home for house-flies; very interesting creatures; here they breed and buzz and feed and enjoy themselves, and die in a good old age of a few

months. My favorite insect lives in this other case; she is at home, but in her private-chamber; you shall see her.

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He tapped on the glass lightly, and a large, gray, hairy spider came forth from the hollow of a funnel-like web.

—And this is all the friend you have to love? said the Master, with a tenderness in his voice which made the question very significant.

—Nothing else loves me better than she does, that I know of,—he answered.

—To think of it! Not even a dog to lick his hand, or a cat to purr and rub her fur against him! Oh, these boarding-houses, these boarding-houses! What forlorn people one sees stranded on their desolate shores! Decayed gentlewomen with the poor wrecks of what once made their households beautiful, disposed around them in narrow chambers as they best may be, coming down day after day, poor souls! to sit at the board with strangers; their hearts full of sad memories which have no language but a sigh, no record but the lines of sorrow on their features; orphans, creatures with growing tendrils and nothing to cling to; lonely rich men, casting about them what to do with the wealth they never knew how to enjoy, when they shall no longer worry over keeping and increasing it; young men and young women, left to their instincts, unguarded, unwatched, save by malicious eyes, which are sure to be found and to find occupation in these miscellaneous collections of human beings; and now and then a shred of humanity like this little adust specialist, with just the resources needed to keep the “radical moisture” from entirely exhaling from his attenuated organism, and busying himself over a point of science, or compiling a hymn-book, or editing a grammar or a dictionary;—such are the tenants of boarding-houses whom we cannot think of without feeling how sad it is when the wind is not tempered to the shorn lamb; when the solitary, whose hearts are shrivelling, are not set in families!

The Master was greatly interested in the Scarabee’s Muscarium.

—I don’t remember,—he said,—that I have heard of such a thing as that before. Mighty curious creatures, these same house-flies! Talk about miracles! Was there ever anything more miraculous, so far as our common observation goes, than the coming and the going of these creatures? Why didn’t Job ask where the flies come from and where they go to? I did not say that you and I don’t know, but how many people do know anything about it? Where are the cradles of the young flies? Where are the cemeteries of the dead ones, or do they die at all except when we kill them? You think all the flies of the year are dead and gone, and there comes a warm day and all at once there is a general resurrection of ’em; they had been taking a nap, that is all.

—I suppose you do not trust your spider in the Muscarium?—said I, addressing the Scarabee.



—Not exactly,—he answered,—she is a terrible creature. She loves me, I think, but she is a killer and a cannibal among other insects. I wanted to pair her with a male spider, but it wouldn't do.

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-Wouldn't do?—said I,—why not? Don't spiders have their mates as well as other folks?

-Oh yes, sometimes; but the females are apt to be particular, and if they don't like the mate you offer them they fall upon him and kill him and eat him up. You see they are a great deal bigger and stronger than the males, and they are always hungry and not always particularly anxious to have one of the other sex bothering round.

—Woman's rights!—said I,—there you have it! Why don't those talking ladies take a spider as their emblem? Let them form arachnoid associations, spinsters and spiders would be a good motto.

—The Master smiled. I think it was an eleemosynary smile, for my pleasantry seems to me a particularly basso rilievo, as I look upon it in cold blood. But conversation at the best is only a thin sprinkling of occasional felicities set in platitudes and commonplaces. I never heard people talk like the characters in the "School for Scandal,"—I should very much like to.—I say the Master smiled. But the Scarabee did not relax a muscle of his countenance.

—There are persons whom the very mildest of faecetiae sets off into such convulsions of laughter, that one is afraid lest they should injure themselves. Even when a jest misses fire completely, so that it is no jest at all, but only a jocular intention, they laugh just as heartily. Leave out the point of your story, get the word wrong on the duplicity of which the pun that was to excite hilarity depended, and they still honor your abortive attempt with the most lusty and vociferous merriment.

There is a very opposite class of persons whom anything in the nature of a joke perplexes, troubles, and even sometimes irritates, seeming to make them think they are trifled with, if not insulted. If you are fortunate enough to set the whole table laughing, one of this class of persons will look inquiringly round, as if something had happened, and, seeing everybody apparently amused but himself, feel as if he was being laughed at, or at any rate as if something had been said which he was not to hear. Often, however, it does not go so far as this, and there is nothing more than mere insensibility to the cause of other people's laughter, a sort of joke-blindness, comparable to the well-known color-blindness with which many persons are afflicted as a congenital incapacity.

I have never seen the Scarabee smile. I have seen him take off his goggles,—he breakfasts in these occasionally,—I suppose when he has been tiring his poor old eyes out over night gazing through his microscope,—I have seen him take his goggles off, I say, and stare about him, when the rest of us were laughing at something which amused us, but his features betrayed nothing more than a certain bewilderment, as if we had been foreigners talking in an unknown tongue. I do not think it was a mere fancy of mine that he bears a kind of resemblance to the tribe of insects he gives his life

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to studying. His shiny black coat; his rounded back, convex with years of stooping over his minute work; his angular movements, made natural to him by his habitual style of manipulation; the aridity of his organism, with which his voice is in perfect keeping;—all these marks of his special sedentary occupation are so nearly what might be expected, and indeed so much, in accordance with the more general fact that a man's aspect is subdued to the look of what he works in, that I do not feel disposed to accuse myself of exaggeration in my account of the Scarabee's appearance. But I think he has learned something else of his coleopterous friends. The beetles never smile. Their physiognomy is not adapted to the display of the emotions; the lateral movement of their jaws being effective for alimentary purposes, but very limited in its gamut of expression. It is with these unemotional beings that the Scarabee passes his life. He has but one object, and that is perfectly serious, to his mind, in fact, of absorbing interest and importance. In one aspect of the matter he is quite right, for if the Creator has taken the trouble to make one of His creatures in just such a way and not otherwise, from the beginning of its existence on our planet in ages of unknown remoteness to the present time, the man who first explains His idea to us is charged with a revelation. It is by no means impossible that there may be angels in the celestial hierarchy to whom it would be new and interesting. I have often thought that spirits of a higher order than man might be willing to learn something from a human mind like that of Newton, and I see no reason why an angelic being might not be glad to hear a lecture from Mr. Huxley, or Mr. Tyndall, or one of our friends at Cambridge.

I have been sinuous as the Links of Forth seen from Stirling Castle, or as that other river which threads the Berkshire valley and runs, a perennial stream, through my memory, —from which I please myself with thinking that I have learned to wind without fretting against the shore, or forgetting cohere I am flowing,—sinuous, I say, but not jerky,—no, not jerky nor hard to follow for a reader of the right sort, in the prime of life and full possession of his or her faculties.

—All this last page or so, you readily understand, has been my private talk with you, the Reader. The cue of the conversation which I interrupted by this digression is to be found in the words “a good motto;” from which I begin my account of the visit again.

—Do you receive many visitors,—I mean vertebrates, not articulates? —said the Master.

I thought this question might perhaps bring il disiato riso, the long-wished-for smile, but the Scarabee interpreted it in the simplest zoological sense, and neglected its hint of playfulness with the most absolute unconsciousness, apparently, of anything not entirely serious and literal.

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—You mean friends, I suppose,—he answered.—I have correspondents, but I have no friends except this spider. I live alone, except when I go to my subsection meetings; I get a box of insects now and then, and send a few beetles to coleopterists in other entomological districts; but science is exacting, and a man that wants to leave his record has not much time for friendship. There is no great chance either for making friends among naturalists. People that are at work on different things do not care a great deal for each other's specialties, and people that work on the same thing are always afraid lest one should get ahead of the other, or steal some of his ideas before he has made them public. There are none too many people you can trust in your laboratory. I thought I had a friend once, but he watched me at work and stole the discovery of a new species from me, and, what is more, had it named after himself. Since that time I have liked spiders better than men. They are hungry and savage, but at any rate they spin their own webs out of their own insides. I like very well to talk with gentlemen that play with my branch of entomology; I do not doubt it amused you, and if you want to see anything I can show you, I shall have no scruple in letting you see it. I have never had any complaint to make of amateurs.

—Upon my honor,—I would hold my right hand up and take my Bible-oath, if it was not busy with the pen at this moment,—I do not believe the Scarabee had the least idea in the world of the satire on the student of the Order of Things implied in his invitation to the “amatoor.” As for the Master, he stood fire perfectly, as he always does; but the idea that he, who had worked a considerable part of several seasons at examining and preparing insects, who believed himself to have given a new tabanus to the catalogue of native diptera, the idea that he was playing with science, and might be trusted anywhere as a harmless amateur, from whom no expert could possibly fear any anticipation of his unpublished discoveries, went beyond anything set down in that book of his which contained so much of the strainings of his wisdom.

The poor little Scarabee began fidgeting round about this time, and uttering some half-audible words, apologetical, partly, and involving an allusion to refreshments. As he spoke, he opened a small cupboard, and as he did so out bolted an uninvited tenant of the same, long in person, sable in hue, and swift of movement, on seeing which the Scarabee simply said, without emotion, blatta, but I, forgetting what was due to good manners, exclaimed cockroach!

We could not make up our minds to tax the Scarabee's hospitality, already levied upon by the voracious articulate. So we both alleged a state of utter repletion, and did not solve the mystery of the contents of the cupboard,—not too luxurious, it may be conjectured, and yet kindly offered, so that we felt there was a moist filament of the social instinct running like a nerve through that exsiccated and almost anhydrous organism.

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We left him with professions of esteem and respect which were real. We had gone, not to scoff, but very probably to smile, and I will not say we did not. But the Master was more thoughtful than usual.

—If I had not solemnly dedicated myself to the study of the Order of Things,—he said, —I do verily believe I would give what remains to me of life to the investigation of some single point I could utterly eviscerate and leave finally settled for the instruction and, it may be, the admiration of all coming time. The keel ploughs ten thousand leagues of ocean and leaves no trace of its deep-graven furrows. The chisel scars only a few inches on the face of a rock, but the story it has traced is read by a hundred generations. The eagle leaves no track of his path, no memory of the place where he built his nest; but a patient mollusk has bored a little hole in a marble column of the temple of Serapis, and the monument of his labor outlasts the altar and the statue of the divinity.

—Whew!—said I to myself,—that sounds a little like what we college boys used to call a “squirt.”—The Master guessed my thought and said, smiling,

—That is from one of my old lectures. A man’s tongue wags along quietly enough, but his pen begins prancing as soon as it touches paper. I know what you are thinking—you’re thinking this is a squirt. That word has taken the nonsense out of a good many high-stepping fellows. But it did a good deal of harm too, and it was a vulgar lot that applied it oftenest.

I am at last perfectly satisfied that our Landlady has no designs on the Capitalist, and as well convinced that any fancy of mine that he was like to make love to her was a mistake. The good woman is too much absorbed in her children, and more especially in “the Doctor,” as she delights to call her son, to be the prey of any foolish desire of changing her condition. She is doing very well as it is, and if the young man succeeds, as I have little question that he will, I think it probable enough that she will retire from her position as the head of a boarding-house. We have all liked the good woman who have lived with her,—I mean we three friends who have put ourselves on record. Her talk, I must confess, is a little diffuse and not always absolutely correct, according to the standard of the great Worcester; she is subject to lachrymose cataclysms and semiconvulsive upheavals when she reverts in memory to her past trials, and especially when she recalls the virtues of her deceased spouse, who was, I suspect, an adjunct such as one finds not rarely annexed to a capable matron in charge of an establishment like hers; that is to say, an easy-going, harmless, fetch-and-carry, carve-and-help, get-out-of-the-way kind of neuter, who comes up three times (as they say drowning people do) every day, namely, at breakfast, dinner, and tea, and disappears, submerged beneath the waves of life, during the intervals of these events.

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It is a source of genuine delight to me, who am of a kindly nature enough, according to my own reckoning, to watch the good woman, and see what looks of pride and affection she bestows upon her Benjamin, and how, in spite of herself, the maternal feeling betrays its influence in her dispensations of those delicacies which are the exceptional element in our entertainments. I will not say that Benjamin's mess, like his Scripture namesake's, is five times as large as that of any of the others, for this would imply either an economical distribution to the guests in general or heaping the poor young man's plate in a way that would spoil the appetite of an Esquimau, but you may be sure he fares well if anybody does; and I would have you understand that our Landlady knows what is what as well as who is who.

I begin really to entertain very sanguine expectations of young Doctor Benjamin Franklin. He has lately been treating a patient of whose good-will may prove of great importance to him. The Capitalist hurt one of his fingers somehow or other, and requested our young doctor to take a look at it. The young doctor asked nothing better than to take charge of the case, which proved more serious than might have been at first expected, and kept him in attendance more than a week. There was one very odd thing about it. The Capitalist seemed to have an idea that he was like to be ruined in the matter of bandages,—small strips of worn linen which any old woman could have spared him from her rag-bag, but which, with that strange perversity which long habits of economy give to a good many elderly people, he seemed to think were as precious as if they had been turned into paper and stamped with promises to pay in thousands, from the national treasury. It was impossible to get this whim out of him, and the young doctor had tact enough to humor him in it. All this did not look very promising for the state of mind in which the patient was like to receive his bill for attendance when that should be presented. Doctor Benjamin was man enough, however, to come up to the mark, and sent him in such an account as it was becoming to send a man of ample means who had been diligently and skilfully cared for. He looked forward with some uncertainty as to how it would be received. Perhaps his patient would try to beat him down, and Doctor Benjamin made up his mind to have the whole or nothing. Perhaps he would pay the whole amount, but with a look, and possibly a word, that would make every dollar of it burn like a blister.

Doctor Benjamin's conjectures were not unnatural, but quite remote from the actual fact. As soon as his patient had got entirely well, the young physician sent in his bill. The Capitalist requested him to step into his room with him, and paid the full charge in the handsomest and most gratifying way, thanking him for his skill and attention, and assuring him that he had had great satisfaction in submitting himself to such competent hands, and should certainly apply to him again in case he should have any occasion for a medical adviser. We must not be too sagacious in judging people by the little excrescences of their character. *Ex pede Herculem* may often prove safe enough, but *ex verruca Tullium* is liable to mislead a hasty judge of his fellow-men.

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I have studied the people called misers and thought a good deal about them. In former years I used to keep a little gold by me in order to ascertain for myself exactly the amount of pleasure to be got out of handling it; this being the traditional delight of the old-fashioned miser. It is by no means to be despised. Three or four hundred dollars in double-eagles will do very well to experiment on. There is something very agreeable in the yellow gleam, very musical in the metallic clink, very satisfying in the singular weight, and very stimulating in the feeling that all the world over these same yellow disks are the master-keys that let one in wherever he wants to go, the servants that bring him pretty nearly everything he wants, except virtue,—and a good deal of what passes for that. I confess, then, to an honest liking for the splendors and the specific gravity and the manifold potentiality of the royal metal, and I understand, after a certain imperfect fashion, the delight that an old ragged wretch, starving himself in a crazy hovel, takes in stuffing guineas into old stockings and filling earthen pots with sovereigns, and every now and then visiting his hoards and fingering the fat pieces, and thinking ever all that they represent of earthly and angelic and diabolic energy. A miser pouring out his guineas into his palm and bathing his shrivelled and trembling hands in the yellow heaps before him, is not the prosaic being we are in the habit of thinking him. He is a dreamer, almost a poet. You and I read a novel or a poem to help our imaginations to build up palaces, and transport us into the emotional states and the felicitous conditions of the ideal characters pictured in the book we are reading. But think of him and the significance of the symbols he is handling as compared with the empty syllables and words we are using to build our aerial edifices with! In this hand he holds the smile of beauty and in that the dagger of revenge. The contents of that old glove will buy him the willing service of many an adroit sinner, and with what that coarse sack contains he can purchase the prayers of holy men for all succeeding time. In this chest is a castle in Spain, a real one, and not only in Spain, but anywhere he will choose to have it. If he would know what is the liberality of judgment of any of the straiter sects, he has only to hand over that box of rouleaux to the trustees of one of its educational institutions for the endowment of two or three professorships. If he would dream of being remembered by coming generations, what monument so enduring as a college building that shall bear his name, and even when its solid masonry shall crumble give place to another still charged with the same sacred duty of perpetuating his remembrance. Who was Sir Matthew Holworthy, that his name is a household word on the lips of thousands of scholars, and will be centuries hence, as that of Walter de Merton, dead six hundred years ago, is to-day at Oxford?

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Who was Mistress Holden, that she should be blessed among women by having her name spoken gratefully and the little edifice she caused to be erected preserved as her monument from generation to generation? All these possibilities, the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life; the tears of grateful orphans by the gallon; the prayers of Westminster Assembly's Catechism divines by the thousand; the masses of priests by the century;—all these things, and more if more there be that the imagination of a lover of gold is likely to range over, the miser hears and sees and feels and hugs and enjoys as he paddles with his lean hands among the sliding, shining, ringing, innocent-looking bits of yellow metal, toying with them as the lion-tamer handles the great carnivorous monster, whose might and whose terrors are child's play to the latent forces and power of harm-doing of the glittering counters played with in the great game between angels and devils.

I have seen a good deal of misers, and I think I understand them as well as most persons do. But the Capitalist's economy in rags and his liberality to the young doctor are very oddly contrasted with each other. I should not be surprised at any time to hear that he had endowed a scholarship or professorship or built a college dormitory, in spite of his curious parsimony in old linen.

I do not know where our Young Astronomer got the notions that he expresses so freely in the lines that follow. I think the statement is true, however, which I see in one of the most popular Cyclopaedias, that "the non-clerical mind in all ages is disposed to look favorably upon the doctrine of the universal restoration to holiness and happiness of all fallen intelligences, whether human or angelic." Certainly, most of the poets who have reached the heart of men, since Burns dropped the tear for poor "auld Nickie-ben" that softened the stony-hearted theology of Scotland, have had "non-clerical" minds, and I suppose our young friend is in his humble way an optimist like them. What he says in verse is very much the same thing as what is said in prose in all companies, and thought by a great many who are thankful to anybody that will say it for them,—not a few clerical as well as "non-clerical" persons among them.

Wind-clouds and star-drifts.

V

What am I but the creature Thou hast made?
What have I save the blessings Thou hast lent?
What hope I but Thy mercy and Thy love?
Who but myself shall cloud my soul with fear?
Whose hand protect me from myself but Thine?



I claim the rights of weakness, I, the babe,
Call on my sire to shield me from the ills
That still beset my path, not trying me
With snares beyond my wisdom or my strength,
He knowing I shall use them to my harm,
And find a tenfold misery in the sense

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That in my childlike folly I have sprung
The trap upon myself as vermin use
Drawn by the cunning bait to certain doom.
Who wrought the wondrous charm that leads us on
To sweet perdition, but the self-same power
That set the fearful engine to destroy
His wretched offspring (as the Rabbis tell),
And hid its yawning jaws and treacherous springs
In such a show of innocent sweet flowers
It lured the sinless angels and they fell?

Ah! He who prayed the prayer of all mankind
Summed in those few brief words the mightiest plea
For erring souls before the courts of heaven,
Save us from being tempted,—lest we fall!
If we are only as the potter's clay
Made to be fashioned as the artist wills,
And broken into shards if we offend
The eye of Him who made us, it is well;
Such love as the insensate lump of clay
That spins upon the swift-revolving wheel
Bears to the hand that shapes its growing form,
—Such love, no more, will be our hearts' return
To the great Master-workman for his care,
Or would be, save that this, our breathing clay,
Is intertwined with fine innumerable threads
That make it conscious in its framer's hand;
And this He must remember who has filled
These vessels with the deadly draught of life,
Life, that means death to all it claims. Our love
Must kindle in the ray that streams from heaven,
A faint reflection of the light divine;
The sun must warm the earth before the rose
Can show her inmost heart-leaves to the sun.

He yields some fraction of the Maker's right
Who gives the quivering nerve its sense of pain;
Is there not something in the pleading eye
Of the poor brute that suffers, which arraigns
The law that bids it suffer? Has it not



A claim for some remembrance in the book
That fills its pages with the idle words
Spoken of men? Or is it only clay,
Bleeding and aching in the potter's hand,
Yet all his own to treat it as he will
And when he will to cast it at his feet,
Shattered, dishonored, lost forevermore?
My dog loves me, but could he look beyond
His earthly master, would his love extend
To Him who—Hush! I will not doubt that He
Is better than our fears, and will not wrong
The least, the meanest of created things!

He would not trust me with the smallest orb
That circles through the sky; he would not give
A meteor to my guidance; would not leave
The coloring of a cloudlet to my hand;
He locks my beating heart beneath its bars
And keeps the key himself; he measures out
The draughts of vital breath that warm my blood,

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Winds up the springs of instinct which uncoil,
Each in its season; ties me to my home,
My race, my time, my nation, and my creed
So closely that if I but slip my wrist
Out of the band that cuts it to the bone,
Men say, "He hath a devil"; he has lent
All that I hold in trust, as unto one
By reason of his weakness and his years
Not fit to hold the smallest shred in fee
Of those most common things he calls his own
And yet—my Rabbi tells me—he has left
The care of that to which a million worlds.
Filled with unconscious life were less than naught,
Has left that mighty universe, the Soul,
To the weak guidance of our baby hands,
Turned us adrift with our immortal charge,
Let the foul fiends have access at their will,
Taking the shape of angels, to our hearts,
Our hearts already poisoned through and through
With the fierce virus of ancestral sin.
If what my Rabbi tells me is the truth,
Why did the choir of angels sing for joy?
Heaven must be compassed in a narrow space,
And offer more than room enough for all
That pass its portals; but the underworld,
The godless realm, the place where demons forge
Their fiery darts and adamant chains,
Must swarm with ghosts that for a little while
Had worn the garb of flesh, and being heirs
Of all the dulness of their stolid sires,
And all the erring instincts of their tribe,
Nature's own teaching, rudiments of "sin,"
Fell headlong in the snare that could not fail
To trap the wretched creatures shaped of clay
And cursed with sense enough to lose their souls!

Brother, thy heart is troubled at my word;
Sister, I see the cloud is on thy brow.
He will not blame me, He who sends not peace,
But sends a sword, and bids us strike again



At Error's gilded crest, where in the van
Of earth's great army, mingling with the best
And bravest of its leaders, shouting loud
The battle-cries that yesterday have led
The host of Truth to victory, but to-day
Are watchwords of the laggard and the slave,
He leads his dazzled cohorts. God has made
This world a strife of atoms and of spheres;
With every breath I sigh myself away
And take my tribute from the wandering wind
To fan the flame of life's consuming fire;
So, while my thought has life, it needs must burn,
And burning, set the stubble-fields ablaze,
Where all the harvest long ago was reaped
And safely garnered in the ancient barns,
But still the gleaners, groping for their food,
Go blindly feeling through the close-shorn straw,
While the young reapers flash their glittering steel
Where later suns have ripened nobler grain!

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We listened to these lines in silence. They were evidently written honestly, and with feeling, and no doubt meant to be reverential. I thought, however, the Lady looked rather serious as he finished reading. The Young Girl's cheeks were flushed, but she was not in the mood for criticism.

As we came away the Master said to me—The stubble-fields are mighty slow to take fire. These young fellows catch up with the world's ideas one after another,—they have been tamed a long while, but they find them running loose in their minds, and think they are *ferae naturae*. They remind me of young sportsmen who fire at the first feathers they see, and bring down a barnyard fowl. But the chicken may be worth bagging for all that, he said, good-humoredly.

X

Caveat Lector. Let the reader look out for himself. The old Master, whose words I have so frequently quoted and shall quote more of, is a dogmatist who lays down the law, *ex cathedra*, from the chair of his own personality. I do not deny that he has the ambition of knowing something about a greater number of subjects than any one man ought to meddle with, except in a very humble and modest way. And that is not his way. There was no doubt something of, humorous bravado in his saying that the actual "order of things" did not offer a field sufficiently ample for his intelligence. But if I found fault with him, which would be easy enough, I should say that he holds and expresses definite opinions about matters that he could afford to leave open questions, or ask the judgment of others about. But I do not want to find fault with him. If he does not settle all the points he speaks of so authoritatively, he sets me thinking about them, and I like a man as a companion who is not afraid of a half-truth. I know he says some things peremptorily that he may inwardly debate with himself. There are two ways of dealing with assertions of this kind. One may attack them on the false side and perhaps gain a conversational victory. But I like better to take them up on the true side and see how much can be made of that aspect of the dogmatic assertion. It is the only comfortable way of dealing with persons like the old Master.

There have been three famous talkers in Great Britain, either of whom would illustrate what I say about dogmatists well enough for my purpose. You cannot doubt to what three I refer: Samuel the First, Samuel the Second, and Thomas, last of the Dynasty. (I mean the living Thomas and not Thomas B.)

I say the last of the Dynasty, for the conversational dogmatist on the imperial scale becomes every year more and more an impossibility. If he is in intelligent company he will be almost sure to find some one who knows more about some of the subjects he generalizes upon than any wholesale thinker who handles knowledge by the cargo is like to know. I find myself, at certain intervals, in the society of a number of

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experts in science, literature, and art, who cover a pretty wide range, taking them all together, of human knowledge. I have not the least doubt that if the great Dr. Samuel Johnson should come in and sit with this company at one of their Saturday dinners, he would be listened to, as he always was, with respect and attention. But there are subjects upon which the great talker could speak magisterially in his time and at his club, upon which so wise a man would express himself guardedly at the meeting where I have supposed him a guest. We have a scientific man or two among us, for instance, who would be entitled to smile at the good Doctor's estimate of their labors, as I give it here:

"Of those that spin out life in trifles and die without a memorial, many flatter themselves with high opinion of their own importance and imagine that they are every day adding some improvement to human life."—"Some turn the wheel of electricity, some suspend rings to a loadstone, and find that what they did yesterday they can do again to-day. Some register the changes of the wind, and die fully convinced that the wind is changeable.

"There are men yet more profound, who have heard that two colorless liquors may produce a color by union, and that two cold bodies will grow hot if they are mingled; they mingle them, and produce the effect expected, say it is strange, and mingle them again."

I cannot transcribe this extract without an intense inward delight in its wit and a full recognition of its thorough half-truthfulness. Yet if while the great moralist is indulging in these vivacities, he can be imagined as receiving a message from Mr. Boswell or Mrs. Thrale flashed through the depths of the ocean, we can suppose he might be tempted to indulge in another oracular utterance, something like this:—A wise man recognizes the convenience of a general statement, but he bows to the authority of a particular fact. He who would bound the possibilities of human knowledge by the limitations of present acquirements would take the dimensions of the infant in ordering the habiliments of the adult. It is the province of knowledge to speak and it is the privilege of wisdom to listen. Will the Professor have the kindness to inform me by what steps of gradual development the ring and the loadstone, which were but yesterday the toys of children and idlers, have become the means of approximating the intelligences of remote continents, and wafting emotions unchilled through the abysses of the no longer unfathomable deep?

—This, you understand, Beloved, is only a conventional imitation of the Doctor's style of talking. He wrote in grand balanced phrases, but his conversation was good, lusty, off-hand familiar talk. He used very often to have it all his own way. If he came back to us we must remember that to treat him fairly we must suppose him on a level with the knowledge of our own time. But that knowledge is more specialized, a great deal, than

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knowledge was in his day. Men cannot talk about things they have seen from the outside with the same magisterial authority the talking dynasty pretended to. The sturdy old moralist felt grand enough, no doubt, when he said, "He that is growing great and happy by electrifying a bottle wonders how the world can be engaged by trifling prattle about war or peace." Benjamin Franklin was one of these idlers who were electrifying bottles, but he also found time to engage in the trifling prattle about war and peace going on in those times. The talking Doctor hits him very hard in "Taxation no Tyranny": "Those who wrote the Address (of the American Congress in 1775), though they have shown no great extent or profundity of mind, are yet probably wiser than to believe it: but they have been taught by some master of mischief how to put in motion the engine of political electricity; to attract by the sounds of Liberty and Property, to repel by those of Popery and Slavery; and to give the great stroke by the name of Boston." The talking dynasty has always been hard upon us Americans. King Samuel *ii.* says: "It is, I believe, a fact verified beyond doubt, that some years ago it was impossible to obtain a copy of the Newgate Calendar, as they had all been bought up by the Americans, whether to suppress the blazon of their forefathers or to assist in their genealogical researches I could never learn satisfactorily." As for King Thomas, the last of the monological succession, he made such a piece of work with his prophecies and his sarcasms about our little trouble with some of the Southern States, that we came rather to pity him for his whims and crotchets than to get angry with him for calling us bores and other unamiable names.

I do not think we believe things because considerable people say them, on personal authority, that is, as intelligent listeners very commonly did a century ago. The newspapers have lied that belief out of us. Any man who has a pretty gift of talk may hold his company a little while when there is nothing better stirring. Every now and then a man who may be dull enough prevailingly has a passion of talk come over him which makes him eloquent and silences the rest. I have a great respect for these divine paroxysms, these half-inspired moments of influx when they seize one whom we had not counted among the luminaries of the social sphere. But the man who can—give us a fresh experience on anything that interests us overrides everybody else. A great peril escaped makes a great story-teller of a common person enough. I remember when a certain vessel was wrecked long ago, that one of the survivors told the story as well as Defoe could have told it. Never a word from him before; never a word from him since. But when it comes to talking one's common thoughts,—those that come and go as the breath does; those that tread the mental areas and corridors with steady, even foot-fall, an interminable procession of every hue and garb,—there

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are few, indeed, that can dare to lift the curtain which hangs before the window in the breast and throw open the window, and let us look and listen. We are all loyal enough to our sovereign when he shows himself, but sovereigns are scarce. I never saw the absolute homage of listeners but once, that I remember, to a man's common talk, and that was to the conversation of an old man, illustrious by his lineage and the exalted honors he had won, whose experience had lessons for the wisest, and whose eloquence had made the boldest tremble.

All this because I told you to look out for yourselves and not take for absolute truth everything the old Master of our table, or anybody else at it sees fit to utter. At the same time I do not think that he, or any of us whose conversation I think worth reporting, says anything for the mere sake of saying it and without thinking that it holds some truth, even if it is not unqualifiedly true.

I suppose a certain number of my readers wish very heartily that the Young Astronomer whose poetical speculations I am recording would stop trying by searching to find out the Almighty, and sign the thirty-nine articles, or the Westminster Confession of Faith, at any rate slip his neck into some collar or other, and pull quietly in the harness, whether it galled him or not. I say, rather, let him have his talk out; if nobody else asks the questions he asks, some will be glad to hear them, but if you, the reader, find the same questions in your own mind, you need not be afraid to see how they shape themselves in another's intelligence. Do you recognize the fact that we are living in a new time? Knowledge—it excites prejudices to call it science—is advancing as irresistibly, as majestically, as remorselessly as the ocean moves in upon the shore. The courtiers of King Canute (I am not afraid of the old comparison), represented by the adherents of the traditional beliefs of the period, move his chair back an inch at a time, but not until his feet are pretty damp, not to say wet. The rock on which he sat securely awhile ago is completely under water. And now people are walking up and down the beach and judging for themselves how far inland the chair of King Canute is like to be moved while they and their children are looking on, at the rate in which it is edging backward. And it is quite too late to go into hysterics about it.

The shore, solid, substantial, a great deal more than eighteen hundred years old, is natural humanity. The beach which the ocean of knowledge—you may call it science if you like—is flowing over, is theological humanity. Somewhere between the Sermon on the Mount and the teachings of Saint Augustine sin was made a transferable chattel. (I leave the interval wide for others to make narrow.)

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The doctrine of heritable guilt, with its mechanical consequences, has done for our moral nature what the doctrine of demoniac possession has done in barbarous times and still does among barbarous tribes for disease. Out of that black cloud came the lightning which struck the compass of humanity. Conscience, which from the dawn of moral being had pointed to the poles of right and wrong only as the great current of will flowed through the soul, was demagnetized, paralyzed, and knew henceforth no fixed meridian, but stayed where the priest or the council placed it. There is nothing to be done but to polarize the needle over again. And for this purpose we must study the lines of direction of all the forces which traverse our human nature.

We must study man as we have studied stars and rocks. We need not go, we are told, to our sacred books for astronomy or geology or other scientific knowledge. Do not stop there! Pull Canute's chair back fifty rods at once, and do not wait until he is wet to the knees! Say now, bravely, as you will sooner or later have to say, that we need not go to any ancient records for our anthropology. Do we not all hold, at least, that the doctrine of man's being a blighted abortion, a miserable disappointment to his Creator, and hostile and hateful to him from his birth, may give way to the belief that he is the latest terrestrial manifestation of an ever upward-striving movement of divine power? If there lives a man who does not want to disbelieve the popular notions about the condition and destiny of the bulk of his race, I should like to have him look me in the face and tell me so.

I am not writing for the basement story or the nursery, and I do not pretend to be, but I say nothing in these pages which would not be said without fear of offence in any intelligent circle, such as clergymen of the higher castes are in the habit of frequenting. There are teachers in type for our grandmothers and our grandchildren who vaccinate the two childhoods with wholesome doctrine, transmitted harmlessly from one infant to another. But we three men at our table have taken the disease of thinking in the natural way. It is an epidemic in these times, and those who are afraid of it must shut themselves up close or they will catch it.

I hope none of us are wanting in reverence. One at least of us is a regular church-goer, and believes a man may be devout and yet very free in the expression of his opinions on the gravest subjects. There may be some good people who think that our young friend who puts his thoughts in verse is going sounding over perilous depths, and are frightened every time he throws the lead. There is nothing to be frightened at. This is a manly world we live in. Our reverence is good for nothing if it does not begin with self-respect. Occidental manhood springs from that as its basis; Oriental manhood finds the greatest satisfaction in self-abasement. There

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is no use in trying to graft the tropical palm upon the Northern pine. The same divine forces underlie the growth of both, but leaf and flower and fruit must follow the law of race, of soil, of climate. Whether the questions which assail my young friend have risen in my reader's mind or not, he knows perfectly well that nobody can keep such questions from springing up in every young mind of any force or honesty. As for the excellent little wretches who grow up in what they are taught, with never a scruple or a query, Protestant or Catholic, Jew or Mormon, Mahometan or Buddhist, they signify nothing in the intellectual life of the race. If the world had been wholly peopled with such half-vitalized mental negatives, there never would have been a creed like that of Christendom.

I entirely agree with the spirit of the verses I have looked over, in this point at least, that a true man's allegiance is given to that which is highest in his own nature. He reverences truth, he loves kindness, he respects justice. The two first qualities he understands well enough. But the last, justice, at least as between the Infinite and the finite, has been so utterly dehumanized, disintegrated, decomposed, and diabolized in passing through the minds of the half-civilized banditti who have peopled and unpeopled the world for some scores of generations, that it has become a mere algebraic x , and has no fixed value whatever as a human conception.

As for power, we are outgrowing all superstition about that. We have not the slightest respect for it as such, and it is just as well to remember this in all our spiritual adjustments. We fear power when we cannot master it; but just as far as we can master it, we make a slave and a beast of burden of it without hesitation. We cannot change the ebb and flow of the tides, or the course of the seasons, but we come as near it as we can. We dam out the ocean, we make roses bloom in winter and water freeze in summer. We have no more reverence for the sun than we have for a fish-tail gas-burner; we stare into his face with telescopes as at a ballet-dancer with opera-glasses; we pick his rays to pieces with prisms as if they were so many skeins of colored yarn; we tell him we do not want his company and shut him out like a troublesome vagrant. The gods of the old heathen are the servants of to-day. Neptune, Vulcan, Aolus, and the bearer of the thunderbolt himself have stepped down from their pedestals and put on our livery. We cannot always master them, neither can we always master our servant, the horse, but we have put a bridle on the wildest natural agencies. The mob of elemental forces is as noisy and turbulent as ever, but the standing army of civilization keeps it well under, except for an occasional outbreak.

When I read the Lady's letter printed some time since, I could not help honoring the feeling which prompted her in writing it. But while I respect the innocent incapacity of tender age and the limitations of the comparatively uninstructed classes, it is quite out of the question to act as if matters of common intelligence and universal interest were the

private property of a secret society, only to be meddled with by those who know the grip and the password.

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We must get over the habit of transferring the limitations of the nervous temperament and of hectic constitutions to the great Source of all the mighty forces of nature, animate and inanimate. We may confidently trust that we have over us a Being thoroughly robust and grandly magnanimous, in distinction from the Infinite Invalid bred in the studies of sickly monomaniacs, who corresponds to a very common human type, but makes us blush for him when we contrast him with a truly noble man, such as most of us have had the privilege of knowing both in public and in private life.

I was not a little pleased to find that the Lady, in spite of her letter, sat through the young man's reading of portions of his poem with a good deal of complacency. I think I can guess what is in her mind. She believes, as so many women do, in that great remedy for discontent, and doubts about humanity, and questionings of Providence, and all sorts of youthful vagaries,—I mean the love-cure. And she thinks, not without some reason, that these astronomical lessons, and these readings of poetry and daily proximity at the table, and the need of two young hearts that have been long feeling lonely, and youth and nature and “all impulses of soul and sense,” as Coleridge has it, will bring these two young people into closer relations than they perhaps have yet thought of; and so that sweet lesson of loving the neighbor whom he has seen may lead him into deeper and more trusting communion with the Friend and Father whom he has not seen.

The Young Girl evidently did not intend that her accomplice should be a loser by the summary act of the Member of the Haouse: I took occasion to ask That Boy what had become of all the popguns. He gave me to understand that popguns were played out, but that he had got a squirt and a whip, and considered himself better off than before.

This great world is full of mysteries. I can comprehend the pleasure to be got out of the hydraulic engine; but what can be the fascination of a whip, when one has nothing to flagellate but the calves of his own legs, I could never understand. Yet a small riding-whip is the most popular article with the miscellaneous New-Englander at all great gatherings,—cattle-shows and Fourth-of-July celebrations. If Democritus and Heraclitus could walk arm in arm through one of these crowds, the first would be in a broad laugh to see the multitude of young persons who were rejoicing in the possession of one of these useless and worthless little commodities; happy himself to see how easily others could purchase happiness. But the second would weep bitter tears to think what a rayless and barren life that must be which could extract enjoyment from the miserable flimsy wand that has such magic attraction for sauntering youths and simpering maidens. What a dynamometer of happiness are these paltry toys, and what a rudimentary vertebrate must be the freckled adolescent whose yearning for the infinite can be stayed even for a single hour by so trifling a boon from the venal hands of the finite!

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Pardon these polysyllabic reflections, Beloved, but I never contemplate these dear fellow-creatures of ours without a delicious sense of superiority to them and to all arrested embryos of intelligence, in which I have no doubt you heartily sympathize with me. It is not merely when I look at the vacuous countenances of the mastigophori, the whip-holders, that I enjoy this luxury (though I would not miss that holiday spectacle for a pretty sum of money, and advise you by all means to make sure of it next Fourth of July, if you missed it this), but I get the same pleasure from many similar manifestations.

I delight in Regalia, so called, of the kind not worn by kings, nor obtaining their diamonds from the mines of Golconda. I have a passion for those resplendent titles which are not conferred by a sovereign and would not be the open sesame to the courts of royalty, yet which are as opulent in impressive adjectives as any Knight of the Garter's list of dignities. When I have recognized in the every-day name of His Very Worthy High Eminence of some cabalistic association, the inconspicuous individual whose trifling indebtedness to me for value received remains in a quiescent state and is likely long to continue so, I confess to having experienced a thrill of pleasure. I have smiled to think how grand his magnificent titular appendages sounded in his own ears and what a feeble tintinnabulation they made in mine. The crimson sash, the broad diagonal belt of the mounted marshal of a great procession, so cheap in themselves, yet so entirely satisfactory to the wearer, tickle my heart's root.

Perhaps I should have enjoyed all these weaknesses of my infantile fellow-creatures without an afterthought, except that on a certain literary anniversary when I tie the narrow blue and pink ribbons in my button-hole and show my decorated bosom to the admiring public, I am conscious of a certain sense of distinction and superiority in virtue of that trifling addition to my personal adornments which reminds me that I too have some embryonic fibres in my tolerably well-matured organism.

I hope I have not hurt your feelings, if you happen to be a High and Mighty Grand Functionary in any illustrious Fraternity. When I tell you that a bit of ribbon in my button-hole sets my vanity prancing, I think you cannot be grievously offended that I smile at the resonant titles which make you something more than human in your own eyes. I would not for the world be mistaken for one of those literary roughs whose brass knuckles leave their mark on the foreheads of so many inoffensive people.

There is a human sub-species characterized by the coarseness of its fibre and the acrid nature of its intellectual secretions. It is to a certain extent penetrative, as all creatures are which are provided with stings. It has an instinct which guides it to the vulnerable parts of the victim on which it fastens. These two qualities give it a certain degree of power which is not to be despised. It might perhaps be less mischievous, but for the fact that the wound where it leaves its poison opens the fountain from which it draws its nourishment.

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Beings of this kind can be useful if they will only find their appropriate sphere, which is not literature, but that circle of rough-and-tumble political life where the fine-fibred men are at a discount, where epithets find their subjects poison-proof, and the sting which would be fatal to a literary debutant only wakes the eloquence of the pachydermatous ward-room politician to a fiercer shriek of declamation.

The Master got talking the other day about the difference between races and families. I am reminded of what he said by what I have just been saying myself about coarse-fibred and fine-fibred people.

—We talk about a Yankee, a New-Englander,—he said,—as if all of 'em were just the same kind of animal. “There is knowledge and knowledge,” said John Bunyan. There are Yankees and Yankees. Do you know two native trees called pitch pine and white pine respectively? Of course you know 'em. Well, there are pitch-pine Yankees and white-pine Yankees. We don't talk about the inherited differences of men quite as freely, perhaps, as they do in the Old World, but republicanism doesn't alter the laws of physiology. We have a native aristocracy, a superior race, just as plainly marked by nature as of a higher and finer grade than the common run of people as the white pine is marked in its form, its stature, its bark, its delicate foliage, as belonging to the nobility of the forest; and the pitch pine, stubbed, rough, coarse-haired, as of the plebeian order. Only the strange thing is to see in what a capricious way our natural nobility is distributed. The last born nobleman I have seen, I saw this morning; he was pulling a rope that was fastened to a Maine schooner loaded with lumber. I should say he was about twenty years old, as fine a figure of a young man as you would ask to see, and with a regular Greek outline of countenance, waving hair, that fell as if a sculptor had massed it to copy, and a complexion as rich as a red sunset. I have a notion that the State of Maine breeds the natural nobility in a larger proportion than some other States, but they spring up in all sorts of out-of-the-way places. The young fellow I saw this morning had on an old flannel shirt, a pair of trowsers that meant hard work, and a cheap cloth cap pushed back on his head so as to let the large waves of hair straggle out over his forehead; he was tugging at his rope with the other sailors, but upon my word I don't think I have seen a young English nobleman of all those whom I have looked upon that answered to the notion of “blood” so well as this young fellow did. I suppose if I made such a levelling confession as this in public, people would think I was looking towards being the labor-reform candidate for President. But I should go on and spoil my prospects by saying that I don't think the white-pine Yankee is the more generally prevailing growth, but rather the pitch-pine Yankee.

—The Member of the Haouse seemed to have been getting a dim idea that all this was not exactly flattering to the huckleberry districts. His features betrayed the growth of this suspicion so clearly that the Master replied to his look as if it had been a remark. [I need hardly say that this particular member of the General Court was a pitch-pine Yankee of the most thoroughly characterized aspect and flavor.]

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—Yes, Sir,—the Master continued,—Sir being anybody that listened, —there is neither flattery nor offence in the views which a physiological observer takes of the forms of life around him. It won't do to draw individual portraits, but the differences of natural groups of human beings are as proper subjects of remark as those of different breeds of horses, and if horses were Houyhnhnms I don't think they would quarrel with us because we made a distinction between a "Morgan" and a "Messenger." The truth is, Sir, the lean sandy soil and the droughts and the long winters and the east-winds and the cold storms, and all sorts of unknown local influences that we can't make out quite so plainly as these, have a tendency to roughen the human organization and make it coarse, something as it is with the tree I mentioned. Some spots and some strains of blood fight against these influences, but if I should say right out what I think, it would be that the finest human fruit, on the whole; and especially the finest women that we get in New England are raised under glass.

—Good gracious!—exclaimed the Landlady, under glass!

—Give me cucumbers raised in the open air, said the Capitalist, who was a little hard of hearing.

—Perhaps,—I remarked,—it might be as well if you would explain this last expression of yours. Raising human beings under glass I take to be a metaphorical rather than a literal statement of your meaning.

—No, Sir!—replied the Master, with energy,—I mean just what I say, Sir. Under glass, and with a south exposure. During the hard season, of course,—for in the heats of summer the tenderest hot-house plants are not afraid of the open air. Protection is what the transplanted Aryan requires in this New England climate. Keep him, and especially keep her, in a wide street of a well-built city eight months of the year; good solid brick walls behind her, good sheets of plate-glass, with the sun shining warm through them, in front of her, and you have put her in the condition of the pine-apple, from the land of which, and not from that of the other kind of pine, her race started on its travels. People don't know what a gain there is to health by living in cities, the best parts of them of course, for we know too well what the worst parts are. In the first place you get rid of the noxious emanations which poison so many country localities with typhoid fever and dysentery, not wholly rid of them, of course, but to a surprising degree. Let me tell you a doctor's story. I was visiting a Western city a good many years ago; it was in the autumn, the time when all sorts of malarious diseases are about. The doctor I was speaking of took me to see the cemetery just outside the town, I don't know how much he had done to fill it, for he didn't tell me, but I'll tell you what he did say.

"Look round," said the doctor. "There isn't a house in all the ten-mile circuit of country you can see over, where there isn't one person, at least, shaking with fever and ague. And yet you need n't be afraid of carrying it away with you, for as long as your home is on a paved street you are safe."

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—I think it likely—the Master went on to say—that my friend the doctor put it pretty strongly, but there is no doubt at all that while all the country round was suffering from intermittent fever, the paved part of the city was comparatively exempted. What do you do when you build a house on a damp soil, and there are damp soils pretty much everywhere? Why you floor the cellar with cement, don't you? Well, the soil of a city is cemented all over, one may say, with certain qualifications of course. A first-rate city house is a regular sanatorium. The only trouble is, that the little good-for-nothings that come of utterly used-up and worn-out stock, and ought to die, can't die, to save their lives. So they grow up to dilute the vigor of the race with skim-milk vitality. They would have died, like good children, in most average country places; but eight months of shelter in a regulated temperature, in a well-sunned house, in a duly moistened air, with good sidewalks to go about on in all weather, and four months of the cream of summer and the fresh milk of Jersey cows, make the little sham organizations—the worm-eaten wind-falls, for that 's what they look like—hang on to the boughs of life like “froze-n-thaws”; regular struldbrugs they come to be, a good many of 'em.

—The Scarabee's ear was caught by that queer word of Swift's, and he asked very innocently what kind of bugs he was speaking of, whereupon That Boy shouted out, Straddlebugs! to his own immense amusement and the great bewilderment of the Scarabee, who only saw that there was one of those unintelligible breaks in the conversation which made other people laugh, and drew back his antennae as usual, perplexed, but not amused.

I do not believe the Master had said all he was going to say on this subject, and of course all these statements of his are more or less one-sided. But that some invalids do much better in cities than in the country is indisputable, and that the frightful dysenteries and fevers which have raged like pestilences in many of our country towns are almost unknown in the better built sections of some of our large cities is getting to be more generally understood since our well-to-do people have annually emigrated in such numbers from the cemented surface of the city to the steaming soil of some of the dangerous rural districts. If one should contrast the healthiest country residences with the worst city ones the result would be all the other way, of course, so that there are two sides to the question, which we must let the doctors pound in their great mortar, infuse and strain, hoping that they will present us with the clear solution when they have got through these processes. One of our chief wants is a complete sanitary map of every State in the Union.

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The balance of our table, as the reader has no doubt observed, has been deranged by the withdrawal of the Man of Letters, so called, and only the side of the deficiency changed by the removal of the Young Astronomer into our neighborhood. The fact that there was a vacant chair on the side opposite us had by no means escaped the notice of That Boy. He had taken advantage of his opportunity and invited in a schoolmate whom he evidently looked upon as a great personage. This boy or youth was a good deal older than himself and stood to him apparently in the light of a patron and instructor in the ways of life. A very jaunty, knowing young gentleman he was, good-looking, smartly dressed, smooth-checked as yet, curly-haired, with a roguish eye, a sagacious wink, a ready tongue, as I soon found out; and as I learned could catch a ball on the fly with any boy of his age; not quarrelsome, but, if he had to strike, hit from the shoulder; the pride of his father (who was a man of property and a civic dignitary), and answering to the name of Johnny.

I was a little surprised at the liberty That Boy had taken in introducing an extra peptic element at our table, reflecting as I did that a certain number of avoirdupois ounces of nutriment which the visitor would dispose of corresponded to a very appreciable pecuniary amount, so that he was levying a contribution upon our Landlady which she might be inclined to complain of. For the *Caput mortuum* (or deadhead, in vulgar phrase) is apt to be furnished with a *Venter vivus*, or, as we may say, a lively appetite. But the Landlady welcomed the new-comer very heartily.

—Why! how—do—you—do Johnny?! with the notes of interrogation and of admiration both together, as here represented.

Johnny signified that he was doing about as well as could be expected under the circumstances, having just had a little difference with a young person whom he spoke of as “Pewter-jaw” (I suppose he had worn a dentist’s tooth-straightening contrivance during his second dentition), which youth he had finished off, as he said, in good shape, but at the expense of a slight epistaxis, we will translate his vernacular expression.

—The three ladies all looked sympathetic, but there did not seem to be any great occasion for it, as the boy had come out all right, and seemed to be in the best of spirits.

-And how is your father and your mother? asked the Landlady.

-Oh, the Governor and the Head Centre? A 1, both of ’em. Prime order for shipping,—warranted to stand any climate. The Governor says he weighs a hunderd and seventy-five pounds. Got a chin-tuft just like Ed’in Forrest. D’d y’ ever see Ed’in Forrest play *Metamora*? Bully, I tell you! My old gentleman means to be Mayor or Governor or President or something or other before he goes off the handle, you’d better b’lieve. He’s smart,—and I’ve heard folks say I take after him.



—Somehow or other I felt as if I had seen this boy before, or known something about him. Where did he get those expressions “A 1” and “prime” and so on? They must have come from somebody who has been in the retail dry-goods business, or something of that nature. I have certain vague reminiscences that carry me back to the early times of this boardinghouse.—Johnny.—Landlady knows his father well.

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—Boarded with her, no doubt.—There was somebody by the name of John, I remember perfectly well, lived with her. I remember both my friends mentioned him, one of them very often. I wonder if this boy isn't a son of his! I asked the Landlady after breakfast whether this was not, as I had suspected, the son of that former boarder.

—To be sure he is,—she answered,—and jest such a good-natur'd sort of creatur' as his father was. I always liked John, as we used to call his father. He did love fun, but he was a good soul, and stood by me when I was in trouble, always. He went into business on his own account after a while, and got merried, and settled down into a family man. They tell me he is an amazing smart business man,—grown wealthy, and his wife's father left her money. But I can't help calling him John,—law, we never thought of calling him anything else, and he always laughs and says, "That's right." This is his oldest son, and everybody calls him Johnny. That Boy of ours goes to the same school with his boy, and thinks there never was anybody like him,—you see there was a boy undertook to impose on our boy, and Johnny gave the other boy a good licking, and ever since that he is always wanting to have Johnny round with him and bring him here with him,—and when those two boys get together, there never was boys that was so chock full of fun and sometimes mischief, but not very bad mischief, as those two boys be. But I like to have him come once in a while when there is room at the table, as there is now, for it puts me in mind of the old times, when my old boarders was all round me, that I used to think so much of,—not that my boarders that I have now a'n't very nice people, but I did think a dreadful sight of the gentleman that made that first book; it helped me on in the world more than ever he knew of,—for it was as good as one of them Brandreth's pills advertisements, and did n't cost me a cent, and that young lady he merried too, she was nothing but a poor young schoolma'am when she come to my house, and now—and she deserved it all too; for she was always just the same, rich or poor, and she is n't a bit prouder now she wears a camel's-hair shawl, than she was when I used to lend her a woollen one to keep her poor dear little shoulders warm when she had to go out and it was storming,—and then there was that old gentleman,—I can't speak about him, for I never knew how good he was till his will was opened, and then it was too late to thank him....

I respected the feeling which caused the interval of silence, and found my own eyes moistened as I remembered how long it was since that friend of ours was sitting in the chair where I now sit, and what a tidal wave of change has swept over the world and more especially over this great land of ours, since he opened his lips and found so many kind listeners.

The Young Astronomer has read us another extract from his manuscript. I ran my eye over it, and so far as I have noticed it is correct enough in its versification. I suppose we are getting gradually over our hemispherical provincialism, which allowed a set of monks to pull their hoods over our eyes and tell us there was no meaning in any religious symbolism but our own. If I am mistaken about this advance I am very glad to print the young man's somewhat outspoken lines to help us in that direction.

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Wind-clouds and star-drifts.

VI

The time is racked with birth-pangs; every hour
Brings forth some gasping truth, and truth new-born
Looks a misshapen and untimely growth,
The terror of the household and its shame,
A monster coiling in its nurse's lap
That some would strangle, some would only starve;
But still it breathes, and passed from hand to hand,
And suckled at a hundred half-clad breasts,
Comes slowly to its stature and its form,
Calms the rough ridges of its dragon-scales,
Changes to shining locks its snaky hair,
And moves transfigured into angel guise,
Welcomed by all that cursed its hour of birth,
And folded in the same encircling arms
That cast it like a serpent from their hold!

If thou wouldst live in honor, die in peace,
Have the fine words the marble-workers learn
To carve so well, upon thy funeral-stone,
And earn a fair obituary, dressed
In all the many-colored robes of praise,
Be deafer than the adder to the cry
Of that same foundling truth, until it grows
To seemly favor, and at length has won
The smiles of hard-mouthed men and light-upped dames,
Then snatch it from its meagre nurse's breast,
Fold it in silk and give it food from gold;
So shalt thou share its glory when at last
It drops its mortal vesture, and revealed
In all the splendor of its heavenly form,
Spreads on the startled air its mighty wings!

Alas! how much that seemed immortal truth
That heroes fought for, martyrs died to save,
Reveals its earth-born lineage, growing old
And limping in its march, its wings unplumed,
Its heavenly semblance faded like a dream!

Here in this painted casket, just unsealed,
Lies what was once a breathing shape like thine,



Once loved as thou art loved; there beamed the eyes
That looked on Memphis in its hour of pride,
That saw the walls of hundred-gated Thebes,
And all the mirrored glories of the Nile.
See how they toiled that all-consuming time
Might leave the frame immortal in its tomb;
Filled it with fragrant balms and odorous gums
That still diffuse their sweetness through the air,
And wound and wound with patient fold on fold
The flaxen bands thy hand has rudely torn!
Perchance thou yet canst see the faded stain
Of the sad mourner's tear.

But what is this?

The sacred beetle, bound upon the breast
Of the blind heathen! Snatch the curious prize,
Give it a place among thy treasured spoils
Fossil and relic,—corals, encrinites,
The fly in amber and the fish in stone,
The twisted circlet of Etruscan gold,
Medal, intaglio, poniard, poison-ring,
—Place for the Memphian beetle with thine hoard!

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Ah! longer than thy creed has blest the world
This toy, thus ravished from thy brother's breast,
Was to the heart of Mizraim as divine,
As holy, as the symbol that we lay
On the still bosom of our white-robed dead,
And raise above their dust that all may know
Here sleeps an heir of glory. Loving friends,
With tears of trembling faith and choking sobs,
And prayers to those who judge of mortal deeds,
Wrapped this poor image in the cerement's fold
That Isis and Osiris, friends of man,
Might know their own and claim the ransomed soul

An idol? Man was born to worship such!
An idol is an image of his thought;
Sometimes he carves it out of gleaming stone,
And sometimes moulds it out of glittering gold,
Or rounds it in a mighty frescoed dome,
Or lifts it heavenward in a lofty spire,
Or shapes it in a cunning frame of words,
Or pays his priest to make it day by day;
For sense must have its god as well as soul;
A new-born Dian calls for silver shrines,
And Egypt's holiest symbol is our own,
The sign we worship as did they of old
When Isis and Osiris ruled the world.

Let us be true to our most subtle selves,
We long to have our idols like the rest.
Think! when the men of Israel had their God
Encamped among them, talking with their chief,
Leading them in the pillar of the cloud
And watching o'er them in the shaft of fire,
They still must have an image; still they longed
For somewhat of substantial, solid form
Whereon to hang their garlands, and to fix
Their wandering thoughts, and gain a stronger hold
For their uncertain faith, not yet assured
If those same meteors of the day and night
Were not mere exhalations of the soil.

Are we less earthly than the chosen race?
Are we more neighbors of the living God
Than they who gathered manna every morn,

Reaping where none had sown, and heard the voice
Of him who met the Highest in the mount,
And brought them tables, graven with His hand?
Yet these must have their idol, brought their gold,
That star-browed Apis might be god again;
Yea, from their ears the women brake the rings
That lent such splendors to the gypsy brown
Of sunburnt cheeks,—what more could woman do
To show her pious zeal? They went astray,
But nature led them as it leads us all.

We too, who mock at Israel's golden calf
And scoff at Egypt's sacred scarabee,
Would have our amulets to clasp and kiss,
And flood with rapturous tears, and bear with us
To be our dear companions in the dust,
Such magic works an image in our souls!

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Man is an embryo; see at twenty years
His bones, the columns that uphold his frame
Not yet cemented, shaft and capital,
Mere fragments of the temple incomplete.
At twoscore, threescore, is he then full grown?
Nay, still a child, and as the little maids
Dress and undress their puppets, so he tries
To dress a lifeless creed, as if it lived,
And change its raiment when the world cries shame!
We smile to see our little ones at play
So grave, so thoughtful, with maternal care
Nursing the wisps of rags they call their babes;
Does He not smile who sees us with the toys
We call by sacred names, and idly feign
To be what we have called them?
He is still The Father of this helpless nursery-brood,
Whose second childhood joins so close its first,
That in the crowding, hurrying years between
We scarce have trained our senses to their task
Before the gathering mist has dimmed our eyes,
And with our hollowed palm we help our ear,
And trace with trembling hand our wrinkled names,
And then begin to tell our stories o'er,
And see—not hear—the whispering lips that say,
“You know—? Your father knew him.—This is he,
Tottering and leaning on the hireling’s arm,—”
And so, at length, disrobed of all that clad
The simple life we share with weed and worm,
Go to our cradles, naked as we came.

XI

I suppose there would have been even more remarks upon the growing intimacy of the Young Astronomer and his pupil, if the curiosity of the boarders had not in the mean time been so much excited at the apparently close relation which had sprung up between the Register of Deeds and the Lady. It was really hard to tell what to make of it. The Register appeared at the table in a new coat. Suspicious. The Lady was evidently deeply interested in him, if we could judge by the frequency and the length of their interviews. On at least one occasion he has brought a lawyer with him, which naturally suggested the idea that there were some property arrangements to be attended to, in case, as seems probable against all reasons to the contrary, these two estimable persons, so utterly unfitted, as one would say, to each other, contemplated an alliance. It is no pleasure to me to record an arrangement of this kind. I frankly confess

I do not know what to make of it. With her tastes and breeding, it is the last thing that I should have thought of,—her uniting herself with this most commonplace and mechanical person, who cannot even offer her the elegances and luxuries to which she might seem entitled on changing her condition.

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While I was thus interested and puzzled I received an unexpected visit from our Landlady. She was evidently excited, and by some event which was of a happy nature, for her countenance was beaming and she seemed impatient to communicate what she had to tell. Impatient or not, she must wait a moment, while I say a word about her. Our Landlady is as good a creature as ever lived. She is a little negligent of grammar at times, and will get a wrong word now and then; she is garrulous, circumstantial, associates facts by their accidental cohesion rather than by their vital affinities, is given to choking and tears on slight occasions, but she has a warm heart, and feels to her boarders as if they were her blood-relations. She began her conversation abruptly.—I expect I'm a going to lose one of my boarders,—she said.

—You don't seem very unhappy about it, madam,—I answered.—We all took it easily when the person who sat on our side of the table quitted us in such a hurry, but I do not think there is anybody left that either you or the boarders want to get rid of—unless it is myself,—I added modestly.

—You! said the Landlady—you! No indeed. When I have a quiet boarder that 's a small eater, I don't want to lose him. You don't make trouble, you don't find fault with your vit —[Dr. Benjamin had schooled his parent on this point and she altered the word] with your food, and you know when you 've had enough.

—I really felt proud of this eulogy, which embraces the most desirable excellences of a human being in the capacity of boarder.

The Landlady began again.—I'm going to lose—at least, I suppose I shall—one of the best boarders I ever had,—that Lady that's been with me so long.

—I thought there was something going on between her and the Register,—I said.

—Something! I should think there was! About three months ago he began making her acquaintance. I thought there was something particular. I did n't quite like to watch 'em very close; but I could n't help overbearing some of the things he said to her, for, you see, he used to follow her up into the parlor, they talked pretty low, but I could catch a word now and then. I heard him say something to her one day about "bettering her condition," and she seemed to be thinking very hard about it, and turning of it over in her mind, and I said to myself, She does n't want to take up with him, but she feels dreadful poor, and perhaps he has been saving and has got money in the bank, and she does n't want to throw away a chance of bettering herself without thinking it over. But dear me, —says I to myself,—to think of her walking up the broad aisle into meeting alongside of such a homely, rusty-looking creatur' as that! But there 's no telling what folks will do when poverty has got hold of 'em.

—Well, so I thought she was waiting to make up her mind, and he was hanging on in hopes she'd come round at last, as women do half the time, for they don't know their

own minds and the wind blows both ways at once with 'em as the smoke blows out of the tall chimlies,—east out of this one and west out of that,—so it's no use looking at 'em to know what the weather is.

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—But yesterday she comes up to me after breakfast, and asks me to go up with her into her little room. Now, says I to myself, I shall hear all about it. I saw she looked as if she'd got some of her trouble off her mind, and I guessed that it was settled, and so, says I to myself, I must wish her joy and hope it's all for the best, whatever I think about it.

—Well, she asked me to set down, and then she begun. She said that she was expecting to have a change in her condition of life, and had asked me up so that I might have the first news of it. I am sure—says I—I wish you both joy. Merriage is a blessed thing when folks is well sorted, and it is an honorable thing, and the first meracle was at the merriage in Canaan. It brings a great sight of happiness with it, as I've had a chance of knowing, for my hus—

The Landlady showed her usual tendency to “break” from the conversational pace just at this point, but managed to rein in the rebellious diaphragm, and resumed her narrative.

—Merriage!—says she,—pray who has said anything about merriage?—I beg your pardon, ma'am,—says I,—I thought you had spoke of changing your condition and I— She looked so I stopped right short.

-Don't say another word, says she, but jest listen to what I am going to tell you.

—My friend, says she, that you have seen with me so often lately, was hunting among his old Record books, when all at once he come across an old deed that was made by somebody that had my family name. He took it into his head to read it over, and he found there was some kind of a condition that if it was n't kept, the property would all go back to them that was the heirs of the one that gave the deed, and that he found out was me. Something or other put it into his head, says she, that the company that owned the property—it was ever so rich a company and owned land all round everywhere—hadn't kept to the conditions. So he went to work, says she, and hunted through his books and he inquired all round, and he found out pretty much all about it, and at last he come to me—it 's my boarder, you know, that says all this—and says he, Ma'am, says he, if you have any kind of fancy for being a rich woman you've only got to say so. I didn't know what he meant, and I began to think, says she, he must be crazy. But he explained it all to me, how I'd nothing to do but go to court and I could get a sight of property back. Well, so she went on telling me—there was ever so much more that I suppose was all plain enough, but I don't remember it all—only I know my boarder was a good deal worried at first at the thought of taking money that other people thought was theirs, and the Register he had to talk to her, and he brought a lawyer and he talked to her, and her friends they talked to her, and the upshot of it all was that the company agreed to settle the business by paying her, well, I don't know just how much, but enough to make her one of the rich folks again.

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I may as well add here that, as I have since learned, this is one of the most important cases of releasing right of reentry for condition broken which has been settled by arbitration for a considerable period. If I am not mistaken the Register of Deeds will get something more than a new coat out of this business, for the Lady very justly attributes her change of fortunes to his sagacity and his activity in following up the hint he had come across by mere accident.

So my supernumerary fellow-boarder, whom I would have dispensed with as a cumberer of the table, has proved a ministering angel to one of the personages whom I most cared for.

One would have thought that the most scrupulous person need not have hesitated in asserting an unquestioned legal and equitable claim simply because it had lain a certain number of years in abeyance. But before the Lady could make up her mind to accept her good fortune she had been kept awake many nights in doubt and inward debate whether she should avail herself of her rights. If it had been private property, so that another person must be made poor that she should become rich, she would have lived and died in want rather than claim her own. I do not think any of us would like to turn out the possessor of a fine estate enjoyed for two or three generations on the faith of unquestioned ownership by making use of some old forgotten instrument, which accident had thrown in our way.

But it was all nonsense to indulge in any sentiment in a case like this, where it was not only a right, but a duty which she owed herself and others in relation with her, to accept what Providence, as it appeared, had thrust upon her, and when no suffering would be occasioned to anybody. Common sense told her not to refuse it. So did several of her rich friends, who remembered about this time that they had not called upon her for a good while, and among them Mrs. Midas Goldenrod.

Never had that lady's carriage stood before the door of our boarding-house so long, never had it stopped so often, as since the revelation which had come from the Registry of Deeds. Mrs. Midas Goldenrod was not a bad woman, but she loved and hated in too exclusive and fastidious a way to allow us to consider her as representing the highest ideal of womanhood. She hated narrow ill-ventilated courts, where there was nothing to see if one looked out of the window but old men in dressing-gowns and old women in caps; she hated little dark rooms with air-tight stoves in them; she hated rusty bombazine gowns and last year's bonnets; she hated gloves that were not as fresh as new-laid eggs, and shoes that had grown bulgy and wrinkled in service; she hated common crockeryware and teaspoons of slight constitution; she hated second appearances on the dinner-table; she hated coarse napkins and table-cloths; she hated to ride in the horsecars; she hated to walk except for short distances, when she was tired of sitting

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in her carriage. She loved with sincere and undisguised affection a spacious city mansion and a charming country villa, with a seaside cottage for a couple of months or so; she loved a perfectly appointed household, a cook who was up to all kinds of salmis and vol-au-vents, a French maid, and a stylish-looking coachman, and the rest of the people necessary to help one live in a decent manner; she loved pictures that other people said were first-rate, and which had at least cost first-rate prices; she loved books with handsome backs, in showy cases; she loved heavy and richly wrought plate; fine linen and plenty of it; dresses from Paris frequently, and as many as could be got in without troubling the customhouse; Russia sables and Venetian point-lace; diamonds, and good big ones; and, speaking generally, she loved dear things in distinction from cheap ones, the real article and not the economical substitute.

For the life of me I cannot see anything Satanic in all this. Tell me, Beloved, only between ourselves, if some of these things are not desirable enough in their way, and if you and I could not make up our minds to put up with some of the least objectionable of them without any great inward struggle? Even in the matter of ornaments there is something to be said. Why should we be told that the New Jerusalem is paved with gold, and that its twelve gates are each of them a pearl, and that its foundations are garnished with sapphires and emeralds and all manner of precious stones, if these are not among the most desirable of objects? And is there anything very strange in the fact that many a daughter of earth finds it a sweet foretaste of heaven to wear about her frail earthly tabernacle these glittering reminders of the celestial city?

Mrs. Midas Goldenrod was not so entirely peculiar and anomalous in her likes and dislikes; the only trouble was that she mixed up these accidents of life too much with life itself, which is so often serenely or actively noble and happy without reference to them. She valued persons chiefly according to their external conditions, and of course the very moment her relative, the Lady of our breakfast-table, began to find herself in a streak of sunshine she came forward with a lighted candle to show her which way her path lay before her.

The Lady saw all this, how plainly, how painfully! yet she exercised a true charity for the weakness of her relative. Sensible people have as much consideration for the frailties of the rich as for those of the poor. There is a good deal of excuse for them. Even you and I, philosophers and philanthropists as we may think ourselves, have a dislike for the enforced economies, proper and honorable though they certainly are, of those who are two or three degrees below us in the scale of agreeable living.

—These are very worthy persons you have been living with, my dear, —said Mrs. Midas —[the “My dear” was an expression which had flowered out more luxuriantly than ever before in the new streak of sunshine] —eminently respectable parties, I have no

question, but then we shall want you to move as soon as possible to our quarter of the town, where we can see more of you than we have been able to in this queer place.

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It was not very pleasant to listen to this kind of talk, but the Lady remembered her annual bouquet, and her occasional visits from the rich lady, and restrained the inclination to remind her of the humble sphere from which she herself, the rich and patronizing personage, had worked her way up (if it was up) into that world which she seemed to think was the only one where a human being could find life worth having. Her cheek flushed a little, however, as she said to Mrs. Midas that she felt attached to the place where she had been living so long. She doubted, she was pleased to say, whether she should find better company in any circle she was like to move in than she left behind her at our boarding-house. I give the old Master the credit of this compliment. If one does not agree with half of what he says, at any rate he always has something to say, and entertains and lets out opinions and whims and notions of one kind and another that one can quarrel with if he is out of humor, or carry away to think about if he happens to be in the receptive mood.

But the Lady expressed still more strongly the regret she should feel at leaving her young friend, our Scheherezade. I cannot wonder at this. The Young Girl has lost what little playfulness she had in the earlier months of my acquaintance with her. I often read her stories partly from my interest in her, and partly because I find merit enough in them to deserve something, better than the rough handling they got from her coarse-fibred critic, whoever he was. I see evidence that her thoughts are wandering from her task, that she has fits of melancholy, and bursts of tremulous excitement, and that she has as much as she can do to keep herself at all to her stated, inevitable, and sometimes almost despairing literary labor. I have had some acquaintance with vital phenomena of this kind, and know something of the nervous nature of young women and its "magnetic storms," if I may borrow an expression from the physicists, to indicate the perturbations to which they are liable. She is more in need of friendship and counsel now than ever before, it seems to me, and I cannot bear to think that the Lady, who has become like a mother to her, is to leave her to her own guidance.

It is plain enough what is at the bottom of this disturbance. The astronomical lessons she has been taking have become interesting enough to absorb too much of her thoughts, and she finds them wandering to the stars or elsewhere, when they should be working quietly in the editor's harness.

The Landlady has her own views on this matter which she communicated to me something as follows:

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—I don't quite like to tell folks what a lucky place my boarding-house is, for fear I should have all sorts of people crowding in to be my boarders for the sake of their chances. Folks come here poor and they go away rich. Young women come here without a friend in the world, and the next thing that happens is a gentleman steps up to 'em and says, "If you'll take me for your pardner for life, I'll give you a good home and love you ever so much besides"; and off goes my young lady-boarder into a fine three-story house, as grand as the governor's wife, with everything to make her comfortable, and a husband to care for her into the bargain. That's the way it is with the young ladies that comes to board with me, ever since the gentleman that wrote the first book that advertised my establishment (and never charged me a cent for it neither) merried the Schoolma'am. And I think but that's between you and me—that it 's going to be the same thing right over again between that young gentleman and this young girl here—if she doos n't kill herself with writing for them news papers,—it 's too bad they don't pay her more for writing her stories, for I read one of 'em that made me cry so the Doctor—my Doctor Benjamin—said, "Ma, what makes your eyes look so?" and wanted to rig a machine up and look at 'em, but I told him what the matter was, and that he needn't fix up his peeking contrivances on my account,—anyhow she's a nice young woman as ever lived, and as industrious with that pen of hers as if she was at work with a sewing-machine,—and there ain't much difference, for that matter, between sewing on shirts and writing on stories,—one way you work with your foot, and the other way you work with your fingers, but I rather guess there's more headache in the stories than there is in the stitches, because you don't have to think quite so hard while your foot's going as you do when your fingers is at work, scratch, scratch, scratch, scribble, scribble, scribble.

It occurred to me that this last suggestion of the Landlady was worth considering by the soft-handed, broadcloth-clad spouters to the laboring classes,—so called in distinction from the idle people who only contrive the machinery and discover the processes and lay out the work and draw the charts and organize the various movements which keep the world going and make it tolerable. The organ-blower works harder with his muscles, for that matter, than the organ player, and may perhaps be exasperated into thinking himself a downtrodden martyr because he does not receive the same pay for his services.

I will not pretend that it needed the Landlady's sagacious guess about the Young Astronomer and his pupil to open my eyes to certain possibilities, if not probabilities, in that direction. Our Scheherezade kept on writing her stories according to agreement, so many pages for so many dollars, but some of her readers began to complain that they could not always follow her quite so well as in her earlier efforts.

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It seemed as if she must have fits of absence. In one instance her heroine began as a blonde and finished as a brunette; not in consequence of the use of any cosmetic, but through simple inadvertence. At last it happened in one of her stories that a prominent character who had been killed in an early page, not equivocally, but mortally, definitively killed, done for, and disposed of, reappeared as if nothing had happened towards the close of her narrative. Her mind was on something else, and she had got two stories mixed up and sent her manuscript without having looked it over. She told this mishap to the Lady, as something she was dreadfully ashamed of and could not possibly account for. It had cost her a sharp note from the publisher, and would be as good as a dinner to some half-starved Bohemian of the critical press.

The Lady listened to all this very thoughtfully, looking at her with great tenderness, and said, "My poor child!" Not another word then, but her silence meant a good deal.

When a man holds his tongue it does not signify much. But when a woman dispenses with the office of that mighty member, when she sheathes her natural weapon at a trying moment, it means that she trusts to still more formidable enginery; to tears it may be, a solvent more powerful than that with which Hannibal softened the Alpine rocks, or to the heaving bosom, the sight of which has subdued so many stout natures, or, it may be, to a sympathizing, quieting look which says "Peace, be still!" to the winds and waves of the little inland ocean, in a language that means more than speech.

While these matters were going on the Master and I had many talks on many subjects. He had found me a pretty good listener, for I had learned that the best way of getting at what was worth having from him was to wind him up with a question and let him run down all of himself. It is easy to turn a good talker into an insufferable bore by contradicting him, and putting questions for him to stumble over,—that is, if he is not a bore already, as "good talkers" are apt to be, except now and then.

We had been discussing some knotty points one morning when he said all at once:

—Come into my library with me. I want to read you some new passages from an interleaved copy of my book. You haven't read the printed part yet. I gave you a copy of it, but nobody reads a book that is given to him. Of course not. Nobody but a fool expects him to. He reads a little in it here and there, perhaps, and he cuts all the leaves if he cares enough about the writer, who will be sure to call on him some day, and if he is left alone in his library for five minutes will have hunted every corner of it until he has found the book he sent,—if it is to be found at all, which does n't always happen, if there's a penal colony anywhere in a garret or closet for typographical offenders and vagrants.

—What do you do when you receive a book you don't want, from the author?—said I.

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—Give him a good-natured adjective or two if I can, and thank him, and tell him I am lying under a sense of obligation to him.

—That is as good an excuse for lying as almost any,—I said.

—Yes, but look out for the fellows that send you a copy of their book to trap you into writing a bookseller's advertisement for it. I got caught so once, and never heard the end of it and never shall hear it.—He took down an elegantly bound volume, on opening which appeared a flourishing and eminently flattering dedication to himself.—There,—said he, what could I do less than acknowledge such a compliment in polite terms, and hope and expect the book would prove successful, and so forth and so forth? Well, I get a letter every few months from some new locality where the man that made that book is covering the fences with his placards, asking me whether I wrote that letter which he keeps in stereotype and has kept so any time these dozen or fifteen years. Animus tuus oculus, as the freshmen used to say. If her Majesty, the Queen of England, sends you a copy of her "Leaves from the Journal of Our Life in the Highlands," be sure you mark your letter of thanks for it Private!

We had got comfortably seated in his library in the mean time, and the Master had taken up his book. I noticed that every other page was left blank, and that he had written in a good deal of new matter.

—I tell you what,—he said,—there 's so much intelligence about nowadays in books and newspapers and talk that it's mighty hard to write without getting something or other worth listening to into your essay or your volume. The foolishest book is a kind of leaky boat on a sea of wisdom; some of the wisdom will get in anyhow. Every now and then I find something in my book that seems so good to me, I can't help thinking it must have leaked in. I suppose other people discover that it came through a leak, full as soon as I do. You must write a book or two to find out how much and how little you know and have to say. Then you must read some notices of it by somebody that loves you and one or two by somebody that hates you. You 'll find yourself a very odd piece of property after you 've been through these experiences. They 're trying to the constitution; I'm always glad to hear that a friend is as well as can be expected after he 's had a book.

You must n't think there are no better things in these pages of mine than the ones I'm going to read you, but you may come across something here that I forgot to say when we were talking over these matters.

He began, reading from the manuscript portion of his book:

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—We find it hard to get and to keep any private property in thought. Other people are all the time saying the same things we are hoarding to say when we get ready. [He looked up from his book just here and said, “Don’t be afraid, I am not going to quote Pereant.”] One of our old boarders—the one that called himself “The Professor” I think it was—said some pretty audacious things about what he called “pathological piety,” as I remember, in one of his papers. And here comes along Mr. Galton, and shows in detail from religious biographies that “there is a frequent correlation between an unusually devout disposition and a weak constitution.” Neither of them appeared to know that John Bunyan had got at the same fact long before them. He tells us, “The more healthy the lusty man is, the more prone he is unto evil.” If the converse is true, no wonder that good people, according to Bunyan, are always in trouble and terror, for he says,

“A Christian man is never long at ease;
When one fright is gone, another doth him seize.”

If invalidism and the nervous timidity which is apt to go with it are elements of spiritual superiority, it follows that pathology and toxicology should form a most important part of a theological education, so that a divine might know how to keep a parish in a state of chronic bad health in order that it might be virtuous.

It is a great mistake to think that a man’s religion is going to rid him of his natural qualities. “Bishop Hall” (as you may remember to have seen quoted elsewhere) “prefers Nature before Grace in the Election of a wife, because, saith he, it will be a hard Task, where the Nature is peevish and froward, for Grace to make an entire conquest while Life lasteth.”

“Nature” and “Grace” have been contrasted with each other in a way not very respectful to the Divine omnipotence. Kings and queens reign “by the Grace of God,” but a sweet, docile, pious disposition, such as is born in some children and grows up with them,—that congenital gift which good Bishop Hall would look for in a wife,—is attributed to “Nature.” In fact “Nature” and “Grace,” as handled by the scholastics, are nothing more nor less than two hostile Divinities in the Pantheon of post-classical polytheism.

What is the secret of the profound interest which “Darwinism” has excited in the minds and hearts of more persons than dare to confess their doubts and hopes? It is because it restores “Nature” to its place as a true divine manifestation. It is that it removes the traditional curse from that helpless infant lying in its mother’s arms. It is that it lifts from the shoulders of man the responsibility for the fact of death. It is that, if it is true, woman can no longer be taunted with having brought down on herself the pangs which make her sex a martyrdom. If development upward is the general law of the race; if we have grown by natural evolution out of the cave-man, and even less human forms of life, we have everything to hope from the future. That the question can be discussed without offence shows that we are entering on a new era, a Revival greater than that of Letters, the Revival of Humanity.

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The prevalent view of "Nature" has been akin to that which long reigned with reference to disease. This used to be considered as a distinct entity apart from the processes of life, of which it is one of the manifestations. It was a kind of demon to be attacked with things of odious taste and smell; to be fumigated out of the system as the evil spirit was driven from the bridal-chamber in the story of Tobit. The Doctor of earlier days, even as I can remember him, used to exorcise the demon of disease with recipes of odor as potent as that of the angel's diabolifuge,—the smoke from a fish's heart and liver, duly burned,—"the which smell when the evil spirit had smelled he fled into the uttermost parts of Egypt." The very moment that disease passes into the category of vital processes, and is recognized as an occurrence absolutely necessary, inevitable, and as one may say, normal under certain given conditions of constitution and circumstance, the medicine-man loses his half-miraculous endowments. The mythical serpent is untwined from the staff of Esculapius, which thenceforth becomes a useful walking-stick, and does not pretend to be anything more.

Sin, like disease, is a vital process. It is a function, and not an entity. It must be studied as a section of anthropology. No preconceived idea must be allowed to interfere with our investigation of the deranged spiritual function, any more than the old ideas of demoniacal possession must be allowed to interfere with our study of epilepsy. Spiritual pathology is a proper subject for direct observation and analysis, like any other subject involving a series of living actions.

In these living actions everything is progressive. There are sudden changes of character in what is called "conversion" which, at first, hardly seem to come into line with the common laws of evolution. But these changes have been long preparing, and it is just as much in the order of nature that certain characters should burst all at once from the rule of evil propensities, as it is that the evening primrose should explode, as it were, into bloom with audible sound, as you may read in Keats's *Endymion*, or observe in your own garden.

There is a continual tendency in men to fence in themselves and a few of their neighbors who agree with them in their ideas, as if they were an exception to their race. We must not allow any creed or religion whatsoever to confiscate to its own private use and benefit the virtues which belong to our common humanity. The Good Samaritan helped his wounded neighbor simply because he was a suffering fellow-creature. Do you think your charitable act is more acceptable than the Good Samaritan's, because you do it in the name of Him who made the memory of that kind man immortal? Do you mean that you would not give the cup of cold water for the sake simply and solely of the poor, suffering fellow-mortal, as willingly as you now do, professing to give it for the sake of Him who is not thirsty or in need of any help of yours? We must ask questions like this, if we are to claim for our common nature what belongs to it.

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The scientific study of man is the most difficult of all branches of knowledge. It requires, in the first place, an entire new terminology to get rid of that enormous load of prejudices with which every term applied to the malformations, the functional disturbances, and the organic diseases of the moral nature is at present burdened. Take that one word Sin, for instance: all those who have studied the subject from nature and not from books know perfectly well that a certain fraction of what is so called is nothing more or less than a symptom of hysteria; that another fraction is the index of a limited degree of insanity; that still another is the result of a congenital tendency which removes the act we sit in judgment upon from the sphere of self-determination, if not entirely, at least to such an extent that the subject of the tendency cannot be judged by any normal standard.

To study nature without fear is possible, but without reproach, impossible. The man who worships in the temple of knowledge must carry his arms with him as our Puritan fathers had to do when they gathered in their first rude meeting-houses. It is a fearful thing to meddle with the ark which holds the mysteries of creation. I remember that when I was a child the tradition was whispered round among us little folks that if we tried to count the stars we should drop down dead. Nevertheless, the stars have been counted and the astronomer has survived. This nursery legend is the child's version of those superstitions which would have strangled in their cradles the young sciences now adolescent and able to take care of themselves, and which, no longer daring to attack these, are watching with hostile aspect the rapid growth of the comparatively new science of man.

The real difficulty of the student of nature at this time is to reconcile absolute freedom and perfect fearlessness with that respect for the past, that reverence, for the spirit of reverence wherever we find it, that tenderness for the weakest fibres by which the hearts of our fellow-creatures hold to their religious convictions, which will make the transition from old belief to a larger light and liberty an interstitial change and not a violent mutilation.

I remember once going into a little church in a small village some miles from a great European capital. The special object of adoration in this humblest of places of worship was a bambino, a holy infant, done in wax, and covered with cheap ornaments such as a little girl would like to beautify her doll with. Many a good Protestant of the old Puritan type would have felt a strong impulse to seize this "idolatrous" figure and dash it to pieces on the stone floor of the little church. But one must have lived awhile among simple-minded pious Catholics to know what this poor waxen image and the whole baby-house of bambinos mean for a humble, unlettered, unimaginative peasantry. He will find that the true office of this eidolon

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is to fix the mind of the worshipper, and that in virtue of the devotional thoughts it has called forth so often for so many years in the mind of that poor old woman who is kneeling before it, it is no longer a wax doll for her, but has undergone a transubstantiation quite as real as that of the Eucharist. The moral is that we must not roughly smash other people's idols because we know, or think we know, that they are of cheap human manufacture.

—Do you think cheap manufactures encourage idleness?—said I.

The Master stared. Well he might, for I had been getting a little drowsy, and wishing to show that I had been awake and attentive, asked a question suggested by some words I had caught, but which showed that I had not been taking the slightest idea from what he was reading me. He stared, shook his head slowly, smiled good-humoredly, took off his great round spectacles, and shut up his book.

—Sat prates biberunt,—he said. A sick man that gets talking about himself, a woman that gets talking about her baby, and an author that begins reading out of his own book, never know when to stop. You'll think of some of these things you've been getting half asleep over by and by. I don't want you to believe anything I say; I only want you to try to see what makes me believe it.

My young friend, the Astronomer, has, I suspect, been making some addition to his manuscript. At any rate some of the lines he read us in the afternoon of this same day had never enjoyed the benefit of my revision, and I think they had but just been written. I noticed that his manner was somewhat more excited than usual, and his voice just towards the close a little tremulous. Perhaps I may attribute his improvement to the effect of my criticisms, but whatever the reason, I think these lines are very nearly as correct as they would have been if I had looked them over.

Wind-clouds and star-drifts.

VII

What if a soul redeemed, a spirit that loved
While yet on earth and was beloved in turn,
And still remembered every look and tone
Of that dear earthly sister who was left
Among the unwise virgins at the gate,
Itself admitted with the bridegroom's train,
What if this spirit redeemed, amid the host
Of chanting angels, in some transient lull
Of the eternal anthem, heard the cry



Of its lost darling, whom in evil hour
Some wilder pulse of nature led astray
And left an outcast in a world of fire,
Condemned to be the sport of cruel fiends,
Sleepless, unpitying, masters of the skill
To wring the maddest ecstasies of pain
From worn-out souls that only ask to die,
Would it not long to leave the bliss of Heaven,
Bearing



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a little water in its hand

To moisten those poor lips that plead in vain
With Him we call our Father? Or is all
So changed in such as taste celestial joy
They hear unmoved the endless wail of woe,
The daughter in the same dear tones that hushed
Her cradled slumbers; she who once had held
A babe upon her bosom from its voice
Hoarse with its cry of anguish, yet the same?

No! not in ages when the Dreadful Bird
Stamped his huge footprints, and the Fearful Beast
Strode with the flesh about those fossil bones
We build to mimic life with pygmy hands,
Not in those earliest days when men ran wild
And gashed each other with their knives of stone,
When their low foreheads bulged in ridgy brows
And their flat hands were callous in the palm
With walking in the fashion of their sires,
Grove as they might to find a cruel god
To work their will on such as human wrath
Had wrought its worst to torture, and had left
With rage unsated, white and stark and cold,
Could hate have shaped a demon more malign
Than him the dead men mummied in their creed
And taught their trembling children to adore!
Made in his image! Sweet and gracious souls
Dear to my heart by nature's fondest names,
Is not your memory still the precious mould
That lends its form to Him who hears my prayer?
Thus only I behold him, like to them,
Long-suffering, gentle, ever slow to wrath,
If wrath it be that only wounds to heal,
Ready to meet the wanderer ere he reach
The door he seeks, forgetful of his sin,
Longing to clasp him in a father's arms,
And seal his pardon with a pitying tear!

Four gospels tell their story to mankind,
And none so full of soft, caressing words
That bring the Maid of Bethlehem and her Babe
Before our tear-dimmed eyes, as his who learned



In the meek service of his gracious art
The tones which like the medicinal balms
That calm the sufferer's anguish, soothe our souls.
—Oh that the loving woman, she who sat
So long a listener at her Master's feet,
Had left us Mary's Gospel,—all she heard
Too sweet, too subtle for the ear of man!
Mark how the tender-hearted mothers read
The messages of love between the lines
Of the same page that loads the bitter tongue
Of him who deals in terror as his trade
With threatening words of wrath that scorch like flame!
They tell of angels whispering round the bed
Of the sweet infant smiling in its dream,
Of lambs enfolded in the Shepherd's arms,
Of Him who blessed the children; of the land
Where crystal rivers feed unfading flowers,
Of cities golden-paved with streets of pearl,
Of the white robes the winged creatures wear,
The crowns and harps from whose melodious strings
One long, sweet anthem flows forevermore!



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—We too bad human mothers, even as Thou,
Whom we have learned to worship as remote
From mortal kindred, wast a cradled babe.
The milk of woman filled our branching veins,
She lulled us with her tender nursery-song,
And folded round us her untiring arms,
While the first unremembered twilight year
Shaped us to conscious being; still we feel
Her pulses in our own,—too faintly feel;
Would that the heart of woman warmed our creeds!

Not from the sad-eyed hermit's lonely cell,
Not from the conclave where the holy men
Glare on each other, as with angry eyes
They battle for God's glory and their own,
Till, sick of wordy strife, a show of hands
Fixes the faith of ages yet unborn,
Ah, not from these the listening soul can hear
The Father's voice that speaks itself divine!
Love must be still our Master; till we learn
What he can teach us of a woman's heart,
We know not His, whose love embraces all.

There are certain nervous conditions peculiar to women in which the common effects of poetry and of music upon their sensibilities are strangely exaggerated. It was not perhaps to be wondered at that Octavia fainted when Virgil in reading from his great poem came to the line beginning *Tu Marcellus eris*: It is not hard to believe the story told of one of the two Davidson sisters, that the singing of some of Moore's plaintive melodies would so impress her as almost to take away the faculties of sense and motion. But there must have been some special cause for the singular nervous state into which this reading threw the young girl, our Scheherezade. She was doubtless tired with overwork and troubled with the thought that she was not doing herself justice, and that she was doomed to be the helpless prey of some of those corbies who not only pick out corbies' eyes, but find no other diet so nutritious and agreeable.

Whatever the cause may have been, her heart heaved tumultuously, her color came and went, and though she managed to avoid a scene by the exercise of all her self-control, I watched her very anxiously, for I was afraid she would have had a hysteric turn, or in one of her pallid moments that she would have fainted and fallen like one dead before us.

I was very glad, therefore, when evening came, to find that she was going out for a lesson on the stars. I knew the open air was what she needed, and I thought the walk would do her good, whether she made any new astronomical acquisitions or not.

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It was now late in the autumn, and the trees were pretty nearly stripped of their leaves. —There was no place so favorable as the Common for the study of the heavens. The skies were brilliant with stars, and the air was just keen enough to remind our young friends that the cold season was at hand. They wandered round for a while, and at last found themselves under the Great Elm, drawn thither, no doubt, by the magnetism it is so well known to exert over the natives of its own soil and those who have often been under the shadow of its outstretched arms. The venerable survivor of its contemporaries that flourished in the days when Blackstone rode beneath it on his bull was now a good deal broken by age, yet not without marks of lusty vitality. It had been wrenched and twisted and battered by so many scores of winters that some of its limbs were crippled and many of its joints were shaky, and but for the support of the iron braces that lent their strong sinews to its more infirm members it would have gone to pieces in the first strenuous northeaster or the first sudden and violent gale from the southwest. But there it stood, and there it stands as yet,—though its obituary was long ago written after one of the terrible storms that tore its branches,—leafing out hopefully in April as if it were trying in its dumb language to lisp “Our Father,” and dropping its slender burden of foliage in October as softly as if it were whispering Amen!

Not far from the ancient and monumental tree lay a small sheet of water, once agile with life and vocal with evening melodies, but now stirred only by the swallow as he dips his wing, or by the morning bath of the English sparrows, those high-headed, thick-bodied, full-feeding, hot-tempered little John Bulls that keep up such a swashing and swabbing and spattering round all the water basins, one might think from the fuss they make about it that a bird never took a bath here before, and that they were the missionaries of ablution to the unwashed Western world.

There are those who speak lightly of this small aqueous expanse, the eye of the sacred enclosure, which has looked unwinking on the happy faces of so many natives and the curious features of so many strangers. The music of its twilight minstrels has long ceased, but their memory lingers like an echo in the name it bears. Cherish it, inhabitants of the two-hilled city, once three-hilled; ye who have said to the mountain, “Remove hence,” and turned the sea into dry land! May no contractor fill his pockets by undertaking to fill thee, thou granite girdled lakelet, or drain the civic purse by drawing off thy waters! For art thou not the Palladium of our Troy? Didst thou not, like the Divine image which was the safeguard of Ilium, fall from the skies, and if the Trojan could look with pride upon the heaven-descended form of the Goddess of Wisdom, cannot he who dwells by thy shining oval look in that mirror and contemplate Himself,—the Native of Boston.

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There must be some fatality which carries our young men and maidens in the direction of the Common when they have anything very particular to exchange their views about. At any rate I remember two of our young friends brought up here a good many years ago, and I understand that there is one path across the enclosure which a young man must not ask a young woman to take with him unless he means business, for an action will hold—for breach of promise, if she consents to accompany him, and he chooses to forget his obligations:

Our two young people stood at the western edge of the little pool, studying astronomy in the reflected firmament. The Pleiades were trembling in the wave before them, and the three great stars of Orion,—for these constellations were both glittering in the eastern sky.

“There is no place too humble for the glories of heaven to shine in,” she said.

“And their splendor makes even this little pool beautiful and noble,” he answered.

“Where is the light to come from that is to do as much for our poor human lives?”

A simple question enough, but the young girl felt her color change as she answered, “From friendship, I think.”

—Grazing only as-yet,—not striking full, hardly hitting at all,—but there are questions and answers that come so very near, the wind of them alone almost takes the breath away.

There was an interval of silence. Two young persons can stand looking at water for a long time without feeling the necessity of speaking. Especially when the water is alive with stars and the young persons are thoughtful and impressible. The water seems to do half the thinking while one is looking at it; its movements are felt in the brain very much like thought. When I was in full training as a flaneur, I could stand on the Pont Neuf with the other experts in the great science of passive cerebration and look at the river for half an hour with so little mental articulation that when I moved on it seemed as if my thinking-marrow had been asleep and was just waking up refreshed after its nap.

So the reader can easily account for the interval of silence. It is hard to tell how long it would have lasted, but just then a lubberly intrusive boy threw a great stone, which convulsed the firmament, the one at their feet, I mean. The six Pleiads disappeared as if in search of their lost sister; the belt of Orion was broken asunder, and a hundred worlds dissolved back into chaos. They turned away and strayed off into one of the more open paths, where the view of the sky over them was unobstructed. For some reason or other the astronomical lesson did not get on very fast this evening.

Presently the young man asked his pupil:

—Do you know what the constellation directly over our heads is?

—Is it not Cassiopea?—she asked a little hesitatingly.

—No, it is Andromeda. You ought not to have forgotten her, for I remember showing you a double star, the one in her right foot, through the equatorial telescope. You have not forgotten the double star,—the two that shone for each other and made a little world by themselves?

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—No, indeed,—she answered, and blushed, and felt ashamed because she had said indeed, as if it had been an emotional recollection.

The double-star allusion struck another dead silence. She would have given a week's pay to any invisible attendant that would have cut her stay-lace.

At last: Do you know the story of Andromeda? he said.

—Perhaps I did once, but suppose I don't remember it.

He told her the story of the unfortunate maiden chained to a rock and waiting for a sea-beast that was coming to devour her, and how Perseus came and set her free, and won her love with her life. And then he began something about a young man chained to his rock, which was a star-gazer's tower, a prey by turns to ambition, and lonely self-contempt and unwholesome scorn of the life he looked down upon after the serenity of the firmament, and endless questionings that led him nowhere,—and now he had only one more question to ask. He loved her. Would she break his chain?—He held both his hands out towards her, the palms together, as if they were fettered at the wrists. She took hold of them very gently; parted them a little; then wider—wider—and found herself all at once folded, unresisting, in her lover's arms.

So there was a new double-star in the living firmament. The constellations seemed to kindle with new splendors as the student and the story-teller walked homeward in their light; Alioth and Algol looked down on them as on the first pair of lovers they shone over, and the autumn air seemed full of harmonies as when the morning stars sang together.

XII

The old Master had asked us, the Young Astronomer and myself, into his library, to hear him read some passages from his interleaved book. We three had formed a kind of little club without knowing it from the time when the young man began reading those extracts from his poetical reveries which I have reproduced in these pages. Perhaps we agreed in too many things,—I suppose if we could have had a good hard-headed, old-fashioned New England divine to meet with us it might have acted as a wholesome corrective. For we had it all our own way; the Lady's kindly remonstrance was taken in good part, but did not keep us from talking pretty freely, and as for the Young Girl, she listened with the tranquillity and fearlessness which a very simple trusting creed naturally gives those who hold it. The fewer outworks to the citadel of belief, the fewer points there are to be threatened and endangered.

The reader must not suppose that I even attempt to reproduce everything exactly as it took place in our conversations, or when we met to listen to the Master's prose or to the Young Astronomer's verse. I do not pretend to give all the pauses and interruptions by



question or otherwise. I could not always do it if I tried, but I do not want to, for oftentimes it is better to let the speaker or reader go on continuously, although there may have been many breaks in the course of the conversation or reading. When, for instance, I by and by reproduce what the Landlady said to us, I shall give it almost without any hint that it was arrested in its flow from time to time by various expressions on the part of the hearers.

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I can hardly say what the reason of it was, but it is very certain that I had a vague sense of some impending event as we took our seats in the Master's library. He seemed particularly anxious that we should be comfortably seated, and shook up the cushions of the arm-chairs himself, and got them into the right places.

Now go to sleep—he said—or listen,—just which you like best. But I am going to begin by telling you both a secret.

Liberavi animam meam. That is the meaning of my book and of my literary life, if I may give such a name to that party-colored shred of human existence. I have unburdened myself in this book, and in some other pages, of what I was born to say. Many things that I have said in my ripe days have been aching in my soul since I was a mere child. I say aching, because they conflicted with many of my inherited beliefs, or rather traditions. I did not know then that two strains of blood were striving in me for the mastery,—two! twenty, perhaps,—twenty thousand, for aught I know,—but represented to me by two,—paternal and maternal. Blind forces in themselves; shaping thoughts as they shaped features and battled for the moulding of constitution and the mingling of temperament.

Philosophy and poetry came—to me before I knew their names.

Je fis mes premiers vers, sans savoir les écrire.

Not verses so much as the stuff that verses are made of. I don't suppose that the thoughts which came up of themselves in my mind were so mighty different from what come up in the minds of other young folks. And that 's the best reason I could give for telling 'em. I don't believe anything I've written is as good as it seemed to me when I wrote it,—he stopped, for he was afraid he was lying,—not much that I 've written, at any rate,—he said—with a smile at the honesty which made him qualify his statement. But I do know this: I have struck a good many chords, first and last, in the consciousness of other people. I confess to a tender feeling for my little brood of thoughts. When they have been welcomed and praised it has pleased me, and if at any time they have been rudely handled and despitefully entreated it has cost me a little worry. I don't despise reputation, and I should like to be remembered as having said something worth lasting well enough to last.

But all that is nothing to the main comfort I feel as a writer. I have got rid of something my mind could not keep to itself and rise as it was meant to into higher regions. I saw the aeronauts the other day emptying from the bags some of the sand that served as ballast. It glistened a moment in the sunlight as a slender shower, and then was lost and seen no more as it scattered itself unnoticed. But the airship rose higher as the sand was poured out, and so it seems to me I have felt myself getting above the mists and clouds whenever I have lightened myself of some portion of the mental ballast I have carried with me. Why should I hope or fear when I send out my book? I have had

my reward, for I have wrought out my thought, I have said my say, I have freed my soul. I can afford to be forgotten.

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Look here!—he said. I keep oblivion always before me.—He pointed to a singularly perfect and beautiful trilobite which was lying on a pile of manuscripts.—Each time I fill a sheet of paper with what I am writing, I lay it beneath this relic of a dead world, and project my thought forward into eternity as far as this extinct crustacean carries it backward. When my heart beats too lustily with vain hopes of being remembered, I press the cold fossil against it and it grows calm. I touch my forehead with it, and its anxious furrows grow smooth. Our world, too, with all its breathing life, is but a leaf to be folded with the other strata, and if I am only patient, by and by I shall be just as famous as imperious Caesar himself, embedded with me in a conglomerate.

He began reading:—"There is no new thing under the sun," said the Preacher. He would not say so now, if he should come to life for a little while, and have his photograph taken, and go up in a balloon, and take a trip by railroad and a voyage by steamship, and get a message from General Grant by the cable, and see a man's leg cut off without its hurting him. If it did not take his breath away and lay him out as flat as the Queen of Sheba was knocked over by the splendors of his court, he must have rivalled our Indians in the nil admarari line.

For all that, it is a strange thing to see what numbers of new things are really old. There are many modern contrivances that are of as early date as the first man, if not thousands of centuries older. Everybody knows how all the arrangements of our telescopes and microscopes are anticipated in the eye, and how our best musical instruments are surpassed by the larynx. But there are some very odd things any anatomist can tell, showing how our recent contrivances are anticipated in the human body. In the alimentary canal are certain pointed eminences called villi, and certain ridges called valvulae conniventes. The makers of heating apparatus have exactly reproduced the first in the "pot" of their furnaces, and the second in many of the radiators to be seen in our public buildings. The object in the body and the heating apparatus is the same; to increase the extent of surface.—We mix hair with plaster (as the Egyptians mixed straw with clay to make bricks) so that it shall hold more firmly. But before man had any artificial dwelling the same contrivance of mixing fibrous threads with a cohesive substance had been employed in the jointed fabric of his own spinal column. India-rubber is modern, but the yellow animal substance which is elastic like that, and serves the same purpose in the animal economy which that serves in our mechanical contrivances, is as old as the mammalia. The dome, the round and the Gothic arch, the groined roof, the flying buttress, are all familiar to those who have studied the bony frame of man. All forms of the lever and all the principal kinds of hinges are to be met with in our own frames. The valvular arrangements of the blood-vessels are unapproached by any artificial apparatus, and the arrangements for preventing friction are so perfect that two surfaces will play on each other for fourscore years or more and never once trouble their owner by catching or rubbing so as to be felt or heard.

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But stranger than these repetitions are the coincidences one finds in the manners and speech of antiquity and our own time. In the days when Flood Ireson was drawn in the cart by the Maenads of Marblehead, that fishing town had the name of nurturing a young population not over fond of strangers. It used to be said that if an unknown landsman showed himself in the streets, the boys would follow after him, crying, "Rock him! Rock him! He's got a long-tailed coat on!"

Now if one opens the Odyssey, he will find that the Phaeacians, three thousand years ago, were wonderfully like these youthful Marbleheaders. The blue-eyed Goddess who convoys Ulysses, under the disguise of a young maiden of the place, gives him some excellent advice. "Hold your tongue," she says, "and don't look at anybody or ask any questions, for these are seafaring people, and don't like to have strangers round or anybody that does not belong here."

Who would have thought that the saucy question, "Does your mother know you're out?" was the very same that Horace addressed to the bore who attacked him in the Via Sacra?

Interpellandi locus hic erat; Est tibi mater?
Cognati, queis te salvo est opus?

And think of the London cockney's prefix of the letter h to innocent words beginning with a vowel having its prototype in the speech of the vulgar Roman, as may be seen in the verses of Catullus:

Chommoda dicebat, siquando commoda vellet
Dicere, et hinsidias Arrius insidias.
Et tum mirifice sperabat se esse locutum,
Cum quantum poterat, dixerat hinsidias...

Hoc misso in Syriam, requierant omnibus aures...
Cum subito affertur nuncius horribilis;
Ionios fluctus, postquam illuc Arrius isset,
Jam non Ionios esse, sed Hionios.

—Our neighbors of Manhattan have an excellent jest about our crooked streets which, if they were a little more familiar with a native author of unquestionable veracity, they would strike out from the letter of "Our Boston Correspondent," where it is a source of perennial hilarity. It is worth while to reprint, for the benefit of whom it may concern, a paragraph from the authentic history of the venerable Diedrich Knickerbocker:

"The sage council, as has been mentioned in a preceding chapter, not being able to determine upon any plan for the building of their city,—the cows, in a laudable fit of patriotism, took it under their peculiar charge, and as they went to and from pasture,

established paths through the bushes, on each side of which the good folks built their houses; which is one cause of the rambling and picturesque turns and labyrinths, which distinguish certain streets of New York at this very day.”

—When I was a little boy there came to stay with us for a while a young lady with a singularly white complexion. Now I had often seen the masons slacking lime, and I thought it was the whitest thing I had ever looked upon. So I always called this fair visitor of ours Slacked Lime. I think she is still living in a neighboring State, and I am sure she has never forgotten the fanciful name I gave her. But within ten or a dozen years I have seen this very same comparison going the round of the papers, and credited to a Welsh poet, David Ap Gwyllym, or something like that, by name.

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—I turned a pretty sentence enough in one of my lectures about finding poppies springing up amidst the corn; as if it had been foreseen by nature that wherever there should be hunger that asked for food, there would be pain that needed relief,—and many years afterwards. I had the pleasure of finding that Mistress Piozzi had been beforehand with me in suggesting the same moral reflection.

—I should like to carry some of my friends to see a giant bee-hive I have discovered. Its hum can be heard half a mile, and the great white swarm counts its tens of thousands. They pretend to call it a planing-mill, but if it is not a bee-hive it is so like one that if a hundred people have not said so before me, it is very singular that they have not. If I wrote verses I would try to bring it in, and I suppose people would start up in a dozen places, and say, “Oh, that bee-hive simile is mine,—and besides, did not Mr. Bayard Taylor call the snowflakes ‘white bees’?”

I think the old Master had chosen these trivialities on purpose to amuse the Young Astronomer and myself, if possible, and so make sure of our keeping awake while he went on reading, as follows:

—How the sweet souls of all time strike the same note, the same because it is in unison with the divine voice that sings to them! I read in the Zend Avesta, “No earthly man with a hundred-fold strength speaks so much evil as Mithra with heavenly strength speaks good. No earthly man with a hundred-fold strength does so much evil as Mithra with heavenly strength does good.”

And now leave Persia and Zoroaster, and come down with me to our own New England and one of our old Puritan preachers. It was in the dreadful days of the Salem Witchcraft delusion that one Jonathan Singletary, being then in the prison at Ipswich, gave his testimony as to certain fearful occurrences,—a great noise, as of many cats climbing, skipping, and jumping, of throwing about of furniture, and of men walking in the chambers, with crackling and shaking as if the house would fall upon him.

“I was at present,” he says, “something affrighted; yet considering what I had lately heard made out by Mr. Mitchel at Cambridge, that there is more good in God than there is evil in sin, and that although God is the greatest good and sin the greatest evil, yet the first Being of evil cannot weave the scales or overpower the first Being of good: so considering that the authour of good was of greater power than the authour of evil, God was pleased of his goodness to keep me from being out of measure frightened.”

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I shall always bless the memory of this poor, timid creature for saving that dear remembrance of "Matchless Mitchel." How many, like him, have thought they were preaching a new gospel, when they were only reaffirming the principles which underlie the Magna Charta of humanity, and are common to the noblest utterances of all the nobler creeds! But spoken by those solemn lips to those stern, simpleminded hearers, the words I have cited seem to me to have a fragrance like the precious ointment of spikenard with which Mary anointed her Master's feet. I can see the little bare meeting-house, with the godly deacons, and the grave matrons, and the comely maidens, and the sober manhood of the village, with the small group of college students sitting by themselves under the shadow of the awful Presidential Presence, all listening to that preaching, which was, as Cotton Mather says, "as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice"; and as the holy pastor utters those blessed words, which are not of any one church or age, but of all time, the humble place of worship is filled with their perfume, as the house where Mary knelt was filled with the odor of the precious ointment.

—The Master rose, as he finished reading this sentence, and, walking to the window, adjusted a curtain which he seemed to find a good deal of trouble in getting to hang just as he wanted it.

He came back to his arm-chair, and began reading again

—If men would only open their eyes to the fact which stares them in the face from history, and is made clear enough by the slightest glance at the condition of mankind, that humanity is of immeasurably greater importance than their own or any other particular belief, they would no more attempt to make private property of the grace of God than to fence in the sunshine for their own special use and enjoyment.

We are all tattooed in our cradles with the beliefs of our tribe; the record may seem superficial, but it is indelible. You cannot educate a man wholly out of the superstitious fears which were early implanted in his imagination; no matter how utterly his reason may reject them, he will still feel as the famous woman did about ghosts, *Je n'y crois pas, mais je les crains*,—"I don't believe in them, but I am afraid of them, nevertheless."

—As people grow older they come at length to live so much in memory that they often think with a kind of pleasure of losing their dearest blessings. Nothing can be so perfect while we possess it as it will seem when remembered. The friend we love best may sometimes weary us by his presence or vex us by his infirmities. How sweet to think of him as he will be to us after we have outlived him ten or a dozen years! Then we can recall him in his best moments, bid him stay with us as long as we want his company, and send him away when we wish to be alone again. One might alter Shenstone's well-known epitaph to suit such a case:—

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Hen! quanto minus est cum to vivo versari

Quam erit (vel esset) tui mortui reminisse!

“Alas! how much less the delight of thy living presence
Than will (or would) be that of remembering thee when thou hast
left us!”

I want to stop here—I the Poet—and put in a few reflections of my own, suggested by what I have been giving the reader from the Master’s Book, and in a similar vein.

—How few things there are that do not change their whole aspect in the course of a single generation! The landscape around us is wholly different. Even the outlines of the hills that surround us are changed by the creeping of the villages with their spires and school-houses up their sides. The sky remains the same, and the ocean. A few old churchyards look very much as they used to, except, of course, in Boston, where the gravestones have been rooted up and planted in rows with walks between them, to the utter disgrace and ruin of our most venerated cemeteries. The Registry of Deeds and the Probate Office show us the same old folios, where we can read our grandfather’s title to his estate (if we had a grandfather and he happened to own anything) and see how many pots and kettles there were in his kitchen by the inventory of his personal property.

Among living people none remain so long unchanged as the actors. I can see the same Othello to-day, if I choose, that when I was a boy I saw smothering Mrs. Duff-Desdemona with the pillow, under the instigations of Mr. Cooper-Iago. A few stone heavier than he was then, no doubt, but the same truculent blackamoor that took by the thr-r-r-oat the circumcised dog in Aleppo, and told us about it in the old Boston Theatre. In the course of a fortnight, if I care to cross the water, I can see Mademoiselle Dejaset in the same parts I saw her in under Louis Philippe, and be charmed by the same grace and vivacity which delighted my grandmother (if she was in Paris, and went to see her in the part of Fanchon toute seule at the Theatre des Capucines) in the days when the great Napoleon was still only First Consul.

The graveyard and the stage are pretty much the only places where you can expect to find your friends—as you left them, five and twenty or fifty years ago. I have noticed, I may add, that old theatre-goers bring back the past with their stories more vividly than men with any other experiences. There were two old New-Yorkers that I used to love to sit talking with about the stage. One was a scholar and a writer of note; a pleasant old gentleman, with the fresh cheek of an octogenarian Cupid. The other not less noted in his way, deep in local lore, large-brained, full-blooded, of somewhat perturbing and tumultuous presence. It was good to hear them talk of George Frederic Cooke, of Kean, and the lesser stars of those earlier constellations. Better still to breakfast with old Samuel Rogers, as some of my readers have done more than once, and hear him

answer to the question who was the best actor he remembered, "I think, on the whole, Garrick."

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If we did but know how to question these charming old people before it is too late! About ten years, more or less, after the generation in advance of our own has all died off, it occurs to us all at once, "There! I can ask my old friend what he knows of that picture, which must be a Copley; of that house and its legends about which there is such a mystery. He (or she) must know all about that." Too late! Too late!

Still, now and then one saves a reminiscence that means a good deal by means of a casual question. I asked the first of those two old New-Yorkers the following question: "Who, on the whole, seemed to you the most considerable person you ever met?"

Now it must be remembered that this was a man who had lived in a city that calls itself the metropolis, one who had been a member of the State and the National Legislature, who had come in contact with men of letters and men of business, with politicians and members of all the professions, during a long and distinguished public career. I paused for his answer with no little curiosity. Would it be one of the great Ex-Presidents whose names were known to, all the world? Would it be the silver-tongued orator of Kentucky or the "God-like" champion of the Constitution, our New-England Jupiter Capitolinus? Who would it be?

"Take it altogether," he answered, very deliberately, "I should say Colonel Elisha Williams was the most notable personage that I have met with."

—Colonel Elisha Williams! And who might he be, forsooth? A gentleman of singular distinction, you may be well assured, even though you are not familiar with his name; but as I am not writing a biographical dictionary, I shall leave it to my reader to find out who and what he was.

—One would like to live long enough to witness certain things which will no doubt come to pass by and by. I remember that when one of our good kindhearted old millionnaires was growing very infirm, his limbs failing him, and his trunk getting packed with the infirmities which mean that one is bound on a long journey, he said very simply and sweetly, "I don't care about living a great deal longer, but I should like to live long enough to find out how much old (a many-millioned fellow-citizen) is worth." And without committing myself on the longevity-question, I confess I should like to live long enough to see a few things happen that are like to come, sooner or later.

I want to hold the skull of Abraham in my hand. They will go through the cave of Machpelah at Hebron, I feel sure, in the course of a few generations at the furthest, and as Dr. Robinson knows of nothing which should lead us to question the correctness of the tradition which regards this as the place of sepulture of Abraham and the other patriarchs, there is no reason why we may not find his mummied body in perfect preservation, if he was embalmed after the Egyptian fashion. I suppose the tomb of David will be explored by a

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commission in due time, and I should like to see the phrenological developments of that great king and divine singer and warm-blooded man. If, as seems probable, the anthropological section of society manages to get round the curse that protects the bones of Shakespeare, I should like to see the dome which rounded itself over his imperial brain. Not that I am what is called a phrenologist, but I am curious as to the physical developments of these fellow-mortals of mine, and a little in want of a sensation.

I should like to live long enough to see the course of the Tiber turned, and the bottom of the river thoroughly dredged. I wonder if they would find the seven-branched golden candlestick brought from Jerusalem by Titus, and said to have been dropped from the Milvian bridge. I have often thought of going fishing for it some year when I wanted a vacation, as some of my friends used to go to Ireland to fish for salmon. There was an attempt of that kind, I think, a few years ago.

We all know how it looks well enough, from the figure of it on the Arch of Titus, but I should like to “heft” it in my own hand, and carry it home and shine it up (excuse my colloquialisms), and sit down and look at it, and think and think and think until the Temple of Solomon built up its walls of hewn stone and its roofs of cedar around me as noiselessly as when it rose, and “there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building.”

All this, you will remember, Beloved, is a digression on my own account, and I return to the old Master whom I left smiling at his own alteration of Shenstone’s celebrated inscription. He now begin reading again:

—I want it to be understood that I consider that a certain number of persons are at liberty to dislike me peremptorily, without showing cause, and that they give no offence whatever in so doing.

If I did not cheerfully acquiesce in this sentiment towards myself on the part of others, I should not feel at liberty to indulge my own aversions. I try to cultivate a Christian feeling to all my fellow-creatures, but inasmuch as I must also respect truth and honesty, I confess to myself a certain number of inalienable dislikes and prejudices, some of which may possibly be shared by others. Some of these are purely instinctive, for others I can assign a reason. Our likes and dislikes play so important a part in the Order of Things that it is well to see on what they are founded.

There are persons I meet occasionally who are too intelligent by half for my liking. They know my thoughts beforehand, and tell me what I was going to say. Of course they are masters of all my knowledge, and a good deal besides; have read all the books I have read, and in later editions; have had all the experiences I have been through, and more-

too. In my private opinion every mother's son of them will lie at any time rather than confess ignorance.

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—I have a kind of dread, rather than hatred, of persons with a large excess of vitality; great feeders, great laughers, great story-tellers, who come sweeping over their company with a huge tidal wave of animal spirits and boisterous merriment. I have pretty good spirits myself, and enjoy a little mild pleasantry, but I am oppressed and extinguished by these great lusty, noisy creatures,—and feel as if I were a mute at a funeral when they get into full blast.

—I cannot get along much better with those drooping, languid people, whose vitality falls short as much as that of the others is in excess. I have not life enough for two; I wish I had. It is not very enlivening to meet a fellow-creature whose expression and accents say, “You are the hair that breaks the camel’s back of my endurance, you are the last drop that makes my cup of woe run over”; persons whose heads drop on one side like those of toothless infants, whose voices recall the tones in which our old snuffling choir used to wail out the verses of:

“Life is the time to serve the Lord.”

—There is another style which does not captivate me. I recognize an attempt at the grand manner now and then, in persons who are well enough in their way, but of no particular importance, socially or otherwise. Some family tradition of wealth or distinction is apt to be at the bottom of it, and it survives all the advantages that used to set it off. I like family pride as well as my neighbors, and respect the high-born fellow-citizen whose progenitors have not worked in their shirt-sleeves for the last two generations full as much as I ought to. But grand pere oblige; a person with a known grandfather is too distinguished to find it necessary to put on airs. The few Royal Princes I have happened to know were very easy people to get along with, and had not half the social knee-action I have often seen in the collapsed dowagers who lifted their eyebrows at me in my earlier years.

—My heart does not warm as it should do towards the persons, not intimates, who are always too glad to see me when we meet by accident, and discover all at once that they have a vast deal to unbosom themselves of to me.

—There is one blameless person whom I cannot love and have no excuse for hating. It is the innocent fellow-creature, otherwise inoffensive to me, whom I find I have involuntarily joined on turning a corner. I suppose the Mississippi, which was flowing quietly along, minding its own business, hates the Missouri for coming into it all at once with its muddy stream. I suppose the Missouri in like manner hates the Mississippi for diluting with its limpid, but insipid current the rich reminiscences of the varied soils through which its own stream has wandered. I will not compare myself, to the clear or the turbid current, but I will own that my heart sinks when I find all of a sudden I am in for a corner confluence, and I cease loving my neighbor as myself until I can get away from him.

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—These antipathies are at least weaknesses; they may be sins in the eye of the Recording Angel. I often reproach myself with my wrong-doings. I should like sometimes to thank Heaven for saving me from some kinds of transgression, and even for granting me some qualities that if I dared I should be disposed to call virtues. I should do so, I suppose, if I did not remember the story of the Pharisee. That ought not to hinder me. The parable was told to illustrate a single virtue, humility, and the most unwarranted inferences have been drawn from it as to the whole character of the two parties. It seems not at all unlikely, but rather probable, that the Pharisee was a fairer dealer, a better husband, and a more charitable person than the Publican, whose name has come down to us “linked with one virtue,” but who may have been guilty, for aught that appears to the contrary, of “a thousand crimes.” Remember how we limit the application of other parables. The lord, it will be recollected, commended the unjust steward because he had done wisely. His shrewdness was held up as an example, but after all he was a miserable swindler, and deserved the state-prison as much as many of our financial operators. The parable of the Pharisee and the Publican is a perpetual warning against spiritual pride. But it must not frighten any one of us out of being thankful that he is not, like this or that neighbor, under bondage to strong drink or opium, that he is not an Erie-Railroad Manager, and that his head rests in virtuous calm on his own pillow. If he prays in the morning to be kept out of temptation as well as for his daily bread, shall he not return thanks at night that he has not fallen into sin as well as that his stomach has been filled? I do not think the poor Pharisee has ever had fair play, and I am afraid a good many people sin with the comforting, half-latent intention of smiting their breasts afterwards and repeating the prayer of the Publican.

(Sensation.)

This little movement which I have thus indicated seemed to give the Master new confidence in his audience. He turned over several pages until he came to a part of the interleaved volume where we could all see he had written in a passage of new matter in red ink as of special interest.

—I told you, he said, in Latin, and I repeat it in English, that I have freed my soul in these pages,—I have spoken my mind. I have read you a few extracts, most of them of rather slight texture, and some of them, you perhaps thought, whimsical. But I meant, if I thought you were in the right mood for listening to it, to read you some paragraphs which give in small compass the pith, the marrow, of all that my experience has taught me. Life is a fatal complaint, and an eminently contagious one. I took it early, as we all do, and have treated it all along with the best palliatives I could get hold of, inasmuch as I could find no radical cure for its evils, and have so far managed to keep pretty comfortable under it.

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It is a great thing for a man to put the whole meaning of his life into a few paragraphs, if he does it so that others can make anything out of it. If he conveys his wisdom after the fashion of the old alchemists, he may as well let it alone. He must talk in very plain words, and that is what I have done. You want to know what a certain number of scores of years have taught me that I think best worth telling. If I had half a dozen square inches of paper, and one penful of ink, and five minutes to use them in for the instruction of those who come after me, what should I put down in writing? That is the question.

Perhaps I should be wiser if I refused to attempt any such brief statement of the most valuable lesson that life has taught me. I am by no means sure that I had not better draw my pen through the page that holds the quintessence of my vital experiences, and leave those who wish to know what it is to distil to themselves from my many printed pages. But I have excited your curiosity, and I see that you are impatient to hear what the wisdom, or the folly, it may be, of a life shows for, when it is crowded into a few lines as the fragrance of a gardenful of roses is concentrated in a few drops of perfume.

—By this time I confess I was myself a little excited. What was he going to tell us? The Young Astronomer looked upon him with an eye as clear and steady and brilliant as the evening star, but I could see that he too was a little nervous, wondering what would come next.

The old Master adjusted his large round spectacles, and began:

—It has cost me fifty years to find my place in the Order of Things. I had explored all the sciences; I had studied the literature of all ages; I had travelled in many lands; I had learned how to follow the working of thought in men and of sentiment and instinct in women. I had examined for myself all the religions that could make out any claim for themselves. I had fasted and prayed with the monks of a lonely convent; I had mingled with the crowds that shouted glory at camp-meetings; I had listened to the threats of Calvinists and the promises of Universalists; I had been a devout attendant on a Jewish Synagogue; I was in correspondence with an intelligent Buddhist; and I met frequently with the inner circle of Rationalists, who believed in the persistence of Force, and the identity of alimentary substances with virtue, and were reconstructing the universe on this basis, with absolute exclusion of all Supernumeraries. In these pursuits I had passed the larger part of my half-century of existence, as yet with little satisfaction. It was on the morning of my fiftieth birthday that the solution of the great problem I had sought so long came to me as a simple formula, with a few grand but obvious inferences. I will repeat the substance of this final intuition:

The one central fact an the Order of Things which solves all questions is:

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At this moment we were interrupted by a knock at the Master's door. It was most inopportune, for he was on the point of the great disclosure, but common politeness compelled him to answer it, and as the step which we had heard was that of one of the softer-footed sex, he chose to rise from his chair and admit his visitor.

This visitor was our Landlady. She was dressed with more than usual nicety, and her countenance showed clearly that she came charged with an important communication.

—I did n't low there was company with you, said the Landlady,—but it's jest as well. I've got something to tell my boarders that I don't want to tell them, and if I must do it, I may as well tell you all at once as one to a time. I 'm agoing to give up keeping boarders at the end of this year,—I mean come the end of December.

She took out a white handkerchief, at hand in expectation of what was to happen, and pressed it to her eyes. There was an interval of silence. The Master closed his book and laid it on the table. The Young Astronomer did not look as much surprised as I should have expected. I was completely taken aback,—I had not thought of such a sudden breaking up of our little circle.

When the Landlady had recovered her composure, she began again:

The Lady that's been so long with me is going to a house of her own, —one she has bought back again, for it used to belong to her folks. It's a beautiful house, and the sun shines in at the front windows all day long. She's going to be wealthy again, but it doos n't make any difference in her ways. I've had boarders complain when I was doing as well as I knowed how for them, but I never heerd a word from her that wasn't as pleasant as if she'd been talking to the Governor's lady. I've knowed what it was to have women-boarders that find fault,—there's some of 'em would quarrel with me and everybody at my table; they would quarrel with the Angel Gabriel if he lived in the house with 'em, and scold at him and tell him he was always dropping his feathers round, if they could n't find anything else to bring up against him.

Two other boarders of mine has given me notice that they was expecting to leave come the first of January. I could fill up their places easy enough, for ever since that first book was wrote that called people's attention to my boarding-house, I've had more wanting to come than I wanted to keep.

But I'm getting along in life, and I ain't quite so rugged as I used to be. My daughter is well settled and my son is making his own living. I've done a good deal of hard work in my time, and I feel as if I had a right to a little rest. There's nobody knows what a woman that has the charge of a family goes through, but God Almighty that made her. I've done my best for them that I loved, and for them that was under my roof. My husband and my children was well cared for when they lived, and he and them little

ones that I buried has white marble head-stones and foot-stones, and an iron fence round the lot, and a place left for me betwixt him and the....

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Some has always been good to me,—some has made it a little of a strain to me to get along. When a woman's back aches with overworking herself to keep her house in shape, and a dozen mouths are opening at her three times a day, like them little young birds that split their heads open so you can a'most see into their empty stomachs, and one wants this and another wants that, and provisions is dear and rent is high, and nobody to look to,—then a sharp word cuts, I tell you, and a hard look goes right to your heart. I've seen a boarder make a face at what I set before him, when I had tried to suit him jest as well as I knew how, and I haven't cared to eat a thing myself all the rest of that day, and I've laid awake without a wink of sleep all night. And then when you come down the next morning all the boarders stare at you and wonder what makes you so low-spirited, and why you don't look as happy and talk as cheerful as one of them rich ladies that has dinner-parties, where they've nothing to do but give a few orders, and somebody comes and cooks their dinner, and somebody else comes and puts flowers on the table, and a lot of men dressed up like ministers come and wait on everybody, as attentive as undertakers at a funeral.

And that reminds me to tell you that I'm agoing to live with my daughter. Her husband's a very nice man, and when he isn't following a corpse, he's as good company as if he was a member of the city council. My son, he's agoing into business with the old Doctor he studied with, and he's agoing to board with me at my daughter's for a while,—I suppose he'll be getting a wife before long. [This with a pointed look at our young friend, the Astronomer.]

It is n't but a little while longer that we are going to be together, and I want to say to you gentlemen, as I mean to say to the others and as I have said to our two ladies, that I feel more obligated to, you for the way you 've treated me than I know very well how to put into words. Boarders sometimes expect too much of the ladies that provides for them. Some days the meals are better than other days; it can't help being so. Sometimes the provision-market is n't well supplied, sometimes the fire in the cooking-stove does n't burn so well as it does other days; sometimes the cook is n't so lucky as she might be. And there is boarders who is always laying in wait for the days when the meals is not quite so good as they commonly be, to pick a quarrel with the one that is trying to serve them so as that they shall be satisfied. But you've all been good and kind to me. I suppose I'm not quite so spry and quick-sighted as I was a dozen years ago, when my boarder wrote that first book so many have asked me about. But—now I'm going to stop taking boarders. I don't believe you'll think much about what I did n't do,—because I couldn't,—but remember that at any rate I tried honestly to serve you. I hope God will bless all that set at my table, old and young, rich and poor, merried and single,

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and single that hopes soon to be merried. My husband that's dead and gone always believed that we all get to heaven sooner or later,—and sence I've grown older and buried so many that I've loved I've come to feel that perhaps I should meet all of them that I've known here—or at least as many of 'em as I wanted to—in a better world. And though I don't calculate there is any boarding-houses in heaven, I hope I shall some time or other meet them that has set round my table one year after another, all together, where there is no fault-finding with the food and no occasion for it,—and if I do meet them and you there—or anywhere,—if there is anything I can do for you....

....Poor dear soul! Her ideas had got a little mixed, and her heart was overflowing, and the white handkerchief closed the scene with its timely and greatly needed service.

—What a pity, I have often thought, that she came in just at that precise moment! For the old Master was on the point of telling us, and through one of us the reading world, —I mean that fraction of it which has reached this point of the record,—at any rate, of telling you, Beloved, through my pen, his solution of a great problem we all have to deal with. We were some weeks longer together, but he never offered to continue his reading. At length I ventured to give him a hint that our young friend and myself would both of us be greatly gratified if he would begin reading from his unpublished page where he had left off.

—No, sir,—he said,—better not, better not. That which means so much to me, the writer, might be a disappointment, or at least a puzzle, to you, the listener. Besides, if you'll take my printed book and be at the trouble of thinking over what it says, and put that with what you've heard me say, and then make those comments and reflections which will be suggested to a mind in so many respects like mine as is your own,—excuse my good opinion of myself,

(It is a high compliment to me, I replied) you will perhaps find you have the elements of the formula and its consequences which I was about to read you. It's quite as well to crack your own filberts as to borrow the use of other people's teeth. I think we will wait awhile before we pour out the Elixir Vitae.

—To tell the honest truth, I suspect the Master has found out that his formula does not hold water quite so perfectly as he was thinking, so long as he kept it to himself, and never thought of imparting it to anybody else. The very minute a thought is threatened with publicity it seems to shrink towards mediocrity, as. I have noticed that a great pumpkin, the wonder of a village, seemed to lose at least a third of its dimensions between the field where it grew and the cattle-show fair-table, where it took its place with other enormous pumpkins from other wondering villages. But however that maybe, I shall always regret that I had not the opportunity of judging for myself how completely

the Master's formula, which, for him, at least, seemed to have solved the great problem, would have accomplished that desirable end for me.

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The Landlady's announcement of her intention to give up keeping boarders was heard with regret by all who met around her table. The Member of the Haouse inquired of me whether I could tell him if the Lamb Tahvern was kept well abaout these times. He knew that members from his place used to stop there, but he hadn't heerd much abaout it of late years. I had to inform him that that fold of rural innocence had long ceased offering its hospitalities to the legislative, flock. He found refuge at last, I have learned, in a great public house in the northern section of the city, where, as he said, the folks all went up stairs in a rat-trap, and the last I heard of him was looking out of his somewhat elevated attic-window in a northwesterly direction in hopes that he might perhaps get a sight of the Grand Monadnock, a mountain in New Hampshire which I have myself seen from the top of Bunker Hill Monument.

The Member of the Haouse seems to have been more in a hurry to find a new resting-place than the other boarders. By the first of January, however, our whole company was scattered, never to meet again around the board where we had been so long together.

The Lady moved to the house where she had passed many of her prosperous years. It had been occupied by a rich family who had taken it nearly as it stood, and as the pictures had been dusted regularly, and the books had never been handled, she found everything in many respects as she had left it, and in some points improved, for the rich people did not know what else to do, and so they spent money without stint on their house and its adornments, by all of which she could not help profiting. I do not choose to give the street and number of the house where she lives, but a-great many poor people know very well where it is, and as a matter of course the rich ones roll up to her door in their carriages by the dozen every fine Monday while anybody is in town.

It is whispered that our two young folks are to be married before another season, and that the Lady has asked them to come and stay with her for a while. Our Scheherezade is to write no more stories. It is astonishing to see what a change for the better in her aspect a few weeks of brain-rest and heart's ease have wrought in her. I doubt very much whether she ever returns to literary labor. The work itself was almost heart-breaking, but the effect upon her of the sneers and cynical insolences of the literary rough who came at her in mask and brass knuckles was to give her what I fear will be a lifelong disgust against any writing for the public, especially in any of the periodicals. I am not sorry that she should stop writing, but I am sorry that she should have been silenced in such a rude way. I doubt, too, whether the Young Astronomer will pass the rest of his life in hunting for comets and planets. I think he has found an attraction that will call him down from the celestial luminaries to a light

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not less pure and far less remote. And I am inclined to believe that the best answer to many of those questions which have haunted him and found expression in his verse will be reached by a very different channel from that of lonely contemplation, the duties, the cares, the responsible realities of a life drawn out of itself by the power of newly awakened instincts and affections. The double star was prophetic,—I thought it would be.

The Register of Deeds is understood to have been very handsomely treated by the boarder who owes her good fortune to his sagacity and activity. He has engaged apartments at a very genteel boarding-house not far from the one where we have all been living. The Salesman found it a simple matter to transfer himself to an establishment over the way; he had very little to move, and required very small accommodations.

The Capitalist, however, seems to have felt it impossible to move without ridding himself of a part at—least of his encumbrances. The community was startled by the announcement that a citizen who did not wish his name to be known had made a free gift of a large sum of money—it was in tens of thousands—to an institution of long standing and high character in the city of which he was a quiet resident. The source of such a gift could not long be kept secret. It, was our economical, not to say parsimonious Capitalist who had done this noble act, and the poor man had to skulk through back streets and keep out of sight, as if he were a show character in a travelling caravan, to avoid the acknowledgments of his liberality, which met him on every hand and put him fairly out of countenance.

That Boy has gone, in virtue of a special invitation, to make a visit of indefinite length at the house of the father of the older boy, whom we know by the name of Johnny. Of course he is having a good time, for Johnny's father is full of fun, and tells first-rate stories, and if neither of the boys gets his brains kicked out by the pony, or blows himself up with gunpowder, or breaks through the ice and gets drowned, they will have a fine time of it this winter.

The Scarabee could not bear to remove his collections, and the old Master was equally unwilling to disturb his books. It was arranged, therefore, that they should keep their apartments until the new tenant should come into the house, when, if they were satisfied with her management, they would continue as her boarders.

The last time I saw the Scarabee he was still at work on the meloe question. He expressed himself very pleasantly towards all of us, his fellow-boarders, and spoke of the kindness and consideration with which the Landlady had treated him when he had been straitened at times for want of means. Especially he seemed to be interested in our young couple who were soon to be united. His tired old eyes glistened as he asked



about them,—could it be that their little romance recalled some early vision of his own? However that may be, he got up presently and went to a little box in which, as he said, he kept some choice specimens. He brought to me in his hand something which glittered. It was an exquisite diamond beetle.

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—If you could get that to her,—he said,—they tell me that ladies sometimes wear them in their hair. If they are out of fashion, she can keep it till after they're married, and then perhaps after a while there may be—you know—you know what I mean—there may be larvae, that 's what I 'm thinking there may be, and they 'll like to look at it.

—As he got out the word larvae, a faint sense of the ridiculous seemed to take hold of the Scarabee, and for the first and only time during my acquaintance with him a slight attempt at a smile showed itself on his features. It was barely perceptible and gone almost as soon as seen, yet I am pleased to put it on record that on one occasion at least in his life the Scarabee smiled.

The old Master keeps adding notes and reflections and new suggestions to his interleaved volume, but I doubt if he ever gives them to the public. The study he has proposed to himself does not grow easier the longer it is pursued. The whole Order of Things can hardly be completely unravelled in any single person's lifetime, and I suspect he will have to adjourn the final stage of his investigations to that more luminous realm where the Landlady hopes to rejoin the company of boarders who are nevermore to meet around her cheerful and well-ordered table.

The curtain has now fallen, and I show myself a moment before it to thank my audience and say farewell. The second comer is commonly less welcome than the first, and the third makes but a rash venture. I hope I have not wholly disappointed those who have been so kind to my predecessors.

To you, Beloved, who have never failed to cut the leaves which hold my record, who have never nodded over its pages, who have never hesitated in your allegiance, who have greeted me with unfailing smiles and part from me with unfeigned regrets, to you I look my last adieu as I bow myself out of sight, trusting my poor efforts to your always kind remembrance.

EPILOGUE TO THE BREAKFAST-TABLE SERIES

Autocrat—professor—poet.

At A bookstore.

Anno Domini 1972.

A crazy bookcase, placed before
A low-price dealer's open door;
Therein arrayed in broken rows
A ragged crew of rhyme and prose,
The homeless vagrants, waifs and strays
Whose low estate this line betrays



(Set forth the lesser birds to lime)
your choice among these books, 1 dime!

Ho! dealer; for its motto's sake
This scarecrow from the shelf I take;
Three starveling volumes bound in one,
Its covers warping in the sun.
Methinks it hath a musty smell,
I like its flavor none too well,
But Yorick's brain was far from dull,
Though Hamlet pah!'d, and dropped his skull.



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Why, here comes rain! The sky grows dark,
—Was that the roll of thunder? Hark!
The shop affords a safe retreat,
A chair extends its welcome seat,
The tradesman has a civil look
(I've paid, impromptu, for my book),
The clouds portend a sudden shower,
I'll read my purchase for an hour.

.....

What have I rescued from the shelf?
A Boswell, writing out himself!
For though he changes dress and name,
The man beneath is still the same,
Laughing or sad, by fits and starts,
One actor in a dozen parts,
And whatsoe'er the mask may be,
The voice assures us, This is he.

I say not this to cry him clown;
I find my Shakespeare in his clown,
His rogues the self-same parent own;
Nay! Satan talks in Milton's tone!
Where'er the ocean inlet strays,
The salt sea wave its source betrays,
Where'er the queen of summer blows,
She tells the zephyr, "I'm the rose!"

And his is not the playwright's page;
His table does not ape the stage;
What matter if the figures seen
Are only shadows on a screen,
He finds in them his lurking thought,
And on their lips the words he sought,
Like one who sits before the keys
And plays a tune himself to please.

And was he noted in his day?
Read, flattered, honored? Who shall say?
Poor wreck of time the wave has cast
To find a peaceful shore at last,
Once glorying in thy gilded name
And freighted deep with hopes of fame,



Thy leaf is moistened with a tear,
The first for many a long, long year!

For be it more or less of art
That veils the lowliest human heart
Where passion throbs, where friendship glows,
Where pity's tender tribute flows,
Where love has lit its fragrant fire,
And sorrow quenched its vain desire,
For me the altar is divine,
Its flame, its ashes,—all are mine!

And thou, my brother, as I look
And see thee pictured in thy book,
Thy years on every page confessed
In shadows lengthening from the west,
Thy glance that wanders, as it sought
Some freshly opening flower of thought,
Thy hopeful nature, light and free,
I start to find myself in thee!

Come, vagrant, outcast, wretch forlorn
In leather jerkin stained and torn,
Whose talk has filled my idle hour
And made me half forget the shower,
I'll do at least as much for you,
Your coat I'll patch, your guilt renew,
Read you,—perhaps,—some other time.
Not bad, my bargain! Price one dime!
Not bad, my bargain! Price one dime!



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OVER THE TEACUPS

by Oliver W. Holmes

PREFACE.

The kind way in which this series of papers has been received has been a pleasure greater than I dared to anticipate. I felt that I was a late comer in the midst of a crowd of ardent and eager candidates for public attention, that I had already had my day, and that if, like the unfortunate Frenchman we used read about, I had "come again," I ought not to be surprised if I received the welcome of "Monsieur Tonson."

It has not proved so. My old readers have come forward in the pleasantest possible way and assured me that they were glad to see me again. There is no need, therefore, of apologies or explanations. I thought I had something left to say and I have found listeners. In writing these papers I have had occupation and kept myself in relation with my fellow-beings. New sympathies, new sources of encouragement, if not of inspiration, have opened themselves before me and cheated the least promising season of life of much that seemed to render it dreary and depressing. What particularly pleased me has been the freedom of criticisms which I have seen from disadvantageous comparisons of my later with my earlier writings.

I should like a little rest from literary work before the requiescat ensures my repose from earthly labors, but I will not be rash enough to promise that I will not even once again greet my old and new readers if the impulse becomes irresistible to renew a companionship which has been to me such a source of happiness.

Beverly farm, Mass., August, 1891.

O. W. H.

OVER THE TEACUPS.

I

INTRODUCTION.

This series of papers was begun in March, 1888. A single number was printed, when it was interrupted the course of events, and not resumed until nearly years later, in January, 1890. The plan of the series was not formed in my mind when I wrote the number. In returning to my task I found that my original plan had shaped itself in the underground laboratory of my thought so that some changes had to be made in what I



had written. As I proceeded, the slight story which formed a part of my programme eloped itself without any need of much contrivance on my, part. Given certain characters in a writer's conception, if they are real to him, as they ought to be they will act in such or such a way, according to the law of their nature. It was pretty safe to assume that intimate relations would spring up between some members of our mixed company; and it was not rash conjecture that some of these intimacies might end in such attachment as would furnish us hints, at least, of a love-story.

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As to the course of the conversations which would take place, very little could be guessed beforehand. Various subjects of interest would be likely to present themselves, without definite order, oftentimes abruptly and, as it would seem, capriciously. Conversation in such a mixed company as that of "The Teacups" is likely to be suggestive rather than exhaustive. Continuous discourse is better adapted to the lecture-room than to the tea-table. There is quite enough of it, I fear too much,—in these pages. But the reader must take the reports of our talks as they were jotted down. A patchwork quilt is not like a piece of Gobelin tapestry; but it has its place and its use.

Some will feel a temptation to compare these conversations with those earlier ones, and remark unamiably upon their difference. This is hardly fair, and is certainly not wise. They are produced under very different conditions, and betray that fact in every line. It is better to take them by themselves; and, if my reader finds anything to please or profit from, I shall be contented, and he, I feel sure, will not be ungrateful.

The readers who take up this volume may recollect a series of conversations held many years ago over the breakfast-table, and reported for their more or less profitable entertainment. Those were not very early breakfasts at which the talks took place, but at any rate the sun was rising, and the guests had not as yet tired themselves with the labors of the day. The morning cup of coffee has an exhilaration about it which the cheering influence of the afternoon or evening cup of tea cannot be expected to reproduce. The toils of the forenoon, the heats of midday, in the warm season, the slanting light of the descending sun, or the sobered translucency of twilight have subdued the vivacity of the early day. Yet under the influence of the benign stimulant many trains of thought which will bear recalling, may suggest themselves to some of our quiet circle and prove not uninteresting to a certain number of readers.

How early many of my old breakfast companions went off to bed! I am thinking not merely of those who sat round our table, but of that larger company of friends who listened to our conversations as reported. Dear girl with the silken ringlets, dear boy with the down-shadowed cheek, your grandfather, your grandmother, turned over the freshly printed leaves that told the story of those earlier meetings around the plain board where so many things were said and sung, not all of which have quite faded from memory of this overburdened and forgetful time. Your father, your mother, found the scattered leaves gathered in a volume, and smiled upon them as not uncompanionable acquaintances. My tea-table makes no promises. There is no programme of exercises to studied beforehand. What if I should content myself with a single report of what was said and done over our teacups? Perhaps my young reader would be glad to let me off, for there are talkers enough who have not yet left their breakfast-tables; and nobody can blame the young people for preferring the thoughts and the language of their own generation, with all its future before it, to those of their grandfathers contemporaries.

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My reader, young or old, will please to observe that I have left myself entire freedom as to the sources of what may be said over the teacups. I have not told how many cups are commonly on the board, but by using the plural I have implied that there is at least one other talker or listener beside myself, and for all that appears there may be a dozen. There will be no regulation length to my reports,—no attempt to make out a certain number of pages. I have no contract to fill so many columns, no pledge to contribute so many numbers. I can stop on this first page if I do not care to say anything more, and let this article stand by itself if so minded. What a sense of freedom it gives not to write by the yard or the column!

When one writes for an English review or magazine at so many guineas a sheet, the temptation is very great to make one's contribution cover as many sheets as possible. We all know the metallic taste of articles written under this powerful stimulus. If Bacon's Essays had been furnished by a modern hand to the "Quarterly Review" at fifty guineas a sheet, what a great book it would have taken to hold them!

The first thing which suggests itself to me, as I contemplate my slight project, is the liability of repeating in the evening what I may have said in the morning in one form or another, and printed in these or other pages. When it suddenly flashes into the consciousness of a writer who had been long before the public, "Why, I have said all that once or oftener in my books or essays, and here it is again; the same old thought, the same old image, the same old story!" it irritates him, and is likely to stir up the monosyllables of his unsanctified vocabulary. He sees in imagination a thousand readers, smiling or yawning as they say to themselves, "We have had all that before," and turn to another writer's performance for something not quite so stale and superfluous. This is what the writer says to himself about the reader.

The idiot! Does the simpleton really think that everybody has read all he has written? Does he really believe that everybody remembers all of his, writer's, words he may happen to have read? At one of those famous dinners of the Phi Beta Kappa Society; where no reporter was ever admitted, and which nothing ever leaks out about what is said and done, Mr. Edward Everett, in his after-dinner speech, quoted these lines from the Aeneid, giving a liberal English version of them, which he applied to the Oration just delivered by Mr. Emerson:

Tres imbris torti radios, tres nubis aquosae
Addiderant, rutili tres ignis, et alitis Austri.

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His nephew, the ingenious, inventive, and inexhaustible. Edward Everett Hale, tells the story of this quotation, and of the various uses to which it might plied in after-dinner speeches. How often he ventured to repeat it at the Phi Beta Kappa dinners I am not sure; but as he reproduced it with his lively embellishments and fresh versions and artful circumlocutions, not one person in ten remembered that he had listened to those same words in those same accents only a twelvemonth ago. The poor deluded creatures who take it for granted that all the world remembers what they have said, and laugh at them when they say it over again, may profit by this recollection. But what if one does say the same things,—of course in a little different form each time,—over her? If he has anything to say worth saying, that is just what he ought to do. Whether he ought to or not, it is very certain that this is what all who write much or speak much necessarily must and will do. Think of the clergyman who preaches fifty or a hundred or more sermons every year for fifty years! Think of the stump speaker who shouts before a hundred audiences during the same political campaign, always using the same arguments, illustrations, and catchwords! Think of the editor, as Carlyle has pictured him, threshing the same straw every morning, until we know what is coming when we see the first line, as we do when we read the large capitals at the head of a thrilling story, which ends in an advertisement of an all-cleansing soap or an all-curing remedy!

The latch-key which opens into the inner chambers of my consciousness fits, as I have sufficient reason to believe, the private apartments of a good many other people's thoughts. The longer we live, the more we find we are like other persons. When I meet with any facts in my own mental experience, I feel almost sure that I shall find them repeated or anticipated in the writings or the conversation of others. This feeling gives one a freedom in telling his own personal history he could not have enjoyed without it. My story belongs to you as much as to me. *De te fabula narratur*. Change the personal pronoun,—that is all. It gives many readers a singular pleasure to find a writer telling them something they have long known or felt, but which they have never before found any one to put in words for them. An author does not always know when he is doing the service of the angel who stirred the waters of the pool of Bethesda. Many a reader is delighted to find his solitary thought has a companion, and is grateful to the benefactor who has strengthened him. This is the advantage of the humble reader over the ambitious and self-worshipping writer. It is not with him *pereant illi*, but *beati sunt illi qui pro nobis nostra dixerunt*,—Blessed are those who have said our good things for us.

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What I have been saying of repetitions leads me into a train of reflections like which I think many readers will find something in their own mental history. The area of consciousness is covered by layers of habitual thoughts, as a sea-beach is covered with wave-worn, rounded pebbles, shaped, smoothed, and polished by long attrition against each other. These thoughts remain very much the same from day to day, from week to week; and as we grow older, from month to month, and from year to year. The tides of wakening consciousness roll in upon them daily as we unclothe our eyelids, and keep up the gentle movement and murmur of ordinary mental respiration until we close them again in slumber. When we think we are thinking, we are for the most part only listening to sound of attrition between these inert elements of intelligence. They shift their places a little, they change their relations to each other, they roll over and turn up new surfaces. Now and then a new fragment is cast in among them, to be worn and rounded and takes its place with the others, but the pebbled floor of consciousness is almost as stationary as the pavement of a city thoroughfare.

It so happens that at this particular time I have something to tell which I am quite sure is not one of rolled pebbles which my reader has seen before in any of my pages, or, as I feel confident, in those of any other writer.

If my reader asks why I do not send the statement I am going to make to some one of the special periodicals that deal with such subjects, my answer is, that I like to tell my own stories at my own time, in own chosen columns, where they will be read by a class of readers with whom I like to talk.

All men of letters or of science, all writers well known to the public, are constantly tampered with, in these days, by a class of predaceous and hungry fellow-laborers who may be collectively spoken of as the brain-tappers. They want an author's ideas on the subjects which interest them, the inquirers, from the gravest religious and moral questions to the most trivial matters of his habits and his whims and fancies. Some of their questions he cannot answer; some he does not choose to answer; some he is not yet ready to answer, and when he is ready he prefers to select his own organ of publication. I do not find fault with all the brain-tappers. Some of them are doing excellent service by accumulating facts which could not otherwise be attained. But one gets tired of the strings of questions sent him, to which he is expected to return an answer, plucked, ripe or unripe, from his private tree of knowledge. The brain-tappers are like the owner of the goose that laid the golden eggs. They would have the embryos and germs of one's thoughts out of the mental oviducts, and cannot wait for their spontaneous evolution and extrusion.

The story I have promised is, on the whole, the most remarkable of a series which I may have told in part at some previous date, but which, if I have not told, may be worth recalling at a future time.

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Some few of my readers may remember that in a former paper I suggested the possibility of the existence of an idiotic area in the human mind, corresponding to the blind spot in the human retina. I trust that I shall not be thought to have let my wits go wandering in that region of my own intellectual domain, when I relate a singular coincidence which very lately occurred in my experience, and add a few remarks made by one of our company on the delicate and difficult but fascinating subject which it forces upon our attention. I will first copy the memorandum made at the time:

“Remarkable coincidence. On Monday, April 18th, being at table from 6.30 P. M. to 7.30, with _____ and _____ the two ladies of my household, I told them of the case of ‘trial by battel’ offered by Abraham Thornton in 1817. I mentioned his throwing down his glove, which was not taken up by the brother of his victim, and so he had to be let off, for the old law was still in force. I mentioned that Abraham Thornton was said to have come to this country, ’and [I added] he may be living near us, for aught that I know.” I rose from the table, and found an English letter waiting for me, left while I sat at dinner. A copy the first portion of this letter:

*’20 Alfred place, West (near Museum) South Kensington, London, S. W. April 7, 1887.
Dr. O. W. Holmes:*

*Dear sir,—*In travelling, the other day, I met with a reprint of the very interesting case of Thornton for murder, 1817. The prisoner pleaded successfully the old Wager of Battel. I thought you would like to read the account, and send it with this....

*Yours faithfully,
Fred. Rathbone.’*

Mr. Rathbone is a well-known dealer in old Wedgwood and eighteenth-century art. As a friend of my hospitable entertainer, Mr. Willett, he had shown me many attentions in England, but I was not expecting any communication from him; and when, fresh from my conversation, I found this letter just arrived by mail, and left while I was at table, and on breaking the seal read what I had a few moments before been; telling, I was greatly surprised, and immediately made a note of the occurrence, as given above.

I had long been familiar with all the details of this celebrated case, but had not referred to it, so far as I can remember, for months or years. I know of no train of thought which led me to speak of it on that particular day. I had never alluded to it before in that company, nor had I ever spoken of it with Mr. Rathbone.



I told this story over our teacups. Among the company at the table is a young English girl. She seemed to be amused by the story. "Fancy!" she said,—“how very very odd!” “It was a striking and curious coincidence,” said the professor who was with us at the table. “As remarkable as two teaspoons in one saucer,” was the comment of a college youth who happened to

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be one of the company. But the member of our circle whom the reader will hereafter know as Number Seven, began stirring his tea in a nervous sort of way, and I knew that he was getting ready to say something about the case. An ingenious man he is, with a brain like a tinder-box, its contents catching at any spark that is flying about. I always like to hear what he says when his tinder brain has a spark fall into it. It does not follow that because he is often wrong he may not sometimes be right, for he is no fool. He treated my narrative very seriously.

The reader need not be startled at the new terms he introduces. Indeed, I am not quite sure that some thinking people will not adopt his view of the matter, which seems to have a degree of plausibility as he states and illustrates it.

“The impulse which led you to tell that story passed directly from the letter, which came charged from the cells of the cerebral battery of your correspondent. The distance at which the action took place [the letter was left on a shelf twenty-four feet from the place where I was sitting] shows this charge to have been of notable intensity.

“Brain action through space without material symbolism, such as speech, expression, *etc.*, is analogous to electrical induction. Charge the prime conductor of an electrical machine, and a gold-leaf electrometer, far off from it, will at once be disturbed. Electricity, as we all know, can be stored and transported as if it were a measurable fluid.

“Your incident is a typical example of cerebral induction from a source containing stored cerebricity. I use this word, not to be found in my dictionaries, as expressing the brain-cell power corresponding to electricity. Think how long it was before we had attained any real conception of the laws that govern the wonderful agent, which now works in harness with the other trained and subdued forces! It is natural that cerebricity should be the last of the unweighable agencies to be understood. The human eye had seen heaven and earth and all that in them is before it saw itself as our instruments enable us to see it. This fact of yours, which seems so strange to you, belongs to a great series of similar facts familiarly known now to many persons, and before long to be recognized as generally as those relating to the electric telegraph and the slaving `dynamo.’

“What! you cannot conceive of a charge of cerebricity fastening itself on a letter-sheet and clinging to it for weeks, while it was shuffling about in mail-bags, rolling over the ocean, and shaken up in railroad cars? And yet the odor of a grain of musk will hang round a note or a dress for a lifetime. Do you not remember what Professor Silliman says, in that pleasant journal of his, about the little ebony cabinet which Mary, Queen of Scots, brought with her from France,—how ‘its drawers still exhale the sweetest perfumes’? If they could hold their sweetness for more than two hundred years, why should not a written page retain for a week or a month the equally mysterious effluence

poured over it from the thinking marrow, and diffuse its vibrations to another excitable nervous centre?"

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I have said that although our imaginative friend is given to wild speculations, he is not always necessarily wrong. We know too little about the laws of brain-force to be dogmatic with reference to it. I am, myself, therefore, fully in sympathy with the psychological investigators. When it comes to the various pretended sciences by which men and women make large profits, attempts at investigation are very apt to be used as lucrative advertisements for the charlatans. But a series of investigations of the significance of certain popular beliefs and superstitions, a careful study of the relations of certain facts to each other,—whether that of cause and effect, or merely of coincidence,—is a task not unworthy of sober-minded and well-trained students of nature. Such a series of investigations has been recently instituted, and was reported at a late meeting held in the rooms of the Boston Natural History Society. The results were, mostly negative, and in one sense a disappointment. A single case, related by Professor Royce, attracted a good deal of attention. It was reported in the next morning's newspapers, and will be given at full length, doubtless, in the next number of the Psychological Journal. The leading facts were, briefly, these: A lady in Hamburg, Germany, wrote, on the 22d of June last, that she had what she supposed to be nightmare on the night of the 17th, five days before. "It seemed," she wrote, "to belong to you; to be a horrid pain in your head, as if it were being forcibly jammed into an iron casque, or some such pleasant instrument of torture." It proved that on that same 17th of June her sister was undergoing a painful operation at the hands of a dentist. "No single case," adds Professor Royce, "proves, or even makes probable, the existence of telepathic toothaches; but if there are any more cases of this sort, we want to hear of them, and that all the more because no folk-lore and no supernatural horrors have as yet mingled with the natural and well-known impressions that people associate with the dentist's chair."

The case I have given is, I am confident, absolutely free from every source of error. I do not remember that Mr. Rathbone had communicated with me since he sent me a plentiful supply of mistletoe a year ago last Christmas. The account I received from him was cut out of "The Sporting Times" of March 5, 1887. My own knowledge of the case came from "Kirby's Wonderful Museum," a work presented to me at least thirty years ago. I had not looked at the account, spoken of it, nor thought of it for a long time, when it came to me by a kind of spontaneous generation, as it seemed, having no connection with any previous train of thought that I was aware of. I consider the evidence of entire independence, apart from possible "telepathic" causation, completely water-proof, airtight, incombustible, and unassailable.

I referred, when first reporting this curious case of coincidence, with suggestive circumstances, to two others, one of which I said was the most picturesque and the other the most unlikely, as it would seem, to happen. This is the first of those two cases:—

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Grenville Tudor Phillips was a younger brother of George Phillips, my college classmate, and of Wendell Phillips, the great orator. He lived in Europe a large part of his life, but at last returned, and, in the year 1863, died at the house of his brother George. I read his death in the paper; but, having seen and heard very little of him during his life, should not have been much impressed by the fact, but for the following occurrence: between the time of Grenville Phillips's death and his burial, I was looking in upon my brother, then living in the house in which we were both born. Some books which had been my father's were stored in shelves in the room I used to occupy when at Cambridge. Passing my eye over them, an old dark quarto attracted my attention. It must be a Bible, I said to myself, perhaps a rare one,—the "Breeches" Bible or some other interesting specimen. I took it from the shelves, and, as I did so, an old slip of paper fell out and fluttered to the floor. On lifting it I read these words:

The name is Grenville Tudor.

What was the meaning of this slip of paper coming to light at this time, after reposing undisturbed so long? There was only one way of explaining its presence in my father's old Bible;—a copy of the Scriptures which I did not remember ever having handled or looked into before. In christening a child the minister is liable to forget the name, just at the moment when he ought to remember it. My father preached occasionally at the Brattle Street Church. I take this for granted, for I remember going with him on one occasion when he did so. Nothing was more likely than that he should be asked to officiate at the baptism of the younger son of his wife's first cousin, Judge Phillips. This slip was handed him to remind him of the name: He brought it home, put it in that old Bible, and there it lay quietly for nearly half a century, when, as if it had just heard of Mr. Phillips's decease, it flew from its hiding-place and startled the eyes of those who had just read his name in the daily column of deaths. It would be hard to find anything more than a mere coincidence here; but it seems curious enough to be worth telling.

The second of these two last stories must be told in prosaic detail to show its whole value as a coincidence.

One evening while I was living in Charles Street, I received a call from Dr. S., a well-known and highly respected Boston physician, a particular friend of the late Alexander H. Stephens, vice-president of the Southern Confederacy. It was with reference to a work which Mr. Stephens was about to publish that Dr. S. called upon me. After talking that matter over we got conversing on other subjects, among the rest a family relationship existing between us,—not a very near one, but one which I think I had seen mentioned in genealogical accounts. Mary S. (the last name being the same as that of my visitant), it appeared, was the great-great-grandmother of Mrs.

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H. and myself. After cordially recognizing our forgotten relationship, now for the first time called to mind, we parted, my guest leaving me for his own home. We had been sitting in my library on the lower floor. On going up-stairs where Mrs. H. was sitting alone, just as I entered the room she pushed a paper across the table towards me, saying that perhaps it might interest me. It was one of a number of old family papers which she had brought from the house of her mother, recently deceased.

I opened the paper, which was an old-looking document, and found that it was a copy, perhaps made in this century, of the will of that same Mary S. about whom we had been talking down-stairs.

If there is such a thing as a purely accidental coincidence this must be considered an instance of it.

All one can say about it is that it seems very unlikely that such a coincidence should occur, but it did.

I have not tried to keep my own personality out of these stories. But after all, how little difference it makes whether or not a writer appears with a mask on which everybody can take off,—whether he bolts his door or not, when everybody can look in at his windows, and all his entrances are at the mercy of the critic's skeleton key and the jimmy of any ill-disposed assailant!

The company have been silent listeners for the most part; but the reader will have a chance to become better acquainted with some of them by and by.

II

To the reader.

I know that it is a hazardous experiment to address myself again to a public which in days long past has given me a generous welcome. But my readers have been, and are, a very faithful constituency. I think there are many among them who would rather listen to an old voice they are used to than to a new one of better quality, even if the "childish treble" should betray itself now and then in the tones of the overtired organ. But there must be others,—I am afraid many others,—who will exclaim: "He has had his day, and why can't he be content? We don't want literary revenants, superfluous veterans, writers who have worn out their welcome and still insist on being attended to. Give us something fresh, something that belongs to our day and generation. Your morning draught was well enough, but we don't care for your evening slip-slop. You are not in relation with us, with our time, our ideas, our aims, our aspirations."



Alas, alas! my friend,—my young friend, for your hair is not yet whitened,—I am afraid you are too nearly right. No doubt,—no doubt. Teacups are not coffee-cups. They do not hold so much. Their pallid infusion is but a feeble stimulant compared with the black decoction served at the morning board. And so, perhaps, if wisdom like yours were compatible with years like mine, I should drop my pen and make no further attempts upon your patience.

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But suppose that a writer who has reached and passed the natural limit of serviceable years feels that he has some things which he would like to say, and which may have an interest for a limited class of readers,—is he not right in trying his powers and calmly taking the risk of failure? Does it not seem rather lazy and cowardly, because he cannot “beat his record,” or even come up to the level of what he has done in his prime, to shrink from exerting his talent, such as it is, now that he has outlived the period of his greatest vigor? A singer who is no longer equal to the trials of opera on the stage may yet please at a chamber concert or in the drawing-room. There is one gratification an old author can afford a certain class of critics: that, namely, of comparing him as he is with what he was. It is a pleasure to mediocrity to have its superiors brought within range, so to speak; and if the ablest of them will only live long enough, and keep on writing, there is no pop-gun that cannot reach him. But I fear that this is an unamiable reflection, and I am at this time in a very amiable mood.

I confess that there is something agreeable to me in renewing my relations with the reading public. Were it but a single appearance, it would give me a pleasant glimpse of the time when I was known as a frequent literary visitor. Many of my readers—if I can lure any from the pages of younger writers will prove to be the children, or the grandchildren, of those whose acquaintance I made something more than a whole generation ago. I could depend on a kind welcome from my contemporaries,—my coevals. But where are those contemporaries? Ay de mi! as Carlyle used to exclaim, —Ah, dear me! as our old women say,—I look round for them, and see only their vacant places. The old vine cannot unwind its tendrils. The branch falls with the decay of its support, and must cling to the new growths around it, if it would not lie helpless in the dust. This paper is a new tendril, feeling its way, as it best may, to whatever it can wind around. The thought of finding here and there an old friend, and making, it may be, once in a while a new one, is very grateful to me. The chief drawback to the pleasure is the feeling that I am submitting to that inevitable exposure which is the penalty of authorship in every form. A writer must make up his mind to the possible rough treatment of the critics, who swarm like bacteria whenever there is any literary material on which they can feed. I have had as little to complain of as most writers, yet I think it is always with reluctance that one encounters the promiscuous handling which the products of the mind have to put up with, as much as the fruit and provisions in the market-stalls. I had rather be criticised, however, than criticise; that is, express my opinions in the public prints of other writers' work, if they are living, and can suffer, as I should often have to make them. There are enough, thank Heaven,

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without me. We are literary cannibals, and our writers live on each other and each other's productions to a fearful extent. What the mulberry leaf is to the silk-worm, the author's book, treatise, essay, poem, is to the critical larva; that feed upon it. It furnishes them with food and clothing. The process may not be agreeable to the mulberry leaf or to the printed page; but without it the leaf would not have become the silk that covers the empress's shoulders, and but for the critic the author's book might never have reached the scholar's table. Scribblers will feed on each other, and if we insist on being scribblers we must consent to be fed on. We must try to endure philosophically what we cannot help, and ought not, I suppose, to wish to help.

It is the custom at our table to vary the usual talk, by the reading of short papers, in prose or verse, by one or more of The Teacups, as we are in the habit of calling those who make up our company. Thirty years ago, one of our present circle—"Teacup Number Two," The Professor,—read a paper on Old Age, at a certain Breakfast-table, where he was in the habit of appearing. That paper was published at the time, and has since seen the light in other forms. He did not know so much about old age then as he does now, and would doubtless write somewhat differently if he took the subject up again. But I found that it was the general wish that another of our company should let us hear what he had to say about it. I received a polite note, requesting me to discourse about old age, inasmuch as I was particularly well qualified by my experience to write in an authoritative way concerning it. The fact is that I,—for it is myself who am speaking,—have recently arrived at the age of threescore years and twenty,—fourscore years we may otherwise call it. In the arrangement of our table, I am Teacup Number One, and I may as well say that I am often spoken of as The Dictator. There is nothing invidious in this, as I am the oldest of the company, and no claim is less likely to excite jealousy than that of priority of birth.

I received congratulations on reaching my eightieth birthday, not only from our circle of Teacups, but from friends, near and distant, in large numbers. I tried to acknowledge these kindly missives with the aid of a most intelligent secretary; but I fear that there were gifts not thanked for, and tokens of good-will not recognized. Let any neglected correspondent be assured that it was not intentionally that he or she was slighted. I was grateful for every such mark of esteem; even for the telegram from an unknown friend in a distant land, for which I cheerfully paid the considerable charge which the sender doubtless knew it would give me pleasure to disburse for such an expression of friendly feeling.

I will not detain the reader any longer from the essay I have promised.

This is the paper read to The Teacups.

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It is in A Song of Moses that we find the words, made very familiar to us by the Episcopal Burial Service, which place the natural limit on life at threescore years and ten, with an extra ten years for some of a stronger constitution than the average. Yet we are told that Moses himself lived to be a hundred and twenty years old, and that his eye was not dim nor his natural strength abated. This is hard to accept literally, but we need not doubt that he was very old, and in remarkably good condition for a man of his age. Among his followers was a stout old captain, Caleb, the son of Jephunneh. This ancient warrior speaks of himself in these brave terms: "Lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet, I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me; as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out and to come in." It is not likely that anybody believed his brag about his being as good a man for active service at eighty-five as he was at forty, when Moses sent him out to spy the land of Canaan. But he was, no doubt, lusty and vigorous for his years, and ready to smite the Canaanites hip and thigh, and drive them out, and take possession of their land, as he did forthwith, when Moses gave him leave.

Grand old men there were, three thousand years ago! But not all octogenarians were like Caleb, the son of Jephunneh. Listen to poor old Barzillai, and hear him piping: "I am this day fourscore years old; and can I discern between good and evil? Can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? Wherefore, then, should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king?" And poor King David was worse off than this, as you all remember, at the early age of seventy.

Thirty centuries do not seem to have made any very great difference in the extreme limits of life. Without pretending to rival the alleged cases of life prolonged beyond the middle of its second century, such as those of Henry Jenkins and Thomas Parr, we can make a good showing of centenarians and nonagenarians. I myself remember Dr. Holyoke, of Salem, son of a president of Harvard College, who answered a toast proposed in his honor at a dinner given to him on his hundredth birthday.

"Father Cleveland," our venerated city missionary, was born June 21, 1772, and died June 5, 1872, within a little more than a fortnight of his hundredth birthday. Colonel Perkins, of Connecticut, died recently after celebrating his centennial anniversary.

Among nonagenarians, three whose names are well known to Bostonians, Lord Lyndhurst, Josiah Quincy, and Sidney Bartlett, were remarkable for retaining their faculties in their extreme age. That patriarch of our American literature, the illustrious historian of his country, is still with us, his birth dating in 1800.

Ranke, the great German historian, died at the age of ninety-one, and Chevreul, the eminent chemist, at that of a hundred and two.

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Some English sporting characters have furnished striking examples of robust longevity. In Gilpin's "Forest Scenery" there is the story of one of these horseback heroes. Henry Hastings was the name of this old gentleman, who lived in the time of Charles the First. It would be hard to find a better portrait of a hunting squire than that which the Earl of Shaftesbury has the credit of having drawn of this very peculiar personage. His description ends by saying, "He lived to be an hundred, and never lost his eyesight nor used spectacles. He got on horseback without help, and rode to the death of the stag till he was past fourscore."

Everything depends on habit. Old people can do, of course, more or less well, what they have been doing all their lives; but try to teach them any new tricks, and the truth of the old adage will very soon show itself. Mr. Henry Hastings had done nothing but hunt all his days, and his record would seem to have been a good deal like that of Philippus Zaehdarm in that untranslatable epitaph which may be found in "Sartor Resartus." Judged by its products, it was a very short life of a hundred useless twelve months.

It is something to have climbed the white summit, the Mont Blanc of fourscore. A small number only of mankind ever see their eightieth anniversary. I might go to the statistical tables of the annuity and life insurance offices for extended and exact information, but I prefer to take the facts which have impressed themselves upon me in my own career.

The class of 1829 at Harvard College, of which I am a member, graduated, according to the triennial, fifty-nine in number. It is sixty years, then, since that time; and as they were, on an average, about twenty years old, those who survive must have reached fourscore years. Of the fifty-nine graduates ten only are living, or were at the last accounts; one in six, very nearly. In the first ten years after graduation, our third decade, when we were between twenty and thirty years old, we lost three members,—about one in twenty; between the ages of thirty and forty, eight died,—one in seven of those the decade began with; from forty to fifty, only two,—or one in twenty-four; from fifty to sixty, eight,—or one in six; from sixty to seventy, fifteen,—or two out of every five; from seventy to eighty, twelve,—or one in two. The greatly increased mortality which began with our seventh decade went on steadily increasing. At sixty we come "within range of the rifle-pits," to borrow an expression from my friend Weir Mitchell.

Our eminent classmate, the late Professor Benjamin Peirce, showed by numerical comparison that the men of superior ability outlasted the average of their fellow-graduates. He himself lived a little beyond his threescore and ten years. James Freeman Clarke almost reached the age of eighty. The eighth decade brought the fatal year for Benjamin Robbins Curtis, the great lawyer, who was one of the judges

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of the Supreme Court of the United States; for the very able chief justice of Massachusetts, George Tyler Bigelow; and for that famous wit and electric centre of social life, George T. Davis. At the last annual dinner every effort was made to bring all the survivors of the class together. Six of the ten living members were there, six old men in the place of the thirty or forty classmates who surrounded the long, oval table in 1859, when I asked, "Has there any old fellow got mixed with the boys?"—11 boys whose tongues were as the vibrating leaves of the forest; whose talk was like the voice of many waters; whose laugh was as the breaking of mighty waves upon the seashore. Among the six at our late dinner was our first scholar, the thorough-bred and accomplished engineer who held the city of Lawrence in his brain before it spread itself out along the banks of the Merrimac. There, too, was the poet whose National Hymn, "My Country, 't is of thee," is known to more millions, and dearer to many of them, than all the other songs written since the Psalms of David. Four of our six were clergymen; the engineer and the present writer completed the list. Were we melancholy? Did we talk of graveyards and epitaphs? No,—we remembered our dead tenderly, serenely, feeling deeply what we had lost in those who but a little while ago were with us. How could we forget James Freeman Clarke, that man of noble thought and vigorous action, who pervaded this community with his spirit, and was felt through all its channels as are the light and the strength that radiate through the wires which stretch above us? It was a pride and a happiness to have such classmates as he was to remember. We were not the moping, complaining graybeards that many might suppose we must have been. We had been favored with the blessing of long life. We had seen the drama well into its fifth act. The sun still warmed us, the air was still grateful and life-giving. But there was another underlying source of our cheerful equanimity, which we could not conceal from ourselves if we had wished to do it. Nature's kindly anodyne is telling upon us more and more with every year. Our old doctors used to give an opiate which they called "the black drop." It was stronger than laudanum, and, in fact, a dangerously powerful narcotic. Something like this is that potent drug in Nature's pharmacopoeia which she reserves for the time of need,—the later stages of life. She commonly begins administering it at about the time of the "grand climacteric," the ninth septennial period, the sixty-third year. More and more freely she gives it, as the years go on, to her grey-haired children, until, if they last long enough, every faculty is benumbed, and they drop off quietly into sleep under its benign influence.

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Do you say that old age is unfeeling? It has not vital energy enough to supply the waste of the more exhausting emotions. Old Men's Tears, which furnished the mournful title to Joshua Scottow's Lamentations, do not suggest the deepest grief conceivable. A little breath of wind brings down the raindrops which have gathered on the leaves of the tremulous poplars. A very slight suggestion brings the tears from Marlborough's eyes, but they are soon over, and he is smiling again as an allusion carries him back to the days of Blenheim and Malplaquet. Envy not the old man the tranquillity of his existence, nor yet blame him if it sometimes looks like apathy. Time, the inexorable, does not threaten him with the scythe so often as with the sand-bag. He does not cut, but he stuns and stupefies. One's fellow-mortals can afford to be as considerate and tender with him as Time and Nature.

There was not much boasting among us of our present or our past, as we sat together in the little room at the great hotel. A certain amount of self-deception is quite possible at threescore years and ten, but at three score years and twenty Nature has shown most of those who live to that age that she is earnest, and means to dismantle and have done with them in a very little while. As for boasting of our past, the laudator temporis acti makes but a poor figure in our time. Old people used to talk of their youth as if there were giants in those days. We knew some tall men when we were young, but we can see a man taller than any one among them at the nearest dime museum. We had handsome women among us, of high local reputation, but nowadays we have professional beauties who challenge the world to criticise them as boldly as Phryne ever challenged her Athenian admirers. We had fast horses,—did not "Old Blue" trot a mile in three minutes? True, but there is a three-year-old colt just put on the track who has done it in a little more than two thirds of that time. It seems as if the material world had been made over again since we were boys. It is but a short time since we were counting up the miracles we had lived to witness. The list is familiar enough: the railroad, the ocean steamer, photography, the spectroscope, the telegraph, telephone, phonograph, anesthetics, electric illumination,—with such lesser wonders as the friction match, the sewing machine, and the bicycle. And now, we said, we must have come to the end of these unparalleled developments of the forces of nature. We must rest on our achievements. The nineteenth century is not likely to add to them; we must wait for the twentieth century. Many of us, perhaps most of us, felt in that way. We had seen our planet furnished by the art of man with a complete nervous system: a spinal cord beneath the ocean, secondary centres,—ganglions,—in all the chief places where men are gathered together, and ramifications extending throughout civilization. All at once, by the side of this talking and light-giving apparatus, we see another wire stretched over our heads, carrying force to a vast metallic muscular system,—a slender cord conveying the strength of a hundred men, of a score of horses, of a team of elephants. The lightning is tamed and harnessed, the thunderbolt has become a common carrier. No more surprises in this century! A voice whispers, What next?

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It will not do for us to boast about our young days and what they had to show. It is a great deal better to boast of what they could not show, and, strange as it may seem, there is a certain satisfaction in it. In these days of electric lighting, when you have only to touch a button and your parlor or bedroom is instantly flooded with light, it is a pleasure to revert to the era of the tinder-box, the flint and steel, and the brimstone match. It gives me an almost proud satisfaction to tell how we used, when those implements were not at hand or not employed, to light our whale-oil lamp by blowing a live coal held against the wick, often swelling our cheeks and reddening our faces until we were on the verge of apoplexy. I love to tell of our stage-coach experiences, of our sailing-packet voyages, of the semi-barbarous destitution of all modern comforts and conveniences through which we bravely lived and came out the estimable personages you find us.

Think of it! All my boyish shooting was done with a flint-lock gun; the percussion lock came to me as one of those new-fangled notions people had just got hold of. We ancients can make a grand display of minus quantities in our reminiscences, and the figures look almost as well as if they had the plus sign before them.

I am afraid that old people found life rather a dull business in the time of King David and his rich old subject and friend, Barzillai, who, poor man, could not have read a wicked novel, nor enjoyed a symphony concert, if they had had those luxuries in his day. There were no pleasant firesides, for there were no chimneys. There were no daily newspapers for the old man to read, and he could not read them if there were, with his dimmed eyes, nor hear them read, very probably, with his dulled ears. There was no tobacco, a soothing drug, which in its various forms is a great solace to many old men and to some old women, Carlyle and his mother used to smoke their pipes together, you remember.

Old age is infinitely more cheerful, for intelligent people at least, than it was two or three thousand years ago. It is our duty, so far as we can, to keep it so. There will always be enough about it that is solemn, and more than enough, alas! that is saddening. But how much there is in our times to lighten its burdens! If they that look out at the windows be darkened, the optician is happy to supply them with eye-glasses for use before the public, and spectacles for their hours of privacy. If the grinders cease because they are few, they can be made many again by a third dentition, which brings no toothache in its train. By temperance and good Habits of life, proper clothing, well-warmed, well-drained, and well-ventilated dwellings, and sufficient, not too much exercise, the old man of our time may keep his muscular strength in very good condition. I doubt if Mr. Gladstone, who is fast nearing his eightieth birthday, would boast, in the style of Caleb,

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that he was as good a man with his axe as he was when he was forty, but I would back him,—if the match were possible, for a hundred shekels, against that over-confident old Israelite, to cut down and chop up a cedar of Lebanon. I know a most excellent clergyman, not far from my own time of life, whom I would pit against any old Hebrew rabbi or Greek philosopher of his years and weight, if they could return to the flesh, to run a quarter of a mile on a good, level track.

We must not make too much of such exceptional cases of prolonged activity. I often reproached my dear friend and classmate, Tames Freeman Clarke, that his ceaseless labors made it impossible for his coevals to enjoy the luxury of that repose which their years demanded. A wise old man, the late Dr. James Walker, president of Harvard University, said that the great privilege of old age was the getting rid of responsibilities. These hard-working veterans will not let one get rid of them until he drops in his harness, and so gets rid of them and his life together. How often has many a tired old man envied the superannuated family cat, stretched upon the rug before the fire, letting the genial warmth tranquilly diffuse itself through all her internal arrangements! No more watching for mice in dark, damp cellars, no more awaiting the savage gray rat at the mouth of his den, no more scurrying up trees and lamp-posts to avoid the neighbor's cur who wishes to make her acquaintance! It is very grand to "die in harness," but it is very pleasant to have the tight straps unbuckled and the heavy collar lifted from the neck and shoulders.

It is natural enough to cling to life. We are used to atmospheric existence, and can hardly conceive of ourselves except as breathing creatures. We have never tried any other mode of being, or, if we have, we have forgotten all about it, whatever Wordsworth's grand ode may tell us we remember. Heaven itself must be an experiment to every human soul which shall find itself there. It may take time for an earthborn saint to become acclimated to the celestial ether,—that is, if time can be said to exist for a disembodied spirit. We are all sentenced to capital punishment for the crime of living, and though the condemned cell of our earthly existence is but a narrow and bare dwelling-place, we have adjusted ourselves to it, and made it tolerably comfortable for the little while we are to be confined in it. The prisoner of Chillon

"regained [his] freedom with a sigh,"

and a tender-hearted mortal might be pardoned for looking back, like the poor lady who was driven from her dwelling-place by fire and brimstone, at the home he was leaving for the "undiscovered country."

On the other hand, a good many persons, not suicidal in their tendencies, get more of life than they want. One of our wealthy citizens said, on hearing that a friend had dropped off from apoplexy, that it made his mouth water to hear of such a case. It was

an odd expression, but I have no doubt that the fine old gentleman to whom it was attributed made use of it. He had had enough of his gout and other infirmities. Swift's account of the Struldbrugs is not very amusing reading for old people, but some may find it a consolation to reflect on the probable miseries they escape in not being doomed to an undying earthly existence.

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There are strange diversities in the way in which different old persons look upon their prospects. A millionaire whom I well remember confessed that he should like to live long enough to learn how much a certain fellow-citizen, a multimillionaire, was worth. One of the, three nonagenarians before referred to expressed himself as having a great curiosity about the new sphere of existence to which he was looking forward.

The feeling must of necessity come to many aged persons that they have outlived their usefulness; that they are no longer wanted, but rather in the way, drags on the wheels rather than helping them forward. But let them remember the often-quoted line of Milton,

“They also serve who only stand and wait.”

This is peculiarly true of them. They are helping others without always being aware of it. They are the shields, the breakwaters, of those who come after them. Every decade is a defence of the one next behind it. At thirty the youth has sobered into manhood, but the strong men of forty rise in almost unbroken rank between him and the approaches of old age as they show in the men of fifty. At forty he looks with a sense of security at the strong men of fifty, and sees behind them the row of sturdy sexagenarians. When fifty is reached, somehow sixty does not look so old as it once used to, and seventy is still afar off. After sixty the stern sentence of the burial service seems to have a meaning that one did not notice in former years. There begins to be something personal about it. But if one lives to seventy he soon gets used to the text with the threescore years and ten in it, and begins to count himself among those who by reason of strength are destined to reach fourscore, of whom he can see a number still in reasonably good condition. The octogenarian loves to read about people of ninety and over. He peers among the asterisks of the triennial catalogue of the University for the names of graduates who have been seventy years out of college and remain still unstarred. He is curious about the biographies of centenarians. Such escapades as those of that terrible old sinner and ancestor of great men, the Reverend Stephen Bachelder, interest him as they never did before. But he cannot deceive himself much longer. See him walking on a level surface, and he steps off almost as well as ever; but watch him coming down a flight of stairs, and the family record could not tell his years more faithfully. He cut you dead, you say? Did it occur to you that he could not see you clearly enough to know you from any other son or daughter of Adam? He said he was very glad to hear it, did he, when you told him that your beloved grandmother had just deceased? Did you happen to remember that though he does not allow that he is deaf, he will not deny that he does not hear quite so well as he used to? No matter about his failings; the longer he holds on to life, the longer he makes life seem to all the living who follow him, and thus he is their constant benefactor.

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Every stage of existence has its special trials and its special consolations. Habits are the crutches of old age; by the aid of these we manage to hobble along after the mental joints are stiff and the muscles rheumatic, to speak metaphorically,—that is to say, when every act of self-determination costs an effort and a pang. We become more and more automatic as we grow older, and if we lived long enough we should come to be pieces of creaking machinery like Maelzel's chess player,—or what that seemed to be.

Emerson was sixty-three years old, the year I have referred to as that of the grand climacteric, when he read to his son the poem he called "Terminus," beginning:

"It is time to be old,
To take in sail.
The God of bounds,
Who sets to seas a shore,
Came to me in his fatal rounds
And said, 'No more!'"

It was early in life to feel that the productive stage was over, but he had received warning from within, and did not wish to wait for outside advices. There is all the difference in the world in the mental as in the bodily constitution of different individuals. Some must "take in sail" sooner, some later. We can get a useful lesson from the American and the English elms on our Common. The American elms are quite bare, and have been so for weeks. They know very well that they are going to have storms to wrestle with; they have not forgotten the gales of September and the tempests of the late autumn and early winter. It is a hard fight they are going to have, and they strip their coats off and roll up their shirt-sleeves, and show themselves bare-armed and ready for the contest. The English elms are of a more robust build, and stand defiant, with all their summer clothing about their sturdy frames. They may yet have to learn a lesson of their American cousins, for notwithstanding their compact and solid structure they go to pieces in the great winds just as ours do. We must drop much of our foliage before winter is upon us. We must take in sail and throw over cargo, if that is necessary, to keep us afloat. We have to decide between our duties and our instinctive demand of rest. I can believe that some have welcomed the decay of their active powers because it furnished them with peremptory reasons for sparing themselves during the few years that were left them.

Age brings other obvious changes besides the loss of active power. The sensibilities are less keen, the intelligence is less lively, as we might expect under the influence of that narcotic which Nature administers. But there is another effect of her "black drop" which is not so commonly recognized. Old age is like an opium-dream. Nothing seems real except what is unreal. I am sure that the pictures painted by the imagination,—the faded frescos on the walls of memory,—come out in clearer and brighter colors than belonged to them many years earlier. Nature has her special favors for her children of every age, and this is one which she reserves for our second childhood.

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No man can reach an advanced age without thinking of that great change to which, in the course of nature, he must be so near. It has been remarked that the sterner beliefs of rigid theologians are apt to soften in their later years. All reflecting persons, even those whose minds have been half palsied by the deadly dogmas which have done all they could to disorganize their thinking powers,—all reflecting persons, I say, must recognize, in looking back over a long life, how largely their creeds, their course of life, their wisdom and unwisdom, their whole characters, were shaped by the conditions which surrounded them. Little children they came from the hands of the Father of all; little children in their helplessness, their ignorance, they are going back to Him. They cannot help feeling that they are to be transferred from the rude embrace of the boisterous elements to arms that will receive them tenderly. Poor planetary foundlings, they have known hard treatment at the hands of the brute forces of nature, from the control of which they are soon to be set free. There are some old pessimists, it is true, who believe that they and a few others are on a raft, and that the ship which they have quitted, holding the rest of mankind, is going down with all on board. It is no wonder that there should be such when we remember what have been the teachings of the priesthood through long series of ignorant centuries. Every age has to shape the Divine image it worships over again,—the present age and our own country are busily engaged in the task at this time. We unmake Presidents and make new ones. This is an apprenticeship for a higher task. Our doctrinal teachers are unmaking the Deity of the Westminster Catechism and trying to model a new one, with more of modern humanity and less of ancient barbarism in his composition. If Jonathan Edwards had lived long enough, I have no doubt his creed would have softened into a kindly, humanized belief.

Some twenty or thirty years ago, I said to Longfellow that certain statistical tables I had seen went to show that poets were not a long-lived race. He doubted whether there was anything to prove they were particularly short-lived. Soon after this, he handed me a list he had drawn up. I cannot lay my hand upon it at this moment, but I remember that Metastasio was the oldest of them all. He died at the age of eighty-four. I have had some tables made out, which I have every reason to believe are correct so far as they go. From these, it appears that twenty English poets lived to the average age of fifty-six years and a little over. The eight American poets on the list averaged seventy-three and a half, nearly, and they are not all dead yet. The list including Greek, Latin, Italian, and German poets, with American and English, gave an average of a little over sixty-two years. Our young poets need not be alarmed. They can remember that Bryant lived to be eighty-three years old, that Longfellow reached seventy-five and Halleck seventy-seven, while Whittier is living at the age of nearly eighty-two. Tennyson is still writing at eighty, and Browning reached the age of seventy-seven.

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Shall a man who in his younger days has written poetry, or what passed for it, continue to attempt it in his later years? Certainly, if it amuses or interests him, no one would object to his writing in verse as much as he likes. Whether he should continue to write for the public is another question. Poetry is a good deal a matter of heart-beats, and the circulation is more languid in the later period of life. The joints are less supple; the arteries are more or less "ossified." Something like these changes has taken place in the mind. It has lost the flexibility, the plastic docility, which it had in youth and early manhood, when the gristle had but just become hardened into bone. It is the nature of poetry to writhe itself along through the tangled growths of the vocabulary, as a snake winds through the grass, in sinuous, complex, and unexpected curves, which crack every joint that is not supple as india-rubber.

I had a poem that I wanted to print just here. But after what I have this moment said, I hesitated, thinking that I might provoke the obvious remark that I exemplified the unfitness of which I had been speaking. I remembered the advice I had given to a poetical aspirant not long since, which I think deserves a paragraph to itself.

My friend, I said, I hope you will not write in verse. When you write in prose you say what you mean. When you write in rhyme you say what you must.

Should I send this poem to the publishers, or not?

"Some said, 'John, print it;' others said, 'Not so.'"

I did not ask "some" or "others." Perhaps I should have thought it best to keep my poem to myself and the few friends for whom it was written. All at once, my daimon—that other Me over whom I button my waistcoat when I button it over my own person—put it into my head to look up the story of Madame Saqui. She was a famous danseuse, who danced Napoleon in and out, and several other dynasties besides. Her last appearance was at the age of seventy-six, which is rather late in life for the tight rope, one of her specialties. Jules Janin mummified her when she died in 1866, at the age of eighty. He spiced her up in his eulogy as if she had been the queen of a modern Pharaoh. His foamy and flowery rhetoric put me into such a state of good-nature that I said, I will print my poem, and let the critical Gil Blas handle it as he did the archbishop's sermon, or would have done, if he had been a writer for the "Salamanca Weekly."

It must be premised that a very beautiful loving cup was presented to me on my recent birthday, by eleven ladies of my acquaintance. This was the most costly and notable of all the many tributes I received, and for which in different forms I expressed my gratitude.

To the eleven ladies

*Who presented me with A silver loving cup on the
twenty-ninth of august, M DCCC LXXXIX.*

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"Who gave this cup?" The secret thou wouldst steal
Its brimming flood forbids it to reveal:
No mortal's eye shall read it till he first
Cool the red throat of thirst.

If on the golden floor one draught remain,
Trust me, thy careful search will be in vain;
Not till the bowl is emptied shalt thou know
The names enrolled below.

Deeper than Truth lies buried in her well
Those modest names the graven letters spell
Hide from the sight; but, wait, and thou shalt see
Who the good angels be

Whose bounty glistens in the beauteous gift
That friendly hands to loving lips shall lift:
Turn the fair goblet when its floor is dry,
Their names shall meet thine eye.

Count thou their number on the beads of Heaven,
Alas! the clustered Pleiads are but seven;
Nay, the nine sister Muses are too few,
—The Graces must add two.

"For whom this gift?" For one who all too long
Clings to his bough among the groves of song;
Autumn's last leaf, that spreads its faded wing
To greet a second spring.

Dear friends, kind friends, whate'er the cup may hold,
Bathing its burnished depths, will change to gold
Its last bright drop let thirsty Maenads drain,
Its fragrance will remain.

Better love's perfume in the empty bowl
Than wine's nepenthe for the aching soul
Sweeter than song that ever poet sung,
It makes an old heart young!

III

After the reading of the paper which was reported in the preceding number of this record, the company fell into talk upon the subject with which it dealt.

The Mistress. "I could have wished you had said more about the religious attitude of old age as such. Surely the thoughts of aged persons must be very much taken up with the question of what is to become of them. I should like to have The Dictator explain himself a little more fully on this point."

My dear madam, I said, it is a delicate matter to talk about. You remember Mr. Calhoun's response to the advances of an over-zealous young clergyman who wished to examine him as to his outfit for the long journey. I think the relations between man and his Maker grow more intimate, more confidential, if I may say so, with advancing years. The old man is less disposed to argue about special matters of belief, and more ready to sympathize with spiritually minded persons without anxious questioning as to the fold to which they belong. That kindly judgment which he exercises with regard to others he will, naturally enough, apply to himself. The caressing tone in which the Emperor Hadrian addresses his soul is very much like that of an old person talking with a grandchild or some other pet:

"Animula, vagula, blandula,
Hospes comesque corporis."

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"Dear little, flitting, pleasing sprite,
The body's comrade and its guest."

How like the language of Catullus to Lesbia's sparrow!

More and more the old man finds his pleasures in memory, as the present becomes unreal and dreamlike, and the vista of his earthly future narrows and closes in upon him. At last, if he live long enough, life comes to be little more than a gentle and peaceful delirium of pleasing recollections. To say, as Dante says, that there is no greater grief than to remember past happiness in the hour of misery is not giving the whole truth. In the midst of the misery, as many would call it, of extreme old age, there is often a divine consolation in recalling the happy moments and days and years of times long past. So beautiful are the visions of bygone delight that one could hardly wish them to become real, lest they should lose their ineffable charm. I can almost conceive of a dozing and dreamy centenarian saying to one he loves, "Go, darling, go! Spread your wings and leave me. So shall you enter that world of memory where all is lovely. I shall not hear the sound of your footsteps any more, but you will float before me, an aerial presence. I shall not hear any word from your lips, but I shall have a deeper sense of your nearness to me than speech can give. I shall feel, in my still solitude, as the Ancient Mariner felt when the seraph band gathered before him:

"No voice did they impart
No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart."

I said that the lenient way in which the old look at the failings of others naturally leads them to judge themselves more charitably. They find an apology for their short-comings and wrong-doings in another consideration. They know very well that they are not the same persons as the middle-aged individuals, the young men, the boys, the children, that bore their names, and whose lives were continuous with theirs. Here is an old man who can remember the first time he was allowed to go shooting. What a remorseless young destroyer he was, to be sure! Wherever he saw a feather, wherever a poor little squirrel showed his bushy tail, bang! went the old "king's arm," and the feathers or the fur were set flying like so much chaff. Now that same old man,—the mortal that was called by his name and has passed for the same person for some scores of years,—is considered absurdly sentimental by kind-hearted women, because he opens the fly-trap and sets all its captives free,—out-of-doors, of course, but the dear souls all insisting, meanwhile, that the flies will, every one of them, be back again in the house before the day is over. Do you suppose that venerable sinner expects to be rigorously called to account for the want of feeling he showed in those early years, when the instinct of destruction, derived from his forest-roaming ancestors, led him to acts which he now looks upon with pain and aversion?

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“Senex” has seen three generations grow up, the son repeating the virtues and the failings of the father, the grandson showing the same characteristics as the father and grandfather. He knows that if such or such a young fellow had lived to the next stage of life he would very probably have caught up with his mother’s virtues, which, like a graft of a late fruit on an early apple or pear tree, do not ripen in her children until late in the season. He has seen the successive ripening of one quality after another on the boughs of his own life, and he finds it hard to condemn himself for faults which only needed time to fall off and be succeeded by better fruitage. I cannot help thinking that the recording angel not only drops a tear upon many a human failing, which blots it out forever, but that he hands many an old record-book to the imp that does his bidding, and orders him to throw that into the fire instead of the sinner for whom the little wretch had kindled it.

“And pitched him in after it, I hope,” said Number Seven, who is in some points as much of an optimist as any one among us, in spite of the squint in his brain,—or in virtue of it, if you choose to have it so.

“I like Wordsworth’s ‘Matthew,’” said Number Five, “as well as any picture of old age I remember.”

“Can you repeat it to us?” asked one of The Teacups.

“I can recall two verses of it,” said Number Five, and she recited the two following ones. Number Five has a very sweet voice. The moment she speaks all the faces turn toward her. I don’t know what its secret is, but it is a voice that makes friends of everybody.

“The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs
Of one tired out with fun and madness;
The tears which came to Matthew’s eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

“Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seemed as if he drank it up,
He felt with spirit so profound:’

“This was the way in which Wordsworth paid his tribute to a

“Soul of God’s best earthly mould.”

The sweet voice left a trance-like silence after it, which may have lasted twenty heart-beats. Then I said, We all thank you for your charming quotation. How much more wholesome a picture of humanity than such stuff as the author of the “Night Thoughts” has left us:

“Heaven’s Sovereign saves all beings but Himself
That hideous sight, a naked human heart.”

Or the author of “Don Juan,” telling us to look into

“Man’s heart, and view the hell that’s there!”

I hope I am quoting correctly, but I am more of a scholar in Wordsworth than in Byron.
Was Parson Young’s own heart such a hideous spectacle to himself?

If it was, he had better have stripped off his surplice. No,—it was nothing but the cant of his calling. In Byron it was a mood, and he might have said just the opposite thing the next day, as he did in his two descriptions of the Venus de’ Medici. That picture of old Matthew abides in the memory, and makes one think better of his kind. What nobler tasks has the poet than to exalt the idea of manhood, and to make the world we live in more beautiful?

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We have two or three young people with us who stand a fair chance of furnishing us the element without which life and tea-tables alike are wanting in interest. We are all, of course, watching them, and curious to know whether we are to have a romance or not. Here is one of them; others will show themselves presently.

I cannot say just how old the Tutor is, but I do not detect a gray hair in his head. My sight is not so good as it was, however, and he may have turned the sharp corner of thirty, and even have left it a year or two behind him. More probably he is still in the twenties,—say twenty-eight or twenty-nine. He seems young, at any rate, excitable, enthusiastic, imaginative, but at the same time reserved. I am afraid that he is a poet. When I say “I am afraid,” you wonder what I mean by the expression. I may take another opportunity to explain and justify it; I will only say now that I consider the Muse the most dangerous of sirens to a young man who has his way to make in the world. Now this young man, the Tutor, has, I believe, a future before him. He was born for a philosopher,—so I read his horoscope,—but he has a great liking for poetry and can write well in verse. We have had a number of poems offered for our entertainment, which I have commonly been requested to read. There has been some little mystery about their authorship, but it is evident that they are not all from the same hand. Poetry is as contagious as measles, and if a single case of it break out in any social circle, or in a school, there are certain to be a number of similar cases, some slight, some serious, and now and then one so malignant that the subject of it should be put on a spare diet of stationery, say from two to three penfuls of ink and a half sheet of notepaper per diem. If any of our poetical contributions are presentable, the reader shall have a chance to see them.

It must be understood that our company is not invariably made up of the same persons. The Mistress, as we call her, is expected to be always in her place. I make it a rule to be present. The Professor is almost as sure to be at the table as I am. We should hardly know what to do without Number Five. It takes a good deal of tact to handle such a little assembly as ours, which is a republic on a small scale, for all that they give me the title of Dictator, and Number Five is a great help in every social emergency. She sees when a discussion tends to become personal, and heads off the threatening antagonists. She knows when a subject has been knocking about long enough and dexterously shifts the talk to another track. It is true that I am the one most frequently appealed to as the highest tribunal in doubtful cases, but I often care more for Number Five's opinion than I do for my own. Who is this Number Five, so fascinating, so wise, so full of knowledge, and so ready to learn? She is suspected of being the anonymous author of a book which produced a sensation

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when published, not very long ago, and which those who read are very apt to read a second time, and to leave on their tables for frequent reference. But we have never asked her. I do not think she wants to be famous. How she comes to be unmarried is a mystery to me; it must be that she has found nobody worth caring enough for. I wish she would furnish us with the romance which, as I said, our tea-table needs to make it interesting. Perhaps the new-comer will make love to her,—I should think it possible she might fancy him.

And who is the new-comer? He is a Counsellor and a Politician. Has a good war record. Is about forty-five years old, I conjecture. Is engaged in a great law case just now. Said to be very eloquent. Has an intellectual head, and the bearing of one who has commanded a regiment or perhaps a brigade. Altogether an attractive person, scholarly, refined has some accomplishments not so common as they might be in the class we call gentlemen, with an accent on the word.

There is also a young Doctor, waiting for his bald spot to come, so that he may get into practice.

We have two young ladies at the table,—the English girl referred to in a former number, and an American girl of about her own age. Both of them are students in one of those institutions—I am not sure whether they call it an “annex” or not; but at any rate one of those schools where they teach the incomprehensible sort of mathematics and other bewildering branches of knowledge above the common level of high-school education. They seem to be good friends, and form a very pleasing pair when they walk in arm in arm; nearly enough alike to seem to belong together, different enough to form an agreeable contrast.

Of course we were bound to have a Musician at our table, and we have one who sings admirably, and accompanies himself, or one or more of our ladies, very frequently.

Such is our company when the table is full. But sometimes only half a dozen, or it may be only three or four, are present. At other times we have a visitor or two, either in the place of one of our habitual number, or in addition to it. We have the elements, we think, of a pleasant social gathering,—different sexes, ages, pursuits, and tastes,—all that is required for a “symphony concert” of conversation. One of the curious questions which might well be asked by those who had been with us on different occasions would be, “How many poets are there among you?” Nobody can answer this question. It is a point of etiquette with us not to press our inquiries about these anonymous poems too sharply, especially if any of them betray sentiments which would not bear rough handling.

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I don't doubt that the different personalities at our table will get mixed up in the reader's mind if he is not particularly clear-headed. That happens very often, much oftener than all would be willing to confess, in reading novels and plays. I am afraid we should get a good deal confused even in reading our Shakespeare if we did not look back now and then at the *dramatis personae*. I am sure that I am very apt to confound the characters in a moderately interesting novel; indeed, I suspect that the writer is often no better off than the reader in the dreary middle of the story, when his characters have all made their appearance, and before they have reached near enough to the denouement to have fixed their individuality by the position they have arrived at in the chain of the narrative.

My reader might be a little puzzled when he read that Number Five did or said such or such a thing, and ask, "Whom do you mean by that title? I am not quite sure that I remember." Just associate her with that line of Emerson,

"Why nature loves the number five,"

and that will remind you that she is the favorite of our table.

You cannot forget who Number Seven is if I inform you that he specially prides himself on being a seventh son of a seventh son. The fact of such a descent is supposed to carry wonderful endowments with it. Number Seven passes for a natural healer. He is looked upon as a kind of wizard, and is lucky in living in the nineteenth century instead of the sixteenth or earlier. How much confidence he feels in himself as the possessor of half-supernatural gifts I cannot say. I think his peculiar birthright gives him a certain confidence in his whims and fancies which but for that he would hardly feel. After this explanation, when I speak of Number Five or Number Seven, you will know to whom I refer.

The company are very frank in their criticisms of each other. "I did not like that expression of yours, planetary foundlings," said the Mistress. "It seems to me that it is too like atheism for a good Christian like you to use."

Ah, my dear madam, I answered, I was thinking of the elements and the natural forces to which man was born an almost helpless subject in the rudimentary stages of his existence, and from which he has only partially got free after ages upon ages of warfare with their tyranny. Think what hunger forced the caveman to do! Think of the surly indifference of the storms that swept the forest and the waters, the earthquake chasms that engulfed him, the inundations that drowned him out of his miserable hiding-places, the pestilences that lay in wait for him, the unequal strife with ferocious animals! I need not sum up all the wretchedness that goes to constitute the "martyrdom of man." When our forefathers came to this wilderness as it then was, and found everywhere the bones of the poor natives who had perished in the great plague (which our Doctor there thinks was probably the small-pox),

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they considered this destructive malady as a special mark of providential favor for them. How about the miserable Indians? Were they anything but planetary foundlings? No! Civilization is a great foundling hospital, and fortunate are all those who get safely into the creche before the frost or the malaria has killed them, the wild beasts or the venomous reptiles worked out their deadly appetites and instincts upon them. The very idea of humanity seems to be that it shall take care of itself and develop its powers in the "struggle for life." Whether we approve it or not, if we can judge by the material record, man was born a foundling, and fought his way as he best might to that kind of existence which we call civilized,—one which a considerable part of the inhabitants of our planet have reached.

If you do not like the expression planetary foundlings, I have no objection to your considering the race as put out to nurse. And what a nurse Nature is! She gives her charge a hole in the rocks to live in, ice for his pillow and snow for his blanket, in one part of the world; the jungle for his bedroom in another, with the tiger for his watch-dog, and the cobra as his playfellow.

Well, I said, there may be other parts of the universe where there are no tigers and no cobras. It is not quite certain that such realms of creation are better off, on the whole, than this earthly residence of ours, which has fought its way up to the development of such centres of civilization as Athens and Rome, to such personalities as Socrates, as Washington.

"One of our company has been on an excursion among the celestial bodies of our system, I understand," said the Professor.

Number Five colored. "Nothing but a dream," she said. "The truth is, I had taken ether in the evening for a touch of neuralgia, and it set my imagination at work in a way quite unusual with me. I had been reading a number of books about an ideal condition of society,—Sir Thomas Mores 'Utopia,' Lord Bacon's 'New Atlantis,' and another of more recent date. I went to bed with my brain a good deal excited, and fell into a deep slumber, in which I passed through some experiences so singular that, on awaking, I put them down on paper. I don't know that there is anything very original about the experiences I have recorded, but I thought them worth preserving. Perhaps you would not agree with me in that belief."

"If Number Five will give us a chance to form our own judgment about her dream or vision, I think we shall enjoy it," said the Mistress. "She knows what will please The Teacups in the way of reading as well as I do how many lumps of sugar the Professor wants in his tea and how many I want in mine."

The company was so urgent that Number Five sent up-stairs for her paper.

Number Five reads the story of her dream.

It cost me a great effort to set down the words of the manuscript from which I am reading. My dreams for the most part fade away so soon after their occurrence that I cannot recall them at all. But in this case my ideas held together with remarkable tenacity. By keeping my mind steadily upon the work, I gradually unfolded the narrative which follows, as the famous Italian antiquary opened one of those fragile carbonized manuscripts found in the ruins of Herculaneum or Pompeii.

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The first thing I remember about it is that I was floating upward, without any sense of effort on my part. The feeling was that of flying, which I have often had in dreams, as have many other persons. It was the most natural thing in the world,—a semi-materialized volition, if I may use such an expression.

At the first moment of my new consciousness,—for I seemed to have just emerged from a deep slumber, I was aware that there was a companion at my side. Nothing could be more gracious than the way in which this being accosted me. I will speak of it as she, because there was a delicacy, a sweetness, a divine purity, about its aspect that recalled my ideal of the loveliest womanhood.

“I am your companion and your guide,” this being made me understand, as she looked at me. Some faculty of which I had never before been conscious had awakened in me, and I needed no interpreter to explain the unspoken language of my celestial attendant.

“You are not yet outside of space and time,” she said, “and I am going with you through some parts of the phenomenal or apparent universe,—what you call the material world. We have plenty of what you call time before us, and we will take our voyage leisurely, looking at such objects of interest as may attract our attention as we pass. The first thing you will naturally wish to look at will be the earth you have just left. This is about the right distance,” she said, and we paused in our flight.

The great globe we had left was rolling beneath us. No eye of one in the flesh could see it as I saw or seemed to see it. No ear of any mortal being could bear the sounds that came from it as I heard or seemed to hear them. The broad oceans unrolled themselves before me. I could recognize the calm Pacific and the stormy Atlantic,—the ships that dotted them, the white lines where the waves broke on the shore,—frills on the robes of the continents,—so they looked to my woman’s perception; the—vast South American forests; the glittering icebergs about the poles; the snowy mountain ranges, here and there a summit sending up fire and smoke; mighty rivers, dividing provinces within sight of each other, and making neighbors of realms thousands of miles apart; cities; light-houses to insure the safety of sea-going vessels, and war-ships to knock them to pieces and sink them. All this, and infinitely more, showed itself to me during a single revolution of the sphere: twenty-four hours it would have been, if reckoned by earthly measurements of time. I have not spoken of the sounds I heard while the earth was revolving under us. The howl of storms, the roar and clash of waves, the crack and crash of the falling thunderbolt,—these of course made themselves heard as they do to mortal ears. But there were other sounds which enchained my attention more than these voices of nature. As the skilled leader of an orchestra hears every single sound from each member of the mob of stringed and wind instruments, and above all the screech of the straining soprano, so my sharpened perceptions made what would have been for common mortals a confused murmur audible to me as compounded of innumerable easily distinguished sounds. Above them

all arose one continued, unbroken, agonizing cry. It was the voice of suffering womanhood, a sound that goes up day and night, one long chorus of tortured victims.

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"Let us get out of reach of this," I said; and we left our planet, with its blank, desolate moon staring at it, as if it had turned pale at the sights and sounds it had to witness.

Presently the gilded dome of the State House, which marked our starting-point, came into view for the second time, and I knew that this side-show was over. I bade farewell to the Common with its Cogswell fountain, and the Garden with its last awe-inspiring monument.

"Oh, if I could sometimes revisit these beloved scenes!" I exclaimed.

"There is nothing to hinder that I know of," said my companion. "Memory and imagination as you know them in the flesh are two winged creatures with strings tied to their legs, and anchored to a bodily weight of a hundred and fifty pounds, more or less. When the string is cut you can be where you wish to be,—not merely a part of you, leaving the rest behind, but the whole of you. Why shouldn't you want to revisit your old home sometimes?"

I was astonished at the human way in which my guide conversed with me. It was always on the basis of my earthly habits, experiences, and limitations. "Your solar system," she said, "is a very small part of the universe, but you naturally feel a curiosity about the bodies which constitute it and about their inhabitants. There is your moon: a bare and desolate-looking place it is, and well it may be, for it has no respirable atmosphere, and no occasion for one. The Lunites do not breathe; they live without waste and without supply. You look as if you do not understand this. Yet your people have, as you well know, what they call incandescent lights everywhere. You would have said there can be no lamp without oil or gas, or other combustible substance, to feed it; and yet you see a filament which sheds a light like that of noon all around it, and does not waste at all. So the Lunites live by influx of divine energy, just as the incandescent lamp glows,—glows, and is not consumed; receiving its life, if we may call it so, from the central power, which wears the unpleasant name of 'dynamo.'"

The Lunites appeared to me as pale phosphorescent figures of ill-defined outline, lost in their own halos, as it were. I could not help thinking of Shelley's

"maiden
With white fire laden."

But as the Lunites were after all but provincials, as are the tenants of all the satellites, I did not care to contemplate them for any great length of time.

I do not remember much about the two planets that came next to our own, except the beautiful rosy atmosphere of one and the huge bulk of the other. Presently, we found ourselves within hailing distance of another celestial body, which I recognized at once, by the rings which girdled it, as the planet Saturn. A dingy, dull-looking sphere it was in

its appearance. "We will tie up here for a while," said my attendant. The easy, familiar way in which she spoke surprised and pleased me.

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Why, said I,—The Dictator,—what is there to prevent beings of another order from being as cheerful, as social, as good companions, as the very liveliest of God's creatures whom we have known in the flesh? Is it impossible for an archangel to smile? Is such a phenomenon as a laugh never heard except in our little sinful corner of the universe? Do you suppose, that when the disciples heard from the lips of their Master the play of words on the name of Peter, there was no smile of appreciation on the bearded faces of those holy men? From any other lips we should have called this pleasantry a—

Number Five shook her head very slightly, and gave me a look that seemed to say, "Don't frighten the other Teacups. We don't call things by the names that belong to them when we deal with celestial subjects."

We tied up, as my attendant playfully called our resting, so near the planet that I could know—I will not say see and hear, but apprehend—all that was going on in that remote sphere; remote, as we who live in what we have been used to consider the centre of the rational universe regard it. What struck me at once was the deadness of everything I looked upon. Dead, uniform color of surface and surrounding atmosphere. Dead complexion of all the inhabitants. Dead-looking trees, dead-looking grass, no flowers to be seen anywhere.

"What is the meaning of all this?" I said to my guide.

She smiled good-naturedly, and replied, "It is a forlorn home for anything above a lichen or a toadstool; but that is no wonder, when you know what the air is which they breathe. It is pure nitrogen."

The Professor spoke up. "That can't be, madam," he said. "The spectroscope shows the atmosphere of Saturn to be—no matter, I have forgotten what; but it was not pure nitrogen, at any rate."

Number Five is never disconcerted. "Will you tell me," she said, "where you have found any account of the bands and lines in the spectrum of dream-nitrogen? I should be so pleased to become acquainted with them."

The Professor winced a little, and asked Delilah, the handmaiden, to pass a plate of muffins to him. The dream had carried him away, and he thought for the moment that he was listening to a scientific paper.

Of course, my companion went on to say, the bodily constitution of the Saturnians is wholly different from that of air-breathing, that is oxygen-breathing, human beings. They are the dullest, slowest, most torpid of mortal creatures.

All this is not to be wondered at when you remember the inert characteristics of nitrogen. There are in some localities natural springs which give out slender streams of



oxygen. You will learn by and by what use the Saturnians make of this dangerous gas, which, as you recollect, constitutes about one fifth of your own atmosphere. Saturn has large lead mines, but no other metal is found on this planet. The inhabitants have nothing else to make tools of, except stones and shells. The mechanical arts have therefore made no great progress among them. Chopping down a tree with a leaden axe is necessarily a slow process.

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So far as the Saturnians can be said to have any pride in anything, it is in the absolute level which characterizes their political and social order. They profess to be the only true republicans in the solar system. The fundamental articles of their Constitution are these:

All Saturnians are born equal, live equal, and die equal.

All Saturnians are born free,—free, that is, to obey the rules laid down for the regulation of their conduct, pursuits, and opinions, free to be married to the person selected for them by the physiological section of the government, and free to die at such proper period of life as may best suit the convenience and general welfare of the community.

The one great industrial product of Saturn is the bread-root. The Saturnians find this wholesome and palatable enough; and it is well they do, as they have no other vegetable. It is what I should call a most uninteresting kind of eatable, but it serves as food and drink, having juice enough, so that they get along without water. They have a tough, dry grass, which, matted together, furnishes them with clothes sufficiently warm for their cold-blooded constitutions, and more than sufficiently ugly.

A piece of ground large enough to furnish bread-root for ten persons is allotted to each head of a household, allowance being made for the possible increase of families. This, however, is not a very important consideration, as the Saturnians are not a prolific race. The great object of life being the product of the largest possible quantity of bread-roots, and women not being so capable in the fields as the stronger sex, females are considered an undesirable addition to society. The one thing the Saturnians dread and abhor is inequality. The whole object of their laws and customs is to maintain the strictest equality in everything,—social relations, property, so far as they can be said to have anything which can be so called, mode of living, dress, and all other matters. It is their boast that nobody ever starved under their government. Nobody goes in rags, for the coarse-fibred grass from which they fabricate their clothes is very durable. (I confess I wondered how a woman could live in Saturn. They have no looking-glasses. There is no such article as a ribbon known among them. All their clothes are of one pattern. I noticed that there were no pockets in any of their garments, and learned that a pocket would be considered *prima facie* evidence of theft, as no honest person would have use for such a secret receptacle.) Before the revolution which established the great law of absolute and lifelong equality, the inhabitants used to feed at their own private tables. Since the regeneration of society all meals are taken in common. The last relic of barbarism was the use of plates,—one or even more to each individual. This “odious relic of an effete civilization,” as they called it, has long been superseded by oblong hollow receptacles,

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one of which is allotted to each twelve persons. A great riot took place when an attempt was made by some fastidious and exclusive egotists to introduce partitions which should partially divide one portion of these receptacles into individual compartments. The Saturnians boast that they have no paupers, no thieves, none of those fictitious values called money,—all which things, they hear, are known in that small Saturn nearer the sun than the great planet which is their dwelling-place.

“I suppose that now they have levelled everything they are quiet and contented. Have they any of those uneasy people called reformers?”

“Indeed they have,” said my attendant. “There are the Orthobrachians, who declaim against the shameful abuse of the left arm and hand, and insist on restoring their perfect equality with the right. Then there are Isopodic societies, which insist on bringing back the original equality of the upper and lower limbs. If you can believe it, they actually practise going on all fours,—generally in a private way, a few of them together, but hoping to bring the world round to them in the near future.”

Here I had to stop and laugh.

“I should think life might be a little dull in Saturn,” I said.

“It is liable to that accusation,” she answered. “Do you notice how many people you meet with their mouths stretched wide open?”

“Yes,” I said, “and I do not know what to make of it. I should think every fourth or fifth person had his mouth open in that way.”

“They are suffering from the endemic disease of their planet, prolonged and inveterate gaping or yawning, which has ended in dislocation of the lower jaw. After a time this becomes fixed, and requires a difficult surgical operation to restore it to its place.”

It struck me that, in spite of their boast that they have no paupers, no thieves, no money, they were a melancholy-looking set of beings.

“What are their amusements?” I asked.

“Intoxication and suicide are their chief recreations. They have a way of mixing the oxygen which issues in small jets from certain natural springs with their atmospheric nitrogen in the proportion of about twenty per cent, which makes very nearly the same thing as the air of your planet. But to the Saturnians the mixture is highly intoxicating, and is therefore a relief to the monotony of their every-day life. This mixture is greatly sought after, but hard to obtain, as the sources of oxygen are few and scanty. It shortens the lives of those who have recourse to it; but if it takes too long, they have



other ways of escaping from a life which cuts and dries everything for its miserable subjects, defeats all the natural instincts, confounds all individual characteristics, and makes existence such a colossal bore, as your worldly people say, that self-destruction becomes a luxury.”

Number Five stopped here.

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Your imaginary wholesale Shakerdom is all very fine, said I. Your Utopia, your New Atlantis, and the rest are pretty to look at. But your philosophers are treating the world of living souls as if they were, each of them, playing a game of solitaire,—all the pegs and all the holes alike. Life is a very different sort of game. It is a game of chess, and not of solitaire, nor even of checkers. The men are not all pawns, but you have your knights, bishops, rooks,—yes, your king and queen,—to be provided for. Not with these names, of course, but all looking for their proper places, and having their own laws and modes of action. You can play solitaire with the members of your own family for pegs, if you like, and if none of them rebel. You can play checkers with a little community of meek, like-minded people. But when it comes to the handling of a great state, you will find that nature has emptied a box of chessmen before you, and you must play with them so as to give each its proper move, or sweep them off the board, and come back to the homely game such as I used to see played with beans and kernels of corn on squares marked upon the back of the kitchen bellows.

It was curious to see how differently Number Five's narrative was received by the different listeners in our circle. Number Five herself said she supposed she ought to be ashamed of its absurdities, but she did not know that it was much sillier than dreams often are, and she thought it might amuse the company. She was herself always interested by these ideal pictures of society. But it seemed to her that life must be dull in any of them, and with that idea in her head her dreaming fancy had drawn these pictures.

The Professor was interested in her conception of the existence of the Lunites without waste, and the death in life of the nitrogen-breathing Saturnians. Dream-chemistry was a new subject to him. Perhaps Number Five would give him some lessons in it.

At this she smiled, and said she was afraid she could not teach him anything, but if he would answer a few questions in matter-of-fact chemistry which had puzzled her she would be vastly obliged to him.

"You must come to my laboratory," said the Professor.

"I will come to-morrow," said Number Five.

Oh, yes! Much laboratory work they will do! Play of mutual affinities. Amalgamates. No freezing mixtures, I'll warrant!

Why shouldn't we get a romance out of all this, hey?

But Number Five looks as innocent as a lamb, and as brave as a lion. She does not care a copper for the looks that are going round The Teacups.

Our Doctor was curious about those cases of anchylosis, as he called it, of the lower jaw. He thought it a quite possible occurrence. Both the young girls thought the dream gave a very hard view of the optimists, who look forward to a reorganization of society which shall rid mankind of the terrible evils of over-crowding and competition.

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Number Seven was quite excited about the matter. He had himself drawn up a plan for a new social arrangement. He had shown it to the legal gentleman who has lately joined us. This gentleman thought it well-intended, but that it would take one constable to every three inhabitants to enforce its provisions.

I said the dream could do no harm; it was too outrageously improbable to come home to anybody's feelings. Dreams were like broken mosaics,—the separated stones might here and there make parts of pictures. If one found a caricature of himself made out of the pieces which had accidentally come together, he would smile at it, knowing that it was an accidental effect with no malice in it. If any of you really believe in a working Utopia, why not join the Shakers, and convert the world to this mode of life? Celibacy alone would cure a great many of the evils you complain of.

I thought this suggestion seemed to act rather unfavorably upon the ladies of our circle. The two Annexes looked inquiringly at each other. Number Five looked smilingly at them. She evidently thought it was time to change the subject of conversation, for she turned to me and said, "You promised to read us the poem you read before your old classmates the other evening."

I will fulfill my promise, I said. We felt that this might probably be our last meeting as a Class. The personal reference is to our greatly beloved and honored classmate, James Freeman Clarke.

After the Curfew.

The Play is over. While the light
Yet lingers in the darkening hall,

I come to say a last Good-night
Before the final Exeunt all.

We gathered once, a joyous throng: The jovial toasts went gayly round; With jest, and laugh, and shout, and song we made the floors and walls resound.

We come with feeble steps and slow,
A little band of four or five,
Left from the wrecks of long ago,
Still pleased to find ourselves alive.

Alive! How living, too, are they whose memories it is ours to share! Spread the long table's full array, There sits a ghost in every chair! One breathing form no more, alas! Amid our slender group we see; With him we still remained "The Class," without his presence what are we?

The hand we ever loved to clasp,
That tireless hand which knew no rest,
Loosed from affection's clinging grasp,
Lies nerveless on the peaceful breast.

The beaming eye, the cheering voice, That lent to life a generous glow, whose every
meaning said "Rejoice," we see, we hear, no more below.

The air seems darkened by his loss,
Earth's shadowed features look less fair,
And heavier weighs the daily cross
His willing shoulders helped as bear.

Why mourn that we, the favored few

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Whom grasping Time so long has spared
Life's sweet illusions to pursue,
The common lot of age have shared?

In every pulse of Friendship's heart
There breeds unfelt a throb of pain,
One hour must rend its links apart,
Though years on years have forged the chain.

So ends "The Boys,"—a lifelong play.
We too must hear the Prompter's call
To fairer scenes and brighter day
Farewell! I let the curtain fall.

IV

If the reader thinks that all these talking Teacups came together by mere accident, as people meet at a boarding-house, I may as well tell him at once that he is mistaken. If he thinks I am going to explain how it is that he finds them thus brought together, whether they form a secret association, whether they are the editors of this or that periodical, whether they are connected with some institution, and so on,—I must disappoint him. It is enough that he finds them in each other's company, a very mixed assembly, of different sexes, ages, and pursuits; and if there is a certain mystery surrounds their meetings, he must not be surprised. Does he suppose we want to be known and talked about in public as "Teacups"? No; so far as we give to the community some records of the talks at our table our thoughts become public property, but the sacred personality of every Teacup must be properly respected. If any wonder at the presence of one of our number, whose eccentricities might seem to render him an undesirable associate of the company, he should remember that some people may have relatives whom they feel bound to keep their eye on; besides the cracked Teacup brings out the ring of the sound ones as nothing else does. Remember also that soundest teacup does not always hold the best tea, or the cracked teacup the worst.

This is a hint to the reader, who is not expected to be too curious about the individual Teacups constituting our unorganized association.

The Dictator Discourses.

I have been reading Balzac's *Peau de Chagrin*. You have all read the story, I hope, for it is the first of his wonderful romances which fixed the eyes of the reading world upon him, and is a most fascinating if somewhat fantastic tale. A young man becomes the possessor of a certain magic skin, the peculiarity of which is that, while it gratifies every wish formed by its possessor, it shrinks in all its dimensions each time that a wish is

gratified. The young man makes every effort to ascertain the cause of its shrinking; invokes the aid of the physicist, the chemist, the student of natural history, but all in vain. He draws a red line around it. That same day he indulges a longing for a certain object. The next morning there is a little interval between the red line and the skin, close to which it was traced. So always, so inevitably. As he lives on, satisfying one desire, one passion, after another, the process of shrinking continues. A mortal disease sets in, which keeps pace with the shrinking skin, and his life and his talisman come to an end together.

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One would say that such a piece of integument was hardly a desirable possession. And yet, how many of us have at this very moment a *peau de chagrin* of our own, diminishing with every costly wish indulged, and incapable, like the magical one of the story, of being arrested in its progress.

Need I say that I refer to those coupon bonds, issued in the days of eight and ten per cent interest, and gradually narrowing as they drop their semiannual slips of paper, which represent wishes to be realized, as the roses let fall their leaves in July, as the icicles melt away in the thaw of January?

How beautiful was the coupon bond, arrayed in its golden raiment of promises to pay at certain stated intervals, for a goodly number of coming years! What annual the horticulturist can show will bear comparison with this product of auricultural industry, which has flowered in midsummer and midwinter for twenty successive seasons? And now the last of its blossoms is to be plucked, and the bare stem, stripped of its ever maturing and always welcome appendages, is reduced to the narrowest conditions of reproductive existence. Such is the fate of the financial *peau de chagrin*. Pity the poor fractional capitalist, who has just managed to live on the eight per cent of his coupon bonds. The shears of Atropos were not more fatal to human life than the long scissors which cut the last coupon to the lean proprietor, whose slice of dry toast it served to flatter with oleomargarine. Do you wonder that my thoughts took the poetical form, in the contemplation of these changes and their melancholy consequences? If the entire poem, of several hundred lines, was “declined with thanks” by an unfeeling editor, that is no reason why you should not hear a verse or two of it.

The peau de chagrin of state street.

How beauteous is the bond
In the manifold array
Of its promises to pay,
While the eight per cent it gives
And the rate at which one lives
Correspond!

But at last the bough is bare
Where the coupons one by one
Through their ripening days have run,
And the bond, a beggar now,
Seeks investment anyhow,
Anywhere!

The Mistress commonly contents herself with the general supervision of the company, only now and then taking an active part in the conversation. She started a question the other evening which set some of us thinking.

“Why is it,” she said, “that there is so common and so intense a desire for poetical reputation? It seems to me that, if I were a man, I had rather have done something worth telling of than make verses about what other people had done.”

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"You agree with Alexander the Great," said the Professor. "You would prefer the fame of Achilles to that of Homer, who told the story of his wrath and its direful consequences. I am afraid that I should hardly agree with you. Achilles was little better than a Choctaw brave. I won't quote Horace's line which characterizes him so admirably, for I will take it for granted that you all know it. He was a gentleman,—so is a first-class Indian,—a very noble gentleman in point of courage, lofty bearing, courtesy, but an unsoaped, ill-clad, turbulent, high-tempered young fellow, looked up to by his crowd very much as the champion of the heavy weights is looked up to by his gang of blackguards. Alexander himself was not much better,—a foolish, fiery young madcap. How often is he mentioned except as a warning? His best record is that he served to point a moral as 'Macedonian's madman.' He made a figure, it is true, in Dryden's great Ode, but what kind of a figure? He got drunk,—in very bad company, too,—and then turned fire-bug. He had one redeeming point,—he did value his Homer, and slept with the Iliad under his pillow. A poet like Homer seems to me worth a dozen such fellows as Achilles and Alexander."

"Homer is all very well far those that can read him," said Number Seven, "but the fellows that tag verses together nowadays are mostly fools. That's my opinion. I wrote some verses once myself, but I had been sick and was very weak; hadn't strength enough to write in prose, I suppose."

This aggressive remark caused a little stir at our tea-table. For you must know, if I have not told you already, there are suspicions that we have more than one "poet" at our table. I have already confessed that I do myself indulge in verse now and then, and have given my readers a specimen of my work in that line. But there is so much difference of character in the verses which are produced at our table, without any signature, that I feel quite sure there are at least two or three other contributors besides myself. There is a tall, old-fashioned silver urn, a sugar-bowl of the period of the Empire, in which the poems sent to be read are placed by unseen hands. When the proper moment arrives, I lift the cover of the urn and take out any manuscript it may contain. If conversation is going on and the company are in a talking mood, I replace the manuscript or manuscripts, clap on the cover, and wait until there is a moment's quiet before taking it off again. I might guess the writers sometimes by the handwriting, but there is more trouble taken to disguise the chirography than I choose to take to identify it as that of any particular member of our company.

The turn the conversation took, especially the slashing onslaught of Number Seven on the writers of verse, set me thinking and talking about the matter. Number Five turned on the stream of my discourse by a question.

"You receive a good many volumes of verse, do you not?" she said, with a look which implied that she knew I did.

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I certainly do, I answered. My table aches with them. My shelves groan with them. Think of what a fuss Pope made about his trials, when he complained that

“All Bedlam or Parnassus is let out”!

What were the numbers of the

“Mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease”

to that great multitude of contributors to our magazines, and authors of little volumes—sometimes, alas! big ones—of verse, which pour out of the press, not weekly, but daily, and at such a rate of increase that it seems as if before long every hour would bring a book, or at least an article which is to grow into a book by and by?

I thanked Heaven, the other day, that I was not a critic. These attenuated volumes of poetry in fancy bindings open their covers at one like so many little unfledged birds, and one does so long to drop a worm in,—a worm in the shape of a kind word for the poor fledgling! But what a desperate business it is to deal with this army of candidates for immortality! I have often had something to say about them, and I may be saying over the same things; but if I do not remember what I have said, it is not very likely that my reader will; if he does, he will find, I am very sure, that I say it a little differently.

What astonishes me is that this enormous mass of commonplace verse, which burdens the postman who brings it, which it is a serious task only to get out of its wrappers and open in two or three places, is on the whole of so good an average quality. The dead level of mediocrity is in these days a table-land, a good deal above the old sea-level of laboring incapacity. Sixty years ago verses made a local reputation, which verses, if offered today to any of our first-class magazines, would go straight into the waste-basket. To write “poetry” was an art and mystery in which only a few noted men and a woman or two were experts.

When “Potter the ventriloquist,” the predecessor of the well-remembered Signor Blitz, went round giving his entertainments, there was something unexplained, uncanny, almost awful, and beyond dispute marvellous, in his performances. Those watches that disappeared and came back to their owners, those endless supplies of treasures from empty hats, and especially those crawling eggs that travelled all over the magician’s person, sent many a child home thinking that Mr. Potter must have ghostly assistants, and raised grave doubts in the minds of “professors,” that is members of the church, whether they had not compromised their characters by being seen at such an unhallowed exhibition. Nowadays, a clever boy who has made a study of parlor magic can do many of those tricks almost as well as the great sorcerer himself. How simple it all seems when we have seen the mechanism of the deception!

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It is just so with writing in verse. It was not understood that everybody can learn to make poetry, just as they can learn the more difficult tricks of juggling. M. Jourdain's discovery that he had been speaking and writing prose all his life is nothing to that of the man who finds out in middle life, or even later, that he might have been writing poetry all his days, if he had only known how perfectly easy and simple it is. Not everybody, it is true, has a sufficiently good ear, a sufficient knowledge of rhymes and capacity for handling them, to be what is called a poet. I doubt whether more than nine out of ten, in the average, have that combination of gifts required for the writing of readable verse.

This last expression of opinion created a sensation among The Teacups. They looked puzzled for a minute. One whispered to the next Teacup, "More than nine out of ten! I should think that was a pretty liberal allowance."

Yes, I continued; perhaps ninety-nine in a hundred would come nearer to the mark. I have sometimes thought I might consider it worth while to set up a school for instruction in the art. "Poetry taught in twelve lessons." Congenital idiocy is no disqualification. Anybody can write "poetry." It is a most unenviable distinction to leave published a thin volume of verse, which nobody wanted, nobody buys, nobody reads, nobody cares for except the author, who cries over its pathos, poor fellow, and revels in its beauties, which he has all to himself. Come! who will be my pupils in a Course,—Poetry taught in twelve lessons? That made a laugh, in which most of The Teacups, myself included, joined heartily. Through it all I heard the sweet tones of Number Five's caressing voice; not because it was more penetrating or louder than the others, for it was low and soft, but it was so different from the others, there was so much more life,—the life of sweet womanhood,—dissolved in it.

(Of course he will fall in love with her. "He? Who?" Why, the newcomer, the Counsellor. Did I not see his eyes turn toward her as the silvery notes rippled from her throat? Did they not follow her in her movements, as she turned her tread this or that way?

—What nonsense for me to be arranging matters between two people strangers to each other before to-day!)

"A fellow writes in verse when he has nothing to say, and feels too dull and silly to say it in prose," said Number Seven.

This made us laugh again, good-naturedly. I was pleased with a kind of truth which it seemed to me to wrap up in its rather startling affirmation. I gave a piece of advice the other day which I said I thought deserved a paragraph to itself. It was from a letter I wrote not long ago to an unknown young correspondent, who had a longing for seeing himself in verse but was not hopelessly infatuated with the idea that he was born a "poet." "When you write in prose," I said, "you say what you mean. When you write in verse you

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say what you must." I was thinking more especially of rhymed verse. Rhythm alone is a tether, and not a very long one. But rhymes are iron fetters; it is dragging a chain and ball to march under their incumbrance; it is a clog-dance you are figuring in, when you execute your metrical pas seul. Consider under what a disadvantage your thinking powers are laboring when you are handicapped by the inexorable demands of our scanty English rhyming vocabulary! You want to say something about the heavenly bodies, and you have a beautiful line ending with the word stars. Were you writing in prose, your imagination, your fancy, your rhetoric, your musical ear for the harmonies of language, would all have full play. But there is your rhyme fastening you by the leg, and you must either reject the line which pleases you, or you must whip your hobbling fancy and all your limping thoughts into the traces which are hitched to one of three or four or half a dozen serviceable words. You cannot make any use of cars, I will suppose; you have no occasion to talk about scars; "the red planet Mars" has been used already; Dibdin has said enough about the gallant tars; what is there left for you but bars? So you give up your trains of thought, capitulate to necessity, and manage to lug in some kind of allusion, in place or out of place, which will allow you to make use of bars. Can there be imagined a more certain process for breaking up all continuity of thought, for taking out all the vigor, all the virility, which belongs to natural prose as the vehicle of strong, graceful, spontaneous thought, than this miserable subjugation of intellect to the-clink of well or ill matched syllables? I think you will smile if I tell you of an idea I have had about teaching the art of writing "poems" to the half-witted children at the Idiot Asylum. The trick of rhyming cannot be more usefully employed than in furnishing a pleasant amusement to the poor feeble-minded children. I should feel that I was well employed in getting up a Primer for the pupils of the Asylum, and other young persons who are incapable of serious thought and connected expression. I would start in the simplest way; thus:—

When darkness veils the evening....
I love to close my weary....

The pupil begins by supplying the missing words, which most children who are able to keep out of fire and water can accomplish after a certain number of trials. When the poet that is to be has got so as to perform this task easily, a skeleton verse, in which two or three words of each line are omitted, is given the child to fill up. By and by the more difficult forms of metre are outlined, until at length a feeble-minded child can make out a sonnet, completely equipped with its four pairs of rhymes in the first section and its three pairs in the second part.

Number Seven interrupted my discourse somewhat abruptly, as is his wont; for we grant him a license, in virtue of his eccentricity, which we should hardly expect to be claimed by a perfectly sound Teacup.

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"That's the way,—that 's the way!" exclaimed he. "It's just the same thing as my plan for teaching drawing."

Some curiosity was shown among The Teacups to know what the queer creature had got into his mind, and Number Five asked him, in her irresistible tones, if he wouldn't oblige us by telling us all about it.

He looked at her a moment without speaking. I suppose he has often been made fun of,—slighted in conversation, taken as a butt for people who thought themselves witty, made to feel as we may suppose a cracked piece of china-ware feels when it is clinked in the company of sound bits of porcelain. I never saw him when he was carelessly dealt with in conversation,—for it would sometimes happen, even at our table,—without recalling some lines of Emerson which always struck me as of wonderful force and almost terrible truthfulness:—

"Alas! that one is born in blight,
Victim of perpetual slight
When thou lookest in his face
Thy heart saith, 'Brother, go thy ways
None shall ask thee what thou doest,
Or care a rush for what thou knowest,
Or listen when thou repliest,
Or remember where thou liest,
Or how thy supper is sodden;'—
And another is born
To make the sun forgotten."

Poor fellow! Number Seven has to bear a good deal in the way of neglect and ridicule, I do not doubt. Happily, he is protected by an amount of belief in himself which shields him from many assailants who would torture a more sensitive nature. But the sweet voice of Number Five and her sincere way of addressing him seemed to touch his feelings. That was the meaning of his momentary silence, in which I saw that his eyes glistened and a faint flush rose on his cheeks. In a moment, however, as soon as he was on his hobby, he was all right, and explained his new and ingenious system as follows:

"A man at a certain distance appears as a dark spot,—nothing more. Good. Anybody, man, woman, or child, can make a dot, say a period, such as we use in writing. Lesson No. 1. Make a dot; that is, draw your man, a mile off, if that is far enough. Now make him come a little nearer, a few rods, say. The dot is an oblong figure now. Good. Let your scholar draw the oblong figure. It is as easy as it is to make a note of admiration. Your man comes nearer, and now some hint of a bulbous enlargement at one end, and perhaps of lateral appendages and a bifurcation, begins to show itself. The pupil sets down with his pencil just what he sees,—no more. So by degrees the man who serves

as model approaches. A bright pupil will learn to get the outline of a human figure in ten lessons, the model coming five hundred feet nearer each time. A dull one may require fifty, the model beginning a mile off, or more, and coming a hundred feet nearer at each move."

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The company were amused by all this, but could not help seeing that there was a certain practical possibility about the scheme. Our two Annexes, as we call then, appeared to be interested in the project, or fancy, or whim, or whatever the older heads might consider it. "I guess I'll try it," said the American Annex. "Quite so," answered the English Annex. Why the first girl "guessed" about her own intentions it is hard to say. What "quite so" referred to it would not be easy to determine. But these two expressions would decide the nationality of our two young ladies if we met them on the top of the great Pyramid.

I was very glad that Number Seven had interrupted me. In fact, it is a good thing once in a while to break in upon the monotony of a steady talker at a dinner-table, tea-table, or any other place of social converse. The best talker is liable to become the most formidable of bores. It is a peculiarity of the bore that he is the last person to find himself out. Many a terebrant I have known who, in that capacity, to borrow a line from Coleridge,

"Was great, nor knew how great he was."

A line, by the way, which, as I have remarked, has in it a germ like that famous "He builded better than he knew" of Emerson.

There was a slight lull in the conversation. The Mistress, who keeps an eye on the course of things, and feared that one of those panic silences was impending, in which everybody wants to say something and does not know just what to say, begged me to go on with my remarks about the "manufacture" of "poetry."

You use the right term, madam, I said. The manufacture of that article has become an extensive and therefore an important branch of industry. One must be an editor, which I am not, or a literary confidant of a wide circle of correspondents, which I am, to have any idea of the enormous output of verse which is characteristic of our time. There are many curious facts connected with this phenomenon. Educated people—yes, and many who are not educated—have discovered that rhymes are not the private property of a few noted writers who, having squatted on that part of the literary domain some twenty or forty or sixty years ago, have, as it were, fenced it in with their touchy, barbed-wire reputations, and have come to regard it and cause it to be regarded as their private property. The discovery having been made that rhyme is not a paddock for this or that race-horse, but a common, where every colt, pony, and donkey can range at will; a vast irruption into that once-privileged inclosure has taken place. The study of the great invasion is interesting.

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Poetry is commonly thought to be the language of emotion. On the contrary, most of what is so called proves the absence of all passionate excitement. It is a cold-blooded, haggard, anxious, worrying hunt after rhymes which can be made serviceable, after images which will be effective, after phrases which are sonorous; all this under limitations which restrict the natural movements of fancy and imagination. There is a secondary excitement in overcoming the difficulties of rhythm and rhyme, no doubt, but this is not the emotional heat excited by the subject of the "poet's" treatment. True poetry, the best of it, is but the ashes of a burnt-out passion. The flame was in the eye and in the cheek, the coals may be still burning in the heart, but when we come to the words it leaves behind it, a little warmth, a cinder or two just glimmering under the dead gray ashes,—that is all we can look for. When it comes to the manufactured article, one is surprised to find how well the metrical artisans have learned to imitate the real thing. They catch all the phrases of the true poet. They imitate his metrical forms as a mimic copies the gait of the person he is representing.

Now I am not going to abuse "these same metre ballad-mongers," for the obvious reason that, as all The Teacups know, I myself belong to the fraternity. I don't think that this reason should hinder my having my say about the ballad-mongering business. For the last thirty years I have been in the habit of receiving a volume of poems or a poem, printed or manuscript—I will not say daily, though I sometimes receive more than one in a day, but at very short intervals. I have been consulted by hundreds of writers of verse as to the merit of their performances, and have often advised the writers to the best of my ability. Of late I have found it impossible to attempt to read critically all the literary productions, in verse and in prose, which have heaped themselves on every exposed surface of my library, like snowdrifts along the railroad tracks,—blocking my literary pathway, so that I can hardly find my daily papers.

What is the meaning of this rush into rhyming of such a multitude of people, of all ages, from the infant phenomenon to the oldest inhabitant?

Many of my young correspondents have told me in so many words, "I want to be famous." Now it is true that of all the short cuts to fame, in time of peace, there is none shorter than the road paved with rhymes. Byron woke up one morning and found himself famous. Still more notably did Rouget de l'Isle fill the air of France, nay, the whole atmosphere of freedom all the world over, with his name wafted on the wings of the Marseillaise, the work of a single night. But if by fame the aspirant means having his name brought before and kept before the public, there is a much cheaper way of acquiring that kind of notoriety. Have your portrait taken as a "Wonderful Cure of a Desperate Disease given up by all the Doctors." You

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will get a fair likeness of yourself and a partial biographical notice, and have the satisfaction, if not of promoting the welfare of the community, at least that of advancing the financial interests of the benefactor whose enterprise has given you your coveted notoriety. If a man wants to be famous, he had much better try the advertising doctor than the terrible editor, whose waste-basket is a maw which is as insatiable as the temporary stomach of Jack the Giant-killer.

"You must not talk so," said Number Five. "I know you don't mean any wrong to the true poets, but you might be thought to hold them cheap, whereas you value the gift in others,—in yourself too, I rather think. There are a great many women,—and some men,—who write in verse from a natural instinct which leads them to that form of expression. If you could peep into the portfolio of all the cultivated women among your acquaintances, you would be surprised, I believe, to see how many of them trust their thoughts and feelings to verse which they never think of publishing, and much of which never meets any eyes but their own. Don't be cruel to the sensitive natures who find a music in the harmonies of rhythm and rhyme which soothes their own souls, if it reaches no farther."

I was glad that Number Five spoke up as she did. Her generous instinct came to the rescue of the poor poets just at the right moment. Not that I meant to deal roughly with them, but the "poets" I have been forced into relation with have impressed me with certain convictions which are not flattering to the fraternity, and if my judgments are not accompanied by my own qualifications, distinctions, and exceptions, they may seem harsh to many readers.

Let me draw a picture which many a young man and woman, and some no longer young, will recognize as the story of their own experiences.

—He is sitting alone with his own thoughts and memories. What is that book he is holding? Something precious, evidently, for it is bound in "tree calf," and there is gilding enough about it for a birthday present. The reader seems to be deeply absorbed in its contents, and at times greatly excited by what he reads; for his face is flushed, his eyes glitter, and—there rolls a large tear down his cheek. Listen to him; he is reading aloud in impassioned tones:

And have I coined my soul in words for naught?
And must I, with the dim, forgotten throng
Of silent ghosts that left no earthly trace
To show they once had breathed this vital air,
Die out, of mortal memories?

His voice is choked by his emotion. “How is it possible,” he says to himself, “that any one can read my ‘Gaspings for Immortality’ without being impressed by their freshness, their passion, their beauty, their originality?” Tears come to his relief freely,—so freely that he has to push the precious volume out of the range of their blistering shower. Six years ago “Gaspings

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for Immortality” was published, advertised, praised by the professionals whose business it is to boost their publishers’ authors. A week and more it was seen on the counters of the booksellers and at the stalls in the railroad stations. Then it disappeared from public view. A few copies still kept their place on the shelves of friends,—presentation copies, of course, as there is no evidence that any were disposed of by sale; and now, one might as well ask for the lost books of Livy as inquire at a bookstore for “Gasping for Immortality.”

The authors of these poems are all round us, men and women, and no one with a fair amount of human sympathy in his disposition would treat them otherwise than tenderly. Perhaps they do not need tender treatment. How do you know that posterity may not resuscitate these seemingly dead poems, and give their author the immortality for which he longed and labored? It is not every poet who is at once appreciated. Some will tell you that the best poets never are. Who can say that you, dear unappreciated brother or sister, are not one of those whom it is left for after times to discover among the wrecks of the past, and hold up to the admiration of the world?

I have not thought it necessary to put in all the interpellations, as the French call them, which broke the course of this somewhat extended series of remarks; but the comments of some of The Teacups helped me to shape certain additional observations, and may seem to the reader as of more significance than what I had been saying.

Number Seven saw nothing but the folly and weakness of the “rhyming cranks,” as he called them. He thought the fellow that I had described as blubbing over his still-born poems would have been better occupied in earning his living in some honest way or other. He knew one chap that published a volume of verses, and let his wife bring up the wood for the fire by which he was writing. A fellow says, “I am a poet!” and he thinks himself different from common folks. He ought to be excused from military service. He might be killed, and the world would lose the inestimable products of his genius. “I believe some of ’em think,” said Number Seven, “that they ought not to be called upon to pay their taxes and their bills for household expenses, like the rest of us.”

“If they would only study and take to heart Horace’s ‘Ars Poetica,’” said the Professor, “it would be a great benefit to them and to the world at large. I would not advise you to follow him too literally, of course, for, as you will see, the changes that have taken place since his time would make some of his precepts useless and some dangerous, but the spirit of them is always instructive. This is the way, somewhat modernized and accompanied by my running commentary, in which he counsels a young poet:

“Don’t try to write poetry, my boy, when you are not in the mood for doing it,—when it goes against the grain. You are a fellow of sense,—you understand all that.

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“If you have written anything which you think well of, show it to Mr. _____, the well-known critic; to “the governor,” as you call him,—your honored father; and to me, your friend.’

“To the critic is well enough, if you like to be overhauled and put out of conceit with yourself,—it may do you good; but I wouldn’t go to ‘the governor’ with my verses, if I were you. For either he will think what you have written is something wonderful, almost as good as he could have written himself,—in fact, he always did believe in hereditary genius,—or he will pooh-pooh the whole rhyming nonsense, and tell you that you had a great deal better stick to your business, and leave all the word-jingling to Mother Goose and her followers.

“‘Show me your verses,’ says Horace. Very good it was in him, and mighty encouraging the first counsel he gives! ‘Keep your poem to yourself for some eight or ten years; you will have time to look it over, to correct it and make it fit to present to the public.’

“‘Much obliged for your advice,’ says the poor poet, thirsting for a draught of fame, and offered a handful of dust. And off he hurries to the printer, to be sure that his poem comes out in the next number of the magazine he writes for.”

“Is not poetry the natural language of lovers?”

It was the Tutor who asked this question, and I thought he looked in the direction of Number Five, as if she might answer his question. But Number Five stirred her tea devotedly; there was a lump of sugar, I suppose, that acted like a piece of marble. So there was a silence while the lump was slowly dissolving, and it was anybody’s chance who saw fit to take up the conversation.

The voice that broke the silence was not the sweet, winsome one we were listening for, but it instantly arrested the attention of the company. It was the grave, manly voice of one used to speaking, and accustomed to be listened to with deference. This was the first time that the company as a whole had heard it, for the speaker was the new-comer who has been repeatedly alluded to,—the one of whom I spoke as “the Counsellor.”

“I think I can tell you something about that,” said the Counsellor. “I suppose you will wonder how a man of my profession can know or interest himself about a question so remote from his arid pursuits. And yet there is hardly one man in a thousand who knows from actual experience a fraction of what I have learned of the lovers’ vocabulary in my professional experience. I have, I am sorry to say, had to take an important part in a great number of divorce cases. These have brought before me scores and hundreds of letters, in which every shade of the great passion has been represented. What has most struck me in these amatory correspondences has been their remarkable

sameness. It seems as if writing love-letters reduced all sorts of people to the same level. I don't remember whether Lord Bacon has left us anything in that line,—unless,

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indeed, he wrote Romeo and Juliet' and the 'Sonnets;' but if he has, I don't believe they differ so very much from those of his valet or his groom to their respective lady-loves. It is always, My darling! my darling! The words of endearment are the only ones the lover wants to employ, and he finds the vocabulary too limited for his vast desires. So his letters are apt to be rather tedious except to the personage to whom they are addressed. As to poetry, it is very common to find it in love-letters, especially in those that have no love in them. The letters of bigamists and polygamists are rich in poetical extracts. Occasionally, an original spurt in rhyme adds variety to an otherwise monotonous performance. I don't think there is much passion in men's poetry addressed to women. I agree with The Dictator that poetry is little more than the ashes of passion; still it may show that the flame has had its sweep where you find it, unless, indeed, it is shoveled in from another man's fireplace."

"What do you say to the love poetry of women?" asked the Professor. "Did ever passion heat words to incandescence as it did those of Sappho?"

The Counsellor turned,—not to Number Five, as he ought to have done, according to my programme, but to the Mistress.

"Madam," he said, "your sex is adorable in many ways, but in the abandon of a genuine love-letter it is incomparable. I have seen a string of women's love-letters, in which the creature enlaced herself about the object of her worship as that South American parasite which clasps the tree to which it has attached itself, begins with a slender succulent network, feeds on the trunk, spreads its fingers out to hold firmly to one branch after another, thickens, hardens, stretches in every direction, following the boughs,—and at length gets strong enough to hold in its murderous arms, high up in air, the stump and shaft of the once sturdy growth that was its support and subsistence."

The Counsellor did not say all this quite so formally as I have set it down here, but in a much easier way. In fact, it is impossible to smooth out a conversation from memory without stiffening it; you can't have a dress shirt look quite right without starching the bosom.

Some of us would have liked to hear more about those letters in the divorce cases, but the Counsellor had to leave the table. He promised to show us some pictures he has of the South American parasite. I have seen them, and I can assure you they are very curious.

The following verses were found in the urn, or sugar-bowl.

CacoethesScribendi.



If all the trees in all the woods were men,
And each and every blade of grass a pen;
If every leaf on every shrub and tree
Turned to a sheet of foolscap; every sea
Were changed to ink, and all earth's living tribes
Had nothing else to do but act as scribes,

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And for ten thousand ages, day and night,
The human race should write, and write, and write,
Till all the pens and paper were used up,
And the huge inkstand was an empty cup,
Still would the scribblers clustered round its brim
Call for more pens, more paper, and more ink.

V

“Dolce, ma non troppo dolce,” said the Professor to the Mistress, who was sweetening his tea. She always sweetens his and mine for us. He has been attending a series of concerts, and borrowed the form of the directions to the orchestra. “Sweet, but not too sweet,” he said, translating the Italian for the benefit of any of the company who might not be linguists or musical experts.

“Do you go to those musical hullabaloo?” called out Number Seven. There was something very much like rudeness in this question and the tone in which it was asked. But we are used to the outbursts, and extravagances, and oddities of Number Seven, and do not take offence at his rough speeches as we should if any other of the company uttered them.

“If you mean the concerts that have been going on this season, yes, I do,” said the Professor, in a bland, good-humored way.

“And do you take real pleasure in the din of all those screeching and banging and growling instruments?”

“Yes,” he answered, modestly, “I enjoy the brouhaha, if you choose to consider it such, of all this quarrelsome menagerie of noise-making machines, brought into order and harmony by the presiding genius, the leader, who has made a happy family of these snarling stringed instruments and whining wind instruments, so that although

“Linguae centum sent, oraque centum,

“notwithstanding there are a hundred vibrating tongues and a hundred bellowing mouths, their one grand blended and harmonized uproar sets all my fibres tingling with a not displeasing tremor.”

“Do you understand it? Do you take any idea from it? Do you know what it all means?” said Number Seven.

The Professor was long-suffering under this series of somewhat peremptory questions. He replied very placidly, "I am afraid I have but a superficial outside acquaintance with the secrets, the unfathomable mysteries, of music. I can no more conceive of the working conditions of the great composer,

"Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony,'

"than a child of three years can follow the reasonings of Newton's 'Principia.' I do not even pretend that I can appreciate the work of a great master as a born and trained musician does. Still, I do love a great crash of harmonies, and the oftener I listen to these musical tempests the higher my soul seems to ride upon them, as the wild fowl I see through my window soar more freely and fearlessly the fiercer the storm with which they battle."

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"That's all very well," said Number Seven, "but I wish we could get the old-time music back again. You ought to have heard,—no, I won't mention her, dead, poor girl,—dead and singing with the saints in heaven,—but the S_____ girls. If you could have heard them as I did when I was a boy, you would have cried, as we all used to. Do you cry at those great musical smashes? How can you cry when you don't know what it is all about? We used to think the words meant something,—we fancied that Burns and Moore said some things very prettily. I suppose you've outgrown all that."

No one can handle Number Seven in one of his tantrums half so well as Number Five can do it. She can pick out what threads of sense may be wound off from the tangle of his ideas when they are crowded and confused, as they are apt to be at times. She can soften the occasional expression of half-concealed ridicule with which the poor old fellow's sallies are liable to be welcomed—or unwelcomed. She knows that the edge of a broken teacup may be sharper, very possibly, than that of a philosopher's jackknife. A mind a little off its balance, one which has a slightly squinting brain as its organ; will often prove fertile in suggestions. Vulgar, cynical, contemptuous listeners fly at all its weaknesses, and please themselves with making light of its often futile ingenuities, when a wiser audience would gladly accept a hint which perhaps could be developed in some profitable direction, or so interpret an erratic thought that it should prove good sense in disguise. That is the way Number Five was in the habit of dealing with the explosions of Number Seven. Do you think she did not see the ridiculous element in a silly speech, or the absurdity of an outrageously extravagant assertion? Then you never heard her laugh when she could give way to her sense of the ludicrous without wounding the feelings of any other person. But her kind heart never would forget itself, and so Number Seven had a champion who was always ready to see that his flashes of intelligence, fitful as they were, and liable to be streaked with half-crazy fancies, always found one willing recipient of what light there was in them.

Number Five, I have found, is a true lover of music, and has a right to claim a real knowledge of its higher and deeper mysteries. But she accepted very cordially what our light-headed companion said about the songs he used to listen to.

"There is no doubt," she remarked, "that the tears which used to be shed over 'Oft in the sully night,' or 'Auld Robin Gray,' or 'A place in thy memory, dearest,' were honest tears, coming from the true sources of emotion. There was no affectation about them; those songs came home to the sensibilities of young people,—of all who had any sensibilities to be acted upon. And on the other hand, there is a great amount of affectation in the apparent enthusiasm of many persons in admiring and applauding music of which they have

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not the least real appreciation. They do not know whether it is good or bad, the work of a first-rate or a fifth-rate composer; whether there are coherent elements in it, or whether it is nothing more than 'a concourse of sweet sounds' with no organic connections. One must be educated, no doubt, to understand the more complex and difficult kinds of musical composition. Go to the great concerts where you know that the music is good, and that you ought to like it whether you do or not. Take a music-bath once or twice a week for a few seasons, and you will find that it is to the soul what the water-bath is to the body. I wouldn't trouble myself about the affectations of people who go to this or that series of concerts chiefly because it is fashionable. Some of these people whom we think so silly and hold so cheap will perhaps find, sooner or later, that they have a dormant faculty which is at last waking up,—and that they who came because others came, and began by staring at the audience, are listening with a newly found delight. Every one of us has a harp under bodice or waistcoat, and if it can only once get properly strung and tuned it will respond to all outside harmonies."

The Professor has some ideas about music, which I believe he has given to the world in one form or another; but the world is growing old and forgetful, and needs to be reminded now and then of what one has formerly told it.

"I have had glimpses," the Professor said, "of the conditions into which music is capable of bringing a sensitive nature. Glimpses, I say, because I cannot pretend that I am capable of sounding all the depths or reaching all the heights to which music may transport our mortal consciousness. Let me remind you of a curious fact with reference to the seat of the musical sense. Far down below the great masses of thinking marrow and its secondary agents, just as the brain is about to merge in the spinal cord, the roots of the nerve of hearing spread their white filaments out into the sentient matter, where they report what the external organs of hearing tell them. This sentient matter is in remote connection only with the mental organs, far more remote than the centres of the sense of vision and that of smell. In a word, the musical faculty might be said to have a little brain of its own. It has a special world and a private language all to itself. How can one explain its significance to those whose musical faculties are in a rudimentary state of development, or who have never had them trained? Can you describe in intelligible language the smell of a rose as compared with that of a violet? No,—music can be translated only by music. Just so far as it suggests worded thought, it falls short of its highest office. Pure emotional movements of the spiritual nature,—that is what I ask of music. Music will be the universal language,—the Volapuk of spiritual being."

"Angels sit down with their harps and play at each other, I suppose," said Number Seven. "Must have an atmosphere up there if they have harps, or they wouldn't get any music. Wonder if angels breathe like mortals? If they do, they must have lungs and air

passages, of course. Think of an angel with the influenza, and nothing but a cloud for a handkerchief!"

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—This is a good instance of the way in which Number Seven's squinting brain works. You will now and then meet just such brains in heads you know very well. Their owners are much given to asking unanswerable questions. A physicist may settle it for us whether there is an atmosphere about a planet or not, but it takes a brain with an extra fissure in it to ask these unexpected questions,—questions which the natural philosopher cannot answer, and which the theologian never thinks of asking.

The company at our table do not keep always in the same places. The first thing I noticed, the other evening, was that the Tutor was sitting between the two Annexes, and the Counsellor was next to Number Five. Something ought to come of this arrangement. One of those two young ladies must certainly captivate and perhaps capture the Tutor. They are just the age to be falling in love and to be fallen in love with. The Tutor is good looking, intellectual, suspected of writing poetry, but a little shy, it appears to me. I am glad to see him between the two girls. If there were only one, she might be shy too, and then there would be less chance for a romance such as I am on the lookout for; but these young persons lend courage to each other, and between them, if he does not wake up like Cymon at the sight of Iphigenia, I shall be disappointed. As for the Counsellor and Number Five, they will soon find each other out. Yes, it is all pretty clear in my mind,—except that there is always an x in a problem where sentiments are involved. No, not so clear about the Tutor. Predestined, I venture my guess, to one or the other, but to which? I will suspend my opinion for the present.

I have found out that the Counsellor is a childless widower. I am told that the Tutor is unmarried, and so far as known not engaged. There is no use in denying it,—a company without the possibility of a love-match between two of its circle is like a champagne bottle with the cork out for some hours as compared to one with its pop yet in reserve. However, if there should be any love-making, it need not break up our conversations. Most of it will be carried on away from our tea-table.

Some of us have been attending certain lectures on Egypt and its antiquities. I have never been on the Nile. If in any future state there shall be vacations in which we may have liberty to revisit our old home, equipped with a complete brand-new set of mortal senses as our travelling outfit, I think one of the first places I should go to, after my birthplace, the old gambrel-roofed house,—the place where it stood, rather,—would be that mighty, awe-inspiring river. I do not suppose we shall ever know half of what we owe to the wise and wonderful people who confront us with the overpowering monuments of a past which flows out of the unfathomable darkness as the great river streams from sources even as yet but imperfectly explored.

I have thought a good deal about Egypt, lately, with reference to our historical monuments. How did the great unknown mastery who fixed the two leading forms of their monumental records arrive at those admirable and eternal types, the pyramid and the obelisk? How did they get their model of the pyramid?

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Here is an hour-glass, not inappropriately filled with sand from the great Egyptian desert. I turn it, and watch the sand as it accumulates in the lower half of the glass. How symmetrically, how beautifully, how inevitably, the little particles pile up the cone, which is ever building and unbuilding itself, always aiming at the stability which is found only at a certain fixed angle! The Egyptian children playing in the sand must have noticed this as they let the grains fall from their hands, and the sloping sides of the miniature pyramid must have been among the familiar sights to the little boys and girls for whom the sand furnished their earliest playthings. Nature taught her children through the working of the laws of gravitation how to build so that her forces should act in harmony with art, to preserve the integrity of a structure meant to reach a far-off posterity. The pyramid is only the cone in which Nature arranges her heaped and sliding fragments; the cone with flattened Surfaces, as it is prefigured in certain well-known crystalline forms. The obelisk is from another of Nature's patterns; it is only a gigantic acicular crystal.

The Egyptians knew what a monument should be, simple, noble, durable. It seems to me that we Americans might take a lesson from those early architects. Our cemeteries are crowded with monuments which are very far from simple, anything but noble, and stand a small chance of being permanent. The pyramid is rarely seen, perhaps because it takes up so much room; and when built on a small scale seems insignificant as we think of it, dwarfed by the vast structures of antiquity. The obelisk is very common, and when in just proportions and of respectable dimensions is unobjectionable.

But the gigantic obelisks like that on Bunker Hill, and especially the Washington monument at the national capital, are open to critical animadversion. Let us contrast the last mentioned of these great piles with the obelisk as the Egyptian conceived and executed it. The new Pharaoh ordered a memorial of some important personage or event. In the first place, a mighty stone was dislodged from its connections, and lifted, unbroken, from the quarry. This was a feat from which our modern stone-workers shrink dismayed. The Egyptians appear to have handled these huge monoliths as our artisans handle hearthstones and doorsteps, for the land actually bristled with such giant columns. They were shaped and finished as nicely as if they were breastpins for the Titans to wear, and on their polished surfaces were engraved in imperishable characters the records they were erected to preserve.

Europe and America borrow these noble productions of African art and power, and find them hard enough to handle after they have succeeded in transporting them to Rome, or London, or New York. Their simplicity, grandeur, imperishability, speaking symbolism, shame all the pretentious and fragile works of human art around them. The obelisk has no joints for the destructive agencies of nature to attack; the pyramid has no masses hanging in unstable equilibrium, and threatening to fall by their own weight in the course of a thousand or two years.

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America says the Father of his Country must have a monument worthy of his exalted place in history. What shall it be? A temple such as Athens might have been proud to rear upon her Acropolis? An obelisk such as Thebes might have pointed out with pride to the strangers who found admission through her hundred gates? After long meditation and the rejection of the hybrid monstrosities with which the nation was menaced, an obelisk is at last decided upon. How can it be made grand and dignified enough to be equal to the office assigned it? We dare not attempt to carve a single stone from the living rock,—all our modern appliances fail to make the task as easy to us as it seems to have been to the early Egyptians. No artistic skill is required in giving a four-square tapering figure to a stone column. If we cannot shape a solid obelisk of the proper dimensions, we can build one of separate blocks. How can we give it the distinction we demand for it? The nation which can brag that it has “the biggest show on earth” cannot boast a great deal in the way of architecture, but it can do one thing,—it can build an obelisk that shall be taller than any structure now standing which the hand of man has raised. Build an obelisk! How different the idea of such a structure from that of the unbroken, unjointed prismatic shaft, one perfect whole, as complete in itself, as fitly shaped and consolidated to defy the elements, as the towering palm or the tapering pine! Well, we had the satisfaction for a time of claiming the tallest structure in the world; and now that the new Tower of Babel which has sprung up in Paris has killed that pretention, I think we shall feel and speak more modestly about our stone hyperbole, our materialization of the American love of the superlative. We have the higher civilization among us, and we must try to keep down the forth-putting instincts of the lower. We do not want to see our national monument placarded as “the greatest show on earth,”—perhaps it is well that it is taken down from that bad eminence.

I do not think that this speech of mine was very well received. It appeared to jar somewhat on the nerves of the American Annex. There was a smile on the lips of the other Annex,—the English girl,—which she tried to keep quiet, but it was too plain that she enjoyed my diatribe.

It must be remembered that I and the other Teacups, in common with the rest of our fellow-citizens, have had our sensibilities greatly worked upon, our patriotism chilled, our local pride outraged, by the monstrosities which have been allowed to deform our beautiful public grounds. We have to be very careful in conducting a visitor, say from his marble-fronted hotel to the City Hall.—Keep pretty straight along after entering the Garden,—you will not care to inspect the little figure of the military gentleman to your right.—Yes, the Cochituate water is drinkable, but I think I would not turn aside to visit that small fabric which makes believe it is a temple, and is a weak-eyed fountain feebly weeping over its own insignificance. About that other stone misfortune, cruelly reminding us of the “Boston Massacre,” we will not discourse; it is not imposing, and is rarely spoken of.

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What a mortification to the inhabitants of a city with some hereditary and contemporary claims to cultivation; which has noble edifices, grand libraries, educational institutions of the highest grade, an art-gallery filled with the finest models and rich in paintings and statuary,—a stately city that stretches both arms across the Charles to clasp the hands of Harvard, her twin-sister, each lending lustre to the other like double stars,—what a pity that she should be so disfigured by crude attempts to adorn her and commemorate her past that her most loving children blush for her artificial deformities amidst the wealth of her natural beauties! One hardly knows which to groan over most sadly,—the tearing down of old monuments, the shelling of the Parthenon, the overthrow of the pillared temples of Rome, and in a humbler way the destruction of the old Hancock house, or the erection of monuments which are to be a perpetual eyesore to ourselves and our descendants.

We got talking on the subject of realism, of which so much has been said of late.

It seems to me, I said, that the great additions which have been made by realism to the territory of literature consist largely in swampy, malarious, ill-smelling patches of soil which had previously been left to reptiles and vermin. It is perfectly easy to be original by violating the laws of decency and the canons of good taste. The general consent of civilized people was supposed to have banished certain subjects from the conversation of well-bred people and the pages of respectable literature. There is no subject, or hardly any, which may not be treated of at the proper time, in the proper place, by the fitting person, for the right kind of listener or reader. But when the poet or the storyteller invades the province of the man of science, he is on dangerous ground. I need say nothing of the blunders he is pretty sure to make. The imaginative writer is after effects. The scientific man is after truth. Science is decent, modest; does not try to startle, but to instruct. The same scenes and objects which outrage every sense of delicacy in the story teller's highly colored paragraphs can be read without giving offence in the chaste language of the physiologist or the physician.

There is a very celebrated novel, "Madame Bovary," the work of M. Flaubert, which is noted for having been the subject of prosecution as an immoral work. That it has a serious lesson there is no doubt, if one will drink down to the bottom of the cup. But the honey of sensuous description is spread so deeply over the surface of the goblet that a large proportion of its readers never think of its holding anything else. All the phases of unhallowed passion are described in full detail. That is what the book is bought and read for, by the great majority of its purchasers, as all but simpletons very well know. That is what makes it sell and brought it into the courts of justice. This book is famous

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for its realism; in fact, it is recognized as one of the earliest and most brilliant examples of that modern style of novel which, beginning where Balzac left off, attempted to do for literature what the photograph has done for art. For those who take the trouble to drink out of the cup below the rim of honey, there is a scene where realism is carried to its extreme,—surpassed in horror by no writer, unless it be the one whose name must be looked for at the bottom of the alphabet, as if its natural place were as low down in the dregs of realism as it could find itself. This is the death-bed scene, where Madame Bovary expires in convulsions. The author must have visited the hospitals for the purpose of watching the terrible agonies he was to depict, tramping from one bed to another until he reached the one where the cries and contortions were the most frightful. Such a scene he has reproduced. No hospital physician would have pictured the straggle in such colors. In the same way, that other realist, M. Zola, has painted a patient suffering from delirium tremens, the disease known to common speech as “the horrors.” In describing this case he does all that language can do to make it more horrible than the reality. He gives us, not realism, but super-realism, if such a term does not contradict itself.

In this matter of the literal reproduction of sights and scenes which our natural instinct and our better informed taste and judgment teach us to avoid, art has been far in advance of literature. It is three hundred years since Joseph Ribera, more commonly known as Spagnoletto, was born in the province Valencia, in Spain. We had the misfortune of seeing a painting of his in a collection belonging to one of the French princes, and exhibited at the Art Museum. It was that of a man performing upon himself the operation known to the Japanese as harakiri. Many persons who looked upon this revolting picture will never get rid of its remembrance, and will regret the day when their eyes fell upon it. I should share the offence of the painter if I ventured to describe it. Ribera was fond of depicting just such odious and frightful subjects. “Saint Lawrence writhing on his gridiron, Saint Sebastian full of arrows, were equally a source of delight to him. Even in subjects which had no such elements of horror he finds the materials for the delectation of his ferocious pencil; he makes up for the defect by rendering with a brutal realism deformity and ugliness.”

The first great mistake made by the ultra-realists; like Flaubert and Zola, is, as I have said, their ignoring the line of distinction between imaginative art and science. We can find realism enough in books of anatomy, surgery, and medicine. In studying the human figure, we want to see it clothed with its natural integuments. It is well for the artist to study the *ecorche* in the dissecting-room, but we do not want the Apollo or the Venus to leave their skins behind them when they go into the gallery for

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exhibition. Lancisi's figures show us how the great statues look when divested of their natural covering. It is instructive, but useful chiefly as a means to aid in the true artistic reproduction of nature. When the hospitals are invaded by the novelist, he should learn something from the physician as well as from the patients. Science delineates in monochrome. She never uses high tints and strontian lights to astonish lookers-on. Such scenes as Flaubert and Zola describe would be reproduced in their essential characters, but not dressed up in picturesque phrases. That is the first stumbling-block in the way of the reader of such realistic stories as those to which I have referred. There are subjects which must be investigated by scientific men which most educated persons would be glad to know nothing about. When a realistic writer like Zola surprises his reader into a kind of knowledge he never thought of wishing for, he sometimes harms him more than he has any idea of doing. He wants to produce a sensation, and he leaves a permanent disgust not to be got rid of. Who does not remember odious images that can never be washed out from the consciousness which they have stained? A man's vocabulary is terribly retentive of evil words, and the images they present cling to his memory and will not loose their hold. One who has had the mischance to soil his mind by reading certain poems of Swift will never cleanse it to its original whiteness. Expressions and thoughts of a certain character stain the fibre of the thinking organ, and in some degree affect the hue of every idea that passes through the discolored tissues.

This is the gravest accusation to bring against realism, old or recent, whether in the brutal paintings of Spagnoletto or in the unclean revelations of Zola. Leave the description of the drains and cesspools to the hygienic specialist, the painful facts of disease to the physician, the details of the laundry to the washerwoman. If we are to have realism in its tedious descriptions of unimportant particulars, let it be of particulars which do not excite disgust. Such is the description of the vegetables in Zola's "Ventre de Paris," where, if one wishes to see the apotheosis of turnips, beets, and cabbages, he can find them glorified as supremely as if they had been symbols of so many deities; their forms, their colors, their expression, worked upon until they seem as if they were made to be looked at and worshipped rather than to be boiled and eaten.

I am pleased to find a French critic of M. Flaubert expressing ideas with which many of my own entirely coincide. "The great mistake of the realists," he says, "is that they profess to tell the truth because they tell everything. This puerile hunting after details, this cold and cynical inventory of all the wretched conditions in the midst of which poor humanity vegetates, not only do not help us to understand it better, but, on the contrary, the effect on the spectators is a kind of dazzled confusion mingled with fatigue and disgust. The material truthfulness to which the school of M. Flaubert more especially pretends misses its aim in going beyond it. Truth is lost in its own excess."

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I return to my thoughts on the relations of imaginative art in all its forms with science. The subject which in the hands of the scientific student is handled decorously,—reverently, we might almost say,—becomes repulsive, shameful, and debasing in the unscrupulous manipulations of the low-bred man of letters.

I confess that I am a little jealous of certain tendencies in our own American literature, which led one of the severest and most outspoken of our satirical fellow-countrymen, no longer living to be called to account for it, to say; in a moment of bitterness, that the mission of America was to vulgarize mankind. I myself have sometimes wondered at the pleasure some Old World critics have professed to find in the most lawless freaks of New World literature. I have questioned whether their delight was not like that of the Spartans in the drunken antics of their Helots. But I suppose I belong to another age, and must not attempt to judge the present by my old-fashioned standards.

The company listened very civilly to these remarks, whether they agreed with them or not. I am not sure that I want all the young people to think just as I do in matters of critical judgment. New wine does not go well into old bottles, but if an old cask has held good wine, it may improve a crude juice to stand awhile upon the lees of that which once filled it.

I thought the company had had about enough of this disquisition. They listened very decorously, and the Professor, who agrees very well with me, as I happen to know, in my views on this business of realism, thanked me for giving them the benefit of my opinion.

The silence that followed was broken by Number Seven's suddenly exclaiming,—

"I should like to boss creation for a week!"

This expression was an outbreak suggested by some train of thought which Number Seven had been following while I was discoursing. I do not think one of the company looked as if he or she were shocked by it as an irreligious or even profane speech. It is a better way always, in dealing with one of those squinting brains, to let it follow out its own thought. It will keep to it for a while; then it will quit the rail, so to speak, and run to any side-track which may present itself.

"What is the first thing you would do?" asked Number Five in a pleasant, easy way.

"The first thing? Pick out a few thousand of the best specimens of the best races, and drown the rest like so many blind puppies."

"Why," said she, "that was tried once, and does not seem to have worked very well."

"Very likely. You mean Noah's flood, I suppose. More people nowadays, and a better lot to pick from than Noah had."

“Do tell us whom you would take with you,” said Number Five.

“You, if you would go,” he answered, and I thought I saw a slight flush on his cheek.

“But I didn’t say that I should go aboard the new ark myself. I am not sure that I should. No, I am pretty sure that I shouldn’t. I don’t believe, on the whole, it would pay me to save myself. I ain’t of much account. But I could pick out some that were.”

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And just now he was saying that he should like to boss the universe! All this has nothing very wonderful about it. Every one of us is subject to alternations of overvaluation and undervaluation of ourselves. Do you not remember soliloquies something like this? "Was there ever such a senseless, stupid creature as I am? How have I managed to keep so long out of the idiot asylum? Undertook to write a poem, and stuck fast at the first verse. Had a call from a friend who had just been round the world. Did n't ask him one word about what he had seen or heard, but gave him full details of my private history, I having never been off my own hearth-rug for more than an hour or two at a time, while he was circumnavigating and circumrailing the globe. Yes, if anybody can claim the title, I am certainly the prize idiot." I am afraid that we all say such things as this to ourselves at times. Do we not use more emphatic words than these in our self-depreciation? I cannot say how it is with others, but my vocabulary of self-reproach and humiliation is so rich in energetic expressions that I should be sorry to have an interviewer present at an outburst of one of its raging geysers, its savage soliloquies. A man is a kind of inverted thermometer, the bulb uppermost, and the column of self-valuation is all the time going up and down. Number Seven is very much like other people in this respect,—very much like you and me.

This train of reflections must not carry me away from Number Seven.

"If I can't get a chance to boss this planet for a week or so," he began again, "I think I could write its history,—yes, the history of the world, in less compass than any one who has tried it so far."

"You know Sir Walter Raleigh's 'History of the World,' of course?" said the Professor.

"More or less,—more or less," said Number Seven prudently. "But I don't care who has written it before me. I will agree to write the story of two worlds, this and the next, in such a compact way that you can commit them both to memory in less time than you can learn the answer to the first question in the Catechism."

What he had got into his head we could not guess, but there was no little curiosity to discover the particular bee which was buzzing in his bonnet. He evidently enjoyed our curiosity, and meant to keep us waiting awhile before revealing the great secret.

"How many words do you think I shall want?"

It is a formula, I suppose, I said, and I will grant you a hundred words.

"Twenty," said the Professor. "That was more than the wise men of Greece wanted for their grand utterances."

The two Annexes whispered together, and the American Annex gave their joint result. One thousand was the number they had fixed on. They were used to hearing lectures,

and could hardly conceive that any subject could be treated without taking up a good part of an hour.

“Less than ten,” said Number Five. “If there are to be more than ten, I don’t believe that Number Seven would think the surprise would be up to our expectations.”

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"Guess as much as you like," said Number Seven.

"The answer will keep. I don't mean to say what it is until we are ready to leave the table." He took a blank card from his pocket-book, wrote something on it, or appeared, at any rate, to write, and handed it, face down, to the Mistress. What was on the card will be found near the end of this paper. I wonder if anybody will be curious enough to look further along to find out what it was before she reads the next paragraph?

In the mean time there is a train of thought suggested by Number Seven and his whims. If you want to know how to account for yourself, study the characters of your relations. All of our brains squint more or less. There is not one in a hundred, certainly, that does not sometimes see things distorted by double refraction, out of plumb or out of focus, or with colors which do not belong to it, or in some way betraying that the two halves of the brain are not acting in harmony with each other. You wonder at the eccentricities of this or that connection of your own. Watch yourself, and you will find impulses which, but for the restraints you put upon them, would make you do the same foolish things which you laugh at in that cousin of yours. I once lived in the same house with the near relative of a very distinguished person, whose name is still honored and revered among us. His brain was an active one, like that of his famous relative, but it was full of random ideas, unconnected trains of thought, whims, crotchets, erratic suggestions. Knowing him, I could interpret the mental characteristics of the whole family connection in the light of its exaggerated peculiarities as exhibited in my odd fellow-boarder. Squinting brains are a great deal more common than we should at first sight believe. Here is a great book, a solid octavo of five hundred pages, full of the vagaries of this class of organizations. I hope to refer to this work hereafter, but just now I will only say that, after reading till one is tired the strange fancies of the squarers of the circle, the inventors of perpetual motion, and the rest of the moonstruck dreamers, most persons will confess to themselves that they have had notions as wild, conceptions as extravagant, theories as baseless, as the least rational of those which are here recorded.

Some day I want to talk about my library. It is such a curious collection of old and new books, such a mosaic of learning and fancies and follies, that a glance over it would interest the company. Perhaps I may hereafter give you a talk about books, but while I am saying a few passing words upon the subject the greatest bibliographical event that ever happened in the book-market of the New World is taking place under our eyes. Here is Mr. Bernard Quaritch just come from his well-known habitat, No. 15 Piccadilly, with such a collection of rare, beautiful, and somewhat expensive volumes as the Western Continent never saw before on the shelves of a bibliopole.

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We bookworms are all of us now and then betrayed into an extravagance. The keen tradesmen who tempt us are like the fishermen who dangle a minnow, a frog, or a worm before the perch or pickerel who may be on the lookout for his breakfast. But Mr. Quaritch comes among us like that formidable angler of whom it is said,

His hook he baited with a dragon's tail,
And sat upon a rock and bobbed for whale.

The two catalogues which herald his coming are themselves interesting literary documents. One can go out with a few shillings in his pocket, and venture among the books of the first of these catalogues without being ashamed to show himself with no larger furnishing of the means for indulging his tastes,—he will find books enough at comparatively modest prices. But if one feels very rich, so rich that it requires a good deal to frighten him, let him take the other catalogue and see how many books he proposes to add to his library at the prices affixed. Here is a Latin Psalter with the Canticles, from the press of Fust and Schoeffer, the second book issued from their press, the second book printed with a date, that date being 1459. There are only eight copies of this work known to exist; you can have one of them, if so disposed, and if you have change enough in your pocket. Twenty-six thousand two hundred and fifty dollars will make you the happy owner of this precious volume. If this is more than you want to pay, you can have the Gold Gospels of Henry VIII., on purple vellum, for about half the money. There are pages on pages of titles of works any one of which would be a snug little property if turned into money at its catalogue price.

Why will not our multimillionaires look over this catalogue of Mr. Quaritch, and detain some of its treasures on this side of the Atlantic for some of our public libraries? We decant the choicest wines of Europe into our cellars; we ought to be always decanting the precious treasures of her libraries and galleries into our own, as we have opportunity and means. As to the means, there are so many rich people who hardly know what to do with their money that it is well to suggest to them any new useful end to which their superfluity may contribute. I am not in alliance with Mr. Quaritch; in fact, I am afraid of him, for if I stayed a single hour in his library, where I never was but once, and then for fifteen minutes only, I should leave it so much poorer than I entered it that I should be reminded of the picture in the titlepage of Fuller's 'Historie of the Holy Warre,' "We went out full. We returned empty."

—After the teacups were all emptied, the card containing Number Seven's abridged history of two worlds, this and the next, was handed round.

This was all it held:

After all had looked at it, it was passed back to me. "Let The Dictator interpret it," they all said.

This is what I announced as my interpretation:



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Two worlds, the higher and the lower, separated by the thinnest of partitions. The lower world is that of questions; the upper world is that of answers. Endless doubt and unrest here below; wondering, admiring, adoring certainty above.—Am I not right?

“You are right,” answered Number Seven solemnly. “That is my revelation.”

The following poem was found in the sugar-bowl.

I read it to the company. There was much whispering and there were many conjectures as to its authorship, but every Teacup looked innocent, and we separated each with his or her private conviction. I had mine, but I will not mention it.

Therose and the fern.

Lady, life's sweetest lesson wouldst thou learn,
Come thou with me to Love's enchanted bower:
High overhead the trellised roses burn;
Beneath thy feet behold the feathery fern,
A leaf without a flower.

What though the rose leaves fall? They still are sweet,
And have been lovely in their beauteous prime,
While the bare frond seems ever to repeat,
“For us no bud, no blossom, wakes to greet
The joyous flowering time!”

Heed thou the lesson. Life has leaves to tread
And flowers to cherish; summer round thee glows;
Wait not till autumn's fading robes are shed,
But while its petals still are burning red
Gather life's full-blown rose!

VI

Of course the reading of the poem at the end of the last paper has left a deep impression. I strongly suspect that something very much like love-making is going on at our table. A peep under the lid of the sugar-bowl has shown me that there is another poem ready for the company. That receptacle is looked upon with an almost tremulous excitement by more than one of The Teacups. The two Annexes turn towards the mystic urn as if the lots which were to determine their destiny were shut up in it. Number Five, quieter, and not betraying more curiosity than belongs to the sex at all ages, glances at the sugarbowl now and then; looking so like a clairvoyant, that sometimes I cannot help thinking she must be one. There is a sly look about that young Doctor's eyes, which might imply that he knows something about what the silver vessel



holds, or is going to hold. The Tutor naturally falls under suspicion, as he is known to have written and published poems. I suppose the Professor and myself have hardly been suspected of writing love-poems; but there is no telling,—there is no telling. Why may not some one of the lady Teacups have played the part of a masculine lover? George Sand, George Eliot, Charles Egbert Craddock, made pretty good men in print. The authoress of “Jane Eyre” was taken for a man by many persons. Can Number Five be masquerading in verse? Or is one of the two Annexes the make believe lover?

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Or did these girls lay their heads together, and send the poem we had at our last sitting to puzzle the company? It is certain that the Mistress did not write the poem. It is evident that Number Seven, who is so severe in his talk about rhymesters, would not, if he could, make such a fool of himself as to set up for a “poet.” Why should not the Counsellor fall in love and write verses? A good many lawyers have been “poets.”

Perhaps the next poem, which may be looked for in its proper place, may help us to form a judgment. We may have several verse-writers among us, and if so there will be a good opportunity for the exercise of judgment in distributing their productions among the legitimate claimants. In the mean time, we must not let the love-making and the song-writing interfere with the more serious matters which these papers are expected to contain.

Number Seven’s compendious and comprehensive symbolism proved suggestive, as his whimsical notions often do. It always pleases me to take some hint from anything he says when I can, and carry it out in a direction not unlike that of his own remark. I reminded the company of his enigmatical symbol.

You can divide mankind in the same way, I said. Two words, each of two letters, will serve to distinguish two classes of human beings who constitute the principal divisions of mankind. Can any of you tell what those two words are?

“Give me five letters,” cried Number Seven, “and I can solve your problem! F-o-o-l-s,—those five letters will give you the first and largest half. For the other fraction”—

Oh, but, said I, I restrict you absolutely to two letters. If you are going to take five, you may as well take twenty or a hundred.

After a few attempts, the company gave it up. The nearest approach to the correct answer was Number Five’s guess of Oh and Ah: Oh signifying eternal striving after an ideal, which belongs to one kind of nature; and Ah the satisfaction of the other kind of nature, which rests at ease in what it has attained.

Good! I said to Number Five, but not the answer I am after. The great division between human beings is into the Ifs and the Ases.

“Is the last word to be spelt with one or two s’s?” asked the young Doctor.

The company laughed feebly at this question. I answered it soberly. With one s. There are more foolish people among the Ifs than there are among the Ases.

The company looked puzzled, and asked for an explanation.



This is the meaning of those two words as I interpret them: If it were,—if it might be,—if it could be,—if it had been. One portion of mankind go through life always regretting, always whining, always imagining. These are the people whose backbones remain cartilaginous all their lives long, as do those of certain other vertebrate animals,—the sturgeons, for instance. A good many poets must be classed with this group of vertebrates.

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As it is,—this is the way in which the other class of people look at the conditions in which they find themselves. They may be optimists or pessimists, they are very largely optimists,—but, taking things just as they find them, they adjust the facts to their wishes if they can; and if they cannot, then they adjust themselves to the facts. I venture to say that if one should count the Ifs and the Ases in the conversation of his acquaintances, he would find the more able and important persons among them—statesmen, generals, men of business—among the Ases, and the majority of the conspicuous failures among the Ifs. I don't know but this would be as good a test as that of Gideon,—lapping the water or taking it up in the hand. I have a poetical friend whose conversation is starred as thick with ifs as a boiled ham is with cloves. But another friend of mine, a business man, whom I trust in making my investments, would not let me meddle with a certain stock which I fancied, because, as he said, "there are too many ifs in it. As it looks now, I would n't touch it."

I noticed, the other evening, that some private conversation was going on between the Counsellor and the two Annexes. There was a mischievous look about the little group, and I thought they were hatching some plot among them. I did not hear what the English Annex said, but the American girl's voice was sharper, and I overheard what sounded to me like, "It is time to stir up that young Doctor." The Counsellor looked very knowing, and said that he would find a chance before long. I was rather amused to see how readily he entered into the project of the young people. The fact is, the Counsellor is young for his time of life; for he already betrays some signs of the change referred to in that once familiar street song, which my friend, the great American surgeon, inquired for at the music-shops under the title, as he got it from the Italian minstrel,

"Silva tredi mondi goo."

I saw, soon after this, that the Counsellor was watching his chance to "stir up the young Doctor."

It does not follow, because our young Doctor's bald spot is slower in coming than he could have wished, that he has not had time to form many sound conclusions in the calling to which he has devoted himself Vesalius, the father of modern descriptive anatomy, published his great work on that subject before he was thirty. Bichat, the great anatomist and physiologist, who died near the beginning of this century, published his treatise, which made a revolution in anatomy and pathology, at about the same age; dying soon after he had reached the age of thirty. So, possibly the Counsellor may find that he has "stirred up" a young man who, can take care of his own head, in case of aggressive movements in its direction.

"Well, Doctor," the Counsellor began, "how are stocks in the measles market about these times? Any corner in bronchitis? Any syndicate in the vaccination business?" All this playfully.

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"I can't say how it is with other people's patients; most of my families are doing very well without my help, at this time."

"Do tell me, Doctor, how many families you own. I have heard it said that some of our fellow-citizens have two distinct families, but you speak as if you had a dozen."

"I have, but not so large a number as I should like. I could take care of fifteen or twenty more without: having to work too hard."

"Why, Doctor, you are as bad as a Mormon. What do you mean by calling certain families yours?"

"Don't you speak about my client? Don't your clients call you their lawyer? Does n't your baker, does n't your butcher, speak of the families he supplies as his families?"

To be sure, yes, of course they do; but I had a notion that a man had as many doctors as he had organs to be doctored."

"Well, there is some truth in that; but did you think the old-fashioned family doctor was extinct, a fossil like the megatherium?"

"Why, yes, after the recent experience of a friend of mine, I did begin to think that there would soon be no such personage left as that same old-fashioned family doctor. Shall I tell you what that experience was?"

The young Doctor said he should be mightily pleased to hear it. He was going to be one of those old-fogy practitioners himself.

"I don't know," the Counsellor said, "whether my friend got all the professional terms of his story correctly, nor whether I have got them from him without making any mistakes; but if I do make blunders in some of the queer names, you can correct me. This is my friend's story:

"My family doctor," he said, "was a very sensible man, educated at a school where they professed to teach all the specialties, but not confining himself to any one branch of medical practice. Surgical practice he did not profess to meddle with, and there were some classes of patients whom he was willing to leave to the female physician. But throughout the range of diseases not requiring exceptionally skilled manual interference, his education had authorized him to consider himself, and he did consider himself, qualified to undertake the treatment of all ordinary cases—It so happened that my young wife was one of those uneasy persons who are never long contented with their habitual comforts and blessings, but always trying to find something a little better, something newer, at any rate. I was getting to be near fifty years old, and it happened to me, as it not rarely does to people at about that time of life, that my hair began to fall out. I spoke of it to my doctor, who smiled, said it was a part of the process of reversed



evolution, but might be retarded a little, and gave me a prescription. I did not find any great effect from it, and my wife would have me go to a noted dermatologist. The distinguished specialist examined my denuded scalp with great care. He looked at it through a strong

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magnifier. He examined the bulb of a fallen hair in a powerful microscope. He deliberated for a while, and then said, "This is a case of alopecia. It may perhaps be partially remedied. I will give you a prescription." Which he did, and told me to call again in a fortnight. At the end of three months I had called six times, and each time got a new recipe, and detected no difference in the course of my "alopecia." After I had got through my treatment, I showed my recipes to my family physician; and we found that three of them were the same he had used, familiar, old-fashioned remedies, and the others were taken from a list of new and little-tried prescriptions mentioned in one of the last medical journals, which was lying on the old doctor's table. I might as well have got no better under his charge, and should have got off much cheaper.

"The next trouble I had was a little redness of the eyes, for which my doctor gave me a wash; but my wife would have it that I must see an oculist. So I made four visits to an oculist, and at the last visit the redness was nearly gone,—as it ought to have been by that time. The specialist called my complaint conjunctivitis, but that did not make it feel any better nor get well any quicker. If I had had a cataract or any grave disease of the eye, requiring a nice operation on that delicate organ, of course I should have properly sought the aid of an expert, whose eye, hand, and judgment were trained to that special business; but in this case I don't doubt that my family doctor would have done just as well as the expert. However, I had to obey orders, and my wife would have it that I should entrust my precious person only to the most skilful specialist in each department of medical practice.

"In the course of the year I experienced a variety of slight indispositions. For these I was auriscoped by an aurist, laryngoscoped by a laryngologist, ausculted by a stethoscopist, and so on, until a complete inventory of my organs was made out, and I found that if I believed all these searching inquirers professed to have detected in my unfortunate person, I could repeat with too literal truth the words of the General Confession, "And there is no health in us." I never heard so many hard names in all my life. I proved to be the subject of a long catalogue of diseases, and what maladies I was not manifestly guilty of I was at least suspected of harboring. I was handed along all the way from alopecia, which used to be called baldness, to zoster, which used to be known as shingles. I was the patient of more than a dozen specialists. Very pleasant persons, many of them, but what a fuss they made about my trifling incommodities! 'Please look at that photograph. See if there is a minute elevation under one eye.'

"'On which side?' I asked him, for I could not be sure there was anything different on one side from what I saw on the other.

"'Under the left eye. I called it a pimple; the specialist called it acne. Now look at this photograph. It was taken after my acne had been three months under treatment. It shows a little more distinctly than in the first photograph, does n't it?'

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“‘I think it does,’ I answered. ‘It does n’t seem to me that you gained a great deal by leaving your customary adviser for the specialist.’

“‘Well,’ my friend continued, ‘following my wife’s urgent counsel, I kept on, as I told you, for a whole year with my specialists, going from head to foot, and tapering off with a chiropodist. I got a deal of amusement out of their contrivances and experiments. Some of them lighted up my internal surfaces with electrical or other illuminating apparatus. Thermometers, dynamometers, exploring-tubes, little mirrors that went half-way down to my stomach, tuning-forks, ophthalmoscopes, percussion-hammers, single and double stethoscopes, speculums, sphygmometers,—such a battery of detective instruments I had never imagined. All useful, I don’t doubt; but at the end of the year I began to question whether I should n’t have done about as well to stick to my long tried practitioner. When the bills for “professional services” came in, and the new carpet had to be given up, and the old bonnet trimmed over again, and the sealskin sack remained a vision, we both agreed, my wife and I, that we would try to get along without consulting specialists, except in such cases as our family physician considered to be beyond his skill.’”

The Counsellor’s story of his friend’s experiences seemed to please the young Doctor very much. It “stirred him up,” but in an agreeable way; for, as he said, he meant to devote himself to family practice, and not to adopt any limited class of cases as a specialty. I liked his views so well that I should have been ready to adopt them as my own, if they had been challenged.

The young Doctor discourses.

“I am very glad,” he said, “that we have a number of practitioners among us who confine themselves to the care of single organs and their functions. I want to be able to consult an oculist who has done nothing but attend to eyes long enough to know all that is known about their diseases and their treatment,—skilful enough to be trusted with the manipulation of that delicate and most precious organ. I want an aurist who knows all about the ear and what can be done for its disorders. The maladies of the larynx are very ticklish things to handle, and nobody should be trusted to go behind the epiglottis who has not the tactus eruditus. And so of certain other particular classes of complaints. A great city must have a limited number of experts, each a final authority, to be appealed to in cases where the family physician finds himself in doubt. There are operations which no surgeon should be willing to undertake unless he has paid a particular, if not an exclusive, attention to the cases demanding such operations. All this I willingly grant.

“But it must not be supposed that we can return to the methods of the old Egyptians—who, if my memory serves me correctly, had a special physician for every part of the body—without falling into certain errors and incurring certain liabilities.

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"The specialist is much like other people engaged in lucrative business. He is apt to magnify his calling, to make much of any symptom which will bring a patient within range of his battery of remedies. I found a case in one of our medical journals, a couple of years ago, which illustrates what I mean. Dr. _____ of Philadelphia, had a female patient with a crooked nose,—deviated septum, if our young scholars like that better. She was suffering from what the doctor called reflex headache. She had been to an oculist, who found that the trouble was in her eyes. She went from him to a gynecologist, who considered her headache as owing to causes for which his specialty had the remedies. How many more specialists would have appropriated her, if she had gone the rounds of them all, I dare not guess; but you remember the old story of the siege, in which each artisan proposed means of defence which he himself was ready to furnish. Then a shoemaker said, 'Hang your walls with new boots.'

"Human nature is the same with medical specialists as it was with ancient cordwainers, and it is too possible that a hungry practitioner may be warped by his interest in fastening on a patient who, as he persuades himself, comes under his medical jurisdiction. The specialist has but one fang with which to seize and bold his prey, but that fang is a fearfully long and sharp canine. Being confined to a narrow field of observation and practice, he is apt to give much of his time to curious study, which may be magnifique, but is not exactly la guerre against the patient's malady. He divides and subdivides, and gets many varieties of diseases, in most respects similar. These he equips with new names, and thus we have those terrific nomenclatures which are enough to frighten the medical student, to say nothing of the sufferers staggering under this long catalogue of local infirmities. The 'old-fogy' doctor, who knows the family tendencies of his patient, who 'understands his constitution,' will often treat him better than the famous specialist, who sees him for the first time, and has to guess at many things 'the old doctor' knows from his previous experience with the same patient and the family to which he belongs.

"It is a great luxury to practise as a specialist in almost any class of diseases. The special practitioner has his own hours, hardly needs a night-bell, can have his residence out of the town in which he exercises his calling, in short, lives like a gentleman; while the hard-worked general practitioner submits to a servitude more exacting than that of the man who is employed in his stable or in his kitchen. That is the kind of life I have made up my mind to."

The teaspoons tinkled all round the table. This was the usual sign of approbation, instead of the clapping of hands.

The young Doctor paused, and looked round among The Teacups. "I beg your pardon," he said, "for taking up so much of your time with medicine. It is a subject that a good many persons, especially ladies, take an interest in and have a curiosity about, but I have no right to turn this tea-table into a lecture platform."

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"We should like to hear you talk longer about it," said the English Annex. "One of us has thought of devoting herself to the practice of medicine. Would you lecture to us; if you were a professor in one of the great medical schools?"

"Lecture to students of your sex? Why not, I should like to know? I don't think it is the calling for which the average woman is especially adapted, but my teacher got a part of his medical education from a lady, Madame Lachapelle; and I don't see why, if one can learn from a woman, he may not teach a woman, if he knows enough."

"We all like a little medical talk now and then," said Number Five, "and we are much obliged to you for your discourse. You are specialist enough to take care of a sprained ankle, I suppose, are you not?"

"I hope I should be equal to that emergency," answered the young Doctor; "but I trust you are not suffering from any such accident?"

"No," said Number Five, "but there is no telling what may happen. I might slip, and get a sprain or break a sinew, or something, and I should like to know that there is a practitioner at hand to take care of my injury. I think I would risk myself in your bands, although you are not a specialist. Would you venture to take charge of the case?"

"Ah, my dear lady," he answered gallantly, "the risk would be in the other direction. I am afraid it would be safer for your doctor if he were an older man than I am."

This is the first clearly, indisputably sentimental outbreak which has happened in conversation at our table. I tremble to think what will come of it; for we have several inflammable elements in our circle, and a spark like this is liable to light on any one or two of them.

I was not sorry that this medical episode came in to vary the usual course of talk at our table. I like to have one—of an intelligent company, who knows anything thoroughly, hold the floor for a time, and discourse upon the subject which chiefly engages his daily thoughts and furnishes his habitual occupation. It is a privilege to meet such a person now and then, and let him have his full swing. But because there are "professionals" to whom we are willing to listen as oracles, I do not want to see everybody who is not a "professional" silenced or snubbed, if he ventures into any field of knowledge which he has not made especially his own. I like to read Montaigne's remarks about doctors, though he never took a medical degree. I can even enjoy the truth in the sharp satire of Voltaire on the medical profession. I frequently prefer the remarks I hear from the pew after the sermon to those I have just been hearing from the pulpit. There are a great many things which I never expect to comprehend, but which I desire very much to apprehend. Suppose that our circle of Teacups were made up of specialists,—experts in various departments. I should be very willing that each one should have his innings at the proper time, when the company were

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ready for him. But the time is coming when everybody will know something about every thing. How can one have the illustrated magazines, the "Popular Science Monthly," the Psychological journals, the theological periodicals, books on all subjects, forced on his attention, in their own persons, so to speak, or in the reviews which analyze and pass judgment upon them, without getting some ideas which belong to many provinces of human intelligence? The air we breathe is made up of four elements, at least: oxygen, nitrogen, carbonic acid gas, and knowledge. There is something quite delightful to witness in the absorption and devotion of a genuine specialist. There is a certain sublimity in that picture of the dying scholar in Browning's "A Grammarian's Funeral:"—

"So with the throttling hands of death at strife,
Ground he at grammar;
Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were rife;
While he could stammer
He settled Hoti's business—let it be—
Properly based Oun
Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic De,
Dead from the waist down."

A genuine enthusiasm, which will never be satisfied until it has pumped the well dry at the bottom of which truth is lying, always excites our interest, if not our admiration.

One of the pleasantest of our American writers, whom we all remember as Ik Marvel, and greet in his more recent appearance as Donald Grant Mitchell, speaks of the awkwardness which he feels in offering to the public a "panoramic view of British writers in these days of specialists,—when students devote half a lifetime to the analysis of the works of a single author, and to the proper study of a single period."

He need not have feared that his connected sketches of "English Lands, Letters and Kings" would be any less welcome because they do not pretend to fill up all the details or cover all the incidents they hint in vivid outline. How many of us ever read or ever will read Drayton's "Poly-Olbion?" Twenty thousand long Alexandrines are filled with admirable descriptions of scenery, natural productions, and historical events, but how many of us in these days have time to read and inwardly digest twenty thousand Alexandrine verses? I fear that the specialist is apt to hold his intelligent reader or hearer too cheap. So far as I have observed in medical specialties, what he knows in addition to the knowledge of the well-taught general practitioner is very largely curious rather than important. Having exhausted all that is practical, the specialist is naturally tempted to amuse himself with the natural history of the organ or function he deals with; to feel as a writing-master does when he sets a copy,—not content to shape the letters properly, but he must add flourishes and fancy figures, to let off his spare energy.

I am beginning to be frightened. When I began these papers, my idea was a very simple and innocent one. Here was a mixed company, of various conditions, as I have already told my readers, who came together regularly, and before they were aware of it formed something like a club or association. As I was the patriarch among them, they gave me the name some of you may need to be reminded of; for as these reports are published at intervals, you may not remember the fact that I am what The Teacups have seen fit to call The Dictator.

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Now, what did I expect when I began these papers, and what is it that has begun to frighten me?

I expected to report grave conversations and light colloquial passages of arms among the members of the circle. I expected to hear, perhaps to read, a paper now and then. I expected to have, from time to time, a poem from some one of The Teacups, for I felt sure there must be among them one or more poets,—Teacups of the finer and rarer translucent kind of porcelain, to speak metaphorically.

Out of these conversations and written contributions I thought I might make up a readable series of papers; a not wholly unwelcome string of recollections, anticipations, suggestions, too often perhaps repetitions, that would be to the twilight what my earlier series had been to the morning.

I hoped also that I should come into personal relations with my old constituency, if I may call my nearer friends, and those more distant ones who belong to my reading parish, by that name. It is time that I should. I received this blessed morning—I am telling the literal truth—a highly flattering obituary of myself in the shape of an extract from “Le National” of the 10th of February last. This is a bi-weekly newspaper, published in French, in the city of Plattsburg, Clinton County, New York. I am occasionally reminded by my unknown friends that I must hurry up their autograph, or make haste to copy that poem they wish to have in the author’s own handwriting, or it will be too late; but I have never before been huddled out of the world in this way. I take this rather premature obituary as a hint that, unless I come to some arrangement with my well-meaning but insatiable correspondents, it would be as well to leave it in type, for I cannot bear much longer the load they lay upon me. I will explain myself on this point after I have told my readers what has frightened me.

I am beginning to think this room where we take our tea is more like a tinder-box than a quiet and safe place for “a party in a parlor.” It is true that there are at least two or three incombustibles at our table, but it looks to me as if the company might pair off before the season is over, like the crew of Her Majesty’s ship the Mantelpiece,—three or four weddings clear our whole table of all but one or two of the impregnable. The poem we found in the sugar-bowl last week first opened my eyes to the probable state of things. Now, the idea of having to tell a love-story,—perhaps two or three love-stories,—when I set out with the intention of repeating instructive, useful, or entertaining discussions, naturally alarms me. It is quite true that many things which look to me suspicious may be simply playful. Young people (and we have several such among The Teacups) are fond of make-believe courting when they cannot have the real thing,—“flirting,” as it used to be practised in the days of Arcadian innocence, not the more modern and more questionable recreation which has reached us from the home of the cicisbeo. Whatever comes of it, I shall tell what I see, and take the consequences.

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But I am at this moment going to talk in my own proper person to my own particular public, which, as I find by my correspondence, is a very considerable one, and with which I consider myself in exceptionally pleasant relations.

I have read recently that Mr. Gladstone receives six hundred letters a day. Perhaps he does not receive six hundred letters every day, but if he gets anything like half that number daily, what can he do with them? There was a time when he was said to answer all his correspondents. It is understood, I think, that he has given up doing so in these later days.

I do not pretend that I receive six hundred or even sixty letters a day, but I do receive a good many, and have told the public of the fact from time to time, under the pressure of their constantly increasing exertions. As it is extremely onerous, and is soon going to be impossible, for me to keep up the wide range of correspondence which has become a large part of my occupation, and tends to absorb all the vital force which is left me, I wish to enter into a final explanation with the well-meaning but merciless taskmasters who have now for many years been levying their daily tax upon me. I have preserved thousands of their letters, and destroyed a very large number, after answering most of them. A few interesting chapters might be made out of the letters I have kept,—not only such as are signed by the names of well-known personages, but many from unknown friends, of whom I had never heard before and have never heard since. A great deal of the best writing the languages of the world have ever known has been committed to leaves that withered out of sight before a second sunlight had fallen upon them. I have had many letters I should have liked to give the public, had their nature admitted of their being offered to the world. What straggles of young ambition, finding no place for its energies, or feeling its incapacity to reach the ideal towards which it was striving! What longings of disappointed, defeated fellow-mortals, trying to find a new home for themselves in the heart of one whom they have amiably idealized! And oh, what hopeless efforts of mediocrities and inferiorities, believing in themselves as superiorities, and stumbling on through limping disappointments to prostrate failure! Poverty comes pleading, not for charity, for the most part, but imploring us to find a purchaser for its unmarketable wares. The unreadable author particularly requests us to make a critical examination of his book, and report to him whatever may be our verdict,—as if he wanted anything but our praise, and that very often to be used in his publisher's advertisements.

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But what does not one have to submit to who has become the martyr—the Saint Sebastian—of a literary correspondence! I will not dwell on the possible impression produced on a sensitive nature by reading one's own premature obituary, as I have told you has been my recent experience. I will not stop to think whether the urgent request for an autograph by return post, in view of the possible contingencies which might render it the last one was ever to write, is pleasing or not. At threescore and twenty one must expect such hints of what is like to happen before long. I suppose, if some near friend were to watch one who was looking over such a pressing letter, he might possibly see a slight shadow flit over the reader's features, and some such dialogue might follow as that between Othello and Iago, after "this honest creature" has been giving breath to his suspicions about Desdemona:

"I see this hath a little dash'd your spirits.
Not a jot, not a jot.

.....

"My lord, I see you're moved."

And a little later the reader might, like Othello, complain,

"I have a pain upon my forehead here."

Nothing more likely. But, for myself, I have grown callous to all such allusions. The repetition of the Scriptural phrase for the natural term of life is so frequent that it wears out one's sensibilities.

But how many charming and refreshing letters I have received! How often I have felt their encouragement in moments of doubt and depression, such as the happiest temperaments must sometimes experience!

If the time comes when to answer all my kind unknown friends, even by dictation, is impossible, or more than I feel equal to, I wish to refer any of those who may feel disappointed at not receiving an answer to the following general acknowledgments:

I. I am always grateful for any attention which shows me that I am kindly remembered.
—II. Your pleasant message has been read to me, and has been thankfully listened to.
—III. Your book (your essay) (your poem) has reached me safely, and has received all the respectful attention to which it seemed entitled. It would take more than all the time I have at my disposal to read all the printed matter and all the manuscripts which are sent to me, and you would not ask me to attempt the impossible. You will not, therefore, expect me to express a critical opinion of your work.—IV. I am deeply sensible to your expressions of personal attachment to me as the author of certain writings which have brought me very near to you, in virtue of some affinity in our ways of thought and moods of feeling. Although I cannot keep up correspondences with many of my readers who

seem to be thoroughly congenial with myself, let them be assured that their letters have been read or heard with peculiar gratification, and are preserved as precious treasures.

I trust that after this notice no correspondent will be surprised to find his or her letter thus answered by anticipation; and that if one of the above formulae is the only answer he receives, the unknown friend will remember that he or she is one of a great many whose incessant demands have entirely outrun my power of answering them as fully as the applicants might wish and perhaps expect.

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I could make a very interesting volume of the letters I have received from correspondents unknown to the world of authorship, but writing from an instinctive impulse, which many of them say they have long felt and resisted. One must not allow himself to be flattered into an overestimate of his powers because he gets many letters expressing a peculiar attraction towards his books, and a preference of them to those with which he would not have dared to compare his own. Still, if the *homo unius libri*—the man of one book—choose to select one of our own writing as his favorite volume, it means something,—not much, perhaps; but if one has unlocked the door to the secret entrance of one heart, it is not unlikely that his key may fit the locks of others. What if nature has lent him a master key? He has found the wards and slid back the bolt of one lock; perhaps he may have learned the secret of others. One success is an encouragement to try again. Let the writer of a truly loving letter, such as greets one from time to time, remember that, though he never hears a word from it, it may prove one of the best rewards of an anxious and laborious past, and the stimulus of a still aspiring future.

Among the letters I have recently received, none is more interesting than the following. The story of Helen Keller, who wrote it, is told in the well-known illustrated magazine called “The Wide Awake,” in the number for July, 1888. For the account of this little girl, now between nine and ten years old, and other letters of her writing, I must refer to the article I have mentioned. It is enough to say that she is deaf and dumb and totally blind. She was seven years old when her teacher, Miss Sullivan, under the direction of Mr. Anagnos, at the Blind Asylum at South Boston, began her education. A child fuller of life and happiness it would be hard to find. It seems as if her soul was flooded with light and filled with music that had found entrance to it through avenues closed to other mortals. It is hard to understand how she has learned to deal with abstract ideas, and so far to supplement the blanks left by the senses of sight and hearing that one would hardly think of her as wanting in any human faculty. Remember Milton’s pathetic picture of himself, suffering from only one of poor little Helen’s deprivations:

“Not to me returns

Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer’s rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank
Of Nature’s works, to me expunged and rased,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.”

Surely for this loving and lovely child does



“the celestial Light
Shine inward.”

Anthropologist, metaphysician, most of all theologian, here is a lesson which can teach you much that you will not find in your primers and catechisms. Why should I call her “poor little Helen”? Where can you find a happier child?

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South Boston, mass., March 1, 1890.

*Dear kind poet,—*I have thought of you many times since that bright Sunday when I bade you goodbye, and I am going to write you a letter because I love you. I am sorry that you have no little children to play with sometimes, but I think you are very happy with your books, and your many, many friends. On Washington's Birthday a great many people came here to see the little blind children, and I read for them from your poems, and showed them some beautiful shells which came from a little island near Palos. I am reading a very sad story called "Little Jakey." Jakey was the sweetest little fellow you can imagine, but he was poor and blind. I used to think, when I was small and before I could read, that everybody was always happy, and at first it made me very sad to know about pain and great sorrow; but now I know that we could never learn to be brave and patient, if there were only joy in the world. I am studying about insects in Zoology, and I have learned many things about butterflies. They do not make honey for us, like the bees, but many of them are as beautiful as the flowers they light upon, and they always delight the hearts of little children. They live a gay life, flitting from flower to flower, sipping the drops of honey-dew, without a thought for the morrow. They are just like little boys and girls when they forget books and studies, and run away to the woods and the fields to gather wild-flowers, or wade in the ponds for fragrant lilies, happy in the bright sunshine. If my little sister comes to Boston next June, will you let me bring her to see you? She is a lovely baby and I am sure you will love [her]. Now I must tell my gentle poet good-bye, for I have a letter to write home before I go to bed. From your loving little friend, *Helen A. Keller.*

The reading of this letter made many eyes glisten, and a dead silence hushed the whole circle. All at once Delilah, our pretty table-maid, forgot her place,—what business had she to be listening to our conversation and reading?—and began sobbing, just as if she had been a lady. She could n't help it, she explained afterwards,—she had a little blind sister at the asylum, who had told her about Helen's reading to the children.

It was very awkward, this breaking-down of our pretty Delilah, for one girl crying will sometimes set off a whole row of others,—it is as hazardous as lighting one cracker in a bunch. The two Annexes hurried out their pocket-handkerchiefs, and I almost expected a semi-hysteric cataclysm. At this critical moment Number Five called Delilah to her, looked into her face with those calm eyes of hers, and spoke a few soft words. Was Number Five forgetful, too? Did she not remember the difference of their position? I suppose so. But she quieted the poor handmaiden as simply and easily as a nursing mother quiets her unweaned baby. Why are we not all in love with Number Five? Perhaps we are. At any rate, I suspect the Professor. When we all get quiet, I will touch him up about that visit she promised to make to his laboratory.

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I got a chance at last to speak privately with him.

“Did Number Five go to meet you in your laboratory, as she talked of doing?”

“Oh, yes, of course she did,—why, she said she would!”

“Oh, to be sure. Do tell me what she wanted in your laboratory.”

“She wanted me to burn a diamond for her.”

“Burn a diamond! What was that for? Because Cleopatra swallowed a pearl?”

“No, nothing of that kind. It was a small stone, and had a flaw in it. Number Five said she did n’t want a diamond with a flaw in it, and that she did want to see how a diamond would burn.”

“Was that all that happened?”

“That was all. She brought the two Annexes with her, and I gave my three visitors a lecture on carbon, which they seemed to enjoy very much.”

I looked steadily in the Professor’s face during the reading of the following poem. I saw no questionable look upon it,—but he has a remarkable command of his features. Number Five read it with a certain archness of expression, as if she saw all its meaning, which I think some of the company did not quite take in. They said they must read it slowly and carefully. Somehow, “I like you” and “I love you” got a little mixed, as they heard it. It was not Number Five’s fault, for she read it beautifully, as we all agreed, and as I knew she would when I handed it to her.

I like you and I love you.

I like you met *I love you*, face to face;
The path was narrow, and they could not pass.
I like you smiled; *I love you* cried, Alas!
And so they halted for a little space.

“Turn thou and go before,” *I love you* said,
“Down the green pathway, bright with many a flower
Deep in the valley, lo! my bridal bower
Awaits thee.” But *I like you* shook his head.

Then while they lingered on the span-wide shelf
That shaped a pathway round the rocky ledge,
I like you bared his icy dagger’s edge,
And first he slew *I love you*,—then himself.

VII

There is no use in burdening my table with those letters of inquiry as to where our meetings are held, and what are the names of the persons designated by numbers, or spoken of under the titles of the Professor, the Tutor, and so forth. It is enough that you are aware who I am, and that I am known at the tea-table as The Dictator. Theatrical “asides” are apt to be whispered in a pretty loud voice, and the persons who ought not to have any idea of what is said are expected to be reasonably hard of bearing. If I named all The Teacups, some of them might be offended. If any of my readers happen to be able to identify any one Teacup by some accidental circumstance,—say,

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for instance, Number Five, by the incident of her burning the diamond,—I hope they will keep quiet about it. Number Five does n't want to be pointed out in the street as the extravagant person who makes use of such expensive fuel, for the story would soon grow to a statement that she always uses diamonds, instead of cheaper forms of carbon, to heat her coffee with. So with other members of the circle. The "Cracked Teacup," Number Seven, would not, perhaps, be pleased to recognize himself under that title. I repeat it, therefore, Do not try to identify the individual Teacups. You will not get them right; or, if you do, you may too probably make trouble. How is it possible that I can keep up my freedom of intercourse with you all if you insist on bellowing my "asides" through a speaking-trumpet? Besides, you cannot have failed to see that there are strong symptoms of the springing up of delicate relations between some of our number. I told you how it would be. It did not require a prophet to foresee that the saucy intruder who, as Mr. Willis wrote, and the dear dead girls used to sing, in our young days,

"Taketh every form of air,
And every shape of earth,
And comes unbidden everywhere,
Like thought's mysterious birth,"

would pop his little curly head up between one or more pairs of Teacups. If you will stop these questions, then, I will go on with my reports of what was said and done at our meetings over the teacups.

Of all things beautiful in this fair world, there is nothing so enchanting to look upon, to dream about, as the first opening of the flower of young love. How closely the calyx has hidden the glowing leaves in its quiet green mantle! Side by side, two buds have been tossing jauntily in the breeze, often brought very near to each other, sometimes touching for a moment, with a secret thrill in their close-folded heart-leaves, it may be, but still the cool green sepals shutting tight over the burning secret within. All at once a morning ray touches one of the two buds, and the point of a blushing petal betrays the imprisoned and swelling blossom.

—Oh, no, I did not promise a love-story. There may be a little sentiment now and then, but these papers are devoted chiefly to the opinions, prejudices, fancies, whims, of myself, The Dictator, and others of The Teacups who have talked or written for the general benefit of the company.

Here are some of the remarks I made the other evening on the subject of Intellectual Over-Feeding and its consequence, Mental Dyspepsia. There is something positively appalling in the amount of printed matter yearly, monthly, weekly, daily, secreted by that great gland of the civilized organism, the press. I need not dilate upon this point, for it is

brought home to every one of you who ever looks into a bookstore or a public library. So large is the variety of literary products continually coming forward, forced upon the attention of the reader by stimulating and suggestive titles, commended to his notice by famous names, recasting old subjects and developing and illustrating new ones, that the mind is liable to be urged into a kind of unnatural hunger, leading to a repletion which is often followed by disgust and disturbed nervous conditions as its natural consequence.

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It has long been a favorite rule with me, a rule which I have never lost sight of, however imperfectly I have carried it out: Try to know enough of a wide range of subjects to profit by the conversation of intelligent persons of different callings and various intellectual gifts and acquisitions. The cynic will paraphrase this into a shorter formula: Get a smattering in every sort of knowledge. I must therefore add a second piece of advice: Learn to hold as of small account the comments of the cynic. He is often amusing, sometimes really witty, occasionally, without meaning it, instructive; but his talk is to profitable conversation what the stone is to the pulp of the peach, what the cob is to the kernels on an ear of Indian corn. Once more: Do not be bullied out of your common sense by the specialist; two to one, he is a pedant, with all his knowledge and valuable qualities, and will "cavil on the ninth part of a hair," if it will give him a chance to show off his idle erudition.

I saw attributed to me, the other day, the saying, "Know something about everything, and everything about something." I am afraid it does not belong to me, but I will treat it as I used to treat a stray boat which came through my meadow, floating down the Housatonic,—get hold of it and draw it ashore, and hold on to it until the owner turns up. If this precept is used discreetly, it is very serviceable; but it is as well to recognize the fact that you cannot know something about everything in days like these of intellectual activity, of literary and scientific production. We all feel this. It makes us nervous to see the shelves of new books, many of which we feel as if we ought to read, and some among them to study. We must adopt some principle of selection among the books outside of any particular branch which we may have selected for study. I have often been asked what books I would recommend for a course of reading. I have always answered that I had a great deal rather take advice than give it. Fortunately, a number of scholars have furnished lists of books to which the inquirer may be directed. But the worst of it is that each student is in need of a little library specially adapted to his wants. Here is a young man writing to me from a Western college, and wants me to send him a list of the books which I think would be most useful to him. He does not send me his intellectual measurements, and he might as well have sent to a Boston tailor for a coat, without any hint of his dimensions in length, breadth, and thickness.

But instead of laying down rules for reading, and furnishing lists of the books which should be read in order, I will undertake the much humbler task of giving a little quasi-medical advice to persons, young or old, suffering from book-hunger, book-surfeit, book-nervousness, book-indigestion, book-nausea, and all other maladies which, directly or indirectly, may be traced to books, and to which I could give Greek or Latin names if I thought it worth while.

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I have a picture hanging in my library, a lithograph, of which many of my readers may have seen copies. It represents a gray-haired old book-lover at the top of a long flight of steps. He finds himself in clover, so to speak, among rare old editions, books he has longed to look upon and never seen before, rarities, precious old volumes, incunabula, cradle-books, printed while the art was in its infancy,—its glorious infancy, for it was born a giant. The old bookworm is so intoxicated with the sight and handling of the priceless treasures that he cannot bear to put one of the volumes back after he has taken it from the shelf. So there he stands,—one book open in his hands, a volume under each arm, and one or more between his legs,—loaded with as many as he can possibly hold at the same time.

Now, that is just the way in which the extreme form of book-hunger shows itself in the reader whose appetite has become over-developed. He wants to read so many books that he over-crams himself with the crude materials of knowledge, which become knowledge only when the mental digestion has time to assimilate them. I never can go into that famous “Corner Bookstore” and look over the new books in the row before me, as I enter the door, without seeing half a dozen which I want to read, or at least to know something about. I cannot empty my purse of its contents, and crowd my bookshelves with all those volumes. The titles of many of them interest me. I look into one or two, perhaps. I have sometimes picked up a line or a sentence, in these momentary glances between the uncut leaves of a new book, which I have never forgotten. As a trivial but bona fide example, one day I opened a book on duelling. I remember only these words: “Conservons-la, cette noble institution.” I had never before seen duelling called a noble institution, and I wish I had taken the name of the book. Book-tasting is not necessarily profitless, but it is very stimulating, and makes one hungry for more than he needs for the nourishment of his thinking-marrow. To feed this insatiable hunger, the abstracts, the reviews, do their best. But these, again, have grown so numerous and so crowded with matter that it is hard to find time to master their contents. We are accustomed, therefore, to look for analyses of these periodicals, and at last we have placed before us a formidable-looking monthly, “The Review of Reviews.” After the analyses comes the newspaper notice; and there is still room for the epigram, which sometimes makes short work with all that has gone before on the same subject.

It is just as well to recognize the fact that if one should read day and night, confining himself to his own language, he could not pretend to keep up with the press. He might as well try to race with a locomotive. The first discipline, therefore, is that of despair. If you could stick to your reading day and night for fifty years, what a learned idiot you would become long before the half-century

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was over! Well, then, there is no use in gorging one's self with knowledge, and no need of self-reproach because one is content to remain more or less ignorant of many things which interest his fellow-creatures. We gain a good deal of knowledge through the atmosphere; we learn a great deal by accidental hearsay, provided we have the mordant in our own consciousness which makes the wise remark, the significant fact, the instructive incident, take hold upon it. After the stage of despair comes the period of consolation. We soon find that we are not so much worse off than most of our neighbors as we supposed. The fractional value of the wisest shows a small numerator divided by an infinite denominator of knowledge.

I made some explanations to The Teacups, the other evening, which they received very intelligently and graciously, as I have no doubt the readers of these reports of mine will receive them. If the reader will turn back to the end of the fourth number of these papers, he will find certain lines entitled, "Cacoethes Scribendi." They were said to have been taken from the usual receptacle of the verses which are contributed by The Teacups, and, though the fact was not mentioned, were of my own composition. I found them in manuscript in my drawer, and as my subject had naturally suggested the train of thought they carried out into extravagance, I printed them. At the same time they sounded very natural, as we say, and I felt as if I had published them somewhere or other before; but I could find no evidence of it, and so I ventured to have them put in type.

And here I wish to take breath for a short, separate paragraph. I have often felt, after writing a line which pleased me more than common, that it was not new, and perhaps was not my own. I have very rarely, however, found such a coincidence in ideas or expression as would be enough to justify an accusation of unconscious plagiarism,—conscious plagiarism is not my particular failing. I therefore say my say, set down my thought, print my line, and do not heed the suspicion that I may not be as original as I supposed, in the passage I have been writing. My experience may be worth something to a modest young writer, and so I have interrupted what I was about to say by intercalating this paragraph.

In this instance my telltale suspicion had not been at fault. I had printed those same lines, years ago, in "The Contributors' Club," to which I have rarely sent any of my prose or verse. Nobody but the editor has noticed the fact, so far as I know. This is consoling, or mortifying, I hardly know which. I suppose one has a right to plagiarize from himself, but he does not want to present his work as fresh from the workshop when it has been long standing in his neighbor's shop-window.

But I have just received a letter from a brother of the late Henry Howard Brownell, the poet of the Bay Fight and the River Fight, in which he quotes a passage from an old book, "A Heroine, Adventures of Cherubina," which might well have suggested my own

lines, if I had ever seen it. I have not the slightest recollection of the book or the passage. I think its liveliness and “local color” will make it please the reader, as it pleases me, more than my own more prosaic extravagances:

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Lines to A pretty little maid of mamma's.

"If Black Sea, Red Sea, White Sea, ran
One tide of ink to Ispahan,
If all the geese in Lincoln fens
Produced spontaneous well-made pens,
If Holland old and Holland new
One wondrous sheet of paper grew,
And could I sing but half the grace
Of half a freckle in thy face,
Each syllable I wrote would reach
From Inverness to Bognor's beach,
Each hair-stroke be a river Rhine,
Each verse an equinoctial line!"

"The immediate dismissal of the 'little maid' was the consequence."

I may as well say that our Delilah was not in the room when the last sentence was read.

Readers must be either very good-natured or very careless. I have laid myself open to criticism by more than one piece of negligence, which has been passed over without invidious comment by the readers of my papers. How could I, for instance, have written in my original "copy" for the printer about the fisherman baiting his hook with a giant's tail instead of a dragon's? It is the automatic fellow,—Me—Number-Two of our dual personality,—who does these things, who forgets the message Me—Number—One sends down to him from the cerebral convolutions, and substitutes a wrong word for the right one. I suppose Me—Number—Two will "sass back," and swear that "giant's" was the message which came down from headquarters. He is always doing the wrong thing and excusing himself. Who blows out the gas instead of shutting it off? Who puts the key in the desk and fastens it tight with the spring lock? Do you mean to say that the upper Me, the Me of the true thinking-marrow, the convolutions of the brain, does not know better? Of course he does, and Me-Number-Two is a careless servant, who remembers some old direction, and follows that instead of the one just given.

Number Seven demurred to this, and I am not sure that he is wrong in so doing. He maintains that the automatic fellow always does just what he is told to do. Number Five is disposed to agree with him. We will talk over the question.

But come, now, why should not a giant have a tail as well as a dragon? Linnaeus admitted the homo caudatus into his anthropological catalogue. The human embryo has a very well marked caudal appendage; that is, the vertebral column appears prolonged, just as it is in a young quadruped. During the late session of the Medical Congress at Washington, my friend Dr. Priestley, a distinguished London physician, of the highest character and standing, showed me the photograph of a small boy, some



three or four years old, who had a very respectable little tail, which would have passed muster on a pig, and would have made a frog or a toad ashamed of himself. I have never heard what became of the little boy, nor have I looked in the books or journals to find out if there

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are similar cases on record, but I have no doubt that there are others. And if boys may have this additional ornament to their vertebral columns, why not men? And if men, why not giants? So I may not have made a very bad blunder, after all, and my reader has learned something about the homo caudatus as spoken of by Linnxus, and as shown me in photograph by Dr. Priestley. This child is a candidate for the vacant place of Missing Link.

In accounting for the blunders, and even gross blunders, which, sooner or later, one who writes much is pretty sure to commit, I must not forget the part played by the blind spot or idiotic area in the brain, which I have already described.

The most knowing persons we meet with are sometimes at fault. Nova onania possumus omnes is not a new nor profound axiom, but it is well to remember it as a counterpoise to that other truly American saying of the late Mr. Samuel Patch, "Some things can be done as well as others." Yes, some things, but not all things. We all know men and women who hate to admit their ignorance of anything. Like Talkative in "Pilgrim's Progress," they are ready to converse of "things heavenly or things earthly; things moral or things evangelical; things sacred or things profane; things past or things to come; things foreign or things at home; things more essential or things circumstantial."

Talkative is apt to be a shallow fellow, and to say foolish things about matters he only half understands, and yet he has his place in society. The specialists would grow to be intolerable, were they not counterpoised to some degree by the people of general intelligence. The man who knows too much about one particular subject is liable to become a terrible social infliction. Some of the worst bores (to use plain language) we ever meet with are recognized as experts of high grade in their respective departments. Beware of making so much as a pinhole in the dam that holds back their knowledge. They ride their hobbies without bit or bridle. A poet on Pegasus, reciting his own verses, is hardly more to be dreaded than a mounted specialist.

One of the best offices which women perform for men is that of tasting books for them. They may or may not be profound students,—some of them are; but we do not expect to meet women like Mrs. Somerville, or Caroline Herschel, or Maria Mitchell at every dinner-table or afternoon tea. But give your elect lady a pile of books to look over for you, and she will tell you what they have for her and for you in less time than you would have wasted in stupefying yourself over a single volume.

One of the encouraging signs of the times is the condensed and abbreviated form in which knowledge is presented to the general reader. The short biographies of historic personages, of which within the past few years many have been published, have been a

great relief to the large class of readers who want to know something, but not too much, about them.

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What refuge is there for the victim who is oppressed with the feeling that there are a thousand new books he ought to read, while life is only long enough for him to attempt to read a hundred? Many readers remember what old Rogers, the poet, said:

“When I hear a new book talked about or have it pressed upon me, I read an old one.”

Happy the man who finds his rest in the pages of some favorite classic! I know no reader more to be envied than that friend of mine who for many years has given his days and nights to the loving study of Horace. After a certain period in life, it is always with an effort that we admit a new author into the inner circle of our intimates. The Parisian omnibuses, as I remember them half a century ago,—they may still keep to the same habit, for aught that I know,—used to put up the sign “Complet” as soon as they were full. Our public conveyances are never full until the natural atmospheric pressure of sixteen pounds to the square inch is doubled, in the close packing of the human sardines that fill the all-accommodating vehicles. A new-comer, however well mannered and well dressed, is not very welcome under these circumstances. In the same way, our tables are full of books half-read and books we feel that we must read. And here come in two thick volumes, with uncut leaves, in small type, with many pages, and many lines to a page,—a book that must be read and ought to be read at once. What a relief to hand it over to the lovely keeper of your literary conscience, who will tell you all that you will most care to know about it, and leave you free to plunge into your beloved volume, in which you are ever finding new beauties, and from which you rise refreshed, as if you had just come from the cool waters of Hippocrene! The stream of modern literature represented by the books and periodicals on the crowded counters is a turbulent and clamorous torrent, dashing along among the rocks of criticism, over the pebbles of the world’s daily events; trying to make itself seen and heard amidst the hoarse cries of the politicians and the rumbling wheels of traffic. The classic is a still lakelet, a mountain tarn, fed by springs that never fail, its surface never ruffled by storms,—always the same, always smiling a welcome to its visitor. Such is Horace to my friend. To his eye “*Lydia, dic per omnes*” is as familiar as “*Pater noster qui es in caelis*” to that of a pious Catholic. “*Integer vitae*,” which he has put into manly English, his Horace opens to as Watt’s hymn-book opens to “From all that dwell below the skies.” The more he reads, the more he studies his author, the richer are the treasures he finds. And what Horace is to him, Homer, or Virgil, or Dante is to many a quiet reader, sick to death of the unending train of bookmakers.

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I have some curious books in my library, a few of which I should like to say something about to The Teacups, when they have no more immediately pressing subjects before them. A library of a few thousand volumes ought always to have some books in it which the owner almost never opens, yet with whose backs he is so well acquainted that he feels as if he knew something of their contents. They are like those persons whom we meet in our daily walks, with whose faces and figures, whose summer and winter garments, whose walking-sticks and umbrellas even, we feel acquainted, and yet whose names, whose business, whose residences, we know nothing about. Some of these books are so formidable in their dimensions, so rusty and crabbed in their aspect, that it takes a considerable amount of courage to attack them.

I will ask Delilah to bring down from my library a very thick, stout volume, bound in parchment, and standing on the lower shelf, next the fireplace. The pretty handmaid knows my books almost as if she were my librarian, and I don't doubt she would have found it if I had given only the name on the back.

Delilah returned presently, with the heavy quarto in her arms. It was a pleasing sight,—the old book in the embrace of the fresh young damsel. I felt, on looking at them, as I did when I followed the slip of a girl who conducted us in the Temple, that ancient building in the heart of London. The long-enduring monuments of the dead do so mock the fleeting presence of the living!

Is n't this book enough to scare any of you? I said, as Delilah dumped it down upon the table. The teacups jumped from their saucers as it thumped on the board. Danielis Georgii Morhofii Polyhistor, Literarius, Philosophicus et Poeticus. Lubecae MDCCXXXIII. Perhaps I should not have ventured to ask you to look at this old volume, if it had not been for the fact that Dr. Johnson mentions Morhof as the author to whom he was specially indebted.—more, I think, than to any other. It is a grand old encyclopaedic summary of all the author knew about pretty nearly everything, full of curious interest, but so strangely mediaeval, so utterly antiquated in most departments of knowledge, that it is hard to believe the volume came from the press at a time when persons whom I well remember were living. Is it possible that the books which have been for me what Morhof was for Dr. Johnson can look like that to the student of the year 1990?

Morhof was a believer in magic and the transmutation of metals. There was always something fascinating to me in the old books of alchemy. I have felt that the poetry of science lost its wings when the last powder of projection had been cast into the crucible, and the fire of the last transmutation furnace went out. Perhaps I am wrong in implying that alchemy is an extinct folly. It existed in New England's early days, as we learn from the Winthrop papers, and I see no reason why gold-making should not have its votaries as well as other popular delusions.

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Among the essays of Morhof is one on the "Paradoxes of the Senses." That title brought to mind the recollection of another work I have been meaning to say something about, at some time when you were in the listening mood. The book I refer to is "A Budget of Paradoxes," by Augustus De Morgan. De Morgan is well remembered as a very distinguished mathematician, whose works have kept his name in high honor to the present time. The book I am speaking of was published by his widow, and is largely made up of letters received by him and his comments upon them. Few persons ever read it through. Few intelligent readers ever took it up and laid it down without taking a long draught of its singular and interesting contents. The letters are mostly from that class of persons whom we call "cranks," in our familiar language.

At this point Number Seven interrupted me by calling out, "Give us some of those cranks' letters. A crank is a man who does his own thinking. I had a relation who was called a crank. I believe I have been spoken of as one myself. That is what you have to expect if you invent anything that puts an old machine out of fashion, or solve a problem that has puzzled all the world up to your time. There never was a religion founded but its Messiah was called a crank. There never was an idea started that woke up men out of their stupid indifference but its originator was spoken of as a crank. Do you want to know why that name is given to the men who do most for the world's progress? I will tell you. It is because cranks make all the wheels in all the machinery of the world go round. What would a steam-engine be without a crank? I suppose the first fool that looked on the first crank that was ever made asked what that crooked, queer-looking thing was good for. When the wheels got moving he found out. Tell us something about that book which has so much to say concerning cranks."

Hereupon I requested Delilah to carry back Morhof, and replace him in the wide gap he had left in the bookshelf. She was then to find and bring down the volume I had been speaking of.

Delilah took the wisdom of the seventeenth century in her arms, and departed on her errand. The book she brought down was given me some years ago by a gentleman who had sagaciously foreseen that it was just one of those works which I might hesitate about buying, but should be well pleased to own. He guessed well; the book has been a great source of instruction and entertainment to me. I wonder that so much time and cost should have been expended upon a work which might have borne a title like the *Encomium Moriae* of Erasmus; and yet it is such a wonderful museum of the productions of the squinting brains belonging to the class of persons commonly known as cranks that we could hardly spare one of its five hundred octavo pages.

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Those of us who are in the habit of receiving letters from all sorts of would-be-literary people—letters of inquiry, many of them with reference to matters we are supposed to understand—can readily see how it was that Mr. De Morgan, never too busy to be good-natured with the people who pestered—or amused—him with their queer fancies, received such a number of letters from persons who thought they had made great discoveries, from those who felt that they and their inventions and contrivances had been overlooked, and who sought in his large charity of disposition and great receptiveness a balm for their wounded feelings and a ray of hope for their darkened prospects.

The book before us is made up from papers published in “The Athenaeum,” with additions by the author. Soon after opening it we come to names with which we are familiar, the first of these, that of Cornelius Agrippa, being connected with the occult and mystic doctrines dealt with by many of De Morgan’s correspondents. But the name most likely to arrest us is that of Giordano Bruno, the same philosopher, heretic, and martyr whose statue has recently been erected in Rome, to the great horror of the Pope and his prelates in the Old World and in the New. De Morgan’s pithy account of him will interest the company: “Giordano Bruno was all paradox. He was, as has been said, a vorticism before Descartes, an optimist before Leibnitz, a Copernican before Galileo. It would be easy to collect a hundred strange opinions of his. He was born about 1550, and was roasted alive at Rome, February 17, 1600, for the maintenance and defence of the Holy Church, and the rights and liberties of the same.”

Number Seven could not contain himself when the reading had reached this point. He rose from his chair, and tinkled his spoon against the side of his teacup. It may have been a fancy, but I thought it returned a sound which Mr. Richard Briggs would have recognized as implying an organic defect. But Number Seven did not seem to notice it, or, if he did, to mind it.

“Why did n’t we all have a chance to help erect that statue?” he cried. “A murdered heretic at the beginning of the seventeenth century, a hero of knowledge in the nineteenth,—I drink to the memory of the roasted crank, Giordano Bruno!”

Number Seven lifted his teacup to his lips, and most of us followed his example.

After this outburst of emotion and eloquence had subsided, and the teaspoons lay quietly in their saucers, I went on with my extract from the book I had in hand.

I think, I said, that the passage which follows will be new and instructive to most of the company. De Morgan’s interpretation of the cabalistic sentence, made up as you will find it, is about as ingenious a piece of fanciful exposition as you will be likely to meet with anywhere in any book, new or old. I am the more willing to mention it as it suggests a puzzle which some of the company may like to work upon. Observe the

character and position of the two distinguished philosophers who did not think their time thrown away in laboring at this seemingly puerile task.

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"There is a kind of Cabbala Alphabetica which the investigators of the numerals in words would do well to take up; it is the formation of sentences which contain all the letters of the alphabet, and each only once. No one has done it with v and j treated as consonants; but you and I can do it. Dr. Whewell and I amused ourselves some years ago with attempts. He could not make sense, though he joined words he gave me Phiz, styx, wrong, buck, flame, quiz.

"I gave him the following, which he agreed was 'admirable sense,'—I certainly think the words would never have come together except in this way: I quartz pyx who fling muck beds. I long thought that no human being could say this under any circumstances. At last I happened to be reading a religious writer,—as he thought himself,—who threw aspersions on his opponents thick and threefold. Heyday came into my head; this fellow flings muck beds; he must be a quartz pyx. And then I remembered that a pyx is a sacred vessel, and quartz is a hard stone, as hard as the heart of a religious foe-cursor. So that the line is the motto of the ferocious sectarian who turns his religious vessels into mud-holders, for the benefit of those who will not see what he sees."

"There are several other sentences given, in which all the letters (except v and j as consonants) are employed, of which the following is the best: Get nymph; quiz sad brow; fix luck,—which in more sober English would be, Marry; be cheerful; watch your business. There is more edification, more religion, in this than in all the 666 interpretations put together."

There is something very pleasant in the thought of these two sages playing at jackstraws with the letters of the alphabet. The task which De Morgan and Dr. Whewell, "the omniscient," set themselves would not be unworthy of our own ingenious scholars, and it might be worth while for some one of our popular periodicals to offer a prize for the best sentence using up the whole alphabet, under the same conditions as those submitted to by our two philosophers.

This whole book of De Morgan's seems to me full of instruction. There is too much of it, no doubt; yet one can put up with the redundancy for the sake of the multiplicity of shades of credulity and self-deception it displays in broad daylight. I suspect many of us are conscious of a second personality in our complex nature, which has many traits resembling those found in the writers of the letters addressed to Mr. De Horgan.

I have not ventured very often nor very deeply into the field of metaphysics, but if I were disposed to make any claim in that direction, it would be the recognition of the squinting brain, the introduction of the term "cerebricity" corresponding to electricity, the idiotic area in the brain or thinking-marrow, and my studies of the second member in the partnership of I-My-Self & Co. I add the Co. with especial reference to a very interesting article in a late

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Scribner, by my friend Mr. William James. In this article the reader will find a full exposition of the doctrine of plural personality illustrated by striking cases. I have long ago noticed and referred to the fact of the stratification of the currents of thought in three layers, one over the other. I have recognized that where there are two individuals talking together there are really six personalities engaged in the conversation. But the distinct, separable, independent individualities, taking up conscious life one after the other, are brought out by Mr. James and the authorities to which he refers as I have not elsewhere seen them developed.

Whether we shall ever find the exact position of the idiotic centre or area in the brain (if such a spot exists) is uncertain. We know exactly where the blind spot of the eye is situated, and can demonstrate it anatomically and physiologically. But we have only analogy to lead us to infer the possible or even probable existence of an insensible spot in the thinking-centre. If there is a focal point where consciousness is at its highest development, it would not be strange if near by there should prove to be an anaesthetic district or limited space where no report from the senses was intelligently interpreted. But all this is mere hypothesis.

Notwithstanding the fact that I am nominally the head personage of the circle of Teacups, I do not pretend or wish to deny that we all look to Number Five as our chief adviser in all the literary questions that come before us. She reads more and better than any of us. She is always ready to welcome the first sign of genius, or of talent which approaches genius. She makes short work with all the pretenders whose only excuse for appealing to the public is that they "want to be famous." She is one of the very few persons to whom I am willing to read any one of my own productions while it is yet in manuscript, unpublished. I know she is disposed to make more of it than it deserves; but, on the other hand, there are degrees in her scale of judgment, and I can distinguish very easily what delights her from what pleases only, or is, except for her kindly feeling to the writer, indifferent, or open to severe comment. What is curious is that she seems to have no literary aspirations, no desire to be known as a writer. Yet Number Five has more esprit, more sparkle, more sense in her talk, than many a famous authoress from whom we should expect brilliant conversation.

There are mysteries about Number Five. I am not going to describe her personally. Whether she belongs naturally among the bright young people, or in the company of the maturer persons, who have had a good deal of experience of the world, and have reached the wisdom of the riper decades without losing the graces of the earlier ones, it would be hard to say. The men and women, young and old, who throng about her forget their own ages. "There is no such thing as time in her presence," said the

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Professor, the other day, in speaking of her. Whether the Professor is in love with her or not is more than I can say, but I am sure that he goes to her for literary sympathy and counsel, just as I do. The reader may remember what Number Five said about the possibility of her getting a sprained ankle, and her asking the young Doctor whether he felt equal to taking charge of her if she did. I would not for the world insinuate that he wishes she would slip and twist her foot a little,—just a little, you know, but so that it would have to be laid on a pillow in a chair, and inspected, and bandaged, and delicately manipulated. There was a banana-skin which she might naturally have trodden on, in her way to the tea-table. Nobody can suppose that it was there except by the most innocent of accidents. There are people who will suspect everybody. The idea of the Doctor's putting that banana-skin there! People love to talk in that silly way about doctors.

Number Five had promised to read us a narrative which she thought would interest some of the company. Who wrote it she did not tell us, but I inferred from various circumstances that she had known the writer. She read the story most effectively in her rich, musical voice. I noticed that when it came to the sounds of the striking clock, the ringing of the notes was so like that which reaches us from some far-off cathedral tower that we wanted to bow our heads, as if we had just heard a summons to the Angelus. This was the short story that Number Five read to The Teacups:—

I have somewhere read this anecdote. Louis the Fourteenth was looking out, one day, from, a window of his palace of Saint-Germain. It was a beautiful landscape which spread out before him, and the monarch, exulting in health, strength, and the splendors of his exalted position, felt his bosom swell with emotions of pride and happiness: Presently he noticed the towers of a church in the distance, above the treetops. "What building is that?" he asked. "May it please your Majesty, that is the Church of St. Denis, where your royal ancestors have been buried for many generations." The answer did not "please his Royal Majesty." There, then, was the place where he too was to lie and moulder in the dust. He turned, sick at heart, from the window, and was uneasy until he had built him another palace, from which he could never be appalled by that fatal prospect.

Something like the experience of Louis the Fourteenth was that of the owner of

The terrible clock.

I give the story as transcribed from the original manuscript:—

The clock was bequeathed to me by an old friend who had recently died. His mind had been a good deal disordered in the later period of his life. This clock, I am told; seemed to have a strange fascination for him. His eyes were fastened on it during the last hours

of his life. He died just at midnight. The clock struck twelve, the nurse told me, as he drew his last breath, and then, without any known cause, stopped, with both hands upon the hour.

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It is a complex and costly piece of mechanism. The escapement is in front, so that every tooth is seen as it frees itself. It shows the phases of the moon, the month of the year, the day of the month, and the day of the week, as well as the hour and minute of the day.

I had not owned it a week before I began to perceive the same kind of fascination as that which its former owner had experienced. This gradually grew upon me, and presently led to trains of thought which became at first unwelcome, then worrying, and at last unendurable. I began by taking offence at the moon. I did not like to see that “something large and smooth and round,” so like the skull which little Peterkin picked up on the field of Blenheim. “How many times,” I kept saying to myself, “is that wicked old moon coming up to stare at me?” I could not stand it. I stopped a part of the machinery, and the moon went into permanent eclipse. By and by the sounds of the infernal machine began to trouble and pursue me. They talked to me; more and more their language became that of articulately speaking men. They twitted me with the rapid flight of time. They hurried me, as if I had not a moment to lose. Quick! Quick! Quick! as each tooth released itself from the escapement. And as I looked and listened there could not be any mistake about it. I heard Quick! Quick! Quick! as plainly, at least, as I ever heard a word from the phonograph. I stood watching the dial one day,—it was near one o’clock,—and a strange attraction held me fastened to the spot. Presently something appeared to trip or stumble inside of the infernal mechanism. I waited for the sound I knew was to follow. How nervous I got! It seemed to me that it would never strike. At last the minute-hand reached the highest point of the dial. Then there was a little stir among the works, as there is in a congregation as it rises to receive the benediction. It was no form of blessing which rung out those deep, almost sepulchral tones. But the word they uttered could not be mistaken. I can hear its prolonged, solemn vibrations as if I were standing before the clock at this moment.

Gone! Yes, I said to myself, gone,—its record made up to be opened in eternity.

I stood still, staring vaguely at the dial as in a trance. And as the next hour creeps stealthily up, it starts all at once, and cries aloud, Gone!—Gone! The sun sinks lower, the hour-hand creeps downward with it, until I hear the thrice-repeated monosyllable, Gone!—Gone!—Gone! Soon through the darkening hours, until at the dead of night the long roll is called, and with the last Gone! the latest of the long procession that filled the day follows its ghostly companions into the stillness and darkness of the past.

I silenced the striking part of the works. Still, the escapement kept repeating, Quick! Quick! Quick! Still the long minute-hand, like the dart in the grasp of Death, as we see it in Roubiliac’s monument to Mrs. Nightingale, among the tombs of Westminster Abbey, stretched itself out, ready to transfix each hour as it passed, and make it my last. I sat by the clock to watch the leap from one day of the week to the next. Then would come, in natural order, the long stride from one month to the following one.

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I could endure it no longer. "Take that clock away!" I said. They took it away. They took me away, too,—they thought I needed country air. The sounds and motions still pursued me in imagination. I was very nervous when I came here. The walks are pleasant, but the walls seem to me unnecessarily high. The boarders are numerous; a little miscellaneous, I think. But we have the Queen, and the President of the United States, and several other distinguished persons, if we may trust what they tell about themselves.

After we had listened to Number Five's story, I was requested to read a couple of verses written by me when the guest of my friends, whose name is hinted by the title prefixed to my lines.

LaMaison D'OR.

Barharbor.

From this fair home behold on either side
The restful mountains or the restless sea:
So the warm sheltering walls of life divide
Time and its tides from still eternity.

Look on the waves: their stormy voices teach
That not on earth may toil and struggle cease.
Look on the mountains: better far than speech
Their silent promise of eternal peace.

VIII.

I had intended to devote this particular report to an account of my replies to certain questions which have been addressed to me,—questions which I have a right to suppose interest the public, and which, therefore, I was justified in bringing before The Teacups, and presenting to the readers of these articles.

Some may care for one of these questions, and some for another. A good many young people think nothing about life as it presents itself in the far horizon, bounded by the snowy ridges of threescore and the dim peaks beyond that remote barrier. Again, there are numbers of persons who know nothing at all about the Jews; while, on the other hand, there are those who can, or think they can, detect the Israelitish blood in many of their acquaintances who believe themselves of the purest Japhetic origin, and are full of prejudices about the Semitic race.

I do not mean to be cheated out of my intentions. I propose to answer my questioners on the two points just referred to, but I find myself so much interested in the personal affairs of The Teacups that I must deal with them before attacking those less exciting



subjects. There is no use, let me say here, in addressing to me letters marked "personal," "private," "confidential," and so forth, asking me how I came to know what happened in certain conversations of which I shall give a partial account. If there is a very sensitive phonograph lying about here and there in unsuspected corners, that might account for some part of my revelations. If Delilah, whose hearing is of almost supernatural delicacy, reports to me what she overhears, it might explain a part of the mystery. I do not want to accuse Delilah, but a young person who assures me she can hear my watch ticking in my pocket, when I am in the next room, might undoubtedly tell many secrets, if so disposed. Number Five is pretty nearly omniscient, and she and I are on the best terms with each other. These are all the hints I shall give you at present.

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The Teacups of whom the least has been heard at our table are the Tutor and the Musician. The Tutor is a modest young man, kept down a little, I think, by the presence of older persons, like the Professor and myself. I have met him several times, of late, walking with different lady Teacups: once with the American Annex; twice with the English Annex; once with the two Annexes together; once with Number Five.

I have mentioned the fact that the Tutor is a poet as among his claims to our attention. I must add that I do not think any the worse of him for expressing his emotions and experiences in verse. For though rhyming is often a bad sign in a young man, especially if he is already out of his teens, there are those to whom it is as natural, one might almost say as necessary, as it is to a young bird to fly. One does not care to see barnyard fowls tumbling about in trying to use their wings. They have a pair of good, stout drumsticks, and had better keep to them, for the most part. But that feeling does not apply to young eagles, or even to young swallows and sparrows. The Tutor is by no means one of those ignorant, silly, conceited phrase-tinklers, who live on the music of their own jingling syllables and the flattery of their foolish friends. I think Number Five must appreciate him. He is sincere, warmhearted,—his poetry shows that,—not in haste to be famous, and he looks to me as if he only wanted love to steady him. With one of those two young girls he ought certainly to be captivated, if he is not already. Twice walking with the English Annex, I met him, and they were so deeply absorbed in conversation they hardly noticed me. He has been talking over the matter with Number Five, who is just the kind of person for a confidante.

“I know I feel very lonely,” he was saying, “and I only wish I felt sure that I could make another person happy. My life would be transfigured if I could find such a one, whom I could love well enough to give my life to her,—for her, if that were needful, and who felt an affinity for me, if any one could.”

“And why not your English maiden?” said Number Five.

“What makes you think I care more for her than for her American friend?” said the Tutor.

“Why, have n’t I met you walking with her, and did n’t you both seem greatly interested in the subject you were discussing? I thought, of course, it was something more or less sentimental that you were talking about.”

“I was explaining that ‘enclitic de’ in Browning’s Grammarian’s Funeral. I don’t think there was anything very sentimental about that. She is an inquisitive creature, that English girl. She is very fond of asking me questions,—in fact, both of them are. There is one curious difference between them: the English girl settles down into her answers and is quiet; the American girl is never satisfied with yesterday’s conclusions; she is always reopening old questions in the light of some

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new fact or some novel idea. I suppose that people bred from childhood to lean their backs against the wall of the Creed and the church catechism find it hard to sit up straight on the republican stool, which obliges them to stiffen their own backs. Which of these two girls would be the safest choice for a young man? I should really like to hear what answer you would make if I consulted you seriously, with a view to my own choice,—on the supposition that there was a fair chance that either of them might be won.”

“The one you are in love with,” answered Number Five.

“But what if it were a case of ‘How happy could I be with either’? Which offers the best chance of happiness,—a marriage between two persons of the same country, or a marriage where one of the parties is of foreign birth? Everything else being equal, which is best for an American to marry, an American or an English girl? We need not confine the question to those two young persons, but put it more generally.”

“There are reasons on both sides,” answered Number Five. “I have often talked this matter over with The Dictator. This is the way he speaks about it. English blood is apt to tell well on the stock upon which it is engrafted. Over and over again he has noticed finely grown specimens of human beings, and on inquiry has found that one or both of the parents or grandparents were of British origin. The chances are that the descendants of the imported stock will be of a richer organization, more florid, more muscular, with mellower voices, than the native whose blood has been unmingled with that of new emigrants since the earlier colonial times.—So talks The Dictator.—I myself think the American will find his English wife concentrates herself more readily and more exclusively on her husband,—for the obvious reason that she is obliged to live mainly in him. I remember hearing an old friend of my early days say, ‘A woman does not bear transplanting.’ It does not do to trust these old sayings, and yet they almost always have some foundation in the experience of mankind, which has repeated them from generation to generation. Happy is the married woman of foreign birth who can say to her husband, as Andromache said to Hector, after enumerating all the dear relatives she had lost,

“Yet while my hector still survives,
I see My father, mother, brethren, all in thee!”

“How many a sorrowing wife, exiled from her native country, dreams of the mother she shall see no more! How many a widow, in a strange land, wishes that her poor, worn-out body could be laid among her kinsfolk, in the little churchyard where she used to gather daisies in her childhood! It takes a great deal of love to keep down the ‘climbing sorrow’ that swells up in a woman’s throat when such memories seize upon her, in her moments of desolation. But if a foreign-born woman does willingly give up all for a man, and never looks backward, like Lot’s wife, she is a prize that it is worth running a risk to

gain,—that is, if she has the making of a good woman in her; and a few years will go far towards naturalizing her.”

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The Tutor listened to Number Five with much apparent interest. "And now," he said, "what do you think of her companion?"

"A charming girl for a man of a quiet, easy temperament. The great trouble is with her voice. It is pitched a full note too high. It is aggressive, disturbing, and would wear out a nervous man without his ever knowing what was the matter with him. A good many crazy Northern people would recover their reason if they could live for a year or two among the blacks of the Southern States. But the penetrating, perturbing quality of the voices of many of our Northern women has a great deal to answer for in the way of determining love and friendship. You remember that dear friend of ours who left us not long since? If there were more voices like hers, the world would be a different place to live in. I do not believe any man or woman ever came within the range of those sweet, tranquil tones without being hushed, captivated, entranced I might almost say, by their calming, soothing influence. Can you not imagine the tones in which those words, 'Peace, be still,' were spoken? Such was the effect of the voice to which but a few weeks ago we were listening. It is hard to believe that it has died out of human consciousness. Can such a voice be spared from that world of happiness to which we fondly look forward, where we love to dream, if we do not believe with assured conviction, that whatever is loveliest in this our mortal condition shall be with us again as an undying possession? Your English friend has a very agreeable voice, round, mellow, cheery, and her articulation is charming. Other things being equal, I think you, who are, perhaps, oversensitive, would live from two to three years longer with her than with the other. I suppose a man who lived within hearing of a murmuring brook would find his life shortened if a sawmill were set up within earshot of his dwelling."

"And so you advise me to make love to the English girl, do you?" asked the Tutor.

Number Five laughed. It was not a loud laugh, she never laughed noisily; it was not a very hearty laugh; the idea did not seem to amuse her much.

"No," she said, "I won't take the responsibility. Perhaps this is a case in which the true reading of Gay's line would be—

"How happy could I be with neither.

"There are several young women in the world besides our two Annexes."

I question whether the Tutor had asked those questions very seriously, and I doubt if Number Five thought he was very much in earnest.

One of The Teacups reminded me that I had promised to say something of my answers to certain questions. So I began at once:

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I have given the name of brain-tappers to the literary operatives who address persons whose names are well known to the public, asking their opinions or their experiences on subjects which are at the time of general interest. They expect a literary man or a scientific expert to furnish them materials for symposia and similar articles, to be used by them for their own special purposes. Sometimes they expect to pay for the information furnished them; at other times, the honor of being included in a list of noted personages who have received similar requests is thought sufficient compensation. The object with which the brain-tapper puts his questions may be a purely benevolent and entirely disinterested one. Such was the object of some of those questions which I have received and answered. There are other cases, in which the brain-tapper is acting much as those persons do who stop a physician in the street to talk with him about their livers or stomachs, or other internal arrangements, instead of going to his office and consulting him, expecting to pay for his advice. Others are more like those busy women who, having the generous intention of making a handsome present to their pastor, at as little expense as may be, send to all their neighbors and acquaintances for scraps of various materials, out of which the imposing "bedspread" or counterpane is to be elaborated.

That is all very well so long as old pieces of stuff are all they call for, but it is a different matter to ask for clippings out of new and uncut rolls of cloth. So it is one thing to ask an author for liberty to use extracts from his published writings, and it is a very different thing to expect him to write expressly for the editor's or compiler's piece of literary patchwork.

I have received many questions within the last year or two, some of which I am willing to answer, but prefer to answer at my own time, in my own way, through my customary channel of communication with the public. I hope I shall not be misunderstood as implying any reproach against the inquirers who, in order to get at facts which ought to be known, apply to all whom they can reach for information. Their inquisitiveness is not always agreeable or welcome, but we ought to be glad that there are mousing fact-hunters to worry us with queries to which, for the sake of the public, we are bound to give our attention. Let me begin with my brain-tappers.

And first, as the papers have given publicity to the fact that I, The Dictator of this tea-table, have reached the age of threescore years and twenty, I am requested to give information as to how I managed to do it, and to explain just how they can go and do likewise. I think I can lay down a few rules that will help them to the desired result. There is no certainty in these biological problems, but there are reasonable probabilities upon which it is safe to act.

The first thing to be done is, some years before birth, to advertise for a couple of parents both belonging to long-lived families. Especially let the mother come of a race in which octogenarians and nonagenarians are very common phenomena. There are practical difficulties in following out this suggestion, but possibly the forethought of your

progenitors, or that concurrence of circumstances which we call accident, may have arranged this for you.



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Do not think that a robust organization is any warrant of long life, nor that a frail and slight bodily constitution necessarily means scanty length of days. Many a strong-limbed young man and many a blooming young woman have I seen failing and dropping away in or before middle life, and many a delicate and slightly constituted person outliving the athletes and the beauties of their generation. Whether the excessive development of the muscular system is compatible with the best condition of general health is, I think, more than doubtful. The muscles are great sponges that suck up and make use of large quantities of blood, and the other organs must be liable to suffer for want of their share.

One of the Seven Wise Men of Greece boiled his wisdom down into two words,—*nothing too much*. It is a rule which will apply to food, exercise, labor, sleep, and, in short, to every part of life. This is not so very difficult a matter if one begins in good season and forms regular habits. But what if I should lay down the rule, Be cheerful; take all the troubles and trials of life with perfect equanimity and a smiling countenance? Admirable directions! Your friend, the curly-haired blonde, with florid complexion, round cheeks, the best possible digestion and respiration, the stomach of an ostrich and the lungs of a pearl-diver, finds it perfectly easy to carry them into practice. You, of leaden complexion, with black and lank hair, lean, hollow-eyed, dyspeptic, nervous, find it not so easy to be always hilarious and happy. The truth is that the persons of that buoyant disposition which comes always heralded by a smile, as a yacht driven by a favoring breeze carries a wreath of sparkling foam before her, are born with their happiness ready made. They cannot help being cheerful any more than their saturnine fellow-mortal can help seeing everything through the cloud he carries with him. I give you the precept, then, Be cheerful, for just what it is worth, as I would recommend to you to be six feet, or at least five feet ten, in stature. You cannot settle that matter for yourself, but you can stand up straight, and give your five feet five its—full value. You can help along a little by wearing high-heeled shoes. So you can do something to encourage yourself in serenity of aspect and demeanor, keeping your infirmities and troubles in the background instead of making them the staple of your conversation. This piece of advice, if followed, may be worth from three to five years of the fourscore which you hope to attain.

If, on the other hand, instead of going about cheerily in society, making the best of everything and as far as possible forgetting your troubles, you can make up your mind to economize all your stores of vital energy, to hoard your life as a miser hoards his money, you will stand a fair chance of living until you are tired of life,—fortunate if everybody is not tired of you.

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One of my prescriptions for longevity may startle you somewhat. It is this: Become the subject of a mortal disease. Let half a dozen doctors thump you, and knead you, and test you in every possible way, and render their verdict that you have an internal complaint; they don't know exactly what it is, but it will certainly kill you by and by. Then bid farewell to the world and shut yourself up for an invalid. If you are threescore years old when you begin this mode of life, you may very probably last twenty years, and there you are,—an octogenarian. In the mean time, your friends outside have been dropping off, one after another, until you find yourself almost alone, nursing your mortal complaint as if it were your baby, hugging it and kept alive by it,—if to exist is to live. Who has not seen cases like this,—a man or a woman shutting himself or herself up, visited by a doctor or a succession of doctors (I remember that once, in my earlier experience, I was the twenty-seventh physician who had been consulted), always taking medicine, until everybody was reminded of that impatient speech of a relative of one of these invalid vampires who live on the blood of tired-out attendants, "I do wish she would get well—or something"? Persons who are shut up in that way, confined to their chambers, sometimes to their beds, have a very small amount of vital expenditure, and wear out very little of their living substance. They are like lamps with half their wicks picked down, and will continue to burn when other lamps have used up all their oil. An insurance office might make money by taking no risks except on lives of persons suffering from mortal disease. It is on this principle of economizing the powers of life that a very eminent American physician,—Dr. Weir Mitchell, a man of genius,—has founded his treatment of certain cases of nervous exhaustion.

What have I got to say about temperance, the use of animal food, and so forth? These are questions asked me. Nature has proved a wise teacher, as I think, in my own case. The older I grow, the less use I make of alcoholic stimulants. In fact, I hardly meddle with them at all, except a glass or two of champagne occasionally. I find that by far the best borne of all drinks containing alcohol. I do not suppose my experience can be the foundation of a universal rule. Dr. Holyoke, who lived to be a hundred, used habitually, in moderate quantities, a mixture of cider, water, and rum. I think, as one grows older, less food, especially less animal food, is required. But old people have a right to be epicures, if they can afford it. The pleasures of the palate are among the last gratifications of the senses allowed them. We begin life as little cannibals,—feeding on the flesh and blood of our mothers. We range through all the vegetable and animal products, of nature, and I suppose, if the second childhood could return to the food of the first, it might prove a wholesome diet.

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What do I say to smoking? I cannot grudge an old man his pipe, but I think tobacco often does a good deal of harm to the health,—to the eyes especially, to the nervous system generally, producing headache, palpitation, and trembling. I myself gave it up many years ago. Philosophically speaking, I think self-narcotization and self-alcoholization are rather ignoble substitutes for undisturbed self-consciousness and unfettered self-control.

Here is another of those brain-tapping letters, of similar character, which I have no objection to answering at my own time and in the place which best suits me. As the questions must be supposed to be asked with a purely scientific and philanthropic purpose, it can make little difference when and where they are answered. For myself, I prefer our own tea-table to the symposia to which I am often invited. I do not quarrel with those who invite their friends to a banquet to which many strangers are expected to contribute. It is a very easy and pleasant way of giving an entertainment at little cost and with no responsibility. Somebody has been writing to me about “Oatmeal and Literature,” and somebody else wants to know whether I have found character influenced by diet; also whether, in my opinion, oatmeal is preferable to pie as an American national food.

In answer to these questions, I should say that I have my beliefs and prejudices; but if I were pressed hard for my proofs of their correctness, I should make but a poor show in the witness-box. Most assuredly I do believe that body and mind are much influenced by the kind of food habitually depended upon. I am persuaded that a too exclusively porcine diet gives a bristly character to the beard and hair, which is borrowed from the animal whose tissues these stiff-bearded compatriots of ours have too largely assimilated. I can never stray among the village people of our windy capes without now and then coming upon a human being who looks as if he had been split, salted, and dried, like the salt-fish which has built up his arid organism. If the body is modified by the food which nourishes it, the mind and character very certainly will be modified by it also. We know enough of their close connection with each other to be sure of that, without any statistical observations to prove it.

Do you really want to know “whether oatmeal is preferable to pie as an American national food”? I suppose the best answer I can give to your question is to tell you what is my own practice. Oatmeal in the morning, as an architect lays a bed of concrete to form a base for his superstructure. Pie when I can get it; that is, of the genuine sort, for I am not patriotic enough to think very highly of the article named after the Father of his Country, who was first in war, first in peace,—not first in pies, according to my standard.

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There is a very odd prejudice against pie as an article of diet. It is common to hear every form of bodily degeneracy and infirmity attributed to this particular favorite food. I see no reason or sense in it. Mr. Emerson believed in pie, and was almost indignant when a fellow-traveller refused the slice he offered him. "Why, Mr. _____," said he, "what is pie made for!" If every Green Mountain boy has not eaten a thousand times his weight in apple, pumpkin, squash, and mince pie, call me a dumpling. And Colonel Ethan Allen was one of them,—Ethan Allen, who, as they used to say, could wrench off the head of a wrought nail with his teeth.

If you mean to keep as well as possible, the less you think about your health the better. You know enough not to eat or drink what you have found does not agree with you. You ought to know enough not to expose yourself needlessly to draughts. If you take a "constitutional," walk with the wind when you can, and take a closed car against it if you can get one. Walking against the wind is one of the most dangerous kinds of exposure, if you are sensitive to cold. But except a few simple rules such as I have just given, let your health take care of itself so long as it behaves decently. If you want to be sure not to reach threescore and twenty, get a little box of homoeopathic pellets and a little book of homeopathic prescriptions. I had a poor friend who fell into that way, and became at last a regular Hahnemaniac. He left a box of his little jokers, which at last came into my hands. The poor fellow had cultivated symptoms as other people cultivate roses or chrysanthemums. What a luxury of choice his imagination presented to him! When one watches for symptoms, every organ in the body is ready to put in its claim. By and by a real illness attacked him, and the box of little pellets was shut up, to minister to his fancied evils no longer.

Let me tell you one thing. I think if patients and physicians were in the habit of recognizing the fact I am going to mention, both would be gainers. The law I refer to must be familiar to all observing physicians, and to all intelligent persons who have observed their own bodily and mental conditions. This is the curve of health. It is a mistake to suppose that the normal state of health is represented by a straight horizontal line. Independently of the well-known causes which raise or depress the standard of vitality, there seems to be,—I think I may venture to say there is,—a rhythmic undulation in the flow of the vital force. The "dynamo" which furnishes the working powers of consciousness and action has its annual, its monthly, its diurnal waves, even its momentary ripples, in the current it furnishes. There are greater and lesser curves in the movement of every day's life,—a series of ascending and descending movements, a periodicity depending on the very nature of the force at work in the living organism. Thus we have our good seasons and our bad seasons, our good days and our bad days, life climbing and descending in long or short undulations, which I have called the curve of health.

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From this fact spring a great proportion of the errors of medical practice. On it are based the delusions of the various shadowy systems which impose themselves on the ignorant and half-learned public as branches or “schools” of science. A remedy taken at the time of the ascent in the curve of health is found successful. The same remedy taken while the curve is in its downward movement proves a failure.

So long as this biological law exists, so long the charlatan will keep his hold on the ignorant public. So long as it exists, the wisest practitioner will be liable to deceive himself about the effect of what he calls and loves to think are his remedies. Long-continued and sagacious observation will to some extent undeceive him; but were it not for the happy illusion that his useless or even deleterious drugs were doing good service, many a practitioner would give up his calling for one in which he could be more certain that he was really being useful to the subjects of his professional dealings. For myself, I should prefer a physician of a sanguine temperament, who had a firm belief in himself and his methods. I do not wonder at all that the public support a whole community of pretenders who show the portraits of the patients they have “cured.” The best physicians will tell you that, though many patients get well under their treatment, they rarely cure anybody. If you are told also that the best physician has many more patients die on his hands than the worst of his fellow-practitioners, you may add these two statements to your bundle of paradoxes, and if they puzzle you I will explain them at some future time.

[I take this opportunity of correcting a statement now going the rounds of the medical and probably other periodicals. In “The Journal of the American Medical Association,” dated April 26, 1890, published at Chicago, I am reported, in quotation marks, as saying, “Give me opium, wine, and milk, and I will cure all diseases to which flesh is heir.”

In the first place, I never said I will cure, or can cure, or would or could cure, or had cured any disease. My venerated instructor, Dr. James Jackson, taught me never to use that expression. *Curo* means, I take care of, he used to say, and in that sense, if you mean nothing more, it is properly employed. So, in the amphitheatre of the *Ecole de Medecine*, I used to read the words of Ambroise Pare, “*Je le pansay, Dieu le guarist.*” (I dressed his wound, and God cured him.) Next, I am not in the habit of talking about “the diseases to which flesh is heir.” The expression has become rather too familiar for repetition, and belongs to the rhetoric of other latitudes. And, lastly, I have said some plain things, perhaps some sharp ones, about the abuse of drugs and the limited number of vitally important remedies, but I am not so ignorantly presumptuous as to make the foolish statement falsely attributed to me.]

I paused a minute or two, and as no one spoke out; I put a question to the Counsellor.

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Are you quite sure that you wish to live to be threescore and twenty years old?

“Most certainly I do. Don’t they say that Theophrastus lived to his hundred and seventh year, and did n’t he complain of the shortness of life? At eighty a man has had just about time to get warmly settled in his nest. Do you suppose he doesn’t enjoy the quiet of that resting-place? No more haggard responsibility to keep him awake nights,—unless he prefers to retain his hold on offices and duties from which he can be excused if he chooses. No more goading ambitions,—he knows he has done his best. No more jealousies, if he were weak enough to feel such ignoble stirrings in his more active season. An octogenarian with a good record, and free from annoying or distressing infirmities, ought to be the happiest of men. Everybody treats him with deference. Everybody wants to help him. He is the ward of the generations that have grown up since he was in the vigor of maturity. Yes, let me live to be fourscore years, and then I will tell you whether I should like a few more years or not.”

You carry the feelings of middle age, I said, in imagination, over into the period of senility, and then reason and dream about it as if its whole mode of being were like that of the earlier period of life. But how many things there are in old age which you must live into if you would expect to have any “realizing sense” of their significance! In the first place, you have no coevals, or next to none. At fifty, your vessel is stanch, and you are on deck with the rest, in all weathers. At sixty, the vessel still floats, and you are in the cabin. At seventy, you, with a few fellow-passengers, are on a raft. At eighty, you are on a spars to which, possibly, one, or two, or three friends of about your own age are still clinging. After that, you must expect soon to find yourself alone, if you are still floating, with only a life-preserver to keep your old white-bearded chin above the water.

Kindness? Yes, pitying kindness, which is a bitter sweet in which the amiable ingredient can hardly be said to predominate. How pleasant do you think it is to have an arm offered to you when you are walking on a level surface, where there is no chance to trip? How agreeable do you suppose it is to have your well-meaning friends shout and screech at you, as if you were deaf as an adder, instead of only being, as you insist, somewhat hard of hearing? I was a little over twenty years old when I wrote the lines which some of you may have met with, for they have been often reprinted:

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

The world was a garden to me then; it is a churchyard now.

“I thought you were one of those who looked upon old age cheerfully, and welcomed it as a season of peace and contented enjoyment.”

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I am one of those who so regard it. Those are not bitter or scalding tears that fall from my eyes upon "the mossy marbles." The young who left my side early in my life's journey are still with me in the unchanged freshness and beauty of youth. Those who have long kept company with me live on after their seeming departure, were it only by the mere force of habit; their images are all around me, as if every surface had been a sensitive film that photographed them; their voices echo about me, as if they had been recorded on those unforgetting cylinders which bring back to us the tones and accents that have imprinted them, as the hardened sands show us the tracks of extinct animals. The melancholy of old age has a divine tenderness in it, which only the sad experiences of life can lend a human soul. But there is a lower level,—that of tranquil contentment and easy acquiescence in the conditions in which we find ourselves; a lower level, in which old age trudges patiently when it is not using its wings. I say its wings, for no period of life is so imaginative as that which looks to younger people the most prosaic. The atmosphere of memory is one in which imagination flies more easily and feels itself more at home than in the thinner ether of youthful anticipation. I have told you some of the drawbacks of age; I would not have you forget its privileges. When it comes down from its aerial excursions, it has much left to enjoy on the humble plane of being. And so you think you would like to become an octogenarian? "I should," said the Counsellor, now a man in the high noon of bodily and mental vigor. "Four more—yes, five more—decades would not be too much, I think. And how much I should live to see in that time! I am glad you have laid down some rules by which a man may reasonably expect to leap the eight barred gate. I won't promise to obey them all, though."

Among the questions addressed to me, as to a large number of other persons, are the following. I take them from "The American Hebrew" of April 4, 1890. I cannot pretend to answer them all, but I can say something about one or two of them.

"I. Can you, of your own personal experience, find any justification whatever for the entertainment of prejudice towards individuals solely because they are Jews?

"II. Is this prejudice not due largely to the religious instruction that is given by the church and Sunday-school? For instance, the teachings that the Jews crucified Jesus; that they rejected him, and can only secure salvation by belief in him, and similar matters that are calculated to excite in the impressionable mind of the child an aversion, if not a loathing, for members of 'the despised race.'

"III. Have you observed in the social or business life of the Jew, so far as your personal experience has gone, any different standard of conduct than prevails among Christians of the same social status?

"IV. Can you suggest what should be done to dispel the existing prejudice?"

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As to the first question, I have had very slight acquaintance with the children of Israel. I shared more or less the prevailing prejudices against the persecuted race. I used to read in my hymn-book,—I hope I quote correctly,—

“See what a living stone
The builders did refuse!
Yet God has built his church thereon,
In spite of envious Jews.”

I grew up inheriting the traditional idea that they were a race lying under a curse for their obstinacy in refusing the gospel. Like other children of New England birth, I walked in the narrow path of Puritan exclusiveness. The great historical church of Christendom was presented to me as Bunyan depicted it: one of the two giants sitting at the door of their caves, with the bones, of pilgrims scattered about them, and grinning at the travellers whom they could no longer devour. In the nurseries of old-fashioned Orthodoxy there was one religion in the world,—one religion, and a multitude of detestable, literally damnable impositions, believed in by uncounted millions, who were doomed to perdition for so believing. The Jews were the believers in one of these false religions. It had been true once, but was now a pernicious and abominable lie. The principal use of the Jews seemed to be to lend money, and to fulfil the predictions of the old prophets of their race.

No doubt the individual sons of Abraham whom we found in our ill-favored and ill-flavored streets were apt to be unpleasing specimens of the race. It was against the most adverse influences of legislation, of religious feeling, of social repugnance, that the great names of Jewish origin made themselves illustrious; that the philosophers, the musicians, the financiers, the statesmen, of the last centuries forced the world to recognize and accept them. Benjamin, the son of Isaac, a son of Israel, as his family name makes obvious, has shown how largely Jewish blood has been represented in the great men and women of modern days.

There are two virtues which Christians have found it very hard to exemplify in practice. These are modesty and civility. The Founder of the Christian religion appeared among a people accustomed to look for a Messiah, a special ambassador from heaven, with an authoritative message. They were intimately acquainted with every expression having reference to this divine messenger. They had a religion of their own, about which Christianity agrees with Judaism in asserting that it was of divine origin. It is a serious fact, to which we do not give all the attention it deserves, that this divinely instructed people were not satisfied with the evidence that the young Rabbi who came to overthrow their ancient church and found a new one was a supernatural being. “We think he was a great Doctor,” said a Jewish companion with whom I was conversing. He meant a great Teacher, I presume, though healing the sick was one of his special offices. Instead

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of remembering that they were entitled to form their own judgment of the new Teacher, as they had judged of Hillel and other great instructors, Christians, as they called themselves, have insulted, calumniated, oppressed, abased, outraged, "the chosen race" during the long succession of centuries since the Jewish contemporaries of the Founder of Christianity made up their minds that he did not meet the conditions required by the subject of the predictions of their Scriptures. The course of the argument against them is very briefly and effectively stated by Mr. Emerson:

"This was Jehovah come down out of heaven. I will kill you if you say he was a man."

It seems as if there should be certain laws of etiquette regulating the relation of different religions to each other. It is not civil for a follower of Mahomet to call his neighbor of another creed a "Christian dog." Still more, there should be something like politeness in the bearing of Christian sects toward each other, and of believers in the new dispensation toward those who still adhere to the old. We are in the habit of allowing a certain arrogant assumption to our Roman Catholic brethren. We have got used to their pretensions. They may call us "heretics," if they like. They may speak of us as "infidels," if they choose, especially if they say it in Latin. So long as there is no inquisition, so long as there is no *auto da fe*, we do not mind the hard words much; and we have as good phrases to give them back: the Man of Sin and the Scarlet Woman will serve for examples. But it is better to be civil to each other all round. I doubt if a convert to the religion of Mahomet was ever made by calling a man a Christian dog. I doubt if a Hebrew ever became a good Christian if the baptismal rite was performed by spitting on his Jewish gabardine. I have often thought of the advance in comity and true charity shown in the title of my late honored friend James Freeman Clarke's book, "The Ten Great Religions." If the creeds of mankind try to understand each other before attempting mutual extermination, they will be sure to find a meaning in beliefs which are different from their own. The old Calvinistic spirit was almost savagely exclusive. While the author of the "Ten Great Religions" was growing up in Boston under the benignant, large-minded teachings of the Rev. James Freeman, the famous Dr. John M. Mason, at New York, was fiercely attacking the noble humanity of "The Universal Prayer." "In preaching," says his biographer, "he once quoted Pope's lines as to God's being adored alike 'by saint, by savage, and by sage,' and pronounced it (in his deepest guttural) 'the most damnable lie.'"

What could the Hebrew expect when a Christian preacher could use such language about a petition breathing the very soul of humanity? Happily, the true human spirit is encroaching on that arrogant and narrow-minded form of selfishness which called itself Christianity.

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The golden rule should govern us in dealing with those whom we call unbelievers, with heathen, and with all who do not accept our religious views. The Jews are with us as a perpetual lesson to teach us modesty and civility. The religion we profess is not self-evident. It did not convince the people to whom it was sent. We have no claim to take it for granted that we are all right, and they are all wrong. And, therefore, in the midst of all the triumphs of Christianity, it is well that the stately synagogue should lift its walls by the side of the aspiring cathedral, a perpetual reminder that there are many mansions in the Father's earthly house as well as in the heavenly one; that civilized humanity, longer in time and broader in space than any historical form of belief, is mightier than any one institution or organization it includes.

Many years ago I argued with myself the proposition which my Hebrew correspondent has suggested. Recognizing the fact that I was born to a birthright of national and social prejudices against "the chosen people,"—chosen as the object of contumely and abuse by the rest of the world,—I pictured my own inherited feelings of aversion in all their intensity, and the strain of thought under the influence of which those prejudices gave way to a more human, a more truly Christian feeling of brotherhood. I must ask your indulgence while I quote a few verses from a poem of my own, printed long ago under the title "At the Pantomime."

I was crowded between two children of Israel, and gave free inward expression to my feelings. All at once I happened to look more closely at one of my neighbors, and saw that the youth was the very ideal of the Son of Mary.

A fresh young cheek whose olive hue
The mantling blood shows faintly through;
Locks dark as midnight, that divide
And shade the neck on either side;
Soft, gentle, loving eyes that gleam
Clear as a starlit mountain stream;
So looked that other child of Shem,
The Maiden's Boy of Bethlehem!

—And thou couldst scorn the peerless blood
That flows unmingled from the Flood,
Thy scutcheon spotted with the stains
Of Norman thieves and pirate Danes!
The New World's foundling, in thy pride
Scowl on the Hebrew at thy side,
And lo! the very semblance there
The Lord of Glory deigned to wear!

I see that radiant image rise,
The flowing hair, the pitying eyes,

The faintly crimsoned cheek that shows
The blush of Sharon's opening rose,
Thy hands would clasp his hallowed feet
Whose brethren soil thy Christian seat,
Thy lips would press his garment's hem
That curl in wrathful scorn for them!

A sudden mist, a watery screen,
Dropped like a veil before the scene;
The shadow floated from my soul,
And to my lips a whisper stole:
—Thy prophets caught the Spirit's flame,
From thee the Son of Mary came,
With thee the Father deigned to dwell,
Peace be upon thee, Israel!

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It is not to be expected that intimate relations will be established between Jewish and Christian communities until both become so far rationalized and humanized that their differences are comparatively unimportant. But already there is an evident approximation in the extreme left of what is called liberal Christianity and the representatives of modern Judaism. The life of a man like the late Sir Moses Montefiore reads a lesson from the Old Testament which might well have been inspired by the noblest teachings of the Christian Gospels.

Delilah, and how she got her name.

Est-elle bien gentille, cette petite? I said one day to Number Five, as our pretty Delilah put her arm between us with a bunch of those tender early radishes that so recall the rosy-fingered morning of Homer. The little hand which held the radishes would not have shamed Aurora. That hand has never known drudgery, I feel sure.

When I spoke those French words our little Delilah gave a slight, seemingly involuntary start, and her cheeks grew of as bright a red as her radishes. Ah, said I to myself; does that young girl understand French? It may be worth while to be careful what one says before her.

There is a mystery about this girl. She seems to know her place perfectly,—except, perhaps, when she burst out crying, the other day, which was against all the rules of table-maiden's etiquette,—and yet she looks as if she had been born to be waited on, and not to perform that humble service for others. We know that once in a while girls with education and well connected take it into their heads to go into service for a few weeks or months. Sometimes it is from economic motives,—to procure means for their education, or to help members of their families who need assistance. At any rate, they undertake the lighter menial duties of some household where they are not known, and, having stooped—if stooping it is to be considered—to lowly offices, no born and bred servants are more faithful to all their obligations. You must not suppose she was christened Delilah. Any of our ministers would hesitate to give such a heathen name to a Christian child.

The way she came to get it was this: The Professor was going to give a lecture before an occasional audience, one evening. When he took his seat with the other Teacups, the American Annex whispered to the other Annex, "His hair wants cutting,—it looks like fury." "Quite so," said the English Annex. "I wish you would tell him so,—I do, awfully." "I'll fix it," said the American girl. So, after the teacups were emptied and the company had left the table, she went up to the Professor. "You read this lecture, don't you, Professor?" she said. "I do," he answered. "I should think that lock of hair which falls down over your forehead would trouble you," she said. "It does sometimes," replied the Professor. "Let our little maid trim it for you. You're equal to that,

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aren't you?" turning to the handmaiden. "I always used to cut my father's hair," she answered. She brought a pair of glittering shears, and before she would let the Professor go she had trimmed his hair and beard as they had not been dealt with for many a day. Everybody said the Professor looked ten years younger. After that our little handmaiden was always called Delilah, among the talking Teacups.

The Mistress keeps a watchful eye on this young girl. I should not be surprised to find that she was carrying out some ideal, some fancy or whim,—possibly nothing more, but springing from some generous, youthful impulse. Perhaps she is working for that little sister at the Blind Asylum. Where did she learn French? She did certainly blush, and betrayed every sign of understanding the words spoken about her in that language. Sometimes she sings while at her work, and we have all been struck with the pure, musical character of her voice. It is just such a voice as ought to come from that round white throat. We made a discovery about it the other evening.

The Mistress keeps a piano in her room, and we have sometimes had music in the evening. One of The Teacups, to whom I have slightly referred, is an accomplished pianist, and the two Annexes sing very sweetly together,—the American girl having a clear soprano voice, the English girl a mellow contralto. They had sung several tunes, when the Mistress rang for Avis,—for that is our Delilah's real name. She whispered to the young girl, who blushed and trembled. "Don't be frightened," said the Mistress encouragingly. "I have heard you singing 'Too Young for Love,' and I will get our pianist to play it. The young ladies both know it, and you must join in."

The two voices, with the accompaniment, had hardly finished the first line when a pure, ringing, almost childlike voice joined the vocal duet. The sound of her own voice seemed to make her forget her fears, and she warbled as naturally and freely as any young bird of a May morning. Number Five came in while she was singing, and when she got through caught her in her arms and kissed her, as if she were her sister, and not Delilah, our table-maid. Number Five is apt to forget herself and those social differences to which some of us attach so much importance. This is the song in which the little maid took part:

Too young for love.

Too young for love?
Ah, say not so!
Tell reddening rose-buds not to blow!
Wait not for spring to pass away,
—Love's summer months begin with May!
Too young for love?
Ah, say not so!



Too young? Too young?
Ah, no! no! no!

Too young for love?
Ah, say not so,
While daisies bloom and tulips glow!
June soon will come with lengthened day
To practise all love learned in May.
Too young for love?
Ah, say not so!
Too young? Too young?
Ah, no! no! no!

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IX

I often wish that our Number Seven could have known and corresponded with the author of "The Budget of Paradoxes." I think Mr. De Morgan would have found some of his vagaries and fancies not undeserving of a place in his wonderful collection of eccentricities, absurdities, ingenuities,—mental freaks of all sorts. But I think he would have now and then recognized a sound idea, a just comparison, a suggestive hint, a practical notion, which redeemed a page of extravagances and crotchety whims. I confess that I am often pleased with fancies of his, and should be willing to adopt them as my own. I think he has, in the midst of his erratic and tangled conceptions, some perfectly clear and consistent trains of thought.

So when Number Seven spoke of sending us a paper, I welcomed the suggestion. I asked him whether he had any objection to my looking it over before he read it. My proposal rather pleased him, I thought, for, as was observed on a former occasion, he has in connection with a belief in himself another side,—a curious self-distrust. I have no question that he has an obscure sense of some mental deficiency. Thus you may expect from him first a dogma, and presently a doubt. If you fight his dogma, he will do battle for it stoutly; if you let him alone, he will very probably explain its extravagances, if it has any, and tame it into reasonable limits. Sometimes he is in one mood, sometimes in another.

The first portion of what we listened to shows him at his best; in the latter part I am afraid you will think he gets a little wild.

I proceed to lay before you the paper which Number Seven read to The Teacups. There was something very pleasing in the deference which was shown him. We all feel that there is a crack in the teacup, and are disposed to handle it carefully. I have left out a few things which he said, feeling that they might give offence to some of the company. There were sentences so involved and obscure that I was sure they would not be understood, if indeed he understood them himself. But there are other passages so entirely sane, and as it seems to me so just, that if any reader attributes them to me I shall not think myself wronged by the supposition. You must remember that Number Seven has had a fair education, that he has been a wide reader in many directions, and that he belongs to a family of remarkable intellectual gifts. So it was not surprising that he said some things which pleased the company, as in fact they did. The reader will not be startled to see a certain abruptness in the transition from one subject to another,—it is a characteristic of the squinting brain wherever you find it. Another curious mark rarely wanting in the subjects of mental strabismus is an irregular and often sprawling and deformed handwriting. Many and many a time I have said, after glancing at the back of a letter, "This comes from an insane asylum, or from an eccentric who might well be a candidate for such an institution." Number Seven's manuscript, which showed marks of my corrections here and there, furnished good examples of the chirography of

persons with ill-mated cerebral hemispheres. But the earlier portions of the manuscript are of perfectly normal appearance.

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Conticuere omnes, as Virgil says. We were all silent as Number Seven began the reading of his paper.

Number Seven reads.

I am the seventh son of a seventh son, as I suppose you all know. It is commonly believed that some extraordinary gifts belong to the fortunate individuals born under these exceptional conditions. However this may be, a peculiar virtue was supposed to dwell in me from my earliest years. My touch was believed to have the influence formerly attributed to that of the kings and queens of England. You may remember that the great Dr. Samuel Johnson, when a child, was carried to be touched by her Majesty Queen Anne for the “king’s evil,” as scrofula used to be called. Our honored friend The Dictator will tell you that the brother of one of his Andover schoolmates was taken to one of these gifted persons, who touched him, and hung a small bright silver coin, either a “fourpence ha’penny” or a “ninepence,” about his neck, which, strange to say, after being worn a certain time, became tarnished, and finally black,—a proof of the poisonous matters which had become eliminated from the system and gathered upon the coin. I remember that at one time I used to carry fourpence ha’pennies with holes bored through them, which I furnished to children or to their mothers, under pledges of secrecy,—receiving a piece of silver of larger dimensions in exchange. I never felt quite sure about any extraordinary endowment being a part of my inheritance in virtue of my special conditions of birth. A phrenologist, who examined my head when I was a boy, said the two sides were unlike. My hatter’s measurement told me the same thing; but in looking over more than a bushel of the small cardboard hat-patterns which give the exact shape of the head, I have found this is not uncommon. The phrenologist made all sorts of predictions of what I should be and do, which proved about as near the truth as those recorded in Miss Edith Thomas’s charming little poem, “Augury,” which some of us were reading the other day.

I have never been through college, but I had a relative who was famous as a teacher of rhetoric in one of our universities, and especially for taking the nonsense out of sophomorical young fellows who could not say anything without rigging it up in showy and sounding phrases. I think I learned from him to express myself in good old-fashioned English, and without making as much fuss about it as our Fourth of July orators and political haranguers were in the habit of making.

I read a good many stories during my boyhood, one of which left a lasting impression upon me, and which I have always commended to young people. It is too late, generally, to try to teach old people, yet one may profit by it at any period of life before the sight has become too dim to be of any use. The story I refer to is in “Evenings at Home,” and is called “Eyes and No Eyes.” I ought to have it by me, but it is constantly happening that the best old things get overlaid by the newest trash; and though I have never seen anything of the kind half so good, my table and shelves are cracking with the weight of involuntary accessions to my library.

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This is the story as I remember it: Two children walk out, and are questioned when they come home. One has found nothing to observe, nothing to admire, nothing to describe, nothing to ask questions about. The other has found everywhere objects of curiosity and interest. I advise you, if you are a child anywhere under forty-five, and do not yet wear glasses, to send at once for “Evenings at Home” and read that story. For myself, I am always grateful to the writer of it for calling my attention to common things. How many people have been waked to a quicker consciousness of life by Wordsworth’s simple lines about the daffodils, and what he says of the thoughts suggested to him by “the meanest flower that blows”!

I was driving with a friend, the other day, through a somewhat dreary stretch of country, where there seemed to be very little to attract notice or deserve remark. Still, the old spirit infused by “Eyes and No Eyes” was upon me, and I looked for something to fasten my thought upon, and treat as an artist treats a study for a picture. The first object to which my eyes were drawn was an old-fashioned well-sweep. It did not take much imaginative sensibility to be stirred by the sight of this most useful, most ancient, most picturesque, of domestic conveniences. I know something of the shadoof of Egypt,—the same arrangement by which the sacred waters of the Nile have been lifted, from the days of the Pharaohs to those of the Khedives. That long forefinger pointing to heaven was a symbol which spoke to the Puritan exile as it spoke of old to the enslaved Israelite. Was there ever any such water as that which we used to draw from the deep, cold well, in “the old oaken bucket”? What memories gather about the well in all ages! What love-matches have been made at its margin, from the times of Jacob and, Rachel downward! What fairy legends hover over it, what fearful mysteries has it hidden! The beautiful well-sweep! It is too rarely that we see it, and as it dies out and gives place to the odiously convenient pump, with the last patent on its cast-iron uninterestingness, does it not seem as if the farmyard aspect had lost half its attraction? So long as the dairy farm exists, doubtless there must be every facility for getting water in abundance; but the loss of the well-sweep cannot be made up to us even if our milk were diluted to twice its present attenuation.

The well-sweep had served its turn, and my companion and I relapsed into silence. After a while we passed another farmyard, with nothing which seemed deserving of remark except the wreck of an old wagon.

“Look,” I said, “if you want to see one of the greatest of all the triumphs of human ingenuity, one of the most beautiful, as it is one of the most useful, of all the mechanisms which the intelligence of successive ages has called into being.”

“I see nothing,” my companion answered, “but an old broken-down wagon. Why they leave such a piece of lumbering trash about their place, where people can see it as they pass, is more than I can account for.”

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“And yet,” said I, “there is one of the most extraordinary products of human genius and skill,—an object which combines the useful and the beautiful to an extent which hardly any simple form of mechanism can pretend to rival. Do you notice how, while everything else has gone to smash, that wheel remains sound and fit for service? Look at it merely for its beauty.

“See the perfect circles, the outer and the inner. A circle is in itself a consummate wonder of geometrical symmetry. It is the line in which the omnipotent energy delights to move. There is no fault in it to be amended. The first drawn circle and the last both embody the same complete fulfillment of a perfect design. Then look at the rays which pass from the inner to the outer circle. How beautifully they bring the greater and lesser circles into connection with each other! The flowers know that secret,—the marguerite in the meadow displays it as clearly as the great sun in heaven. How beautiful is this flower of wood and iron, which we were ready to pass by without wasting a look upon it! But its beauty is only the beginning of its wonderful claim upon us for our admiration. Look at that field of flowering grass, the triticum vulgare,—see how its waves follow the breeze in satiny alternations of light and shadow. You admire it for its lovely aspect; but when you remember that this flowering grass is wheat, the finest food of the highest human races, it gains a dignity, a glory, that its beauty alone could not give it.

“Now look at that exquisite structure lying neglected and disgraced, but essentially unchanged in its perfection, before you. That slight and delicate-looking fabric has stood such a trial as hardly any slender contrivance, excepting always the valves of the heart, was ever subjected to. It has rattled for years over the cobble-stones of a rough city pavement. It has climbed over all the accidental obstructions it met in the highway, and dropped into all the holes and deep ruts that made the heavy farmer sitting over it use his Sunday vocabulary in a week-day form of speech. At one time or another, almost every part of that old wagon has given way. It has had two new pairs of shafts. Twice the axle has broken off close to the hub, or nave. The seat broke when Zekle and Huldy were having what they called ‘a ride’ together. The front was kicked in by a vicious mare. The springs gave way and the floor bumped on the axle. Every portion of the wagon became a prey of its special accident, except that most fragile looking of all its parts, the wheel. Who can help admiring the exact distribution of the power of resistance at the least possible expenditure of material which is manifested in this wondrous triumph of human genius and skill? The spokes are planted in the solid hub as strongly as the jaw-teeth of a lion in their deep-sunken sockets. Each spoke has its own territory in the circumference, for which it is responsible. According to the load the vehicle

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is expected to carry, they are few or many, stout or slender, but they share their joint labor with absolute justice,—not one does more, not one does less, than its just proportion. The outer end of the spokes is received into the deep mortise of the wooden fellies, and the structure appears to be complete. But how long would it take to turn that circle into a polygon, unless some mighty counteracting force should prevent it? See the iron tire brought hot from the furnace and laid around the smoking circumference. Once in place, the workman cools the hot iron; and as it shrinks with a force that seems like a hand-grasp of the Omnipotent, it clasps the fitted fragments of the structure, and compresses them into a single inseparable whole.

“Was it not worth our while to stop a moment before passing that old broken wagon, and see whether we could not find as much in it as Swift found in his ‘Meditations on a Broomstick’? I have been laughed at for making so much of such a common thing as a wheel. Idiots! Solomon’s court fool would have scoffed at the thought of the young Galilean who dared compare the lilies of the field to his august master. Nil admirari is very well for a North American Indian and his degenerate successor, who has grown too grand to admire anything but himself, and takes a cynical pride in his stolid indifference to everything worth reverencing or honoring.”

After calling my companion’s attention to the wheel, and discoursing upon it until I thought he was getting sleepy, we jogged along until we came to a running stream. It was crossed by a stone bridge of a single arch. There are very few stone arches over the streams in New England country towns, and I always delighted in this one. It was built in the last century, amidst the doubting predictions of staring rustics, and stands to-day as strong as ever, and seemingly good for centuries to come.

“See there!” said I,—“there is another of my ‘Eyes and No Eyes’ subjects to meditate upon. Next to the wheel, the arch is the noblest of those elementary mechanical composites, corresponding to the proximate principles of chemistry. The beauty of the arch consists first in its curve, commonly a part of the circle, of the perfection of which I have spoken. But the mind derives another distinct pleasure from the admirable manner in which the several parts, each different from all the others, contribute to a single harmonious effect. It is a typical example of the *piu nel uno*. An arch cut out or a single stone would not be so beautiful as one of which each individual stone was shaped for its exact position. Its completion by the locking of the keystone is a delight to witness and to contemplate. And how the arch endures, when its lateral thrust is met by solid masses of resistance! In one of the great temples of Baalbec a keystone has slipped, but how rare is that occurrence! One will hardly find another such example among all the ruins of antiquity.

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Yes, I never get tired of arches. They are noble when shaped of solid marble blocks, each carefully beveled for its position. They are beautiful when constructed with the large thin tiles the Romans were so fond of using. I noticed some arches built in this way in the wall of one of the grand houses just going up on the bank of the river. They were over the capstones of the windows,—to take off the pressure from them, no doubt, for now and then a capstone will crack under the weight of the superincumbent mass. How close they fit, and how striking the effect of their long radiations!"

The company listened very well up to this point. When he began the strain of thoughts which follows, a curious look went round The Teacups.

What a strange underground life is that which is led by the organisms we call trees! These great fluttering masses of leaves, stems, boughs, trunks, are not the real trees. They live underground, and what we see are nothing more nor less than their tails.

The Mistress dropped her teaspoon. Number Five looked at the Doctor, whose face was very still and sober. The two Annexes giggled, or came very near it.

Yes, a tree is an underground creature, with its tail in the air. All its intelligence is in its roots. All the senses it has are in its roots. Think what sagacity it shows in its search after food and drink! Somehow or other, the rootlets, which are its tentacles, find out that there is a brook at a moderate distance from the trunk of the tree, and they make for it with all their might. They find every crack in the rocks where there are a few grains of the nourishing substance they care for, and insinuate themselves into its deepest recesses. When spring and summer come, they let their tails grow, and delight in whisking them about in the wind, or letting them be whisked about by it; for these tails are poor passive things, with very little will of their own, and bend in whatever direction the wind chooses to make them. The leaves make a deal of noise whispering. I have sometimes thought I could understand them, as they talk with each other, and that they seemed to think they made the wind as they wagged forward and back. Remember what I say. The next time you see a tree waving in the wind, recollect that it is the tail of a great underground, many-armed, polypus-like creature, which is as proud of its caudal appendage, especially in summer-time, as a peacock of his gorgeous expanse of plumage.

Do you think there is anything so very odd about this idea? Once get it well into your heads, and you will find it renders the landscape wonderfully interesting. There are as many kinds of tree-tails as there are of tails to dogs and other quadrupeds. Study them as Daddy Gilpin studied them in his "Forest Scenery," but don't forget that they are only the appendage of the underground vegetable polypus, the true organism to which they belong.

He paused at this point, and we all drew long breaths, wondering what was coming next. There was no denying it, the “cracked Teacup” was clinking a little false,—so it seemed to the company. Yet, after all, the fancy was not delirious,—the mind could follow it well enough; let him go on.

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What do you say to this? You have heard all sorts of things said in prose and verse about Niagara. Ask our young Doctor there what it reminds him of. Is n't it a giant putting his tongue out? How can you fail to see the resemblance? The continent is a great giant, and the northern half holds the head and shoulders. You can count the pulse of the giant wherever the tide runs up a creek; but if you want to look at the giant's tongue, you must go to Niagara. If there were such a thing as a cosmic physician, I believe he could tell the state of the country's health, and the prospects of the mortality for the coming season, by careful inspection of the great tongue, which Niagara is putting out for him, and has been showing to mankind ever since the first flint-shapers chipped their arrow-heads. You don't think the idea adds to the sublimity and associations of the cataract? I am sorry for that, but I can't help the suggestion. It is just as manifestly a tongue put out for inspection as if it had Nature's own label to that effect hung over it. I don't know whether you can see these things as clearly as I do. There are some people that never see anything, if it is as plain as a hole in a grindstone, until it is pointed out to them; and some that can't see it then, and won't believe there is any hole till they've poked their finger through it. I've got a great many things to thank God for, but perhaps most of all that I can find something to admire, to wonder at, to set my fancy going, and to wind up my enthusiasm pretty much everywhere.

Look here! There are crowds of people whirled through our streets on these new-fashioned cars, with their witch-broomsticks overhead,—if they don't come from Salem, they ought to,—and not more than one in a dozen of these fish-eyed bipeds thinks or cares a nickel's worth about the miracle which is wrought for their convenience. They know that without hands or feet, without horses, without steam, so far as they can see, they are transported from place to place, and that there is nothing to account for it except the witch-broomstick and the iron or copper cobweb which they see stretched above them. What do they know or care about this last revelation of the omnipresent spirit of the material universe? We ought to go down on our knees when one of these mighty caravans, car after car, spins by us, under the mystic impulse which seems to know not whether its train is loaded or empty. We are used to force in the muscles of horses, in the expansive potency of steam, but here we have force stripped stark naked, —nothing but a filament to cover its nudity,—and yet showing its might in efforts that would task the working-beam of a ponderous steam-engine. I am thankful that in an age of cynicism I have not lost my reverence. Perhaps you would wonder to see how some very common sights impress me. I always take off my hat if I stop to speak to a stone-cutter at his work. "Why?" do you ask me? Because I know

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that his is the only labor that is likely to endure. A score of centuries has not effaced the marks of the Greek's or the Roman's chisel on his block of marble. And now, before this new manifestation of that form of cosmic vitality which we call electricity, I feel like taking the posture of the peasants listening to the Angelus. How near the mystic effluence of mechanical energy brings us to the divine source of all power and motion! In the old mythology, the right hand of Jove held and sent forth the lightning. So, in the record of the Hebrew prophets, did the right hand of Jehovah cast forth and direct it. Was Nahum thinking of our far-off time when he wrote, "The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings"?

Number Seven had finished reading his paper. Two bright spots in his cheeks showed that he had felt a good deal in writing it, and the flush returned as he listened to his own thoughts. Poor old fellow! The "cracked Teacup" of our younger wits,—not yet come to their full human sensibilities,—the "crank" of vulgar tongues, the eccentric, the seventh son of a seventh son, too often made the butt of thoughtless pleasantry, was, after all, a fellow-creature, with flesh and blood like the rest of us. The wild freaks of his fancy did not hurt us, nor did they prevent him from seeing many things justly, and perhaps sometimes more vividly and acutely than if he were as sound as the dullest of us.

The teaspoons tinkled loudly all round the table, as he finished reading. The Mistress caught her breath. I was afraid she was going to sob, but she took it out in vigorous stirring of her tea. Will you believe that I saw Number Five, with a sweet, approving smile on her face all the time, brush her cheek with her hand-kerchief? There must have been a tear stealing from beneath its eyelid. I hope Number Seven saw it. He is one of the two men at our table who most need the tender looks and tones of a woman. The Professor and I are hors de combat; the Counsellor is busy with his cases and his ambitions; the Doctor is probably in love with a microscope, and flirting with pathological specimens; but Number Seven and the Tutor are, I fear, both suffering from that worst of all famines, heart-hunger.

Do you remember that Number Seven said he never wrote a line of "poetry" in his life, except once when he was suffering from temporary weakness of body and mind? That is because he is a poet. If he had not been one, he would very certainly have taken to tinkling rhymes. What should you think of the probable musical genius of a young man who was particularly fond of jingling a set of sleigh-bells? Should you expect him to turn out a Mozart or a Beethoven? Now, I think I recognize the poetical instinct in Number Seven, however imperfect may be its expression, and however he may be run away with at times by fantastic

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notions that come into his head. If fate had allotted him a helpful companion in the shape of a loving and intelligent wife, he might have been half cured of his eccentricities, and we should not have had to say, in speaking of him, "Poor fellow!" But since this cannot be, I am pleased that he should have been so kindly treated on the occasion of the reading of his paper. If he saw Number Five's tear, he will certainly fall in love with her. No matter if he does Number Five is a kind of Circe who does not turn the victims of her enchantment into swine, but into lambs. I want to see Number Seven one of her little flock. I say "little." I suspect it is larger than most of us know. Anyhow, she can spare him sympathy and kindness and encouragement enough to keep him contented with himself and with her, and never miss the pulses of her loving life she lends him. It seems to be the errand of some women to give many people as much happiness as they have any right to in this world. If they concentrated their affection on one, they would give him more than any mortal could claim as his share. I saw Number Five watering her flowers, the other day. The watering-pot had one of those perforated heads, through which the water runs in many small streams. Every plant got its share: the proudest lily bent beneath the gentle shower; the lowliest daisy held its little face up for baptism. All were refreshed, none was flooded. Presently she took the perforated head, or "rose," from the neck of the watering-pot, and the full stream poured out in a round, solid column. It was almost too much for the poor geranium on which it fell, and it looked at one minute as if the roots would be laid bare, and perhaps the whole plant be washed out of the soil in which it was planted. What if Number Five should take off the "rose" that sprinkles her affections on so many, and pour them all on one? Can that ever be? If it can, life is worth living for him on whom her love may be lavished.

One of my neighbors, a thorough American, is much concerned about the growth of what he calls the "hard-handed aristocracy." He tells the following story:—

"I was putting up a fence about my yard, and employed a man of whom I knew something,—that he was industrious, temperate, and that he had a wife and children to support,—a worthy man, a native New Englander. I engaged him, I say, to dig some post-holes. My employee bought a new spade and scoop on purpose, and came to my place at the appointed time, and began digging. While he was at work, two men came over from a drinking-saloon, to which my residence is nearer than I could desire. One of them I had known as Mike Fagan, the other as Hans Schleimer. They looked at Hiram, my New Hampshire man, in a contemptuous and threatening way for a minute or so, when Fagan addressed him:

"'And how much does the man pay yez by the hour?'

"'The gentleman does n't pay me by the hour,' said Hiram.

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“How mosh does he bay you by der veeks?’ said Hans.

“‘I don’ know as that’s any of your business,’ answered Hiram.

“‘Faith, we’ll make it our business,’ said Mike Fagan. ‘We’re Knights of Labor, we’d have yez to know, and ye can’t make yer bargains jist as ye loikes. We manes to know how mony hours ye worrks, and how much ye gets for it.’

“‘Knights of Labor!’ said I. ‘Why, that is a kind of title of nobility, is n’t it? I thought the laws of our country did n’t allow titles of that kind. But if you have a right to be called knights, I suppose I ought to address you as such. Sir Michael, I congratulate you on the dignity you have attained. I hope Lady Fagan is getting on well with my shirts. Sir Hans, I pay my respects to your title. I trust that Lady Schleixner has got through that little difficulty between her ladyship and yourself in which the police court thought it necessary to intervene.’

“The two men looked at me. I weigh about a hundred and eighty pounds, and am well put together. Hiram was noted in his village as a ‘rahstler.’ But my face is rather pallid and peaked, and Hiram had something of the greenhorn look. The two men, who had been drinking, hardly knew what ground to take. They rather liked the sound of Sir Michael and, Sir Hans. They did not know very well what to make of their wives as ‘ladies.’ They looked doubtful whether to take what had been said as a casus belli or not, but they wanted a pretext of some kind or other. Presently one of them saw a label on the scoop, or longhanded, spoon-like shovel, with which Hiram had been working.

“‘Arrah, be jabbers!’ exclaimed Mike Fagan, ‘but has n’t he been a-tradin’ wid Brown, the hardware fellah, that we boycotted! Grab it, Hans, and we’ll carry it off and show it to the brotherhood.’

“The men made a move toward the implement.

“‘You let that are scoop-shovel alone,’ said Hiram.

“I stepped to his side. The Knights were combative, as their noble predecessors with the same title always were, and it was necessary to come to a voie de fait. My straight blow from the shoulder did for Sir Michael. Hiram treated Sir Hans to what is technically known as a cross-buttock.

“‘Naow, Dutchman,’ said Hiram, ‘if you don’t want to be planted in that are post-hole, y’d better take y’rself out o’ this here piece of private property. “Dangerous passin,” as the sign-posts say, abaout these times.’

“Sir Michael went down half stunned by my expressive gesture; Sir Hans did not know whether his hip was out of joint or he had got a bad sprain; but they were both out of condition for further hostilities. Perhaps it was hardly fair to take advantage of their

misfortunes to inflict a discourse upon them, but they had brought it on themselves, and we each of us gave them a piece of our mind.

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“I tell you what it is,” said Hiram, “I’m a free and independent American citizen, and I an’t a-gon’ to hev no man tyrannize over me, if he doos call himself by one o’ them noblemen’s titles. Ef I can’t work jes’ as I choose, fur folks that wants me to work fur ’em and that I want to work fur, I might jes’ as well go to Sibery and done with it. My gran’f’ther fit in Bunker Hill battle. I guess if our folks in them days did n’t care no great abaout Lord Percy and Sir William Haowe, we an’t a-gon’ to be scart by Sir Michael Fagan and Sir Hans What ’s-his-name, nor no other fellahs that undertakes to be noblemen, and tells us common folks what we shall dew an’ what we sha’n’t. No, sir!”

“I took the opportunity to explain to Sir Michael and Sir Hans what it was our fathers fought for, and what is the meaning of liberty. If these noblemen did not like the country, they could go elsewhere. If they did n’t like the laws, they had the ballot-box, and could choose new legislators. But as long as the laws existed they must obey them. I could not admit that, because they called themselves by the titles the Old World nobility thought so much of, they had a right to interfere in the agreements I entered into with my neighbor. I told Sir Michael that if he would go home and help Lady Fagan to saw and split the wood for her fire, he would be better employed than in meddling with my domestic arrangements. I advised Sir Hans to ask Lady Schleimer for her bottle of spirits to use as an embrocation for his lame hip. And so my two visitors with the aristocratic titles staggered off, and left us plain, untitled citizens, Hiram and myself, to set our posts, and consider the question whether we lived in a free country or under the authority of a self-constituted order of quasi-nobility.”

It is a very curious fact that, with all our boasted “free and equal” superiority over the communities of the Old World, our people have the most enormous appetite for Old World titles of distinction. Sir Michael and Sir Hans belong to one of the most extended of the aristocratic orders. But we have also “Knights and Ladies of Honor,” and, what is still grander, “Royal Conclave of Knights and Ladies,” “Royal Arcanum,” and “Royal Society of Good Fellows,” “Supreme Council,” “Imperial Court,” “Grand Protector,” and “Grand Dictator,” and so on. Nothing less than “Grand” and “Supreme” is good enough for the dignitaries of our associations of citizens. Where does all this ambition for names without realities come from? Because a Knight of the Garter wears a golden star, why does the worthy cordwainer, who mends the shoes of his fellow-citizens, want to wear a tin star, and take a name that had a meaning as used by the representatives of ancient families, or the men who had made themselves illustrious by their achievements?

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It appears to be a peculiarly American weakness. The French republicans of the earlier period thought the term citizen was good enough for anybody. At a later period, “Roi Citoyen”—the citizen king was a common title given to Louis Philippe. But nothing is too grand for the American, in the way of titles. The proudest of them all signify absolutely nothing. They do not stand for ability, for public service, for social importance, for large possessions; but, on the contrary, are oftenest found in connection with personalities to which they are supremely inapplicable. We can hardly afford to quarrel with a national habit which, if lightly handled, may involve us in serious domestic difficulties. The “Right Worshipful” functionary whose equipage stops at my back gate, and whose services are indispensable to the health and comfort of my household, is a dignitary whom I must not offend. I must speak with proper deference to the lady who is scrubbing my floors, when I remember that her husband, who saws my wood, carries a string of high-sounding titles which would satisfy a Spanish nobleman.

After all, every people must have its own forms of ostentation, pretence, and vulgarity. The ancient Romans had theirs, the English and the French have theirs as well,—why should not we Americans have ours? Educated and refined persons must recognize frequent internal conflicts between the “Homo sum” of Terence and the “Odi profanum vulgus” of Horace. The nobler sentiment should be that of every true American, and it is in that direction that our best civilization is constantly tending.

We were waited on by a new girl, the other evening. Our pretty maiden had left us for a visit to some relative,—so the Mistress said. I do sincerely hope she will soon come back, for we all like to see her flitting round the table.

I don’t know what to make of it. I had it all laid out in my mind. With such a company there must be a love-story. Perhaps there will be, but there may be new combinations of the elements which are to make it up, and here is a bud among the full-blown flowers to which I must devote a little space.

Delilah.

I must call her by the name we gave her after she had trimmed the Samson locks of our Professor. Delilah is a puzzle to most of us. A pretty creature, dangerously pretty to be in a station not guarded by all the protective arrangements which surround the maidens of a higher social order. It takes a strong cage to keep in a tiger or a grizzly bear, but what iron bars, what barbed wires, can keep out the smooth and subtle enemy that finds out the cage where beauty is imprisoned? Our young Doctor is evidently attracted by the charming maiden who serves him and us so modestly and so gracefully. Fortunately, the Mistress never loses sight of her. If she were her own daughter, she could not be more watchful of all her movements. And yet I do not believe that Delilah needs all this overlooking. If I

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am not mistaken, she knows how to take care of herself, and could be trusted anywhere, in any company, without a duenna. She has a history,—I feel sure of it. She has been trained and taught as young persons of higher position in life are brought up, and does not belong in the humble station in which we find her. But inasmuch as the Mistress says nothing about her antecedents, we do not like to be too inquisitive. The two Annexes are, it is plain, very curious about her. I cannot wonder. They are both good-looking girls, but Delilah is prettier than either of them. My sight is not so good as it was, but I can see the way in which the eyes of the young people follow each other about plainly enough to set me thinking as to what is going on in the thinking marrow behind them. The young Doctor's follow Delilah as she glides round the table,—they look into hers whenever they get a chance; but the girl's never betray any consciousness of it, so far as I can see. There is no mistaking the interest with which the two, Annexes watch all this. Why shouldn't they, I should like to know? The Doctor is a bright young fellow, and wants nothing but a bald spot and a wife to find himself in a comfortable family practice. One of the Annexes, as I have said, has had thoughts of becoming a doctress. I don't think the Doctor would want his wife to practise medicine, for reasons which I will not stop to mention. Such a partnership sometimes works wonderfully well, as in one well-known instance where husband and wife are both eminent in the profession; but our young Doctor has said to me that he had rather see his wife,—if he ever should have one,—at the piano than at the dissecting-table. Of course the Annexes know nothing about this, and they may think, as he professed himself willing to lecture on medicine to women, he might like to take one of his pupils as a helpmeet.

If it were not for our Delilah's humble position, I don't see why she would not be a good match for any young man. But then it is so hard to take a young woman from so very lowly a condition as that of a "waitress" that it would require a deal of courage to venture on such a step. If we could only find out that she is a princess in disguise, so to speak,—that is, a young person of presentable connections as well as pleasing looks and manners; that she has had an education of some kind, as we suspected when she blushed on hearing herself spoken of as a "gentille petite," why, then everything would be all right, the young Doctor would have plain sailing,—that is, if he is in love with her, and if she fancies him,—and I should find my love-story,—the one I expected, but not between the parties I had thought would be mating with each other.

Dear little Delilah! Lily of the valley, growing in the shade now,—perhaps better there until her petals drop; and yet if she is all I often fancy she is, how her youthful presence would illuminate and sweeten a household! There is not one of us who does not feel interested in her,—not one of us who would not be delighted at some Cinderella transformation which would show her in the setting Nature meant for her favorite.

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The fancy of Number Seven about the witches' broomsticks suggested to one of us the following poem:

*The broomstick train;
or, the return of the witches.*

Lookout! Look out, boys! Clear the track!
The witches are here! They've all come back!
They hanged them high,—No use! No use!
What cares a witch for a hangman's noose?
They buried them deep, but they would n't lie, still,
For cats and witches are hard to kill;
They swore they shouldn't and wouldn't die,
Books said they did, but they lie! they lie!

—A couple of hundred years, or so,
They had knocked about in the world below,
When an Essex Deacon dropped in to call,
And a homesick feeling seized them all;
For he came from a place they knew full well,
And many a tale he had to tell.
They long to visit the haunts of men,
To see the old dwellings they knew again,
And ride on their broomsticks all around
Their wide domain of unhallowed ground.

In Essex county there's many a roof
Well known to him of the cloven hoof;
The small square windows are full in view
Which the midnight hags went sailing through,
On their well-trained broomsticks mounted high,
Seen like shadows against the sky;
Crossing the track of owls and bats,
Hugging before them their coal-black cats.

Well did they know, those gray old wives,
The sights we see in our daily drives
Shimmer of lake and shine of sea,
Brown's bare hill with its lonely tree,
(It wasn't then as we see it now,
With one scant scalp-lock to shade its brow;)
Dusky nooks in the Essex woods,
Dark, dim, Dante-like solitudes,
Where the tree-toad watches the sinuous snake



Glide through his forests of fern and brake;
Ipswich River; its old stone bridge;
Far off Andover's Indian Ridge,
And many a scene where history tells
Some shadow of bygone terror dwells,
Of "Norman's Woe" with its tale of dread,
Of the Screeching Woman of Marblehead,
(The fearful story that turns men pale
Don't bid me tell it,—my speech would fail.)

Who would not, will not, if he can,
Bathe in the breezes of fair Cape Ann,
Rest in the bowers her bays enfold,
Loved by the sachems and squaws of old?
Home where the white magnolias bloom,
Sweet with the bayberry's chaste perfume,
Hugged by the woods and kissed by the seal
Where is the Eden like to thee?

For that "couple of hundred years, or so,"
There had been no peace in the world below;
The witches still grumbling, "It is n't fair;
Come, give us a taste of the upper air!
We've had enough of your sulphur springs,

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And the evil odor that round them clings;
We long for a drink that is cool and nice,
Great buckets of water with Wenham ice;
We've served you well up-stairs, you know;
You're a good old-fellow—come, let us go!"

I don't feel sure of his being good,
But he happened to be in a pleasant mood,
As fiends with their skins full sometimes are,
(He'd been drinking with "roughs" at a Boston bar.)
So what does he do but up and shout
To a graybeard turnkey, "Let 'em out!"

To mind his orders was all he knew;
The gates swung open, and out they flew.
"Where are our broomsticks?" the beldams cried.
"Here are your broomsticks," an imp replied.
"They've been in—the place you know—so long
They smell of brimstone uncommon strong;
But they've gained by being left alone,
Just look, and you'll see how tall they've grown."
—And where is my cat? "a vixen squalled.
Yes, where are our cats?" the witches bawled,
And began to call them all by name:
As fast as they called the cats, they came
There was bob-tailed Tommy and long-tailed Tim,
And wall-eyed Jacky and green-eyed Jim,
And splay-foot Benny and slim-legged Beau,
And Skinny and Squally, and Jerry and Joe,

And many another that came at call,
It would take too long to count them all.
All black,—one could hardly tell which was which,
But every cat knew his own old witch;
And she knew hers as hers knew her,
Ah, did n't they curl their tails and purr!

No sooner the withered hags were free
Than out they swarmed for a midnight spree;
I could n't tell all they did in rhymes,



But the Essex people had dreadful times.
The Swampscott fishermen still relate
How a strange sea-monster stole thair bait;
How their nets were tangled in loops and knots,
And they found dead crabs in their lobster-pots.
Poor Danvers grieved for her blasted crops,
And Wilmington mourned over mildewed hops.
A blight played havoc with Beverly beans,
It was all the work of those hateful queans!
A dreadful panic began at "Pride's,"
Where the witches stopped in their midnight rides,
And there rose strange rumors and vague alarms
'Mid the peaceful dwellers at Beverly Farms.

Now when the Boss of the Beldams found
That without his leave they were ramping round,
He called,—they could hear him twenty miles,
From Chelsea beach to the Misery Isles;
The deafest old granny knew his tone
Without the trick of the telephone.
"Come here, you witches! Come here!" says he,
—"At your games of old, without asking me
I'll give you a little job to do
That will keep you stirring, you godless crew!"

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They came, of course, at their master's call,
The witches, the broomsticks, the cats, and all;
He led the hags to a railway train
The horses were trying to drag in vain.
"Now, then," says he, "you've had your fun,
And here are the cars you've got to run.

"The driver may just unhitch his team,
We don't want horses, we don't want steam;
You may keep your old black cats to hug,
But the loaded train you've got to lug."

Since then on many a car you'll see
A broomstick plain as plain can be;
On every stick there's a witch astride,
The string you see to her leg is tied.
She will do a mischief if she can,
But the string is held by a careful man,
And whenever the evil-minded witch
Would cut come caper, he gives a twitch.
As for the hag, you can't see her,
But hark! you can hear her black cat's purr,
And now and then, as a car goes by,
You may catch a gleam from her wicked eye.

Often you've looked on a rushing train,
But just what moved it was not so plain.
It couldn't be those wires above,
For they could neither pull nor shove;
Where was the motor that made it go
You couldn't guess, but now you know.

Remember my rhymes when you ride again
On the rattling rail by the broomstick train!

X

In my last report of our talks over the teacups I had something to say of the fondness of our people for titles. Where did the anti-republican, anti-democratic passion for swelling names come from, and how long has it been naturalized among us?

A striking instance of it occurred at about the end of the last century. It was at that time there appeared among us one of the most original and singular personages to whom

America has given birth. Many of our company,—many of my readers,—all well acquainted with his name, and not wholly ignorant of his history. They will not object to my giving some particulars relating to him, which, if not new to them, will be new to others into whose hands these pages may fall.

Timothy Dexter, the first claimant of a title of nobility among the people of the United States of America, was born in the town of Malden, near Boston. He served an apprenticeship as a leather-dresser, saved some money, got some more with his wife, began trading and speculating, and became at last rich, for those days. His most famous business enterprise was that of sending an invoice of warming-pans to the West Indies. A few tons of ice would have seemed to promise a better return; but in point of fact, he tells us, the warming-pans were found useful in the manufacture of sugar, and brought him in a handsome profit. His ambition rose with his fortune. He purchased a large and stately house in Newburyport, and proceeded to embellish and furnish it according

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to the dictates of his taste and fancy. In the grounds about his house, he caused to be erected between forty and fifty wooden statues of great men and allegorical figures, together with four lions and one lamb. Among these images were two statues of Dexter himself, one of which held a label with a characteristic inscription. His house was ornamented with minarets, adorned with golden balls, and surmounted by a large gilt eagle. He equipped it with costly furniture, with paintings, and a library. He went so far as to procure the services of a poet laureate, whose business it seems to have been to sing his praises. Surrounded with splendors like these, the plain title of "Mr." Dexter would have been infinitely too mean and common. He therefore boldly took the step of self-ennobling, and gave himself forth—as he said, obeying "the voice of the people at large"—as "Lord Timothy Dexter," by which appellation he has ever since been known to the American public.

If to be the pioneer in the introduction of Old World titles into republican America can confer a claim to be remembered by posterity, Lord Timothy Dexter has a right to historic immortality. If the true American spirit shows itself most clearly in boundless self-assertion, Timothy Dexter is the great original American egotist. If to throw off the shackles of Old World pedantry, and defy the paltry rules and examples of grammarians and rhetoricians, is the special province and the chartered privilege of the American writer, Timothy Dexter is the founder of a new school, which tramples under foot the conventionalities that hampered and subjugated the faculties of the poets, the dramatists, the historians, essayists, story-tellers, orators, of the worn-out races which have preceded the great American people.

The material traces of the first American nobleman's existence have nearly disappeared. The house is still standing, but the statues, the minarets, the arches, and the memory of the great Lord Timothy Dexter live chiefly in tradition, and in the work which he bequeathed to posterity, and of which I shall say a few words. It is unquestionably a thoroughly original production, and I fear that some readers may think I am trifling with them when I am quoting it literally. I am going to make a strong claim for Lord Timothy as against other candidates for a certain elevated position.

Thomas Jefferson is commonly recognized as the first to proclaim before the world the political independence of America. It is not so generally agreed upon as to who was the first to announce the literary emancipation of our country.

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One of Mr. Emerson's biographers has claimed that his Phi Beta Kappa Oration was our Declaration of Literary Independence. But Mr. Emerson did not cut himself loose from all the traditions of Old World scholarship. He spelled his words correctly, he constructed his sentences grammatically. He adhered to the slavish rules of propriety, and observed the reticences which a traditional delicacy has considered inviolable in decent society, European and Oriental alike. When he wrote poetry, he commonly selected subjects which seemed adapted to poetical treatment,—apparently thinking that all things were not equally calculated to inspire the true poet's genius. Once, indeed, he ventured to refer to “the meal in the firkin, the milk in the pan,” but he chiefly restricted himself to subjects such as a fastidious conventionalism would approve as having a certain fitness for poetical treatment. He was not always so careful as he might have been in the rhythm and rhyme of his verse, but in the main he recognized the old established laws which have been accepted as regulating both. In short, with all his originality, he worked in Old World harness, and cannot be considered as the creator of a truly American, self-governed, self-centred, absolutely independent style of thinking and writing, knowing no law but its own sovereign will and pleasure.

A stronger claim might be urged for Mr. Whitman. He takes into his hospitable vocabulary words which no English dictionary recognizes as belonging to the language,—words which will be looked for in vain outside of his own pages. He accepts as poetical subjects all things alike, common and unclean, without discrimination, miscellaneous as the contents of the great sheet which Peter saw let down from heaven. He carries the principle of republicanism through the whole world of created objects. He will “thread a thread through [his] poems,” he tells us, “that no one thing in the universe is inferior to another thing.” No man has ever asserted the surpassing dignity and importance of the American citizen so boldly and freely as Mr. Whitman. He calls himself “teacher of the unquenchable creed, namely, egotism.” He begins one of his chants, “I celebrate myself,” but he takes us all in as partners in his self-glorification. He believes in America as the new Eden.

“A world primal again,—vistas of glory incessant and branching, A new race dominating previous ones and grander far, New politics—new literature and religions—new inventions and arts.”

Of the new literature he himself has furnished specimens which certainly have all the originality he can claim for them. So far as egotism is concerned, he was clearly anticipated by the titled personage to whom I have referred, who says of himself, “I am the first in the East, the first in the West, and the greatest philosopher in the Western world.” But while Mr. Whitman divests himself of a part of his baptismal name, the distinguished New Englander

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thus announces his proud position: "I'm the first Lord in the younited States of A mercary Now of Newburyport. it is the voice of the peopel and I cant Help it." This extract is from his famous little book called "A Pickle for the Knowing Ones." As an inventor of a new American style he goes far beyond Mr. Whitman, who, to be sure, cares little for the dictionary, and makes his own rules of rhythm, so far as there is any rhythm in his sentences. But Lord Timothy spells to suit himself, and in place of employing punctuation as it is commonly used, prints a separate page of periods, colons, semicolons, commas, notes of interrogation and of admiration, with which the reader is requested to "peper and soolt" the book as he pleases.

I am afraid that Mr. Emerson and Mr. Whitman must yield the claim of declaring American literary independence to Lord Timothy Dexter, who not only taught his countrymen that they need not go to the Heralds' College to authenticate their titles of nobility, but also that they were at perfect liberty to spell just as they liked, and to write without troubling themselves about stops of any kind. In writing what I suppose he intended for poetry, he did not even take the pains to break up his lines into lengths to make them look like verse, as may be seen by the following specimen:

Wonderof wonders!

How great the soul is! Do not you all wonder and admire to see and behold and hear? Can you all believe half the truth, and admire to hear the wonders how great the soul is—only behold—past finding out! Only see how large the soul is! that if a man is drowned in the sea what a great bubble comes up out of the top of the water... The bubble is the soul.

I confess that I am not in sympathy with some of the movements that accompany the manifestations of American social and literary independence. I do not like the assumption of titles of Lords and Knights by plain citizens of a country which prides itself on recognizing simple manhood and womanhood as sufficiently entitled to respect without these unnecessary additions. I do not like any better the familiar, and as it seems to me rude, way of speaking of our fellow-citizens who are entitled to the common courtesies of civilized society. I never thought it dignified or even proper for a President of the United States to call himself, or to be called by others, "Frank" Pierce. In the first place I had to look in a biographical dictionary to find out whether his baptismal name was Franklin, or Francis, or simply Frank, for I think children are sometimes christened with this abbreviated name. But it is too much in the style of Cowper's unpleasant acquaintance:

"The man who hails you Tom or Jack,
And proves by thumping on your back
How he esteems your merit."

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I should not like to hear our past chief magistrates spoken of as Jack Adams or Jim Madison, and it would have been only as a political partisan that I should have reconciled myself to "Tom" Jefferson. So, in spite of "Ben" Jonson, "Tom" Moore, and "Jack" Sheppard, I prefer to speak of a fellow-citizen already venerable by his years, entitled to respect by useful services to his country, and recognized by many as the prophet of a new poetical dispensation, with the customary title of adults rather than by the free and easy school-boy abbreviation with which he introduced himself many years ago to the public. As for his rhapsodies, Number Seven, our "cracked Teacup," says they sound to him like "fugues played on a big organ which has been struck by lightning." So far as concerns literary independence, if we understand by that term the getting rid of our subjection to British criticism, such as it was in the days when the question was asked, "Who reads an American book?" we may consider it pretty well established. If it means dispensing with punctuation, coining words at will, self-revelation unrestrained by a sense of what is decorous, declamations in which everything is glorified without being idealized, "poetry" in which the reader must make the rhythms which the poet has not made for him, then I think we had better continue literary colonists. I shrink from a lawless independence to which all the virile energy and trampling audacity of Mr. Whitman fail to reconcile me. But there is room for everybody and everything in our huge hemisphere. Young America is like a three-year-old colt with his saddle and bridle just taken off. The first thing he wants to do is to roll. He is a droll object, sprawling in the grass with his four hoofs in the air; but he likes it, and it won't harm us. So let him roll,—let him roll.

Of all The Teacups around our table, Number Five is the one who is the object of the greatest interest. Everybody wants to be her friend, and she has room enough in her hospitable nature to find a place for every one who is worthy of the privilege. The difficulty is that it is so hard to be her friend without becoming her lover. I have said before that she turns the subjects of her Circe-like enchantment, not into swine, but into lambs. The Professor and I move round among her lambs, the docile and amiable flock that come and go at her bidding, that follow her footsteps, and are content to live in the sunshine of her smile and within reach of the music of her voice. I like to get her away from their amiable bleatings; I love to talk with her about life, of which she has seen a great deal, for she knows what it is to be an idol in society and the centre of her social circle. It might be a question whether women or men most admire and love her. With her own sex she is always helpful, sympathizing, tender, charitable, sharing their griefs as well as taking part in their pleasures. With men it has seemed to make little difference whether they were young or old: all have found her the same sweet, generous, unaffected companion; fresh enough in feeling for the youngest, deep enough in the wisdom of the heart for the oldest. She does not pretend to be youthful, nor does she trouble herself that she has seen the roses of more Junes than many of—the younger women who gather round her. She has not had to say,

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Comme je regrette
Mon bras si dodu,

for her arm has never lost its roundness, and her face is one of those that cannot be cheated of their charm even if they live long enough to look upon the grown up grandchildren of their coevals.

It is a wonder how Number Five can find the time to be so much to so many friends of both sexes, in spite of the fact that she is one of the most insatiable of readers. She not only reads, but she remembers; she not only remembers, but she records, for her own use and pleasure, and for the delight and profit of those who are privileged to look over her note-books. Number Five, as I think I have said before, has not the ambition to figure as an authoress. That she could write most agreeably is certain. I have seen letters of hers to friends which prove that clearly enough. Whether she would find prose or verse the most natural mode of expression I cannot say, but I know she is passionately fond of poetry, and I should not be surprised if, laid away among the pressed pansies and roses of past summers, there were poems, songs, perhaps, of her own, which she sings to herself with her fingers touching the piano; for to that she tells her secrets in tones sweet as the ring-dove's call to her mate.

I am afraid it may be suggested that I am drawing Number Five's portrait too nearly after some model who is unconsciously sitting for it; but have n't I told you that you must not look for flesh and blood personalities behind or beneath my Teacups? I am not going to make these so lifelike that you will be saying, This is Mr. or Miss, or Mrs. So-and-So. My readers must remember that there are very many pretty, sweet, amiable girls and women sitting at their pianos, and finding chords to the music of their heart-strings. If I have pictured Number Five as one of her lambs might do it, I have succeeded in what I wanted to accomplish. Why don't I describe her person? If I do, some gossip or other will be sure to say, "Oh, he means her, of course," and find a name to match the pronoun.

It is strange to see how we are all coming to depend upon the friendly aid of Number Five in our various perplexities. The Counsellor asked her opinion in one of those cases where a divorce was too probable, but a reconciliation was possible. It takes a woman to sound a woman's heart, and she found there was still love enough under the ruffled waters to warrant the hope of peace and tranquillity. The young Doctor went to her for counsel in the case of a hysteric girl possessed with the idea that she was a born poetess, and covering whole pages of foolscap with senseless outbursts, which she wrote in paroxysms of wild excitement, and read with a rapture of self-admiration which there was nothing in her verses to justify or account for. How sweetly Number Five dealt with that poor deluded sister in her talk with the Doctor! "Yes," she said to him, "nothing can be fuller of vanity, self-worship, and self-deception.

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But we must be very gentle with her. I knew a young girl tormented with aspirations, and possessed by a belief that she was meant for a higher place than that which fate had assigned her, who needed wholesome advice, just as this poor young thing does. She did not ask for it, and it was not offered. Alas, alas! 'no man cared for her soul,'—no man nor woman either. She was in her early teens, and the thought of her earthly future, as it stretched out before her, was more than she could bear, and she sought the presence of her Maker to ask the meaning of her abortive existence.—We will talk it over. I will help you take care of this child."

The Doctor was thankful to have her assistance in a case with which he would have found it difficult to deal if he had been left to, his unaided judgment, and between them the young girl was safely piloted through the perilous straits in which she came near shipwreck.

I know that it is commonly said of her that every male friend of hers must become her lover unless he is already lassoed by another. Il fait passer par l'a. The young Doctor is, I think, safe, for I am convinced that he is bewitched with Delilah. Since she has left us, he has seemed rather dejected; I feel sure that he misses her. We all do, but he more seriously than the rest of us. I have said that I cannot tell whether the Counsellor is to be counted as one of Number Five's lambs or not, but he evidently admires her, and if he is not fascinated, looks as if he were very near that condition.

It was a more delicate matter about which the Tutor talked with her. Something which she had pleasantly said to him about the two Annexes led him to ask her, more or less seriously, it may be remembered, about the fitness of either of them to be the wife of a young man in his position. She talked so sensibly, as it seemed to him, about it that he continued the conversation, and, shy as he was, became quite easy and confidential in her company. The Tutor is not only a poet, but is a great reader of the poetry of many languages. It so happened that Number Five was puzzled, one day, in reading a sonnet of Petrarch, and had recourse to the Tutor to explain the difficult passage. She found him so thoroughly instructed, so clear, so much interested, so ready to impart knowledge, and so happy in his way of doing it, that she asked him if he would not allow her the privilege of reading an Italian author under his guidance, now and then.

The Tutor found Number Five an apt scholar, and something more than that; for while, as a linguist, he was, of course, her master, her intelligent comments brought out the beauties of an author in a way to make the text seem like a different version. They did not always confine themselves to the book they were reading. Number Five showed some curiosity about the Tutor's relations with the two Annexes. She suggested whether it would not be well to ask one or both of them in to take part in their readings.



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The Tutor blushed and hesitated. "Perhaps you would like to ask one of them," said Number Five. "Which one shall it be?" "It makes no difference to me which," he answered, "but I do not see that we need either." Number Five did not press the matter further. So the young Tutor and Number Five read together pretty regularly, and came to depend upon their meeting over a book as one of their stated seasons of enjoyment. He is so many years younger than she is that I do not suppose he will have to pass *par la*, as most of her male friends have done. I tell her sometimes that she reminds me of my Alma Mater, always young, always fresh in her attractions, with her scholars all round her, many of them graduates, or to graduate sooner or later.

What do I mean by graduates? Why, that they have made love to her, and would be entitled to her diploma, if she gave a parchment to each one of them who had had the courage to face the inevitable. About the Counsellor I am, as I have said, in doubt. Who wrote that "I Like You and I Love You," which we found in the sugar-bowl the other day? Was it a graduate who had felt the "icy dagger," or only a candidate for graduation who was afraid of it? So completely does she subjugate those who come under her influence that I believe she looks upon it as a matter of course that the fateful question will certainly come, often after a brief acquaintance. She confessed as much to me, who am in her confidence, and not a candidate for graduation from her academy. Her graduates—her lambs I called them—are commonly faithful to her, and though now and then one may have gone off and sulked in solitude, most of them feel kindly to her, and to those who have shared the common fate of her suitors. I do really believe that some of them would be glad to see her captured by any one, if such there can be, who is worthy of her. She is the best of friends, they say, but can she love anybody, as so many other women do, or seem to? Why shouldn't our Musician, who is evidently fond of her company, and sings and plays duets with her, steal her heart as Piozzi stole that of the pretty and bright Mrs. Thrale, as so many music-teachers have run away with their pupils' hearts? At present she seems to be getting along very placidly and contentedly with her young friend the Tutor. There is something quite charming in their relations with each other. He knows many things she does not, for he is reckoned one of the most learned in his literary specialty of all the young men of his time; and it can be a question of only a few years when some first-class professorship will be offered him. She, on the other hand, has so much more experience, so much more practical wisdom, than he has that he consults her on many every-day questions, as he did, or made believe do, about that of making love to one of the two Annexes. I had thought, when we first sat round the tea-table, that she was good for the bit of romance I wanted; but since she has undertaken to be a kind of half-maternal

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friend to the young Tutor, I am afraid I shall have to give her up as the heroine of a romantic episode. It would be a pity if there were nothing to commend these papers to those who take up this periodical but essays, more or less significant, on subjects more or less interesting to the jaded and impatient readers of the numberless stories and entertaining articles which crowd the magazines of this prolific period. A whole year of a tea-table as large as ours without a single love passage in it would be discreditable to the company. We must find one, or make one, before the tea-things are taken away and the table is no longer spread.

The Dictator turns preacher.

We have so many light and playful talks over the teacups that some readers may be surprised to find us taking up the most serious and solemn subject which can occupy a human intelligence. The sudden appearance among our New England Protestants of the doctrine of purgatory as a possibility, or even probability, has startled the descendants of the Puritans. It has naturally led to a reconsideration of the doctrine of eternal punishment. It is on that subject that Number Five and I have talked together. I love to listen to her, for she talks from the promptings of a true woman's heart. I love to talk to her, for I learn my own thoughts better in that way than in any other "L'appetit vient en mangeant," the French saying has it. "L'esprit vient en causant;" that is, if one can find the right persons to talk with.

The subject which has specially interested Number Five and myself, of late, was suggested to me in the following way.

Some two years ago I received a letter from a clergyman who bears by inheritance one of the most distinguished names which has done honor to the American "Orthodox" pulpit. This letter requested of me "a contribution to a proposed work which was to present in their own language the views of 'many men of many minds' on the subject of future punishment. It was in my mind to let the public hear not only from professional theologians, but from other professions, as from jurists on the alleged but disputed value of the hangman's whip overhanging the witness-box, and from physicians on the working of beliefs about the future life in the minds of the dangerously sick. And I could not help thinking what a good thing it would be to draw out the present writer upon his favorite borderland between the spiritual and the material." The communication came to me, as the writer reminds me in a recent letter, at a "painfully inopportune time," and though it was courteously answered, was not made the subject of a special reply.

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This request confers upon me a certain right to express my opinion on this weighty subject without fear and without reproach even from those who might be ready to take offence at one of the laity for meddling with pulpit questions. It shows also that this is not a dead issue in our community, as some of the younger generation seem to think. There are some, there may be many, who would like to hear what impressions one has received on the subject referred to, after a long life in which he has heard and read a great deal about the matter. There is a certain gravity in the position of one who is, in the order of nature very near the undiscovered country. A man who has passed his eighth decade feels as if he were already in the antechamber of the apartments which he may be called to occupy in the house of many mansions. His convictions regarding the future of our race are likely to be serious, and his expressions not lightly uttered. The question my correspondent suggests is a tremendous one. No other interest compares for one moment with that belonging to it. It is not only ourselves that it concerns, but all whom we love or ever have loved, all our human brotherhood, as well as our whole idea of the Being who made us and the relation in which He stands to his creatures. In attempting to answer my correspondent's question, I shall no doubt repeat many things I have said before in different forms, on different occasions. This is no more than every clergyman does habitually, and it would be hard if I could not have the same license which the professional preacher enjoys so fully.

Number Five and I have occasionally talked on religious questions, and discovered many points of agreement in our views. Both of us grew up under the old "Orthodox" or Calvinistic system of belief. Both of us accepted it in our early years as a part of our education. Our experience is a common one. William Cullen Bryant says of himself, "The Calvinistic system of divinity I adopted of course, as I heard nothing else taught from the pulpit, and supposed it to be the accepted belief of the religious world." But it was not the "five points" which remained in the young poet's memory and shaped his higher life. It was the influence of his mother that left its permanent impression after the questions and answers of the Assembly's Catechism had faded out, or remained in memory only as fossil survivors of an extinct or fast-disappearing theological formation. The important point for him, as for so many other children of Puritan descent, was not his father's creed, but his mother's character, precepts, and example. "She was a person," he says, "of excellent practical sense, of a quick and sensitive moral judgment, and had no patience with any form of deceit or duplicity. Her prompt condemnation of injustice, even in those instances in which it is tolerated by the world, made a strong impression upon me in early life; and if, in the discussion of public questions, I have in my riper age endeavored to keep in view the great rule of right without much regard to persons, it has been owing in a great degree to the force of her example, which taught me never to countenance a wrong because others did."

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I have quoted this passage because it was an experience not wholly unlike my own, and in certain respects like that of Number Five. To grow up in a narrow creed and to grow out of it is a tremendous trial of one's nature. There is always a bond of fellowship between those who have been through such an ordeal.

The experiences we have had in common naturally lead us to talk over the theological questions which at this time are constantly presenting themselves to the public, not only in the books and papers expressly devoted to that class of subjects, but in many of the newspapers and popular periodicals, from the weeklies to the quarterlies. The pulpit used to lay down the law to the pews; at the present time, it is of more consequence what the pews think than what the minister does, for the obvious reason that the pews can change their minister, and often do, whereas the minister cannot change the pews, or can do so only to a very limited extent. The preacher's garment is cut according to the pattern of that of the hearers, for the most part. Thirty years ago, when I was writing on theological subjects, I came in for a very pretty share of abuse, such as it was the fashion of that day, at least in certain quarters, to bestow upon those who were outside of the high-walled enclosures in which many persons; not naturally unamiable or exclusive, found themselves imprisoned. Since that time what changes have taken place! Who will believe that a well-behaved and reputable citizen could have been denounced as a "moral parricide," because he attacked some of the doctrines in which he was supposed to have been brought up? A single thought should have prevented the masked theologian who abused his incognito from using such libellous language.

Much, and in many families most, of the religious teaching of children is committed to the mother. The experience of William Cullen Bryant, which I have related in his own words, is that of many New England children. Now, the sternest dogmas that ever came from a soul cramped or palsied by an obsolete creed become wonderfully softened in passing between the lips of a mother. The cruel doctrine at which all but case-hardened "professionals" shudder cones out, as she teaches and illustrates it, as unlike its original as the milk which a peasant mother gives her babe is unlike the coarse food which furnishes her nourishment. The virus of a cursing creed is rendered comparatively harmless by the time it reaches the young sinner in the nursery. Its effects fall as far short of what might have been expected from its virulence as the pearly vaccine vesicle falls short of the terrors of the confluent small-pox.

Controversialists should therefore be careful (for their own sakes, for they hurt nobody so much as themselves) how they use such terms as "parricide" as characterizing those who do not agree in all points with the fathers whom or whose memory they honor and venerate. They might with as much propriety call them matricides, if they did not agree with the milder teachings of their mothers. I can imagine Jonathan Edwards in the nursery with his three-year-old child upon his knee. The child looks up to his face and says to him,—“Papa, nurse tells me that you say God hates me worse than He hates one of those horrid ugly snakes that crawl all round. Does God hate me so?”

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"Alas! my child, it is but too true. So long as you are out of Christ you are as a viper, and worse than a viper, in his sight."

By and by, Mrs. Edwards, one of the loveliest of women and sweetest of mothers, comes into the nursery. The child is crying.

"What is the matter, my darling?"

"Papa has been telling me that God hates me worse than a snake."

Poor, gentle, poetical, sensitive, spiritual, almost celestial Mrs. Jonathan Edwards! On the one hand the terrible sentence conceived, written down, given to the press, by the child's father; on the other side the trusting child looking up at her, and all the mother pleading in her heart against the frightful dogma of her revered husband. Do you suppose she left that poison to rankle in the tender soul of her darling? Would it have been moral parricide for a son of the great divine to have repudiated the doctrine which degraded his blameless infancy to the condition and below the condition of the reptile? Was it parricide in the second or third degree when his descendant struck out that venomous sentence from the page in which it stood as a monument to what depth Christian heathenism could sink under the teaching of the great master of logic and spiritual inhumanity? It is too late to be angry about the abuse a well-meaning writer received thirty years ago. The whole atmosphere has changed since then. It is mere childishness to expect men to believe as their fathers did; that is, if they have any minds of their own. The world is a whole generation older and wiser than when the father was of his son's age.

So far as I have observed persons nearing the end of life, the Roman Catholics understand the business of dying better than Protestants. They have an expert by them, armed with spiritual specifics, in which they both, patient and priestly ministrant, place implicit trust. Confession, the Eucharist, Extreme Unction,—these all inspire a confidence which without this symbolism is too apt to be wanting in over-sensitive natures. They have been peopled in earlier years with ghastly spectres of avenging fiends, moving in a sleepless world of devouring flames and smothering exhalations; where nothing lives but the sinner, the fiends, and the reptiles who help to make life an unending torture. It is no wonder that these images sometimes return to the enfeebled intelligence. To exorcise them, the old Church of Christendom has her mystic formulae, of which no rationalistic prescription can take the place. If Cowper had been a good Roman Catholic, instead of having his conscience handled by a Protestant like John Newton, he would not have died despairing, looking upon himself as a castaway. I have seen a good many Roman Catholics on their dying beds, and it always appeared to me that they accepted the inevitable with a composure which showed that their belief, whether or not the best to live by, was a better one to die by than most of the harder creeds which have replaced it.

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In the more intelligent circles of American society one may question anything and everything, if he will only do it civilly. We may talk about eschatology, the science of last things,—or, if you will, the natural history of the undiscovered country, without offence before anybody except young children and very old women of both sexes. In our New England the great Andover discussion and the heretical missionary question have benumbed all sensibility on this subject as entirely, as completely, as the new local anaesthetic, cocaine, deadens the sensibility of the part to which it is applied, so that the eye may have its mote or beam plucked out without feeling it,—as the novels of Zola and Maupassant have hardened the delicate nerve-centres of the women who have fed their imaginations on the food they have furnished.

The generally professed belief of the Protestant world as embodied in their published creeds is that the great mass of mankind are destined to an eternity of suffering. That this eternity is to be one of bodily pain—of “torment”—is the literal teaching of Scripture, which has been literally interpreted by the theologians, the poets, and the artists of many long ages which followed the acceptance of the recorded legends of the church as infallible. The doctrine has always been recognized, as it is now, as a very terrible one. It has found a support in the story of the fall of man, and the view taken of the relation of man to his Maker since that event. The hatred of God to mankind in virtue of their “first disobedience” and inherited depravity is at the bottom of it. The extent to which that idea was carried is well shown in the expressions I have borrowed from Jonathan Edwards. According to his teaching,—and he was a reasoner who knew what he was talking about, what was involved in the premises of the faith he accepted,—man inherits the curse of God as his principal birthright.

What shall we say to the doctrine of the fall of man as the ground of inflicting endless misery on the human race? A man to be punished for what he could not help! He was expected to be called to account for Adam’s sin. It is singular to notice that the reasoning of the wolf with the lamb should be transferred to the dealings of the Creator with his creatures. “You stirred the brook up and made my drinking-place muddy.” “But, please your wolfship, I couldn’t do that, for I stirred the water far down the stream,—below your drinking-place.” “Well, anyhow, your father troubled it a year or two ago, and that is the same thing.” So the wolf falls upon the lamb and makes a meal of him. That is wolf logic,—and theological reasoning.

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How shall we characterize the doctrine of endless torture as the destiny of most of those who have lived, and are living, on this planet? I prefer to let another writer speak of it. Mr. John Morley uses the following words: "The horrors of what is perhaps the most frightful idea that has ever corroded human character,—the idea of eternal punishment." Sismondi, the great historian, heard a sermon on eternal punishment, and vowed never again to enter another church holding the same creed. Romanism he considered a religion of mercy and peace by the side of what the English call the Reformation.—I mention these protests because I happen to find them among my notes, but it would be easy to accumulate examples of the same kind. When Cowper, at about the end of the last century, said satirically of the minister he was attacking,

"He never mentioned hell to ears polite,"

he was giving unconscious evidence that the sense of the barbarism of the idea was finding its way into the pulpit. When Burns, in the midst of the sulphurous orthodoxy of Scotland, dared to say,

"The fear o' hell 's a hangman's whip
To haud the wretch in order,"

he was only appealing to the common sense and common humanity of his fellow-countrymen.

All the reasoning in the world, all the proof-texts in old manuscripts, cannot reconcile this supposition of a world of sleepless and endless torment with the declaration that "God is love."

Where did this "frightful idea" come from? We are surprised, as we grow older, to find that the legendary hell of the church is nothing more nor less than the Tartarus of the old heathen world. It has every mark of coming from the cruel heart of a barbarous despot. Some malignant and vindictive Sheik, some brutal Mezentius, must have sat for many pictures of the Divinity. It was not enough to kill his captive enemy, after torturing him as much as ingenuity could contrive to do it. He escaped at last by death, but his conqueror could not give him up so easily, and so his vengeance followed him into the unseen and unknown world. How the doctrine got in among the legends of the church we are no more bound to show than we are to account for the intercalation of the "three witnesses" text, or the false insertion, or false omission, whichever it may be, of the last twelve verses of the Gospel of St Mark. We do not hang our grandmothers now, as our ancestors did theirs, on the strength of the positive command, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live."

The simple truth is that civilization has outgrown witchcraft, and is outgrowing the Christian Tartarus. The pulpit no longer troubles itself about witches and their evil doings. All the legends in the world could not arrest the decay of that superstition and

all the edicts that grew out of it. All the stories that can be found in old manuscripts will never prevent the going out of the fires of the legendary

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Inferno. It is not much talked about nowadays to ears polite or impolite. Humanity is shocked and repelled by it. The heart of woman is in unconquerable rebellion against it. The more humane sects tear it from their "Bodies of Divinity" as if it were the flaming shirt of Nessus. A few doctrines with which it was bound up have dropped or are dropping away from it: the primal curse; consequential damages to give infinite extension to every transgression of the law of God; inverting the natural order of relative obligations; stretching the smallest of finite offenses to the proportions of the infinite; making the babe in arms the responsible being, and not the parent who gave it birth and determined its conditions of existence.

After a doctrine like "the hangman's whip" has served its purpose,—if it ever had any useful purpose,—after a doctrine like that of witchcraft has hanged old women enough, civilization contrives to get rid of it. When we say that civilization crowds out the old superstitious legends, we recognize two chief causes. The first is the naked individual protest; the voice of the inspiration which giveth man understanding. This shows itself conspicuously in the modern poets. Burns in Scotland, Bryant, Longfellow, Whittier, in America, preached a new gospel to the successors of men like Thomas Boston and Jonathan Edwards. In due season, the growth of knowledge, chiefly under the form of that part of knowledge called science, so changes the views of the universe that many of its long-unchallenged legends become no more than nursery tales. The text-books of astronomy and geology work their way in between the questions and answers of the time-honored catechisms. The doctrine of evolution, so far as it is accepted, changes the whole relations of man to the creative power. It substitutes infinite hope in the place of infinite despair for the vast majority of mankind. Instead of a shipwreck, from which a few cabin passengers and others are to be saved in the long-boat, it gives mankind a vessel built to endure the tempests, and at last to reach a port where at the worst the passengers can find rest, and where they may hope for a home better than any which they ever had in their old country. It is all very well to say that men and women had their choice whether they would reach the safe harbor or not.

"Go to it grandam, child;
Give grandam kingdom, and it grandam will
Give it a plum, a cherry and a fig."

We know what the child will take. So which course we shall take depends very much on the way the choice is presented to us, and on what the chooser is by nature. What he is by nature is not determined by himself, but by his parentage. "They know not what they do." In one sense this is true of every human being. The agent does not know, never can know, what makes him that which he is. What we most want to ask of our Maker is an unfolding of the divine purpose in putting human beings into conditions in which such numbers of them would be sure to go wrong. We want an advocate of helpless humanity whose task it shall be, in the words of Milton,

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“To justify the ways of God to man.”

We have heard Milton’s argument, but for the realization of his vision of the time

“When Hell itself shall pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day,”

our suffering race must wait in patience.

The greater part of the discourse the reader has had before him was delivered over the teacups one Sunday afternoon. The Mistress looked rather grave, as if doubtful whether she ought not to signify her disapprobation of what seemed to her dangerous doctrine.

However, as she knew that I was a good church-goer and was on the best terms with her minister, she said nothing to show that she had taken the alarm. Number Five listened approvingly. We had talked the question over well, and were perfectly agreed on the main point. How could it be otherwise? Do you suppose that any intellectual, spiritual woman, with a heart under her bodice, can for a moment seriously believe that the greater number of the high-minded men, the noble and lovely women, the ingenuous and affectionate children, whom she knows and honors or loves, are to be handed over to the experts in a great torture-chamber, in company with the vilest creatures that have once worn human shape?

“If there is such a world as used to be talked about from the pulpit, you may depend upon it,” she said to me once, “there will soon be organized a Humane Society in heaven, and a mission established among ‘the spirits in prison.’”

Number Five is a regular church-goer, as I am. I do not believe either of us would darken the doors of a church if we were likely to hear any of the “old-fashioned” sermons, such as I used to listen to in former years from a noted clergyman, whose specialty was the doctrine of eternal punishment. But you may go to the churches of almost any of our Protestant denominations, and hear sermons by which you can profit, because the ministers are generally good men, whose moral and spiritual natures are above the average, and who know that the harsh preaching of two or three generations ago would offend and alienate a large part of their audience. So neither Number Five nor I are hypocrites in attending church or “going to meeting.” I am afraid it does not make a great deal of difference to either of us what may be the established creed of the worshipping assembly. That is a matter of great interest, perhaps of great importance, to them, but of much less, comparatively, to us. Companionship in worship, and sitting quiet for an hour while a trained speaker, presumably somewhat better than we are, stirs up our spiritual nature,—these are reasons enough to Number Five, as to me, for regular attendance on divine worship.

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Number Seven is of a different way of thinking and feeling. He insists upon it that the churches keep in their confessions of faith statements which they do not believe, and that it is notorious that they are afraid to meddle with them. The Anglo-American church has dropped the Athanasian Creed from its service; the English mother church is afraid to. There are plenty of Universalists, Number Seven says, in the Episcopalian and other Protestant churches, but they do not avow their belief in any frank and candid fashion. The churches know very well, he maintains, that the fear of everlasting punishment more than any or all other motives is the source of their power and the support of their organizations. Not only are the fears of mankind the whip to scourge and the bridle to restrain them, but they are the basis of an almost incalculable material interest. "Talk about giving up the doctrine of endless punishment by fire!" exclaimed Number Seven; "there is more capital embarked in the subterranean fire-chambers than in all the iron-furnaces on the face of the earth. To think what an army of clerical beggars would be turned loose on the world, if once those raging flames were allowed to go out or to calm down! Who can wonder that the old conservatives draw back startled and almost frightened at the thought that there may be a possible escape for some victims whom the Devil was thought to have secured? How many more generations will pass before Milton's alarming prophecy will find itself realized in the belief of civilized mankind?"

Remember that Number Seven is called a "crank" by many persons, and take his remarks for just what they are worth, and no more.

Out of the preceding conversation must have originated the following poem, which was found in the common receptacle of these versified contributions:

Tartarus.

While in my simple gospel creed
That "God is Love" so plain I read,
Shall dreams of heathen birth affright
My pathway through the coming night?
Ah, Lord of life, though spectres pale
Fill with their threats the shadowy vale,
With Thee my faltering steps to aid,
How can I dare to be afraid?

Shall mouldering page or fading scroll
Outface the charter of the soul?
Shall priesthood's palsied arm protect
The wrong our human hearts reject,
And smite the lips whose shuddering cry
Proclaims a cruel creed a lie?



The wizard's rope we disallow
Was justice once,—is murder now!

Is there a world of blank despair,
And dwells the Omnipresent there?
Does He behold with smile serene
The shows of that unending scene,
Where sleepless, hopeless anguish lies,
And, ever dying, never dies?

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Say, does He hear the sufferer's groan,
And is that child of wrath his own?
O mortal, wavering in thy trust,
Lift thy pale forehead from the dust
The mists that cloud thy darkened eyes
Fade ere they reach the o'erarching skies!
When the blind heralds of despair
Would bid thee doubt a Father's care,
Look up from earth, and read above
On heaven's blue tablet, *god is love!*

XI

The tea is sweetened.

We have been going on very pleasantly of late, each of us pretty well occupied with his or her special business. The Counsellor has been pleading in a great case, and several of The Teacups were in the court-room. I thought, but I will not be certain, that some of his arguments were addressed to Number Five rather than to the jury,—the more eloquent passages especially.

Our young Doctor seems to me to be gradually getting known in the neighborhood and beyond it. A member of one of the more influential families, whose regular physician has gone to Europe, has sent for him to come and see her, and as the patient is a nervous lady, who has nothing in particular the matter with her, he is probably in for a good many visits and a long bill by and by. He has even had a call at a distance of some miles from home,—at least he has had to hire a conveyance frequently of late, for he has not yet set up his own horse and chaise. We do not like to ask him about who his patient may be, but he or she is probably a person of some consequence, as he is absent several hours on these out-of-town visits. He may get a good practice before his bald spot makes its appearance, for I have looked for it many times without as yet seeing a sign of it. I am sure he must feel encouraged, for he has been very bright and cheerful of late; and if he sometimes looks at our new handmaid as if he wished she were Delilah, I do not think he is breaking his heart about her absence. Perhaps he finds consolation in the company of the two Annexes, or one of them,—but which, I cannot make out. He is in consultations occasionally with Number Five, too, but whether professionally or not I have no means of knowing. I cannot for the life of me see what Number Five wants of a doctor for herself, so perhaps it is another difficult case in which her womanly sagacity is called upon to help him.

In the mean time she and the Tutor continue their readings. In fact, it seems as if these readings were growing more frequent, and lasted longer than they did at first. There is a little arbor in the grounds connected with our place of meeting, and sometimes they

have gone there for their readings. Some of The Teacups have listened outside once in a while, for the Tutor reads well, and his clear voice must be heard in the more emphatic passages, whether one is expressly listening or not. But besides

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the reading there is now and then some talking, and persons talking in an arbor do not always remember that latticework, no matter how closely the vines cover it, is not impenetrable to the sound of the human voice. There was a listener one day,—it was not one of The Teacups, I am happy to say,—who heard and reported some fragments of a conversation which reached his ear. Nothing but the profound intimacy which exists between myself and the individual reader whose eyes are on this page would induce me to reveal what I was told of this conversation. The first words seem to have been in reply to some question.

“Why, my dear friend, how can you think of such a thing? Do you know—I am—old enough to be your—[I think she must have been on the point of saying mother, but that was more than any woman could be expected to say]—old enough to be your aunt?”

“To be sure you are,” answered the Tutor, “and what of it? I have two aunts, both younger than I am. Your years may be more than mine, but your life is fuller of youthful vitality than mine is. I never feel so young as when I have been with you. I don’t believe in settling affinities by the almanac. You know what I have told you more than once; you have n’t ‘bared the ice-cold dagger’s edge’ upon me yet; may I not cherish the”....

What a pity that the listener did not hear the rest of the sentence and the reply to it, if there was one! The readings went on the same as before, but I thought that Number Five was rather more silent and more pensive than she had been.

I was much pleased when the American Annex came to me one day and told me that she and the English Annex were meditating an expedition, in which they wanted the other Teacups to join. About a dozen miles from us is an educational institution of the higher grade, where a large number of young ladies are trained in literature, art, and science, very much as their brothers are trained in the colleges. Our two young ladies have already been through courses of this kind in different schools, and are now busy with those more advanced studies which are ventured upon by only a limited number of “graduates.” They have heard a good deal about this institution, but have never visited it.

Every year, as the successive classes finish their course, there is a grand reunion of the former students, with an “exhibition,” as it is called, in which the graduates of the year have an opportunity of showing their proficiency in the various branches taught. On that occasion prizes are awarded for excellence in different departments. It would be hard to find a more interesting ceremony. These girls, now recognized as young ladies, are going forth as missionaries of civilization among our busy people. They are many of them to be teachers, and those who have seen what opportunities they have to learn will understand their fitness for that exalted office. Many are to be the wives and

mothers of the generation next coming upon the stage. Young and beautiful, “youth is always beautiful,” said old Samuel Rogers,—their countenances radiant with developed intelligence, their complexions, their figures, their movements, all showing that they have had plenty of outdoor as well as indoor exercise, and have lived well in all respects, one would like to read on the wall of the hall where they are assembled,—



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Siste, viator!

Si uxorem requiris, circumspice!

This proposed expedition was a great event in our comparatively quiet circle. The Mistress, who was interested in the school, undertook to be the matron of the party. The young Doctor, who knew the roads better than any of us, was to be our pilot. He arranged it so that he should have the two Annexes under his more immediate charge. We were all on the lookout to see which of the two was to be the favored one, for it was pretty well settled among The Teacups that a wife he must have, whether the bald spot came or not; he was getting into business, and he could not achieve a complete success as a bachelor.

Number Five and the Tutor seemed to come together as a matter of course. I confess that I could not help regretting that our pretty Delilah was not to be one of the party. She always looked so young, so fresh,—she would have enjoyed the excursion so much, that if she had been still with us I would have told the Mistress that she must put on her best dress; and if she had n't one nice enough, I would give her one myself. I thought, too, that our young Doctor would have liked to have her with us; but he appeared to be getting along very well with the Annexes, one of whom it seems likely that he will annex to himself and his fortunes, if she fancies him, which is not improbable.

The organizing of this expedition was naturally a cause of great excitement among The Teacups. The party had to be arranged in such a way as to suit all concerned, which was a delicate matter. It was finally managed in this way: The Mistress was to go with a bodyguard, consisting of myself, the Professor, and Number Seven, who was good company, with all his oddities. The young Doctor was to take the two Annexes in a wagon, and the Tutor was to drive Number Five in a good old-fashioned chaise drawn by a well-conducted family horse. As for the Musician, he had gone over early, by special invitation, to take a part in certain musical exercises which were to have a place in the exhibition. This arrangement appeared to be in every respect satisfactory. The Doctor was in high spirits, apparently delighted, and devoting himself with great gallantry to his two fair companions. The only question which intruded itself was, whether he might not have preferred the company of one to that of two. But both looked very attractive in their best dresses: the English Annex, the rosier and heartier of the two; the American girl, more delicate in features, more mobile and excitable, but suggesting the thought that she would tire out before the other. Which of these did he most favor? It was hard to say. He seemed to look most at the English girl, and yet he talked more with the American girl. In short, he behaved particularly well, and neither of the young ladies could complain that she was not attended to. As to the Tutor and Number Five, their going together caused no special

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comment. Their intimacy was accepted as an established fact, and nothing but the difference in their ages prevented the conclusion that it was love, and not mere friendship, which brought them together. There was, no doubt, a strong feeling among many people that Number Five's affections were a kind of Gibraltar or Ehrenbreitstein, say rather a high table-land in the region of perpetual, unmelting snow. It was hard for these people to believe that any man of mortal mould could find a foothold in that impregnable fortress,—could climb to that height and find the flower of love among its glaciers. The Tutor and Number Five were both quiet, thoughtful: he, evidently captivated; she, what was the meaning of her manner to him? Say that she seemed fond of him, as she might be were he her nephew,—one for whom she had a special liking. If she had a warmer feeling than this, she could hardly know how to manage it; for she was so used to having love made to her without returning it that she would naturally be awkward in dealing with the new experience.

The Doctor drove a lively five-year-old horse, and took the lead. The Tutor followed with a quiet, steady-going nag; if he had driven the five-year-old, I would not have answered for the necks of the pair in the chaise, for he was too much taken up with the subject they were talking of, to be very careful about his driving. The Mistress and her escort brought up the rear,—I holding the reins, the Professor at my side, and Number Seven sitting with the Mistress.

We arrived at the institution a little later than we had expected to, and the students were flocking into the hall, where the Commencement exercises were to take place, and the medal-scholars were to receive the tokens of their excellence in the various departments. From our seats we could see the greater part of the assembly,—not quite all, however of the pupils. A pleasing sight it was to look upon, this array of young ladies dressed in white, with their class badges, and with the ribbon of the shade of blue affected by the scholars of the institution. If Solomon in all his glory was not to be compared to a lily, a whole bed of lilies could not be compared to this garden-bed of youthful womanhood.

The performances were very much the same as most of us have seen at the academies and collegiate schools. Some of the graduating class read their "compositions," one of which was a poem,—an echo of the prevailing American echoes, of course, but prettily worded and intelligently read. Then there was a song sung by a choir of the pupils, led by their instructor, who was assisted by the Musician whom we count among The Teacups.—There was something in one of the voices that reminded me of one I had heard before. Where could it have been? I am sure I cannot remember. There are some good voices in our village choir, but none so pure and bird-like as this. A sudden thought came into my head, but I kept it to myself. I heard a tremulous

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catching of the breath, something like a sob, close by me. It was the Mistress,—she was crying. What was she crying for? It was impressive, certainly, to listen to these young voices, many of them blending for the last time,—for the scholars were soon to be scattered all over the country, and some of them beyond its boundaries,—but why the Mistress was so carried away, I did not know. She must be more impressible than most of us; yet I thought Number Five also looked as if she were having a struggle with herself to keep down some rebellious signs of emotion.

The exercises went on very pleasingly until they came to the awarding of the gold medal of the year and the valedictory, which was to be delivered by the young lady to whom it was to be presented. The name was called; it was one not unfamiliar to our ears, and the bearer of it—the Delilah of our tea-table, Avis as she was known in the school and elsewhere—rose in her place and came forward, so that for the first time on that day, we looked upon her. It was a sensation for The Teacups. Our modest, quiet waiting-girl was the best scholar of her year. We had talked French before her, and we learned that she was the best French scholar the teacher had ever had in the school. We had never thought of her except as a pleasing and well-trained handmaiden, and here she was an accomplished young lady.

Avis went through her part very naturally and gracefully, and when it was finished, and she stood before us with the medal glittering on her breast, we did not know whether to smile or to cry,—some of us did one, and some the other.—We all had an opportunity to see her and congratulate her before we left the institution. The mystery of her six weeks' serving at our table was easily solved. She had been studying too hard and too long, and required some change of scene and occupation. She had a fancy for trying to see if she could support herself as so many young women are obliged to, and found a place with us, the Mistress only knowing her secret.

"She is to be our young Doctor's wife!" the Mistress whispered to me, and did some more crying, not for grief, certainly.

Whether our young Doctor's long visits to a neighboring town had anything to do with the fact that Avis was at that institution, whether she was the patient he visited or not, may be left in doubt. At all events, he had always driven off in the direction which would carry him to the place where she was at school.

I have attended a large number of celebrations, commencements, banquets, soirees, and so forth, and done my best to help on a good many of them. In fact, I have become rather too well known in connection with "occasions," and it has cost me no little trouble. I believe there is no kind of occurrence for which I have not been requested to contribute something in prose or verse. It is sometimes very hard to say no to the requests. If one is in the right mood when

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he or she writes an occasional poem, it seems as if nothing could have been easier. "Why, that piece run off jest like ile. I don't bullieve," the unlettered applicant says to himself, "I don't bullieve it took him ten minutes to write them verses." The good people have no suspicion of how much a single line, a single expression, may cost its author. The wits used to say that Ropers,—the poet once before referred to, old Samuel Ropers, author of the Pleasures of Memory and giver of famous breakfasts,—was accustomed to have straw laid before the house whenever he had just given birth to a couplet. It is not quite so bad as that with most of us who are called upon to furnish a poem, a song, a hymn, an ode for some grand meeting, but it is safe to say that many a trifling performance has had more good honest work put into it than the minister's sermon of that week had cost him. If a vessel glides off the ways smoothly and easily at her launching, it does not mean that no great pains have been taken to secure the result. Because a poem is an "occasional" one, it does not follow that it has not taken as much time and skill as if it had been written without immediate, accidental, temporary motive. Pindar's great odes were occasional poems, just as much as our Commencement and Phi Beta Kappa poems are, and yet they have come down among the most precious bequests of antiquity to modern times.

The mystery of the young Doctor's long visits to the neighboring town was satisfactorily explained by what we saw and heard of his relations with our charming "Delilah,"—for Delilah we could hardly help calling her. Our little handmaid, the Cinderella of the teacups, now the princess, or, what was better, the pride of the school to which she had belonged, fit for any position to which she might be called, was to be the wife of our young Doctor. It would not have been the right thing to proclaim the fact while she was a pupil, but now that she had finished her course of instruction there was no need of making a secret of the engagement.

So we have got our romance, our love-story out of our Teacups, as I hoped and expected that we should, but not exactly in the quarter where it might have been looked for.

What did our two Annexes say to this unexpected turn of events? They were good-hearted girls as ever lived, but they were human, like the rest of us, and women, like some of the rest of us. They behaved perfectly. They congratulated the Doctor, and hoped he would bring the young lady to the tea-table where she had played her part so becomingly. It is safe to say that each of the Annexes would have liked to be asked the lover's last question by the very nice young man who had been a pleasant companion at the table and elsewhere to each of them. That same question is the highest compliment a man can pay a woman, and a woman does not mind having a dozen or more such compliments to string on the rosary of her remembrances. Whether either of them was glad, on the whole, that he had not offered himself to the other in preference

to herself would be a mean, shabby question, and I think altogether too well of you who are reading this paper to suppose that you would entertain the idea of asking it.

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It was a very pleasant occasion when the Doctor brought Avis over to sit with us at the table where she used to stand and wait upon us. We wondered how we could for a moment have questioned that she was one to be waited upon, and not made for the humble office which nevertheless she performed so cheerfully and so well.

Commencements and other Celebrations, American and English.

The social habits of our people have undergone an immense change within the past half century, largely in consequence of the vast development of the means of intercourse between different neighborhoods.

Commencements, college gatherings of all kinds, church assemblages, school anniversaries, town centennials,—all possible occasions for getting crowds together are made the most of. “T is sixty years since,”—and a good many years over,—the time to which my memory extends. The great days of the year were, Election,—General Election on Wednesday, and Artillery Election on the Monday following, at which time lilacs were in bloom and 'lection buns were in order; Fourth of July, when strawberries were just going out; and Commencement, a grand time of feasting, fiddling, dancing, jollity, not to mention drunkenness and fighting, on the classic green of Cambridge. This was the season of melons and peaches. That is the way our boyhood chronicles events. It was odd that the literary festival should be turned into a Donnybrook fair, but so it was when I was a boy, and the tents and the shows and the crowds on the Common were to the promiscuous many the essential parts of the great occasion. They had been so for generations, and it was only gradually that the Cambridge Saturnalia were replaced by the decencies and solemnities of the present sober anniversary.

Nowadays our celebrations smack of the Sunday-school more than of the dancing-hall. The aroma of the punch-bowl has given way to the milder flavor of lemonade and the cooling virtues of ice-cream. A strawberry festival is about as far as the dissipation of our social gatherings ventures. There was much that was objectionable in those swearing, drinking, fighting times, but they had a certain excitement for us boys of the years when the century was in its teens, which comes back to us not without its fascinations. The days of total abstinence are a great improvement over those of unlicensed license, but there was a picturesque element about the rowdyism of our old Commencement days, which had a charm for the eye of boyhood. My dear old friend,—book-friend, I mean,—whom I always called Daddy Gilpin (as I find Fitzgerald called Wordsworth, Daddy Wordsworth),—my old friend Gilpin, I say, considered the donkey more picturesque in a landscape than the horse. So a village fete as depicted by Teniers is more picturesque than a teetotal picnic or a Sabbath-school strawberry festival. Let us be thankful that the vicious picturesque is only a remembrance, and the virtuous commonplace a reality of to-day.

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What put all this into my head is something which the English Annex has been showing me. Most of my readers are somewhat acquainted with our own church and village celebrations. They know how they are organized; the women always being the chief motors, and the machinery very much the same in one case as in another. Perhaps they would like to hear how such things are managed in England; and that is just what they may learn from the pamphlet which was shown me by the English Annex, and of which I will give them a brief account.

Some of us remember the Rev. Mr. Haweis, his lectures and his violin, which interested and amused us here in Boston a few years ago. Now Mr. Haweis, assisted by his intelligent and spirited wife, has charge of the parish of St. James, Westmoreland Street, Marylebone, London. On entering upon the twenty-fifth year of his incumbency in Marylebone, and the twenty-eighth of his ministry in the diocese of London, it was thought a good idea to have an "Evening Conversazione and Fete." We can imagine just how such a meeting would be organized in one of our towns. Ministers, deacons, perhaps a member of Congress, possibly a Senator, and even, conceivably, his Excellency the Governor, and a long list of ladies lend their names to give lustre to the occasion. It is all very pleasant, unpretending, unceremonious, cheerful, well ordered, commendable, but not imposing.

Now look at our Marylebone parish celebration, and hold your breath while the procession of great names passes before you. You learn at the outset that it is held *under royal patronage*, and read the names of two royal highnesses, one highness, a prince, and a princess. Then comes a list before which if you do not turn pale, you must certainly be in the habit of rouging: three earls, seven lords, three bishops, two generals (one of them Lord Wolseley), one admiral, four baronets, nine knights, a crowd of right honorable and honorable ladies (many of them peeresses), and a mob of other personages, among whom I find Mr. Howells, Bret Harte, and myself.

Perhaps we are disposed to smile at seeing so much made of titles; but after what we have learned of Lord Timothy Dexter and the high-sounding names appropriated by many of our own compatriots, who have no more claim to them than we plain Misters and Misseses, we may feel to them something as our late friend Mr. Appleton felt to the real green turtle soup set before him, when he said that it was almost as good as mock.

The entertainment on this occasion was of the most varied character. The programme makes the following announcement:

Friday, 4 July, 18-.

At 8 P. M. the Doors will Open.

Mr. Haweis will receive his Friends.

The Royal Handbell Ringers will Ring.

The Fish-pond will be Fished.

The Stalls will be Visited.
The Phonograph will Utter.

Refreshments will be called for, and they will come,—Tea, Coffee, and Cooling Drinks.
Spirits will not be called for, from the Vasty Deep or anywhere else,—nor would they
come if they were.

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At 9.30 Mrs. Haweis will join the assembly.

I am particularly delighted with this last feature in the preliminary announcement. It is a proof of the high regard in which the estimable and gifted lady who shares her husband's labors is held by the people of their congregation, and the friends who share in their feelings. It is such a master stroke of policy, too, to keep back the principal attraction until the guests must have grown eager for her appearance: I can well imagine how great a saving it must have been to the good lady's nerves, which were probably pretty well tried already by the fatigues and responsibilities of the busy evening. I have a right to say this, for I myself had the honor of attending a meeting at Mr. Haweis's house, where I was a principal guest, as I suppose, from the fact of the great number of persons who were presented to me. The minister must be very popular, for the meeting was a regular jam,—not quite so tremendous as that greater one, where but for the aid of Mr. Smalley, who kept open a breathing-space round us, my companion and myself thought we should have been asphyxiated.

The company was interested, as some of my readers maybe, to know what were the attractions offered to the visitors besides that of meeting the courteous entertainers and their distinguished guests. I cannot give these at length, for each part of the show is introduced in the programme with apt quotations and pleasantries, which enlivened the catalogue. There were eleven stalls, "conducted on the cooperative principle of division of profits and interest; they retain the profits, and you take a good deal of interest, we hope, in their success."

Stall No. 1. Edisoniana, or the Phonograph. Alluded to by the Roman Poet as Vox, et praeterea nihil.

Stall No. 2. Money-changing.

Stall No. 3. Programmes and General Enquiries.

Stall No. 4. Roses.

A rose by any other name, *etc.* Get one. You can't expect to smell one without buying it, but you may buy one without smelling it.

Stall No. 5. Lasenby Liberty Stall. (I cannot explain this. Probably articles from Liberty's famous establishment.)

Stall No. 6. Historical Costumes and Ceramics.

Stall No. 7. The Fish-pond.

Stall No. 8. Varieties.

Stall No. 9. Bookstall. (Books) "highly recommended for insomnia; friends we never speak to, and always cut if we want to know them well."

Stall No. 10. Icelandic.

Stall No. 11. Call Office. "Mrs. Magnusson, who is devoted to the North Pole and all its works, will thaw your sympathies, enlighten your minds," *etc.*, *etc.*

All you buy may be left at the stalls, ticketed. A duplicate ticket will be handed to you on leaving. Present your duplicate at the Call Office.

At 9.45, First Concert.

At 10.45, An Address of Welcome by Rev. H. R. Haweis.

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At 11 P. M., Bird-warbling Interlude by Miss Mabel Stephenson, U. S. A.

At 11.20, Second Concert.

Notice!

Three Great Pictures.

Lord Tennyson. G. F. Watts, R. A. *John Stuart mill* G. F. Watts, R. A.
Joseph Garibaldi Sig. Rondi.

Notice!

A Famous Violin.

A world-famed Stradivarius Violin, for which Mr. Hill, of Bond Street, gave L 1000, *etc.*, *etc.*

Refreshments.

Tickets for Tea, Coffee, Sandwiches, Iced Drinks, or Ices, Sixpence each, *etc.*, *etc.*

I hope my American reader is pleased and interested by this glimpse of the way in which they do these things in London.

There is something very pleasant about all this, but what specially strikes me is a curious flavor of city provincialism. There are little centres in the heart of great cities, just as there are small fresh-water ponds in great islands with the salt sea roaring all round them, and bays and creeks penetrating them as briny as the ocean itself. Irving has given a charming picture of such a quasi-provincial centre in one of his papers in the Sketch-Book,—the one with the title “Little Britain.” London is a nation of itself, and contains provinces, districts, foreign communities, villages, parishes,—innumerable lesser centres, with their own distinguishing characteristics, habits, pursuit, languages, social laws, as much isolated from each other as if “mountains interposed” made the separation between them. One of these lesser centres is that over which my friend Mr. Haweis presides as spiritual director. Chelsea has been made famous as the home of many authors and artists,—above all, as the residence of Carlyle during the greater part of his life. Its population, like that of most respectable suburbs, must belong mainly to the kind of citizens which resembles in many ways the better class,—as we sometimes dare to call it,—of one of our thriving New England towns. How many John Gilpins there must be in this population,—citizens of “famous London town,” but living with the simplicity of the inhabitants of our inland villages! In the mighty metropolis where the wealth of the world displays itself they practise their snug economies, enjoy their simple pleasures, and look upon ice-cream as a luxury, just as if they were living on the banks of the Connecticut or the Housatonic, in regions where the summer locusts of the great

cities have not yet settled on the verdure of the native inhabitants. It is delightful to realize the fact that while the West End of London is flaunting its splendors and the East End in struggling with its miseries, these great middle-class communities are living as comfortable, unpretending lives as if they were in one of our thriving townships in the huckleberry-districts. Human beings are wonderfully alike when they are placed in similar conditions.

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We were sitting together in a very quiet way over our teacups. The young Doctor, who was in the best of spirits, had been laughing and chatting with the two Annexes. The Tutor, who always sits next to Number Five of late, had been conversing with her in rather low tones. The rest of us had been soberly sipping our tea, and when the Doctor and the Annexes stopped talking there was one of those dead silences which are sometimes so hard to break in upon, and so awkward while they last. All at once Number Seven exploded in a loud laugh, which startled everybody at the table.

What is it that sets you laughing so? said I.

"I was thinking," Number Seven replied, "of what you said the other day of poetry being only the ashes of emotion. I believe that some people are disposed to dispute the proposition. I have been putting your doctrine to the test. In doing it I made some rhymes,—the first and only ones I ever made. I will suppose a case of very exciting emotion, and see whether it would probably take the form of poetry or prose. You are suddenly informed that your house is on fire, and have to scramble out of it, without stopping to tie your neck-cloth neatly or to put a flower in your buttonhole. Do you think a poet turning out in his night-dress, and looking on while the flames were swallowing his home and all its contents, would express himself in this style?

"My house is on fire!

Bring me my lyre!

Like the flames that rise heavenward my song shall aspire!

"He would n't do any such thing, and you know he wouldn't. He would yell Fire! Fire! with all his might. Not much rhyming for him just yet! Wait until the fire is put out, and he has had time to look at the charred timbers and the ashes of his home, and in the course of a week he may possibly spin a few rhymes about it. Or suppose he was making an offer of his hand and heart, do you think he would declaim a versified proposal to his Amanda, or perhaps write an impromptu on the back of his hat while he knelt before her?

"My beloved, to you

I will always be true.

Oh, pray make me happy, my love, do! do! do!

"What would Amanda think of a suitor who courted her with a rhyming dictionary in his pocket to help him make love?"

You are right, said I,—there's nothing in the world like rhymes to cool off a man's passion. You look at a blacksmith working on a bit of iron or steel. Bright enough it looked while it was on the hearth, in the midst of the sea-coal, the great bellows blowing away, and the rod or the horse-shoe as red or as white as the burning coals. How it fizzes as it goes into the trough of water, and how suddenly all the glow is gone! It looks

black and cold enough now. Just so with your passionate incandescence. It is all well while it burns and scintillates in your emotional centres, without articulate and connected expression; but the minute you plunge

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it into the rhyme-trough it cools down, and becomes as dead and dull as the cold horse-shoe. It is true that if you lay it cold on the anvil and hammer away on it for a while it warms up somewhat. Just so with the rhyming fellow,—he pounds away on his verses and they warm up a little. But don't let him think that this afterglow of composition is the same thing as the original passion. That found expression in a few oh, oh's, eheu's, *helas*, *helas's*, and when the passion had burned itself out you got the rhymed verses, which, as I have said, are its ashes.

I thanked Number Seven for his poetical illustration of my thesis. There is great good to be got out of a squinting brain, if one only knows how to profit by it. We see only one side of the moon, you know, but a fellow with a squinting brain seems now and then to get a peep at the other side. I speak metaphorically. He takes new and startling views of things we have always looked at in one particular aspect. There is a rule invariably to be observed with one of this class of intelligences: Never contradict a man with a squinting brain. I say a man, because I do not think that squinting brains are nearly so common in women as they are in men. The "eccentrics" are, I think, for the most part of the male sex.

That leads me to say that persons with a strong instinctive tendency to contradiction are apt to become unprofitable companions. Our thoughts are plants that never flourish in inhospitable soils or chilling atmospheres. They are all started under glass, so to speak; that is, sheltered and fostered in our own warm and sunny consciousness. They must expect some rough treatment when we lift the sash from the frame and let the outside elements in upon them. They can bear the rain and the breezes, and be all the better for them; but perpetual contradiction is a pelting hailstorm, which spoils their growth and tends to kill them out altogether.

Now stop and consider a moment. Are not almost all brains a little wanting in bilateral symmetry? Do you not find in persons whom you love, whom you esteem, and even admire, some marks of obliquity in mental vision? Are there not some subjects in looking at which it seems to you impossible that they should ever see straight? Are there not moods in which it seems to you that they are disposed to see all things out of plumb and in false relations with each other? If you answer these questions in the affirmative, then you will be glad of a hint as to the method of dealing with your friends who have a touch of cerebral strabismus, or are liable to occasional paroxysms of perversity. Let them have their head. Get them talking on subjects that interest them. As a rule, nothing is more likely to serve this purpose than letting them talk about themselves; if authors, about their writings; if artists, about their pictures or statues; and generally on whatever they have most pride in and think most of their own relations with.

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Perhaps you will not at first sight agree with me in thinking that slight mental obliquity is as common as I suppose. An analogy may have some influence on your belief in this matter. Will you take the trouble to ask your tailor how many persons have their two shoulders of the same height? I think he will tell you that the majority of his customers show a distinct difference of height on the two sides. Will you ask a portrait-painter how many of those who sit to him have both sides of their faces exactly alike? I believe he will tell you that one side is always a little better than the other. What will your hatter say about the two sides of the head? Do you see equally well with both eyes, and hear equally well with both ears? Few persons past middle age will pretend that they do. Why should the two halves of a brain not show a natural difference, leading to confusion of thought, and very possibly to that instinct of contradiction of which I was speaking? A great deal of time is lost in profitless conversation, and a good deal of ill temper frequently caused, by not considering these organic and practically insuperable conditions. In dealing with them, acquiescence is the best of palliations and silence the sovereign specific.

I have been the reporter, as you have seen, of my own conversation and that of the other Teacups. I have told some of the circumstances of their personal history, and interested, as I hope, here and there a reader in the fate of different members of our company. Here are our pretty Delilah and our Doctor provided for. We may take it for granted that it will not be very long that the young couple will have to wait; for, as I have told you all, the Doctor is certainly getting into business, and bids fair to have a thriving practice before he saddles his nose with an eyeglass and begins to think of a pair of spectacles. So that part of our little domestic drama is over, and we can only wish the pair that is to be all manner of blessings consistent with a reasonable amount of health in the community on whose ailings must depend their prosperity.

All our thoughts are now concentrated on the relation existing between Number Five and the Tutor. That there is some profound instinctive impulse which is drawing them closer together no one who watches them can for a moment doubt. There are two principles of attraction which bring different natures together: that in which the two natures closely resemble each other, and that in which one is complementary of the other. In the first case, they coalesce, as do two drops of water or of mercury, and become intimately blended as soon as they touch; in the other, they rush together as an acid and an alkali unite, predestined from eternity to find all they most needed in each other. What is the condition of things in the growing intimacy of Number Five and the Tutor? He is many years her junior, as we know. Both of them look that fact squarely in the face.

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The presumption is against the union of two persons under these circumstances. Presumptions are strong obstacles against any result we wish to attain, but half our work in life is to overcome them. A great many results look in the distance like six-foot walls, and when we get nearer prove to be only five-foot hurdles, to be leaped over or knocked down. Twenty years from now she may be a vigorous and active old woman, and he a middle-aged, half-worn-out invalid, like so many overworked scholars. Everything depends on the number of drops of the elixir vitae which Nature mingled in the nourishment she administered to the embryo before it tasted its mother's milk. Think of Cleopatra, the bewitching old mischief-maker; think of Ninon de L'Enclos, whose own son fell desperately in love with her, not knowing the relation in which she stood to him; think of Dr. Johnson's friend, Mrs. Thrale, afterward Mrs. Piozzi, who at the age of eighty was full enough of life to be making love ardently and persistently to Conway, the handsome young actor. I can readily believe that Number Five will outlive the Tutor, even if he is fortunate enough rather in winning his way into the fortress through gates that open to him of their own accord. If he fails in his siege, I do really believe he will die early; not of a broken heart, exactly, but of a heart starved, with the food it was craving close to it, but unattainable. I have, therefore, a deep interest in knowing how Number Five and the Tutor are getting along together. Is there any danger of one or the other growing tired of the intimacy, and becoming willing to get rid of it, like a garment which has shrunk and grown too tight? Is it likely that some other attraction may come into disturb the existing relation? The problem is to my mind not only interesting, but exceptionally curious. You remember the story of Cymon and Iphigenia as Dryden tells it. The poor youth has the capacity of loving, but it lies hidden in his undeveloped nature. All at once he comes upon the sleeping beauty, and is awakened by her charms to a hitherto unfelt consciousness. With the advent of the new passion all his dormant faculties start into life, and the seeming simpleton becomes the bright and intelligent lover. The case of Number Five is as different from that of Cymon as it could well be. All her faculties are wide awake, but one emotional side of her nature has never been called into active exercise. Why has she never been in love with any one of her suitors? Because she liked too many of them. Do you happen to remember a poem printed among these papers, entitled "I Like You and I Love You"

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No one of the poems which have been placed in the urn,—that is, in the silver sugar-bowl,—has had any name attached to it; but you could guess pretty nearly who was the author of some of them, certainly of the one just, referred to. Number Five was attracted to the Tutor from the first time he spoke to her. She dreamed about him that night, and nothing idealizes and renders fascinating one in whom we have already an interest like dreaming of him or of her. Many a calm suitor has been made passionate by a dream; many a passionate lover has been made wild and half beside himself by a dream; and now and then an infatuated but hapless lover, waking from a dream of bliss to a cold reality of wretchedness, has helped himself to eternity before he was summoned to the table.

Since Number Five had dreamed about the Tutor, he had been more in her waking thoughts than she was willing to acknowledge. These thoughts were vague, it is true, —emotions, perhaps, rather than worded trains of ideas; but she was conscious of a pleasing excitement as his name or his image floated across her consciousness; she sometimes sighed as she looked over the last passage they had read from the same book, and sometimes when they were together they were silent too long,—too long! What were they thinking of?

And so it was all as plain sailing for Number Five and the young Tutor as it had been for Delilah and the young Doctor, was it? Do you think so? Then you do not understand Number Five. Many a woman has as many atmospheric rings about her as the planet Saturn. Three are easily to be recognized. First, there is the wide ring of attraction which draws into itself all that once cross its outer border. These revolve about her without ever coming any nearer. Next is the inner ring of attraction. Those who come within its irresistible influence are drawn so close that it seems as if they must become one with her sooner or later. But within this ring is another,—an atmospheric girdle, one of repulsion, which love, no matter how enterprising, no matter how prevailing or how insinuating, has never passed, and, if we judge of what is to be by what has been, never will. Perhaps Nature loved Number Five so well that she grudged her to any mortal man, and gave her this inner girdle of repulsion to guard her from all who would know her too nearly and love her too well. Sometimes two vessels at sea keep each other company for a long distance, it may be daring a whole voyage. Very pleasant it is to each to have a companion to exchange signals with from time to time; to come near enough, when the winds are light, to hold converse in ordinary tones from deck to deck; to know that, in case of need, there's help at hand. It is good for them to be near each other, but not good to be too near. Woe is to them if they touch! The wreck of one or both is likely to be the consequence. And so two well-equipped and heavily freighted natures may be the best of companions

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to each other, and yet must never attempt to come into closer union. Is this the condition of affairs between Number Five and the Tutor? I hope not, for I want them to be joined together in that dearest of intimacies, which, if founded in true affinity, is the nearest approach to happiness to be looked for in our mortal, experience. We must wait. The Teacups will meet once more before the circle is broken, and we may, perhaps, find the solution of the question we have raised.

In the mean time, our young Doctor is playing truant oftener than ever. He has brought Avis,—if we must call her so, and not Delilah,—several times to take tea with us. It means something, in these days, to graduate from one of our first-class academies or collegiate schools. I shall never forget my first visit to one of these institutions. How much its pupils know, I said, which I was never taught, and have never learned! I was fairly frightened to see what a teaching apparatus was provided for them. I should think the first thing to be done with most of the husbands, they are likely to get would be to put them through a course of instruction. The young wives must find their lords wofully ignorant, in a large proportion of cases. When the wife has educated the husband to such a point that she can invite him to work out a problem in the higher mathematics or to perform a difficult chemical analysis with her as his collaborator, as less instructed dames ask their husbands to play a game of checkers or backgammon, they can have delightful and instructive evenings together. I hope our young Doctor will take kindly to his wife's (that is to be) teachings.

When the following verses were taken out of the urn, the Mistress asked me to hand the manuscript to the young Doctor to read. I noticed that he did not keep his eyes very closely fixed on the paper. It seemed as if he could have recited the lines without referring to the manuscript at all.

At the turn of the road.

The glory has passed from the goldenrod's plume,
The purple-hued asters still linger in bloom;
The birch is bright yellow, the sumachs are red,
The maples like torches aflame overhead.

But what if the joy of the summer is past,
And winter's wild herald is blowing his blast?
For me dull November is sweeter than May,
For my love is its sunshine,—she meets me to-day!

Will she come? Will the ring-dove return to her nest?
Will the needle swing back from the east or the west?



At the stroke of the hour she will be at her gate;
A friend may prove laggard,—love never comes late.

Do I see her afar in the distance? Not yet.
Too early! Too early! She could not forget!
When I cross the old bridge where the brook overflowed,
She will flash full in sight at the turn of the road.

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I pass the low wall where the ivy entwines;
I tread the brown pathway that leads through the pines;
I haste by the boulder that lies in the field,
Where her promise at parting was lovingly sealed.

Will she come by the hillside or round through the wood?
Will she wear her brown dress or her mantle and hood?
The minute draws near,—but her watch may go wrong;
My heart will be asking, What keeps her so long?

Why doubt for a moment? More shame if I do!
Why question? Why tremble? Are angels more true?
She would come to the lover who calls her his own
Though she trod in the track of a whirling cyclone!

—I crossed the old bridge ere the minute had passed.
I looked: lo! my Love stood before me at last.
Her eyes, how they sparkled, her cheeks, how they glowed,
As we met, face to face, at the turn of the road!

XII

There was a great tinkling of teaspoons the other evening, when I took my seat at the table, where all The Teacups were gathered before my entrance. The whole company arose, and the Mistress, speaking for them, expressed the usual sentiment appropriate to such occasions. “Many happy returns” is the customary formula. No matter if the object of this kind wish is a centenarian, it is quite safe to assume that he is ready and very willing to accept as many more years as the disposing powers may see fit to allow him.

The meaning of it all was that this was my birthday. My friends, near and distant, had seen fit to remember it, and to let me know in various pleasant ways that they had not forgotten it. The tables were adorned with flowers. Gifts of pretty and pleasing objects were displayed on a side table. A great green wreath, which must have cost the parent oak a large fraction of its foliage, was an object of special admiration. Baskets of flowers which had half unpeopled greenhouses, large bouquets of roses, fragrant bunches of pinks, and many beautiful blossoms I am not botanist enough to name had been coming in upon me all day long. Many of these offerings were brought by the givers in person; many came with notes as fragrant with good wishes as the flowers they accompanied with their natural perfumes.

How old was I, The Dictator, once known by another equally audacious title,—I, the recipient of all these favors and honors? I had cleared the eight-barred gate, which few



come in sight of, and fewer, far fewer, go over, a year before. I was a trespasser on the domain belonging to another generation. The children of my coevals were fast getting gray and bald, and their children beginning to look upon the world as belonging to them, and not to their sires and grandsires. After that leap over the tall barrier, it looks like a kind of impropriety to keep on as if one were still of a reasonable age.

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Sometimes it seems to me almost of the nature of a misdemeanor to be wandering about in the preserve which the fleshless gamekeeper guards so jealously. But, on the other hand, I remember that men of science have maintained that the natural life of man is nearer fivescore than threescore years and ten. I always think of a familiar experience which I bring from the French cafes, well known to me in my early manhood. One of the illustrated papers of my Parisian days tells it pleasantly enough.

A guest of the establishment is sitting at his little table. He has just had his coffee, and the waiter is serving him with his *petit verre*. Most of my readers know very well what a *petit verre* is, but there may be here and there a virtuous abstainer from alcoholic fluids, living among the bayberries and the sweet ferns, who is not aware that the words, as commonly used, signify a small glass—a very small glass—of spirit, commonly brandy, taken as a *chasse-cafe*, or coffee-chaser. This drinking of brandy, “neat,” I may remark by the way, is not quite so bad as it looks. Whiskey or rum taken unmixed from a tumbler is a knock-down blow to temperance, but the little thimbleful of brandy, or Chartreuse, or Maraschino, is only, as it were, tweaking the nose of teetotalism.

Well,—to go back behind our brackets,—the guest is calling to the waiter, “*Garçon! et le bain de pieds!*” Waiter! and the foot-bath!—The little glass stands in a small tin saucer or shallow dish, and the custom is to more than fill the glass, so that some extra brandy rung over into this tin saucer or cup-plate, to the manifest gain of the consumer.

Life is a *petit verre* of a very peculiar kind of spirit. At seventy years it used to be said that the little glass was full. We should be more apt to put it at eighty in our day, while Gladstone and Tennyson and our own Whittier are breathing, moving, thinking, writing, speaking, in the green preserve belonging to their children and grandchildren, and Bancroft is keeping watch of the gamekeeper in the distance. But, returning resolutely to the *petit verre*, I am willing to concede that all after fourscore is the *bain de pieds*,—the slopping over, so to speak, of the full measure of life. I remember that one who was very near and dear to me, and who lived to a great age, so that the ten-barred gate of the century did not look very far off, would sometimes apologize in a very sweet, natural way for lingering so long to be a care and perhaps a burden to her children, themselves getting well into years. It is not hard to understand the feeling, never less called for than it was in the case of that beloved nonagenarian. I have known few persons, young or old, more sincerely and justly regretted than the gentle lady whose memory comes up before me as I write.

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Oh, if we could all go out of flower as gracefully, as pleasingly, as we come into blossom! I always think of the morning-glory as the loveliest example of a graceful yielding to the inevitable. It is beautiful before its twisted corolla opens; it is comely as it folds its petals inward, when its brief hours of perfection are over. Women find it easier than men to grow old in a becoming way. A very old lady who has kept something, it may be a great deal, of her youthful feelings, who is daintily cared for, who is grateful for the attentions bestowed upon her, and enters into the spirit of the young lives that surround her, is as precious to those who love her as a gem in an antique setting, the fashion of which has long gone by, but which leaves the jewel the color and brightness which are its inalienable qualities. With old men it is too often different. They do not belong so much indoors as women do. They have no pretty little manual occupations. The old lady knits or stitches so long as her eyes and fingers will let her. The old man smokes his pipe, but does not know what to do with his fingers, unless he plays upon some instrument, or has a mechanical turn which finds business for them.

But the old writer, I said to The Teacups, as I say to you, my readers, labors under one special difficulty, which I am thinking of and exemplifying at this moment. He is constantly tending to reflect upon and discourse about his own particular stage of life. He feels that he must apologize for his intrusion upon the time and thoughts of a generation which he naturally supposes must be tired of him, if they ever had any considerable regard for him. Now, if the world of readers hates anything it sees in print, it is apology. If what one has to say is worth saying, he need not beg pardon for saying it. If it is not worth saying I will not finish the sentence. But it is so hard to resist the temptation, notwithstanding that the terrible line beginning "Superfluous lags the veteran" is always repeating itself in his dull ear!

What kind of audience or reading parish is a man who secured his constituency in middle life, or before that period, to expect when he has reached the age of threescore and twenty? His coevals have dropped away by scores and tens, and he sees only a few units scattered about here and there, like the few beads above the water after a ship has gone to pieces. Does he write and publish for those of his own time of life? He need not print a large edition. Does he hope to secure a hearing from those who have come into the reading world since his coevals? They have found fresher fields and greener pastures. Their interests are in the out-door, active world. Some of them are circumnavigating the planet while he is hitching his rocking chair about his hearth-rug. Some are gazing upon the pyramids while he is staring at his andirons. Some are settling the tariff and fixing the laws of suffrage and taxation while he is dozing over the weather bulletin, and going to sleep over the obituaries in his morning or evening paper.

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Nature is wiser than we give her credit for being; never wiser than in her dealings with the old. She has no idea of mortifying them by sudden and wholly unexpected failure of the chief servants of consciousness. The sight, for instance, begins to lose something of its perfection long before its deficiency calls the owner's special attention to it. Very probably, the first hint we have of the change is that a friend makes the pleasing remark that we are "playing the trombone," as he calls it; that is, moving a book we are holding backward and forward, to get the right focal distance. Or it may be we find fault with the lamp or the gas-burner for not giving so much light as it used to. At last, somewhere between forty and fifty, we begin to dangle a jaunty pair of eye-glasses, half plaything and half necessity. In due time a pair of sober, business-like spectacles bestrides the nose. Old age leaps upon it as his saddle, and rides triumphant, unchallenged, until the darkness comes which no glasses can penetrate. Nature is pitiless in carrying out the universal sentence, but very pitiful in her mode of dealing with the condemned on his way to the final scene. The man who is to be hanged always has a good breakfast provided for him.

Do not think that the old look upon themselves as the helpless, hopeless, forlorn creatures which they seem to young people. Do these young folks suppose that all vanity dies out of the natures of old men and old women? A dentist of olden time told me that a good-looking young man once said to him, "Keep that incisor presentable, if you can, till I am fifty, and then I sha'n't care how I look." I venture to say that that gentleman was as particular about his personal appearance and as proud of his good looks at fifty, and many years after fifty, as he was in the twenties, when he made that speech to the dentist.

My dear friends around the teacups, and at that wider board where I am now entertaining, or trying to entertain, my company, is it not as plain to you as it is to me that I had better leave such tasks as that which I am just finishing to those who live in a more interesting period of life than one which, in the order of nature, is next door to decrepitude? Ought I not to regret having undertaken to report the doings and sayings of the members of the circle which you have known as The Teacups?

Dear, faithful reader, whose patient eyes have followed my reports through these long months, you and I are about parting company. Perhaps you are one of those who have known me under another name, in those far-off days separated from these by the red sea of the great national conflict. When you first heard the tinkle of the teaspoons, as the table was being made ready for its guests, you trembled for me, in the kindness of your hearts. I do not wonder that you did,—I trembled for myself. But I remembered the story of Sir Cloudesley Shovel, who was seen all of a tremor just as he was going

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into action. "How is this?" said a brother officer to him. "Surely you are not afraid?" "No," he answered, "but my flesh trembles at the thought of the dangers into which my intrepid spirit will carry me." I knew the risk of undertaking to carry through a series of connected papers. And yet I thought it was better to run that risk, more manly, more sensible, than to give way to the fears which made my flesh tremble as did Sir Cloudesley Shovel's. For myself the labor has been a distraction, and one which came at a time when it was needed. Sometimes, as in one of those poems recently published,—the reader will easily guess which,—the youthful spirit has come over me with such a rush that it made me feel just as I did when I wrote the history of the "One-hoss Shay" thirty years ago. To repeat one of my comparisons, it was as if an early fruit had ripened on a graft upon an old, steady-going tree, to the astonishment of all its later-maturing products. I should hardly dare to say so much as this if I had not heard a similar opinion expressed by others.

Once committed to my undertaking, there was no turning back. It is true that I had said I might stop at any moment, but after one or two numbers it seemed as if there were an informal pledge to carry the series on, as in former cases, until I had completed my dozen instalments.

Writers and speakers have their idiosyncrasies, their habits, their tricks, if you had rather call them so, as to their ways of writing and speaking. There is a very old and familiar story, accompanied by a feeble jest, which most of my readers may probably enough have met with in Joe Miller or elsewhere. It is that of a lawyer who could never make an argument without having a piece of thread to work upon with his fingers while he was pleading. Some one stole it from him one day, and he could not get on at all with his speech,—he had lost the thread of his discourse, as the story had it. Now this is what I myself once saw. It was at a meeting where certain grave matters were debated in an assembly of professional men. A speaker, whom I never heard before or since, got up and made a long and forcible argument. I do not think he was a lawyer, but he spoke as if he had been trained to talk to juries. He held a long string in one hand, which he drew through the other band incessantly, as he spoke, just as a shoe maker performs the motion of waxing his thread. He appeared to be dependent on this motion. The physiological significance of the fact I suppose to be that the flow of what we call the nervous current from the thinking centre to the organs of speech was rendered freer and easier by the establishment of a simultaneous collateral nervous current to the set of muscles concerned in the action I have described.

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I do not use a string to help me write or speak, but I must have its equivalent. I must have my paper and pen or pencil before me to set my thoughts flowing in such form that they can be written continuously. There have been lawyers who could think out their whole argument in connected order without a single note. There are authors,—and I think there are many,—who can compose and finish off a poem or a story without writing a word of it until, when the proper time comes, they copy what they carry in their heads. I have been told that Sir Edwin Arnold thought out his beautiful “Light of Asia” in this way.

I find the great charm of writing consists in its surprises. When one is in the receptive attitude of mind, the thoughts which are sprung upon him, the images which flash through his—consciousness, are a delight and an excitement. I am impatient of every hindrance in setting down my thoughts,—of a pen that will not write, of ink that will not flow, of paper that will not receive the ink. And here let me pay the tribute which I owe to one of the humblest but most serviceable of my assistants, especially in poetical composition. Nothing seems more prosaic than the stylographic pen. It deprives the handwriting of its beauty, and to some extent of its individual character. The brutal communism of the letters it forms covers the page it fills with the most uniformly uninteresting characters. But, abuse it as much as you choose, there is nothing like it for the poet, for the imaginative writer. Many a fine flow of thought has been checked, perhaps arrested, by the ill behavior of a goose-quill. Many an idea has escaped while the author was dipping his pen in the inkstand. But with the stylographic pen, in the hands of one who knows how to care for it and how to use it, unbroken rhythms and harmonious cadences are the natural products of the unimpeded flow of the fluid which is the vehicle of the author’s thoughts and fancies. So much for my debt of gratitude to the humble stylographic pen. It does not furnish the proper medium for the correspondence of intimates, who wish to see as much of their friends’ personality as their handwriting can hold,—still less for the impassioned interchange of sentiments between lovers; but in writing for the press its use is open to no objection. Its movement over the paper is like the flight of a swallow, while the quill pen and the steel pen and the gold pen are all taking short, laborious journeys, and stopping to drink every few minutes.

A chief pleasure which the author of novels and stories experiences is that of becoming acquainted with the characters he draws. It is perfectly true that his characters must, in the nature of things, have more or less of himself in their composition. If I should seek an exemplification of this in the person of any of my Teacups, I should find it most readily in the one whom I have called Number Seven, the one with the squinting brain. I think that

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not only I, the writer, but many of my readers, recognize in our own mental constitution an occasional obliquity of perception, not always detected at the time, but plain enough when looked back upon. What extravagant fancies you and I have seriously entertained at one time or another! What superstitious notions have got into our heads and taken possession of its empty chambers,—or, in the language of science, seized on the groups of nerve-cells in some of the idle cerebral convolutions!

The writer, I say, becomes acquainted with his characters as he goes on. They are at first mere embryos, outlines of distinct personalities. By and by, if they have any organic cohesion, they begin to assert themselves. They can say and do such and such things; such and such other things they cannot and must not say or do. The story-writer's and play-writer's danger is that they will get their characters mixed, and make A say what B ought to have said. The stronger his imaginative faculty, the less liable will the writer be to this fault; but not even Shakespeare's power of throwing himself into his characters prevents many of his different personages from talking philosophy in the same strain and in a style common to them all.

You will often observe that authors fall in love with the imaginary persons they describe, and that they bestow affectionate epithets upon them which it may happen the reader does not consider in any way called for. This is a pleasure to which they have a right. Every author of a story is surrounded by a little family of ideal children, as dear to him, it may be, as are flesh-and-blood children to their parents. You may forget all about the circle of Teacups to which I have introduced you,—on the supposition that you have followed me with some degree of interest; but do you suppose that Number Five does not continue as a presence with me, and that my pretty Delilah has left me forever because she is going to be married?

No, my dear friend, our circle will break apart, and its different members will soon be to you as if they had never been. But do you think that I can forget them? Do you suppose that I shall cease to follow the love (or the loves; which do you think is the true word, the singular or the plural?) of Number Five and the young Tutor who is so constantly found in her company? Do you suppose that I do not continue my relations with the "Cracked Teacup,"—the poor old fellow with whom I have so much in common, whose counterpart, perhaps, you may find in your own complex personality?

I take from the top shelf of the hospital department of my library—the section devoted to literary cripples, imbeciles, failures, foolish rhymesters, and silly eccentrics—one of the least conspicuous and most hopelessly feeble of the weak-minded population of that intellectual almshouse. I open it and look through its pages. It is a story. I have looked into it once before,—on its first reception as a gift from the author. I try to recall some of the names I see there: they mean nothing to me, but I venture to say the author cherishes them all, and cries over them as he did when he was writing their history. I

put the book back among its dusty companions, and, sitting down in my reflective rocking-chair, think how others must forget, and how I shall remember, the company that gathered about this table.

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Shall I ever meet any one of them again, in these pages or in any other? Will the cracked Teacup hold together, or will he go to pieces, and find himself in that retreat where the owner of the terrible clock which drove him crazy is walking under the shelter of the high walls? Has the young Doctor's crown yet received the seal which is Nature's warrant of wisdom and proof of professional competency? And Number Five and her young friend the Tutor,—have they kept on in their dangerous intimacy? Did they get through the tutto tremante passage, reading from the same old large edition of Dante which the Tutor recommended as the best, and in reading from which their heads were necessarily brought perilously near to each other?

It would be very pleasant if I could, consistently with the present state of affairs, bring these two young people together. I say two young people, for the one who counts most years seems to me to be really the younger of the pair. That Number Five foresaw from the first that any tenderer feeling than that of friendship would intrude itself between them I do not believe. As for the Tutor, he soon found where he was drifting. It was his first experience in matters concerning the heart, and absorbed his whole nature as a thing of course. Did he tell her he loved her? Perhaps he did, fifty times; perhaps he never had the courage to say so outright. But sometimes they looked each other straight in the eyes, and strange messages seemed to pass from one consciousness to the other. Will the Tutor ask Number Five to be his wife; and if he does, will she yield to the dictates of nature, and lower the flag of that fortress so long thought impregnable? Will he go on writing such poems to her as "The Rose and the Fern" or "I Like You and I Love You," and be content with the pursuit of that which he never can attain? That is all very well, on the "Grecian Urn" of Keats,—beautiful, but not love such as mortals demand. Still, that may be all, for aught that we have yet seen.

"Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold lover, never, never, canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal,—yet do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
Forever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

.....

"More happy love! more happy, happy love!
Forever warm, and still to be enjoyed,
Forever panting and forever young!"

And so, good-bye, young people, whom we part with here. Shadows you have been and are to my readers; very real you have been and are to me,—as real as the memories of many friends whom I shall see no more.



As I am not in the habit of indulging in late suppers, the reader need not think that I shall spread another board and invite him to listen to the conversations which take place around it. If, from time to time, he finds a slight refectation awaiting him on the sideboard, I hope he may welcome it as pleasantly as he has accepted what I have offered him from the board now just being cleared.

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.....

It is a good rule for the actor who manages the popular street drama of Punch not to let the audience or spectators see his legs. It is very hard for the writer of papers like these, which are now coming to their conclusion, to keep his personality from showing itself too conspicuously through the thin disguises of his various characters. As the show is now over, as the curtain has fallen, I appear before it in my proper person, to address a few words to the friends who have assisted, as the French say, by their presence, and as we use the word, by the kind way in which they have received my attempts at their entertainment.

This series of papers is the fourth of its kind which I have offered to my readers. I may be allowed to look back upon the succession of serial articles which was commenced more than thirty years ago, in 1857. "The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table" was the first of the series. It was begun without the least idea what was to be its course and its outcome. Its characters shaped themselves gradually as the manuscript grew under my hand. I jotted down on the sheet of blotting paper before me the thoughts and fancies which came into my head. A very odd-looking object was this page of memoranda. Many of the hints were worked up into formal shape, many were rejected. Sometimes I recorded a story, a jest, or a pun for consideration, and made use of it or let it alone as my second thought decided. I remember a curious coincidence, which, if I have ever told in print,—I am not sure whether I have or not,—I will tell over again. I mention it, not for the pun, which I rejected as not very edifying and perhaps not new, though I did not recollect having seen it.

Mulier, Latin for woman; why apply that name to one of the gentle but occasionally obstinate sex? The answer was that a woman is (sometimes) more mulish than a mule. Please observe that I did not like the poor pun very well, and thought it rather rude and inelegant. So I left it on the blotter, where it was standing when one of the next numbers of "Punch" came out and contained that very same pun, which must have been hit upon by some English contributor at just about the same time I fell upon it on this side of the Atlantic. This fact may be added to the chapter of coincidences which belongs to the first number of this series of papers.

The "Autocrat" had the attraction of novelty, which of course was wanting in the succeeding papers of similar character. The criticisms upon the successive numbers as they came out were various, but generally encouraging. Some were more than encouraging; very high-colored in their phrases of commendation. When the papers were brought together in a volume their success was beyond my expectations. Up to the present time the "Autocrat" has maintained its position. An immortality of a whole generation is more than most writers are entitled to expect. I venture to think, from the letters I receive from

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the children and grandchildren of my first set of readers, that for some little time longer, at least, it will continue to be read, and even to be a favorite with some of its readers. Non omnis moriar is a pleasant thought to one who has loved his poor little planet, and will, I trust, retain kindly recollections of it through whatever wilderness of worlds he may be called to wander in his future pilgrimages. I say "poor little planet." Ever since I had a ten cent look at the transit of Venus, a few years ago, through the telescope in the Mall, the earth has been wholly different to me from what it used to be. I knew from books what a speck it is in the universe, but nothing ever brought the fact home like the sight of the sister planet sailing across the sun's disk, about large enough for a buckshot, not large enough for a full-sized bullet. Yes, I love the little globule where I have spent more than fourscore years, and I like to think that some of my thoughts and some of my emotions may live themselves over again when I am sleeping. I cannot thank all the kind readers of the "Autocrat" who are constantly sending me their acknowledgments. If they see this printed page, let them be assured that a writer is always rendered happier by being told that he has made a fellow-being wiser or better, or even contributed to his harmless entertainment. This a correspondent may take for granted, even if his letter of grateful recognition receives no reply. It becomes more and more difficult for me to keep up with my correspondents, and I must soon give it up as impossible.

"The Professor at the Breakfast Table" followed immediately on the heels of the "Autocrat." The Professor was the alter ego of the first personage. In the earlier series he had played a secondary part, and in this second series no great effort was made to create a character wholly unlike the first. The Professor was more outspoken, however, on religious subjects, and brought down a good deal of hard language on himself and the author to whom he owed his existence. I suppose he may have used some irritating expressions, unconsciously, but not unconscientiously, I am sure. There is nothing harder to forgive than the sting of an epigram. Some of the old doctors, I fear, never pardoned me for saying that if a ship, loaded with an assorted cargo of the drugs which used to be considered the natural food of sick people, went to the bottom of the sea, it would be "all the better for mankind and all the worse for the fishes." If I had not put that snapper on the end of my whip-lash, I might have got off without the ill temper which my antithesis provoked. Thirty years set that all right, and the same thirty years have so changed the theological atmosphere that such abusive words as "heretic" and "infidel," applied to persons who differ from the old standards of faith, are chiefly interesting as a test of breeding, being seldom used by any people above the social half-caste

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line. I am speaking of Protestants; how it may be among Roman Catholics I do not know, but I suspect that with them also it is a good deal a matter of breeding. There were not wanting some who liked the Professor better than the Autocrat. I confess that I prefer my champagne in its first burst of gaseous enthusiasm; but if my guest likes it better after it has stood awhile, I am pleased to accommodate him. The first of my series came from my mind almost with an explosion, like the champagne cork; it startled me a little to see what I had written, and to hear what people said about it. After that first explosion the flow was more sober, and I looked upon the product of my wine-press more coolly. Continuations almost always sag a little. I will not say that of my own second effort, but if others said it, I should not be disposed to wonder at or to dispute them.

“The Poet at the Breakfast Table” came some years later. This series of papers was not so much a continuation as a resurrection. It was a doubly hazardous attempt, made without any extravagant expectations, and was received as well as I had any right to anticipate. It differed from the other two series in containing a poem of considerable length, published in successive portions. This poem holds a good deal of self-communing, and gave me the opportunity of expressing some thoughts and feelings not to be found elsewhere in my writings. I had occasion to read the whole volume, not long since, in preparation for a new edition, and was rather more pleased with it than I had expected to be. An old author is constantly rediscovering himself in the more or less fossilized productions of his earlier years. It is a long time since I have read the “Autocrat,” but I take it up now and then and read in it for a few minutes, not always without some degree of edification.

These three series of papers, “Autocrat,” “Professor,” “Poet,” are all studies of life from somewhat different points of view. They are largely made up of sober reflections, and appeared to me to require some lively human interest to save them from wearisome didactic dullness. What could be more natural than that love should find its way among the young people who helped to make up the circle gathered around the table? Nothing is older than the story of young love. Nothing is newer than that same old story. A bit of gilding here and there has a wonderful effect in enlivening a landscape or an apartment. Napoleon consoled the Parisians in their year of defeat by gilding the dome of the Invalides. Boston has glorified her State House and herself at the expense of a few sheets of gold leaf laid on the dome, which shines like a sun in the eyes of her citizens, and like a star in those of the approaching traveller. I think the gilding of a love-story helped all three of these earlier papers. The same need I felt in the series of papers just closed. The slight incident of Delilah’s appearance and disappearance served my purpose to

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some extent. But what should I do with Number Five? The reader must follow out her career for himself. For myself, I think that she and the Tutor have both utterly forgotten the difference of their years in the fascination of intimate intercourse. I do not believe that a nature so large, so rich in affection, as Number Five's is going to fall defeated of its best inheritance of life, like a vine which finds no support for its tendrils to twine around, and so creeps along the ground from which nature meant that love should lift it. I feel as if I ought to follow these two personages of my sermonizing story until they come together or separate, to fade, to wither,—perhaps to die, at last, of something like what the doctors call heart-failure, but which might more truly be called heart-starvation. When I say die, I do not mean necessarily the death that goes into the obituary column. It may come to that, in one or both; but I think that, if they are never united, Number Five will outlive the Tutor, who will fall into melancholy ways, and pine and waste, while she lives along, feeling all the time that she has cheated herself of happiness. I hope that is not going to be their fortune, or misfortune. *Vieille fille fait jeune mariee*. What a youthful bride Number Five would be, if she could only make up her mind to matrimony! In the mean time she must be left with her lambs all around her. May heaven temper the winds to them, for they have been shorn very close, every one of them, of their golden fleece of aspirations and anticipations.

I must avail myself of this opportunity to say a few words to my distant friends who take interest enough in my writings, early or recent, to wish to enter into communication with me by letter, or to keep up a communication already begun. I have given notice in print that the letters, books, and manuscripts which I receive by mail are so numerous that if I undertook to read and answer them all I should have little time for anything else. I have for some years depended on the assistance of a secretary, but our joint efforts have proved unable, of late, to keep down the accumulations which come in with every mail. So many of the letters I receive are of a pleasant character that it is hard to let them go unacknowledged. The extreme friendliness which pervades many of them gives them a value which I rate very highly. When large numbers of strangers insist on claiming one as a friend, on the strength of what he has written, it tends to make him think of himself somewhat indulgently. It is the most natural thing in the world to want to give expression to the feeling the loving messages from far-off unknown friends must excite. Many a day has had its best working hours broken into, spoiled for all literary work, by the labor of answering correspondents whose good opinion it is gratifying to have called forth, but who were unconsciously laying a new burden on shoulders already aching. I know too well that

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what I say will not reach the eyes of many who might possibly take a hint from it. Still I must keep repeating it before breaking off suddenly and leaving whole piles of letters unanswered. I have been very heavily handicapped for many years. It is partly my own fault. From what my correspondents tell me, I must infer that I have established a dangerous reputation for willingness to answer all sorts of letters. They come with such insinuating humility,—they cannot bear to intrude upon my time, they know that I have a great many calls upon it,—and incontinently proceed to lay their additional weight on the load which is breaking my back.

The hypocrisy of kind-hearted people is one of the most painful exhibitions of human weakness. It has occurred to me that it might be profitable to reproduce some of my unwritten answers to correspondents. If those which were actually written and sent were to be printed in parallel columns with those mentally formed but not written out responses and comments, the reader would get some idea of the internal conflicts an honest and not unamiable person has to go through, when he finds himself driven to the wall by a correspondence which is draining his vocabulary to find expressions that sound as agreeably, and signify as little, as the phrases used by a diplomatist in closing an official communication.

No. 1. Want my autograph, do you? And don't know how to spell my name. An a for an e in my middle name. Leave out the l in my last name. Do you know how people hate to have their names misspelled? What do you suppose are the sentiments entertained by the Thompsons with a p towards those who address them in writing as Thomson?

No. 2. Think the lines you mention are by far the best I ever wrote, hey? Well, I didn't write those lines. What is more, I think they are as detestable a string of rhymes as I could wish my worst enemy had written. A very pleasant frame of mind I am in for writing a letter, after reading yours!

No. 3. I am glad to hear that my namesake, whom I never saw and never expect to see, has cut another tooth; but why write four pages on the strength of that domestic occurrence?

No. 4. You wish to correct an error in my Broomstick poem, do you? You give me to understand that Wilmington is not in Essex County, but in Middlesex. Very well; but are they separated by running water? Because if they are not, what could hinder a witch from crossing the line that separates Wilmington from Andover, I should like to know? I never meant to imply that the witches made no excursions beyond the district which was more especially their seat of operations.

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As I come towards the end of this task which I had set myself, I wish, of course, that I could have performed it more to my own satisfaction and that of my readers. This is a feeling which almost every one must have at the conclusion of any work he has undertaken. A common and very simple reason for this disappointment is that most of us overrate our capacity. We expect more of ourselves than we have any right to, in virtue of our endowments. The figurative descriptions of the last Grand Assize must no more be taken literally than the golden crowns, which we do not expect or want to wear on our heads, or the golden harps, which we do not want or expect to hold in our hands. Is it not too true that many religious sectaries think of the last tribunal complacently, as the scene in which they are to have the satisfaction of saying to the believers of a creed different from their own, "I told you so"? Are not others oppressed with the thought of the great returns which will be expected of them as the product of their great gifts, the very limited amount of which they do not suspect, and will be very glad to learn, even at the expense of their self-love, when they are called to their account? If the ways of the Supreme Being are ever really to be "justified to men," to use Milton's expression, every human being may expect an exhaustive explanation of himself. No man is capable of being his own counsel, and I cannot help hoping that the ablest of the, archangels will be retained for the defence of the worst of sinners. He himself is unconscious of the agencies which made him what he is. Self-determining he may be, if you will, but who determines the self which is the proximate source of the determination? Why was the A self like his good uncle in bodily aspect and mental and moral qualities, and the B self like the bad uncle in look and character? Has not a man a right to ask this question in the here or in the hereafter,—in this world or in any world in which he may find himself? If the All-wise wishes to satisfy his reasonable and reasoning creatures, it will not be by a display of elemental convulsions, but by the still small voice, which treats with him as a dependent entitled to know the meaning of his existence, and if there was anything wrong in his adjustment to the moral and spiritual conditions of the world around him to have full allowance made for it. No melodramatic display of warring elements, such as the white-robed Second Adventist imagines, can meet the need of the human heart. The thunders and lightnings of Sinai terrified and impressed the more timid souls of the idolatrous and rebellious caravan which the great leader was conducting, but a far nobler manifestation of divinity was that when "the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend."

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I find the burden and restrictions of rhyme more and more troublesome as I grow older. There are times when it seems natural enough to employ that form of expression, but it is only occasionally; and the use of it as the vehicle of the commonplace is so prevalent that one is not much tempted to select it as the medium for his thoughts and emotions. The art of rhyming has almost become a part of a high-school education, and its practice is far from being an evidence of intellectual distinction. Mediocrity is as much forbidden to the poet in our days as it was in those of Horace, and the immense majority of the verses written are stamped with hopeless mediocrity.

When one of the ancient poets found he was trying to grind out verses which came unwillingly, he said he was writing—

INVITA *Minerva*.

Vex not the Muse with idle prayers,
—She will not hear thy call;
She steals upon thee unawares,
Or seeks thee not at all.

Soft as the moonbeams when they sought
Endymion's fragrant bower,
She parts the whispering leaves of thought
To show her full-blown flower.

For thee her wooing hour has passed,
The singing birds have flown,
And winter comes with icy blast
To chill thy buds unblown.

Yet, though the woods no longer thrill
As once their arches rung,
Sweet echoes hover round thee still
Of songs thy summer sung.

Live in thy past; await no more
The rush of heaven-sent wings;
Earth still has music left in store
While Memory sighs and sings.

I hope my special Minerva may not always be unwilling, but she must not be called upon as she has been in times past. Now that the teacups have left the table, an occasional evening call is all that my readers must look for. Thanking them for their kind companionship, and hoping that I may yet meet them in the now and then in the future, I

bid them goodbye for the immediate present, then in the future, I bid them goodbye for the immediate present.

ELSIE VENNER

By Oliver Wendell Holmes

PREFACE.

This tale was published in successive parts in the "Atlantic Monthly," under the name of "The Professor's Story," the first number having appeared in the third week of December, 1859. The critic who is curious in coincidences must refer to the Magazine for the date of publication of the chapter he is examining.

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In calling this narrative a “romance,” the Author wishes to make sure of being indulged in the common privileges of the poetic license. Through all the disguise of fiction a grave scientific doctrine may be detected lying beneath some of the delineations of character. He has used this doctrine as a part of the machinery of his story without pledging his absolute belief in it to the extent to which it is asserted or implied. It was adopted as a convenient medium of truth rather than as an accepted scientific conclusion. The reader must judge for himself what is the value of various stories cited from old authors. He must decide how much of what has been told he can accept either as having actually happened, or as possible and more or less probable. The Author must be permitted, however, to say here, in his personal character, and as responsible to the students of the human mind and body, that since this story has been in progress he has received the most startling confirmation of the possibility of the existence of a character like that which he had drawn as a purely imaginary conception in Elsie Venner.

Boston, January, 1861.

A SECOND PREFACE.

This is the story which a dear old lady, my very good friend, spoke of as “a medicated novel,” and quite properly refused to read. I was always pleased with her discriminating criticism. It is a medicated novel, and if she wished to read for mere amusement and helpful recreation there was no need of troubling herself with a story written with a different end in view.

This story has called forth so many curious inquiries that it seems worth while to answer the more important questions which have occurred to its readers.

In the first place, it is not based on any well-ascertained physiological fact. There are old fables about patients who have barked like dogs or crowed like cocks, after being bitten or wounded by those animals. There is nothing impossible in the idea that Romulus and Remus may have imbibed wolfish traits of character from the wet nurse the legend assigned them, but the legend is not sound history, and the supposition is nothing more than a speculative fancy. Still, there is a limbo of curious evidence bearing on the subject of pre-natal influences sufficient to form the starting-point of an imaginative composition.

The real aim, of the story was to test the doctrine of “original sin” and human responsibility for the disordered volition coming under that technical denomination. Was Elsie Venner, poisoned by the venom of a crotalus before she was born, morally responsible for the “volitional” aberrations, which translated into acts become what is known as sin, and, it may be, what is punished as crime? If, on presentation of the evidence, she becomes by the verdict of the human conscience a proper object of

divine pity and not of divine wrath, as a subject of moral poisoning, wherein lies the difference between her position at the bar of judgment, human or divine, and that of the unfortunate victim who received a moral poison from a remote ancestor before he drew his first breath?

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It might be supposed that the character of Elsie Veneer was suggested by some of the fabulous personages of classical or mediaeval story. I remember that a French critic spoke of her as *cette pauvre Melusine*. I ought to have been ashamed, perhaps, but I had, not the slightest idea who Melusina was until I hunted up the story, and found that she was a fairy, who for some offence was changed every Saturday to a serpent from her waist downward. I was of course familiar with Keats's *Lamia*, another imaginary being, the subject of magical transformation into a serpent. My story was well advanced before Hawthorne's wonderful "*Marble Faun*," which might be thought to have furnished me with the hint of a mixed nature,—human, with an alien element,—was published or known to me. So that my poor heroine found her origin, not in fable or romance, but in a physiological conception fertilized by a theological dogma.

I had the dissatisfaction of enjoying from a quiet corner a well-meant effort to dramatize "*Elsie Veneer*." Unfortunately, a physiological romance, as I knew beforehand, is hardly adapted for the melodramatic efforts of stage representation. I can therefore say, with perfect truth, that I was not disappointed. It is to the mind, and not to the senses, that such a story must appeal, and all attempts to render the character and events objective on the stage, or to make them real by artistic illustrations, are almost of necessity failures. The story has won the attention and enjoyed the favor of a limited class of readers, and if it still continues to interest others of the same tastes and habits of thought I can ask nothing more of it.

January 23, 1883.

PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION.

I have nothing of importance to add to the two preceding Prefaces. The continued call for this story, which was not written for popularity, but with a very serious purpose, has somewhat surprised and, I need not add, gratified me. I can only restate the motive idea of the tale in a little different language. Believing, as I do, that our prevailing theologies are founded upon an utterly false view of the relation of man to his Creator, I attempted to illustrate the doctrine of inherited moral responsibility for other people's misbehavior. I tried to make out a case for my poor Elsie, whom the most hardened theologian would find it hard to blame for her inherited ophidian tastes and tendencies. How, then, is he to blame mankind for inheriting "sinfulness" from their first parents? May not the serpent have bitten Eve before the birth of Cain, her first-born? That would have made an excuse for Cain's children, as Elsie's ante-natal misfortune made an excuse for her. But what difference does it make in the child's responsibility whether his inherited tendencies come from a snake-bite or some other source which he knew nothing about and could not have prevented from acting? All this is plain enough, and the only use of the story is to bring the dogma of inherited guilt and its consequences into a clearer point of view.

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But, after all, the tale must have proved readable as a story to account for the large number of editions which it has reached.

Some readers have been curious about the locality the writer was thought to have in view. No particular place was intended. Some of the characters may have been thought to have been drawn from life; but the personages mentioned are mostly composites, like Mr. Galton's compound photographic likenesses, and are not calculated to provoke scandal or suits for libel.

O. W. H.

Beverly farms, mass., August 3, 1891.

ELSIE VENNER.

CHAPTER I.

The Brahmin caste of new England.

There is nothing in New England corresponding at all to the feudal aristocracies of the Old World. Whether it be owing to the stock from which we were derived, or to the practical working of our institutions, or to the abrogation of the technical "law of honor," which draws a sharp line between the personally responsible class of "gentlemen" and the unnamed multitude of those who are not expected to risk their lives for an abstraction,—whatever be the cause, we have no such aristocracy here as that which grew up out of the military systems of the Middle Ages.

What we mean by "aristocracy" is merely the richer part of the community, that live in the tallest houses, drive real carriages, (not "kerridges,") kidglove their hands, and French-bonnet their ladies' heads, give parties where the persons who call them by the above title are not invited, and have a provokingly easy way of dressing, walking, talking, and nodding to people, as if they felt entirely at home, and would not be embarrassed in the least, if they met the Governor, or even the President of the United States, face to face. Some of these great folks are really well-bred, some of them are only purse-proud and assuming,—but they form a class, and are named as above in the common speech.

It is in the nature of large fortunes to diminish rapidly, when subdivided and distributed. A million is the unit of wealth, now and here in America. It splits into four handsome properties; each of these into four good inheritances; these, again, into scanty competences for four ancient maidens,—with whom it is best the family should die out, unless it can begin again as its great-grandfather did. Now a million is a kind of golden cheese, which represents in a compendious form the summer's growth of a fat meadow

of craft or commerce; and as this kind of meadow rarely bears more than one crop, it is pretty certain that sons and grandsons will not get another golden cheese out of it, whether they milk the same cows or turn in new ones. In other words, the millionocracy, considered in a large way, is not at all an affair of persons and families, but a perpetual fact of money with a variable human element, which

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a philosopher might leave out of consideration without falling into serious error. Of course, this trivial and, fugitive fact of personal wealth does not create a permanent class, unless some special means are taken to arrest the process of disintegration in the third generation. This is so rarely done, at least successfully, that one need not live a very long life to see most of the rich families he knew in childhood more or less reduced, and the millions shifted into the hands of the country-boys who were sweeping stores and carrying parcels when the now decayed gentry were driving their chariots, eating their venison over silver chafing-dishes, drinking Madeira chilled in embossed coolers, wearing their hair in powder, and casing their legs in long boots with silken tassels.

There is, however, in New England, an aristocracy, if you choose to call it so, which has a far greater character of permanence. It has grown to be a caste,—not in any odious sense;—but, by the repetition of the same influences, generation after generation, it has acquired a distinct organization and physiognomy, which not to recognize is mere stupidity, and not to be willing to describe would show a distrust of the good-nature and intelligence of our readers, who like to have us see all we can and tell all we see.

If you will look carefully at any class of students in one of our colleges, you will have no difficulty in selecting specimens of two different aspects of youthful manhood. Of course I shall choose extreme cases to illustrate the contrast between them. In the first, the figure is perhaps robust, but often otherwise,—inelegant, partly from careless attitudes, partly from ill-dressing,—the face is uncouth in feature, or at least common,—the mouth coarse and unformed,—the eye unsympathetic, even if bright,—the movements of the face are clumsy, like those of the limbs,—the voice is unmusical,—and the enunciation as if the words were coarse castings, instead of fine carvings. The youth of the other aspect is commonly slender, his face is smooth, and apt to be pallid,—his features are regular and of a certain delicacy,—his eye is bright and quick,—his lips play over the thought he utters as a pianist's fingers dance over their music, and his whole air, though it may be timid, and even awkward, has nothing clownish. If you are a teacher, you know what to expect from each of these young men. With equal willingness, the first will be slow at learning; the second will take to his books as a pointer or a setter to his field-work.

The first youth is the common country-boy, whose race has been bred to bodily labor. Nature has adapted the family organization to the kind of life it has lived. The hands and feet by constant use have got more than their share of development,—the organs of thought and expression less than their share. The finer instincts are latent and must be developed. A youth of this kind is raw material in its first stage of elaboration. You must not expect too much of any such. Many of them have force of will and character, and become distinguished in practical life; but very few of them ever become great

scholars. A scholar is, in a large proportion of cases, the son of scholars or scholarly persons.

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That is exactly what the other young man is. He comes of the Brahmin caste of New England. This is the harmless, inoffensive, untitled aristocracy referred to, and which many readers will at once acknowledge. There are races of scholars among us, in which aptitude for learning, and all these marks of it I have spoken of, are congenital and hereditary. Their names are always on some college catalogue or other. They break out every generation or two in some learned labor which calls them up after they seem to have died out. At last some newer name takes their place, it maybe,—but you inquire a little and you find it is the blood of the Edwardses or the Chauncys or the Ellerys or some of the old historic scholars, disguised under the altered name of a female descendant.

There probably is not an experienced instructor anywhere in our Northern States who will not recognize at once the truth of this general distinction. But the reader who has never been a teacher will very probably object, that some of our most illustrious public men have come direct from the homespun-clad class of the people,—and he may, perhaps, even find a noted scholar or two whose parents were masters of the English alphabet, but of no other.

It is not fair to pit a few chosen families against the great multitude of those who are continually working their way up into the intellectual classes. The results which are habitually reached by hereditary training are occasionally brought about without it. There are natural filters as well as artificial ones; and though the great rivers are commonly more or less turbid, if you will look long enough, you may find a spring that sparkles as no water does which drips through your apparatus of sands and sponges. So there are families which refine themselves into intellectual aptitude without having had much opportunity for intellectual acquirements. A series of felicitous crosses develops an improved strain of blood, and reaches its maximum perfection at last in the large uncombed youth who goes to college and startles the hereditary class-leaders by striding past them all. That is Nature's republicanism; thank God for it, but do not let it make you illogical. The race of the hereditary scholar has exchanged a certain portion of its animal vigor for its new instincts, and it is hard to lead men without a good deal of animal vigor. The scholar who comes by Nature's special grace from an unworn stock of broad-chested sires and deep-bosomed mothers must always overmatch an equal intelligence with a compromised and lowered vitality. A man's breathing and digestive apparatus (one is tempted to add muscular) are just as important to him on the floor of the Senate as his thinking organs. You broke down in your great speech, did you? Yes, your grandfather had an attack of dyspepsia in '82, after working too hard on his famous Election Sermon. All this does not touch the main fact: our scholars come chiefly from a privileged order, just as our best fruits come from well-known grafts, though now and then a seedling apple, like the Northern Spy, or a seedling pear, like the Seckel, springs from a nameless ancestry and grows to be the pride of all the gardens in the land.

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Let me introduce you to a young man who belongs to the Brahmin caste of New England.

CHAPTER II.

The student and his certificate.

Bernard C. Langdon, a young man attending Medical Lectures at the school connected with one of our principal colleges, remained after the Lecture one day and wished to speak with the Professor. He was a student of mark,—first favorite of his year, as they say of the Derby colts. There are in every class half a dozen bright faces to which the teacher naturally, directs his discourse, and by the intermediation of whose attention he seems to hold that of the mass of listeners. Among these some one is pretty sure to take the lead, by virtue of a personal magnetism, or some peculiarity of expression, which places the face in quick sympathetic relations with the lecturer. This was a young man with such a face; and I found,—for you have guessed that I was the “Professor” above-mentioned,—that, when there was anything difficult to be explained, or when I was bringing out some favorite illustration of a nice point, (as, for instance; when I compared the cell-growth, by which Nature builds up a plant or an animal, to the glassblower’s similar mode of beginning,—always with a hollow sphere, or vesicle, whatever he is going to make,) I naturally looked in his face and gauged my success by its expression.

It was a handsome face,—a little too pale, perhaps, and would have borne something more of fulness without becoming heavy. I put the organization to which it belongs in Section B of Class 1 of my Anglo-American Anthropology (unpublished). The jaw in this section is but slightly narrowed,—just enough to make the width of the forehead tell more decidedly. The moustache often grows vigorously, but the whiskers are thin. The skin is like that of Jacob, rather than like Esau’s. One string of the animal nature has been taken away, but this gives only a greater predominance to the intellectual chords. To see just how the vital energy has been toned down, you must contrast one of this section with a specimen of Section A of the same class,—say, for instance, one of the old-fashioned, full-whiskered, red-faced, roaring, big Commodores of the last generation, whom you remember, at least by their portraits, in ruffled shirts, looking as hearty as butchers and as plucky as bull-terriers, with their hair combed straight up from their foreheads, which were not commonly very high or broad. The special form of physical life I have been describing gives you a right to expect more delicate perceptions and a more reflective, nature than you commonly find in shaggy-throated men, clad in heavy suits of muscles.

The student lingered in the lecture-room, looking all the time as if he wanted to say something in private, and waiting for two or three others, who were still hanging about, to be gone.

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Something is wrong!—I said to myself, when I noticed his expression.—Well, Mr. Langdon,—I said to him, when we were alone,—can I do anything for you to-day?

You can, Sir,—he said.—I am going to leave the class, for the present, and keep school.

Why, that 's a pity, and you so near graduating! You'd better stay and finish this course and take your degree in the spring, rather than break up your whole plan of study.

I can't help myself, Sir,—the young man answered.—There 's trouble at home, and they cannot keep me here as they have done. So I must look out for myself for a while. It's what I've done before, and am ready to do again. I came to ask you for a certificate of my fitness to teach a common school, or a high school, if you think I am up to that. Are you willing to give it to me?

Willing? Yes, to be sure,—but I don't want you to go. Stay; we'll make it easy for you. There's a fund will do something for you, perhaps. Then you can take both the annual prizes, if you like,—and claim them in money, if you want that more than medals.

I have thought it all over,—he answered,—and have pretty much made up my mind to go.

A perfectly gentlemanly young man, of courteous address and mild utterance, but means at least as much as he says. There are some people whose rhetoric consists of a slight habitual under-statement. I often tell Mrs. Professor that one of her "I think it's so" is worth the Bible-oath of all the rest of the household that they "know it's so." When you find a person a little better than his word, a little more liberal than his promise, a little more than borne out in his statement by his facts, a little larger in deed than in speech, you recognize a kind of eloquence in that person's utterance not laid down in Blair or Campbell.

This was a proud fellow, self-trusting, sensitive, with family-recollections that made him unwilling to accept the kind of aid which many students would have thankfully welcomed. I knew him too well to urge him, after the few words which implied that he was determined to go. Besides, I have great confidence in young men who believe in themselves, and are accustomed to rely on their own resources from an early period. When a resolute young fellow steps up to the great bully, the World, and takes him boldly by the beard, he is often surprised to find it come off in his hand, and that it was only tied on to scare away timid adventurers. I have seen young men more than once, who came to a great city without a single friend, support themselves and pay for their education, lay up money in a few years, grow rich enough to travel, and establish themselves in life, without ever asking a dollar of any person which they had not earned. But these are exceptional cases. There are horse-tamers, born so,—as we all know; there are woman-tamers, who bewitch the sex as the pied piper bedeviled the children of Hamelin; and there are world-tamers, who can make any community, even a

Yankee one, get down and let them jump on its back as easily as Mr. Rarey saddled Cruiser.

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Whether Langdon was of this sort or not I could not say positively; but he had spirit, and, as I have said, a family-pride which would not let him be dependent. The New England Brahmin caste often gets blended with connections of political influence or commercial distinction. It is a charming thing for the scholar, when his fortune carries him in this way into some of the "old families" who have fine old houses, and city-lots that have risen in the market, and names written in all the stock-books of all the dividend-paying companies. His narrow study expands into a stately library, his books are counted by thousands instead of hundreds, and his favorites are dressed in gilded calf in place of plebeian sheepskin or its pauper substitutes of cloth and paper.

The Reverend Jedediah Langdon, grandfather of our young gentleman, had made an advantageous alliance of this kind. Miss Dorothea Wentworth had read one of his sermons which had been printed "by request," and became deeply interested in the young author, whom she had never seen. Out of this circumstance grew a correspondence, an interview, a declaration, a matrimonial alliance, and a family of half a dozen children. Wentworth Langdon, Esquire, was the oldest of these, and lived in the old family-mansion. Unfortunately, that principle of the diminution of estates by division, to which I have referred, rendered it somewhat difficult to maintain the establishment upon the fractional income which the proprietor received from his share of the property. Wentworth Langdon, Esq., represented a certain intermediate condition of life not at all infrequent in our old families. He was the connecting link between the generation which lived in ease, and even a kind of state, upon its own resources, and the new brood, which must live mainly by its wits or industry, and make itself rich, or shabbily subside into that lower stratum known to social geologists by a deposit of Kidderminster carpets and the peculiar aspect of the fossils constituting the family furniture and wardrobe. This slack-water period of a race, which comes before the rapid ebb of its prosperity, is familiar to all who live in cities. There are no more quiet, inoffensive people than these children of rich families, just above the necessity of active employment, yet not in a condition to place their own children advantageously, if they happen to have families. Many of them are content to live unmarried. Some mend their broken fortunes by prudent alliances, and some leave a numerous progeny to pass into the obscurity from which their ancestors emerged; so that you may see on handcarts and cobblers' stalls names which, a few generations back, were upon parchments with broad seals, and tombstones with armorial bearings.

In a large city, this class of citizens is familiar to us in the streets. They are very courteous in their salutations; they have time enough to bow and take their hats off,—which, of course, no businessman can afford to do. Their beavers are smoothly brushed, and their boots well polished; all their appointments are tidy; they look the respectable walking gentleman to perfection. They are prone to habits,—they frequent reading-rooms,—insurance-offices,—they walk the same streets at the same hours,—so that one becomes familiar with their faces and persons, as a part of the street-furniture.

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There is one curious circumstance, that all city-people must have noticed, which is often illustrated in our experience of the slack-water gentry. We shall know a certain person by his looks, familiarly, for years, but never have learned his name. About this person we shall have accumulated no little circumstantial knowledge;—thus, his face, figure, gait, his mode of dressing, of saluting, perhaps even of speaking, may be familiar to us; yet who he is we know not. In another department of our consciousness, there is a very familiar name, which we have never found the person to match. We have heard it so often, that it has idealized itself, and become one of that multitude of permanent shapes which walk the chambers of the brain in velvet slippers in the company of Falstaff and Hamlet and General Washington and Mr. Pickwick. Sometimes the person dies, but the name lives on indefinitely. But now and then it happens, perhaps after years of this independent existence of the name and its shadowy image in the brain, on the one part, and the person and all its real attributes, as we see them daily, on the other, that some accident reveals their relation, and we find the name we have carried so long in our memory belongs to the person we have known so long as a fellow-citizen. Now the slack—water gentry are among the persons most likely to be the subjects of this curious divorce of title and reality,—for the reason, that, playing no important part in the community, there is nothing to tie the floating name to the actual individual, as is the case with the men who belong in any way to the public, while yet their names have a certain historical currency, and we cannot help meeting them, either in their haunts, or going to and from them.

To this class belonged Wentworth Langdon, Esq. He had been “dead-headed” into the world some fifty years ago, and had sat with his hands in his pockets staring at the show ever since. I shall not tell you, for reasons before hinted, the whole name of the place in which he lived. I will only point you in the right direction, by saying that there are three towns lying in a line with each other, as you go “down East,” each of them with a Port in its name, and each of them having a peculiar interest which gives it individuality, in addition to the Oriental character they have in common. I need not tell you that these towns are Newburyport, Portsmouth, and Portland. The Oriental character they have in common consists in their large, square, palatial mansions, with sunny gardens round them. The two first have seen better days. They are in perfect harmony with the condition of weakened, but not impoverished, gentility. Each of them is a “paradise of demi-fortunes.” Each of them is of that intermediate size between a village and a city which any place has outgrown when the presence of a well-dressed stranger walking up and down the main street ceases to be a matter of public curiosity and private speculation, as frequently

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happens, during the busier months of the year, in considerable commercial centres like Salem. They both have grand old recollections to fall back upon,—times when they looked forward to commercial greatness, and when the portly gentlemen in cocked hats, who built their now decaying wharves and sent out their ships all over the world, dreamed that their fast-growing port was to be the Tyre or the Carthage of the rich British Colony. Great houses, like that once lived in by Lord Timothy Dexter, in Newburyport, remain as evidence of the fortunes amassed in these places of old. Other mansions—like the Rockingham House in Portsmouth (look at the white horse's tail before you mount the broad staircase)—show that there was not only wealth, but style and state, in these quiet old towns during the last century. It is not with any thought of pity or depreciation that we speak of them as in a certain sense decayed towns; they did not fulfil their early promise of expansion, but they remain incomparably the most interesting places of their size in any of the three northernmost New England States. They have even now prosperity enough to keep them in good condition, and offer the most attractive residences for quiet families, which, if they had been English, would have lived in a palazzo at Genoa or Pisa, or some other Continental Newburyport or Portsmouth.

As for the last of the three Ports, or Portland, it is getting too prosperous to be as attractive as its less northerly neighbors. Meant for a fine old town, to ripen like a Cheshire cheese within its walls of ancient rind, burrowed by crooked alleys and mottled with venerable mould, it seems likely to sacrifice its mellow future to a vulgar material prosperity. Still it remains invested with many of its old charms, as yet, and will forfeit its place among this admirable trio only when it gets a hotel with unequivocal marks of having been built and organized in the present century.

—It was one of the old square palaces of the North, in which Bernard Langdon, the son of Wentworth, was born. If he had had the luck to be an only child, he might have lived as his father had done, letting his meagre competence smoulder on almost without consuming, like the fuel in an air-tight stove. But after Master Bernard came Miss Dorothea Elizabeth Wentworth Langdon, and then Master William Pepperell Langdon, and others, equally well named,—a string of them, looking, when they stood in a row in prayer-time, as if they would fit a set of Pandean pipes, of from three feet upward in dimensions. The door of the air-tight stove has to be opened, under such circumstances, you may well suppose! So it happened that our young man had been obliged, from an early period, to do something to support himself, and found himself stopped short in his studies by the inability of the good people at home to furnish him the present means of support as a student.

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You will understand now why the young man wanted me to give him a certificate of his fitness to teach, and why I did not choose to urge him to accept the aid which a meek country-boy from a family without ante-Revolutionary recollections would have thankfully received. Go he must,—that was plain enough. He would not be content otherwise. He was not, however, to give up his studies; and as it is customary to allow half-time to students engaged in school-keeping,—that is, to count a year, so employed, if the student also keep on with his professional studies, as equal to six months of the three years he is expected to be under an instructor before applying for his degree,—he would not necessarily lose more than a few months of time. He had a small library of professional books, which he could take with him.

So he left my teaching and that of my estimable colleagues, carrying with him my certificate, that Mr. Bernard C. Langdon was a young gentleman of excellent moral character, of high intelligence and good education, and that his services would be of great value in any school, academy, or other institution, where young persons of either sex were to be instructed.

I confess, that expression, “either sex,” ran a little thick, as I may say, from my pen. For, although the young man bore a very fair character, and there was no special cause for doubting his discretion, I considered him altogether too good-looking, in the first place, to be let loose in a roomful of young girls. I didn’t want him to fall in love just then—and if half a dozen girls fell in love with him, as they most assuredly would, if brought into too near relations with him, why, there was no telling what gratitude and natural sensibility might bring about.

Certificates are, for the most part, like ostrich-eggs; the giver never knows what is hatched out of them. But once in a thousand times they act as curses are said to,—come home to roost. Give them often enough, until it gets to be a mechanical business, and, some day or other, you will get caught warranting somebody’s ice not to melt in any climate, or somebody’s razors to be safe in the hands of the youngest children.

I had an uneasy feeling, after giving this certificate. It might be all right enough; but if it happened to end badly, I should always reproach myself. There was a chance, certainly, that it would lead him or others into danger or wretchedness. Any one who looked at this young man could not fail to see that he was capable of fascinating and being fascinated. Those large, dark eyes of his would sink into the white soul of a young girl as the black cloth sunk into the snow in Franklin’s famous experiment. Or, on the other hand, if the rays of a passionate nature should ever be concentrated on them, they would be absorbed into the very depths of his nature, and then his blood would turn to flame and burn his life out of him, until his cheeks grew as white as the ashes that cover a burning coal.

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I wish I had not said either sex in my certificate. An academy for young gentlemen, now; that sounds cool and unimaginative. A boys' school, that would be a very good place for him;—some of them are pretty rough, but there is nerve enough in that old Wentworth strain of blood; he can give any country fellow, of the common stock, twenty pounds, and hit him out of time in ten minutes. But to send such a young fellow as that out a girl's-nesting! to give this falcon a free pass into all the dove-cotes! I was a fool,—that's all.

I brooded over the mischief which might come out of these two words until it seemed to me that they were charged with destiny. I could hardly sleep for thinking what a train I might have been laying, which might take a spark any day, and blow up nobody knows whose peace or prospects. What I dreaded most was one of those miserable matrimonial misalliances where a young fellow who does not know himself as yet flings his magnificent future into the checked apron-lap of some fresh-faced, half-bred country-girl, no more fit to be mated with him than her father's horse to go in double harness with Flora Temple. To think of the eagle's wings, being clipped so that he shall never lift himself over the farm-yard fence! Such things happen, and always must,—because, as one of us said awhile ago, a man always loves, a woman, and a woman a man, unless some good reason exists to the contrary. You think yourself a very fastidious young man, my friend; but there are probably at least five-thousand young women in these United States, any one of whom you would certainly marry, if you were thrown much into her company, and nobody more attractive were near, and she had no objection. And you, my dear young lady, justly pride yourself on your discerning delicacy; but if I should say that there are twenty thousand young men, any one of whom, if he offered his hand and heart under favorable circumstances, you would

“First endure, then pity, then embrace,”

I should be much more imprudent than I mean to be, and you would, no doubt, throw down a story in which I hope to interest you.

I had settled it in my mind that this young fellow had a career marked out for him. He should begin in the natural way, by taking care of poor patients in one of the public charities, and work his way up to a better kind of practice,—better, that is, in the vulgar, worldly sense. The great and good Boerhaave used to say, as I remember very well, that the poor were his best patients; for God was their paymaster. But everybody is not as patient as Boerhaave, nor as deserving; so that the rich, though not, perhaps, the best patients, are good enough for common practitioners. I suppose Boerhaave put up with them when he could not get poor ones, as he left his daughter two millions of florins when he died.

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Now if this young man once got into the wide streets, he would sweep them clear of his rivals of the same standing; and as I was getting indifferent to business, and old Dr. Kilham was growing careless, and had once or twice prescribed morphine when he meant quinine, there would soon be an opening into the Doctor's Paradise,—the streets with only one side to them. Then I would have him strike a bold stroke,—set up a nice little coach, and be driven round like a first-class London doctor, instead of coasting about in a shabby one-horse concern and casting anchor opposite his patients' doors like a Cape Ann fishing-smack. By the time he was thirty, he would have knocked the social pawns out of his way, and be ready to challenge a wife from the row of great pieces in the background. I would not have a man marry above his level, so as to become the appendage of a powerful family-connection; but I would not have him marry until he knew his level,—that is, again, looking at the matter in a purely worldly point of view, and not taking the sentiments at all into consideration. But remember, that a young man, using large endowments wisely and fortunately, may put himself on a level with the highest in the land in ten brilliant years of spirited, unflagging labor. And to stand at the very top of your calling in a great city is something in itself,—that is, if you like money, and influence, and a seat on the platform at public lectures, and gratuitous tickets to all sorts of places where you don't want to go, and, what is a good deal better than any of these things, a sense of power, limited, it may be, but absolute in its range, so that all the Caesars and Napoleons would have to stand aside, if they came between you and the exercise of your special vocation.

That is what I thought this young fellow might have come to; and now I have let him go off into the country with my certificate, that he is fit to teach in a school for either sex! Ten to one he will run like a moth into a candle, right into one of those girls'-nests, and get tangled up in some sentimental folly or other, and there will be the end of him. Oh, yes! country doctor,—half a dollar a visit,—drive, drive, drive all day,—get up at night and harness your own horse,—drive again ten miles in a snow-storm, shake powders out of two phials, (*pulv. glycyrrhiz.*, *pulv. gum. acac. as partes equates.*)—drive back again, if you don't happen to get stuck in a drift, no home, no peace, no continuous meals, no unbroken sleep, no Sunday, no holiday, no social intercourse, but one eternal jog, jog, jog, in a sulky, until you feel like the mummy of an Indian who had been buried in the sitting posture, and was dug up a hundred years afterwards! Why did n't I warn him about love and all that nonsense? Why didn't I tell him he had nothing to do with it, yet awhile? Why did n't I hold up to him those awful examples I could have cited, where poor young fellows who could just keep themselves afloat have hung a matrimonial millstone round their necks, taking it for a life-preserver? All this of two words in a certificate!

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CHAPTER III.

Mr. Bernard tries his hand.

Whether the Student advertised for a school, or whether he fell in with the advertisement of a school-committee, is not certain. At any rate, it was not long before he found himself the head of a large district, or, as it was called by the inhabitants, "deestric" school, in the flourishing inland village of Pequawkett, or, as it is commonly spelt, Pigwacket Centre. The natives of this place would be surprised, if they should hear that any of the readers of a work published in Boston were unacquainted with so remarkable a locality. As, however, some copies of it may be read at a distance from this distinguished metropolis, it may be well to give a few particulars respecting the place, taken from the Universal Gazetteer.

"Pigwacket, sometimes spelt Pequawkett. A post-village and township in _____ Co., State of _____, situated in a fine agricultural region, 2 thriving villages, Pigwacket Centre and Smithville, 3 churches, several school houses, and many handsome private residences. Mink River runs through the town, navigable for small boats after heavy rains. Muddy Pond at N. E. section, well stocked with horn pouts, eels, and shiners. Products, beef, pork, butter, cheese. Manufactures, shoe-pegs, clothes-pins, and tin-ware. Pop. 1373."

The reader may think there is nothing very remarkable implied in this description. If, however he had read the town-history, by the Rev. Jabez Grubb, he would have learned, that, like the celebrated Little Pedlington, it was distinguished by many very remarkable advantages. Thus:

"The situation of Pigwacket is eminently beautiful, looking down the lovely valley of Mink River, a tributary of the Musquash. The air is salubrious, and many of the inhabitants have attained great age, several having passed the allotted period of 'three-score years and ten' before succumbing to any of the various 'ills that flesh is heir to.' Widow Comfort Leevins died in 1836 AEt. LXXXVII. years. Venus, an African, died in 1841, supposed to be C. years old. The people are distinguished for intelligence, as has been frequently remarked by eminent lyceum-lecturers, who have invariably spoken in the highest terms of a Pigwacket audience. There is a public library, containing nearly a hundred volumes, free to all subscribers. The preached word is well attended, there is a flourishing temperance society, and the schools are excellent. It is a residence admirably adapted to refined families who relish the beauties of Nature and the charms of society. The Honorable John Smith, formerly a member of the State Senate, was a native of this town."

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That is the way they all talk. After all, it is probably pretty much like other inland New England towns in point of “salubrity,”—that is, gives people their choice of dysentery or fever every autumn, with a season-ticket for consumption, good all the year round. And so of the other pretences. “Pigwacket audience,” forsooth! Was there ever an audience anywhere, though there wasn’t a pair of eyes in it brighter than pickled oysters, that did n’t think it was “distinguished for intelligence”?—“The preached word”! That means the Rev. Jabez Grubb’s sermons. “Temperance society”! “Excellent schools”! Ah, that is just what we were talking about.

The truth was, that District No. 1, Pigwacket Centre, had had a good deal of trouble of late with its schoolmasters. The committee had done their best, but there were a number of well-grown and pretty rough young fellows who had got the upper-hand of the masters, and meant to keep it. Two dynasties had fallen before the uprising of this fierce democracy. This was a thing that used to be not very uncommon; but in so “intelligent” a community as that of Pigwacket Centre, in an era of public libraries and lyceum-lectures, it was portentous and alarming.

The rebellion began under the ferule of Master Weeks, a slender youth from a country college, underfed, thin-blooded, sloping-shouldered, knock-kneed, straight-haired, weak-bearded, pale-eyed, wide-pupilled, half-colored; a common type enough in in-door races, not rich enough to pick and choose in their alliances. Nature kills off a good many of this sort in the first teething-time, a few in later childhood, a good many again in early adolescence; but every now and then one runs the gauntlet of her various diseases, or rather forms of one disease, and grows up, as Master Weeks had done.

It was a very foolish thing for him to try to inflict personal punishment on such a lusty young fellow as Abner Briggs, Junior, one of the “hardest customers” in the way of a rough-and-tumble fight that there were anywhere round. No doubt he had been insolent, but it would have been better to overlook it. It pains me to report the events which took place when the master made his rash attempt to maintain his authority. Abner Briggs, Junior, was a great, hulking fellow, who had been bred to butchering, but urged by his parents to attend school, in order to learn the elegant accomplishments of reading and writing, in which he was sadly deficient. He was in the habit of talking and laughing pretty loud in school-hours, of throwing wads of paper reduced to a pulp by a natural and easy process, of occasional insolence and general negligence. One of the soft, but unpleasant missiles just alluded to flew by the master’s head one morning, and flattened itself against the wall, where it adhered in the form of a convex mass in alto rilievo. The master looked round and saw the young butcher’s arm in an attitude which pointed to it unequivocally as the source from which the projectile had taken its flight.

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Master Weeks turned pale. He must “lick” Abner Briggs, Junior, or abdicate. So he determined to lick Abner Briggs, Junior.

“Come here, Sir!” he said; “you have insulted me and outraged the decency of the schoolroom often enough! Hold out your hand!”

The young fellow grinned and held it out. The master struck at it with his black ruler, with a will in the blow and a snapping of the eyes, as much as to say that he meant to make him smart this time. The young fellow pulled his hand back as the ruler came down, and the master hit himself a vicious blow with it on the right knee. There are things no man can stand. The master caught the refractory youth by the collar and began shaking him, or rather shaking himself against him.

“Le’ go o’ that are coat, naow,” said the fellow, “or I ’ll make ye! ’T ’ll take tew on yet’ handle me, I tell ye, ‘n’ then ye caant dew it!”—and the young pupil returned the master’s attention by catching hold of his collar.

When it comes to that, the best man, not exactly in the moral sense, but rather in the material, and more especially the muscular point of view, is very apt to have the best of it, irrespectively of the merits of the case. So it happened now. The unfortunate schoolmaster found himself taking the measure of the sanded floor, amidst the general uproar of the school. From that moment his ferule was broken, and the school-committee very soon had a vacancy to fill.

Master Pigeon, the successor of Master Weeks, was of better stature, but loosely put together, and slender-limbed. A dreadfully nervous kind of man he was, walked on tiptoe, started at sudden noises, was distressed when he heard a whisper, had a quick, suspicious look, and was always saying, “Hush?” and putting his hands to his ears. The boys were not long in finding out this nervous weakness, of course. In less than a week a regular system of torments was inaugurated, full of the most diabolical malice and ingenuity. The exercises of the conspirators varied from day to day, but consisted mainly of foot-scraping, solos on the slate-pencil, (making it screech on the slate,) falling of heavy books, attacks of coughing, banging of desk-lids, boot-creaking, with sounds as of drawing a cork from time to time, followed by suppressed chuckles.

Master Pigeon grew worse and worse under these inflictions. The rascally boys always had an excuse for any one trick they were caught at. “Could n’ help coughin’, Sir.” “Slipped out o’ m’ han’, Sir.” “Did n’ go to, Sir.” “Did n’ dew’t o’ purpose, Sir.” And so on, —always the best of reasons for the most outrageous of behavior. The master weighed himself at the grocer’s on a platform balance, some ten days after he began keeping the school. At the end of a week he weighed himself again. He had lost two pounds. At the end of another week he had lost five. He made a little calculation, based on these data, from which he learned that in a certain number of months, going on at this rate, he should come to weigh precisely nothing at all; and as this was a sum in subtraction he

did not care to work out in practice, Master Pigeon took to himself wings and left the school-committee in possession of a letter of resignation and a vacant place to fill once more.

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This was the school to which Mr. Bernard Langdon found himself appointed as master. He accepted the place conditionally, with the understanding that he should leave it at the end of a month, if he were tired of it.

The advent of Master Langdon to Pigwacket Centre created a much more lively sensation than had attended that of either of his predecessors. Looks go a good way all the world over, and though there were several good-looking people in the place, and Major Bush was what the natives of the town called a "hahnsome mahn," that is, big, fat, and red, yet the sight of a really elegant young fellow, with the natural air which grows up with carefully-bred young persons, was a novelty. The Brahmin blood which came from his grandfather as well as from his mother, a direct descendant of the old Flynt family, well known by the famous tutor, Henry Flynt, (see Cat. Harv. Anno 1693,) had been enlivened and enriched by that of the Wentworths, which had had a good deal of ripe old Madeira and other generous elements mingled with it, so that it ran to gout sometimes in the old folks and to high spirit, warm complexion, and curly hair in some of the younger ones. The soft curling hair Mr. Bernard had inherited,—something, perhaps, of the high spirit; but that we shall have a chance of finding out by and by. But the long sermons and the frugal board of his Brahmin ancestry, with his own habits of study, had told upon his color, which was subdued to something more of delicacy than one would care to see in a young fellow with rough work before him. This, however, made him look more interesting, or, as the young ladies at Major Bush's said, "interestin'."

When Mr. Bernard showed himself at meeting, on the first Sunday after his arrival, it may be supposed that a good many eyes were turned upon the young schoolmaster. There was something heroic in his coming forward so readily to take a place which called for a strong hand, and a prompt, steady will to guide it. In fact, his position was that of a military chieftain on the eve of a battle. Everybody knew everything in Pigwacket Centre; and it was an understood thing that the young rebels meant to put down the new master, if they could. It was natural that the two prettiest girls in the village, called in the local dialect, as nearly as our limited alphabet will represent it, Alminy Cutterr, and Arvilly Braowne, should feel and express an interest in the good-looking stranger, and that, when their flattering comments were repeated in the hearing of their indigenous admirers, among whom were some of the older "boys" of the school, it should not add to the amiable dispositions of the turbulent youth.

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Monday came, and the new schoolmaster was in his chair at the upper end of the schoolhouse, on the raised platform. The rustics looked at his handsome face, thoughtful, peaceful, pleasant, cheerful, but sharply cut round the lips and proudly lighted about the eyes. The ringleader of the mischief-makers, the young butcher who has before figured in this narrative, looked at him stealthily, whenever he got a chance to study him unobserved; for the truth was, he felt uncomfortable, whenever he found the large, dark eyes fixed on his own little, sharp, deep-set, gray ones. But he managed to study him pretty well,—first his face, then his neck and shoulders, the set of his arms, the narrowing at the loins, the make of his legs, and the way he moved. In short, he examined him as he would have examined a steer, to see what he could do and how he would cut up. If he could only have gone to him and felt of his muscles, he would have been entirely satisfied. He was not a very wise youth, but he did know well enough, that, though big arms and legs are very good things, there is something besides size that goes to make a man; and he had heard stories of a fighting-man, called “The Spider,” from his attenuated proportions, who was yet a terrible hitter in the ring, and had whipped many a big-limbed fellow, in and out of the roped arena.

Nothing could be smoother than the way in which everything went on for the first day or two. The new master was so kind and courteous, he seemed to take everything in such a natural, easy way, that there was no chance to pick a quarrel with him. He in the mean time thought it best to watch the boys and young men for a day or two with as little show of authority as possible. It was easy enough to see that he would have occasion for it before long.

The schoolhouse was a grim, old, red, one-story building, perched on a bare rock at the top of a hill,—partly because this was a conspicuous site for the temple of learning, and partly because land is cheap where there is no chance even for rye or buckwheat, and the very sheep find nothing to nibble. About the little porch were carved initials and dates, at various heights, from the stature of nine to that of eighteen. Inside were old unpainted desks,—unpainted, but browned with the umber of human contact,—and hacked by innumerable jack-knives. It was long since the walls had been whitewashed, as might be conjectured by the various traces left upon them, wherever idle hands or sleepy heads could reach them. A curious appearance was noticeable on various higher parts of the wall: namely, a wart-like eruption, as one would be tempted to call it, being in reality a crop of the soft missiles before mentioned, which, adhering in considerable numbers, and hardening after the usual fashion of papier-mache, formed at last permanent ornaments of the edifice.

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The young master's quick eye soon noticed that a particular part of the wall was most favored with these ornamental appendages. Their position pointed sufficiently clearly to the part of the room they came from. In fact, there was a nest of young mutineers just there, which must be broken up by a coup d'etat. This was easily effected by redistributing the seats and arranging the scholars according to classes, so that a mischievous fellow, charged full of the rebellious imponderable, should find himself between two non-conductors, in the shape of small boys of studious habits. It was managed quietly enough, in such a plausible sort of way that its motive was not thought of. But its effects were soon felt; and then began a system of correspondence by signs, and the throwing of little scrawls done up in pellets, and announced by preliminary a'h'ms! to call the attention of the distant youth addressed. Some of these were incendiary documents, devoting the schoolmaster to the lower divinities, as "a stuck-up dandy," as "a purse-proud aristocrat," as "a sight too big for his, etc.," and holding him up in a variety of equally forcible phrases to the indignation of the youthful community of School District No. 1, Pigwacket Centre.

Presently the draughtsman of the school set a caricature in circulation, labelled, to prevent mistakes, with the schoolmaster's name. An immense bell-crowned hat, and a long, pointed, swallow-tailed coat showed that the artist had in his mind the conventional dandy, as shown in prints of thirty or forty years ago, rather than any actual human aspect of the time. But it was passed round among the boys and made its laugh, helping of course to undermine the master's authority, as "Punch" or the "Charivari" takes the dignity out of an obnoxious minister. One morning, on going to the schoolroom, Master Langdon found an enlarged copy of this sketch, with its label, pinned on the door. He took it down, smiled a little, put it into his pocket, and entered the schoolroom. An insidious silence prevailed, which looked as if some plot were brewing. The boys were ripe for mischief, but afraid. They had really no fault to find with the master, except that he was dressed like a gentleman, which a certain class of fellows always consider a personal insult to themselves. But the older ones were evidently plotting, and more than once the warning a'h'm! was heard, and a dirty little scrap of paper rolled into a wad shot from one seat to another. One of these happened to strike the stove-funnel, and lodged on the master's desk. He was cool enough not to seem to notice it. He secured it, however, and found an opportunity to look at it, without being observed by the boys. It required no immediate notice.

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He who should have enjoyed the privilege of looking upon Mr. Bernard Langdon the next morning, when his toilet was about half finished, would have had a very pleasant gratuitous exhibition. First he buckled the strap of his trousers pretty tightly. Then he took up a pair of heavy dumb-bells, and swung them for a few minutes; then two great "Indian clubs," with which he enacted all sorts of impossible-looking feats. His limbs were not very large, nor his shoulders remarkably broad; but if you knew as much of the muscles as all persons who look at statues and pictures with a critical eye ought to have learned,—if you knew the trapezius, lying diamond-shaped over the back and shoulders like a monk's cowl,—or the deltoid, which caps the shoulder like an epaulette,—or the triceps, which furnishes the calf of the upper arm,—or the hard-knotted biceps,—any of the great sculptural landmarks, in fact,—you would have said there was a pretty show of them, beneath the white satiny skin of Mr. Bernard Langdon. And if you had seen him, when he had laid down the Indian clubs, catch hold of a leather strap that hung from the beam of the old-fashioned ceiling,—and lift and lower himself over and over again by his left hand alone, you might have thought it a very simple and easy thing to do, until you tried to do it yourself. Mr. Bernard looked at himself with the eye of an expert. "Pretty well!" he said;—"not so much fallen off as I expected." Then he set up his bolster in a very knowing sort of way, and delivered two or three blows straight as rulers and swift as winks. "That will do," he said. Then, as if determined to make a certainty of his condition, he took a dynamometer from one of the drawers in his old veneered bureau. First he squeezed it with his two hands. Then he placed it on the floor and lifted, steadily, strongly. The springs creaked and cracked; the index swept with a great stride far up into the high figures of the scale; it was a good lift. He was satisfied. He sat down on the edge of his bed and looked at his cleanly-shaped arms. "If I strike one of those boobies, I am afraid I shall spoil him," he said. Yet this young man, when weighed with his class at the college, could barely turn one hundred and forty-two pounds in the scale,—not a heavy weight, surely; but some of the middle weights, as the present English champion, for instance, seem to be of a far finer quality of muscle than the bulkier fellows.

The master took his breakfast with a good appetite that morning, but was perhaps rather more quiet than usual. After breakfast he went up-stairs and put, on a light loose frock, instead of that which he commonly wore, which was a close-fitting and rather stylish one. On his way to school he met Alminy Cutterr, who happened to be walking in the other direction. "Good-morning, Miss Cutter," he said; for she and another young lady had been introduced to him, on a former occasion, in the usual phrase of

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polite society in presenting ladies to gentlemen,—“Mr. Langdon, let me make y’ acquainted with Miss Cutterr;—let me make y’ acquainted with Miss Braowne.” So he said, “Good-morning”; to which she replied, “Good-mornin’, Mr. Langdon. Haow’s your haalth?” The answer to this question ought naturally to have been the end of the talk; but Alminy Cutterr lingered and looked as if she had something more on her mind.

A young fellow does not require a great experience to read a simple country-girl’s face as if it were a sign-board. Alminy was a good soul, with red cheeks and bright eyes, kind-hearted as she could be, and it was out of the question for her to hide her thoughts or feelings like a fine lady. Her bright eyes were moist and her red cheeks paler than their wont, as she said, with her lips quivering, “Oh, Mr. Langdon, them boys ’ll be the death of ye, if ye don’t take caar!”

“Why, what’s the matter, my dear?” said Mr. Bernard.—Don’t think there was anything very odd in that “my dear,” at the second interview with a village belle;—some of these woman-tamers call a girl “My dear,” after five minutes’ acquaintance, and it sounds all right as they say it. But you had better not try it at a venture.

It sounded all right to Alminy, as Mr. Bernard said it.—“I ’ll tell ye what’s the mahtterr,” she said, in a frightened voice. “Ahbner ‘s go’n’ to car’ his dog, ‘n’ he’ll set him on ye’z sure ‘z y’ ‘r’ alive. ‘T’s the same cretur that haaf eat up Eben Squires’s little Jo, a year come nex’ Faast day.”

Now this last statement was undoubtedly overcolored; as little Jo Squires was running about the village,—with an ugly scar on his arm, it is true, where the beast had caught him with his teeth, on the occasion of the child’s taking liberties with him, as he had been accustomed to do with a good-tempered Newfoundland dog, who seemed to like being pulled and hauled round by children. After this the creature was commonly muzzled, and, as he was fed on raw meat chiefly, was always ready for a fight, which he was occasionally indulged in, when anything stout enough to match him could be found in any of the neighboring villages.

Tiger, or, more briefly, Tige, the property of Abner Briggs, Junior, belonged to a species not distinctly named in scientific books, but well known to our country-folks under the name “Yallah dog.” They do not use this expression as they would say black dog or white dog, but with almost as definite a meaning as when they speak of a terrier or a spaniel. A “yallah dog” is a large canine brute, of a dingy old-flannel color, of no particular breed except his own, who hangs round a tavern or a butcher’s shop, or trots alongside of a team, looking as if he were disgusted with the world, and the world with him. Our inland population, while they tolerate him, speak of him with contempt. Old _____, of Meredith Bridge, used to twit the sun for not shining on cloudy days, swearing, that, if he hung up his “yallah dog,” he would make a better show of daylight.

A country fellow, abusing a horse of his neighbor's, vowed, that, "if he had such a hoss, he'd swap him for a `yallah dog,'—and then shoot the dog."

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Tige was an ill-conditioned brute by nature, and art had not improved him by cropping his ears and tail and investing him with a spiked collar. He bore on his person, also, various not ornamental scars, marks of old battles; for Tige had fight in him, as was said before, and as might be guessed by a certain bluntness about the muzzle, with a projection of the lower jaw, which looked as if there might be a bull-dog stripe among the numerous bar-sinisters of his lineage.

It was hardly fair, however, to leave Alminy Cutterr waiting while this piece of natural history was telling.—As she spoke of little Jo, who had been “haaf eat up” by Tige, she could not contain her sympathies, and began to cry.

“Why, my dear little soul,” said Mr. Bernard, “what are you worried about? I used to play with a bear when I was a boy; and the bear used to hug me, and I used to kiss him,—so!”

It was too bad of Mr. Bernard, only the second time he had seen Alminy; but her kind feelings had touched him, and that seemed the most natural way of expressing his gratitude. Ahniny looked round to see if anybody was near; she saw nobody, so of course it would do no good to “holler.” She saw nobody; but a stout young fellow, leading a yellow dog, muzzled, saw her through a crack in a picket fence, not a great way off the road. Many a year he had been “hangin’ ‘raoun” Alminy, and never did he see any encouraging look, or hear any “Behave, naow!” or “Come, naow, a’n’t ye ‘shamed?” or other forbidding phrase of acquiescence, such as village belles under stand as well as ever did the nymph who fled to the willows in the eclogue we all remember.

No wonder he was furious, when he saw the school master, who had never seen the girl until within a week, touching with his lips those rosy cheeks which he had never dared to approach. But that was all; it was a sudden impulse; and the master turned away from the young girl, laughing, and telling her not to fret herself about him,—he would take care of himself.

So Master Langdon walked on toward his school-house, not displeased, perhaps, with his little adventure, nor immensely elated by it; for he was one of the natural class of the sex-subduers, and had had many a smile without asking, which had been denied to the feeble youth who try to win favor by pleading their passion in rhyme, and even to the more formidable approaches of young officers in volunteer companies, considered by many to be quite irresistible to the fair who have once beheld them from their windows in the epaulettes and plumes and sashes of the “Pigwacket Invincibles,” or the “Hackmatack Rangers.”

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Master Langdon took his seat and began the exercises of his school. The smaller boys recited their lessons well enough, but some of the larger ones were negligent and surly. He noticed one or two of them looking toward the door, as if expecting somebody or something in that direction. At half past nine o'clock, Abner Briggs, Junior, who had not yet shown himself, made his appearance. He was followed by his "yallah dog," without his muzzle, who squatted down very grimly near the door, and gave a wolfish look round the room, as if he were considering which was the plumpest boy to begin with. The young butcher, meanwhile, went to his seat, looking somewhat flushed, except round the lips, which were hardly as red as common, and set pretty sharply.

"Put out that dog, Abner Briggs!"—The master spoke as the captain speaks to the helmsman, when there are rocks foaming at the lips, right under his lee.

Abner Briggs answered as the helmsman answers, when he knows he has a mutinous crew round him that mean to run the ship on the reef, and is one of the mutineers himself. "Put him aout y'rself, 'f ye a'n't afeard on him!"

The master stepped into the aisle: The great cur showed his teeth,—and the devilish instincts of his old wolf-ancestry looked out of his eyes, and flashed from his sharp tusks, and yawned in his wide mouth and deep red gullet.

The movements of animals are so much quicker than those of human beings commonly are, that they avoid blows as easily as one of us steps out of the way of an ox-cart. It must be a very stupid dog that lets himself be run over by a fast driver in his gig; he can jump out of the wheel's way after the tire has already touched him. So, while one is lifting a stick to strike or drawing back his foot to kick, the beast makes his spring, and the blow or the kick comes too late.

It was not so this time. The master was a fencer, and something of a boxer; he had played at singlestick, and was used to watching an adversary's eye and coming down on him without any of those premonitory symptoms by which unpractised persons show long beforehand what mischief they meditate.

"Out with you!" he said, fiercely,—and explained what he meant by a sudden flash of his foot that clashed the yellow dog's white teeth together like the springing of a bear-trap. The cur knew he had found his master at the first word and glance, as low animals on four legs, or a smaller number, always do; and the blow took him so by surprise, that it curled him up in an instant, and he went bundling out of the open schoolhouse-door with a most pitiable yelp, and his stump of a tail shut down as close as his owner ever shut the short, stubbed blade of his jack-knife.

It was time for the other cur to find who his master.

"Follow your dog, Abner Briggs!" said Master Langdon.

The stout butcher-youth looked round, but the rebels were all cowed and sat still.

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"I'll go when I'm ready," he said,—"'n' I guess I won't go afore I'm ready."

"You're ready now," said Master Langdon, turning up his cuffs so that the little boys noticed the yellow gleam of a pair of gold sleeve-buttons, once worn by Colonel Percy Wentworth, famous in the Old French War.

Abner Briggs, Junior, did not apparently think he was ready, at any rate; for he rose up in his place, and stood with clenched fists, defiant, as the master strode towards him. The master knew the fellow was really frightened, for all his looks, and that he must have no time to rally. So he caught him suddenly by the collar, and, with one great pull, had him out over his desk and on the open floor. He gave him a sharp fling backwards and stood looking at him.

The rough-and-tumble fighters all clinch, as everybody knows; and Abner Briggs, Junior, was one of that kind. He remembered how he had floored Master Weeks, and he had just "spunk" enough left in him to try to repeat his former successful experiment on the new master. He sprang at him, open-handed, to clutch him. So the master had to strike,—once, but very hard, and just in the place to tell. No doubt, the authority that doth hedge a schoolmaster added to the effect of the blow; but the blow was itself a neat one, and did not require to be repeated.

"Now go home," said the master, "and don't let me see you or your dog here again." And he turned his cuffs down over the gold sleeve-buttons.

This finished the great Pigwacket Centre School rebellion. What could be done with a master who was so pleasant as long as the boys behaved decently, and such a terrible fellow when he got "riled," as they called it? In a week's time everything was reduced to order, and the school-committee were delighted. The master, however, had received a proposition so much more agreeable and advantageous, that he informed the committee he should leave at the end of his month, having in his eye a sensible and energetic young college-graduate who would be willing and fully competent to take his place.

So, at the expiration of the appointed time, Bernard Langdon, late master of the School District No. 1, Pigwacket Centre, took his departure from that place for another locality, whither we shall follow him, carrying with him the regrets of the committee, of most of the scholars, and of several young ladies; also two locks of hair, sent unbeknown to payrents, one dark and one warmish auburn, inscribed with the respective initials of Alminy Cutterr and Arvilly Braowne.

CHAPTER IV

The moth flies into the candle.

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The invitation which Mr. Bernard Langdon had accepted came from the Board of Trustees of the "Apollinean Female Institute," a school for the education of young ladies, situated in the flourishing town of Rockland. This was an establishment on a considerable scale, in which a hundred scholars or thereabouts were taught the ordinary English branches, several of the modern languages, something of Latin, if desired, with a little natural philosophy, metaphysics, and rhetoric, to finish off with in the last year, and music at any time when they would pay for it. At the close of their career in the Institute, they were submitted to a grand public examination, and received diplomas tied in blue ribbons, which proclaimed them with a great flourish of capitals to be graduates of the Apollinean Female Institute.

Rockland was a town of no inconsiderable pretensions. It was ennobled by lying at the foot of a mountain,—called by the working-folks of the place "the Maounting,"—which sufficiently showed that it was the principal high land of the district in which it was situated. It lay to the south of this, and basked in the sunshine as Italy stretches herself before the Alps. To pass from the town of Tamarack on the north of the mountain to Rockland on the south was like crossing from Coire to Chiavenna.

There is nothing gives glory and grandeur and romance and mystery to a place like the impending presence of a high mountain. Our beautiful Northampton with its fair meadows and noble stream is lovely enough, but owes its surpassing attraction to those twin summits which brood over it like living presences, looking down into its streets as if they were its tutelary divinities, dressing and undressing their green shrines, robing themselves in jubilant sunshine or in sorrowing clouds, and doing penance in the snowy shroud of winter, as if they had living hearts under their rocky ribs and changed their mood like the children of the soil at their feet, who grow up under their almost parental smiles and frowns. Happy is the child whose first dreams of heaven are blended with the evening glories of Mount Holyoke, when the sun is firing its treetops, and gilding the white walls that mark its one human dwelling! If the other and the wilder of the two summits has a scowl of terror in its overhanging brows, yet is it a pleasing fear to look upon its savage solitudes through the barred nursery-windows in the heart of the sweet, companionable village.—And how the mountains love their children! The sea is of a facile virtue, and will run to kiss the first comer in any port he visits; but the chaste mountains sit apart, and show their faces only in the midst of their own families.

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The Mountain which kept watch to the north of Rockland lay waste and almost inviolate through much of its domain. The catamount still glared from the branches of its old hemlocks on the lesser beasts that strayed beneath him. It was not long since a wolf had wandered down, famished in the winter's dearth, and left a few bones and some tufts of wool of what had been a lamb in the morning. Nay, there were broad-footed tracks in the snow only two years previously, which could not be mistaken;—the black bear alone could have set that plantigrade seal, and little children must come home early from school and play, for he is an indiscriminate feeder when he is hungry, and a little child would not come amiss when other game was wanting.

But these occasional visitors may have been mere wanderers, which, straying along in the woods by day, and perhaps stalking through the streets of still villages by night, had worked their way along down from the ragged mountain-spurs of higher latitudes. The one feature of The Mountain that shed the brownest horror on its woods was the existence of the terrible region known as Rattlesnake Ledge, and still tenanted by those damnable reptiles, which distil a fiercer venom under our cold northern sky than the cobra himself in the land of tropical spices and poisons.

From the earliest settlement of the place, this fact had been, next to the Indians, the reigning nightmare of the inhabitants. It was easy enough, after a time, to drive away the savages; for "a screeching Indian Divell," as our fathers called him, could not crawl into the crack of a rock to escape from his pursuers. But the venomous population of Rattlesnake Ledge had a Gibraltar for their fortress that might have defied the siege-train dragged to the walls of Sebastopol. In its deep embrasures and its impregnable easemates they reared their families, they met in love or wrath, they twined together in family knots, they hissed defiance in hostile clans, they fed, slept, hibernated, and in due time died in peace. Many a foray had the towns-people made, and many a stuffed skin was shown as a trophy,—nay, there were families where the children's first toy was made from the warning appendage that once vibrated to the wrath of one of these "cruel serpents." Sometimes one of them, coaxed out by a warm sun, would writhe himself down the hillside into the roads, up the walks that led to houses,—worse than this, into the long grass, where the barefooted mowers would soon pass with their swinging scythes,—more rarely into houses, and on one memorable occasion, early in the last century, into the meeting-house, where he took a position on the pulpit-stairs,—as is narrated in the "Account of Some Remarkable Providences," *etc.*, where it is suggested that a strong tendency of the Rev. Didymus Bean, the Minister at that time, towards the Arminian Heresy may have had something to do with it, and that the Serpent supposed to have been killed on the Pulpit-Stairs was a false show of the Daemon's Contrivance, he having come in to listen to a Discourse which was a sweet Savour in his Nostrils, and, of course, not being capable of being killed Himself. Others said, however, that, though there was good Reason to think it was a Damon, yet he did come with Intent to bite the Heel of that faithful Servant,—*etc.*

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One Gilson is said to have died of the bite of a rattlesnake in this town early in the present century. After this there was a great snake-hunt, in which very many of these venomous beasts were killed,—one in particular, said to have been as big round as a stout man's arm, and to have had no less than forty joints to his rattle,—indicating, according to some, that he had lived forty years, but, if we might put any faith in the Indian tradition, that he had killed forty human beings,—an idle fancy, clearly. This hunt, however, had no permanent effect in keeping down the serpent population. Viviparous, creatures are a kind of specie-paying lot, but oviparous ones only give their notes, as it were, for a future brood,—an egg being, so to speak, a promise to pay a young one by and by, if nothing happen. Now the domestic habits of the rattlesnake are not studied very closely, for obvious reasons; but it is, no doubt, to all intents and purposes oviparous. Consequently it has large families, and is not easy to kill out.

In the year 184-, a melancholy proof was afforded to the inhabitants of Rockland, that the brood which infested The Mountain was not extirpated. A very interesting young married woman, detained at home at the time by the state of her health, was bitten in the entry of her own house by a rattlesnake which had found its way down from The Mountain. Owing to the almost instant employment of powerful remedies, the bite did not prove immediately fatal; but she died within a few months of the time when she was bitten.

All this seemed to throw a lurid kind of shadow over The Mountain. Yet, as many years passed without any accident, people grew comparatively careless, and it might rather be said to add a fearful kind of interest to the romantic hillside, that the banded reptiles, which had been the terror of the red men for nobody knows how many thousand years, were there still, with the same poison-bags and spring-teeth at the white men's service, if they meddled with them.

The other natural features of Rockland were such as many of our pleasant country-towns can boast of. A brook came tumbling down the mountain-side and skirted the most thickly settled portion of the village. In the parts of its course where it ran through the woods, the water looked almost as brown as coffee flowing from its urn,—to say like smoky quartz would perhaps give a better idea,—but in the open plain it sparkled over the pebbles white as a queen's diamonds. There were huckleberry-pastures on the lower flanks of The Mountain, with plenty of the sweet-scented bayberry mingled with the other bushes. In other fields grew great store of high-bush blackberries. Along the roadside were bayberry-bushes, hung all over with bright red coral pendants in autumn and far into the winter. Then there were swamps set thick with dingy alders, where the three-leaved arum and the skunk's-cabbage grew broad and succulent, shelving down into black

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boggy pools here and there at the edge of which the green frog, stupidest of his tribe, sat waiting to be victimized by boy or snapping-turtle long after the shy and agile leopard-frog had taken the six-foot spring that plumped him into the middle of the pool. And on the neighboring banks the maiden-hair spread its flat disk of embroidered fronds on the wire-like stem that glistened polished and brown as the darkest tortoise-shell, and pale violets, cheated by the cold skies of their hues and perfume, sunned themselves like white-cheeked invalids. Over these rose the old forest-trees,—the maple, scarred with the wounds which had drained away its sweet life-blood,—the beech, its smooth gray bark mottled so as to look like the body of one of those great snakes of old that used to frighten armies, always the mark of lovers' knives, as in the days of Musidora and her swain,—the yellow birch, rough as the breast of Silenus in old marbles,—the wild cherry, its little bitter fruit lying unheeded at its foot,—and, soaring over all, the huge, coarse-barked, splintery-limbed, dark-mantled hemlock, in the depth of whose aerial solitudes the crow brooded on her nest unscared, and the gray squirrel lived unharmed till his incisors grew to look like ram's-horns.

Rockland would have been but half a town without its pond; Guinnepeg Pond was the name of it, but the young ladies of the Apollinean Institute were very anxious that it should be called Crystalline Lake. It was here that the young folks used to sail in summer and skate in winter; here, too, those queer, old, rum-scented good-for-nothing, lazy, story-telling, half-vagabonds, who sawed a little wood or dug a few potatoes now and then under the pretence of working for their living, used to go and fish through the ice for pickerel every winter. And here those three young people were drowned, a few summers ago, by the upsetting of a sail-boat in a sudden flaw of wind. There is not one of these smiling ponds which has not devoured more youths and maidens than any of those monsters the ancients used to tell such lies about. But it was a pretty pond, and never looked more innocent—so the native “bard” of Rockland said in his elegy—than on the morning when they found Sarah Jane and Ellen Maria floating among the lily-pads.

The Apollinean Institute, or Institoot, as it was more commonly called, was, in the language of its Prospectus, a “first-class Educational Establishment.” It employed a considerable corps of instructors to rough out and finish the hundred young lady scholars it sheltered beneath its roof. First, Mr. and Mrs. Peckham, the Principal and the Matron of the school. Silas Peckham was a thorough Yankee, born on a windy part of the coast, and reared chiefly on salt-fish. Everybody knows the type of Yankee produced by this climate and diet: thin, as if he had been split and dried; with an ashen kind of complexion, like the tint of the food he is made of;

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and about as sharp, tough, juiceless, and biting to deal with as the other is to the taste. Silas Peckham kept a young ladies' school exactly as he would have kept a hundred head of cattle,—for the simple, unadorned purpose of making just as much money in just as few years as could be safely done. Mr. Peckham gave very little personal attention to the department of instruction, but was always busy with contracts for flour and potatoes, beef and pork, and other nutritive staples, the amount of which required for such an establishment was enough to frighten a quartermaster. Mrs. Peckham was from the West, raised on Indian corn and pork, which give a fuller outline and a more humid temperament, but may perhaps be thought to render people a little coarse-fibred. Her specialty was to look after the feathering, cackling, roosting, rising, and general behavior of these hundred chicks. An honest, ignorant woman, she could not have passed an examination in the youngest class. So this distinguished institution was under the charge of a commissary and a housekeeper, and its real business was making money by taking young girls in as boarders.

Connected with this, however, was the incidental fact, which the public took for the principal one, namely, the business of instruction. Mr. Peckham knew well enough that it was just as well to have good instructors as bad ones, so far as cost was concerned, and a great deal better for the reputation of his feeding-establishment. He tried to get the best he could without paying too much, and, having got them, to screw all the work out of them that could possibly be extracted.

There was a master for the English branches, with a young lady assistant. There was another young lady who taught French, of the ahvaung and baundahng style, which does not exactly smack of the asphalt of the Boulevards. There was also a German teacher of music, who sometimes helped in French of the ahfaung and bauntaung style,—so that, between the two, the young ladies could hardly have been mistaken for Parisians, by a Committee of the French Academy. The German teacher also taught a Latin class after his fashion,—benna, a ben, gahboot, ahead, and so forth.

The master for the English branches had lately left the school for private reasons, which need not be here mentioned,—but he had gone, at any rate, and it was his place which had been offered to Mr. Bernard Langdon. The offer came just in season,—as, for various causes, he was willing to leave the place where he had begun his new experience.

It was on a fine morning that Mr. Bernard, ushered in by Mr. Peckham, made his appearance in the great schoolroom of the Apollinean Institute. A general rustle ran all round the seats when the handsome young man was introduced. The principal carried him to the desk of the young lady English assistant, Miss Darley by name, and introduced him to her.

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There was not a great deal of study done that day. The young lady assistant had to point out to the new master the whole routine in which the classes were engaged when their late teacher left, and which had gone on as well as it could since. Then Master Langdon had a great many questions to ask, some relating to his new duties, and some, perhaps, implying a degree of curiosity not very unnatural under the circumstances. The truth is, the general effect of the schoolroom, with its scores of young girls, all their eyes naturally centring on him with fixed or furtive glances, was enough to bewilder and confuse a young man like Master Langdon, though he was not destitute of self-possession, as we have already seen.

You cannot get together a hundred girls, taking them as they come, from the comfortable and affluent classes, probably anywhere, certainly not in New England, without seeing a good deal of beauty. In fact, we very commonly mean by beauty the way young girls look when there is nothing to hinder their looking as Nature meant them to. And the great schoolroom of the Apollinean Institute did really make so pretty a show on the morning when Master Langdon entered it, that he might be pardoned for asking Miss Darley more questions about his scholars than about their lessons.

There were girls of all ages: little creatures, some pallid and delicate-looking, the offspring of invalid parents,—much given to books, not much to mischief, commonly spoken of as particularly good children, and contrasted with another sort, girls of more vigorous organization, who were disposed to laughing and play, and required a strong hand to manage them; then young growing misses of every shade of Saxon complexion, and here and there one of more Southern hue: blondes, some of them so translucent-looking that it seemed as if you could see the souls in their bodies, like bubbles in glass, if souls were objects of sight; brunettes, some with rose-red colors, and some with that swarthy hue which often carries with it a heavily-shaded lip, and which, with pure outlines and outspoken reliefs, gives us some of our handsomest women,—the women whom ornaments of plain gold adorn more than any other parures; and again, but only here and there, one with dark hair and gray or blue eyes, a Celtic type, perhaps, but found in our native stock occasionally; rarest of all, a light-haired girl with dark eyes, hazel, brown, or of the color of that mountain-brook spoken of in this chapter, where it ran through shadowy woodlands. With these were to be seen at intervals some of maturer years, full-blown flowers among the opening buds, with that conscious look upon their faces which so many women wear during the period when they never meet a single man without having his monosyllable ready for him,—tied as they are, poor things! on the rock of expectation, each of them an Andromeda waiting for her Perseus.

“Who is that girl in ringlets,—the fourth in the third row on the right?” said Master Langdon.

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“Charlotte Ann Wood,” said Miss Darley; “writes very pretty poems.”

“Oh!—And the pink one, three seats from her? Looks bright; anything in her?”

“Emma Dean,—day-scholar,—Squire Dean’s daughter,—nice girl,—second medal last year.”

The master asked these two questions in a careless kind of way, and did not seem to pay any too much attention to the answers.

“And who and what is that,” he said,—“sitting a little apart there,—that strange, wild-looking girl?”

This time he put the real question he wanted answered;—the other two were asked at random, as masks for the third.

The lady-teacher’s face changed;—one would have said she was frightened or troubled. She looked at the girl doubtfully, as if she might hear the master’s question and its answer. But the girl did not look up;—she was winding a gold chain about her wrist, and then uncoiling it, as if in a kind of reverie.

Miss Darley drew close to the master and placed her hand so as to hide her lips. “Don’t look at her as if we were talking about her,” she whispered softly; “that is Elsie Venner.”

CHAPTER V.

An old-fashioned descriptive chapter.

It was a comfort to get to a place with something like society, with residences which had pretensions to elegance, with people of some breeding, with a newspaper, and “stores” to advertise in it, and with two or three churches to keep each other alive by wholesome agitation. Rockland was such a place.

Some of the natural features of the town have been described already. The Mountain, of course, was what gave it its character, and redeemed it from wearing the commonplace expression which belongs to ordinary country-villages. Beautiful, wild, invested with the mystery which belongs to untrodden spaces, and with enough of terror to give it dignity, it had yet closer relations with the town over which it brooded than the passing stranger knew of. Thus, it made a local climate by cutting off the northern winds and holding the sun’s heat like a garden-wall. Peachtrees, which, on the northern side of the mountain, hardly ever came to fruit, ripened abundant crops in Rockland.

But there was still another relation between the mountain and the town at its foot, which strangers were not likely to hear alluded to, and which was oftener thought of than



spoken of by its inhabitants. Those high-impending forests,—“hangers,” as White of Selborne would have called them,—sloping far upward and backward into the distance, had always an air of menace blended with their wild beauty. It seemed as if some heaven-scaling Titan had thrown his shaggy robe over the bare, precipitous flanks of the rocky summit, and it might at any moment slide like a garment flung carelessly on the nearest chance-support, and, so sliding, crush the village out of being, as the Rossberg when it tumbled over on the valley of Goldau.

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Persons have been known to remove from the place, after a short residence in it, because they were haunted day and night by the thought of this awful green wall, piled up into the air over their heads. They would lie awake of nights, thinking they heard the muffled snapping of roots, as if a thousand acres of the mountain-side were tugging to break away, like the snow from a house-roof, and a hundred thousand trees were clinging with all their fibres to hold back the soil just ready to peel away and crash down with all its rocks and forest-growths. And yet, by one of those strange contradictions we are constantly finding in human nature, there were natives of the town who would come back thirty or forty years after leaving it, just to nestle under this same threatening mountainside, as old men sun themselves against southward-facing walls. The old dreams and legends of danger added to the attraction. If the mountain should ever slide, they had a kind of feeling as if they ought to be there. It was a fascination like that which the rattlesnake is said to exert.

This comparison naturally suggests the recollection of that other source of danger which was an element in the every-day life of the Rockland people. The folks in some of the neighboring towns had a joke against them, that a Rocklander could n't hear a beanpod rattle without saying, "The Lord have mercy on us!" It is very true, that many a nervous old lady has had a terrible start, caused by some mischievous young rogue's giving a sudden shake to one of these noisy vegetable products in her immediate vicinity. Yet, strangely enough, many persons missed the excitement of the possibility of a fatal bite in other regions, where there were nothing but black and green and striped snakes, mean ophidians, having the spite of the nobler serpent without his venom,—poor crawling creatures, whom Nature would not trust with a poison-bag. Many natives of Rockland did unquestionably experience a certain gratification in this infinitesimal sense of danger. It was noted that the old people retained their hearing longer than in other places. Some said it was the softened climate, but others believed it was owing to the habit of keeping their ears open whenever they were walking through the grass or in the woods. At any rate, a slight sense of danger is often an agreeable stimulus. People sip their creme de noyau with a peculiar tremulous pleasure, because there is a bare possibility that it may contain prussic acid enough to knock them over; in which case they will lie as dead as if a thunder-cloud had emptied itself into the earth through their brain and marrow.

But Rockland had other features which helped to give it a special character. First of all, there was one grand street which was its chief glory. Elm Street it was called, naturally enough, for its elms made a long, pointed-arched gallery of it through most of its extent. No natural Gothic arch compares, for a moment, with that formed by two American elms, where their lofty jets of foliage shoot across each other's ascending curves, to intermingle their showery flakes of green. When one looks through a long double row of these, as in that lovely avenue which the poets of Yale remember so well,

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“Oh, could the vista of my life but now as bright appear
As when I first through Temple Street looked down thine espalier!”

he beholds a temple not built with hands, fairer than any minster, with all its clustered stems and flowering capitals, that ever grew in stone.

Nobody knows New England who is not on terms of intimacy with one of its elms. The elm comes nearer to having a soul than any other vegetable creature among us. It loves man as man loves it. It is modest and patient. It has a small flake of a seed which blows in everywhere and makes arrangements for coming up by and by. So, in spring, one finds a crop of baby-elms among his carrots and parsnips, very weak and small compared to those succulent vegetables. The baby-elms die, most of them, slain, unrecognized or unheeded, by hand or hoe, as meekly as Herod's innocents. One of them gets overlooked, perhaps, until it has established a kind of right to stay. Three generations of carrot and parsnip consumers have passed away, yourself among them, and now let your great-grandson look for the baby-elm. Twenty-two feet of clean girth, three hundred and sixty feet in the line that bounds its leafy circle, it covers the boy with such a canopy as neither glossy-leafed oak nor insect-haunted linden ever lifted into the summer skies.

Elm Street was the pride of Rockland, but not only on account of its Gothic-arched vista. In this street were most of the great houses, or “mansion-houses,” as it was usual to call them. Along this street, also, the more nicely kept and neatly painted dwellings were chiefly congregated. It was the correct thing for a Rockland dignitary to have a house in Elm Street. A New England “mansion-house” is naturally square, with dormer windows projecting from the roof, which has a balustrade with turned posts round it. It shows a good breadth of front-yard before its door, as its owner shows a respectable expanse of a clean shirt-front. It has a lateral margin beyond its stables and offices, as its master wears his white wrist bands showing beyond his coat-cuffs. It may not have what can properly be called grounds, but it must have elbow-room, at any rate. Without it, it is like a man who is always tight-buttoned for want of any linen to show. The mansion-house which has had to “button itself up tight in fences, for want of green or gravel margin,” will be advertising for boarders presently. The old English pattern of the New England mansion-house, only on a somewhat grander scale, is Sir Thomas Abney's place, where dear, good Dr. Watts said prayers for the family, and wrote those blessed hymns of his that sing us into consciousness in our cradles, and come back to us in sweet, single verses, between the moments of wandering and of stupor, when we lie dying, and sound over us when we can no longer hear them, bringing grateful tears to the hot, aching eyes beneath the thick, black veils, and carrying the holy calm with

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them which filled the good man's heart, as he prayed and sung under the shelter of the old English mansion-house. Next to the mansion-houses, came the two-story trim, white-painted, "genteel" houses, which, being more gossipy and less nicely bred, crowded close up to the street, instead of standing back from it with arms akimbo, like the mansion-houses. Their little front-yards were very commonly full of lilac and syringa and other bushes, which were allowed to smother the lower story almost to the exclusion of light and airy so that, what with small windows and small windowpanes, and the darkness made by these choking growths of shrubbery, the front parlors of some of these houses were the most tomb-like, melancholy places that could be found anywhere among the abodes of the living. Their garnishing was apt to assist this impression. Large-patterned carpets, which always look discontented in little rooms, haircloth furniture, black and shiny as beetles' wing cases, and centre-tables, with a sullen oil-lamp of the kind called astral by our imaginative ancestors, in the centre,—these things were inevitable. In set piles round the lamp was ranged the current literature of the day, in the form of Temperance Documents, unbound numbers of one of the Unknown Public's Magazines with worn-out steel engravings and high-colored fashion-plates, the Poems of a distinguished British author whom it is unnecessary to mention, a volume of sermons, or a novel or two, or both, according to the tastes of the family, and the Good Book, which is always itself in the cheapest and commonest company. The father of the family with his hand in the breast of his coat, the mother of the same in a wide-bordered cap, sometimes a print of the Last Supper, by no means Morghen's, or the Father of his Country, or the old General, or the Defender of the Constitution, or an unknown clergyman with an open book before him,—these were the usual ornaments of the walls, the first two a matter of rigor, the others according to politics and other tendencies.

This intermediate class of houses, wherever one finds them in New England towns, are very apt to be cheerless and unsatisfactory. They have neither the luxury of the mansion-house nor the comfort of the farm-house. They are rarely kept at an agreeable temperature. The mansion-house has large fireplaces and generous chimneys, and is open to the sunshine. The farm-house makes no pretensions, but it has a good warm kitchen, at any rate, and one can be comfortable there with the rest of the family, without fear and without reproach. These lesser country-houses of genteel aspirations are much given to patent subterfuges of one kind and another to get heat without combustion. The chilly parlor and the slippery hair-cloth seat take the life out of the warmest welcome. If one would make these places wholesome, happy, and cheerful, the first precept would be,—The dearest fuel, plenty of it, and let half the heat go up the chimney. If you can't afford this, don't try to live in a "genteel" fashion, but stick to the ways of the honest farm-house.

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There were a good many comfortable farm-houses scattered about Rockland. The best of them were something of the following pattern, which is too often superseded of late by a more pretentious, but infinitely less pleasing kind of rustic architecture. A little back from the road, seated directly on the green sod, rose a plain wooden building, two stories in front, with a long roof sloping backwards to within a few feet of the ground. This, like the "mansion-house," is copied from an old English pattern. Cottages of this model may be seen in Lancashire, for instance, always with the same honest, homely look, as if their roofs acknowledged their relationship to the soil out of which they sprung. The walls were unpainted, but turned by the slow action of sun and air and rain to a quiet dove or slate color. An old broken millstone at the door,—a well-sweep pointing like a finger to the heavens, which the shining round of water beneath looked up at like a dark unsleeping eye,—a single large elm a little at one side,—a barn twice as big as the house,—a cattle-yard, with

"The white horns tossing above the wall,"—

some fields, in pasture or in crops, with low stone walls round them,—a row of beehives,—a garden-patch, with roots, and currant-bushes, and many-hued hollyhocks, and swollen-stemmed, globe-headed, seedling onions, and marigolds and flower-de-luces, and lady's-delights, and peonies, crowding in together, with southernwood in the borders, and woodbine and hops and morning-glories climbing as they got a chance,—these were the features by which the Rockland-born children remembered the farm-house, when they had grown to be men. Such are the recollections that come over poor sailor-boys crawling out on reeling yards to reef topsails as their vessels stagger round the stormy Cape; and such are the flitting images that make the eyes of old country-born merchants look dim and dreamy, as they sit in their city palaces, warm with the after-dinner flush of the red wave out of which Memory arises, as Aphrodite arose from the green waves of the ocean.

Two meeting-houses stood on two eminences, facing each other, and looking like a couple of fighting-cocks with their necks straight up in the air,—as if they would flap their roofs, the next thing, and crow out of their upstretched steeples, and peck at each other's glass eyes with their sharp-pointed weathercocks.

The first was a good pattern of the real old-fashioned New England meeting-house. It was a large barn with windows, fronted by a square tower crowned with a kind of wooden bell inverted and raised on legs, out of which rose a slender spire with the sharp-billed weathercock at its summit. Inside, tall, square pews with flapping seats, and a gallery running round three sides of the building. On the fourth side the pulpit, with a huge, dusty sounding-board hanging over it. Here preached the Reverend Pierrepont Honeywood, D. D., successor, after a number of generations,

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to the office and the parsonage of the Reverend Didymus Bean, before mentioned, but not suspected of any of his alleged heresies. He held to the old faith of the Puritans, and occasionally delivered a discourse which was considered by the hard-headed theologians of his parish to have settled the whole matter fully and finally, so that now there was a good logical basis laid down for the Millennium, which might begin at once upon the platform of his demonstrations. Yet the Reverend Dr. Honeywood was fonder of preaching plain, practical sermons about the duties of life, and showing his Christianity in abundant good works among his people. It was noticed by some few of his flock, not without comment, that the great majority of his texts came from the Gospels, and this more and more as he became interested in various benevolent enterprises which brought him into relations with ministers and kindhearted laymen of other denominations. He was in fact a man of a very warm, open, and exceedingly human disposition, and, although bred by a clerical father, whose motto was “*Sit anima mea cum Puritanis*,” he exercised his human faculties in the harness of his ancient faith with such freedom that the straps of it got so loose they did not interfere greatly with the circulation of the warm blood through his system. Once in a while he seemed to think it necessary to come out with a grand doctrinal sermon, and then he would lapse away for a while into preaching on men’s duties to each other and to society, and hit hard, perhaps, at some of the actual vices of the time and place, and insist with such tenderness and eloquence on the great depth and breadth of true Christian love and charity, that his oldest deacon shook his head, and wished he had shown as much interest when he was preaching, three Sabbaths back, on Predestination, or in his discourse against the Sabellians. But he was sound in the faith; no doubt of that. Did he not preside at the council held in the town of Tamarack, on the other side of the mountain, which expelled its clergyman for maintaining heretical doctrines? As presiding officer, he did not vote, of course, but there was no doubt that he was all right; he had some of the Edwards blood in him, and that couldn’t very well let him go wrong.

The meeting-house on the other and opposite summit was of a more modern style, considered by many a great improvement on the old New England model, so that it is not uncommon for a country parish to pull down its old meeting-house, which has been preached in for a hundred years or so, and put up one of these more elegant edifices. The new building was in what may be called the florid shingle-Gothic manner. Its pinnacles and crockets and other ornaments were, like the body of the building, all of pine wood,—an admirable material, as it is very soft and easily worked, and can be painted of any color desired. Inside, the walls were stuccoed in imitation of stone,—first a dark brown square, then two light brown squares,

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then another dark brown square, and so on, to represent the accidental differences of shade always noticeable in the real stones of which walls are built. To be sure, the architect could not help getting his party-colored squares in almost as regular rhythmical order as those of a chess-board; but nobody can avoid doing things in a systematic and serial way; indeed, people who wish to plant trees in natural chinks know very well that they cannot keep from making regular lines and symmetrical figures, unless by some trick or other, as that one of throwing a peck of potatoes up into the air and sticking in a tree wherever a potato happens to fall. The pews of this meeting-house were the usual oblong ones, where people sit close together, with a ledge before them to support their hymn-books, liable only to occasional contact with the back of the next pew's heads or bonnets, and a place running under the seat of that pew where hats could be deposited, —always at the risk of the owner, in case of injury by boots or crickets.

In this meeting-house preached the Reverend Chauncy Fairweather, a divine of the "Liberal" school, as it is commonly called, bred at that famous college which used to be thought, twenty or thirty years ago, to have the monopoly of training young men in the milder forms of heresy. His ministrations were attended with decency, but not followed with enthusiasm. "The beauty of virtue" got to be an old story at last. "The moral dignity of human nature" ceased to excite a thrill of satisfaction, after some hundred repetitions. It grew to be a dull business, this preaching against stealing and intemperance, while he knew very well that the thieves were prowling round orchards and empty houses, instead of being there to hear the sermon, and that the drunkards, being rarely church-goers, get little good by the statistics and eloquent appeals of the preacher. Every now and then, however, the Reverend Mr. Fairweather let off a polemic discourse against his neighbor opposite, which waked his people up a little; but it was a languid congregation, at best,—very apt to stay away from meeting in the afternoon, and not at all given to extra evening services. The minister, unlike his rival of the other side of the way, was a down-hearted and timid kind of man. He went on preaching as he had been taught to preach, but he had misgivings at times. There was a little Roman Catholic church at the foot of the hill where his own was placed, which he always had to pass on Sundays. He could never look on the thronging multitudes that crowded its pews and aisles or knelt bare-headed on its steps, without a longing to get in among them and go down on his knees and enjoy that luxury of devotional contact which makes a worshipping throng as different from the same numbers praying apart as a bed of coals is from a trail of scattered cinders.

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"Oh, if I could but huddle in with those poor laborers and working-women!" he would say to himself. "If I could but breathe that atmosphere, stifling though it be, yet made holy by ancient litanies, and cloudy with the smoke of hallowed incense, for one hour, instead of droning over these moral precepts to my half-sleeping congregation!" The intellectual isolation of his sect preyed upon him; for, of all terrible things to natures like his, the most terrible is to belong to a minority. No person that looked at his thin and sallow cheek, his sunken and sad eye, his tremulous lip, his contracted forehead, or who heard his querulous, though not unmusical voice, could fail to see that his life was an uneasy one, that he was engaged in some inward conflict. His dark, melancholic aspect contrasted with his seemingly cheerful creed, and was all the more striking, as the worthy Dr. Honeywood, professing a belief which made him a passenger on board a shipwrecked planet, was yet a most good-humored and companionable gentleman, whose laugh on week-days did one as much good to listen to as the best sermon he ever delivered on a Sunday.

A mile or two from the centre of Rockland was a pretty little Episcopal church, with a roof like a wedge of cheese, a square tower, a stained window, and a trained rector, who read the service with such ventral depth of utterance and rrreduplication of the rrresonant letter, that his own mother would not have known him for her son, if the good woman had not ironed his surplice and put it on with her own hands.

There were two public-houses in the place: one dignified with the name of the Mountain House, somewhat frequented by city people in the summer months, large-fronted, three-storied, balconied, boasting a distinct ladies'-drawing-room, and spreading a table d'hote of some pretensions; the other, "Pollard's Tahvern," in the common speech,—a two-story building, with a bar-room, once famous, where there was a great smell of hay and boots and pipes and all other bucolic-flavored elements,—where games of checkers were played on the back of the bellows with red and white kernels of corn, or with beans and coffee, where a man slept in a box-settle at night, to wake up early passengers,—where teamsters came in, with wooden-handled whips and coarse frocks, reinforcing the bucolic flavor of the atmosphere, and middle-aged male gossips, sometimes including the squire of the neighboring law-office, gathered to exchange a question or two about the news, and then fall into that solemn state of suspended animation which the temperance bar-rooms of modern days produce in human beings, as the Grotta del Cane does in dogs in the well-known experiments related by travellers. This bar-room used to be famous for drinking and storytelling, and sometimes fighting, in old times. That was when there were rows of decanters on the shelf behind the bar, and a hissing vessel of hot water ready, to make punch, and three or four loggerheads (long irons clubbed

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at the end) were always lying in the fire in the cold season, waiting to be plunged into sputtering and foaming mugs of flip,—a goodly compound; speaking according to the flesh, made with beer and sugar, and a certain suspicion of strong waters, over which a little nutmeg being grated, and in it the hot iron being then allowed to sizzle, there results a peculiar singed aroma, which the wise regard as a warning to remove themselves at once out of the reach of temptation.

But the bar of Pollard's Tahvern no longer presented its old attractions, and the loggerheads had long disappeared from the fire. In place of the decanters, were boxes containing "lozengers," as they were commonly called, sticks of candy in jars, cigars in tumblers, a few lemons, grown hard-skinned and marvellously shrunken by long exposure, but still feebly suggestive of possible lemonade,—the whole ornamented by festoons of yellow and blue cut flypaper. On the front shelf of the bar stood a large German-silver pitcher of water, and scattered about were ill-conditioned lamps, with wicks that always wanted picking, which burned red and smoked a good deal, and were apt to go out without any obvious cause, leaving strong reminiscences of the whale-fishery in the circumambient air.

The common schoolhouses of Rockland were dwarfed by the grandeur of the Apollinean Institute. The master passed one of them, in a walk he was taking, soon after his arrival at Rockland. He looked in at the rows of desks, and recalled his late experiences. He could not help laughing, as he thought how neatly he had knocked the young butcher off his pins.

"A little science is a dangerous thing, 'as well as a little 'learning,'" he said to himself; "only it's dangerous to the fellow you' try it on." And he cut him a good stick, and began climbing the side of The Mountain to get a look at that famous Rattlesnake Ledge.

CHAPTER VI.

The sunbeam and the shadow.

The virtue of the world is not mainly in its leaders. In the midst of the multitude which follows there is often something better than in the one that goes before. Old generals wanted to take Toulon, but one of their young colonels showed them how. The junior counsel has been known not unfrequently to make a better argument than his senior fellow,—if, indeed, he did not make both their arguments. Good ministers will tell you they have parishioners who beat them in the practice of the virtues. A great establishment, got up on commercial principles, like the Apollinean Institute, might yet be well carried on, if it happened to get good teachers. And when Master Langdon came to see its management, he recognized that there must be fidelity and intelligence

somewhere among the instructors. It was only necessary to look for a moment at the fair, open forehead, the still, tranquil eye of gentle, habitual authority, the sweet gravity that lay upon the lips, to hear the clear answers to the pupils' questions, to notice how every request had the force without the form of a command, and the young man could not doubt that the good genius of the school stood before him in the person of Helen barley.

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It was the old story. A poor country-clergyman dies, and leaves a widow and a daughter. In Old England the daughter would have eaten the bitter bread of a governess in some rich family. In New England she must keep a school. So, rising from one sphere to another, she at length finds herself the prima donna in the department of instruction in Mr. Silas Peckham's educational establishment.

What a miserable thing it is to be poor. She was dependent, frail, sensitive, conscientious. She was in the power of a hard, grasping, thin-blooded, tough-fibred, trading educator, who neither knew nor cared for a tender woman's sensibilities, but who paid her and meant to have his money's worth out of her brains, and as much more than his money's worth as he could get. She was consequently, in plain English, overworked, and an overworked woman is always a sad sight,—sadder a great deal than an overworked man, because she is so much more fertile in capacities of suffering than a man. She has so many varieties of headache,—sometimes as if Jael were driving the nail that killed Sisera into her temples,—sometimes letting her work with half her brain while the other half throbs as if it would go to pieces,—sometimes tightening round the brows as if her cap-band were a ring of iron,—and then her neuralgias, and her backaches, and her fits of depression, in which she thinks she is nothing and less than nothing, and those paroxysms which men speak slightly of as hysterical,—convulsions, that is all, only not commonly fatal ones,—so many trials which belong to her fine and mobile structure,—that she is always entitled to pity, when she is placed in conditions which develop her nervous tendencies.

The poor young lady's work had, of course, been doubled since the departure of Master Langdon's predecessor. Nobody knows what the weariness of instruction is, as soon as the teacher's faculties begin to be overtasked, but those who have tried it. The relays of fresh pupils, each new set with its exhausting powers in full action, coming one after another, take out all the reserved forces and faculties of resistance from the subject of their draining process.

The day's work was over, and it was late in the evening, when she sat down, tired and faint, with a great bundle of girls' themes or compositions to read over before she could rest her weary head on the pillow of her narrow trundle-bed, and forget for a while the treadmill stair of labor she was daily climbing.

How she dreaded this most forlorn of all a teacher's tasks! She was conscientious in her duties, and would insist on reading every sentence,—there was no saying where she might find faults of grammar or bad spelling. There might have been twenty or thirty of these themes in the bundle before her. Of course she knew pretty well the leading sentiments they could contain: that beauty was subject to the accidents of time; that wealth was inconstant,

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and existence uncertain; that virtue was its own reward; that youth exhaled, like the dewdrop from the flower, ere the sun had reached its meridian; that life was o'ershadowed with trials; that the lessons of virtue instilled by our beloved teachers were to be our guides through all our future career. The imagery employed consisted principally of roses, lilies, birds, clouds, and brooks, with the celebrated comparison of wayward genius to meteor. Who does not know the small, slanted, Italian hand of these girls'-compositions, their stringing together of the good old traditional copy-book phrases; their occasional gushes of sentiment, their profound estimates of the world, sounding to the old folks that read them as the experience of a bantam pullet's last-hatched young one with the chips of its shell on its head would sound to a Mother Cary's chicken, who knew the great ocean with all its typhoons and tornadoes? Yet every now and then one is liable to be surprised with strange clairvoyant flashes, that can hardly be explained, except by the mysterious inspiration which every now and then seizes a young girl and exalts her intelligence, just as hysteria in other instances exalts the sensibility,—a little something of that which made Joan of Arc, and the Burney girl who prophesied "Evelina," and the Davidson sisters. In the midst of these commonplace exercises which Miss Darley read over so carefully were two or three that had something of individual flavor about them, and here and there there was an image or an epithet which showed the footprint of a passionate nature, as a fallen scarlet feather marks the path the wild flamingo has trodden.

The young lady-teacher read them with a certain indifference of manner, as one reads proofs—noting defects of detail, but not commonly arrested by the matters treated of. Even Miss Charlotte Ann Wood's poem, beginning—

"How sweet at evening's balmy hour,"

did not excite her. She marked the inevitable false rhyme of Cockney and Yankee beginners, morn and dawn, and tossed the verses on the pile of papers she had finished. She was looking over some of the last of them in a rather listless way,—for the poor thing was getting sleepy in spite of herself,—when she came to one which seemed to rouse her attention, and lifted her drooping lids. She looked at it a moment before she would touch it. Then she took hold of it by one corner and slid it off from the rest. One would have said she was afraid of it, or had some undefined antipathy which made it hateful to her. Such odd fancies are common enough in young persons in her nervous state. Many of these young people will jump up twenty times a day and run to dabble the tips of their fingers in water, after touching the most inoffensive objects.

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This composition was written in a singular, sharp-pointed, long, slender hand, on a kind of wavy, ribbed paper. There was something strangely suggestive about the look of it, but exactly of what, Miss barley either could not or did not try to think. The subject of the paper was The Mountain,—the composition being a sort of descriptive rhapsody. It showed a startling familiarity with some of the savage scenery of the region. One would have said that the writer must have threaded its wildest solitudes by the light of the moon and stars as well as by day. As the teacher read on, her color changed, and a kind of tremulous agitation came over her. There were hints in this strange paper she did not know what to make of. There was something in its descriptions and imagery that recalled,—Miss Darley could not say what,—but it made her frightfully nervous. Still she could not help reading, till she came to one passage which so agitated her, that the tired and over-wearied girl's self-control left her entirely. She sobbed once or twice, then laughed convulsively; and flung herself on the bed, where she worked out a set hysteric spasm as she best might, without anybody to rub her hands and see that she did not hurt herself.

By and by she got quiet, rose and went to her bookcase, took down a volume of Coleridge, and read a short time, and so to bed, to sleep and wake from time to time with a sudden start out of uneasy dreams.

Perhaps it is of no great consequence what it was in the composition which set her off into this nervous paroxysm. She was in such a state that almost any slight agitation would have brought on the attack, and it was the accident of her transient excitability, very probably, which made a trifling cause the seeming occasion of so much disturbance. The theme was signed, in the same peculiar, sharp, slender hand, E. Venner, and was, of course, written by that wild-looking girl who had excited the master's curiosity and prompted his question, as before mentioned. The next morning the lady-teacher looked pale and wearied, naturally enough, but she was in her place at the usual hour, and Master Langdon in his own.

The girls had not yet entered the school room.

"You have been ill, I am afraid," said Mr. Bernard.

"I was not well yesterday," she, answered. "I had a worry and a kind of fright. It is so dreadful to have the charge of all these young souls and bodies. Every young girl ought to walk locked close, arm in arm, between two guardian angels. Sometimes I faint almost with the thought of all that I ought to do, and of my own weakness and wants.—Tell me, are there not natures born so out of parallel with the lines of natural law that nothing short of a miracle can bring them right?"

Mr. Bernard had speculated somewhat, as all thoughtful persons of his profession are forced to do, on the innate organic tendencies with which individuals, families, and

races are born. He replied, therefore, with a smile, as one to whom the question suggested a very familiar class of facts.

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"Why, of course. Each of us is only the footing-up of a double column of figures that goes back to the first pair. Every unit tells,—and some of them are plus, and some minus. If the columns don't add up right, it is commonly because we can't make out all the figures. I don't mean to say that something may not be added by Nature to make up for losses and keep the race to its average, but we are mainly nothing but the answer to a long sum in addition and subtraction. No doubt there are people born with impulses at every possible angle to the parallels of Nature, as you call them. If they happen to cut these at right angles, of course they are beyond the reach of common influences. Slight obliquities are what we have most to do with in education. Penitentiaries and insane asylums take care of most of the right-angle cases.—I am afraid I have put it too much like a professor, and I am only a student, you know. Pray, what set you to asking me this? Any strange cases among the scholars?"

The meek teacher's blue eyes met the luminous glance that came with the question. She, too, was of gentle blood,—not meaning by that that she was of any noted lineage, but that she came of a cultivated stock, never rich, but long trained to intellectual callings. A thousand decencies, amenities, reticences, graces, which no one thinks of until he misses them, are the traditional right of those who spring from such families. And when two persons of this exceptional breeding meet in the midst of the common multitude, they seek each other's company at once by the natural law of elective affinity. It is wonderful how men and women know their peers. If two stranger queens, sole survivors of two shipwrecked vessels, were cast, half-naked, on a rock together, each would at once address the other as "Our Royal Sister."

Helen Darley looked into the dark eyes of Bernard Langdon glittering with the light which flashed from them with his question. Not as those foolish, innocent country-girls of the small village did she look into them, to be fascinated and bewildered, but to sound them with a calm, steadfast purpose. "A gentleman," she said to herself, as she read his expression and his features with a woman's rapid, but exhausting glance. "A lady," he said to himself, as he met her questioning look,—so brief, so quiet, yet so assured, as of one whom necessity had taught to read faces quickly without offence, as children read the faces of parents, as wives read the faces of hard-souled husbands. All this was but a few seconds' work, and yet the main point was settled. If there had been any vulgar curiosity or coarseness of any kind lurking in his expression, she would have detected it. If she had not lifted her eyes to his face so softly and kept them there so calmly and withdrawn them so quietly, he would not have said to himself, "She is a *lady*," for that word meant a good deal to the descendant of the courtly Wentworths and the scholarly Langdons.

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"There are strange people everywhere, Mr. Langdon," she said, "and I don't think our schoolroom is an exception. I am glad you believe in the force of transmitted tendencies. It would break my heart, if I did not think that there are faults beyond the reach of everything but God's special grace. I should die, if I thought that my negligence or incapacity was alone responsible for the errors and sins of those I have charge of. Yet there are mysteries I do not know how to account for." She looked all round the schoolroom, and then said, in a whisper, "Mr. Langdon, we had a girl that stole, in the school, not long ago. Worse than that, we had a girl who tried to set us on fire. Children of good people, both of them. And we have a girl now that frightens me so"—

The door opened, and three misses came in to take their seats: three types, as it happened, of certain classes, into which it would not have been difficult to distribute the greater number of the girls in the school.—Hannah Martin. Fourteen years and three months old. Short-necked, thick-waisted, round-cheeked, smooth, vacant forehead, large, dull eyes. Looks good-natured, with little other expression. Three buns in her bag, and a large apple. Has a habit of attacking her provisions in school-hours.—Rosa Milburn. Sixteen. Brunette, with a rare-ripe flush in her cheeks. Color comes and goes easily. Eyes wandering, apt to be downcast. Moody at times. Said to be passionate, if irritated. Finished in high relief. Carries shoulders well back and walks well, as if proud of her woman's life, with a slight rocking movement, being one of the wide-flanged pattern, but seems restless,—a hard girl to look after. Has a romance in her pocket, which she means to read in school-time.—Charlotte Ann Wood. Fifteen. The poetess before mentioned. Long, light ringlets, pallid complexion, blue eyes. Delicate child, half unfolded. Gentle, but languid and despondent. Does not go much with the other girls, but reads a good deal, especially poetry, underscoring favorite passages. Writes a great many verses, very fast, not very correctly; full of the usual human sentiments, expressed in the accustomed phrases. Under-vitalized. Sensibilities not covered with their normal integuments. A negative condition, often confounded with genius, and sometimes running into it. Young people who fall out of line through weakness of the active faculties are often confounded with those who step out of it through strength of the intellectual ones.

The girls kept coming in, one after another, or in pairs or groups, until the schoolroom was nearly full. Then there was a little pause, and a light step was heard in the passage. The lady-teacher's eyes turned to the door, and the master's followed them in the same direction.

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A girl of about seventeen entered. She was tall and slender, but rounded, with a peculiar undulation of movement, such as one sometimes sees in perfectly untutored country-girls, whom Nature, the queen of graces, has taken in hand, but more commonly in connection with the very highest breeding of the most thoroughly trained society. She was a splendid scowling beauty, black-browed, with a flash of white teeth which was always like a surprise when her lips parted. She wore a checkered dress, of a curious pattern, and a camel's-hair scarf twisted a little fantastically about her. She went to her seat, which she had moved a short distance apart from the rest, and, sitting down, began playing listlessly with her gold chain, as was a common habit with her, coiling it and uncoiling it about her slender wrist, and braiding it in with her long, delicate fingers. Presently she looked up. Black, piercing eyes, not large,—a low forehead, as low as that of Clytie in the Townley bust,—black hair, twisted in heavy braids,—a face that one could not help looking at for its beauty, yet that one wanted to look away from for something in its expression, and could not for those diamond eyes. They were fixed on the lady-teacher now. The latter turned her own away, and let them wander over the other scholars. But they could not help coming back again for a single glance at the wild beauty. The diamond eyes were on her still. She turned the leaves of several of her books, as if in search of some passage, and, when she thought she had waited long enough to be safe, once more stole a quick look at the dark girl. The diamond eyes were still upon her. She put her kerchief to her forehead, which had grown slightly moist; she sighed once, almost shivered, for she felt cold; then, following some ill-defined impulse, which she could not resist, she left her place and went to the young girl's desk.

"What do you want of me, Elsie Venner?" It was a strange question to put, for the girl had not signified that she wished the teacher to come to her.

"Nothing," she said. "I thought I could make you come." The girl spoke in a low tone, a kind of half-whisper. She did not lisp, yet her articulation of one or two consonants was not absolutely perfect.

"Where did you get that flower, Elsie?" said Miss Darley. It was a rare alpine flower, which was found only in one spot among the rocks of The Mountain.

"Where it grew," said Elsie Veneer. "Take it." The teacher could not refuse her. The girl's finger tips touched hers as she took it. How cold they were for a girl of such an organization!

The teacher went back to her seat. She made an excuse for quitting the schoolroom soon afterwards. The first thing she did was to fling the flower into her fireplace and rake the ashes over it. The second was to wash the tips of her fingers, as if she had been another Lady Macbeth. A poor, over-tasked, nervous creature,—we must not think too much of her fancies.

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After school was done, she finished the talk with the master which had been so suddenly interrupted. There were things spoken of which may prove interesting by and by, but there are other matters we must first attend to.

CHAPTER VII.

The event of the season.

"Mr. and Mrs. Colonel Sprowle's compliments to Mr. Langdon and requests the pleasure of his company at a social entertainment on Wednesday evening next.

"Elm St. Monday."

On paper of a pinkish color and musky smell, with a large "S" at the top, and an embossed border. Envelop adherent, not sealed. Addressed

Langdon Esq.
Present.

Brought by H. Frederic Sprowle, youngest son of the Colonel,—the H. of course standing for the paternal Hezekiah, put in to please the father, and reduced to its initial to please the mother, she having a marked preference for Frederic. Boy directed to wait for an answer.

"Mr. Langdon has the pleasure of accepting Mr. and Mrs. Colonel Sprowle's polite invitation for Wednesday evening."

On plain paper, sealed with an initial.

In walking along the main street, Mr. Bernard had noticed a large house of some pretensions to architectural display, namely, unnecessarily projecting eaves, giving it a mushroomy aspect, wooden mouldings at various available points, and a grandiose arched portico. It looked a little swaggering by the side of one or two of the mansion-houses that were not far from it, was painted too bright for Mr. Bernard's taste, had rather too fanciful a fence before it, and had some fruit-trees planted in the front-yard, which to this fastidious young gentleman implied a defective sense of the fitness of things, not promising in people who lived in so large a house, with a mushroom roof and a triumphal arch for its entrance.

This place was known as "Colonel Sprowle's villa," (genteel friends,)—as "the elegant residence of our distinguished fellow-citizen, Colonel Sprowle," (Rockland Weekly Universe,)—as "the neew haouse," (old settlers,)—as "Sprawle's Folly," (disaffected and possibly envious neighbors,)—and in common discourse, as "the Colonel's."

Hezekiah Sprowle, Esquire, Colonel Sprowle of the Commonwealth's Militia, was a retired "merchant." An India merchant he might, perhaps, have been properly called; for he used to deal in West India goods, such as coffee, sugar, and molasses, not to speak of rum,—also in tea, salt fish, butter and cheese, oil and candles, dried fruit, agricultural "p'doose" generally, industrial products, such as boots and shoes, and various kinds of iron and wooden ware, and at one end of the establishment in calicoes and other stuffs, —to say nothing of miscellaneous objects of the most varied nature, from sticks of candy, which tempted in the smaller youth with coppers

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in their fists, up to ornamental articles of apparel, pocket-books, breast-pins, gilt-edged Bibles, stationery, in short, everything which was like to prove seductive to the rural population. The Colonel had made money in trade, and also by matrimony. He had married Sarah, daughter and heiress of the late Tekel Jordan, Esq., an old miser, who gave the town-clock, which carries his name to posterity in large gilt letters as a generous benefactor of his native place. In due time the Colonel reaped the reward of well-placed affections. When his wife's inheritance fell in, he thought he had money enough to give up trade, and therefore sold out his "store," called in some dialects of the English language shop, and his business.

Life became pretty hard work to him, of course, as soon as he had nothing particular to do. Country people with money enough not to have to work are in much more danger than city people in the same condition. They get a specific look and character, which are the same in all the villages where one studies them. They very commonly fall into a routine, the basis of which is going to some lounging-place or other, a bar-room, a reading-room, or something of the kind. They grow slovenly in dress, and wear the same hat forever. They have a feeble curiosity for news perhaps, which they take daily as a man takes his bitters, and then fall silent and think they are thinking. But the mind goes out under this regimen, like a fire without a draught; and it is not very strange, if the instinct of mental self-preservation drives them to brandy-and-water, which makes the hoarse whisper of memory musical for a few brief moments, and puts a weak leer of promise on the features of the hollow-eyed future. The Colonel was kept pretty well in hand as yet by his wife, and though it had happened to him once or twice to come home rather late at night with a curious tendency to say the same thing twice and even three times over, it had always been in very cold weather,—and everybody knows that no one is safe to drink a couple of glasses of wine in a warm room and go suddenly out into the cold air.

Miss Matilda Sprowle, sole daughter of the house, had reached the age at which young ladies are supposed in technical language to have come out, and thereafter are considered to be in company.

"There's one piece o' goods," said the Colonel to his wife, "that we ha'n't disposed of, nor got a customer for yet. That 's Matildy. I don't mean to set *her* up at vaandoo. I guess she can have her pick of a dozen."

"She 's never seen anybody yet," said Mrs. Sprowle, who had had a certain project for some time, but had kept quiet about it. "Let's have a party, and give her a chance to show herself and see some of the young folks."

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The Colonel was not very clear-headed, and he thought, naturally enough, that the party was his own suggestion, because his remark led to the first starting of the idea. He entered into the plan, therefore, with a feeling of pride as well as pleasure, and the great project was resolved upon in a family council without a dissentient voice. This was the party, then, to which Mr. Bernard was going. The town had been full of it for a week. "Everybody was asked." So everybody said that was invited. But how in respect of those who were not asked? If it had been one of the old mansion-houses that was giving a party, the boundary between the favored and the slighted families would have been known pretty well beforehand, and there would have been no great amount of grumbling. But the Colonel, for all his title, had a forest of poor relations and a brushwood swamp of shabby friends, for he had scrambled up to fortune, and now the time was come when he must define his new social position.

This is always an awkward business in town or country. An exclusive alliance between two powers is often the same thing as a declaration of war against a third. Rockland was soon split into a triumphant minority, invited to Mrs. Sprowle's party, and a great majority, uninvited, of which the fraction just on the border line between recognized "gentility" and the level of the ungloved masses was in an active state of excitement and indignation.

"Who is she, I should like to know?" said Mrs. Saymore, the tailor's wife. "There was plenty of folks in Rockland as good as ever Sally Jordan was, if she had managed to pick up a merchant. Other folks could have married merchants, if their families was n't as wealthy as them old skinflints that willed her their money," *etc.*, *etc.* Mrs. Saymore expressed the feeling of many beside herself. She had, however, a special right to be proud of the name she bore. Her husband was own cousin to the Saymores of Freestone Avenue (who write the name Seymour, and claim to be of the Duke of Somerset's family, showing a clear descent from the Protector to Edward Seymour, (1630,)—then a jump that would break a herald's neck to one Seth Saymore,(1783,)—from whom to the head of the present family the line is clear again). Mrs. Saymore, the tailor's wife, was not invited, because her husband mended clothes. If he had confined himself strictly to making them, it would have put a different face upon the matter.

The landlord of the Mountain House and his lady were invited to Mrs. Sprowle's party. Not so the landlord of Pollard's Tahvern and his lady. Whereupon the latter vowed that they would have a party at their house too, and made arrangements for a dance of twenty or thirty couples, to be followed by an entertainment. Tickets to this "Social Ball" were soon circulated, and, being accessible to all at a moderate price, admission to the "Elegant Supper" included, this second festival promised to be as merry, if not as select, as the great party.

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Wednesday came. Such doings had never been heard of in Rockland as went on that day at the “villa.” The carpet had been taken up in the long room, so that the young folks might have a dance. Miss Matilda’s piano had been moved in, and two fiddlers and a clarionet-player engaged to make music. All kinds of lamps had been put in requisition, and even colored wax-candles figured on the mantel-pieces. The costumes of the family had been tried on the day before: the Colonel’s black suit fitted exceedingly well; his lady’s velvet dress displayed her contours to advantage; Miss Matilda’s flowered silk was considered superb; the eldest son of the family, Mr. T. Jordan Sprowle, called affectionately and elegantly “Geordie,” voted himself “stunnin’”; and even the small youth who had borne Mr. Bernard’s invitation was effective in a new jacket and trousers, buttony in front, and baggy in the reverse aspect, as is wont to be the case with the home-made garments of inland youngsters.

Great preparations had been made for the refection which was to be part of the entertainment. There was much clinking of borrowed spoons, which were to be carefully counted, and much clicking of borrowed china, which was to be tenderly handled, for nobody in the country keeps those vast closets full of such things which one may see in rich city-houses. Not a great deal could be done in the way of flowers, for there were no greenhouses, and few plants were out as yet; but there were paper ornaments for the candlesticks, and colored mats for the lamps, and all the tassels of the curtains and bells were taken out of those brown linen bags, in which, for reasons hitherto undiscovered, they are habitually concealed in some households. In the remoter apartments every imaginable operation was going on at once,—roasting, boiling, baking, beating, rolling, pounding in mortars, frying, freezing; for there was to be ice-cream to-night of domestic manufacture;—and in the midst of all these labors, Mrs. Sprowle and Miss Matilda were moving about, directing and helping as they best might, all day long. When the evening came, it might be feared they would not be in just the state of mind and body to entertain company.

—One would like to give a party now and then, if one could be a billionaire.—“Antoine, I am going to have twenty people to dine to-day.” “Biens, Madame.” Not a word or thought more about it, but get home in season to dress, and come down to your own table, one of your own guests.—“Giuseppe, we are to have a party a week from to-night,—five hundred invitations—there is the list.” The day comes. “Madam, do you remember you have your party tonight?” “Why, so I have! Everything right? supper and all?” “All as it should be, Madam.”

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“Send up Victorine.” “Victorine, full toilet for this evening,—pink, diamonds, and emeralds. Coiffeur at seven. Allez.”—Billionism, or even millionism, must be a blessed kind of state, with health and clear conscience and youth and good looks,—but most blessed is this, that it takes off all the mean cares which give people the three wrinkles between the eyebrows, and leaves them free to have a good time and make others have a good time, all the way along from the charity that tips up unexpected loads of wood before widows’ houses, and leaves foundling turkeys upon poor men’s door-steps, and sets lean clergymen crying at the sight of anonymous fifty-dollar bills, to the taste which orders a perfect banquet in such sweet accord with every sense that everybody’s nature flowers out full—blown in its golden—glowing, fragrant atmosphere.

—A great party given by the smaller gentry of the interior is a kind of solemnity, so to speak. It involves so much labor and anxiety,—its spasmodic splendors are so violently contrasted with the homeliness of every-day family-life,—it is such a formidable matter to break in the raw subordinates to the manege of the cloak-room and the table,—there is such a terrible uncertainty in the results of unfamiliar culinary operations,—so many feuds are involved in drawing that fatal line which divides the invited from the uninvited fraction of the local universe,—that, if the notes requested the pleasure of the guests’ company on “this solemn occasion,” they would pretty nearly express the true state of things.

The Colonel himself had been pressed into the service. He had pounded something in the great mortar. He had agitated a quantity of sweetened and thickened milk in what was called a cream-freezer. At eleven o’clock, A. M., he retired for a space. On returning, his color was noted to be somewhat heightened, and he showed a disposition to be jocular with the female help,—which tendency, displaying itself in livelier demonstrations than were approved at head-quarters, led to his being detailed to out-of-door duties, such as raking gravel, arranging places for horses to be hitched to, and assisting in the construction of an arch of wintergreen at the porch of the mansion.

A whiff from Mr. Geordie’s cigar refreshed the toiling females from time to time; for the windows had to be opened occasionally, while all these operations were going on, and the youth amused himself with inspecting the interior, encouraging the operatives now and then in the phrases commonly employed by genteel young men,—for he had perused an odd volume of “Verdant Green,” and was acquainted with a Sophomore from one of the fresh-water colleges. “Go it on the feed!” exclaimed this spirited young man. “Nothin’ like a good spread. Grub enough and good liquor, that’s the ticket. Guv’nor’ll do the heavy polite, and let me alone for polishin’ off the young charmers.” And Mr. Geordie looked expressively at a handmaid who was rolling gingerbread, as if he were rehearsing for “Don Giovanni.”

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Evening came at last, and the ladies were forced to leave the scene of their labors to array themselves for the coming festivities. The tables had been set in a back room, the meats were ready, the pickles were displayed, the cake was baked, the blanc-mange had stiffened, and the ice-cream had frozen.

At half past seven o'clock, the Colonel, in costume, came into the front parlor, and proceeded to light the lamps. Some were good-humored enough and took the hint of a lighted match at once. Others were as vicious as they could be,—would not light on any terms, any more than if they were filled with water, or lighted and smoked one side of the chimney, or spattered a few sparks and sulked themselves out, or kept up a faint show of burning, so that their ground glasses looked as feebly phosphorescent as so many invalid fireflies. With much coaxing and screwing and pricking, a tolerable illumination was at last achieved. At eight there was a grand rustling of silks, and Mrs. and Miss Sprowle descended from their respective bowers or boudoirs. Of course they were pretty well tired by this time, and very glad to sit down,—having the prospect before them of being obliged to stand for hours. The Colonel walked about the parlor, inspecting his regiment of lamps. By and by Mr. Geordie entered.

“Mph! mph!” he sniffed, as he came in. “You smell of lamp-smoke here.”

That always galls people,—to have a new-comer accuse them of smoke or close air, which they have got used to and do not perceive. The Colonel raged at the thought of his lamps' smoking, and tongued a few anathemas inside of his shut teeth, but turned down two or three wicks that burned higher than the rest.

Master H. Frederic next made his appearance, with questionable marks upon his fingers and countenance. Had been tampering with something brown and sticky. His elder brother grew playful, and caught him by the baggy reverse of his more essential garment.

“Hush!” said Mrs. Sprowle,—“there 's the bell!”

Everybody took position at once, and began to look very smiling and altogether at ease. —False alarm. Only a parcel of spoons,—“loaned,” as the inland folks say when they mean lent, by a neighbor.

“Better late than never!” said the Colonel, “let me heft them spoons.”

Mrs. Sprowle came down into her chair again as if all her bones had been bewitched out of her.

“I'm pretty nigh beat out a'ready,” said she, “before any of the folks has come.”

They sat silent awhile, waiting for the first arrival. How nervous they got! and how their senses were sharpened!

“Hark!” said Miss Matilda,—“what ’s that rumblin’?”

It was a cart going over a bridge more than a mile off, which at any other time they would not have heard. After this there was a lull, and poor Mrs. Sprowle’s head nodded once or twice. Presently a crackling and grinding of gravel;—how much that means, when we are waiting for those whom we long or dread to see! Then a change in the tone of the gravel-crackling.

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"Yes, they have turned in at our gate. They're comin'! Mother! mother!"

Everybody in position, smiling and at ease. Bell rings. Enter the first set of visitors. The Event of the Season has begun.

"Law! it's nothin' but the Cranes' folks! I do believe Mahala 's come in that old green de-laine she wore at the Surprise Party!"

Miss Matilda had peeped through a crack of the door and made this observation and the remark founded thereon. Continuing her attitude of attention, she overheard Mrs. Crane and her two daughters conversing in the attiring-room, up one flight.

"How fine everything is in the great house!" said Mrs. Crane,— "jest look at the picters!"

"Matildy Sprowle's drawin's," said Ada Azuba, the eldest daughter.

"I should think so," said Mahala Crane, her younger sister,—a wide-awake girl, who had n't been to school for nothing, and performed a little on the lead pencil herself. "I should like to know whether that's a hay-cock or a mountain!"

Miss Matilda winced; for this must refer to her favorite monochrome, executed by laying on heavy shadows and stumping them down into mellow harmony,—the style of drawing which is taught in six lessons, and the kind of specimen which is executed in something less than one hour. Parents and other very near relatives are sometimes gratified with these productions, and cause them to be framed and hung up, as in the present instance.

"I guess we won't go down jest yet," said Mrs. Crane, "as folks don't seem to have come."

So she began a systematic inspection of the dressing-room and its conveniences.

"Mahogany four-poster;—come from the Jordans', I cal'la,te. Marseilles quilt. Ruffles all round the pillar. Chintz curtings,—jest put up,—o' purpose for the party, I'll lay ye a dollar.—What a nice washbowl!" (Taps it with a white knuckle belonging to a red finger.) "Stone chaney.—Here's a bran'-new brush and comb,—and here's a scent-bottle. Come here, girls, and fix yourselves in the glass, and scent your pocket-handkerchers."

And Mrs. Crane bedewed her own kerchief with some of the eau de Cologne of native manufacture,—said on its label to be much superior to the German article.

It was a relief to Mrs. and the Miss Cranes when the bell rang and the next guests were admitted. Deacon and Mrs. Soper,—Deacon Soper of the Rev. Mr. Fairweather's church, and his lady. Mrs. Deacon Soper was directed, of course, to the ladies' dressing-room, and her husband to the other apartment, where gentlemen were to

leave their outside coats and hats. Then came Mr. and Mrs. Briggs, and then the three Miss Spinneys, then Silas Peckham, Head of the Apollinean Institute, and Mrs. Peckham, and more after them, until at last the ladies' dressing-room got so full that one might have thought it was a trap none of them could get out of. In truth, they all felt a little awkwardly. Nobody wanted to be first to venture down-stairs. At last Mr. Silas Peckham thought it was time to make a move for the parlor, and for this purpose presented himself at the door of the ladies' dressing-room.

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“Lorindy, my dear!” he exclaimed to Mrs. Peckham,—“I think there can be no impropriety in our joining the family down-stairs.”

Mrs. Peckham laid her large, flaccid arm in the sharp angle made by the black sleeve which held the bony limb her husband offered, and the two took the stair and struck out for the parlor. The ice was broken, and the dressing-room began to empty itself into the spacious, lighted apartments below.

Mr. Silas Peckham slid into the room with Mrs. Peckham alongside, like a shad conveying a jelly-fish.

“Good-evenin’, Mrs. Sprowle! I hope I see you well this evenin’. How ’s your haalth, Colonel Sprowle?”

“Very well, much obleeged to you. Hope you and your good lady are well. Much pleased to see you. Hope you’ll enjoy yourselves. We’ve laid out to have everything in good shape,—spared no trouble nor ex”—

“pence,”—said Silas Peckham.

Mrs. Colonel Sprowle, who, you remember, was a Jordan, had nipped the Colonel’s statement in the middle of the word Mr. Peckham finished, with a look that jerked him like one of those sharp twitches women keep giving a horse when they get a chance to drive one.

Mr. and Mrs. Crane, Miss Ada Azuba, and Miss Mahala Crane made their entrance. There had been a discussion about the necessity and propriety of inviting this family, the head of which kept a small shop for hats and boots and shoes. The Colonel’s casting vote had carried it in the affirmative.—How terribly the poor old green de-laine did cut up in the blaze of so many lamps and candles.

—Deluded little wretch, male or female, in town or country, going to your first great party, how little you know the nature of the ceremony in which you are to bear the part of victim! What! are not these garlands and gauzy mists and many-colored streamers which adorn you, is not this music which welcomes you, this radiance that glows about you, meant solely for your enjoyment, young miss of seventeen or eighteen summers, now for the first time swimming unto the frothy, chatoyant, sparkling, undulating sea of laces and silks and satins, and white-armed, flower-crowned maidens struggling in their waves beneath the lustres that make the false summer of the drawing-room?

Stop at the threshold! This is a hall of judgment you are entering; the court is in session; and if you move five steps forward, you will be at its bar.

There was a tribunal once in France, as you may remember, called the *Chambre Ardente*, the Burning Chamber. It was hung all round with lamps, and hence its name.

The burning chamber for the trial of young maidens is the blazing ball-room. What have they full-dressed you, or rather half-dressed you for, do you think? To make you look pretty, of course! Why have they hung a chandelier above you, flickering all over with flames, so that it searches you like the noonday sun, and your deepest dimple cannot hold a shadow?

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To give brilliancy to the gay scene, no doubt!—No, my clear! Society is inspecting you, and it finds undisguised surfaces and strong lights a convenience in the process. The dance answers the purpose of the revolving pedestal upon which the “White Captive” turns, to show us the soft, kneaded marble, which looks as if it had never been hard, in all its manifold aspects of living loveliness. No mercy for you, my love! Justice, strict justice, you shall certainly have,—neither more nor less. For, look you, there are dozens, scores, hundreds, with whom you must be weighed in the balance; and you have got to learn that the “struggle for life” Mr. Charles Darwin talks about reaches to vertebrates clad in crinoline, as well as to mollusks in shells, or articulates in jointed scales, or anything that fights for breathing-room and food and love in any coat of fur or feather! Happy they who can flash defiance from bright eyes and snowy shoulders back into the pendants of the insolent lustres!

—Miss Mahala Crane did not have these reflections; and no young girl ever did, or ever will, thank Heaven! Her keen eyes sparkled under her plainly parted hair and the green de-laine moulded itself in those unmistakable lines of natural symmetry in which Nature indulges a small shopkeeper’s daughter occasionally as well as a wholesale dealer’s young ladies. She would have liked a new dress as much as any other girl, but she meant to go and have a good time at any rate.

The guests were now arriving in the drawing-room pretty fast, and the Colonel’s hand began to burn a good deal with the sharp squeezes which many of the visitors gave it. Conversation, which had begun like a summer-shower, in scattering drops, was fast becoming continuous, and occasionally rising into gusty swells, with now and then a broad-chested laugh from some Captain or Major or other military personage,—for it may be noted that all large and loud men in the unpaved districts bear military titles.

Deacon Soper came up presently, and entered into conversation with Colonel Sprowle.

“I hope to see our pastor present this evenin’,” said the Deacon.

“I don’t feel quite sure,” the Colonel answered. “His dyspepsy has been bad on him lately. He wrote to say, that, Providence permittin’, it would be agreeable to him to take a part in the exercises of the evenin’; but I mistrusted he did n’t mean to come. To tell the truth, Deacon Soper, I rather guess he don’t like the idee of dancin’, and some of the other little arrangements.”

“Well,” said the Deacon, “I know there’s some condemns dancin’. I’ve heerd a good deal of talk about it among the folks round. Some have it that it never brings a blessin’ on a house to have dancin’ in it. Judge Tileston died, you remember, within a month after he had his great ball, twelve year ago, and some thought it was in the natur’ of a judgment. I don’t believe in any of them notions. If

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a man happened to be struck dead the night after he'd been givin' a ball," (the Colonel loosened his black stock a little, and winked and swallowed two or three times,) "I should n't call it a judgment,—I should call it a coincidence. But I 'm a little afraid our pastor won't come. Somethin' or other's the matter with Mr. Fairweather. I should sooner expect to see the old Doctor come over out of the Orthodox parsonage-house."

"I've asked him," said the Colonel.

"Well?" said Deacon Soper.

"He said he should like to come, but he did n't know what his people would say. For his part, he loved to see young folks havin' their sports together, and very often felt as if he should like to be one of 'em himself. 'But,' says I, 'Doctor, I don't say there won't be a little dancin'.' 'Don't!' says he, 'for I want Letty to go,' (she's his granddaughter that's been stayin' with him,) 'and Letty 's mighty fond of dancin'. You know,' says the Doctor, 'it is n't my business to settle whether other people's children should dance or not.' And the Doctor looked as if he should like to rigadon and sashy across as well as the young one he was talkin' about. He 's got blood in him, the old Doctor has. I wish our little man and him would swop pulpits."

Deacon Soper started and looked up into the Colonel's face, as if to see whether he was in earnest.

Mr. Silas Peckham and his lady joined the group.

"Is this to be a Temperance Celebration, Mrs. Sprowle?" asked Mr. Silas Peckham.

Mrs. Sprowle replied, "that there would be lemonade and srub for those that preferred such drinks, but that the Colonel had given folks to understand that he did n't mean to set in judgment on the marriage in Canaan, and that those that didn't like srub and such things would find somethin' that would suit them better."

Deacon Soper's countenance assumed a certain air of restrained cheerfulness. The conversation rose into one of its gusty paroxysms just then. Master H. Frederic got behind a door and began performing the experiment of stopping and unstopping his ears in rapid alternation, greatly rejoicing in the singular effect of mixed conversation chopped very small, like the contents of a mince-pie, or meat-pie, as it is more forcibly called in the deep-rutted villages lying along the unsalted streams. All at once it grew silent just round the door, where it had been loudest,—and the silence spread itself like a stain, till it hushed everything but a few corner-duets. A dark, sad-looking, middle-aged gentleman entered the parlor, with a young lady on his arm,—his daughter, as it seemed, for she was not wholly unlike him in feature, and of the same dark complexion.

“Dudley Venner,” exclaimed a dozen people, in startled, but half-suppressed tones.

“What can have brought Dudley out to-night?” said Jefferson Buck, a young fellow, who had been interrupted in one of the corner-duets which he was executing in concert with Miss Susy Pettingill.

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"How do I know, Jeff?" was Miss Susy's answer. Then, after a pause,—“Elsie made him come, I guess. Go ask Dr. Kittredge; he knows all about 'em both, they say.”

Dr. Kittredge, the leading physician of Rockland, was a shrewd old man, who looked pretty keenly into his patients through his spectacles, and pretty widely at men, women, and things in general over them. Sixty-three years old,—just the year of the grand climacteric. A bald crown, as every doctor should have. A consulting practitioner's mouth; that is, movable round the corners while the case is under examination, but both corners well drawn down and kept so when the final opinion is made up. In fact, the Doctor was often sent for to act as “caounsel,” all over the county, and beyond it. He kept three or four horses, sometimes riding in the saddle, commonly driving in a sulky, pretty fast, and looking straight before him, so that people got out of the way of bowing to him as he passed on the road. There was some talk about his not being so long-sighted as other folks, but his old patients laughed and looked knowing when this was spoken of.

The Doctor knew a good many things besides how to drop tinctures and shake out powders. Thus, he knew a horse, and, what is harder to understand, a horse-dealer, and was a match for him. He knew what a nervous woman is, and how to manage her. He could tell at a glance when she is in that condition of unstable equilibrium in which a rough word is like a blow to her, and the touch of unmagnetized fingers reverses all her nervous currents. It is not everybody that enters into the soul of Mozart's or Beethoven's harmonies; and there are vital symphonies in B flat, and other low, sad keys, which a doctor may know as little of as a hurdy-gurdy player of the essence of those divine musical mysteries. The Doctor knew the difference between what men say and what they mean as well as most people. When he was listening to common talk, he was in the habit of looking over his spectacles; if he lifted his head so as to look through them at the person talking, he was busier with that person's thoughts than with his words.

Jefferson Buck was not bold enough to confront the Doctor with Miss Susy's question, for he did not look as if he were in the mood to answer queries put by curious young people. His eyes were fixed steadily on the dark girl, every movement of whom he seemed to follow.

She was, indeed, an apparition of wild beauty, so unlike the girls about her that it seemed nothing more than natural, that, when she moved, the groups should part to let her pass through them, and that she should carry the centre of all looks and thoughts with her. She was dressed to please her own fancy, evidently, with small regard to the modes declared correct by the Rockland milliners and mantua-makers. Her heavy black hair lay in a braided coil, with a long gold pin shat through it like a javelin.

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Round her neck was a golden torque, a round, cord-like chain, such as the Gaols used to wear; the “Dying Gladiator” has it. Her dress was a grayish watered silk; her collar was pinned with a flashing diamond brooch, the stones looking as fresh as morning dew-drops, but the silver setting of the past generation; her arms were bare, round, but slender rather than large, in keeping with her lithe round figure. On her wrists she wore bracelets: one was a circlet of enamelled scales; the other looked as if it might have been Cleopatra’s asp, with its body turned to gold and its eyes to emeralds.

Her father—for Dudley Venner was her father—looked like a man of culture and breeding, but melancholy and with a distracted air, as one whose life had met some fatal cross or blight. He saluted hardly anybody except his entertainers and the Doctor. One would have said, to look at him, that he was not at the party by choice; and it was natural enough to think, with Susy Pettingill, that it must have been a freak of the dark girl’s which brought him there, for he had the air of a shy and sad-hearted recluse.

It was hard to say what could have brought Elsie Venner to the party. Hardly anybody seemed to know her, and she seemed not at all disposed to make acquaintances. Here and there was one of the older girls from the Institute, but she appeared to have nothing in common with them. Even in the schoolroom, it may be remembered, she sat apart by her own choice, and now in the midst of the crowd she made a circle of isolation round herself. Drawing her arm out of her father’s, she stood against the wall, and looked, with a strange, cold glitter in her eyes, at the crowd which moved and babbled before her.

The old Doctor came up to her by and by.

“Well, Elsie, I am quite surprised to find you here. Do tell me how you happened to do such a good-natured thing as to let us see you at such a great party.”

“It’s been dull at the mansion-house,” she said, “and I wanted to get out of it. It’s too lonely there,—there’s nobody to hate since Dick’s gone.”

The Doctor laughed good-naturedly, as if this were an amusing bit of pleasantry,—but he lifted his head and dropped his eyes a little, so as to see her through his spectacles. She narrowed her lids slightly, as one often sees a sleepy cat narrow hers,—somewhat as you may remember our famous Margaret used to, if you remember her at all,—so that her eyes looked very small, but bright as the diamonds on her breast. The old Doctor felt very oddly as she looked at him; he did not like the feeling, so he dropped his head and lifted his eyes and looked at her over his spectacles again.

“And how have you all been at the mansion house?” said the Doctor.

“Oh, well enough. But Dick’s gone, and there’s nobody left but Dudley and I and the people. I’m tired of it. What kills anybody quickest, Doctor?” Then, in a whisper, “I ran away again the other day, you know.”

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"Where did you go?" The Doctor spoke in a low, serious tone.

"Oh, to the old place. Here, I brought this for you."

The Doctor started as she handed him a flower of the *Atragene Americana*, for he knew that there was only one spot where it grew, and that not one where any rash foot, least of all a thin-shod woman's foot, should venture.

"How long were you gone?" said the Doctor.

"Only one night. You should have heard the horns blowing and the guns firing. Dudley was frightened out of his wits. Old Sophy told him she'd had a dream, and that I should be found in Dead-Man's Hollow, with a great rock lying on me. They hunted all over it, but they did n't find me,—I was farther up."

Doctor Kittredge looked cloudy and worried while she was speaking, but forced a pleasant professional smile, as he said cheerily, and as if wishing to change the subject,

"Have a good dance this evening, Elsie. The fiddlers are tuning up. Where 's the young master? has he come yet? or is he going to be late, with the other great folks?"

The girl turned away without answering, and looked toward the door.

The "great folks," meaning the mansion-house gentry, were just beginning to come; Dudley Venner and his daughter had been the first of them. Judge Thornton, white-headed, fresh-faced, as good at sixty as he was at forty, with a youngish second wife, and one noble daughter, Arabella, who, they said, knew as much law as her father, a stately, Portia like girl, fit for a premier's wife, not like to find her match even in the great cities she sometimes visited; the Trecothicks, the family of a merchant, (in the larger sense,) who, having made himself rich enough by the time he had reached middle life, threw down his ledger as Sylla did his dagger, and retired to make a little paradise around him in one of the stateliest residences of the town, a family inheritance; the Vaughans, an old Rockland race, descended from its first settlers, Toryish in tendency in Revolutionary times, and barely escaping confiscation or worse; the Dunhams, a new family, dating its gentility only as far back as the Honorable Washington Dunham, M. C., but turning out a clever boy or two that went to college; and some showy girls with white necks and fat arms who had picked up professional husbands: these were the principal mansion-house people. All of them had made it a point to come; and as each of them entered, it seemed to Colonel and Mrs. Sprowle that the lamps burned up with a more cheerful light, and that the fiddles which sounded from the uncarpeted room were all half a tone higher and half a beat quicker.

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Mr. Bernard came in later than any of them; he had been busy with his new duties. He looked well and that is saying a good deal; for nothing but a gentleman is endurable in full dress. Hair that masses well, a head set on with an air, a neckerchief tied cleverly by an easy, practised hand, close-fitting gloves, feet well shaped and well covered,—these advantages can make us forgive the odious sable broadcloth suit, which appears to have been adopted by society on the same principle that condemned all the Venetian gondolas to perpetual and uniform blackness. Mr. Bernard, introduced by Mr. Geordie, made his bow to the Colonel and his lady and to Miss Matilda, from whom he got a particularly gracious curtsy, and then began looking about him for acquaintances. He found two or three faces he knew,—many more strangers. There was Silas Peckham,—there was no mistaking him; there was the inelastic amplitude of Mrs. Peckham; few of the Apollinean girls, of course, they not being recognized members of society,—but there is one with the flame in her cheeks and the fire in her eyes, the girl of vigorous tints and emphatic outlines, whom we saw entering the schoolroom the other day. Old Judge Thornton has his eyes on her, and the Colonel steals a look every now and then at the red brooch which lifts itself so superbly into the light, as if he thought it a wonderfully becoming ornament. Mr. Bernard himself was not displeased with the general effect of the rich-blooded schoolgirl, as she stood under the bright lamps, fanning herself in the warm, languid air, fixed in a kind of passionate surprise at the new life which seemed to be flowering out in her consciousness. Perhaps he looked at her somewhat steadily, as some others had done; at any rate, she seemed to feel that she was looked at, as people often do, and, turning her eyes suddenly on him, caught his own on her face, gave him a half-bashful smile, and threw in a blush involuntarily which made it more charming.

“What can I do better,” he said to himself, “than have a dance with Rosa Milburn?” So he carried his handsome pupil into the next room and took his place with her in a cotillon. Whether the breath of the Goddess of Love could intoxicate like the cup of Circe,—whether a woman is ever phosphorescent with the luminous vapor of life that she exhales,—these and other questions which relate to occult influences exercised by certain women we will not now discuss. It is enough that Mr. Bernard was sensible of a strange fascination, not wholly new to him, nor unprecedented in the history of human experience, but always a revelation when it comes over us for the first or the hundredth time, so pale is the most recent memory by the side of the passing moment with the flush of any new-born passion on its cheek. Remember that Nature makes every man love all women, and trusts the trivial matter of special choice to the commonest accident.

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If Mr. Bernard had had nothing to distract his attention, he might have thought too much about his handsome partner, and then gone home and dreamed about her, which is always dangerous, and waked up thinking of her still, and then begun to be deeply interested in her studies, and so on, through the whole syllogism which ends in Nature's supreme quod erat demonstrandum. What was there to distract him or disturb him? He did not know,—but there was something. This sumptuous creature, this Eve just within the gate of an untried Paradise, untutored in the ways of the world, but on tiptoe to reach the fruit of the tree of knowledge,—alive to the moist vitality of that warm atmosphere palpitating with voices and music, as the flower of some dioecious plant which has grown in a lone corner and suddenly unfolding its corolla on some hot-breathing June evening, feels that the air is perfumed with strange odors and loaded with golden dust wafted from those other blossoms with which its double life is shared,—this almost over-womanized woman might well have bewitched him, but that he had a vague sense of a counter-charm. It was, perhaps, only the same consciousness that some one was looking at him which he himself had just given occasion to in his partner. Presently, in one of the turns of the dance, he felt his eyes drawn to a figure he had not distinctly recognized, though he had dimly felt its presence, and saw that Elsie Venner was looking at him as if she saw nothing else but him. He was not a nervous person, like the poor lady-teacher, yet the glitter of the diamond eyes affected him strangely. It seemed to disenchant the air, so full a moment before of strange attractions. He became silent, and dreamy, as it were. The round-limbed beauty at his side crushed her gauzy draperies against him, as they trod the figure of the dance together, but it was no more to him than if an old nurse had laid her hand on his sleeve. The young girl chafed at his seeming neglect, and her imperious blood mounted into her cheeks; but he appeared unconscious of it.

"There is one of our young ladies I must speak to," he said,—and was just leaving his partner's side.

"Four hands all round?" shouted the first violin,—and Mr. Bernard found himself seized and whirled in a circle out of which he could not escape, and then forced to "cross over," and then to "dozy do," as the maestro had it,—and when, on getting back to his place, he looked for Elsie Venner, she was gone.

The dancing went on briskly. Some of the old folks looked on, others conversed in groups and pairs, and so the evening wore along, until a little after ten o'clock. About this time there was noticed an increased bustle in the passages, with a considerable opening and shutting of doors. Presently it began to be whispered about that they were going to have supper. Many, who had never been to any large party before, held their breath for a moment at this announcement. It was rather with a tremulous interest than with open hilarity that the rumor was generally received.

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One point the Colonel had entirely forgotten to settle. It was a point involving not merely propriety, but perhaps principle also, or at least the good report of the house,—and he had never thought to arrange it. He took Judge Thornton aside and whispered the important question to him,—in his distress of mind, mistaking pockets and taking out his bandanna instead of his white handkerchief to wipe his forehead.

“Judge,” he said, “do you think, that, before we commence refreshing ourselves at the tables, it would be the proper thing to—crave a—to request Deacon Soper or some other elderly person—to ask a blessing?”

The Judge looked as grave as if he were about giving the opinion of the Court in the great India-rubber case.

“On the whole,” he answered, after a pause, “I should think it might, perhaps, be dispensed with on this occasion. Young folks are noisy, and it is awkward to have talking and laughing going on while blessing is being asked. Unless a clergyman is present and makes a point of it, I think it will hardly be expected.”

The Colonel was infinitely relieved. “Judge, will you take Mrs. Sprowle in to supper?” And the Colonel returned the compliment by offering his arm to Mrs. Judge Thornton.

The door of the supper-room was now open, and the company, following the lead of the host and hostess, began to stream into it, until it was pretty well filled.

There was an awful kind of pause. Many were beginning to drop their heads and shut their eyes, in anticipation of the usual petition before a meal; some expected the music to strike up,—others, that an oration would now be delivered by the Colonel.

“Make yourselves at home, ladies and gentlemen,” said the Colonel; “good things were made to eat, and you’re welcome to all you see before you.”

So saying he attacked a huge turkey which stood at the head of the table; and his example being followed first by the bold, then by the doubtful, and lastly by the timid, the clatter soon made the circuit of the tables. Some were shocked, however, as the Colonel had feared they would be, at the want of the customary invocation. Widow Leech, a kind of relation, who had to be invited, and who came with her old, back-country-looking string of gold beads round her neck, seemed to feel very serious about it.

“If she’d ha’ known that folks would begrutch cravin’ a blessin’ over sech a heap o’ provisions, she’d rather ha’ staid t’ home. It was a bad sign, when folks was n’t grateful for the baounties of Providence.”

The elder Miss Spinney, to whom she made this remark, assented to it, at the same time ogling a piece of frosted cake, which she presently appropriated with great



refinement of manner,—taking it between her thumb and forefinger, keeping the others well spread and the little finger in extreme divergence, with a graceful undulation of the neck, and a queer little sound in her throat, as of an M that wanted to get out and perished in the attempt.

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The tables now presented an animated spectacle. Young fellows of the more dashing sort, with high stand-up collars and voluminous bows to their neckerchiefs, distinguished themselves by cutting up fowls and offering portions thereof to the buxom girls these knowing ones had commonly selected.

“A bit of the wing, Roxy, or of the—under limb?”

The first laugh broke out at this, but it was premature, a sporadic laugh, as Dr. Kittredge would have said, which did not become epidemic. People were very solemn as yet, many of them being new to such splendid scenes, and crushed, as it were, in the presence of so much crockery and so many silver spoons, and such a variety of unusual viands and beverages. When the laugh rose around Roxy and her saucy beau, several looked in that direction with an anxious expression, as if something had happened, a lady fainted, for instance, or a couple of lively fellows come to high words.

“Young folks will be young folks,” said Deacon Soper. “No harm done. Least said soonest mended.”

“Have some of these shell-oysters?” said the Colonel to Mrs. Trecothick.

A delicate emphasis on the word shell implied that the Colonel knew what was what. To the New England inland native, beyond the reach of the east winds, the oyster unconditioned, the oyster absolute, without a qualifying adjective, is the pickled oyster. Mrs. Trecothick, who knew very well that an oyster long out of his shell (as is apt to be the case with the rural bivalve) gets homesick and loses his sprightliness, replied, with the pleasantest smile in the world, that the chicken she had been helped to was too delicate to be given up even for the greater rarity. But the word “shell-oysters” had been overheard; and there was a perceptible crowding movement towards their newly discovered habitat, a large soup-tureen.

Silas Peckham had meantime fallen upon another locality of these recent mollusks. He said nothing, but helped himself freely, and made a sign to Mrs. Peckham.

“Lorindy,” he whispered, “shell-oysters”

And ladled them out to her largely, without betraying any emotion, just as if they had been the natural inland or pickled article.

After the more solid portion of the banquet had been duly honored, the cakes and sweet preparations of various kinds began to get their share of attention. There were great cakes and little cakes, cakes with raisins in them, cakes with currants, and cakes without either; there were brown cakes and yellow cakes, frosted cakes, glazed cakes, hearts and rounds, and jumbles, which playful youth slip over the forefinger before spoiling their annular outline. There were mounds of blo'monje, of the arrowroot variety,

—that being undistinguishable from such as is made with Russia isinglass. There were jellies, which had been shaking, all the time the young folks were dancing in the next room, as if they were balancing to partners.

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There were built-up fabrics, called Charlottes, caky externally, pulpy within; there were also marangs, and likewise custards,—some of the indolent-fluid sort, others firm, in which every stroke of the teaspoon left a smooth, conchoidal surface like the fracture of chalcedony, with here and there a little eye like what one sees in cheeses. Nor was that most wonderful object of domestic art called trifle wanting, with its charming confusion of cream and cake and almonds and jam and jelly and wine and cinnamon and froth; nor yet the marvellous floating-island,—name suggestive of all that is romantic in the imaginations of youthful palates.

“It must have cost you a sight of work, to say nothin’ of money, to get all this beautiful confectionery made for the party,” said Mrs. Crane to Mrs. Sprowle.

“Well, it cost some consid’able labor, no doubt,” said Mrs. Sprowle. “Matilda and our girls and I made ’most all the cake with our own hands, and we all feel some tired; but if folks get what suits ’em, we don’t begrudge the time nor the work. But I do feel thirsty,” said the poor lady, “and I think a glass of srub would do my throat good; it’s dreadful dry. Mr. Peckham, would you be so polite as to pass me a glass of srub?”

Silas Peckham bowed with great alacrity, and took from the table a small glass cup, containing a fluid reddish in hue and subacid in taste. This was srub, a beverage in local repute, of questionable nature, but suspected of owing its tint and sharpness to some kind of syrup derived from the maroon-colored fruit of the sumac. There were similar small cups on the table filled with lemonade, and here and there a decanter of Madeira wine, of the Marsala kind, which some prefer to, and many more cannot distinguish from, that which comes from the Atlantic island.

“Take a glass of wine, Judge,” said, the Colonel; “here is an article that I rather think ’ll suit you.”

The Judge knew something of wines, and could tell all the famous old Madeiras from each other, “Eclipse,” “Juno,” the almost fabulously scarce and precious “White-top,” and the rest. He struck the nativity of the Mediterranean Madeira before it had fairly moistened his lip.

“A sound wine, Colonel, and I should think of a genuine vintage. Your very good health.”

“Deacon Soper,” said the Colonel, “here is some Madary Judge Thornton recommends. Let me fill you a glass of it.”

The Deacon’s eyes glistened. He was one of those consistent Christians who stick firmly by the first miracle and Paul’s advice to Timothy.

“A little good wine won’t hurt anybody,” said the Deacon. “Plenty, —plenty,—plenty. There!” He had not withdrawn his glass, while the Colonel was pouring, for fear it should spill, and now it was running over.

—It is very odd how all a man’s philosophy and theology are at the mercy of a few drops of a fluid which the chemists say consists of nothing but C4, O2, H6. The Deacon’s theology fell off several points towards latitudinarianism in the course of the next ten minutes. He had a deep inward sense that everything was as it should be, human nature included. The little accidents of humanity, known collectively to moralists as sin, looked very venial to his growing sense of universal brotherhood and benevolence.

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"It will all come right," the Deacon said to himself,—“I feel a joyful conviction that everything is for the best. I am favored with a blessed peace of mind, and a very precious season of good feelin' toward my fellow-creturs.”

A lusty young fellow happened to make a quick step backward just at that instant, and put his heel, with his weight on top of it, upon the Deacon's toes.

“Aigh! What the d' d' didos are y' abaout with them great huffs o' yourn?” said the Deacon, with an expression upon his features not exactly that of peace and good-will to men. The lusty young fellow apologized; but the Deacon's face did not come right, and his theology backed round several points in the direction of total depravity.

Some of the dashing young men in stand-up collars and extensive neckties, encouraged by Mr. Geordie, made quite free with the “Ma,dary,” and even induced some of the more stylish girls—not of the mansion-house set, but of the tip-top two-story families—to taste a little. Most of these young ladies made faces at it, and declared it was “perfectly horrid,” with that aspect of veracity peculiar to their age and sex.

About this time a movement was made on the part of some of the mansion-house people to leave the supper-table. Miss Jane Trecothick had quietly hinted to her mother that she had had enough of it. Miss Arabella Thornton had whispered to her father that he had better adjourn this court to the next room. There were signs of migration,—a loosening of people in their places,—a looking about for arms to hitch on to.

“Stop!” said the Colonel. “There's something coming yet.—Ice-cream!”

The great folks saw that the play was not over yet, and that it was only polite to stay and see it out. The word “ice-cream” was no sooner whispered than it passed from one to another all down the tables. The effect was what might have been anticipated. Many of the guests had never seen this celebrated product of human skill, and to all the two-story population of Rockland it was the last expression of the art of pleasing and astonishing the human palate. Its appearance had been deferred for several reasons: first, because everybody would have attacked it, if it had come in with the other luxuries; secondly, because undue apprehensions were entertained (owing to want of experience) of its tendency to deliquesce and resolve itself with alarming rapidity into puddles of creamy fluid; and, thirdly, because the surprise would make a grand climax to finish off the banquet.

There is something so audacious in the conception of ice-cream, that it is not strange that a population undebauched by the luxury of great cities looks upon it with a kind of awe and speaks of it with a certain emotion. This defiance of the seasons, forcing Nature to do her work of congelation in the face of her sultriest noon, might well inspire a timid mind with fear lest human art were revolting against the

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Higher Powers, and raise the same scruples which resisted the use of ether and chloroform in certain contingencies. Whatever may be the cause, it is well known that the announcement at any private rural entertainment that there is to be ice-cream produces an immediate and profound impression. It may be remarked, as aiding this impression, that exaggerated ideas are entertained as to the dangerous effects this congealed food may produce on persons not in the most robust health.

There was silence as the pyramids of ice were placed on the table, everybody looking on in admiration. The Colonel took a knife and assailed the one at the head of the table. When he tried to cut off a slice, it didn't seem to understand it, however, and only tipped, as if it wanted to upset. The Colonel attacked it on the other side, and it tipped just as badly the other way. It was awkward for the Colonel. "Permit me," said the Judge,—and he took the knife and struck a sharp slanting stroke which sliced off a piece just of the right size, and offered it to Mrs. Sprowle. This act of dexterity was much admired by the company.

The tables were all alive again.

"Lorindy, here's a plate of ice-cream," said Silas Peckham.

"Come, Mahaly," said a fresh-looking young-fellow with a saucerful in each hand, "here's your ice-cream;—let's go in the corner and have a celebration, us two." And the old green de-lame, with the young curves under it to make it sit well, moved off as pleased apparently as if it had been silk velvet with thousand-dollar laces over it.

"Oh, now, Miss Green! do you think it's safe to put that cold stuff into your stomick?" said the Widow Leech to a young married lady, who, finding the air rather warm, thought a little ice would cool her down very nicely. "It's jest like eatin' snowballs. You don't look very rugged; and I should be dreadful afeard, if I was you."

"Carrie," said old Dr. Kittredge, who had overheard this,—“how well you're looking this evening! But you must be tired and heated;—sit down here, and let me give you a good slice of ice-cream. How you young folks do grow up, to be sure! I don't feel quite certain whether it's you or your older sister, but I know it 's somebody I call Carrie, and that I 've known ever since."

A sound something between a howl and an oath startled the company and broke off the Doctor's sentence. Everybody's eyes turned in the direction from which it came. A group instantly gathered round the person who had uttered it, who was no other than Deacon Soper.

"He's chokin'! he's chokin'!" was the first exclamation,—“slap him on the back!"

Several heavy fists beat such a tattoo on his spine that the Deacon felt as if at least one of his vertebrae would come up.

“He’s black in the face,” said Widow Leech, “he ‘s swallowed somethin’ the wrong way. Where’s the Doctor?—let the Doctor get to him, can’t ye?”

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"If you will move, my good lady, perhaps I can," said Doctor Kittredge, in a calm tone of voice. "He's not choking, my friends," the Doctor added immediately, when he got sight of him.

"It 's apoplexy,—I told you so,—don't you see how red he is in the face?" said old Mrs. Peake, a famous woman for "nussin" sick folks, —determined to be a little ahead of the Doctor.

"It's not apoplexy," said Dr. Kittredge.

"What is it, Doctor? what is it? Will he die? Is he dead?—Here's his poor wife, the Widow Soper that is to be, if she a'n't a'ready"

"Do be quiet, my good woman," said Dr. Kittredge.—"Nothing serious, I think, Mrs. Soper. Deacon!"

The sudden attack of Deacon Soper had begun with the extraordinary sound mentioned above. His features had immediately assumed an expression of intense pain, his eyes staring wildly, and, clapping his hands to his face, he had rocked his head backward and forward in speechless agony.

At the Doctor's sharp appeal the Deacon lifted his head.

"It's all right," said the Doctor, as soon as he saw his face. "The Deacon had a smart attack of neuralgic pain. That 's all. Very severe, but not at all dangerous."

The Doctor kept his countenance, but his diaphragm was shaking the change in iris waistcoat-pockets with subterranean laughter. He had looked through his spectacles and seen at once what had happened. The Deacon, not being in the habit of taking his nourishment in the congealed state, had treated the ice-cream as a pudding of a rare species, and, to make sure of doing himself justice in its distribution, had taken a large mouthful of it without the least precaution. The consequence was a sensation as if a dentist were killing the nerves of twenty-five teeth at once with hot irons, or cold ones, which would hurt rather worse.

The Deacon swallowed something with a spasmodic effort, and recovered pretty soon and received the congratulations of his friends. There were different versions of the expressions he had used at the onset of his complaint,—some of the reported exclamations involving a breach of propriety, to say the least,—but it was agreed that a man in an attack of neuralgy wasn't to be judged of by the rules that applied to other folks.

The company soon after this retired from the supper-room. The mansion-house gentry took their leave, and the two-story people soon followed. Mr. Bernard had stayed an hour or two, and left soon after he found that Elsie Venner and her father had



disappeared. As he passed by the dormitory of the Institute, he saw a light glimmering from one of its upper rooms, where the lady-teacher was still waking. His heart ached, when he remembered, that, through all these hours of gayety, or what was meant for it, the patient girl had been at work in her little chamber; and he looked up at the silent stars, as if to see that they were watching over her. The planet Mars was burning like a red coal; the northern constellation was slanting downward about its central point of flame; and while he looked, a falling star slid from the zenith and was lost.

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He reached his chamber and was soon dreaming over the Event of the Season.

CHAPTER VIII.

The morning after.

Colonel Sprowle's family arose late the next morning. The fatigues and excitements of the evening and the preparation for it were followed by a natural collapse, of which somnolence was a leading symptom. The sun shone into the window at a pretty well opened angle when the Colonel first found himself sufficiently awake to address his yet slumbering spouse.

"Sally!" said the Colonel, in a voice that was a little husky,—for he had finished off the evening with an extra glass or two of "Madary," and had a somewhat rusty and headachy sense of renewed existence, on greeting the rather advanced dawn,—*"Sally!"*

"Take care o' them custard-cups! There they go!"

Poor Mrs. Sprowle was fighting the party over in her dream; and as the visionary custard-cups crashed down through one lobe of her brain into another, she gave a start as if an inch of lightning from a quart Leyden jar had jumped into one of her knuckles with its sudden and lively poonk!

"Sally!" said the Colonel,—*"wake up, wake up. What 'r' y' dreamin' abaout?"*

Mrs. Sprowle raised herself, by a sort of spasm, *sur son seant*, as they say in France, —up on end, as we have it in New England. She looked first to the left, then to the right, then straight before her, apparently without seeing anything, and at last slowly settled down, with her two eyes, blank of any particular meaning, directed upon the Colonel.

"What time is 't?" she said.

"Ten o'clock. What y' been dreamin' abaout? Y' giv a jump like a hopper-grass. Wake up, wake up! Th' party 's over, and y' been asleep all the mornin'. The party's over, I tell ye! Wake up!"

"Over!" said Mrs. Sprowle, who began to define her position at last,—*"over! I should think 't was time 't was over! It's lasted a hundud year. I've been workin' for that party longer 'n Methuselah's lifetime, sence I been asleep. The pies would n' bake, and the blo'monje would n' set, and the ice-cream would n' freeze, and all the folks kep' comin' 'n' comin' 'n' comin',—everybody I ever knew in all my life,—some of 'em 's been dead this twenty year 'n' more,—'n' nothin' for 'em to eat nor drink. The fire would n' burn to cook anything, all we could do. We blowed with the belluses, 'n' we stuffed in paper 'n'*



pitch-pine kindlin's, but nothin' could make that fire burn; 'n' all the time the folks kep' comin', as if they'd never stop,—'n' nothin' for 'em but empty dishes, 'n' all the borrowed chaney slippin' round on the waiters 'n' chippin' 'n' crackin',—I would n' go through what I been through t'-night for all th' money in th' Bank,—I do believe it's harder t' have a party than t'—

Mrs. Sprowle stated the case strongly.

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The Colonel said he did n't know how that might be. She was a better judge than he was. It was bother enough, anyhow, and he was glad that it was over. After this, the worthy pair commenced preparations for rejoining the waking world, and in due time proceeded downstairs.

Everybody was late that morning, and nothing had got put to rights. The house looked as if a small army had been quartered in it over night. The tables were of course in huge disorder, after the protracted assault they had undergone. There had been a great battle evidently, and it had gone against the provisions. Some points had been stormed, and all their defences annihilated, but here and there were centres of resistance which had held out against all attacks,—large rounds of beef, and solid loaves of cake, against which the inexperienced had wasted their energies in the enthusiasm of youth or uninformed maturity, while the longer-headed guests were making discoveries of “shell-oysters” and “partridges” and similar delicacies.

The breakfast was naturally of a somewhat fragmentary character. A chicken that had lost his legs in the service of the preceding campaign was once more put on duty. A great ham stuck with cloves, as Saint Sebastian was with arrows, was again offered for martyrdom. It would have been a pleasant sight for a medical man of a speculative turn to have seen the prospect before the Colonel's family of the next week's breakfasts, dinners, and suppers. The trail that one of these great rural parties leaves after it is one of its most formidable considerations. Every door-handle in the house is suggestive of sweetmeats for the next week, at least. The most unnatural articles of diet displace the frugal but nutritious food of unconvulsed periods of existence. If there is a walking infant about the house, it will certainly have a more or less fatal fit from overmuch of some indigestible delicacy. Before the week is out, everybody will be tired to death of sugary forms of nourishment and long to see the last of the remnants of the festival.

The family had not yet arrived at this condition. On the contrary, the first inspection of the tables suggested the prospect of days of unstinted luxury; and the younger portion of the household, especially, were in a state of great excitement as the account of stock was taken with reference to future internal investments. Some curious facts came to light during these researches.

“Where's all the oranges gone to?” said Mrs. Sprowle. “I expected there'd be ever so many of 'em left. I did n't see many of the folks eatin' oranges. Where's the skins of 'em? There ought to be six dozen orange-skins round on the plates, and there a'n't one dozen. And all the small cakes, too, and all the sugar things that was stuck on the big cakes. Has anybody counted the spoons? Some of 'em got swallowed, perhaps. I hope they was plated ones, if they did!”

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The failure of the morning's orange-crop and the deficit in other expected residual delicacies were not very difficult to account for. In many of the two-story Rockland families, and in those favored households of the neighboring villages whose members had been invited to the great party, there was a very general excitement among the younger people on the morning after the great event. "Did y' bring home somethin' from the party? What is it? What is it? Is it frut-cake? Is it nuts and oranges and apples? Give me some! Give me some!" Such a concert of treble voices uttering accents like these had not been heard since the great Temperance Festival with the celebrated "colation" in the open air under the trees of the Parnassian Grove,—as the place was christened by the young ladies of the Institute. The cry of the children was not in vain. From the pockets of demure fathers, from the bags of sharp-eyed spinsters, from the folded handkerchiefs of light-fingered sisters, from the tall hats of sly-winking brothers, there was a resurrection of the missing oranges and cakes and sugar-things in many a rejoicing family-circle, enough to astonish the most hardened "caterer" that ever contracted to feed a thousand people under canvas.

The tender recollections of those dear little ones whom extreme youth or other pressing considerations detain from scenes of festivity—a trait of affection by no means uncommon among our thoughtful people—dignifies those social meetings where it is manifested, and sheds a ray of sunshine on our common nature. It is "an oasis in the desert,"—to use the striking expression of the last year's "Valedictorian" of the Apollinean Institute. In the midst of so much that is purely selfish, it is delightful to meet such disinterested care for others. When a large family of children are expecting a parent's return from an entertainment, it will often require great exertions on his part to freight himself so as to meet their reasonable expectations. A few rules are worth remembering by all who attend anniversary dinners in Faneuil Hall or elsewhere. Thus: Lobsters' claws are always acceptable to children of all ages. Oranges and apples are to be taken one at a time, until the coat-pockets begin to become inconveniently heavy. Cakes are injured by sitting upon them; it is, therefore, well to carry a stout tin box of a size to hold as many pieces as there are children in the domestic circle. A very pleasant amusement, at the close of one of these banquets, is grabbing for the flowers with which the table is embellished. These will please the ladies at home very greatly, and, if the children are at the same time abundantly supplied with fruits, nuts, cakes, and any little ornamental articles of confectionery which are of a nature to be unostentatiously removed, the kind-hearted parent will make a whole household happy, without any additional expense beyond the outlay for his ticket.

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There were fragmentary delicacies enough left, of one kind and another, at any rate, to make all the Colonel's family uncomfortable for the next week. It bid fair to take as long to get rid of the remains of the great party as it had taken to make ready for it.

In the mean time Mr. Bernard had been dreaming, as young men dream, of gliding shapes with bright eyes and burning cheeks, strangely blended with red planets and hissing meteors, and, shining over all, the white, un-wandering star of the North, girt with its tethered constellations.

After breakfast he walked into the parlor, where he found Miss Darley. She was alone, and, holding a school-book in her hand, was at work with one of the morning's lessons. She hardly noticed him as he entered, being very busy with her book,—and he paused a moment before speaking, and looked at her with a kind of reverence. It would not have been strictly true to call her beautiful. For years,—since her earliest womanhood,—those slender hands had taken the bread which repaid the toil of heart and brain from the coarse palms which offered it in the world's rude market. It was not for herself alone that she had bartered away the life of her youth, that she had breathed the hot air of schoolrooms, that she had forced her intelligence to posture before her will, as the exigencies of her place required,—waking to mental labor,—sleeping to dream of problems,—rolling up the stone of education for an endless twelvemonth's term, to find it at the bottom of the hill again when another year called her to its renewed duties, schooling her temper in unending inward and outward conflicts, until neither dulness nor obstinacy nor ingratitude nor insolence could reach her serene self-possession. Not for herself alone. Poorly as her prodigal labors were repaid in proportion to the waste of life they cost, her value was too well established to leave her without what, under other circumstances, would have been a more than sufficient compensation. But there were others who looked to her in their need, and so the modest fountain which might have been filled to its brim was continually drained through silent-flowing, hidden sluices.

Out of such a life, inherited from a race which had lived in conditions not unlike her own, beauty, in the common sense of the term, could hardly find leisure to develop and shape itself. For it must be remembered, that symmetry and elegance of features and figure, like perfectly formed crystals in the mineral world, are reached only by insuring a certain necessary repose to individuals and to generations. Human beauty is an agricultural product in the country, growing up in men and women as in corn and cattle, where the soil is good. It is a luxury almost monopolized by the rich in cities, bred under glass like their forced pine-apples and peaches. Both in city and country, the evolution of the physical harmonies which make music to our eyes requires a combination

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of favorable circumstances, of which alternations of unburdened tranquillity with intervals of varied excitement of mind and body are among the most important. Where sufficient excitement is wanting, as often happens in the country, the features, however rich in red and white, get heavy, and the movements sluggish; where excitement is furnished in excess, as is frequently the case in cities, the contours and colors are impoverished, and the nerves begin to make their existence known to the consciousness, as the face very soon informs us.

Helen Darley could not, in the nature of things, have possessed the kind of beauty which pleases the common taste. Her eye was calm, sad-looking, her features very still, except when her pleasant smile changed them for a moment, all her outlines were delicate, her voice was very gentle, but somewhat subdued by years of thoughtful labor, and on her smooth forehead one little hinted line whispered already that Care was beginning to mark the trace which Time sooner or later would make a furrow. She could not be a beauty; if she had been, it would have been much harder for many persons to be interested in her. For, although in the abstract we all love beauty, and although, if we were sent naked souls into some ultramundane warehouse of soulless bodies and told to select one to our liking, we should each choose a handsome one, and never think of the consequences,—it is quite certain that beauty carries an atmosphere of repulsion as well as of attraction with it, alike in both sexes. We may be well assured that there are many persons who no more think of specializing their love of the other sex upon one endowed with signal beauty, than they think of wanting great diamonds or thousand-dollar horses. No man or woman can appropriate beauty without paying for it,—in endowments, in fortune, in position, in self-surrender, or other valuable stock; and there are a great many who are too poor, too ordinary, too humble, too busy, too proud, to pay any of these prices for it. So the unbeautiful get many more lovers than the beauties; only, as there are more of them, their lovers are spread thinner and do not make so much show.

The young master stood looking at Helen Darley with a kind of tender admiration. She was such a picture of the martyr by the slow social combusive process, that it almost seemed to him he could see a pale lambent nimbus round her head.

“I did not see you at the great party last evening,” he said, presently.

She looked up and answered, “No. I have not much taste for such large companies. Besides, I do not feel as if my time belonged to me after it has been paid for. There is always something to do, some lesson or exercise,—and it so happened, I was very busy last night with the new problems in geometry. I hope you had a good time.”

“Very. Two or three of our girls were there. Rosa Milburn. What a beauty she is! I wonder what she feeds on! Wine and musk and chloroform and coals of fire, I believe; I didn’t think there was such color and flavor in a woman outside the tropics.”

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Miss Darley smiled rather faintly; the imagery was not just to her taste: femineity often finds it very hard to accept the fact of muliebrity.

“Was”—?

She stopped short; but her question had asked itself.

“Elsie there? She was, for an hour or so. She looked frightfully handsome. I meant to have spoken to her, but she slipped away before I knew it.”

“I thought she meant to go to the party,” said Miss Darley. “Did she look at you?”

“She did. Why?”

“And you did not speak to her?”

“No. I should have spoken to her, but she was gone when I looked for her. A strange creature! Is n’t there an odd sort of fascination about her? You have not explained all the mystery about the girl. What does she come to this school for? She seems to do pretty much as she likes about studying.”

Miss Darley answered in very low tones. “It was a fancy of hers to come, and they let her have her way. I don’t know what there is about her, except that she seems to take my life out of me when she looks at me. I don’t like to ask other people about our girls. She says very little to anybody, and studies, or makes believe to study, almost what she likes. I don’t know what she is,” (Miss Darley laid her hand, trembling, on the young master’s sleeve,) “but I can tell when she is in the room without seeing or hearing her. Oh, Mr. Langdon, I am weak and nervous, and no doubt foolish,—but—if there were women now, as in the days of our Saviour, possessed of devils, I should think there was something not human looking out of Elsie Venner’s eyes!”

The poor girl’s breast rose and fell tumultuously as she spoke, and her voice labored, as if some obstruction were rising in her throat.

A scene might possibly have come of it, but the door opened. Mr. Silas Peckham. Miss Darley got away as soon as she well could.

“Why did not Miss Darley go to the party last evening?” said Mr. Bernard.

“Well, the fact is,” answered Mr. Silas Peckham, “Miss Darley, she’s pooty much took up with the school. She’s an industris young. woman,—yis, she is industris,—but perhaps she a’n’t quite so spry a worker as some. Maybe, considerin’ she’s paid for her time, she is n’t fur out o’ the way in occoopin’ herself evenin’s,—that—is, if so be she a’n’t smart enough to finish up all her work in the daytime. Edoocation is the great business of the Institoot. Amoosements are objec’s of a secondary natur’, accordin’ to my v’oo.”

[The unspellable pronunciation of this word is the touchstone of New England Brahminism.]

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Mr. Bernard drew a deep breath, his thin nostrils dilating, as if the air did not rush in fast enough to cool his blood, while Silas Peckham was speaking. The Head of the Apollinean Institute delivered himself of these judicious sentiments in that peculiar acid, penetrating tone, thickened with a nasal twang, which not rarely becomes hereditary after three or four generations raised upon east winds, salt fish, and large, white-bellied, pickled cucumbers. He spoke deliberately, as if weighing his words well, so that, during his few remarks, Mr. Bernard had time for a mental accompaniment with variations, accented by certain bodily changes, which escaped Mr. Peckham's observation. First there was a feeling of disgust and shame at hearing Helen Darley spoken of like a dumb working animal. That sent the blood up into his cheeks. Then the slur upon her probable want of force—her incapacity, who made the character of the school and left this man to pocket its profits—sent a thrill of the old Wentworth fire through him, so that his muscles hardened, his hands closed, and he took the measure of Mr. Silas Peckham, to see if his head would strike the wall in case he went over backwards all of a sudden. This would not do, of course, and so the thrill passed off and the muscles softened again. Then came that state of tenderness in the heart, overlying wrath in the stomach, in which the eyes grow moist like a woman's, and there is also a great boiling-up of objectionable terms out of the deep-water vocabulary, so that Prudence and Propriety and all the other pious P's have to jump upon the lid of speech to keep them from boiling over into fierce articulation. All this was internal, chiefly, and of course not recognized by Mr. Silas Peckham. The idea, that any full-grown, sensible man should have any other notion than that of getting the most work for the least money out of his assistants, had never suggested itself to him.

Mr. Bernard had gone through this paroxysm, and cooled down, in the period while Mr. Peckham was uttering these words in his thin, shallow whine, twanging up into the frontal sinuses. What was the use of losing his temper and throwing away his place, and so, among the consequences which would necessarily follow, leaving the poor lady-teacher without a friend to stand by her ready to lay his hand on the grand-inquisitor before the windlass of his rack had taken one turn too many?

"No doubt, Mr. Peckham," he said, in a grave, calm voice, "there is a great deal of work to be done in the school; but perhaps we can distribute the duties a little more evenly after a time. I shall look over the girls' themes myself, after this week. Perhaps there will be some other parts of her labor that I can take on myself. We can arrange a new programme of studies and recitations."

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"We can do that," said Mr. Silas Peckham. "But I don't propose mater'llly alterin' Miss Darley's dooties. I don't think she works to hurt herself. Some of the Trustees have proposed interdoosin' new branches of study, and I expect you will be pooty much occoopied with the dooties that belong to your place. On the Sahbath you will be able to attend divine service three times, which is expected of our teachers. I shall continoo myself to give Sahbath Scriptur' readin's to the young ladies. That is a solemn dooty I can't make up my mind to commit to other people. My teachers enjoy the Lord's day as a day of rest. In it they do no manner of work, except in cases of necessity or mercy, such as fillin' out diplomas, or when we git crowded jest at the end of a term, or when there is an extry number of p'oopils, or other Providential call to dispense with the ordinance."

Mr. Bernard had a fine glow in his cheeks by this time,—doubtless kindled by the thought of the kind consideration Mr. Peckham showed for his subordinates in allowing them the between meeting-time on Sundays except for some special reason. But the morning was wearing away; so he went to the schoolroom, taking leave very properly of his respected principal, who soon took his hat and departed.

Mr. Peckham visited certain "stores" or shops, where he made inquiries after various articles in the provision-line, and effected a purchase or two. Two or three barrels of potatoes, which had sprouted in a promising way, he secured at a bargain. A side of feminine beef was also obtained at a low figure. He was entirely satisfied with a couple of barrels of flour, which, being invoiced "slightly damaged," were to be had at a reasonable price.

After this, Silas Peckham felt in good spirits. He had done a pretty stroke of business. It came into his head whether he might not follow it up with a still more brilliant speculation. So he turned his steps in the direction of Colonel Sprowle's.

It was now eleven o'clock, and the battle-field of last evening was as we left it. Mr. Peckham's visit was unexpected, perhaps not very well timed, but the Colonel received him civilly.

"Beautifully lighted,—these rooms last night!" said Mr. Peckham. "Winter-strained?"

The Colonel nodded.

"How much do you pay for your winter-strained?"

The Colonel told him the price.

"Very hahnsome supper,—very hahnsome. Nothin' ever seen like it in Rockland. Must have been a great heap of things leftover."

The compliment was not ungrateful, and the Colonel acknowledged it by smiling and saying, "I should think the' was a trifle? Come and look."

When Silas Peckham saw how many delicacies had survived the evening's conflict, his commercial spirit rose at once to the point of a proposal.

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"Colonel Sprowle," said he, "there's 'meat and cakes and pies and pickles enough on that table to spread a hahnsome colation. If you'd like to trade reasonable, I think perhaps I should be willin' to take 'em off your hands. There's been a talk about our havin' a celebration in the Parnassian Grove, and I think I could work in what your folks don't want and make myself whole by chargin' a small sum for tickets. Broken meats, of course, a'n't of the same valoo as fresh provisions; so I think you might be willin' to trade reasonable."

Mr. Peckham paused and rested on his proposal. It would not, perhaps, have been very extraordinary, if Colonel Sprowle had entertained the proposition. There is no telling beforehand how such things will strike people. It didn't happen to strike the Colonel favorably. He had a little red-blooded manhood in him.

"Sell you them things to make a colation out of?" the Colonel replied. "Walk up to that table, Mr. Peckham, and help yourself! Fill your pockets; Mr. Peckham! Fetch a basket, and our hired folks shall fill it full for ye! Send a cart, if y' like, 'n' carry off them leavin's to make a celebration for your pupils with! Only let me tell ye this:—as sure 's my name's Hezekiah Spraowle, you 'll be known through the taown 'n' through the caounty, from that day forrard, as the Principal of the Broken-Victuals Institoot!"

Even provincial human-nature sometimes has a touch of sublimity about it. Mr. Silas Peckham had gone a little deeper than he meant, and come upon the "hard pan," as the well-diggers call it, of the Colonel's character, before he thought of it. A militia-colonel standing on his sentiments is not to be despised. That was shown pretty well in New England two or three generations ago. There were a good many plain officers that talked about their "rigiment" and their "caounty" who knew very well how to say "Make ready!" "Take aim!" "Fire!"—in the face of a line of grenadiers with bullets in their guns and bayonets on them. And though a rustic uniform is not always unexceptionable in its cut and trimmings, yet there was many an ill-made coat in those old times that was good enough to be shown to the enemy's front rank too often to be left on the field with a round hole in its left lapel that matched another going right through the brave heart of the plain country captain or major or colonel who was buried in it under the crimson turf.

Mr. Silas Peckham said little or nothing. His sensibilities were not acute, but he perceived that he had made a miscalculation. He hoped that there was no offence,—thought it might have been mutooally agreeable, conclooded he would give up the idee of a colation, and backed himself out as if unwilling to expose the less guarded aspect of his person to the risk of accelerating impulses.

The Colonel shut the door,—cast his eye on the toe of his right boot, as if it had had a strong temptation,—looked at his watch, then round the room, and, going to a cupboard, swallowed a glass of deep-red brandy and water to compose his feelings.

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CHAPTER IX.

The doctor orders the best sulky. (With a Digression on "Hired Help.")

"Abel! Slip Cassia into the new sulky, and fetch her round."

Abel was Dr. Kittredge's hired man. He was born in New Hampshire, a queer sort of State, with fat streaks of soil and population where they breed giants in mind and body, and lean streaks which export imperfectly nourished young men with promising but neglected appetites, who may be found in great numbers in all the large towns, or could be until of late years, when they have been half driven out of their favorite basement-stories by foreigners, and half coaxed away from them by California. New Hampshire is in more than one sense the Switzerland of New England. The "Granite State" being naturally enough deficient in pudding-stone, its children are apt to wander southward in search of that deposit,—in the unpetrified condition.

Abel Stebbins was a good specimen of that extraordinary hybrid or mule between democracy and chrysocracy, a native-born New-England serving-man. The Old World has nothing at all like him. He is at once an emperor and a subordinate. In one hand he holds one five-millionth part (be the same more or less) of the power that sways the destinies of the Great Republic. His other hand is in your boot, which he is about to polish. It is impossible to turn a fellow citizen whose vote may make his master—say, rather, employer—Governor or President, or who may be one or both himself, into a flunky. That article must be imported ready-made from other centres of civilization. When a New Englander has lost his self-respect as a citizen and as a man, he is demoralized, and cannot be trusted with the money to pay for a dinner.

It may be supposed, therefore, that this fractional emperor, this continent-shaper, finds his position awkward when he goes into service, and that his employer is apt to find it still more embarrassing. It is always under protest that the hired man does his duty. Every act of service is subject to the drawback, "I am as good as you are." This is so common, at least, as almost to be the rule, and partly accounts for the rapid disappearance of the indigenous "domestic" from the basements above mentioned. Paleontologists will by and by be examining the floors of our kitchens for tracks of the extinct native species of serving-man. The female of the same race is fast dying out; indeed, the time is not far distant when all the varieties of young woman will have vanished from New England, as the dodo has perished in the Mauritius. The young lady is all that we shall have left, and the mop and duster of the last Ahnira or Loizy will be stared at by generations of Bridgets and Noras as that famous head and foot of the lost bird are stared at in the Ashmolean Museum.

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Abel Stebbins, the Doctor's man, took the true American view of his difficult position. He sold his time to the Doctor, and, having sold it, he took care to fulfil his half of the bargain. The Doctor, on his part, treated him, not like a gentleman, because one does not order a gentleman to bring up his horse or run his errands, but he treated him like a man. Every order was given in courteous terms. His reasonable privileges were respected as much as if they had been guaranteed under hand and seal. The Doctor lent him books from his own library, and gave him all friendly counsel, as if he were a son or a younger brother.

Abel had Revolutionary blood in his veins, and though he saw fit to "hire out," he could never stand the word "servant," or consider himself the inferior one of the two high contracting parties. When he came to live with the Doctor, he made up his mind he would dismiss the old gentleman, if he did not behave according to his notions of propriety. But he soon found that the Doctor was one of the right sort, and so determined to keep him. The Doctor soon found, on his side, that he had a trustworthy, intelligent fellow, who would be invaluable to him, if he only let him have his own way of doing what was to be done.

The Doctor's hired man had not the manners of a French valet. He was grave and taciturn for the most part, he never bowed and rarely smiled, but was always at work in the daytime, and always reading in the evening. He was hostler, and did all the housework that a man could properly do, would go to the door or "tend table," bought the provisions for the family,—in short, did almost everything for them but get their clothing. There was no office in a perfectly appointed household, from that of steward down to that of stable-boy, which he did not cheerfully assume. His round of work not consuming all his energies, he must needs cultivate the Doctor's garden, which he kept in one perpetual bloom, from the blowing of the first crocus to the fading of the last dahlia.

This garden was Abel's poem. Its half-dozen beds were so many cantos. Nature crowded them for him with imagery such as no Laureate could copy in the cold mosaic of language. The rhythm of alternating dawn and sunset, the strophe and antistrophe still perceptible through all the sudden shifts of our dithyrambic seasons and echoed in corresponding floral harmonies, made melody in the soul of Abel, the plain serving-man. It softened his whole otherwise rigid aspect. He worshipped God according to the strict way of his fathers; but a florist's Puritanism is always colored by the petals of his flowers,—and Nature never shows him a black corolla.

He may or may not figure again in this narrative; but as there must be some who confound the New England hired man, native-born, with the servant of foreign birth, and as there is the difference of two continents and two civilizations between them, it did not seem fair to let Abel bring round the Doctor's mare and sulky without touching his features in half-shadow into our background.

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The Doctor's mare, Cassia, was so called by her master from her cinnamon color, cassia being one of the professional names for that spice or drug. She was of the shade we call sorrel, or, as an Englishman would perhaps say, chestnut,—a genuine "Morgan" mare, with a low forehead, as is common in this breed, but with strong quarters and flat hocks, well ribbed up, with a good eye and a pair of lively ears,—a first-rate doctor's beast, would stand until her harness dropped off her back at the door of a tedious case, and trot over hill and dale thirty miles in three hours, if there was a child in the next county with a bean in its windpipe and the Doctor gave her a hint of the fact. Cassia was not large, but she had a good deal of action, and was the Doctor's show-horse. There were two other animals in his stable: Quassia or Quashy, the black horse, and Caustic, the old bay, with whom he jogged round the village.

"A long ride to-day?" said Abel, as he brought up the equipage.

"Just out of the village,—that 's all.—There 's a kink in her mane,—pull it out, will you?"

"Goin' to visit some of the great folks," Abel said to himself. "Wonder who it is."—Then to the Doctor,—“Anybody get sick at Sprowles's? They say Deacon Soper had a fit, after eatin' some o' their frozen victuals.”

The Doctor smiled. He guessed the Deacon would do well enough. He was only going to ride over to the Dudley mansion-house.

CHAPTER X.

The doctor calls on Elsie Venner.

If that primitive physician, Chiron, M. D., appears as a Centaur, as we look at him through the lapse of thirty centuries, the modern country-doctor, if he could be seen about thirty miles off, could not be distinguished from a wheel-animalcule. He inhabits a wheel-carriage. He thinks of stationary dwellings as Long Tom Coffin did of land in general; a house may be well enough for incidental purposes, but for a "stiddy" residence give him a "kerridge." If he is classified in the Linnaean scale, he must be set down thus: Genus Homo; Species Rotifer infusorius, the wheel-animal of infusions.

The Dudley mansion was not a mile from the Doctor's; but it never occurred to him to think of walking to see any of his patients' families, if he had any professional object in his visit. Whenever the narrow sulky turned in at a gate, the rustic who was digging potatoes, or hoeing corn, or swishing through the grass with his scythe, in wave-like crescents, or stepping short behind a loaded wheelbarrow, or trudging lazily by the side of the swinging, loose-throated, short-legged oxen, rocking along the road as if they had just been landed after a three-months' voyage, the toiling native, whatever he was doing, stopped and looked up at the house the Doctor was visiting.



“Somebody sick over there t’ Haynes’s. Guess th’ old man’s ailin’ ag’in. Winder’s half-way open in the chamber,—should n’ wonder ’f he was dead and laid aout. Docterin’ a’n’t no use, when y’ see th’ winders open like that. Wahl, money a’n’t much to speak of to th’ old man naow! He don’ want but tew cents,—’n’ old Widah Peake, she knows what he wants them for!”

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Or again,—

“Measles raound pooty thick. Briggs’s folks buried two children with ’em lass’ week. Th’ of Doctor, he’d h’ ker’d ’em through. Struck in ‘n’ p’dooiced mo’t’f’cation,—so they say.”

This is only meant as a sample of the kind of way they used to think or talk, when the narrow sulky turned in at the gate of some house where there was a visit to be made.

Oh, that narrow sulky! What hopes, what fears, what comfort, what anguish, what despair, in the roll of its coming or its parting wheels! In the spring, when the old people get the coughs which give them a few shakes and their lives drop in pieces like the ashes of a burned thread which have kept the threadlike shape until they were stirred, —in the hot summer noons, when the strong man comes in from the fields, like the son of the Shunamite, crying, “My head, my head,”—in the dying autumn days, when youth and maiden lie fever-stricken in many a household, still-faced, dull-eyed, dark-flushed, dry-lipped, low-muttering in their daylight dreams, their fingers moving singly like those of slumbering harpers,—in the dead winter, when the white plague of the North has caged its wasted victims, shuddering as they think of the frozen soil which must be quarried like rock to receive them, if their perpetual convalescence should happen to be interfered with by any untoward accident,—at every season, the narrow sulky rolled round freighted with unmeasured burdens of joy and woe.

The Doctor drove along the southern foot of The Mountain. The “Dudley Mansion” was near the eastern edge of this declivity, where it rose steepest, with baldest cliffs and densest patches of overhanging wood. It seemed almost too steep to climb, but a practised eye could see from a distance the zigzag lines of the sheep-paths which scaled it like miniature Alpine roads. A few hundred feet up The Mountain’s side was a dark deep dell, unwooded, save for a few spindling, crazy-looking hackmatacks or native larches, with pallid green tufts sticking out fantastically all over them. It shelved so deeply, that, while the hemlock-tassels were swinging on the trees around its border, all would be still at its springy bottom, save that perhaps a single fern would wave slowly backward and forward like a sabre with a twist as of a feathered oar,—and this when not a breath could be felt, and every other stem and blade were motionless. There was an old story of one having perished here in the winter of ’86, and his body having been found in the spring,—whence its common name of “Dead-Man’s Hollow.” Higher up there were huge cliffs with chasms, and, it was thought, concealed caves, where in old times they said that Tories lay hid,—some hinted not without occasional aid and comfort from the Dudleys then living in the mansion-house. Still higher and farther west lay the accursed ledge,—shunned by all, unless it were now and then a daring youth, or a wandering naturalist who ventured to its edge in the hope of securing some infantile *Crotalus durissus*, who had not yet cut his poison teeth.

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Long, long ago, in old Colonial times, the Honorable Thomas Dudley, Esquire, a man of note and name and great resources, allied by descent to the family of "Tom Dudley," as the early Governor is sometimes irreverently called by our most venerable, but still youthful antiquary,—and to the other public Dudleys, of course,—of all of whom he made small account, as being himself an English gentleman, with little taste for the splendors of provincial office, early in the last century, Thomas Dudley had built this mansion. For several generations it had been dwelt in by descendants of the same name, but soon after the Revolution it passed by marriage into the hands of the Venners, by whom it had ever since been held and tenanted.

As the doctor turned an angle in the road, all at once the stately old house rose before him. It was a skilfully managed effect, as it well might be, for it was no vulgar English architect who had planned the mansion and arranged its position and approach. The old house rose before the Doctor, crowning a terraced garden, flanked at the left by an avenue of tall elms. The flower-beds were edged with box, which diffused around it that dreamy balsamic odor, full of ante-natal reminiscences of a lost Paradise, dimly fragrant as might be the bdellium of ancient Havilah, the land compassed by the river Pison that went out of Eden. The garden was somewhat neglected, but not in disgrace,—and in the time of tulips and hyacinths, of roses, of "snowballs," of honeysuckles, of lilacs, of syringas, it was rich with blossoms.

From the front-windows of the mansion the eye reached a far blue mountain-summit,—no rounded heap, such as often shuts in a village-landscape, but a sharp peak, clean-angled as Ascutney from the Dartmouth green. A wide gap through miles of woods had opened this distant view, and showed more, perhaps, than all the labors of the architect and the landscape-gardener the large style of the early Dudleys.

The great stone-chimney of the mansion-house was the centre from which all the artificial features of the scene appeared to flow. The roofs, the gables, the dormer-windows, the porches, the clustered offices in the rear, all seemed to crowd about the great chimney. To this central pillar the paths all converged. The single poplar behind the house,—Nature is jealous of proud chimneys, and always loves to put a poplar near one, so that it may fling a leaf or two down its black throat every autumn,—the one tall poplar behind the house seemed to nod and whisper to the grave square column, the elms to sway their branches towards it. And when the blue smoke rose from its summit, it seemed to be wafted away to join the azure haze which hung around the peak in the far distance, so that both should bathe in a common atmosphere.

Behind the house were clumps of lilacs with a century's growth upon them, and looking more like trees than like shrubs. Shaded by a group of these was the ancient well, of huge circuit, and with a low arch opening out of its wall about ten feet below the surface,—whether the door of a crypt for the concealment of treasure, or of a subterranean passage, or merely of a vault for keeping provisions cool in hot weather, opinions differed.

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On looking at the house, it was plain that it was built with Old-World notions of strength and durability, and, so far as might be, with Old-World materials. The hinges of the doors stretched out like arms, instead of like hands, as we make them. The bolts were massive enough for a donjon-keep. The small window-panes were actually inclosed in the wood of the sashes instead of being stuck to them with putty, as in our modern windows. The broad staircase was of easy ascent, and was guarded by quaintly turned and twisted balusters. The ceilings of the two rooms of state were moulded with medallion-portraits and rustic figures, such as may have been seen by many readers in the famous old Philipse house,—Washington's head-quarters,—in the town of Yorkers. The fire-places, worthy of the wide-throated central chimney, were bordered by pictured tiles, some of them with Scripture stories, some with Watteau-like figures,—tall damsels in slim waists and with spread enough of skirt for a modern ballroom, with bowing, reclining, or musical swains of what everybody calls the “conventional” sort,—that is, the swain adapted to genteel society rather than to a literal sheep-compelling existence.

The house was furnished, soon after it was completed, with many heavy articles made in London from a rare wood just then come into fashion, not so rare now, and commonly known as mahogany. Time had turned it very dark, and the stately bedsteads and tall cabinets and claw-footed chairs and tables were in keeping with the sober dignity of the ancient mansion. The old “hangings” were yet preserved in the chambers, faded, but still showing their rich patterns,—properly entitled to their name, for they were literally hung upon flat wooden frames like trellis-work, which again were secured to the naked partitions.

There were portraits of different date on the walls of the various apartments, old painted coats-of-arms, bevel-edged mirrors, and in one sleeping-room a glass case of wax-work flowers and spangly symbols, with a legend signifying that E. M. (supposed to be Elizabeth Mascarene) wished not to be “forgot”

“When I am dead and lay'd in dust
And all my bones are”—

Poor E. M.! Poor everybody that sighs for earthly remembrance in a planet with a core of fire and a crust of fossils!

Such was the Dudley mansion-house,—for it kept its ancient name in spite of the change in the line of descent. Its spacious apartments looked dreary and desolate; for here Dudley Venner and his daughter dwelt by themselves, with such servants only as their quiet mode of life required. He almost lived in his library, the western room on the ground-floor. Its window looked upon a small plat of green, in the midst of which was a single grave marked by a plain marble slab. Except this room, and the chamber where he slept, and the servants' wing, the rest of the house was all Elsie's. She was always a restless, wandering child from her

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early years, and would have her little bed moved from one chamber to another,—flitting round as the fancy took her. Sometimes she would drag a mat and a pillow into one of the great empty rooms, and, wrapping herself in a shawl, coil up and go to sleep in a corner. Nothing frightened her; the “haunted” chamber, with the torn hangings that flapped like wings when there was air stirring, was one of her favorite retreats. She had been a very hard creature to manage. Her father could influence, but not govern her. Old Sophy, born of a slave mother in the house, could do more with her than anybody, knowing her by long instinctive study. The other servants were afraid of her. Her father had sent for governesses, but none of them ever stayed long. She made them nervous; one of them had a strange fit of sickness; not one of them ever came back to the house to see her. A young Spanish woman who taught her dancing succeeded best with her, for she had a passion for that exercise, and had mastered some of the most difficult dances. Long before this period, she had manifested some most extraordinary singularities of taste or instinct. The extreme sensitiveness of her father on this point prevented any allusion to them; but there were stories floating round, some of them even getting into the papers,—without her name, of course,—which were of a kind to excite intense curiosity, if not more anxious feelings. This thing was certain, that at the age of twelve she was missed one night, and was found sleeping in the open air under a tree, like a wild creature. Very often she would wander off by day, always without a companion, bringing home with her a nest, a flower, or even a more questionable trophy of her ramble, such as showed that there was no place where she was afraid to venture. Once in a while she had stayed out over night, in which case the alarm was spread, and men went in search of her, but never successfully,—so—that some said she hid herself in trees, and others that she had found one of the old Tory caves.

Some, of course, said she was a crazy girl, and ought to be sent to an Asylum. But old Dr. Kittredge had shaken his head, and told them to bear with her, and let her have her way as much as they could, but watch her, as far as possible, without making her suspicious of them. He visited her now and then, under the pretext of seeing her father on business, or of only making a friendly call.

The Doctor fastened his horse outside the gate, and walked up the garden-alley. He stopped suddenly with a start. A strange sound had jarred upon his ear. It was a sharp prolonged rattle, continuous, but rising and falling as if in rhythmical cadence. He moved softly towards the open window from which the sound seemed to proceed.

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Elsie was alone in the room, dancing one of those wild Moorish fandangos, such as a matador hot from the Plaza de Toros of Seville or Madrid might love to lie and gaze at. She was a figure to look upon in silence. The dancing frenzy must have seized upon her while she was dressing; for she was in her bodice, bare-armed, her hair floating unbound far below the waist of her barred or banded skirt. She had caught up her castanets, and rattled them as she danced with a kind of passionate fierceness, her lithe body undulating with flexuous grace, her diamond eyes glittering, her round arms wreathing and unwinding, alive and vibrant to the tips of the slender fingers. Some passion seemed to exhaust itself in this dancing paroxysm; for all at once she reeled from the middle of the floor, and flung herself, as it were in a careless coil, upon a great tiger's-skin which was spread out in one corner of the apartment.

The old Doctor stood motionless, looking at her as she lay panting on the tawny, black-lined robe of the dead monster which stretched out beneath her, its rude flattened outline recalling the Terror of the Jungle as he crouched for his fatal spring. In a few moments her head drooped upon her arm, and her glittering eyes closed,—she was sleeping. He stood looking at her still, steadily, thoughtfully, tenderly. Presently he lifted his hand to his forehead, as if recalling some fading remembrance of other years.

“Poor Catalina!”

This was all he said. He shook his head,—implying that his visit would be in vain to-day,—returned to his sulky, and rode away, as if in a dream.

CHAPTER XI.

Cousin Richard's visit.

The Doctor was roused from his revery by the clatter of approaching hoofs. He looked forward and saw a young fellow galloping rapidly towards him.

A common New-England rider with his toes turned out, his elbows jerking and the daylight showing under him at every step, bestriding a cantering beast of the plebeian breed, thick at every point where he should be thin, and thin at every point where he should be thick, is not one of those noble objects that bewitch the world. The best horsemen outside of the cities are the unshod countryboys, who ride “bareback,” with only a halter round the horse's neck, digging their brown heels into his ribs, and slanting over backwards, but sticking on like leeches, and taking the hardest trot as if they loved it.—This was a different sight on which the Doctor was looking. The streaming mane and tail of the unshorn, savage-looking, black horse, the dashing grace with which the young fellow in the shadowy sombrero, and armed with the huge spurs, sat in his high-peaked saddle, could belong only to the mustang of the Pampas and his master. This bold rider was a young man whose sudden apparition in the quiet inland town had

reminded some of the good people of a bright, curly-haired boy they had known some eight or ten years before as little Dick Venner.

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This boy had passed several of his early years at the Dudley mansion, the playmate of Elsie, being her cousin, two or three years older than herself, the son of Captain Richard Venner, a South American trader, who, as he changed his residence often, was glad to leave the boy in his brother's charge. The Captain's wife, this boy's mother, was a lady of Buenos Ayres, of Spanish descent, and had died while the child was in his cradle. These two motherless children were as strange a pair as one roof could well cover. Both handsome, wild, impetuous, unmanageable, they played and fought together like two young leopards, beautiful, but dangerous, their lawless instincts showing through all their graceful movements.

The boy was little else than a young Gaucho when he first came to Rockland; for he had learned to ride almost as soon as to walk, and could jump on his pony and trip up a runaway pig with the bolas or noose him with his miniature lasso at an age when some city-children would hardly be trusted out of sight of a nursery-maid. It makes men imperious to sit a horse; no man governs his fellows so well as from this living throne. And so, from Marcus Aurelius in Roman bronze, down to the "man on horseback" in General Cushing's prophetic speech, the saddle has always been the true seat of empire. The absolute tyranny of the human will over a noble and powerful beast develops the instinct of personal prevalence and dominion; so that horse-subduer and hero were almost synonymous in simpler times, and are closely related still. An ancestry of wild riders naturally enough bequeaths also those other tendencies which we see in the Tartars, the Cossacks, and our own Indian Centaurs, and as well, perhaps, in the old-fashioned fox-hunting squire as in any of these. Sharp alternations of violent action and self-indulgent repose; a hard run, and a long revel after it; this is what over-much horse tends to animalize a man into. Such antecedents may have helped to make little Dick Venner a self-willed, capricious boy, and a rough playmate for Elsie.

Elsie was the wilder of the two. Old Sophy, who used to watch them with those quick, animal-looking eyes of hers,—she was said to be the granddaughter of a cannibal chief, and inherited the keen senses belonging to all creatures which are hunted as game, Old Sophy, who watched them in their play and their quarrels, always seemed to be more afraid for the boy than the girl. "Masse Dick! Masse Dick! don' you be too rough wi' dat gal! She scratch you las' week, 'n' some day she bite you; 'n' if she bite you, Masse Dick!" Old Sophy nodded her head ominously, as if she could say a great deal more; while, in grateful acknowledgment of her caution, Master Dick put his two little fingers in the angles of his mouth, and his forefingers on his lower eyelids, drawing upon these features until his expression reminded her of something she vaguely recollected in her infancy,—the face of a favorite deity executed in wood by an African artist for her grandfather, brought over by her mother, and burned when she became a Christian.

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These two wild children had much in common. They loved to ramble together, to build huts, to climb trees for nests, to ride the colts, to dance, to race, and to play at boys' rude games as if both were boys. But wherever two natures have a great deal in common, the conditions of a first-rate quarrel are furnished ready-made. Relations are very apt to hate each other just because they are too much alike. It is so frightful to be in an atmosphere of family idiosyncrasies; to see all the hereditary uncomeliness or infirmity of body, all the defects of speech, all the failings of temper, intensified by concentration, so that every fault of our own finds itself multiplied by reflections, like our images in a saloon lined with mirrors! Nature knows what she is about. The centrifugal principle which grows out of the antipathy of like to like is only the repetition in character of the arrangement we see expressed materially in certain seed-capsules, which burst and throw the seed to all points of the compass. A house is a large pod with a human germ or two in each of its cells or chambers; it opens by dehiscence of the front-door by and by, and projects one of its germs to Kansas, another to San Francisco, another to Chicago, and so on; and this that Smith may not be Smithed to death and Brown may not be Browened into a mad-house, but mix in with the world again and struggle back to average humanity.

Elsie's father, whose fault was to indulge her in everything, found that it would never do to let these children grow up together. They would either love each other as they got older, and pair like wild creatures, or take some fierce antipathy, which might end nobody could tell where. It was not safe to try. The boy must be sent away. A sharper quarrel than common decided this point. Master Dick forgot Old Sophy's caution, and vexed the girl into a paroxysm of wrath, in which she sprang at him and bit his arm. Perhaps they made too much of it; for they sent for the old Doctor, who came at once when he heard what had happened. He had a good deal to say about the danger there was from the teeth of animals or human beings when enraged; and as he emphasized his remarks by the application of a pencil of lunar caustic to each of the marks left by the sharp white teeth, they were like to be remembered by at least one of his hearers.

So Master Dick went off on his travels, which led him into strange places and stranger company. Elsie was half pleased and half sorry to have him go; the children had a kind of mingled liking and hate for each other, just such as is very common among relations. Whether the girl had most satisfaction in the plays they shared, or in teasing him, or taking her small revenge upon him for teasing her, it would have been hard to say. At any rate, she was lonely without him. She had more fondness for the old black woman than anybody; but Sophy could not follow her far beyond her own old rocking-chair. As

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for her father, she had made him afraid of her, not for his sake, but for her own. Sometimes she would seem to be fond of him, and the parent's heart would yearn within him as she twined her supple arms about him; and then some look she gave him, some half-articulated expression, would turn his cheek pale and almost make him shiver, and he would say kindly, "Now go, Elsie, dear," and smile upon her as she went, and close and lock the door softly after her. Then his forehead would knot and furrow itself, and the drops of anguish stand thick upon it. He would go to the western window of his study and look at the solitary mound with the marble slab for its head-stone. After his grief had had its way, he would kneel down and pray for his child as one who has no hope save in that special grace which can bring the most rebellious spirit into sweet subjection. All this might seem like weakness in a parent having the charge of one sole daughter of his house and heart; but he had tried authority and tenderness by turns so long without any good effect, that he had become sore perplexed, and, surrounding her with cautious watchfulness as he best might, left her in the main to her own guidance and the merciful influences which Heaven might send down to direct her footsteps.

Meantime the boy grew up to youth and early manhood through a strange succession of adventures. He had been at school at Buenos Ayres,—had quarrelled with his mother's relatives,—had run off to the Pampas, and lived with the Gauchos;—had made friends with the Indians, and ridden with them, it was rumored, in some of their savage forays, —had returned and made up his quarrel,—had got money by inheritance or otherwise, —had troubled the peace of certain magistrates,—had found it convenient to leave the City of Wholesome Breezes for a time, and had galloped off on a fast horse of his, (so it was said,) with some officers riding after him, who took good care (but this was only the popular story) not to catch him. A few days after this he was taking his ice on the Alameda of Mendoza, and a week or two later sailed from Valparaiso for New York, carrying with him the horse with which he had scampered over the Plains, a trunk or two with his newly purchased outfit of, clothing and other conveniences, and a belt heavy with gold and with a few Brazilian diamonds sewed in it, enough in value to serve him for a long journey.

Dick Venner had seen life enough to wear out the earlier sensibilities of adolescence. He was tired of worshipping or tyrannizing over the bistred or umbered beauties of mingled blood among whom he had been living. Even that piquant exhibition which the Rio de Mendoza presents to the amateur of breathing sculpture failed to interest him. He was thinking of a far-off village on the other side of the equator, and of the wild girl with whom he used to play and quarrel, a creature of a different race from these degenerate mongrels.

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"A game little devil she was, sure enough!"—And as Dick spoke, he bared his wrist to look for the marks she had left on it: two small white scars, where the two small sharp upper teeth had struck when she flashed at him with her eyes sparkling as bright as those glittering stones sewed up in the belt he wore. "That's a filly worth noosing!" said Dick to himself, as he looked in admiration at the sign of her spirit and passion. "I wonder if she will bite at eighteen as she did at eight! She shall have a chance to try, at any rate!"

Such was the self-sacrificing disposition with which Richard Venner, Esq., a passenger by the Condor from Valparaiso, set foot upon his native shore, and turned his face in the direction of Rockland, The Mountain, and the mansion-house. He had heard something, from time to time, of his New-England relatives, and knew that they were living together as he left them. And so he heralded himself to "My dear Uncle" by a letter signed "Your loving nephew, Richard Venner," in which letter he told a very frank story of travel and mercantile adventure, expressed much gratitude for the excellent counsel and example which had helped to form his character and preserve him in the midst of temptation, inquired affectionately after his uncle's health, was much interested to know whether his lively cousin who used to be his playmate had grown up as handsome as she promised to be, and announced his intention of paying his respects to them both at Rockland. Not long after this came the trunks marked R. V. which he had sent before him, forerunners of his advent: he was not going to wait for a reply or an invitation.

What a sound that is,—the banging down of the preliminary trunk, without its claimant to give it the life which is borrowed by all personal appendages, so long as the owner's hand or eye is on them! If it announce the coming of one loved and longed for, how we delight to look at it, to sit down on it, to caress it in our fancies, as a lone exile walking out on a windy pier yearns towards the merchantman lying alongside, with the colors of his own native land at her peak, and the name of the port he sailed from long ago upon her stern! But if it tell the near approach of the undesired, inevitable guest, what sound short of the muffled noises made by the undertakers as they turn the corners in the dim-lighted house, with low shuffle of feet and whispered cautions, carries such a sense of knocking-kneed collapse with it as the thumping down in the front entry of the heavy portmanteau, rammed with the changes of uncounted coming weeks?

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Whether the R. V. portmanteaus brought one or the other of these emotions to the tenants of the Dudley mansion, it might not be easy to settle. Elsie professed to be pleased with the thought of having an adventurous young stranger, with stories to tell, an inmate of their quiet, not to say dull, family. Under almost any other circumstances, her father would have been unwilling to take a young fellow of whom he knew so little under his roof; but this was his nephew, and anything that seemed like to amuse or please Elsie was agreeable to him. He had grown almost desperate, and felt as if any change in the current of her life and feelings might save her from some strange paroxysm of dangerous mental exaltation or sullen perversion of disposition, from which some fearful calamity might come to herself or others.

Dick had been several weeks at the Dudley mansion. A few days before, he had made a sudden dash for the nearest large city,—and when the Doctor met him, he was just returning from his visit.

It had been a curious meeting between the two young persons, who had parted so young and after such strange relations with each other. When Dick first presented himself at the mansion, not one in the house would have known him for the boy who had left them all so suddenly years ago. He was so dark, partly from his descent, partly from long habits of exposure, that Elsie looked almost fair beside him. He had something of the family beauty which belonged to his cousin, but his eye had a fierce passion in it, very unlike the cold glitter of Elsie's. Like many people of strong and imperious temper, he was soft-voiced and very gentle in his address, when he had no special reason for being otherwise. He soon found reasons enough to be as amiable as he could force himself to be with his uncle and his cousin. Elsie was to his fancy. She had a strange attraction for him, quite unlike anything he had ever known in other women. There was something, too, in early associations: when those who parted as children meet as man and woman, there is always a renewal of that early experience which followed the taste of the forbidden fruit,—a natural blush of consciousness, not without its charm.

Nothing could be more becoming than the behavior of "Richard Venner, Esquire, the guest of Dudley Venner, Esquire, at his noble mansion," as he was announced in the Court column of the "Rockland Weekly Universe." He was pleased to find himself treated with kindness and attention as a relative. He made himself very agreeable by abundant details concerning the religious, political, social, commercial, and educational progress of the South American cities and states. He was himself much interested in everything that was going on about the Dudley mansion, walked all over it, noticed its valuable wood-lots with special approbation, was delighted with the grand old house and its furniture, and would not be easy until he had seen all the family silver and heard its history. In return, he had much to tell of his father, now dead,—the only one of the Venners, beside themselves, in whose fate his uncle was interested. With Elsie, he was subdued and almost tender in his manner; with the few visitors whom they saw, shy and silent,—perhaps a little watchful, if any young man happened to be among them.

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Young fellows placed on their good behavior are apt to get restless and nervous, all ready to fly off into some mischief or other. Dick Venner had his half-tamed horse with him to work off his suppressed life with. When the savage passion of his young blood came over him, he would fetch out the mustang, screaming and kicking as these amiable beasts are wont to do, strap the Spanish saddle tight to his back, vault into it, and, after getting away from the village, strike the long spurs into his sides and whirl away in a wild gallop, until the black horse was flecked with white foam, and the cruel steel points were red with his blood. When horse and rider were alike fired, he would fling the bridle on his neck and saunter homeward, always contriving to get to the stable in a quiet way, and coming into the house as calm as a bishop after a sober trot on his steady-going cob.

After a few weeks of this kind of life, he began to want some more fierce excitement. He had tried making downright love to Elsie, with no great success as yet, in his own opinion. The girl was capricious in her treatment of him, sometimes scowling and repellent, sometimes familiar, very often, as she used to be of old, teasing and malicious. All this, perhaps, made her more interesting to a young man who was tired of easy conquests. There was a strange fascination in her eyes, too, which at times was quite irresistible, so that he would feel himself drawn to her by a power which seemed to take away his will for the moment. It may have been nothing but the common charm of bright eyes; but he had never before experienced the same kind of attraction.

Perhaps she was not so very different from what she had been as a child, after all. At any rate, so it seemed to Dick Venner, who, as was said before, had tried making love to her. They were sitting alone in the study one day; Elsie had round her neck that somewhat peculiar ornament, the golden torque, which she had worn to the great party. Youth is adventurous and very curious about necklaces, brooches, chains, and other such adornments, so long as they are worn by young persons of the female sex. Dick was seized with a great passion for examining this curious chain, and, after some preliminary questions, was rash enough to lean towards her and put out his hand toward the neck that lay in the golden coil.

She threw her head back, her eyes narrowing and her forehead drawing down so that Dick thought her head actually flattened itself. He started involuntarily; for she looked so like the little girl who had struck him with those sharp flashing teeth, that the whole scene came back, and he felt the stroke again as if it had just been given, and the two white scars began to sting as they did after the old Doctor had burned them with that stick of gray caustic, which looked so like a slate pencil, and felt so much like the end of a red-hot poker.

It took something more than a gallop to set him right after this. The next day he mentioned having received a letter from a mercantile agent with whom he had dealings. What his business was is, perhaps, none of our business. At any rate, it required him to go at once to the city where his correspondent resided.

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Independently of this “business” which called him, there may have been other motives, such as have been hinted at. People who have been living for a long time in dreary country-places, without any emotion beyond such as are occasioned by a trivial pleasure or annoyance, often get crazy at last for a vital paroxysm of some kind or other. In this state they rush to the great cities for a plunge into their turbid life-baths, with a frantic thirst for every exciting pleasure, which makes them the willing and easy victims of all those who sell the Devil’s wares on commission. The less intelligent and instructed class of unfortunates, who venture with their ignorance and their instincts into what is sometimes called the “life” of great cities, are put through a rapid course of instruction which entitles them very commonly to a diploma from the police court. But they only illustrate the working of the same tendency in mankind at large which has been occasionally noticed in the sons of ministers and other eminently worthy people, by many ascribed to that intense congenital hatred for goodness which distinguishes human nature from that of the brute, but perhaps as readily accounted for by considering it as the yawning and stretching of a young soul cramped too long in one moral posture.

Richard Veneer was a young man of remarkable experience for his years. He ran less risk, therefore, in exposing himself to the temptations and dangers of a great city than many older men, who, seeking the livelier scenes of excitement to be found in large towns as a relaxation after the monotonous routine of family life, are too often taken advantage of and made the victims of their sentiments or their generous confidence in their fellow-creatures. Such was not his destiny. There was something about him which looked as if he would not take bullying kindly. He had also the advantage of being acquainted with most of those ingenious devices by which the proverbial inconstancy of fortune is steadied to something more nearly approaching fixed laws, and the dangerous risks which have so often led young men to ruin and suicide are practically reduced to somewhat less than nothing. So that Mr. Richard Veneer worked off his nervous energies without any troublesome adventure, and was ready to return to Rockland in less than a week, without having lightened the money-belt he wore round his body, or tarnished the long glittering knife he carried in his boot.

Dick had sent his trunk to the nearest town through which the railroad leading to the city passed. He rode off on his black horse and left him at the place where he took the cars. On arriving at the city station, he took a coach and drove to one of the great hotels. Thither drove also a sagacious-looking, middle-aged man, who entered his name as “W. Thompson” in the book at the office immediately after that of “R. Venner.” Mr. “Thompson” kept a carelessly observant eye upon Mr. Venner during his stay at the hotel,

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and followed him to the cars when he left, looking over his shoulder when he bought his ticket at the station, and seeing him fairly off without obtruding himself in any offensive way upon his attention. Mr. Thompson, known in other quarters as Detective Policeman Terry, got very little by his trouble. Richard Venner did not turn out to be the wife-poisoner, the defaulting cashier, the river-pirate, or the great counterfeiter. He paid his hotel-bill as a gentleman should always do, if he has the money and can spare it. The detective had probably overrated his own sagacity when he ventured to suspect Mr. Venner. He reported to his chief that there was a knowing-looking fellow he had been round after, but he rather guessed he was nothing more than "one o' them Southern sportsmen."

The poor fellows at the stable where Dick had left his horse had had trouble enough with him. One of the ostlers was limping about with a lame leg, and another had lost a mouthful of his coat, which came very near carrying a piece of his shoulder with it. When Mr. Venner came back for his beast, he was as wild as if he had just been lassoed, screaming, kicking, rolling over to get rid of his saddle, and when his rider was at last mounted, jumping about in a way to dislodge any common horseman. To all this Dick replied by sticking his long spurs deeper and deeper into his flanks, until the creature found he was mastered, and dashed off as if all the thistles of the Pampas were pricking him.

"One more gallop, Juan?" This was in the last mile of the road before he came to the town which brought him in sight of the mansion-house. It was in this last gallop that the fiery mustang and his rider flashed by the old Doctor. Cassia pointed her sharp ears and shied to let them pass. The Doctor turned and looked through the little round glass in the back of his sulky.

"Dick Turpin, there, will find more than his match!" said the Doctor.

CHAPTER XII.

The Apollinean institute. (With Extracts from the "Report of the committee.")

The readers of this narrative will hardly expect any elaborate details of the educational management of the Apollinean Institute. They cannot be supposed to take the same interest in its affairs as was shown by the Annual Committees who reported upon its condition and prospects. As these Committees were, however, an important part of the mechanism of the establishment, some general account of their organization and a few extracts from the Report of the one last appointed may not be out of place.

Whether Mr. Silas Peckham had some contrivance for packing his Committees, whether they happened always to be made up of optimists by nature, whether they were cajoled into good-humor by polite attentions, or whether they were always really delighted with the wonderful acquirements of the pupils and the admirable order of the school, it is certain that their Annual Reports were couched in language which might warm the heart of the most cold-blooded and calculating father that ever had a family of daughters to educate. In fact, these Annual Reports were considered by Mr. Peckham as his most effective advertisements.

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The first thing, therefore, was to see that the Committee was made up of persons known to the public.

Some worn-out politician, in that leisurely and amiable transition-state which comes between official extinction and the paralysis which will finish him as soon as his brain gets a little softer, made an admirable Chairman for Mr. Peckham, when he had the luck to pick up such an article. Old reputations, like old fashions, are more prized in the grassy than in the stony districts. An effete celebrity, who would never be heard of again in the great places until the funeral sermon waked up his memory for one parting spasm, finds himself in full flavor of renown a little farther back from the changing winds of the sea-coast. If such a public character was not to be had, so that there was no chance of heading the Report with the name of the Honorable Mr. Somebody, the next best thing was to get the Reverend Dr. Somebody to take that conspicuous position. Then would follow two or three local worthies with Esquire after their names. If any stray literary personage from one of the great cities happened to be within reach, he was pounced upon by Mr. Silas Peckham. It was a hard case for the poor man, who had travelled a hundred miles or two to the outside suburbs after peace and unwatered milk, to be pumped for a speech in this unexpected way. It was harder still, if he had been induced to venture a few tremulous remarks, to be obliged to write them out for the "Rockland Weekly Universe," with the chance of seeing them used as an advertising certificate as long as he lived, if he lived as long as the late Dr. Waterhouse did after giving his certificate in favor of Whitwell's celebrated Cephalic Snuff.

The Report of the last Committee had been signed by the Honorable, _____late _____ of _____, as Chairman. (It is with reluctance that the name and titles are left in blank; but our public characters are so familiarly known to the whole community that this reserve becomes necessary.) The other members of the Committee were the

Reverend Mr. Butters, of a neighboring town, who was to make the prayer before the Exercises of the Exhibition, and two or three notabilities of Rockland, with geoponic eyes, and glabrous, bumpless foreheads. A few extracts from the Report are subjoined:

"The Committee have great pleasure in recording their unanimous opinion, that the Institution was never in so flourishing a condition....

"The health of the pupils is excellent; the admirable quality of food supplied shows itself in their appearance; their blooming aspect excited the admiration of the Committee, and bears testimony to the assiduity of the excellent Matron.

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“.....moral and religious condition most encouraging, which they cannot but attribute to the personal efforts and instruction of the faithful Principal, who considers religious instruction a solemn duty which he cannot commit to other people.

“.....great progress in their studies, under the intelligent superintendence of the accomplished Principal, assisted by Mr. Badger, [Mr. Langdon’s predecessor,] Miss Darley, the lady who superintends the English branches, Miss Crabs, her assistant and teacher of Modern Languages, and Mr. Schneider, teacher of French, German, Latin, and Music....

“Education is the great business of the Institute. Amusements are objects of a secondary nature; but these are by no means neglected....

“.....English compositions of great originality and beauty, creditable alike to the head and heart of their accomplished authors.... several poems of a very high order of merit, which would do honor to the literature of any age or country.... life-like drawings, showing great proficiency.... Many converse fluently in various modern languages.... perform the most difficult airs with the skill of professional musicians....

“.....advantages unsurpassed, if equalled by those of any Institution in the country, and reflecting the highest honor on the distinguished Head of the Establishment, *Silas Peckham*, Esquire, and his admirable Lady, the *matron*, with their worthy assistants....”

The perusal of this Report did Mr. Bernard more good than a week’s vacation would have done: It gave him such a laugh as he had not had for a month. The way in which Silas Peckham had made his Committee say what he wanted them to—for he recognized a number of expressions in the Report as coming directly from the lips of his principal, and could not help thinking how cleverly he had forced his phrases, as jugglers do the particular card they wish their dupe to take—struck him as particularly neat and pleasing.

He had passed through the sympathetic and emotional stages in his new experience, and had arrived at the philosophical and practical state, which takes things coolly, and goes to work to set them right. He had breadth enough of view to see that there was nothing so very exceptional in this educational trader’s dealings with his subordinates,

but he had also manly feeling enough to attack the particular individual instance of wrong before him. There are plenty of dealer's in morals, as in ordinary traffic, who confine themselves to wholesale business. They leave the small necessity of their next-door neighbor to the retailers, who are poorer in statistics and general facts, but richer in the every-day charities. Mr. Bernard felt, at first, as one does who sees a gray rat steal out of a drain and begin gnawing at the bark of some tree loaded with fruit or blossoms, which he will soon girdle, if he is let alone. The first impulse is to murder him with the nearest ragged stone. Then one remembers that he is a rodent, acting after the law of his kind, and cools down and is contented to drive him off and guard the tree against his teeth for the future. As soon as this is done, one can watch his attempts at mischief with a certain amusement.

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This was the kind of process Mr. Bernard had gone through. First, the indignant surprise of a generous nature, when it comes unexpectedly into relations with a mean one. Then the impulse of extermination,—a divine instinct, intended to keep down vermin of all classes to their working averages in the economy of Nature. Then a return of cheerful tolerance,—a feeling, that, if the Deity could bear with rats and sharpers, he could; with a confident trust, that, in the long run, terriers and honest men would have the upperhand, and a grateful consciousness that he had been sent just at the right time to come between a patient victim and the master who held her in peonage.

Having once made up his mind what to do, Mr. Bernard was as good-natured and hopeful as ever. He had the great advantage, from his professional training, of knowing how to recognize and deal with the nervous disturbances to which overtasked women are so liable. He saw well enough that Helen Darley would certainly kill herself or lose her wits, if he could not lighten her labors and lift off a large part of her weight of cares. The worst of it was, that she was one of those women who naturally overwork themselves, like those horses who will go at the top of their pace until they drop. Such women are dreadfully unmanageable. It is as hard reasoning with them as it would have been reasoning with Io, when she was flying over land and sea, driven by the sting of the never-sleeping gadfly.

This was a delicate, interesting game that he played. Under one innocent pretext or another, he invaded this or that special province she had made her own. He would collect the themes and have them all read and marked, answer all the puzzling questions in mathematics, make the other teachers come to him for directions, and in this way gradually took upon himself not only all the general superintendence that belonged to his office, but stole away so many of the special duties which might fairly have belonged to his assistant, that, before she knew it, she was looking better and feeling more cheerful than for many and many a month before.

When the nervous energy is depressed by any bodily cause, or exhausted by overworking, there follow effects which have often been misinterpreted by moralists, and especially by theologians. The conscience itself becomes neuralgic, sometimes actually inflamed, so that the least touch is agony. Of all liars and false accusers, a sick conscience is the most inventive and indefatigable. The devoted daughter, wife, mother, whose life has been given to unselfish labors, who has filled a place which it seems to others only an angel would make good, reproaches herself with incompetence and neglect of duty. The humble Christian, who has been a model to others, calls himself a worm of the dust on one page of his diary, and arraigns himself on the next for coming short of the perfection of an archangel.

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Conscience itself requires a conscience, or nothing can be more unscrupulous. It told Saul that he did well in persecuting the Christians. It has goaded countless multitudes of various creeds to endless forms of self-torture. The cities of India are full of cripples it has made. The hill-sides of Syria are riddled with holes, where miserable hermits, whose lives it had palsied, lived and died like the vermin they harbored. Our libraries are crammed with books written by spiritual hypochondriacs, who inspected all their moral secretions a dozen times a day. They are full of interest, but they should be transferred from the shelf of the theologian to that of the medical man who makes a study of insanity.

This was the state into which too much work and too much responsibility were bringing Helen Darley, when the new master came and lifted so much of the burden that was crushing her as must be removed before she could have a chance to recover her natural elasticity and buoyancy. Many of the noblest women, suffering like her, but less fortunate in being relieved at the right moment, die worried out of life by the perpetual teasing of this inflamed, neuralgic conscience. So subtle is the line which separates the true and almost angelic sensibility of a healthy, but exalted nature, from the soreness of a soul which is sympathizing with a morbid state of the body that it is no wonder they are often confounded. And thus many good women are suffered to perish by that form of spontaneous combustion in which the victim goes on toiling day and night with the hidden fire consuming her, until all at once her cheek whitens, and, as we look upon her, she drops away, a heap of ashes. The more they overwork themselves, the more exacting becomes the sense of duty,—as the draught of the locomotive's furnace blows stronger and makes the fire burn more fiercely, the faster it spins along the track.

It is not very likely, as was said at the beginning of this chapter, that we shall trouble ourselves a great deal about the internal affairs of the Apollinean Institute. These schools are, in the nature of things, not so very unlike each other as to require a minute description for each particular one among them. They have all very much the same general features, pleasing and displeasing. All feeding-establishments have something odious about them,—from the wretched country-houses where paupers are farmed out to the lowest bidder, up to the commons-tables at colleges and even the fashionable boarding-house. A person's appetite should be at war with no other purse than his own. Young people, especially, who have a bone-factory at work in them, and have to feed the living looms of innumerable growing tissues, should be provided for, if possible, by those who love them like their own flesh and blood. Elsewhere their appetites will be sure to make them enemies, or, what are almost as bad, friends whose interests are at variance with the claims of their exacting necessities and demands.

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Besides, all commercial transactions in regard to the most sacred interests of life are hateful even to those who profit by them. The clergyman, the physician, the teacher, must be paid; but each of them, if his duty be performed in the true spirit, can hardly help a shiver of disgust when money is counted out to him for administering the consolations of religion, for saving some precious life, for sowing the seeds of Christian civilization in young ingenuous souls.

And yet all these schools, with their provincial French and their mechanical accomplishments, with their cheap parade of diplomas and commencements and other public honors, have an ever fresh interest to all who see the task they are performing in our new social order. These girls are not being educated for governesses, or to be exported, with other manufactured articles, to colonies where there happens to be a surplus of males. Most of them will be wives, and every American-born husband is a possible President of these United States. Any one of these girls may be a four-years' queen. There is no sphere of human activity so exalted that she may not be called upon to fill it.

But there is another consideration of far higher interest. The education of our community to all that is beautiful is flowing in mainly through its women, and that to a considerable extent by the aid of these large establishments, the least perfect of which do something to stimulate the higher tastes and partially instruct them. Sometimes there is, perhaps, reason to fear that girls will be too highly educated for their own happiness, if they are lifted by their culture out of the range of the practical and everyday working youth by whom they are surrounded. But this is a risk we must take. Our young men come into active life so early, that, if our girls were not educated to something beyond mere practical duties, our material prosperity would outstrip our culture; as it often does in large places where money is made too rapidly. This is the meaning, therefore, of that somewhat ambitious programme common to most of these large institutions, at which we sometimes smile, perhaps unwisely or uncharitably.

We shall take it for granted that the routine of instruction went on at the Apollinean Institute much as it does in other schools of the same class. People, young or old, are wonderfully different, if we contrast extremes in pairs. They approach much nearer, if we take them in groups of twenty. Take two separate hundreds as they come, without choosing, and you get the gamut of human character in both so completely that you can strike many chords in each which shall be in perfect unison with corresponding ones in the other. If we go a step farther, and compare the population of two villages of the same race and region, there is such a regularly graduated distribution and parallelism of character, that it seems as if Nature must turn out human beings in sets like chessmen.

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It must be confessed that the position in which Mr. Bernard now found himself had a pleasing danger about it which might well justify all the fears entertained on his account by more experienced friends, when they learned that he was engaged in a Young Ladies' Seminary. The school never went on more smoothly than during the first period of his administration, after he had arranged its duties, and taken his share, and even more than his share, upon himself. But human nature does not wait for the diploma of the Apollinean Institute to claim the exercise of it, instincts and faculties. These young girls saw but little of the youth of the neighborhood. The mansion-house young men were off at college or in the cities, or making love to each other's sisters, or at any rate unavailable for some reason or other. There were a few "clerks,"—that is, young men who attended shops, commonly called "stores,"—who were fond of walking by the Institute, when they were off duty, for the sake of exchanging a word or a glance with any one of the young ladies they might happen to know, if any such were stirring abroad: crude young men, mostly, with a great many "Sirs" and "Ma'ams" in their speech, and with that style of address sometimes acquired in the retail business, as if the salesman were recommending himself to a customer, "First-rate family article, Ma'am; warranted to wear a lifetime; just one yard and three quarters in this pattern, Ma'am; sha'n't I have the pleasure?" and so forth. If there had been ever so many of them, and if they had been ever so fascinating, the quarantine of the Institute was too rigorous to allow any romantic infection to be introduced from without.

Anybody might see what would happen, with a good-looking, well-dressed, well-bred young man, who had the authority of a master, it is true, but the manners of a friend and equal, moving about among these young girls day after day, his eyes meeting theirs, his breath mingling with theirs, his voice growing familiar to them, never in any harsh tones, often soothing, encouraging, always sympathetic, with its male depth and breadth of sound among the chorus of trebles, as if it were a river in which a hundred of these little piping streamlets-might lose themselves; anybody might see what would happen. Young girls wrote home to their parents that they enjoyed themselves much, this term, at the Institute, and thought they were making rapid progress in their studies. There was a great enthusiasm for the young master's reading-classes in English poetry. Some of the poor little things began to adorn themselves with an extra ribbon, or a bit of such jewelry as they had before kept for great occasions. Dear souls! they only half knew what they were doing it for. Does the bird know why its feathers grow more brilliant and its voice becomes musical in the pairing season?

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And so, in the midst of this quiet inland town, where a mere accident had placed Mr. Bernard Langdon, there was a concentration of explosive materials which might at any time change its Arcadian and academic repose into a scene of dangerous commotion. What said Helen Darley, when she saw with her woman's glance that more than one girl, when she should be looking at her book, was looking over it toward the master's desk? Was her own heart warmed by any livelier feeling than gratitude, as its life began to flow with fuller pulses, and the morning sky again looked bright and the flowers recovered their lost fragrance? Was there any strange, mysterious affinity between the master and the dark girl who sat by herself? Could she call him at will by looking at him? Could it be that—? It made her shiver to think of it.—And who was that strange horseman who passed Mr. Bernard at dusk the other evening, looking so like Mephistopheles galloping hard to be in season at the witches' Sabbath-gathering? That must be the cousin of Elsie's who wants to marry her, they say. A dangerous-looking fellow for a rival, if one took a fancy to the dark girl! And who is she, and what?—by what demon is she haunted, by what taint is she blighted, by what curse is she followed, by what destiny is she marked, that her strange beauty has such a terror in it, and that hardly one shall dare to love her, and her eye glitters always, but warms for none?

Some of these questions are ours. Some were Helen Darley's. Some of them mingled with the dreams of Bernard Langdon, as he slept the night after meeting the strange horseman. In the morning he happened to be a little late in entering the schoolroom. There was something between the leaves of the Virgil which lay upon his desk. He opened it and saw a freshly gathered mountain-flower. He looked at Elsie, instinctively, involuntarily. She had another such flower on her breast.

A young girl's graceful compliment,—that is all,—no doubt,—no doubt. It was odd that the flower should have happened to be laid between the leaves of the Fourth Book of the "Æneid," and at this line,

"Incipit effari, mediaque in voce resistit."

A remembrance of an ancient superstition flashed through the master's mind, and he determined to try the Sortes Virgilianæ. He shut the volume, and opened it again at a venture.—The story of Laocoon!

He read with a strange feeling of unwilling fascination, from "Horresco referees" to "Bis medium amplexi," and flung the book from him, as if its leaves had been steeped in the subtle poisons that princes die of.

CHAPTER XIII.

Curiosity.

People will talk. 'Ciascun lo dice' is a tune that is played oftener than the national air of this country or any other.

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“That ’s what they say. Means to marry her, if she is his cousin. Got money himself,—that ’s the story,—but wants to come and live in the old place, and get the Dudley property by and by.” “Mother’s folks was wealthy.”—“Twenty-three to twenty-five year old.”—“He a’n’t more ’n twenty, or twenty-one at the outside.”—“Looks as if he knew too much to be only twenty year old.”—“Guess he’s been through the mill,—don’t look so green, anyhow, hey? Did y’ ever mind that cut over his left eyebrow?”

So they gossiped in Rockland. The young fellows could make nothing of Dick Venner. He was shy and proud with the few who made advances to him. The young ladies called him handsome and romantic, but he looked at them like a many-tailed pacha who was in the habit of, ordering his wives by the dozen.

“What do you think of the young man over there at the Veneers’?” said Miss Arabella Thornton to her father.

“Handsome,” said the Judge, “but dangerous-looking. His face is indictable at common law. Do you know, my dear, I think there is a blank at the Sheriff’s office, with a place for his name in it?”

The Judge paused and looked grave, as if he had just listened to the verdict of the jury and was going to pronounce sentence.

“Have you heard anything against him?” said the Judge’s daughter.

“Nothing. But I don’t like these mixed bloods and half-told stories. Besides, I have seen a good many desperate fellows at the bar, and I have a fancy they all have a look belonging to them. The worst one I ever sentenced looked a good deal like this fellow. A wicked mouth. All our other features are made for us; but a man makes his own mouth.”

“Who was the person you sentenced?”

“He was a young fellow that undertook to garrote a man who had won his money at cards. The same slender shape, the same cunning, fierce look, smoothed over with a plausible air. Depend upon it, there is an expression in all the sort of people who live by their wits when they can, and by worse weapons when their wits fail them, that we old law-doctors know just as well as the medical counsellors know the marks of disease in a man’s face. Dr. Kittredge looks at a man and says he is going to die; I look at another man and say he is going to be hanged, if nothing happens. I don’t say so of this one, but I don’t like his looks. I wonder Dudley Veneer takes to him so kindly.”

“It’s all for Elsie’s sake,” said Miss Thornton. “I feel quite sure of that. He never does anything that is not meant for her in some way. I suppose it amuses her to have her cousin about the house. She rides a good deal since he has been here. Have you

seen them galloping about together? He looks like my idea of a Spanish bandit on that wild horse of his."

"Possibly he has been one,—or is one," said the Judge,—smiling as men smile whose lips have often been freighted with the life and death of their fellow-creatures. "I met them riding the other day. Perhaps Dudley is right, if it pleases her to have a companion. What will happen, though, if he makes love to her? Will Elsie be easily taken with such a fellow? You young folks are supposed to know more about these matters than we middle-aged people."

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"Nobody can tell. Elsie is not like anybody else. The girls who have seen most of her think she hates men, all but 'Dudley,' as she calls her father. Some of them doubt whether she loves him. They doubt whether she can love anything human, except perhaps the old black woman who has taken care of her since she was a baby. The village people have the strangest stories about her; you know what they call her?"

She whispered three words in her father's ear. The Judge changed color as she spoke, sighed deeply, and was silent as if lost in thought for a moment.

"I remember her mother," he said, "so well! A sweeter creature never lived. Elsie has something of her in her look, but those are not her mother's eyes. They were dark, but soft, as in all I ever saw of her race. Her father's are dark too, but mild, and even tender, I should say. I don't know what there is about Elsie's,—but do you know, my dear, I find myself curiously influenced by them? I have had to face a good many sharp eyes and hard ones,—murderers' eyes and pirates',—men who had to be watched in the bar, where they stood on trial, for fear they should spring on the prosecuting officers like tigers,—but I never saw such eyes as Elsie's; and yet they have a kind of drawing virtue or power about them,—I don't know what else to call it: have you never observed this?"

His daughter smiled in her turn.

"Never observed it? Why, of course, nobody could be with Elsie Venner and not observe it. There are a good many other strange things about her: did you ever notice how she dresses?"

"Why, handsomely enough, I should think," the Judge answered. "I suppose she dresses as she likes, and sends to the city for what she wants. What do you mean in particular? We men notice effects in dress, but not much in detail."

"You never noticed the colors and patterns of her dresses? You never remarked anything curious about her ornaments? Well! I don't believe you men know, half the time, whether a lady wears a nine-penny collar or a thread-lace cape worth a thousand dollars. I don't believe you know a silk dress from a bombazine one. I don't believe you can tell whether a woman is in black or in colors, unless you happen to know she is a widow. Elsie Venner has a strange taste in dress, let me tell you. She sends for the oddest patterns of stuffs, and picks out the most curious things at the jeweller's, whenever she goes to town with her father. They say the old Doctor tells him to let her have her way about such matters. Afraid of her mind, if she is contradicted, I suppose. You've heard about her going to school at that place,—the 'Institoot,' as those people call it? They say she's bright enough in her way,—has studied at home, you know, with her father a good deal, knows some modern languages and Latin, I believe: at any rate, she would have it so,—she must go to the 'Institoot.' They have a very good female

teacher there, I hear; and the new master, that young Mr. Langdon, looks and talks like a well-educated young man. I wonder what they 'll make of Elsie, between them!"

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So they talked at the Judge's, in the calm, judicial-looking mansion-house, in the grave, still library, with the troops of wan-hued law-books staring blindly out of their titles at them as they talked, like the ghosts of dead attorneys fixed motionless and speechless, each with a thin, golden film over his unwinking eyes.

In the mean time, everything went on quietly enough after Cousin Richard's return. A man of sense,—that is, a man who knows perfectly well that a cool head is worth a dozen warm hearts in carrying the fortress of a woman's affections, (not yours, "Astarte," nor yours, "Viola,")—who knows that men are rejected by women every day because they, the men, love them, and are accepted every day because they do not, and therefore can study the arts of pleasing,—a man of sense, when he finds he has established his second parallel too soon, retires quietly to his first, and begins working on his covered ways again. The whole art of love may be read in any Encyclopaedia under the title Fortification, where the terms just used are explained. After the little adventure of the necklace, Dick retreated at once to his first parallel. Elsie loved riding,—and would go off with him on a gallop now and then. He was a master of all those strange Indian horseback-feats which shame the tricks of the circus-riders, and used to astonish and almost amuse her sometimes by disappearing from his saddle, like a phantom horseman lying flat against the side of the bounding creature that bore him, as if he were a hunting leopard with his claws in the horse's flank and flattening himself out against his heaving ribs. Elsie knew a little Spanish too, which she had learned from the young person who had taught her dancing, and Dick enlarged her vocabulary with a few soft phrases, and would sing her a song sometimes, touching the air upon an ancient-looking guitar they had found with the ghostly things in the garret,—a quaint old instrument, marked E. M. on the back, and supposed to have belonged to a certain Elizabeth Mascarene, before mentioned in connection with a work of art,—a fair, dowerless lady, who smiled and sung and faded away, unwedded, a hundred years ago, as dowerless ladies, not a few, are smiling and singing and fading now,—God grant each of them His love,—and one human heart as its interpreter!

As for school, Elsie went or stayed away as she liked. Sometimes, when they thought she was at her desk in the great schoolroom, she would be on The Mountain,—alone always. Dick wanted to go with her, but she would never let him. Once, when she had followed the zigzag path a little way up, she looked back and caught a glimpse of him following her. She turned and passed him without a word, but giving him a look which seemed to make the scars on his wrist tingle, went to her room, where she locked herself up, and did not come out again till evening, Old Sophy having brought her food, and set it down, not speaking, but

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looking into her eyes inquiringly, like a dumb beast trying to feel out his master's will in his face. The evening was clear and the moon shining. As Dick sat at his chamber-window, looking at the mountain-side, he saw a gray-dressed figure flit between the trees and steal along the narrow path which led upward. Elsie's pillow was unpressed that night, but she had not been missed by the household,—for Dick knew enough to keep his own counsel. The next morning she avoided him and went off early to school. It was the same morning that the young master found the flower between the leaves of his Virgil.

The girl got over her angry fit, and was pleasant enough with her cousin for a few days after this; but she shunned rather than sought him. She had taken a new interest in her books, and especially in certain poetical readings which the master conducted with the elder scholars. This gave Master Langdon a good chance to study her ways when her eye was on her book, to notice the inflections of her voice, to watch for any expression of her sentiments; for, to tell the truth, he had a kind of fear that the girl had taken a fancy to him, and, though she interested him, he did not wish to study her heart from the inside.

The more he saw her, the more the sadness of her beauty wrought upon him. She looked as if she might hate, but could not love. She hardly smiled at anything, spoke rarely, but seemed to feel that her natural power of expression lay all in her bright eyes, the force of which so many had felt, but none perhaps had tried to explain to themselves. A person accustomed to watch the faces of those who were ailing in body or mind, and to search in every line and tint for some underlying source of disorder, could hardly help analyzing the impression such a face produced upon him. The light of those beautiful eyes was like the lustre of ice; in all her features there was nothing of that human warmth which shows that sympathy has reached the soul beneath the mask of flesh it wears. The look was that of remoteness, of utter isolation. There was in its stony apathy, it seemed to him, the pathos which we find in the blind who show no film or speck over the organs of sight; for Nature had meant her to be lovely, and left out nothing but love. And yet the master could not help feeling that some instinct was working in this girl which was in some way leading her to seek his presence. She did not lift her glittering eyes upon him as at first. It seemed strange that she did not, for they were surely her natural weapons of conquest. Her color did not come and go like that of young girls under excitement. She had a clear brunette complexion, a little sun-touched, it may be,—for the master noticed once, when her necklace was slightly displaced, that a faint ring or band of a little lighter shade than the rest of the surface encircled her neck. What was the slight peculiarity of her enunciation, when she read? Not a lisp, certainly, but the least possible imperfection in articulating some of the lingual sounds,—just enough to be noticed at first, and quite forgotten after being a few times heard.

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Not a word about the flower on either side. It was not uncommon for the schoolgirls to leave a rose or pink or wild flower on the teacher's desk. Finding it in the Virgil was nothing, after all; it was a little delicate flower, which looked as if it were made to press, and it was probably shut in by accident at the particular place where he found it. He took it into his head to examine it in a botanical point of view. He found it was not common,—that it grew only in certain localities,—and that one of these was among the rocks of the eastern spur of The Mountain.

It happened to come into his head how the Swiss youth climb the sides of the Alps to find the flower called the Edelweiss for the maidens whom they wish to please. It is a pretty fancy, that of scaling some dangerous height before the dawn, so as to gather the flower in its freshness, that the favored maiden may wear it to church on Sunday morning, a proof at once of her lover's devotion and his courage. Mr. Bernard determined to explore the region where this flower was said to grow, that he might see where the wild girl sought the blossoms of which Nature was so jealous.

It was on a warm, fair Saturday afternoon that he undertook his land-voyage of discovery. He had more curiosity, it may be, than he would have owned; for he had heard of the girl's wandering habits, and the guesses about her sylvan haunts, and was thinking what the chances were that he should meet her in some strange place, or come upon traces of her which would tell secrets she would not care to have known.

The woods are all alive to one who walks through them with his mind in an excited state, and his eyes and ears wide open. The trees are always talking, not merely whispering with their leaves, (for every tree talks to itself in that way, even when it stands alone in the middle of a pasture,) but grating their boughs against each other, as old horn-handed farmers press their dry, rustling palms together, dropping a nut or a leaf or a twig, clicking to the tap of a woodpecker, or rustling as a squirrel flashes along a branch. It was now the season of singing-birds, and the woods were haunted with mysterious, tender music. The voices of the birds which love the deeper shades of the forest are sadder than those of the open fields: these are the nuns who have taken the veil, the hermits that have hidden themselves away from the world and tell their griefs to the infinite listening Silences of the wilderness,—for the one deep inner silence that Nature breaks with her fitful superficial sounds becomes multiplied as the image of a star in ruffled waters. Strange! The woods at first convey the impression of profound repose, and yet, if you watch their ways with open ear, you find the life which is in them is restless and nervous as that of a woman: the little twigs are crossing and twining and separating like slender fingers that cannot be still; the stray leaf is to

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be flattened into its place like a truant curl; the limbs sway and twist, impatient of their constrained attitude; and the rounded masses of foliage swell upward and subside from time to time with long soft sighs, and, it may be, the falling of a few rain-drops which had lain hidden among the deeper shadows. I pray you, notice, in the sweet summer days which will soon see you among the mountains, this inward tranquillity that belongs to the heart of the woodland, with this nervousness, for I do not know what else to call it, of outer movement. One would say, that Nature, like untrained persons, could not sit still without nestling about or doing something with her limbs or features, and that high breeding was only to be looked for in trim gardens, where the soul of the trees is ill at ease perhaps, but their manners are unexceptionable, and a rustling branch or leaf falling out of season is an indecorum. The real forest is hardly still except in the Indian summer; then there is death in the house, and they are waiting for the sharp shrunk months to come with white raiment for the summer's burial.

There were many hemlocks in this neighborhood, the grandest and most solemn of all the forest-trees in the mountain regions. Up to a certain period of growth they are eminently beautiful, their boughs disposed in the most graceful pagoda-like series of close terraces, thick and dark with green crystalline leaflets. In spring the tender shoots come out of a paler green, finger-like, as if they were pointing to the violets at their feet. But when the trees have grown old, and their rough boles measure a yard and more through their diameter, they are no longer beautiful, but they have a sad solemnity all their own, too full of meaning to require the heart's comment to be framed in words. Below, all their earthward-looking branches are sapless and shattered, splintered by the weight of many winters' snows; above, they are still green and full of life, but their summits overtop all the deciduous trees around them, and in their companionship with heaven they are alone. On these the lightning loves to fall. One such Mr. Bernard saw, —or rather, what had been one such; for the bolt had torn the tree like an explosion from within, and the ground was strewn all around the broken stump with flakes of rough bark and strips and chips of shivered wood, into which the old tree had been rent by the bursting rocket from the thunder-cloud.

—The master had struck up The Mountain obliquely from the western side of the Dudley mansion-house. In this way he ascended until he reached a point many hundred feet above the level of the plain, and commanding all the country beneath and around. Almost at his feet he saw the mansion-house, the chimney standing out of the middle of the roof, or rather, like a black square hole in it,—the trees almost directly over their stems, the fences as lines, the whole nearly as an architect would draw

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a ground-plan of the house and the inclosures round it. It frightened him to see how the huge masses of rock and old forest-growths hung over the home below. As he descended a little and drew near the ledge of evil name, he was struck with the appearance of a long narrow fissure that ran parallel with it and above it for many rods, not seemingly of very old standing,—for there were many fibres of roots which had evidently been snapped asunder when the rent took place, and some of which were still succulent in both separated portions.

Mr. Bernard had made up his mind, when he set forth, not to come back before he had examined the dreaded ledge. He had half persuaded himself that it was scientific curiosity. He wished to examine the rocks, to see what flowers grew there, and perhaps to pick up an adventure in the zoological line; for he had on a pair of high, stout boots, and he carried a stick in his hand, which was forked at one extremity, so as to be very convenient to hold down a crotalus with, if he should happen to encounter one. He knew the aspect of the ledge from a distance; for its bald and leprous-looking declivities stood out in their nakedness from the wooded sides of The Mountain, when this was viewed from certain points of the village. But the nearer aspect of the blasted region had something frightful in it. The cliffs were water-worn, as if they had been gnawed for thousands of years by hungry waves. In some places they overhung their base so as to look like leaning towers which might topple over at any minute. In other parts they were scooped into niches or caverns. Here and there they were cracked in deep fissures, some of them of such width that one might enter them, if he cared to run the risk of meeting the regular tenants, who might treat him as an intruder.

Parts of the ledge were cloven perpendicularly, with nothing but cracks or slightly projecting edges in which or on which a foot could find hold. High up on one of these precipitous walls of rock he saw some tufts of flowers, and knew them at once for the same that he had found between the leaves of his Virgil. Not there, surely! No woman would have clung against that steep, rough parapet to gather an idle blossom. And yet the master looked round everywhere, and even up the side of that rock, to see if there were no signs of a woman's footstep. He peered about curiously, as if his eye might fall on some of those fragments of dress which women leave after them, whenever they run against each other or against anything else,—in crowded ballrooms, in the brushwood after picnics, on the fences after rambles, scattered round over every place which has witnessed an act of violence, where rude hands have been laid upon them. Nothing—Stop, though, one moment. That stone is smooth and polished, as if it had been somewhat worn by the pressure of human feet. There is one twig broken among the stems of that clump of shrubs. He put his

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foot upon the stone and took hold of the close-clinging shrub. In this way he turned a sharp angle of the rock and found himself on a natural platform, which lay in front of one of the wider fissures,—whether the mouth of a cavern or not he could not yet tell. A flat stone made an easy seat, upon which he sat down, as he was very glad to do, and looked mechanically about him. A small fragment splintered from the rock was at his feet. He took it and threw it down the declivity a little below where he sat. He looked about for a stem or a straw of some kind to bite upon,—a country-instinct,—relic, no doubt, of the old vegetable-feeding habits of Eden. Is that a stem or a straw? He picked it up. It was a hair-pin.

To say that Mr. Langdon had a strange sort of thrill shoot through him at the sight of this harmless little implement would be a statement not at variance with the fact of the case. That smooth stone had been often trodden, and by what foot he could not doubt. He rose up from his seat to look round for other signs of a woman's visits. What if there is a cavern here, where she has a retreat, fitted up, perhaps, as anchorites fitted their cells,—nay, it may be, carpeted and mirrored, and with one of those tiger-skins for a couch, such as they, say the girl loves to lie on? Let us look, at any rate.

Mr. Bernard walked to the mouth of the cavern or fissure and looked into it. His look was met by the glitter of two diamond eyes, small, sharp, cold, shining out of the darkness, but gliding with a smooth, steady motion towards the light, and himself. He stood fixed, struck dumb, staring back into them with dilating pupils and sudden numbness of fear that cannot move, as in the terror of dreams. The two sparks of light came forward until they grew to circles of flame, and all at once lifted themselves up as if in angry surprise. Then for the first time thrilled in Mr. Bernard's ears the dreadful sound that nothing which breathes, be it man or brute, can hear unmoved,—the long, loud, stinging whirr, as the huge, thick bodied reptile shook his many-jointed rattle and adjusted his loops for the fatal stroke. His eyes were drawn as with magnets toward the circles of flame. His ears rung as in the overture to the swooning dream of chloroform. Nature was before man with her anaesthetics: the cat's first shake stupefies the mouse; the lion's first shake deadens the man's fear and feeling; and the crotalus paralyzes before he strikes. He waited as in a trance,—waited as one that longs to have the blow fall, and all over, as the man who shall be in two pieces in a second waits for the axe to drop. But while he looked straight into the flaming eyes, it seemed to him that they were losing their light and terror, that they were growing tame and dull; the charm was dissolving, the numbness was passing away, he could move once more. He heard a light breathing close to his ear, and, half turning, saw the face of Elsie Venner, looking motionless into the reptile's eyes, which had shrunk and faded under the stronger enchantment of her own.

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CHAPTER XIV.

Family secrets.

It was commonly understood in the town of Rockland that Dudley Venner had had a great deal of trouble with that daughter of his, so handsome, yet so peculiar, about whom there were so many strange stories. There was no end to the tales which were told of her extraordinary doings. Yet her name was never coupled with that of any youth or man, until this cousin had provoked remark by his visit; and even then it was oftener in the shape of wondering conjectures whether he would dare to make love to her, than in any pretended knowledge of their relations to each other, that the public tongue exercised its village-prerogative of tattle.

The more common version of the trouble at the mansion-house was this: Elsie was not exactly in her right mind. Her temper was singular, her tastes were anomalous, her habits were lawless, her antipathies were many and intense, and she was liable to explosions of ungovernable anger. Some said that was not the worst of it. At nearly fifteen years old, when she was growing fast, and in an irritable state of mind and body, she had had a governess placed over her for whom she had conceived an aversion. It was whispered among a few who knew more of the family secrets than others, that, worried and exasperated by the presence and jealous oversight of this person, Elsie had attempted to get finally rid of her by unlawful means, such as young girls have been known to employ in their straits, and to which the sex at all ages has a certain instinctive tendency, in preference to more palpable instruments for the righting of its wrongs. At any rate, this governess had been taken suddenly ill, and the Doctor had been sent for at midnight. Old Sophy had taken her master into a room apart, and said a few words to him which turned him as white as a sheet. As soon as he recovered himself, he sent Sophy out, called in the old Doctor, and gave him some few hints, on which he acted at once, and had the satisfaction of seeing his patient out of danger before he left in the morning. It is proper to say, that, during the following days, the most thorough search was made in every nook and cranny of those parts of the house which Elsie chiefly haunted, but nothing was found which might be accused of having been the intentional cause of the probably accidental sudden illness of the governess. From this time forward her father was never easy. Should he keep her apart, or shut her up, for fear of risk to others, and so lose every chance of restoring her mind to its healthy tone by kindly influences and intercourse with wholesome natures? There was no proof, only presumption, as to the agency of Elsie in the matter referred to. But the doubt was worse, perhaps, than certainty would have been,—for then he would have known what to do.

He took the old Doctor as his adviser. The shrewd old man listened to the father's story, his explanations of possibilities, of probabilities, of dangers, of hopes. When he had got through, the Doctor looked him in the face steadily, as if he were saying, Is that all?

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The father's eyes fell. This was not all. There was something at the bottom of his soul which he could not bear to speak of,—nay, which, as often as it reared itself through the dark waves of unworded consciousness into the breathing air of thought, he trod down as the ruined angels tread down a lost soul, trying to come up out of the seething sea of torture. Only this one daughter! No! God never would have ordained such a thing. There was nothing ever heard of like it; it could not be; she was ill,—she would outgrow all these singularities; he had had an aunt who was peculiar; he had heard that hysteric girls showed the strangest forms of moral obliquity for a time, but came right at last. She would change all at once, when her health got more firmly settled in the course of her growth. Are there not rough buds that open into sweet flowers? Are there not fruits, which, while unripe, are not to be tasted or endured, which mature into the richest taste and fragrance? In God's good time she would come to her true nature; her eyes would lose that frightful, cold glitter; her lips would not feel so cold when she pressed them against his cheek; and that faint birth-mark, her mother swooned when she first saw, would fade wholly out,—it was less marked, surely, now than it used to be!

So Dudley Venner felt, and would have thought, if he had let his thoughts breathe the air of his soul. But the Doctor read through words and thoughts and all into the father's consciousness. There are states of mind which may be shared by two persons in presence of each other, which remain not only unworded, but unthoughted, if such a word may be coined for our special need. Such a mutually interpenetrative consciousness there was between the father and the old physician. By a common impulse, both of them rose in a mechanical way and went to the western window, where each started, as he saw the other's look directed towards the white stone which stood in the midst of the small plot of green turf.

The Doctor had, for a moment, forgotten himself but he looked up at the clouds, which were angry, and said, as if speaking of the weather, "It is dark now, but we hope it will clear up by and by. There are a great many more clouds than rains, and more rains than strokes of lightning, and more strokes of lightning than there are people killed. We must let this girl of ours have her way, as far as it is safe. Send away this woman she hates, quietly. Get her a foreigner for a governess, if you can,—one that can dance and sing and will teach her. In the house old Sophy will watch her best. Out of it you must trust her, I am afraid,—for she will not be followed round, and she is in less danger than you think. If she wanders at night, find her, if you can; the woods are not absolutely safe. If she will be friendly with any young people, have them to see her,—young men especially. She will not love any one easily, perhaps not at all; yet love would be more like to bring her right than anything else. If any young person seems in danger of falling in love with her, send him to me for counsel."

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Dry, hard advice, but given from a kind hewn, with a moist eye, and in tones which tried to be cheerful and were full of sympathy. This advice was the key to the more than indulgent treatment which, as we have seen, the girl had received from her father and all about her. The old Doctor often came in, in the kindest, most natural sort of way, got into pleasant relations with Elsie by always treating her in the same easy manner as at the great party, encouraging all her harmless fancies, and rarely reminding her that he was a professional adviser, except when she came out of her own accord, as in the talk they had at the party, telling him of some wild trick she had been playing.

“Let her go to the girls’ school, by all means,” said the Doctor, when she had begun to talk about it. “Possibly she may take to some of the girls or of the teachers. Anything to interest her. Friendship, love, religion, whatever will set her nature at work. We must have headway on, or there will be no piloting her. Action first of all, and then we will see what to do with it.”

So, when Cousin Richard came along, the Doctor, though he did not like his looks any too well, told her father to encourage his staying for a time. If she liked him, it was good; if she only tolerated him, it was better than nothing.

“You know something about that nephew of yours, during these last years, I suppose?” the Doctor said. “Looks as if he had seen life. Has a scar that was made by a sword-cut, and a white spot on the side of his neck that looks like a bullet-mark. I think he has been what folks call a ‘hard customer.’”

Dudley Venner owned that he had heard little or nothing of him of late years. He had invited himself, and of course it would not be decent not to receive him as a relative. He thought Elsie rather liked having him about the house for a while. She was very capricious,—acted as if she fancied him one day and disliked him the next. He did not know,—but sometimes thought that this nephew of his might take a serious liking to Elsie. What should he do about it, if it turned out so?

The Doctor lifted his eyebrows a little. He thought there was no fear. Elsie was naturally what they call a man-hater, and there was very little danger of any sudden passion springing up between two such young persons. Let him stay awhile; it gives her something to think about. So he stayed awhile, as we have seen.

The more Mr. Richard became acquainted with the family,—that is, with the two persons of whom it consisted,—the more favorably the idea of a permanent residence in the mansion-house seemed to impress him. The estate was large,—hundreds of acres, with woodlands and meadows of great value. The father and daughter had been living quietly, and there could not be a doubt that the property which came through the Dudleys must have largely increased of late years. It was evident enough that they had an abundant income,

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from the way in which Elsie's caprices were indulged. She had horses and carriages to suit herself; she sent to the great city for everything she wanted in the way of dress. Even her diamonds—and the young man knew something about these gems—must be of considerable value; and yet she wore them carelessly, as it pleased her fancy. She had precious old laces, too, almost worth their weight in diamonds; laces which had been snatched from altars in ancient Spanish cathedrals during the wars, and which it would not be safe to leave a duchess alone with for ten minutes. The old house was fat with the deposits of rich generations which had gone before. The famous "golden" fire-set was a purchase of one of the family who had been in France during the Revolution, and must have come from a princely palace, if not from one of the royal residences. As for silver, the iron closet which had been made in the dining-room wall was running over with it: tea-kettles, coffee-pots, heavy-lidded tankards, chafing-dishes, punch-bowls, all that all the Dudleys had ever used, from the caudle-cup which used to be handed round the young mother's chamber, and the porringer from which children scooped their bread-and-milk with spoons as solid as ingots, to that ominous vessel, on the upper shelf, far back in the dark, with a spout like a slender italic S, out of which the sick and dying, all along the last century, and since, had taken the last drops that passed their lips. Without being much of a scholar, Dick could see well enough, too, that the books in the library had been ordered from the great London houses, whose imprint they bore, by persons who knew what was best and meant to have it. A man does not require much learning to feel pretty sure, when he takes one of those solid, smooth, velvet-leaved quartos, say a Baskerville Addison, for instance, bound in red morocco, with a margin of gold as rich as the embroidery of a prince's collar, as Vandyck drew it,—he need not know much to feel pretty sure that a score or two of shelves full of such books mean that it took a long purse, as well as a literary taste, to bring them together.

To all these attractions the mind of this thoughtful young gentleman may be said to have been fully open. He did not disguise from himself, however, that there were a number of drawbacks in the way of his becoming established as the heir of the Dudley mansion-house and fortune. In the first place, Cousin Elsie was, unquestionably, very piquant, very handsome, game as a hawk, and hard to please, which made her worth trying for. But then there was something about Cousin Elsie,—(the small, white scars began stinging, as he said this to himself, and he pushed his sleeve up to look at them)—there was something about Cousin Elsie he couldn't make out. What was the matter with her eyes, that they sucked your life out of you in that strange way? What did she always wear a necklace for? Had she some such love-token on her neck as the old Don's revolver had left on his? How safe would anybody feel to live with her? Besides, her father would last forever, if he was left to himself. And he may take it into his head to marry again. That would be pleasant!

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So talked Cousin Richard to himself, in the calm of the night and in the tranquillity of his own soul. There was much to be said on both sides. It was a balance to be struck after the two columns were added up. He struck the balance, and came to the conclusion that he would fall in love with Elsie Venner.

The intelligent reader will not confound this matured and serious intention of falling in love with the young lady with that mere impulse of the moment before mentioned as an instance of making love. On the contrary, the moment Mr. Richard had made up his mind that he should fall in love with Elsie, he began to be more reserved with her, and to try to make friends in other quarters. Sensible men, you know, care very little what a girl's present fancy is. The question is: Who manages her, and how can you get at that person or those persons? Her foolish little sentiments are all very well in their way; but business is business, and we can't stop for such trifles. The old political wire-pullers never go near the man they want to gain, if they can help it; they find out who his intimates and managers are, and work through them. Always handle any positively electrical body, whether it is charged with passion or power, with some non-conductor between you and it, not with your naked hands. —The above were some of the young gentleman's working axioms; and he proceeded to act in accordance with them.

He began by paying his court more assiduously to his uncle. It was not very hard to ingratiate himself in that quarter; for his manners were insinuating, and his precocious experience of life made him entertaining. The old neglected billiard-room was soon put in order, and Dick, who was a magnificent player, had a series of games with his uncle, in which, singularly enough, he was beaten, though his antagonist had been out of play for years. He evinced a profound interest in the family history, insisted on having the details of its early alliances, and professed a great pride in it, which he had inherited from his father, who, though he had allied himself with the daughter of an alien race, had yet chosen one with the real azure blood in her veins, as proud as if she had Castile and Aragon for her dower and the Cid for her grand-papa. He also asked a great deal of advice, such as inexperienced young persons are in need of, and listened to it with due reverence.

It is not very strange that uncle Dudley took a kinder view of his nephew than the Judge, who thought he could read a questionable history in his face,—or the old Doctor, who knew men's temperaments and organizations pretty well, and had his prejudices about races, and could tell an old sword-cut and a ballet-mark in two seconds from a scar got by falling against the fender, or a mark left by king's evil. He could not be expected to share our own prejudices; for he had heard nothing of the wild youth's adventures, or his scamper over the Pampas at short notice. So, then, "Richard Venner, Esquire, guest of Dudley Venner, Esquire, at his elegant mansion," prolonged his visit until his presence became something like a matter of habit, and the neighbors began to think that the fine old house would be illuminated before long for a grand marriage.

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He had done pretty well with the father: the next thing was to gain over the nurse. Old Sophy was as cunning as a red fox or a gray woodchuck. She had nothing in the world to do but to watch Elsie; she had nothing to care for but this girl and her father. She had never liked Dick too well; for he used to make faces at her and tease her when he was a boy, and now he was a man there was something about him—she could not tell what—that made her suspicious of him. It was no small matter to get her over to his side.

The jet-black Africans know that gold never looks so well as on the foil of their dark skins. Dick found in his trunk a string of gold beads, such as are manufactured in some of our cities, which he had brought from the gold region of Chili,—so he said,—for the express purpose of giving them to old Sophy. These Africans, too, have a perfect passion for gay-colored clothing; being condemned by Nature, as it were, to a perpetual mourning-suit, they love to enliven it with all sorts of variegated stuffs of sprightly patterns, aflame with red and yellow. The considerate young man had remembered this, too, and brought home for Sophy some handkerchiefs of rainbow hues, which had been strangely overlooked till now, at the bottom of one of his trunks. Old Sophy took his gifts, but kept her black eyes open and watched every movement of the young people all the more closely. It was through her that the father had always known most of the actions and tendencies of his daughter.

In the mean time the strange adventure on The Mountain had brought the young master into new relations with Elsie. She had led him out of, danger; perhaps saved him from death by the strange power she exerted. He was grateful, and yet shuddered at the recollection of the whole scene. In his dreams he was pursued by the glare of cold glittering eyes, whether they were in the head of a woman or of a reptile he could not always tell, the images had so run together. But he could not help seeing that the eyes of the young girl had been often, very often, turned upon him when he had been looking away, and fell as his own glance met them. Helen Darley told him very plainly that this girl was thinking about him more than about her book. Dick Venner found she was getting more constant in her attendance at school. He learned, on inquiry, that there was a new master, a handsome young man. The handsome young man would not have liked the look that, came over Dick's face when he heard this fact mentioned.

In short, everything was getting tangled up together, and there would be no chance of disentangling the threads in this chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

Physiological.

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If Master Bernard felt a natural gratitude to his young pupil for saving him from an imminent peril, he was in a state of infinite perplexity to know why he should have needed such aid. He, an active, muscular, courageous, adventurous young fellow, with—a stick in his hand, ready to hold down the Old Serpent himself, if he had come in his way, to stand still, staring into those two eyes, until they came up close to him, and the strange, terrible sound seemed to freeze him stiff where he stood,—what was the meaning of it? Again, what was the influence this girl had seemingly exerted, under which the venomous creature had collapsed in such a sudden way? Whether he had been awake or dreaming he did not feel quite sure. He knew he had gone up The Mountain, at any rate; he knew he had come down The Mountain with the girl walking just before him;—there was no forgetting her figure, as she walked on in silence, her braided locks falling a little, for want of the lost hairpin, perhaps, and looking like a wreathing coil of—Shame on such fancies!—to wrong that supreme crowning gift of abounding Nature, a rush of shining black hair, which, shaken loose, would cloud her all round, like Godiva, from brow to instep! He was sure he had sat down before the fissure or cave. He was sure that he was led softly away from the place, and that it was Elsie who had led him. There was the hair-pin to show that so far it was not a dream. But between these recollections came a strange confusion; and the more the master thought, the more he was perplexed to know whether she had waked him, sleeping, as he sat on the stone, from some frightful dream, such as may come in a very brief slumber, or whether she had bewitched him into a trance with those strange eyes of hers, or whether it was all true, and he must solve its problem as he best might.

There was another recollection connected with this mountain adventure. As they approached the mansion-house, they met a young man, whom Mr. Bernard remembered having seen once at least before, and whom he had heard of as a cousin of the young girl. As Cousin Richard Venner, the person in question, passed them, he took the measure, so to speak, of Mr. Bernard, with a look so piercing, so exhausting, so practised, so profoundly suspicious, that the young master felt in an instant that he had an enemy in this handsome youth,—an enemy, too, who was like to be subtle and dangerous.

Mr. Bernard had made up his mind, that, come what might, enemy or no enemy, live or die, he would solve the mystery of Elsie Venner, sooner or later. He was not a man to be frightened out of his resolution by a scowl, or a stiletto, or any unknown means of mischief, of which a whole armory was hinted at in that passing look Dick Venner had given him. Indeed, like most adventurous young persons, he found a kind of charm in feeling that there might be some dangers in the way of his investigations. Some rumors which had reached him about the supposed suitor of Elsie Venner, who was thought to be a desperate kind of fellow, and whom some believed to be an unscrupulous adventurer, added a curious, romantic kind of interest to the course of physiological and psychological inquiries he was about instituting.

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The afternoon on The Mountain was still upper-most in his mind. Of course he knew the common stories—about fascination. He had once been himself an eyewitness of the charming of a small bird by one of our common harmless serpents. Whether a human being could be reached by this subtle agency, he had been skeptical, notwithstanding the mysterious relation generally felt to exist between man and this creature, “cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field,”—a relation which some interpret as the fruit of the curse, and others hold to be so instinctive that this animal has been for that reason adopted as the natural symbol of evil. There was another solution, however, supplied him by his professional reading. The curious work of Mr. Braid of Manchester had made him familiar with the phenomena of a state allied to that produced by animal magnetism, and called by that writer by the name of hypnotism. He found, by referring to his note-book, the statement was, that, by fixing the eyes on a bright object so placed as to produce a strain upon the eyes and eyelids, and to maintain a steady fixed stare, there comes on in a few seconds a very singular condition, characterized by muscular rigidity and inability to move, with a strange exaltation of most of the senses, and generally a closure of the eyelids,—this condition being followed by torpor.

Now this statement of Mr. Braid’s, well known to the scientific world, and the truth of which had been confirmed by Mr. Bernard in certain experiments he had instituted, as it has been by many other experimenters, went far to explain the strange impressions, of which, waking or dreaming, he had certainly been the subject. His nervous system had been in a high state of exaltation at the time. He remembered how the little noises that made rings of sound in the silence of the woods, like pebbles dropped in still waters, had reached his inner consciousness. He remembered that singular sensation in the roots of the hair, when he came on the traces of the girl’s presence, reminding him of a line in a certain poem which he had read lately with a new and peculiar interest. He even recalled a curious evidence of exalted sensibility and irritability, in the twitching of the minute muscles of the internal ear at every unexpected sound, producing an odd little snap in the middle of the head, which proved to him that he was getting very nervous.

The next thing was to find out whether it were possible that the venomous creature’s eyes should have served the purpose of Mr. Braid’s “bright object” held very close to the person experimented on, or whether they had any special power which could be made the subject of exact observation.

For this purpose Mr. Bernard considered it necessary to get a live crotalus or two into his possession, if this were possible. On inquiry, he found that there was a certain family living far up the mountainside, not a mile from the ledge, the members of which were said to have taken these creatures occasionally, and not to be in any danger, or at least in any fear, of being injured by them. He applied to these people, and offered a reward sufficient to set them at work to capture some of these animals, if such a thing were possible.

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A few days after this, a dark, gypsy-looking woman presented herself at his door. She held up her apron as if it contained something precious in the bag she made with it.

"Y' wanted some rattlers," said the woman. "Here they be."

She opened her apron and showed a coil of rattlesnakes lying very peaceably in its fold. They lifted their heads up, as if they wanted to see what was going on, but showed no sign of anger.

"Are you crazy?" said Mr. Bernard. "You're dead in an hour, if one of those creatures strikes you!"

He drew back a little, as he spoke; it might be simple disgust; it might be fear; it might be what we call antipathy, which is different from either, and which will sometimes show itself in paleness, and even faintness, produced by objects perfectly harmless and not in themselves offensive to any sense.

"Lord bless you," said the woman, "rattlers never touches our folks. I'd jest 'z lieves handle them creaturs as so many striped snakes."

So saying, she put their heads down with her hand, and packed them together in her apron as if they had been bits of cart-rope.

Mr. Bernard had never heard of the power, or, at least, the belief in the possession of a power by certain persons, which enables them to handle these frightful reptiles with perfect impunity. The fact, however, is well known to others, and more especially to a very distinguished Professor in one of the leading institutions of the great city of the land, whose experiences in the neighborhood of Graylock, as he will doubtless inform the curious, were very much like those of the young master.

Mr. Bernard had a wired cage ready for his formidable captives, and studied their habits and expression with a strange sort of interest. What did the Creator mean to signify, when he made such shapes of horror, and, as if he had doubly cursed this envenomed wretch, had set a mark upon him and sent him forth the Cain of the brotherhood of serpents? It was a very curious fact that the first train of thoughts Mr. Bernard's small menagerie suggested to him was the grave, though somewhat worn, subject of the origin of evil. There is now to be seen in a tall glass jar, in the Museum of Comparative Anatomy at Cantabridge in the territory of the Massachusetts, a huge crotalus, of a species which grows to more frightful dimensions than our own, under the hotter skies of South America. Look at it, ye who would know what is the tolerance, the freedom from prejudice, which can suffer such an incarnation of all that is devilish to lie unharmed in the cradle of Nature! Learn, too, that there are many things in this world which we are warned to shun, and are even suffered to slay, if need be, but which we must not hate, unless we would hate what God loves and cares for.

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Whatever fascination the creature might exercise in his native haunts, Mr. Bernard found himself not in the least nervous or affected in any way while looking at his caged reptiles. When their cage was shaken, they would lift their heads and spring their rattles; but the sound was by no means so formidable to listen to as when it reverberated among the chasms of the echoing rocks. The expression of the creatures was watchful, still, grave, passionless, fate-like, suggesting a cold malignity which seemed to be waiting for its opportunity. Their awful, deep-cut mouths were sternly closed over the long hollow fangs which rested their roots against the swollen poison-gland, where the venom had been hoarding up ever since the last stroke had emptied it. They never winked, for ophidians have no movable eyelids, but kept up that awful fixed stare which made the two unwinking gladiators the survivors of twenty pairs matched by one of the Roman Emperors, as Pliny tells us, in his "Natural History." Their eyes did not flash, but shone with a cold still light. They were of a pale-golden or straw color, horrible to look into, with their stony calmness, their pitiless indifference, hardly enlivened by the almost imperceptible vertical slit of the pupil, through which Death seemed to be looking out like the archer behind the long narrow loop-hole in a blank turret-wall. On the whole, the caged reptiles, horrid as they were, hardly matched his recollections of what he had seen or dreamed he saw at the cavern. These looked dangerous enough, but yet quiet. A treacherous stillness, however,—as the unfortunate New York physician found, when he put his foot out to wake up the torpid creature, and instantly the fang flashed through his boot, carrying the poison into his blood, and death with it.

Mr. Bernard kept these strange creatures, and watched all their habits with a natural curiosity. In any collection of animals the venomous beasts are looked at with the greatest interest, just as the greatest villains are most run after by the unknown public. Nobody troubles himself for a common striped snake or a petty thief, but a cobra or a wife-killer is a centre of attraction to all eyes. These captives did very little to earn their living, but, on the other hand, their living was not expensive, their diet being nothing but air, *au naturel*. Months and months these creatures will live and seem to thrive well enough, as any showman who has then in his menagerie will testify, though they never touch anything to eat or drink.

In the mean time Mr. Bernard had become very curious about a class of subjects not treated of in any detail in those text-books accessible in most country-towns, to the exclusion of the more special treatises, and especially of the rare and ancient works found on the shelves of the larger city-libraries. He was on a visit to old Dr. Kittredge one day, having been asked by him to call in for a few moments as soon as convenient. The Doctor smiled good-humoredly when he asked him if he had an extensive collection of medical works.

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"Why, no," said the old Doctor, "I haven't got a great many printed books; and what I have I don't read quite as often as I might, I'm afraid. I read and studied in the time of it, when I was in the midst of the young men who were all at work with their books; but it's a mighty hard matter, when you go off alone into the country, to keep up with all that's going on in the Societies and the Colleges. I'll tell you, though, Mr. Langdon, when a man that's once started right lives among sick folks for five-and-thirty years, as I've done, if he has n't got a library of five-and-thirty volumes bound up in his head at the end of that time, he'd better stop driving round and sell his horse and sulky. I know the bigger part of the families within a dozen miles' ride. I know the families that have a way of living through everything, and I know the other set that have the trick of dying without any kind of reason for it. I know the years when the fevers and dysenteries are in earnest, and when they're only making believe. I know the folks that think they're dying as soon as they're sick, and the folks that never find out they're sick till they're dead. I don't want to undervalue your science, Mr. Langdon. There are things I never learned, because they came in after my day, and I am very glad to send my patients to those that do know them, when I am at fault; but I know these people about here, fathers and mothers, and children and grandchildren, so as all the science in the world can't know them, without it takes time about it, and sees them grow up and grow old, and how the wear and tear of life comes to them. You can't tell a horse by driving him once, Mr. Langdon, nor a patient by talking half an hour with him."

"Do you know much about the Veneer family?" said Mr. Bernard, in a natural way enough, the Doctor's talk having suggested the question.

The Doctor lifted his head with his accustomed movement, so as to command the young man through his spectacles.

"I know all the families of this place and its neighborhood," he answered.

"We have the young lady studying with us at the Institute," said Mr. Bernard.

"I know it," the Doctor answered. "Is she a good scholar?"

All this time the Doctor's eyes were fixed steadily on Mr. Bernard, looking through the glasses.

"She is a good scholar enough, but I don't know what to make of her. Sometimes I think she is a little out of her head. Her father, I believe, is sensible enough;—what sort of a woman was her mother, Doctor?—I suppose, of course, you remember all about her?"

"Yes, I knew her mother. She was a very lovely young woman."—The Doctor put his hand to his forehead and drew a long breath.—"What is there you notice out of the way about Elsie Venner?"



“A good many things,” the master answered. “She shuns all the other girls. She is getting a strange influence over my fellow-teacher, a young lady,—you know Miss Helen Darley, perhaps? I am afraid this girl will kill her. I never saw or heard of anything like it, in prose at least;—do you remember much of Coleridge’s Poems, Doctor?”

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The good old Doctor had to plead a negative.

“Well, no matter. Elsie would have been burned for a witch in old times. I have seen the girl look at Miss Darley when she had not the least idea of it, and all at once I would see her grow pale and moist, and sigh, and move round uneasily, and turn towards Elsie, and perhaps get up and go to her, or else have slight spasmodic movements that looked like hysterics;—do you believe in the evil eye, Doctor?”

“Mr. Langdon,” the Doctor said, solemnly, “there are strange things about Elsie Veneer, —very strange things. This was what I wanted to speak to you about. Let me advise you all to be very patient with the girl, but also very careful. Her love is not to be desired, and “—he spoke in a lower tone—“her hate is to be dreaded. Do you think she has any special fancy for anybody else in the school besides Miss Darley?”

Mr. Bernard could not stand the old Doctor’s spectacled eyes without betraying a little of the feeling natural to a young man to whom a home question involving a possible sentiment is put suddenly.

“I have suspected,” he said,—“I have had a kind of feeling—that she—Well, come, Doctor,—I don’t know that there ’s any use in disguising the matter,—I have thought Elsie Veneer had rather a fancy for somebody else,—I mean myself.”

There was something so becoming in the blush with which the young man made this confession, and so manly, too, in the tone with which he spoke, so remote from any shallow vanity, such as young men who are incapable of love are apt to feel, when some loose tendril of a woman’s fancy which a chance wind has blown against them twines about them for the want of anything better, that the old Doctor looked at him admiringly, and could not help thinking that it was no wonder any young girl should be pleased with him.

“You are a man of nerve, Mr. Langdon?” said the Doctor.

“I thought so till very lately,” he replied. “I am not easily frightened, but I don’t know but I might be bewitched or magnetized, or whatever it is when one is tied up and cannot move. I think I can find nerve enough, however, if there is any special use you want to put it to.”

“Let me ask you one more question, Mr. Langdon. Do you find yourself disposed to take a special interest in Elsie,—to fall in love with her, in a word? Pardon me, for I do not ask from curiosity, but a much more serious motive.”

“Elsie interests me,” said the young man, “interests me strangely. She has a wild flavor in her character which is wholly different from that of any human creature I ever saw. She has marks of genius, poetic or dramatic,—I hardly know which. She read a



passage from Keats's 'Lamia' the other day, in the schoolroom, in such a way that I declare to you I thought some of the girls would faint or go into fits. Miss Darley got up and left the room, trembling all over. Then, I pity her, she is so lonely. The girls

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are afraid of her, and she seems to have either a dislike or a fear of them. They have all sorts of painful stories about her. They give her a name which no human creature ought to bear. They say she hides a mark on her neck by always wearing a necklace. She is very graceful, you know, and they will have it that she can twist herself into all sorts of shapes, or tie herself in a knot, if she wants to. There is not one of them that will look her in the eyes. I pity the poor girl; but, Doctor, I do not love her. I would risk my life for her, if it would do her any good, but it would be in cold blood. If her hand touches mine, it is not a thrill of passion I feel running through me, but a very different emotion. Oh, Doctor! there must be something in that creature's blood which has killed the humanity in her. God only knows the cause that has blighted such a soul in so beautiful a body! No, Doctor, I do not love the girl."

"Mr. Langdon," said the Doctor, "you are young, and I am old. Let me talk to you with an old man's privilege, as an adviser. You have come to this country-town without suspicion, and you are moving in the midst of perils. There are things which I must not tell you now; but I may warn you. Keep your eyes open and your heart shut. If, through pitying that girl, you ever come to love her, you are lost. If you deal carelessly with her, beware! This is not all. There are other eyes on you beside Elsie Venner's. Do you go armed?"

"I do!" said Mr. Bernard,—and he "put his hands up" in the shape of fists, in such a way as to show that he was master of the natural weapons at any rate.

The Doctor could not help smiling. But his face fell in an instant.

"You may want something more than those tools to work with. Come with me into my sanctum."

The Doctor led Mr. Bernard into a small room opening out of the study. It was a place such as anybody but a medical man would shiver to enter. There was the usual tall box with its bleached, rattling tenant; there were jars in rows where "interesting cases" outlived the grief of widows and heirs in alcoholic immortality,—for your "preparation-jar" is the true "monumentum aere perennius;" there were various semi-possibilities of minute dimensions and unpromising developments; there were shining instruments of evil aspect, and grim plates on the walls, and on one shelf by itself, accursed and apart, coiled in a long cylinder of spirit, a huge crotalus, rough-scaled, flatheaded, variegated with dull bands, one of which partially encircled the neck like a collar,—an awful wretch to look upon, with murder written all over him in horrid hieroglyphics. Mr. Bernard's look was riveted on this creature,—not fascinated certainly, for its eyes looked like white beads, being clouded by the action of the spirits in which it had been long kept,—but fixed by some indefinite sense of the renewal of a previous impression;—everybody knows the feeling, with its suggestion of some past state of existence. There was a

scrap of paper on the jar, with something written on it. He was reaching up to read it when the Doctor touched him lightly.

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“Look here, Mr. Langdon!” he said, with a certain vivacity of manner, as if wishing to call away his attention,—“this is my armory.”

The Doctor threw open the door of a small cabinet, where were disposed in artistic patterns various weapons of offence and defence,—for he was a virtuoso in his way, and by the side of the implements of the art of healing had pleased himself with displaying a collection of those other instruments, the use of which renders the first necessary.

“See which of these weapons you would like best to carry about you,” said the Doctor.

Mr. Bernard laughed, and looked at the Doctor as if he half doubted whether he was in earnest.

“This looks dangerous enough,” he said,—“for the man who carries it, at least.”

He took down one of the prohibited Spanish daggers or knives which a traveller may, occasionally get hold of and smuggle out of the country. The blade was broad, trowel-like, but the point drawn out several inches, so as to look like a skewer.

“This must be a jealous bull-fighter’s weapon,” he said, and put it back in its place.

Then he took down an ancient-looking broad-bladed dagger, with a complex aspect about it, as if it had some kind of mechanism connected with it.

“Take care!” said the Doctor; “there is a trick to that dagger.”

He took it and touched a spring. The dagger split suddenly into three blades, as when one separates the forefinger and the ring-finger from the middle one. The outside blades were sharp on their outer edge. The stab was to be made with the dagger shut, then the spring touched and the split blades withdrawn.

Mr. Bernard replaced it, saying, that it would have served for sidearm to old Suwarrow, who told his men to work their bayonets back and forward when they pinned a Turk, but to wriggle them about in the wound when they stabbed a Frenchman.

“Here,” said the Doctor, “this is the thing you want.”

He took down a much more modern and familiar implement,—a small, beautifully finished revolver.

“I want you to carry this,” he said; “and more than that, I want you to practise with it often, as for amusement, but so that it maybe seen and understood that you are apt to have a pistol about you. Pistol-shooting is pleasant sport enough, and there is no

reason why you should not practise it like other young fellows. And now," the Doctor said, "I have one other, weapon to give you."

He took a small piece of parchment and shook a white powder into it from one of his medicine-jars. The jar was marked with the name of a mineral salt, of a nature to have been serviceable in case of sudden illness in the time of the Borgias. The Doctor folded the parchment carefully, and marked the Latin name of the powder upon it.

"Here," he said, handing it to Mr. Bernard, "you see what it is, and you know what service it can render. Keep these two protectors about your person day and night; they will not harm you, and you may want one or the other or both before you think of it."

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Mr. Bernard thought it was very odd, and not very old-gentlemanlike, to be fitting him out for treason, stratagem, and spoils, in this way. There was no harm, however, in carrying a doctor's powder in his pocket, or in amusing himself with shooting at a mark, as he had often done before. If the old gentleman had these fancies, it was as well to humor him.

So he thanked old Doctor Kittredge, and shook his hand warmly as he left him.

"The fellow's hand did not tremble, nor his color change," the Doctor said, as he watched him walking away. "He is one of the right sort."

CHAPTER XVI

Epistolary.

Mr. Langdon to the Professor.

My dear professor, You were kind enough to promise me that you would assist me in any professional or scientific investigations in which I might become engaged. I have of late become deeply interested in a class of subjects which present peculiar difficulty, and I must exercise the privilege of questioning you on some points upon which I desire information I cannot otherwise obtain. I would not trouble you, if I could find any person or books competent to enlighten me on some of these singular matters which have so excited me. The leading doctor here is a shrewd, sensible man, but not versed in the curiosities of medical literature.

I proceed, with your leave, to ask a considerable number of questions,—hoping to get answers to some of them, at least.

Is there any evidence that human beings can be infected or wrought upon by poisons, or otherwise, so that they shall manifest any of the peculiarities belonging to beings of a lower nature? Can such peculiarities—be transmitted by inheritance? Is there anything to countenance the stories, long and widely current, about the "evil eye"? or is it a mere fancy that such a power belongs to any human being? Have you any personal experience as to the power of fascination said to be exercised by certain animals? What can you make of those circumstantial statements we have seen in the papers, of children forming mysterious friendships with ophidians of different species, sharing their food with them, and seeming to be under some subtle influence exercised by those creatures? Have you read, critically, Coleridge's poem of "Christabel," and Keats's "Lamia"?—If so, can you understand them, or find any physiological foundation for the story of either?

There is another set of questions of a different nature I should like to ask, but it is hardly fair to put so many on a single sheet. There is one, however, you must answer. Do you



think there may be predispositions, inherited or ingrafted, but at any rate constitutional, which shall take out certain apparently voluntary determinations from the control of the will, and leave them as free from moral responsibility as the instincts of the lower animals? Do you not think there may be a crime which is not a sin?

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Pardon me, my dear Sir, for troubling you with such a list of notes of interrogation. There are some very strange things going on here in this place, country-town as it is. Country-life is apt to be dull; but when it once gets going, it beats the city hollow, because it gives its whole mind to what it is about. These rural sinners make terrible work with the middle of the Decalogue, when they get started. However, I hope I shall live through my year's school-keeping without catastrophes, though there are queer doings about me which puzzle me and might scare some people. If anything should happen, you will be one of the first to hear of it, no doubt. But I trust not to help out the editors of the "Rockland Weekly Universe" with an obituary of the late lamented, who signed himself in life—

Your friend and pupil,
Bernard C. Langdon.

The Professor to Mr. Langdon.

My dear Mr. Langdon, I do not wonder that you find no answer from your country friends to the curious questions you put. They belong to that middle region between science and poetry which sensible men, as they are called, are very shy of meddling with. Some people think that truth and gold are always to be washed for; but the wiser sort are of opinion, that, unless there are so many grains to the peck of sand or nonsense respectively, it does not pay to wash for either, so long as one can find anything else to do. I don't doubt there is some truth in the phenomena of animal magnetism, for instance; but when you ask me to cradle for it, I tell you that the hysteric girls cheat so, and the professionals are such a set of pickpockets, that I can do something better than hunt for the grains of truth among their tricks and lies. Do you remember what I used to say in my lectures?—or were you asleep just then, or cutting your initials on the rail? (You see I can ask questions, my young friend.) Leverage is everything,—was what I used to say;—don't begin to pry till you have got the long arm on your side.

To please you, and satisfy your doubts as far as possible, I have looked into the old books,—into Schenckius and Turner and Kenelm. Digby and the rest, where I have found plenty of curious stories which you must take for what they are worth.

Your first question I can answer in the affirmative upon pretty good authority. Mizaldus tells, in his "Memorabilia," the well-known story of the girl fed on poisons, who was sent by the king of the Indies to Alexander the Great. "When Aristotle saw her eyes sparkling and snapping like those of serpents, he said, 'Look out for yourself, Alexander! this is a dangerous companion for you!'"—and sure enough, the young lady proved to be a very unsafe person to her friends. Cardanus gets a story from Avicenna, of a certain man bit by a serpent, who recovered of his bite, the snake dying therefrom. This man afterwards had a daughter whom venomous serpents could not harm, though she had a fatal power over them.

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I suppose you may remember the statements of old authors about Zycanthropy, the disease in which men took on the nature and aspect of wolves. Actius and Paulus, both men of authority, describe it. Altomaris gives a horrid case; and Fincelius mentions one occurring as late as 1541, the subject of which was captured, still insisting that he was a wolf, only that the hair of his hide was turned in! Versipelles, it may be remembered, was the Latin name for these “were-wolves.”

As for the cases where rabid persons have barked and bit like dogs, there are plenty of such on record.

More singular, or at least more rare, is the account given by Andreas Baccius, of a man who was struck in the hand by a cock, with his beak, and who died on the third day thereafter, looking for all the world like a fighting-cock, to the great horror of the spectators.

As to impressions transmitted at a very early period of existence, every one knows the story of King James’s fear of a naked sword, and the way it is accounted for. Sir Kenelm Digby says,—“I remember when he dubbed me Knight, in the ceremony of putting the point of a naked sword upon my shoulder, he could not endure to look upon it, but turned his face another way, insomuch, that, in lieu of touching my shoulder, he had almost thrust the point into my eyes, had not the Duke of Buckingham guided his hand aright.” It is he, too, who tells the story of the mulberry mark upon the neck of a certain lady of high condition, which “every year, to mulberry season, did swell, grow big, and itch.” And Gaffarel mentions the case of a girl born with the figure of a fish on one of her limbs, of which the wonder was, that, when the girl did eat fish, this mark put her to sensible pain. But there is no end to cases of this kind, and I could give some of recent date, if necessary, lending a certain plausibility at least to the doctrine of transmitted impressions.

I never saw a distinct case of evil eye, though I have seen eyes so bad that they might produce strange effects on very sensitive natures. But the belief in it under various names, fascination, jettatura, *etc.*, is so permanent and universal, from Egypt to Italy, and from the days of Solomon to those of Ferdinand of Naples, that there must be some peculiarity, to say the least, on which the opinion is based. There is very strong evidence that some such power is exercised by certain of the lower animals. Thus, it is stated on good authority that “almost every animal becomes panic-struck at the sight of the rattlesnake, and seems at once deprived of the power of motion, or the exercise of its usual instinct of self-preservation.” Other serpents seem to share this power of fascination, as the Cobra and the *Bucephalus Capensis*.

Some think that it is nothing but fright; others attribute it to the

“strange powers that lie
Within the magic circle of the eye,”—

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as Churchill said, speaking of Garrick.

You ask me about those mysterious and frightful intimacies between children and serpents, of which so many instances have been recorded. I am sure I cannot tell what to make of them. I have seen several such accounts in recent papers, but here is one published in the seventeenth century, which is as striking as any of the more modern ones:

“Mr. Herbert Tones of Monmouth, when he was a little Boy, was used to eat his Milk in a Garden in the Morning, and was no sooner there, but a large Snake always came, and eat out of the Dish with him, and did so for a considerable time, till one Morning, he striking the Snake on the Head, it hissed at him. Upon which he told his Mother that the Baby (for so he call'd it) cry'd Hiss at him. His Mother had it kill'd, which occasioned him a great Fit of Sickness, and 'twas thought would have dy'd, but did recover.”

There was likewise one “William Writtle, condemned at Maidston Assizes for a double murder, told a Minister that was with him after he was condemned, that his mother told him, that when he was a Child, there crept always to him a Snake, wherever she laid him. Sometimes she would convey him up Stairs, and leave him never so little, she should be sure to find a Snake in the Cradle with him, but never perceived it did him any harm.”

One of the most striking alleged facts connected with the mysterious relation existing between the serpent and the human species is the influence which the poison of the *Crotulus*, taken internally, seemed to produce over the moral faculties, in the experiments instituted by Dr. Hering at Surinam. There is something frightful in the disposition of certain ophidians, as the whipsnake, which darts at the eyes of cattle without any apparent provocation or other motive. It is natural enough that the evil principle should have been represented in the form of a serpent, but it is strange to think of introducing it into a human being like cow-pox by vaccination.

You know all about the *Psylli*, or ancient serpent tamers, I suppose. Savary gives an account of the modern serpent-tamers in his “Letters on Egypt.” These modern jugglers are in the habit of making the venomous *Naja* counterfeit death, lying out straight and stiff, changing it into a rod, as the ancient magicians did with their serpents, (probably the same animal,) in the time of Moses.

I am afraid I cannot throw much light on “Christabel” or “Lamia” by any criticism I can offer. Geraldine, in the former, seems to be simply a malignant witch-woman with the evil eye, but with no absolute ophidian relationship. Lamia is a serpent transformed by magic into a woman. The idea of both is mythological, and not in any sense physiological. Some women unquestionably suggest the image of serpents; men rarely or never. I have been struck, like many others, with the ophidian head and eye of the famous Rachel.

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Your question about inherited predispositions, as limiting the sphere of the will, and, consequently, of moral accountability, opens a very wide range of speculation. I can give you only a brief abstract of my own opinions on this delicate and difficult subject. Crime and sin, being the preserves of two great organized interests, have been guarded against all reforming poachers with as great jealousy as the Royal Forests. It is so easy to hang a troublesome fellow! It is so much simpler to consign a soul to perdition, or say masses, for money, to save it, than to take the blame on ourselves for letting it grow up in neglect and run to ruin for want of humanizing influences! They hung poor, crazy Bellingham for shooting Mr. Perceval. The ordinary of Newgate preached to women who were to swing at Tyburn for a petty theft as if they were worse than other people,—just as though he would not have been a pickpocket or shoplifter, himself, if he had been born in a den of thieves and bred up to steal or starve! The English law never began to get hold of the idea that a crime was not necessarily a sin, till Hadfield, who thought he was the Saviour of mankind, was tried for shooting at George the Third;—lucky for him that he did not hit his Majesty!

It is very singular that we recognize all the bodily defects that unfit a man for military service, and all the intellectual ones that limit his range of thought, but always talk at him as if all his moral powers were perfect. I suppose we must punish evil-doers as we extirpate vermin; but I don't know that we have any more right to judge them than we have to judge rats and mice, which are just as good as cats and weasels, though we think it necessary to treat them as criminals.

The limitations of human responsibility have never been properly studied, unless it be by the phrenologists. You know from my lectures that I consider phrenology, as taught, a pseudo-science, and not a branch of positive knowledge; but, for all that, we owe it an immense debt. It has melted the world's conscience in its crucible, and cast it in a new mould, with features less like those of Moloch and more like those of humanity. If it has failed to demonstrate its system of special correspondences, it has proved that there are fixed relations between organization and mind and character. It has brought out that great doctrine of moral insanity, which has done more to make men charitable and soften legal and theological barbarism than any one doctrine that I can think of since the message of peace and good-will to men.

Automatic action in the moral world; the reflex movement which seems to be self-determination, and has been hanged and howled at as such (metaphorically) for nobody knows how many centuries: until somebody shall study this as Marshall Hall has studied reflex nervous action in the bodily system, I would not give much for men's judgments of each others' characters. Shut up the robber and the defaulter,

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we must. But what if your oldest boy had been stolen from his cradle and bred in a North-Street cellar? What if you are drinking a little too much wine and smoking a little too much tobacco, and your son takes after you, and so your poor grandson's brain being a little injured in physical texture, he loses the fine moral sense on which you pride yourself, and doesn't see the difference between signing another man's name to a draft and his own?

I suppose the study of automatic action in the moral world (you see what I mean through the apparent contradiction of terms) may be a dangerous one in the view of many people. It is liable to abuse, no doubt. People are always glad to, get hold of anything which limits their responsibility. But remember that our moral estimates come down to us from ancestors who hanged children for stealing forty shillings' worth, and sent their souls to perdition for the sin of being born,—who punished the unfortunate families of suicides, and in their eagerness for justice executed one innocent person every three years, on the average, as Sir James Mackintosh tells us.

I do not know in what shape the practical question may present itself to you; but I will tell you my rule in life, and I think you will find it a good one. Treat bad men exactly as if they were insane. They are in-sane, out of health, morally. Reason, which is food to sound minds, is not tolerated, still less assimilated, unless administered with the greatest caution; perhaps, not at all. Avoid collision with them, so far as you honorably can; keep your temper, if you can,—for one angry man is as good as another; restrain them from violence, promptly, completely, and with the least possible injury, just as in the case of maniacs,—and when you have got rid of them, or got them tied hand and foot so that they can do no mischief, sit down and contemplate them charitably, remembering that nine tenths of their' perversity comes from outside influences, drunken ancestors, abuse in childhood, bad company, from which you have happily been preserved, and for some of which you, as a member of society, may be fractionally responsible. I think also that there are special influences which work in the brood lake ferments, and I have a suspicion that some of those curious old stories I cited may have more recent parallels. Have you ever met with any cases which admitted of a solution like that which I have mentioned?

Yours very truly,

Bernard Langdon to Philip Staples.
My dear Philip,—

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I have been for some months established in this place, turning the main crank of the machinery for the manufactory of accomplishments superintended by, or rather worked to the profit of, a certain Mr. Silas Peckham. He is a poor wretch, with a little thin fishy blood in his body, lean and flat, long-armed and large-handed, thick-jointed and thin-muscled,—you know those unwholesome, weak-eyed, half-fed creatures, that look not fit to be round among live folks, and yet not quite dead enough to bury. If you ever hear of my being in court to answer to a charge of assault and battery, you may guess that I have been giving him a thrashing to settle off old scores; for he is a tyrant, and has come pretty near killing his principal lady-assistant with overworking her and keeping her out of all decent privileges.

Helen Darley is this lady's name,—twenty two or three years old, I should think,—a very sweet, pale woman,—daughter of the usual country-clergyman,—thrown on her own resources from an early age, and the rest: a common story, but an uncommon person, —very. All conscience and sensibility, I should say,—a cruel worker,—no kind of regard for herself, seems as fragile and supple as a young willow-shoot, but try her and you find she has the spring in her of a steel cross-bow. I am glad I happened to come to this place, if it were only for her sake. I have saved that girl's life; I am as sure of it as if I had pulled her out of the fire or water.

Of course I'm in love with her, you say,—we always love those whom we have benefited; "saved her life,—her love was the reward of his devotion," *etc.*, *etc.*, as in a regular set novel. In love, Philip? Well, about that,—I love Helen Darley—very much: there is hardly anybody I love so well. What a noble creature she is! One of those that just go right on, do their own work and everybody else's, killing themselves inch by inch without ever thinking about it,—singing and dancing at their toil when they begin, worn and saddened after a while, but pressing steadily on, tottering by and by, and catching at the rail by the way-side to help them lift one foot before the other, and at last falling, face down, arms stretched forward.

Philip, my boy, do you know I am the sort of man that locks his door sometimes and cries his heart out of his eyes,—that can sob like a woman and not be ashamed of it? I come of fighting-blood on one side, you know; I think I could be savage on occasion. But I am tender,—more and more tender as I come into my fulness of manhood. I don't like to strike a man, (laugh, if you like,—I know I hit hard when I do strike,)—but what I can't stand is the sight of these poor, patient, toiling women, who never find out in this life how good they are, and never know what it is to be told they are angels while they still wear the pleasing incumbrances of humanity. I don't know what to make of these cases. To think that

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a woman is never to be a woman again, whatever she may come to as an unsexed angel,—and that she should die unloved! Why does not somebody come and carry off this noble woman, waiting here all ready to make a man happy? Philip, do you know the pathos there is in the eyes of unsought women, oppressed with the burden of an inner life unshared? I can see into them now as I could not in those 'earlier days. I sometimes think their pupils dilate on purpose to let my consciousness glide through them; indeed, I dread them, I come so close to the nerve of the soul itself in these momentary intimacies. You used to tell me I was a Turk,—that my heart was full of pigeon-holes, with accommodations inside for a whole flock of doves. I don't know but I am still as Youngish as ever in my ways,—Brigham-Youngish, I mean; at any rate, T. always want to give a little love to all the poor things that cannot have a whole man to themselves. If they would only be contented with a little!

Here now are two girls in this school where I am teaching. One of them, Rosa M., is not more than sixteen years old, I think they say; but Nature has forced her into a tropical luxuriance of beauty, as if it were July with her, instead of May. I suppose it is all natural enough that this girl should like a young man's attention, even if he were a grave schoolmaster; but the eloquence of this young thing's look is unmistakable,—and yet she does not know the language it is talking,—they none of them do; and there is where a good many poor creatures of our good-for-nothing sex are mistaken. There is no danger of my being rash, but I think this girl will cost somebody his life yet. She is one of those women men make a quarrel about and fight to the death for,—the old feral instinct, you know.

Pray, don't think I am lost in conceit, but there is another girl here who I begin to think looks with a certain kindness on me. Her name is Elsie V., and she is the only daughter and heiress of an old family in this place. She is a portentous and almost fearful creature. If I should tell you all I know and half of what I fancy about her, you would tell me to get my life insured at once. Yet she is the most painfully interesting being,—so handsome! so lonely!—for she has no friends among the girls, and sits apart from them, —with black hair like the flow of a mountain-brook after a thaw, with a low-browed, scowling beauty of face, and such eyes as were never seen before, I really believe, in any human creature.

Philip, I don't know what to say about this Elsie. There is something about her I have not fathomed. I have conjectures which I could not utter to any living soul. I dare not even hint the possibilities which have suggested themselves to me. This I will say, that I do take the most intense interest in this young person, an interest much more like pity than love in its common sense. If what I guess at is true, of all the tragedies of existence I ever knew this is the saddest, and yet so full of meaning! Do not ask me any questions,—I have said more than I meant to already; but I am involved in strange

doubts and perplexities,—in dangers too, very possibly,—and it is a relief just to speak ever so guardedly of them to an early and faithful friend.

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Yours ever, *Bernard*.

P. S. I remember you had a copy of Fortunius Licetus' "De Monstris" among your old books. Can't you lend it to me for a while? I am curious, and it will amuse me.

CHAPTER XVII.

Old Sophy calls on the reverend doctor.

The two meeting-houses which faced each other like a pair of fighting-cocks had not flapped their wings or crowed at each other for a considerable time. The Reverend Mr. Fairweather had been dyspeptic and low-spirited of late, and was too languid for controversy. The Reverend Doctor Honeywood had been very busy with his benevolent associations, and had discoursed chiefly on practical matters, to the neglect of special doctrinal subjects. His senior deacon ventured to say to him that some of his people required to be reminded of the great fundamental doctrine of the worthlessness of all human efforts and motives. Some of them were altogether too much pleased with the success of the Temperance Society and the Association for the Relief of the Poor. There was a pestilent heresy about, concerning the satisfaction to be derived from a good conscience, as if, anybody ever did anything which was not to be hated, loathed, despised, and condemned.

The old minister listened gravely, with an inward smile, and told his deacon that he would attend to his suggestion. After the deacon had gone, he tumbled over his manuscripts, until at length he came upon his first-rate old sermon on "Human Nature." He had read a great deal of hard theology, and had at last reached that curious state which is so common in good ministers,—that, namely, in which they contrive to switch off their logical faculties on the narrow sidetrack of their technical dogmas, while the great freight-train of their substantial human qualities keeps in the main highway of common-sense, in which kindly souls are always found by all who approach them by their human side.

The Doctor read his sermon with a pleasant, paternal interest: it was well argued from his premises. Here and there he dashed his pen through a harsh expression. Now and then he added an explanation or qualified abroad statement. But his mind was on the logical side-track, and he followed the chain of reasoning without fairly perceiving where it would lead him, if he carried it into real life.

He was just touching up the final proposition, when his granddaughter, Letty, once before referred to, came into the room with her smiling face and lively movement. Miss Letty or Letitia Forrester was a city-bred girl of some fifteen or sixteen years old, who was passing the summer with her grandfather for the sake of country air and quiet. It

was a sensible arrangement; for, having the promise of figuring as a belle by and by, and being a little given to dancing, and having a voice which drew a

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pretty dense circle around the piano when she sat down to play and sing, it was hard to keep her from being carried into society before her time, by the mere force of mutual attraction. Fortunately, she had some quiet as well as some social tastes, and was willing enough to pass two or three of the summer months in the country, where she was much better bestowed than she would have been at one of those watering-places where so many half-formed girls get prematurely hardened in the vice of self-consciousness.

Miss Letty was altogether too wholesome, hearty, and high-strung a young girl to be a model, according to the flat-chested and cachectic pattern which is the classical type of certain excellent young females, often the subjects of biographical memoirs. But the old minister was proud of his granddaughter for all that. She was so full of life, so graceful, so generous, so vivacious, so ready always to do all she could for him and for everybody, so perfectly frank in her avowed delight in the pleasures which this miserable world offered her in the shape of natural beauty, of poetry, of music, of companionship, of books, of cheerful cooperation in the tasks of those about her, that the Reverend Doctor could not find it in his heart to condemn her because she was deficient in those particular graces and that signal other-worldliness he had sometimes noticed in feeble young persons suffering from various chronic diseases which impaired their vivacity and removed them from the range of temptation.

When Letty, therefore, came bounding into the old minister's study, he glanced up from his manuscript, and, as his eye fell upon her, it flashed across him that there was nothing so very monstrous and unnatural about the specimen of congenital perversion he was looking at, with his features opening into their pleasantest sunshine. Technically, according to the fifth proposition of the sermon on Human Nature, very bad, no doubt. Practically, according to the fact before him, a very pretty piece of the Creator's handiwork, body and soul. Was it not a conceivable thing that the divine grace might show itself in different forms in a fresh young girl like Letitia, and in that poor thing he had visited yesterday, half-grown, half-colored, in bed for the last year with hip-disease?

Was it to be supposed that this healthy young girl, with life throbbing all over her, could, without a miracle, be good according to the invalid pattern and formula?

And yet there were mysteries in human nature which pointed to some tremendous perversion of its tendencies,—to some profound, radical vice of moral constitution, native or transmitted, as you will have it, but positive, at any rate, as the leprosy, breaking out in the blood of races, guard them ever so carefully. Did he not know the case of a young lady in Rockland, daughter of one of the first families in the place, a very beautiful and noble creature to look at, for

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whose bringing up nothing had been spared,—a girl who had had governesses to teach her at the house, who had been indulged almost too kindly,—a girl whose father had given himself, up to her, he being himself a pure and high-souled man?—and yet this girl was accused in whispers of having been on the very verge of committing a fatal crime; she was an object of fear to all who knew the dark hints which had been let fall about her, and there were some that believed—Why, what was this but an instance of the total obliquity and degeneration of the moral principle? and to what could it be owing, but to an innate organic tendency?

“Busy, grandpapa?” said Letty, and without waiting for an answer kissed his cheek with a pair of lips made on purpose for that little function,—fine, but richly turned out, the corners tucked in with a finish of pretty dimples, the rose-bud lips of girlhood’s June.

The old gentleman looked at his granddaughter. Nature swelled up from his heart in a wave that sent a glow to his cheek and a sparkle to his eye. But it is very hard to be interrupted just as we are winding up a string of propositions with the grand conclusion which is the statement in brief of all that has gone before: our own starting-point, into which we have been trying to back our reader or listener as one backs a horse into the shafts.

“Video meliora, proboque,—I see the better, and approve it; deteriora sequor, I follow after the worse; ’t is that natural dislike to what is good, pure, holy, and true, that inrooted selfishness, totally insensible to the claims of”—

Here the worthy man was interrupted by Miss Letty.

“Do come, if you can, grandpapa,” said the young girl; “here is a poor old black woman wants to see you so much!”

The good minister was as kind-hearted as if he had never groped in the dust and ashes of those cruel old abstractions which have killed out so much of the world’s life and happiness. “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness;” a man’s love is the measure of his fitness for good or bad company here or elsewhere. Men are tattooed with their special beliefs like so many South-Sea Islanders; but a real human heart, with Divine love in it, beats with the same glow under all, the patterns of all earth’s thousand tribes!

The Doctor sighed, and folded the sermon, and laid the Quarto Cruden on it. He rose from his desk, and, looking once more at the young girl’s face, forgot his logical conclusions, and said to himself that she was a little angel,—which was in violent contradiction to the leading doctrine of his sermon on Human Nature. And so he followed her out of the study into the wide entry of the old-fashioned country-house.

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An old black woman sat on the plain oaken settle which humble visitors waiting to see the minister were wont to occupy. She was old, but how old it would be very hard to guess. She might be seventy. She might be ninety. One could not swear she was not a hundred. Black women remain at a stationary age (to the eyes of white people, at least) for thirty years. They do not appear to change during this period any more than so many Trenton trilobites. Bent up, wrinkled, yellow-eyed, with long upper-lip, projecting jaws, retreating chin, still meek features, long arms, large flat hands with uncolored palms and slightly webbed fingers, it was impossible not to see in this old creature a hint of the gradations by which life climbs up through the lower natures to the highest human developments. We cannot tell such old women's ages because we do not understand the physiognomy of a race so unlike our own. No doubt they see a great deal in each other's faces that we cannot,—changes of color and expression as real as our own, blushes and sudden betrayals of feeling,—just as these two canaries know what their single notes and short sentences and full song with this or that variation mean, though it is a mystery to us unplumed mortals.

This particular old black woman was a striking specimen of her class. Old as she looked, her eye was bright and knowing. She wore a red-and-yellow turban, which set off her complexion well, and hoops of gold in her ears, and beads of gold about her neck, and an old funeral ring upon her finger. She had that touching stillness about her which belongs to animals that wait to be spoken to and then look up with a kind of sad humility.

"Why, Sophy!" said the good minister, "is this you?"

She looked up with the still expression on her face. "It's ol' Sophy," she said.

"Why," said the Doctor, "I did not believe you could walk so far as this to save the Union. Bring Sophy a glass of wine, Letty. Wine's good for old folks like Sophy and me, after walking a good way, or preaching a good while."

The young girl stepped into the back-parlor, where she found the great pewter flagon in which the wine that was left after each communion-service was brought to the minister's house. With much toil she managed to tip it so as to get a couple of glasses filled. The minister tasted his, and made old Sophy finish hers.

"I wan' to see you 'n' talk wi' you all alone," she said presently.

The minister got up and led the way towards his study. "To be sure," he said; he had only waited for her to rest a moment before he asked her into the library. The young girl took her gently by the arm, and helped her feeble steps along the passage. When they reached the study, she smoothed the cushion of a rocking-chair, and made the old woman sit down in it. Then she tripped lightly away, and left her alone with the minister.

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Old Sophy was a member of the Reverend Doctor Honeywood's church. She had been put through the necessary confessions in a tolerably satisfactory manner. To be sure, as her grandfather had been a cannibal chief, according to the common story, and, at any rate, a terrible wild savage, and as her mother retained to the last some of the prejudices of her early education, there was a heathen flavor in her Christianity which had often scandalized the elder of the minister's two deacons. But, the good minister had smoothed matters over: had explained that allowances were to be made for those who had been long sitting without the gate of Zion,—that, no doubt, a part of the curse which descended to the children of Ham consisted in “having the understanding darkened,” as well as the skin,—and so had brought his suspicious senior deacon to tolerate old Sophy as one of the communion of fellow-sinners.

—Poor things! How little we know the simple notions with which these rudiments of souls are nourished by the Divine Goodness! Did not Mrs. Professor come home this very blessed morning with a story of one of her old black women?

“And how do you feel to-day, Mrs. Robinson?”

“Oh, my dear, I have this singing in my head all the time.” (What doctors call tinnitus aurium.)

“She 's got a cold in the head,” said old Mrs. Rider.

“Oh, no, my dear! Whatever I'm thinking about, it's all this singing, this music. When I'm thinking of the dear Redeemer, it all turns into this singing and music. When the clark came to see me, I asked him if he couldn't cure me, and he said, No,—it was the Holy Spirit in me, singing to me; and all the time I hear this beautiful music, and it's the Holy Spirit a-singing to me.”

The good man waited for Sophy to speak; but she did not open her lips as yet.

“I hope you are not troubled in mind or body,” he said to her at length, finding she did not speak.

The poor old woman took out a white handkerchief, and lifted it—to her black face. She could not say a word for her tears and sobs.

The minister would have consoled her; he was used to tears, and could in most cases withstand their contagion manfully; but something choked his voice suddenly, and when he called upon it, he got no answer, but a tremulous movement of the muscles, which was worse than silence.

At last she spoke.



“Oh, no, no, no! It’s my poor girl, my darling, my beauty, my baby, that ’s grown up to be a woman; she will come to a bad end; she will do something that will make them kill her or shut her up all her life. Or, Doctor, Doctor, save her, pray for her! It a’n’t her fault. It a’n’t her fault. If they knew all that I know, they would n’ blame that poor child. I must tell you, Doctor: if I should die, perhaps nobody else would tell you. Massa Veneer can’t talk about it. Doctor Kittredge won’t talk about it. Nobody but old Sophy to tell you, Doctor; and old Sophy can’t die without telling you.”

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The kind minister soothed the poor old soul with those gentle, quieting tones which had carried peace and comfort to so many chambers of sickness and sorrow, to so many hearts overburdened by the trials laid upon them.

Old Sophy became quiet in a few minutes, and proceeded to tell her story. She told it in the low half-whisper which is the natural voice of lips oppressed with grief and fears; with quick glances around the apartment from time to time, as if she dreaded lest the dim portraits on the walls and the dark folios on the shelves might overhear her words.

It was not one of those conversations which a third person can report minutely, unless by that miracle of clairvoyance known to the readers of stories made out of authors' brains. Yet its main character can be imparted in a much briefer space than the old black woman took to give all its details.

She went far back to the time when Dudley Venner was born,—she being then a middle-aged woman. The heir and hope of a family which had been narrowing down as if doomed to extinction, he had been surrounded with every care and trained by the best education he could have in New England. He had left college, and was studying the profession which gentlemen of leisure most affect, when he fell in love with a young girl left in the world almost alone, as he was. The old woman told the story of his young love and his joyous bridal with a tenderness which had something more, even, than her family sympathies to account for it. Had she not hanging over her bed a paper-cutting of a profile,—jet black, but not blacker than the face it represented—of one who would have been her own husband in the small years of this century, if the vessel in which he went to sea, like Jamie in the ballad, had not sailed away and never come back to land? Had she not her bits of furniture stowed away which had been got ready for her own wedding,—two rocking-chairs, one worn with long use, one kept for him so long that it had grown a superstition with her never to sit in it,—and might he not come back yet, after all? Had she not her chest of linen ready for her humble house-keeping with store of serviceable huckaback and piles of neatly folded kerchiefs, wherefrom this one that showed so white against her black face was taken, for that she knew her eyes would betray her in “the presence”?

All the first part of the story the old woman told tenderly, and yet dwelling upon every incident with a loving pleasure. How happy this young couple had been, what plans and projects of improvement they had formed, how they lived in each other, always together, so young and fresh and beautiful as she remembered them in that one early summer when they walked arm in arm through the wilderness of roses that ran riot in the garden, —she told of this as loath to leave it and come to the woe that lay beneath.

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She told the whole story;-shall I repeat it? Not now. If, in the course of relating the incidents I have undertaken to report, it tells itself, perhaps this will be better than to run the risk of producing a painful impression on some of those susceptible readers whom it would be ill-advised to disturb or excite, when they rather require to be amused and soothed. In our pictures of life, we must show the flowering-out of terrible growths which have their roots deep, deep underground. Just how far we shall lay bare the unseemly roots themselves is a matter of discretion and taste, and which none of us are infallible.

The old woman told the whole story of Elsie, of her birth, of her peculiarities of person and disposition, of the passionate fears and hopes with which her father had watched the course of her development. She recounted all her strange ways, from the hour when she first tried to crawl across the carpet, and her father's look as she worked her way towards him. With the memory of Juliet's nurse she told the story of her teething, and how, the woman to whose breast she had clung dying suddenly about that time, they had to struggle hard with the child before she would learn the accomplishment of feeding with a spoon. And so of her fierce plays and fiercer disputes with that boy who had been her companion, and the whole scene of the quarrel when she struck him with those sharp white teeth, frightening her, old Sophy, almost to death; for, as she said, the boy would have died, if it hadn't been for the old Doctor's galloping over as fast as he could gallop and burning the places right out of his arm. Then came the story of that other incident, sufficiently alluded to already, which had produced such an ecstasy of fright and left such a nightmare of apprehension in the household. And so the old woman came down to this present time. That boy she never loved nor trusted was grown to a dark, dangerous-looking man, and he was under their roof. He wanted to marry our poor Elsie, and Elsie hated him, and sometimes she would look at him over her shoulder just as she used to look at that woman she hated; and she, old Sophy, couldn't sleep for thinking she should hear a scream from the white chamber some night and find him in spasms such as that woman came so near dying with. And then there was something about Elsie she did not know what to make of: she would sit and hang her head sometimes, and look as if she were dreaming; and she brought home books they said a young gentleman up at the great school lent her; and once she heard her whisper in her sleep, and she talked as young girls do to themselves when they're thinking about somebody they have a liking for and think nobody knows it.

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She finished her long story at last. The minister had listened to it in perfect silence. He sat still even when she had done speaking,—still, and lost in thought. It was a very awkward matter for him to have a hand in. Old Sophy was his parishioner, but the Veneers had a pew in the Reverend Mr. Fairweather's meeting-house. It would seem that he, Mr. Fairweather, was the natural adviser of the parties most interested. Had he sense and spirit enough to deal with such people? Was there enough capital of humanity in his somewhat limited nature to furnish sympathy and unshrinking service for his friends in an emergency? or was he too busy with his own attacks of spiritual neuralgia, and too much occupied with taking account of stock of his own thin-blooded offences, to forget himself and his personal interests on the small scale and the large, and run a risk of his life, if need were, at any rate give himself up without reserve to the dangerous task of guiding and counselling these distressed and imperilled fellow-creatures?

The good minister thought the best thing to do would be to call and talk over some of these matters with Brother Fairweather,—for so he would call him at times, especially if his senior deacon were not within earshot. Having settled this point, he comforted Sophy with a few words of counsel and a promise of coming to see her very soon. He then called his man to put the old white horse into the chaise and drive Sophy back to the mansion-house.

When the Doctor sat down to his sermon again, it looked very differently from the way it had looked at the moment he left it. When he came to think of it, he did not feel quite so sure practically about that matter of the utter natural selfishness of everybody. There was Letty, now, seemed to take a very unselfish interest in that old black woman, and indeed in poor people generally; perhaps it would not be too much to say that she was always thinking of other people. He thought he had seen other young persons naturally unselfish, thoughtful for others; it seemed to be a family trait in some he had known.

But most of all he was exercised about this poor girl whose story Sophy had been telling. If what the old woman believed was true,—and it had too much semblance of probability,—what became of his theory of ingrained moral obliquity applied to such a case? If by the visitation of God a person receives any injury which impairs the intellect or the moral perceptions, is it not monstrous to judge such a person by our common working standards of right and wrong? Certainly, everybody will answer, in cases where there is a palpable organic change brought about, as when a blow on the head produces insanity. Fools! How long will it be before we shall learn that for every wound which betrays itself to the sight by a scar, there are a thousand unseen mutilations that cripple, each of them, some one or more of our highest faculties? If what Sophy told and believed was the real truth, what prayers could be agonizing enough, what tenderness could be deep enough, for this poor, lost, blighted, hapless, blameless child of misfortune, struck by such a doom as perhaps no living creature in all the sisterhood of humanity shared with her?

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The minister thought these matters over until his mind was bewildered with doubts and tossed to and fro on that stormy deep of thought heaving forever beneath the conflict of windy dogmas. He laid by his old sermon. He put back a pile of old commentators with their eyes and mouths and hearts full of the dust of the schools. Then he opened the book of Genesis at the eighteenth chapter and read that remarkable argument of Abraham's with his Maker in which he boldly appeals to first principles. He took as his text, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" and began to write his sermon, afterwards so famous, "On the Obligations of an Infinite Creator to a Finite Creature."

It astonished the good people, who had been accustomed so long to repeat mechanically their Oriental hyperboles of self-abasement, to hear their worthy minister maintaining that the dignified attitude of the old Patriarch, insisting on what was reasonable and fair with reference to his fellow-creatures, was really much more respectful to his Maker, and a great deal manlier and more to his credit, than if he had yielded the whole matter, and pretended that men had not rights as well as duties. The same logic which had carried him to certain conclusions with reference to human nature, this same irresistible logic carried him straight on from his text until he arrived at those other results, which not only astonished his people, as was said, but surprised himself. He went so far in defence of the rights of man, that he put his foot into several heresies, for which men had been burned so often, it was time, if ever it could be, to acknowledge the demonstration of the argumentum ad ignem. He did not believe in the responsibility of idiots. He did not believe a new-born infant was morally answerable for other people's acts. He thought a man with a crooked spine would never be called to account for not walking erect. He thought if the crook was in his brain, instead of his back, he could not fairly be blamed for any consequence of this natural defect, whatever lawyers or divines might call it. He argued, that, if a person inherited a perfect mind, body, and disposition, and had perfect teaching from infancy, that person could do nothing more than keep the moral law perfectly. But supposing that the Creator allows a person to be born with an hereditary or ingrafted organic tendency, and then puts this person into the hands of teachers incompetent or positively bad, is not what is called sin or transgression of the law necessarily involved in the premises? Is not a Creator bound to guard his children against the ruin which inherited ignorance might entail on them? Would it be fair for a parent to put into a child's hands the title-deeds to all its future possessions, and a bunch of matches? And are not men children, nay, babes, in the eye of Omniscience?—The minister grew bold in his questions. Had not he as good right to ask questions as Abraham?

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This was the dangerous vein of speculation in which the Reverend Doctor Honeywood found himself involved, as a consequence of the suggestions forced upon him by old Sophy's communication. The truth was, the good man had got so humanized by mixing up with other people in various benevolent schemes, that, the very moment he could escape from his old scholastic abstractions, he took the side of humanity instinctively, just as the Father of the Faithful did,—all honor be to the noble old Patriarch for insisting on the worth of an honest man, and making the best terms he could for a very ill-conditioned metropolis, which might possibly, however, have contained ten righteous people, for whose sake it should be spared!

The consequence of all this was, that he was in a singular and seemingly self-contradictory state of mind when he took his hat and cane and went forth to call on his heretical brother. The old minister took it for granted that the Reverend Mr. Fairweather knew the private history of his parishioner's family. He did not reflect that there are griefs men never put into words,—that there are fears which must not be spoken,—intimate matters of consciousness which must be carried, as bullets which have been driven deep into the living tissues are sometimes carried, for a whole lifetime,—encysted griefs, if we may borrow the surgeon's term, never to be reached, never to be seen, never to be thrown out, but to go into the dust with the frame that bore them about with it, during long years of anguish, known only to the sufferer and his Maker. Dudley Venner had talked with his minister about this child of his. But he had talked cautiously, feeling his way for sympathy, looking out for those indications of tact and judgment which would warrant him in some partial communication, at least, of the origin of his doubts and fears, and never finding them.

There was something about the Reverend Mr. Fairweather which repressed all attempts at confidential intercourse. What this something was, Dudley Venner could hardly say; but he felt it distinctly, and it sealed his lips. He never got beyond certain generalities connected with education and religious instruction. The minister could not help discovering, however, that there were difficulties connected with this girl's management, and he heard enough outside of the family to convince him that she had manifested tendencies, from an early age, at variance with the theoretical opinions he was in the habit of preaching, and in a dim way of holding for truth, as to the natural dispositions of the human being.

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About this terrible fact of congenital obliquity his new beliefs began to cluster as a centre, and to take form as a crystal around its nucleus. Still, he might perhaps have struggled against them, had it not been for the little Roman Catholic chapel he passed every Sunday, on his way to the meeting-house. Such a crowd of worshippers, swarming into the pews like bees, filling all the aisles, running over at the door like berries heaped too full in the measure,—some kneeling on the steps, some standing on the sidewalk, hats off, heads down, lips moving, some looking on devoutly from the other side of the street! Oh, could he have followed his own Bridget, maid of all work, into the heart of that steaming throng, and bowed his head while the priests intoned their Latin prayers! could he have snuffed up the cloud of frankincense, and felt that he was in the great ark which holds the better half of the Christian world, while all around it are wretched creatures, some struggling against the waves in leaky boats, and some on ill-connected rafts, and some with their heads just above water, thinking to ride out the flood which is to sweep the earth clean of sinners, upon their own private, individual life-preservers!

Such was the present state of mind of the Reverend Chauncy Fairweather, when his clerical brother called upon him to talk over the questions to which old Sophy had called his attention.

CHAPTER VIII.

The reverend doctor calls on brother Fairweather.

For the last few months, while all these various matters were going on in Rockland, the Reverend Chauncy Fairweather had been busy with the records of ancient councils and the writings of the early fathers. The more he read, the more discontented he became with the platform upon which he and his people were standing. They and he were clearly in a minority, and his deep inward longing to be with the majority was growing into an engrossing passion. He yearned especially towards the good old unquestioning, authoritative Mother Church, with her articles of faith which took away the necessity for private judgment, with her traditional forms and ceremonies, and her whole apparatus of stimulants and anodynes.

About this time he procured a breviary and kept it in his desk under the loose papers. He sent to a Catholic bookstore and obtained a small crucifix suspended from a string of beads. He ordered his new coat to be cut very narrow in the collar and to be made single-breasted. He began an informal series of religious conversations with Miss O'Brien, the young person of Irish extraction already referred to as Bridget, maid of all work. These not proving very satisfactory, he managed to fall in with Father McShane, the Catholic priest of the Rockland church.

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Father McShane encouraged his nibble very scientifically. It would be such a fine thing to bring over one of those Protestant heretics, and a “liberal” one too!—not that there was any real difference between them, but it sounded better, to say that one of these rationalizing free-and-equal religionists had been made a convert than any of those half-way Protestants who were the slaves of catechisms instead of councils, and of commentators instead of popes. The subtle priest played his disciple with his finest tackle. It was hardly necessary: when anything or anybody wishes to be caught, a bare hook and a coarse line are all that is needed.

If a man has a genuine, sincere, hearty wish to get rid of his liberty, if he is really bent upon becoming a slave, nothing can stop him. And the temptation is to some natures a very great one. Liberty is often a heavy burden on a man. It involves that necessity for perpetual choice which is the kind of labor men have always dreaded. In common life we shirk it by forming habits, which take the place of self-determination. In politics party-organization saves us the pains of much thinking before deciding how to cast our vote. In religious matters there are great multitudes watching us perpetually, each propagandist ready with his bundle of finalities, which having accepted we may be at peace. The more absolute the submission demanded, the stronger the temptation becomes to those who have been long tossed among doubts and conflicts.

So it is that in all the quiet bays which indent the shores of the great ocean of thought, at every sinking wharf, we see moored the hulks and the razees of enslaved or half-enslaved intelligences. They rock peacefully as children in their cradles on the subdued swell which comes feebly in over the bar at the harbor's mouth, slowly crusting with barnacles, pulling at their iron cables as if they really wanted to be free; but better contented to remain bound as they are. For these no more the round unvalled horizon of the open sea, the joyous breeze aloft, the furrow, the foam, the sparkle, that track the rushing keel! They have escaped the dangers of the wave, and lie still henceforth, evermore. Happiest of souls, if lethargy is bliss, and palsy the chief beatitude!

America owes its political freedom to religious Protestantism. But political freedom is reacting on religious prescription with still mightier force. We wonder, therefore, when we find a soul which was born to a full sense of individual liberty, an unchallenged right of self-determination on every new alleged truth offered to its intelligence, voluntarily surrendering any portion of its liberty to a spiritual dictatorship which always proves to rest, in the last analysis, on a majority vote, nothing more nor less, commonly an old one, passed in those barbarous times when men cursed and murdered each other for differences of opinion, and of course were not in a condition to settle the beliefs of a comparatively civilized community.

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In our disgust, we are liable to be intolerant. We forget that weakness is not in itself a sin. We forget that even cowardice may call for our most lenient judgment, if it spring from innate infirmity, Who of us does not look with great tenderness on the young chieftain in the "Fair Maid of Perth," when he confesses his want of courage? All of us love companionship and sympathy; some of us may love them too much. All of us are more or less imaginative in our theology.

Some of us may find the aid of material symbols a comfort, if not a necessity. The boldest thinker may have his moments of languor and discouragement, when he feels as if he could willingly exchange faiths with the old beldame crossing herself at the cathedral-door,—nay, that, if he could drop all coherent thought, and lie in the flowery meadow with the brown-eyed solemnly unthinking cattle, looking up to the sky, and all their simple consciousness staining itself blue, then down to the grass, and life turning to a mere greenness, blended with confused scents of herbs,—no individual mind-movement such as men are teased with, but the great calm cattle-sense of all time and all places that know the milky smell of herds,—if he could be like these, he would be content to be driven home by the cow-boy, and share the grassy banquet of the king of ancient Babylon. Let us be very generous, then, in our judgment of those who leave the front ranks of thought for the company of the meek non-combatants who follow with the baggage and provisions. Age, illness, too much wear and tear, a half-formed paralysis, may bring any of us to this pass. But while we can think and maintain the rights of our own individuality against every human combination, let us not forget to caution all who are disposed to waver that there is a cowardice which is criminal, and a longing for rest which it is baseness to indulge. God help him, over whose dead soul in his living body must be uttered the sad supplication, *Requiescat in pace!*

A knock at the Reverend Mr. Fairweather's study door called his eyes from the book on which they were intent. He looked up, as if expecting a welcome guest.

The Reverend Pierrepont Honeywood, D. D., entered the study of the Reverend Chauncy Fairweather. He was not the expected guest. Mr. Fairweather slipped the book he was reading into a half-open drawer, and pushed in the drawer. He slid something which rattled under a paper lying on the table. He rose with a slight change of color, and welcomed, a little awkwardly, his unusual visitor.

"Good-evening, Brother Fairweather!" said the Reverend Doctor, in a very cordial, good-humored way. "I hope I am not spoiling one of those eloquent sermons I never have a chance to hear."

"Not at all, not at all," the younger clergyman answered, in a languid tone, with a kind of habitual half-querulousness which belonged to it,—the vocal expression which we meet with now and then, and which says as plainly as so many words could say it, "I am a suffering individual. I am persistently undervalued, wronged, and imposed upon by mankind and the powers of the universe generally. But I endure all. I endure you."

Speak. I listen. It is a burden to me, but I even approve. I sacrifice myself. Behold this movement of my lips! It is a smile.”

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The Reverend Doctor knew this forlorn way of Mr. Fairweather's, and was not troubled by it. He proceeded to relate the circumstances of his visit from the old black woman, and the fear she was in about the young girl, who being a parishioner of Mr. Fairweather's, he had thought it best to come over and speak to him about old Sophy's fears and fancies.

In telling the old woman's story, he alluded only vaguely to those peculiar circumstances to which she had attributed so much importance, taking it for granted that the other minister must be familiar with the whole series of incidents she had related. The old minister was mistaken, as we have before seen. Mr. Fairweather had been settled in the place only about ten years, and, if he had heard a strange hint now and then about Elsie, had never considered it as anything more than idle and ignorant, if not malicious, village-gossip. All that he fully understood was that this had been a perverse and unmanageable child, and that the extraordinary care which had been bestowed on her had been so far thrown away that she was a dangerous, self-willed girl, whom all feared and almost all shunned, as if she carried with her some malignant influence.

He replied, therefore, after hearing the story, that Elsie had always given trouble. There seemed to be a kind of natural obliquity about her. Perfectly unaccountable. A very dark case. Never amenable to good influences. Had sent her good books from the Sunday-school library. Remembered that she tore out the frontispiece of one of them, and kept it, and flung the book out of the window. It was a picture of Eve's temptation; and he recollected her saying that Eve was a good woman,—and she'd have done just so, if she'd been there. A very sad child, very sad; bad from infancy. He had talked himself bold, and said all at once, "Doctor, do you know I am almost ready to accept your doctrine of the congenital sinfulness of human nature? I am afraid that is the only thing which goes to the bottom of the difficulty."

The old minister's face did not open so approvingly as Mr. Fairweather had expected.

"Why, yes,—well,—many find comfort in it,—I believe;—there is much to be said,—there are many bad people,—and bad children,—I can't be so sure about bad babies,—though they cry very malignantly at times,—especially if they have the stomach-ache. But I really don't know how to condemn this poor Elsie; she may have impulses that act in her like instincts in the lower animals, and so not come under the bearing of our ordinary rules of judgment."

"But this depraved tendency, Doctor,—this unaccountable perverseness. My dear Sir, I am afraid your school is in the right about human nature. Oh, those words of the Psalmist, 'shapen in iniquity,' and the rest! What are we to do with them,—we who teach that the soul of a child is an unstained white tablet?"

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"King David was very subject to fits of humility, and much given to self-reproaches," said the Doctor, in a rather dry way. "We owe you and your friends a good deal for calling attention to the natural graces, which, after all, may, perhaps, be considered as another form of manifestation of the divine influence. Some of our writers have pressed rather too hard on the tendencies of the human soul toward evil as such. It maybe questioned whether these views have not interfered with the sound training of certain young persons, sons of clergymen and others. I am nearer of your mind about the possibility of educating children so that they shall become good Christians without any violent transition. That is what I should hope for from bringing them up 'in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.'"

The younger minister looked puzzled, but presently answered, "Possibly we may have called attention to some neglected truths; but, after all, I fear we must go to the old school, if we want to get at the root of the matter. I know there is an outward amiability about many young persons, some young girls especially, that seems like genuine goodness; but I have been disposed of late to lean toward your view, that these human affections, as we see them in our children,—ours, I say, though I have not the fearful responsibility of training any of my own,—are only a kind of disguised and sinful selfishness."

The old minister groaned in spirit. His heart had been softened by the sweet influences of children and grandchildren. He thought of a half-sized grave in the burial-ground, and the fine, brave, noble-hearted boy he laid in it thirty years before,—the sweet, cheerful child who had made his home all sunshine until the day when he was brought into it, his long curls dripping, his fresh lips purpled in death,—foolish dear little blessed creature to throw himself into the deep water to save the drowning boy, who clung about him and carried him under! Disguised selfishness! And his granddaughter too, whose disguised selfishness was the light of his household!

"Don't call it my view!" he said. "Abstractly, perhaps, all natures may be considered vitiated; but practically, as I see it in life, the divine grace keeps pace with the perverted instincts from infancy in many natures. Besides, this perversion itself may often be disease, bad habits transmitted, like drunkenness, or some hereditary misfortune, as with this Elsie we were talking about."

The younger minister was completely mystified. At every step he made towards the Doctor's recognized theological position, the Doctor took just one step towards his. They would cross each other soon at this rate, and might as well exchange pulpits,—as Colonel Sprowle once wished they would, it may be remembered.

The Doctor, though a much clearer-headed man, was almost equally puzzled. He turned the conversation again upon Elsie, and endeavored to make her minister feel the importance of bringing every friendly influence to bear upon her at this critical period of

her life. His sympathies did not seem so lively as the Doctor could have wished. Perhaps he had vastly more important objects of solicitude in his own spiritual interests.

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A knock at the door interrupted them. The Reverend Mr. Fairweather rose and went towards it. As he passed the table, his coat caught something, which came rattling to the floor. It was a crucifix with a string of beads attached. As he opened the door, the Milesian features of Father McShane presented themselves, and from their centre proceeded the clerical benediction in Irish-sounding Latin, Pax vobiscum!

The Reverend Doctor Honeywood rose and left the priest and his disciple together.

CHAPTER XIX.

The spider on his thread.

There was nobody, then, to counsel poor Elsie, except her father, who had learned to let her have her own way so as not to disturb such relations as they had together, and the old black woman, who had a real, though limited influence over the girl. Perhaps she did not need counsel. To look upon her, one might well suppose that she was competent to defend herself against any enemy she was like to have. That glittering, piercing eye was not to be softened by a few smooth words spoken in low tones, charged with the common sentiments which win their way to maidens' hearts. That round, lithe, sinuous figure was as full of dangerous life as ever lay under the slender flanks and clean-shaped limbs of a panther.

There were particular times when Elsie was in such a mood that it must have been a bold person who would have intruded upon her with reproof or counsel. "This is one of her days," old Sophy would say quietly to her father, and he would, as far as possible, leave her to herself. These days were more frequent, as old Sophy's keen, concentrated watchfulness had taught her, at certain periods of the year. It was in the heats of summer that they were most common and most strongly characterized. In winter, on the other hand, she was less excitable, and even at times heavy and as if chilled and dulled in her sensibilities. It was a strange, paroxysmal kind of life that belonged to her. It seemed to come and go with the sunlight. All winter long she would be comparatively quiet, easy to manage, listless, slow in her motions; her eye would lose something of its strange lustre; and the old nurse would feel so little anxiety, that her whole expression and aspect would show the change, and people would say to her, "Why, Sophy, how young you're looking!"

As the spring came on, Elsie would leave the fireside, have her tiger-skin spread in the empty southern chamber next the wall, and lie there basking for whole hours in the sunshine. As the season warmed, the light would kindle afresh in her eyes, and the old woman's sleep would grow restless again,—for she knew, that, so long as the glitter was fierce in the girl's eyes, there was no trusting her impulses or movements.

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At last, when the veins of the summer were hot and swollen, and the juices of all the poison-plants and the blood of all the creatures that feed upon them had grown thick and strong,—about the time when the second mowing was in hand, and the brown, wet-faced men were following up the scythes as they chased the falling waves of grass, (falling as the waves fall on sickle-curved beaches; the foam-flowers dropping as the grass-flowers drop,—with sharp semivowel consonantal sounds,—frsh,—for that is the way the sea talks, and leaves all pure vowel-sounds for the winds to breathe over it, and all mutes to the unyielding earth,)—about this time of over-ripe midsummer, the life of Elsie seemed fullest of its malign and restless instincts. This was the period of the year when the Rockland people were most cautious of wandering in the leafier coverts which skirted the base of The Mountain, and the farmers liked to wear thick, long boots, whenever they went into the bushes. But Elsie was never so much given to roaming over The Mountain as at this season; and as she had grown more absolute and uncontrollable, she was as like to take the night as the day for her rambles.

At this season, too, all her peculiar tastes in dress and ornament came out in a more striking way than at other times. She was never so superb as then, and never so threatening in her scowling beauty. The barred skirts she always fancied showed sharply beneath her diaphanous muslins; the diamonds often glittered on her breast as if for her own pleasure rather than to dazzle others; the asp-like bracelet hardly left her arm. She was never seen without some necklace,—either the golden cord she wore at the great party, or a chain of mosaics, or simply a ring of golden scales. Some said that Elsie always slept in a necklace, and that when she died she was to be buried in one. It was a fancy of hers,—but many thought there was a reason for it.

Nobody watched Elsie with a more searching eye than her cousin, Dick Venner. He had kept more out of her way of late, it is true, but there was not a movement she made which he did not carefully observe just so far as he could without exciting her suspicion. It was plain enough to him that the road to fortune was before him, and that the first thing was to marry Elsie. What course he should take with her, or with others interested, after marrying her, need not be decided in a hurry.

He had now done all he could expect to do at present in the way of conciliating the other members of the household. The girl's father tolerated him, if he did not even like him. Whether he suspected his project or not Dick did not feel sure; but it was something to have got a foothold in the house, and to have overcome any prepossession against him which his uncle might have entertained. To be a good listener and a bad billiard-player was not a very great sacrifice to effect this object. Then old Sophy could hardly help feeling well-disposed towards him, after the gifts he had bestowed on her and the court he had paid her. These were the only persons on the place of much importance to gain over. The people employed about the house and farm-lands had little to do with Elsie, except to obey her without questioning her commands.

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Mr. Richard began to think of reopening his second parallel. But he had lost something of the coolness with which he had begun his system of operations. The more he had reflected upon the matter, the more he had convinced himself that this was his one great chance in life. If he suffered this girl to escape him, such an opportunity could hardly, in the nature of things, present itself a second time. Only one life between Elsie and her fortune,—and lives are so uncertain! The girl might not suit him as a wife. Possibly. Time enough to find out after he had got her. In short, he must have the property, and Elsie Venner, as she was to go with it,—and then, if he found it convenient and agreeable to, lead a virtuous life, he would settle down and raise children and vegetables; but if he found it inconvenient and disagreeable, so much the worse for those who made it so. Like many other persons, he was not principled against virtue, provided virtue were a better investment than its opposite; but he knew that there might be contingencies in which the property would be better without its incumbrances, and he contemplated this conceivable problem in the light of all its possible solutions.

One thing Mr. Richard could not conceal from himself: Elsie had some new cause of indifference, at least, if not of aversion to him. With the acuteness which persons who make a sole business of their own interest gain by practice, so that fortune-hunters are often shrewd where real lovers are terribly simple, he fixed at once on the young man up at the school where the girl had been going of late, as probably at the bottom of it.

“Cousin Elsie in love!” so he communed with himself upon his lonely pillow. “In love with a Yankee schoolmaster! What else can it be? Let him look out for himself! He’ll stand but a bad chance between us. What makes you think she’s in love with him? Met her walking with him. Don’t like her looks and ways;—she’s thinking about something, anyhow. Where does she get those books she is reading so often? Not out of our library, that ’s certain. If I could have ten minutes’ peep into her chamber now, I would find out where she got them, and what mischief she was up to.”

At that instant, as if some tributary demon had heard his wish, a shape which could be none but Elsie’s flitted through a gleam of moonlight into the shadow of the trees. She was setting out on one of her midnight rambles.

Dick felt his heart stir in its place, and presently his cheeks flushed with the old longing for an adventure. It was not much to invade a young girl’s deserted chamber, but it would amuse a wakeful hour, and tell him some little matters he wanted to know. The chamber he slept in was over the room which Elsie chiefly occupied at this season. There was no great risk of his being seen or heard, if he ventured down-stairs to her apartment.

Mr. Richard Venner, in the pursuit of his interesting project, arose and lighted a lamp. He wrapped himself in a dressing-gown and thrust his feet into a pair of cloth slippers. He stole carefully down the stair, and arrived safely at the door of Elsie’s room.

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The young lady had taken the natural precaution to leave it fastened, carrying the key with her, no doubt,—unless; indeed, she had got out by the window, which was not far from the ground. Dick could get in at this window easily enough, but he did not like the idea of leaving his footprints in the flower-bed just under it. He returned to his own chamber, and held a council of war with himself.

He put his head out of his own window and looked at that beneath. It was open. He then went to one of his trunks, which he unlocked, and began carefully removing its contents. What these were we need not stop to mention,—only remarking that there were dresses of various patterns, which might afford an agreeable series of changes, and in certain contingencies prove eminently useful. After removing a few of these, he thrust his hand to the very bottom of the remaining pile and drew out a coiled strip of leather many yards in length, ending in a noose,—a tough, well-seasoned lasso, looking as if it had seen service and was none the worse for it. He uncoiled a few yards of this and fastened it to the knob of a door. Then he threw the loose end out of the window so that it should hang by the open casement of Elsie's room. By this he let himself down opposite her window, and with a slight effort swung himself inside the room. He lighted a match, found a candle, and, having lighted that, looked curiously about him, as Clodius might have done when he smuggled himself in among the Vestals.

Elsie's room was almost as peculiar as her dress and ornaments. It was a kind of museum of objects, such as the woods are full of to those who have eyes to see them, but many of them such as only few could hope to reach, even if they knew where to look for them. Crows' nests, which are never found but in the tall trees, commonly enough in the forks of ancient hemlocks, eggs of rare birds, which must have taken a quick eye and a hard climb to find and get hold of, mosses and ferns of unusual aspect, and quaint monstrosities of vegetable growth, such as Nature delights in, showed that Elsie had her tastes and fancies like any naturalist or poet.

Nature, when left to her own freaks in the forest, is grotesque and fanciful to the verge of license, and beyond it. The foliage of trees does not always require clipping to make it look like an image of life. From those windows at Canoe Meadow, among the mountains, we could see all summer long a lion rampant, a Shanghai chicken, and General Jackson on horseback, done by Nature in green leaves, each with a single tree. But to Nature's tricks with boughs and roots and smaller vegetable growths there is no end. Her fancy is infinite, and her humor not always refined. There is a perpetual reminiscence of animal life in her rude caricatures, which sometimes actually reach the point of imitating the complete human figure, as in that extraordinary specimen which nobody will believe to be genuine, except the men of science, and of which the discreet reader may have a glimpse by application in the proper quarter.

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Elsie had gathered so many of these sculpture-like monstrosities, that one might have thought she had robbed old Sophy's grandfather of his fetishes. They helped to give her room a kind of enchanted look, as if a witch had her home in it. Over the fireplace was a long, staff-like branch, strangled in the spiral coils of one of those vines which strain the smaller trees in their clinging embraces, sinking into the bark until the parasite becomes almost identified with its support. With these sylvan curiosities were blended objects of art, some of them not less singular, but others showing a love for the beautiful in form and color, such as a girl of fine organization and nice culture might naturally be expected to feel and to indulge, in adorning her apartment.

All these objects, pictures, bronzes, vases, and the rest, did not detain Mr. Richard Veneer very long, whatever may have been his sensibilities to art. He was more curious about books and papers. A copy of Keats lay on the table. He opened it and read the name of Bernard C. Langdon on the blank leaf. An envelope was on the table with Elsie's name written in a similar hand; but the envelope was empty, and he could not find the note it contained. Her desk was locked, and it would not be safe to tamper with it. He had seen enough; the girl received books and notes from this fellow up at the school, this usher, this Yankee quill-driver;—he was aspiring to become the lord of the Dudley domain, then, was he?

Elsie had been reasonably careful. She had locked up her papers, whatever they might be. There was little else that promised to reward his curiosity, but he cast his eye on everything. There was a clasp-Bible among her books. Dick wondered if she ever unclasped it. There was a book of hymns; it had her name in it, and looked as if it might have been often read;—what the diablo had Elsie to do with hymns?

Mr. Richard Venner was in an observing and analytical state of mind, it will be noticed, or he might perhaps have been touched with the innocent betrayals of the poor girl's chamber. Had she, after all, some human tenderness in her heart? That was not the way he put the question,—but whether she would take seriously to this schoolmaster, and if she did, what would be the neatest and surest and quickest way of putting a stop to all that nonsense. All this, however, he could think over more safely in his own quarters. So he stole softly to the window, and, catching the end of the leathern thong, regained his own chamber and drew in the lasso.

It needs only a little jealousy to set a man on who is doubtful in love or wooing, or to make him take hold of his courting in earnest. As soon as Dick had satisfied himself that the young schoolmaster was his rival in Elsie's good graces, his whole thoughts concentrated themselves more than ever on accomplishing his great design of securing her for himself. There was no time to be lost.

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He must come into closer relations with her, so as to withdraw her thoughts from this fellow, and to find out more exactly what was the state of her affections, if she had any. So he began to court her company again, to propose riding with her, to sing to her, to join her whenever she was strolling about the grounds, to make himself agreeable, according to the ordinary understanding of that phrase, in every way which seemed to promise a chance for succeeding in that amiable effort.

The girl treated him more capriciously than ever. She would be sullen and silent, or she would draw back fiercely at some harmless word or gesture, or she would look at him with her eyes narrowed in such a strange way and with such a wicked light in them that Dick swore to himself they were too much for him, and would leave her for the moment. Yet she tolerated him, almost as a matter of necessity, and sometimes seemed to take a kind of pleasure in trying her power upon him. This he soon found out, and humored her in the fancy that she could exercise a kind of fascination over him, though there were times in which he actually felt an influence he could not understand, an effect of some peculiar expression about her, perhaps, but still centring in those diamond eyes of hers which it made one feel so curiously to look into.

Whether Elsie saw into his object or not was more than he could tell. His idea was, after having conciliated the good-will of all about her as far as possible, to make himself first a habit and then a necessity with the girl,—not to spring any trap of a declaration upon her until tolerance had grown into such a degree of inclination as her nature was like to admit. He had succeeded in the first part of his plan. He was at liberty to prolong his visit at his own pleasure. This was not strange; these three persons, Dudley Venner, his daughter, and his nephew, represented all that remained of an old and honorable family. Had Elsie been like other girls, her father might have been less willing to entertain a young fellow like Dick as an inmate; but he had long outgrown all the slighter apprehensions which he might have had in common with all parents, and followed rather than led the imperious instincts of his daughter. It was not a question of sentiment, but of life and death, or more than that,—some dark ending, perhaps, which would close the history of his race with disaster and evil report upon the lips of all coming generations.

As to the thought of his nephew's making love to his daughter, it had almost passed from his mind. He had been so long in the habit of looking at Elsie as outside of all common influences and exceptional in the law of her nature, that it was difficult for him to think of her as a girl to be fallen in love with. Many persons are surprised, when others court their female relatives; they know them as good young or old women enough,—aunts, sisters, nieces, daughters, whatever they may be,—but

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never think of anybody's falling in love with them, any more than of their being struck by lightning. But in this case there were special reasons, in addition to the common family delusion,—reasons which seemed to make it impossible that she should attract a suitor. Who would dare to marry Elsie? No, let her have the pleasure, if it was one, at any rate the wholesome excitement, of companionship; it might save her from lapsing into melancholy or a worse form of madness. Dudley Venner had a kind of superstition, too, that, if Elsie could only outlive three septenaries, twenty-one years, so that, according to the prevalent idea, her whole frame would have been thrice made over, counting from her birth, she would revert to the natural standard of health of mind and feelings from which she had been so long perverted. The thought of any other motive than love being sufficient to induce Richard to become her suitor had not occurred to him. He had married early, at that happy period when interested motives are least apt to influence the choice; and his single idea of marriage was, that it was the union of persons naturally drawn towards each other by some mutual attraction. Very simple, perhaps; but he had lived lonely for many years since his wife's death, and judged the hearts of others, most of all of his brother's son, by his own. He had often thought whether, in case of Elsie's dying or being necessarily doomed to seclusion, he might not adopt this nephew and make him his heir; but it had not occurred to him that Richard might wish to become his son-in-law for the sake of his property.

It is very easy to criticise other people's modes of dealing with their children. Outside observers see results; parents see processes. They notice the trivial movements and accents which betray the blood of this or that ancestor; they can detect the irrepressible movement of hereditary impulse in looks and acts which mean nothing to the common observer. To be a parent is almost to be a fatalist. This boy sits with legs crossed, just as his uncle used to whom he never saw; his grandfathers both died before he was born, but he has the movement of the eyebrows which we remember in one of them, and the gusty temper of three different generations, can tell pretty nearly the range of possibilities and the limitations of a child, actual or potential, of a given stock,—errors excepted always, because children of the same stock are not bred just alike, because the traits of some less known ancestor are liable to break out at any time, and because each human being has, after all, a small fraction of individuality about him which gives him a flavor, so that he is distinguishable from others by his friends or in a court of justice, and which occasionally makes a genius or a saint or a criminal of him. It is well that young persons cannot read these fatal oracles of Nature. Blind impulse is her highest wisdom, after all. We make our great jump, and then she takes the bandage off our

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eyes. That is the way the broad sea-level of average is maintained, and the physiological democracy is enabled to fight against the principle of selection which would disinherit all the weaker children. The magnificent constituency of mediocrities of which the world is made up,—the people without biographies, whose lives have made a clear solution in the fluid menstroom of time, instead of being precipitated in the opaque sediment of history—

But this is a narrative, and not a disquisition.

CHAPTER XX.

From without and from within.

There were not wanting people who accused Dudley Venner of weakness and bad judgment in his treatment of his daughter. Some were of opinion that the great mistake was in not “breaking her will” when she was a little child. There was nothing the matter with her, they said, but that she had been spoiled by indulgence. If they had had the charge of her, they’d have brought her down. She’d got the upperhand of her father now; but if he’d only taken hold of her in season! There are people who think that everything may be done, if the doer, be he educator or physician, be only called “in season.” No doubt,—but in season would often be a hundred or two years before the child was born; and people never send so early as that.

The father of Elsie Veneer knew his duties and his difficulties too well to trouble himself about anything others might think or say. So soon as he found that he could not govern his child, he gave his life up to following her and protecting her as far as he could. It was a stern and terrible trial for a man of acute sensibility, and not without force of intellect and will, and the manly ambition for himself and his family-name which belonged to his endowments and his position. Passive endurance is the hardest trial to persons of such a nature.

What made it still more a long martyrdom was the necessity for bearing his cross in utter loneliness. He could not tell his griefs. He could not talk of them even with those who knew their secret spring. His minister had the unsympathetic nature which is common in the meaner sort of devotees,—persons who mistake spiritual selfishness for sanctity, and grab at the infinite prize of the great Future and Elsewhere with the egotism they excommunicate in its hardly more odious forms of avarice and self-indulgence. How could he speak with the old physician and the old black woman about a sorrow and a terror which but to name was to strike dumb the lips of Consolation?

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In the dawn of his manhood he had found that second consciousness for which young men and young women go about looking into each other's faces, with their sweet, artless aim playing in every feature, and making them beautiful to each other, as to all of us. He had found his other self early, before he had grown weary in the search and wasted his freshness in vain longings: the lot of many, perhaps we may say of most, who infringe the patent of our social order by intruding themselves into a life already upon half allowance of the necessary luxuries of existence. The life he had led for a brief space was not only beautiful in outward circumstance, as old Sophy had described it to the Reverend Doctor. It was that delicious process of the tuning of two souls to each other, string by string, not without little half-pleasing discords now and then when some chord in one or the other proves to be overstrained or over-lax, but always approaching nearer and nearer to harmony, until they become at last as two instruments with a single voice. Something more than a year of this blissful doubled consciousness had passed over him when he found himself once more alone,—alone, save for the little diamond-eyed child lying in the old black woman's arms, with the coral necklace round—her throat and the rattle in her hand.

He would not die by his own act. It was not the way in his family. There may have been other, perhaps better reasons, but this was enough; he did not come of suicidal stock. He must live for this child's sake, at any rate; and yet,—oh, yet, who could tell with what thoughts he looked upon her? Sometimes her little features would look placid, and something like a smile would steal over them; then all his tender feelings would rush up, into his eyes, and he would put his arms out to take her from the old woman,—but all at once her eyes would narrow and she would throw her head back, and a shudder would seize him as he stooped over his child,—he could not look upon her,—he could not touch his lips to her cheek; nay, there would sometimes come into his soul such frightful suggestions that he would hurry from the room lest the hinted thought should become a momentary madness and he should lift his hand against the hapless infant which owed him life.

In those miserable days he used to wander all over The Mountain in his restless endeavor to seek some relief for inward suffering in outward action. He had no thought of throwing himself from the summit of any of the broken cliffs, but he clambered over them recklessly, as having no particular care for his life. Sometimes he would go into the accursed district where the venomous reptiles were always to be dreaded, and court their worst haunts, and kill all he could come near with a kind of blind fury which was strange in a person of his gentle nature.

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One overhanging cliff was a favorite haunt of his. It frowned upon his home beneath in a very menacing way; he noticed slight seams and fissures that looked ominous;—what would happen, if it broke off some time or other and came crashing down on the fields and roofs below? He thought of such a possible catastrophe with a singular indifference, in fact with a feeling almost like pleasure. It would be such a swift and thorough solution of this great problem of life he was working out in ever-recurring daily anguish! The remote possibility of such a catastrophe had frightened some timid dwellers beneath The Mountain to other places of residence; here the danger was most imminent, and yet he loved to dwell upon the chances of its occurrence. Danger is often the best counterirritant in cases of mental suffering; he found a solace in careless exposure of his life, and learned to endure the trials of each day better by dwelling in imagination on the possibility that it might be the last for him and the home that was his.

Time, the great consoler, helped these influences, and he gradually fell into more easy and less dangerous habits of life. He ceased from his more perilous rambles. He thought less of the danger from the great overhanging rocks and forests; they had hung there for centuries; it was not very likely they would crash or slide in his time. He became accustomed to all Elsie's strange looks and ways. Old Sophy dressed her with ruffles round her neck, and hunted up the red coral branch with silver bells which the little toothless Dudleys had bitten upon for a hundred years. By an infinite effort, her father forced himself to become the companion of this child, for whom he had such a mingled feeling, but whose presence was always a trial to him, and often a terror.

At a cost which no human being could estimate, he had done his duty, and in some degree reaped his reward. Elsie grew up with a kind of filial feeling for him, such as her nature was capable of. She never would obey him; that was not to be looked for. Commands, threats, punishments, were out of the question with her; the mere physical effects of crossing her will betrayed themselves in such changes of expression and manner that it would have been senseless to attempt to govern her in any such way. Leaving her mainly to herself, she could be to some extent indirectly influenced,—not otherwise. She called her father "Dudley," as if he had been her brother. She ordered everybody and would be ordered by none.

Who could know all these things, except the few people of the household? What wonder, therefore, that ignorant and shallow persons laid the blame on her father of those peculiarities which were freely talked about,—of those darker tendencies which were hinted of in whispers? To all this talk, so far as it reached him, he was supremely indifferent, not only with the indifference which all gentlemen feel to the gossip of their inferiors, but with a charitable calmness which did not wonder or blame. He knew that his position was not simply a difficult, but an impossible one, and schooled himself to bear his destiny as well as he might, and report himself only at Headquarters.

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He had grown gentle under this discipline. His hair was just beginning to be touched with silver, and his expression was that of habitual sadness and anxiety. He had no counsellor, as we have seen, to turn to, who did not know either too much or too little. He had no heart to rest upon and into which he might unburden himself of the secrets and the sorrows that were aching in his own breast. Yet he had not allowed himself to run to waste in the long time since he was left alone to his trials and fears. He had resisted the seductions which always beset solitary men with restless brains overwrought by depressing agencies. He disguised no misery to himself with the lying delusion of wine. He sought no sleep from narcotics, though he lay with throbbing, wide-open eyes through all the weary hours of the night.

It was understood between Dudley Veneer and old Doctor Kittredge that Elsie was a subject of occasional medical observation, on account of certain mental peculiarities which might end in a permanent affection of her reason. Beyond this nothing was said, whatever may have been in the mind of either. But Dudley Veneer had studied Elsie's case in the light of all the books he could find which might do anything towards explaining it. As in all cases where men meddle with medical science for a special purpose, having no previous acquaintance with it, his imagination found what it wanted in the books he read, and adjusted it to the facts before him. So it was he came to cherish those two fancies before alluded to that the ominous birthmark she had carried from infancy might fade and become obliterated, and that the age of complete maturity might be signaled by an entire change in her physical and mental state. He held these vague hopes as all of us nurse our only half-believed illusions. Not for the world would he have questioned his sagacious old medical friend as to the probability or possibility of their being true. We are very shy of asking questions of those who know enough to destroy with one word the hopes we live on.

In this life of comparative seclusion to which the father had doomed himself for the sake of his child, he had found time for large and varied reading. The learned Judge Thornton confessed himself surprised at the extent of Dudley Veneer's information. Doctor Kittredge found that he was in advance of him in the knowledge of recent physiological discoveries. He had taken pains to become acquainted with agricultural chemistry; and the neighboring farmers owed him some useful hints about the management of their land. He renewed his old acquaintance with the classic authors. He loved to warm his pulses with Homer and calm them down with Horace. He received all manner of new books and periodicals, and gradually gained an interest in the events of the passing time. Yet he remained almost a hermit, not absolutely refusing to see his neighbors, nor even churlish towards them, but on the other hand not cultivating any intimate relations with them.

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He had retired from the world a young man, little more than a youth, indeed, with sentiments and aspirations all of them suddenly extinguished. The first had bequeathed him a single huge sorrow, the second a single trying duty. In due time the anguish had lost something of its poignancy, the light of earlier and happier memories had begun to struggle with and to soften its thick darkness, and even that duty which he had confronted with such an effort had become an endurable habit.

At a period of life when many have been living on the capital of their acquired knowledge and their youthful stock of sensibilities until their intellects are really shallower and their hearts emptier than they were at twenty, Dudley Veneer was stronger in thought and tenderer in soul than in the first freshness of his youth, when he counted but half his present years. He had entered that period which marks the decline of men who have ceased growing in knowledge and strength: from forty to fifty a man must move upward, or the natural falling off in the vigor of life will carry him rapidly downward. At this time his inward: nature was richer and deeper than in any earlier period of his life. If he could only be summoned to action, he was capable of noble service. If his sympathies could only find an outlet, he was never so capable of love as now; for his natural affections had been gathering in the course of all these years, and the traces of that ineffaceable calamity of his life were softened and partially hidden by new growths of thought and feeling, as the wreck left by a mountainside is covered over by the gentle intrusion of the soft-stemmed herbs which will prepare it for the stronger vegetation that will bring it once more into harmony with the peaceful slopes around it.

Perhaps Dudley Veneer had not gained so much in worldly wisdom as if he had been more in society and less in his study. The indulgence with which he treated his nephew was, no doubt, imprudent. A man more in the habit of dealing with men would have been more guarded with a person with Dick's questionable story and unquestionable physiognomy. But he was singularly unsuspicious, and his natural kindness was an additional motive to the wish for introducing some variety into the routine of Elsie's life.

If Dudley Veneer did not know just what he wanted at this period of his life, there were a great many people in the town of Rockland who thought they did know. He had been a widower long enough, "—nigh twenty year, wa'n't it? He'd been aout to Spraowles's party,—there wa'n't anything to hender him why he shouldn't stir raound l'k other folks. What was the reason he did n't go abaout to taown-meetin's 'n' Sahbath-meetin's, 'n' lyceums, 'n' school 'xaminations, 'n' s'prise-parties, 'n' funerals,—and other entertainments where the still-faced two-story folks were in the habit of looking round to see if any of the mansion-house gentry were present?—Fac' was, he was livin' too lonesome daown there at the mansion-haouse. Why shouldn't he make up to the Jedge's daughter? She was genteel enough for him, and—let's see, haow old was she? Seven-'n'itwenty,—no, six-'n'-twenty,—born the same year we buried our little Anny Marl".

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There was no possible objection to this arrangement, if the parties interested had seen fit to make it or even to think of it. But "Portia," as some of the mansion-house people called her, did not happen to awaken the elective affinities of the lonely widower. He met her once in a while, and said to himself that she was a good specimen of the grand style of woman; and then the image came back to him of a woman not quite so large, not quite so imperial in her port, not quite so incisive in her speech, not quite so judicial in her opinions, but with two or three more joints in her frame, and two or three soft inflections in her voice, which for some absurd reason or other drew him to her side and so bewitched him that he told her half his secrets and looked into her eyes all that he could not tell, in less time than it would have taken him to discuss the champion paper of the last Quarterly with the admirable "Portia." Heu, quanto minus! How much more was that lost image to him than all it left on earth!

The study of love is very much like that of meteorology. We know that just about so much rain will fall in a season; but on what particular day it will shower is more than we can tell. We know that just about so much love will be made every year in a given population; but who will rain his young affections upon the heart of whom is not known except to the astrologers and fortune-tellers. And why rain falls as it does and why love is made just as it is are equally puzzling questions.

The woman a man loves is always his own daughter, far more his daughter than the female children born to him by the common law of life. It is not the outside woman, who takes his name, that he loves: before her image has reached the centre of his consciousness, it has passed through fifty many-layered nerve-strainers, been churned over by ten thousand pulse-beats, and reacted upon by millions of lateral impulses which bandy it about through the mental spaces as a reflection is sent back and forward in a saloon lined with mirrors. With this altered image of the woman before him, his preexisting ideal becomes blended. The object of his love is in part the offspring of her legal parents, but more of her lover's brain. The difference between the real and the ideal objects of love must not exceed a fixed maximum. The heart's vision cannot unite them stereoscopically into a single image, if the divergence passes certain limits. A formidable analogy, much in the nature of a proof, with very serious consequences, which moralists and match-makers would do well to remember! Double vision with the eyes of the heart is a dangerous physiological state, and may lead to missteps and serious falls.

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Whether Dudley Veneer would ever find a breathing image near enough to his ideal one, to fill the desolate chamber of his heart, or not, was very doubtful. Some gracious and gentle woman, whose influence would steal upon him as the first low words of prayer after that interval of silent mental supplication known to one of our simpler forms of public worship, gliding into his consciousness without hurting its old griefs, herself knowing the chastening of sorrow, and subdued into sweet acquiescence with the Divine will,—some such woman as this, if Heaven should send him such, might call him back to the world of happiness, from which he seemed forever exiled. He could never again be the young lover who walked through the garden-alleys all red with roses in the old dead and buried June of long ago. He could never forget the bride of his youth, whose image, growing phantomlike with the lapse of years, hovered over him like a dream while waking and like a reality in dreams. But if it might be in God's good providence that this desolate life should come under the influence of human affections once more, what an ecstasy of renewed existence was in store for him! His life had not all been buried under that narrow ridge of turf with the white stone at its head. It seemed so for a while; but it was not and could not and ought not to be so. His first passion had been a true and pure one; there was no spot or stain upon it. With all his grief there blended no cruel recollection of any word or look he would have wished to forget. All those little differences, such as young married people with any individual flavor in their characters must have, if they are tolerably mated, had only added to the music of existence, as the lesser discords admitted into some perfect symphony, fitly resolved, add richness and strength to the whole harmonious movement. It was a deep wound that Fate had inflicted on him; nay, it seemed like a mortal one; but the weapon was clean, and its edge was smooth. Such wounds must heal with time in healthy natures, whatever a false sentiment may say, by the wise and beneficent law of our being. The recollection of a deep and true affection is rather a divine nourishment for a life to grow strong upon than a poison to destroy it.

Dudley Venner's habitual sadness could not be laid wholly to his early bereavement. It was partly the result of the long struggle between natural affection and duty, on one side, and the involuntary tendencies these had to overcome, on the other,—between hope and fear, so long in conflict that despair itself would have been like an anodyne, and he would have slept upon some final catastrophe with the heavy sleep of a bankrupt after his failure is proclaimed. Alas! some new affection might perhaps rekindle the fires of youth in his heart; but what power could calm that haggard terror of the parent which rose with every morning's sun and watched with every evening star,—what power save alone that of him who comes bearing the inverted torch, and leaving after him only the ashes printed with his footsteps?



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CHAPTER XXI.

The widow Rowens gives A tea-party.

There was a good deal of interest felt, as has been said, in the lonely condition of Dudley Venner in that fine mansion-house of his, and with that strange daughter, who would never be married, as many people thought, in spite of all the stories. The feelings expressed by the good folks who dated from the time when they “buried aour little Anny Mari’,” and others of that homespun stripe, were founded in reason, after all. And so it was natural enough that they should be shared by various ladies, who, having conjugated the verb to live as far as the preterpluperfect tense, were ready to change one of its vowels and begin with it in the present indicative. Unfortunately, there was very little chance of showing sympathy in its active form for a gentleman who kept himself so much out of the way as the master of the Dudley Mansion.

Various attempts had been made, from time to time, of late years, to get him out of his study, which had, for the most part, proved failures. It was a surprise, therefore, when he was seen at the Great Party at the Colonel’s. But it was an encouragement to try him again, and the consequence had been that he had received a number of notes inviting him to various smaller entertainments, which, as neither he nor Elsie had any fancy for them, he had politely declined.

Such was the state of things when he received an invitation to take tea sociably, with a few friends, at Hyacinth Cottage, the residence of the Widow Rowens, relict of the late Beeri Rowens, Esquire, better known as Major Rowens. Major Rowens was at the time of his decease a promising officer in the militia, in the direct line of promotion, as his waistband was getting tighter every year; and, as all the world knows, the militia-officer who splits off most buttons and fills the largest sword-belt stands the best chance of rising, or, perhaps we might say, spreading, to be General.

Major Rowens united in his person certain other traits which help a man to eminence in the branch of public service referred to. He ran to high colors, to wide whiskers, to open pores; he had the saddle-leather skin common in Englishmen, rarer in Americans,—never found in the Brahmin caste, oftener in the military and the commodores: observing people know what is meant; blow the seed-arrows from the white-kid-looking button which holds them on a dandelion-stalk, and the pricked-pincushion surface shows you what to look for. He had the loud gruff voice which implies the right to command. He had the thick hand, stubbed fingers, with bristled pads between their joints, square, broad thumb-nails, and sturdy limbs, which mark a constitution made to use in rough out-door work. He had the never-failing predilection for showy switch-tailed horses that step high, and sidle about, and act as if they were going to do something

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fearful the next minute, in the face of awed and admiring multitudes gathered at mighty musters or imposing cattle-shows. He had no objection, either, to holding the reins in a wagon behind another kind of horse,—a slouching, listless beast, with a strong slant to his shoulder; and a notable depth to his quarter and an emphatic angle at the hock, who commonly walked or lounged along in a lazy trot of five or six miles an hour; but, if a lively colt happened to come rattling up alongside, or a brandy-faced old horse-jockey took the road to show off a fast nag, and threw his dust into the Major's face, would pick his legs up all at once, and straighten his body out, and swing off into a three-minute gait, in a way that "Old Blue" himself need not have been ashamed of.

For some reason which must be left to the next generation of professors to find out, the men who are knowing in horse-flesh have an eye also for, let a long dash separate the brute creation from the angelic being now to be named,—for lovely woman. Of this fact there can be no possible doubt; and therefore you shall notice, that, if a fast horse trots before two, one of the twain is apt to be a pretty bit of muliebrity, with shapes to her, and eyes flying about in all directions.

Major Rowens, at that time Lieutenant of the Rockland Fusileers, had driven and "traded" horses not a few before he turned his acquired skill as a judge of physical advantages in another direction. He knew a neat, snug hoof, a delicate pastern, a broad haunch, a deep chest, a close ribbed-up barrel, as well as any other man in the town. He was not to be taken in by your thick-jointed, heavy-headed cattle, without any go to them, that suit a country-parson, nor yet by the "gaanted-up," long-legged animals, with all their constitutions bred out of them, such as rich greenhorns buy and cover up with their plated trappings.

Whether his equine experience was of any use to him in the selection of the mate with whom he was to go in double harness so long as they both should live, we need not stop to question. At any rate, nobody could find fault with the points of Miss Marilla Van Deusen, to whom he offered the privilege of becoming Mrs. Rowens. The Van must have been crossed out of her blood, for she was an out-and-out brunette, with hair and eyes black enough for a Mohawk's daughter. A fine style of woman, with very striking tints and outlines,—an excellent match for the Lieutenant, except for one thing. She was marked by Nature for a widow. She was evidently got up for mourning, and never looked so well as in deep black, with jet ornaments.

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The man who should dare to marry her would doom himself; for how could she become the widow she was bound to be, unless he could retire and give her a chance? The Lieutenant lived, however, as we have seen, to become Captain and then Major, with prospects of further advancement. But Mrs. Rowens often said she should never look well in colors. At last her destiny fulfilled itself, and the justice of Nature was vindicated. Major Rowens got overheated galloping about the field on the day of the Great Muster, and had a rush of blood to the head, according to the common report,—at any rate, something which stopped him short in his career of expansion and promotion, and established Mrs. Rowens in her normal condition of widowhood.

The Widow Rowens was now in the full bloom of ornamental sorrow. A very shallow crape bonnet, frilled and froth-like, allowed the parted raven hair to show its glossy smoothness. A jet pin heaved upon her bosom with every sigh of memory, or emotion of unknown origin. Jet bracelets shone with every movement of her slender hands, cased in close-fitting black gloves. Her sable dress was ridged with manifold flounces, from beneath which a small foot showed itself from time to time, clad in the same hue of mourning. Everything about her was dark, except the whites of her eyes and the enamel of her teeth. The effect was complete. Gray's *Elegy* was not a more perfect composition.

Much as the Widow was pleased with the costume belonging to her condition, she did not disguise from herself that under certain circumstances she might be willing to change her name again. Thus, for instance, if a gentleman not too far gone in maturity, of dignified exterior, with an ample fortune, and of unexceptionable character, should happen to set his heart upon her, and the only way to make him happy was to give up her weeds and go into those unbecoming colors again for his sake,—why, she felt that it was in her nature to make the sacrifice. By a singular coincidence it happened that a gentleman was now living in Rockland who united in himself all these advantages. Who he was, the sagacious reader may very probably have divined. Just to see how it looked, one day, having bolted her door, and drawn the curtains close, and glanced under the sofa, and listened at the keyhole to be sure there was nobody in the entry,—just to see how it looked, she had taken out an envelope and written on the back of it Mrs. Manilla Veneer. It made her head swim and her knees tremble. What if she should faint, or die, or have a stroke of palsy, and they should break into the room and find that name written! How she caught it up and tore it into little shreds, and then could not be easy until she had burned the small heap of pieces—

But these are things which every honorable reader will consider imparted in strict confidence.

The Widow Rowens, though not of the mansion house set, was among the most genteel of the two-story circle, and was in the habit of visiting some of the great people. In one of these visits she met a dashing young fellow with an olive complexion at the house of a professional gentleman who had married one of the white necks and pairs of fat arms

from a distinguished family before referred to. The professional gentleman himself was out, but the lady introduced the olive-complexioned young man as Mr. Richard Venner.

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The Widow was particularly pleased with this accidental meeting. Had heard Mr. Venner's name frequently mentioned. Hoped his uncle was well, and his charming cousin,—was she as original as ever? Had often admired that charming creature he rode: we had had some fine horses. Had never got over her taste for riding, but could find nobody that liked a good long gallop since—well—she could n't help wishing she was alongside of him, the other day, when she saw him dashing by, just at twilight.

The Widow paused; lifted a flimsy handkerchief with a very deep black border so as to play the jet bracelet; pushed the tip of her slender foot beyond the lowest of her black flounces; looked up; looked down; looked at Mr. Richard, the very picture of artless simplicity,—as represented in well-played genteel comedy.

"A good bit of stuff," Dick said to himself, "and something of it left yet; caramba!" The Major had not studied points for nothing, and the Widow was one of the right sort. The young man had been a little restless of late, and was willing to vary his routine by picking up an acquaintance here and there. So he took the Widow's hint. He should like to have a scamper of half a dozen miles with her some fine morning.

The Widow was infinitely obliged; was not sure that she could find any horse in the village to suit her; but it was so kind in him! Would he not call at Hyacinth Cottage, and let her thank him again there?

Thus began an acquaintance which the Widow made the most of, and on the strength of which she determined to give a tea-party and invite a number of persons of whom we know something already. She took a half-sheet of note-paper and made out her list as carefully as a country "merchant's clerk" adds up two and threepence (New-England nomenclature) and twelve and a half cents, figure by figure, and fraction by fraction, before he can be sure they will make half a dollar, without cheating somebody. After much consideration the list reduced itself to the following names: Mr. Richard Venner and Mrs. Blanche Creamer, the lady at whose house she had met him,—mansion-house breed,—but will come,—soft on Dick; Dudley Venner,—take care of him herself; Elsie,—Dick will see to her,—won't it fidget the Creamer woman to see him round her? the old Doctor,—he 's always handy; and there's that young master there, up at the school,—know him well enough to ask him,—oh, yes, he'll come. One, two, three, four, five, six,—seven; not room enough, without the leaf in the table; one place empty, if the leaf's in. Let's see,—Helen Darley, —she 'll do well enough to fill it up,—why, yes, just the thing, —light brown hair, blue eyes,—won't my pattern show off well against her? Put her down,—she 's worth her tea and toast ten times over, —nobody knows what a "thunder-and-lightning woman," as poor Major used to have it, is, till she gets alongside of one of those old-maidish girls, with hair the color of brown sugar, and eyes like the blue of a teacup.

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The Widow smiled with a feeling of triumph at having overcome her difficulties and arranged her party,—arose and stood before her glass, three-quarters front, one-quarter profile, so as to show the whites of the eyes and the down of the upper lip. “Splendid!” said the Widow—and to tell the truth, she was not far out of the way, and with Helen Darley as a foil anybody would know she must be foudroyant and pyramidal,—if these French adjectives may be naturalized for this one particular exigency.

So the Widow sent out her notes. The black grief which had filled her heart and had overflowed in surges of crape around her person had left a deposit half an inch wide at the margin of her note-paper. Her seal was a small youth with an inverted torch, the same on which Mrs. Blanche Creamer made her spiteful remark, that she expected to see that boy of the Widow’s standing on his head yet; meaning, as Dick supposed, that she would get the torch right-side up as soon as she had a chance. That was after Dick had made the Widow’s acquaintance, and Mrs. Creamer had got it into her foolish head that she would marry that young fellow, if she could catch him. How could he ever come to fancy such a quadroon-looking thing as that, she should like to know?

It is easy enough to ask seven people to a party; but whether they will come or not is an open question, as it was in the case of the spirits of the vasty deep. If the note issues from a three-story mansion-house, and goes to two-story acquaintances, they will all be in an excellent state of health, and have much pleasure in accepting this very polite invitation. If the note is from the lady of a two-story family to three-story ones, the former highly respectable person will very probably find that an endemic complaint is prevalent, not represented in the weekly bills of mortality, which occasions numerous regrets in the bosoms of eminently desirable parties that they cannot have the pleasure of and-so-forthing.

In this case there was room for doubt,—mainly as to whether Elsie would take a fancy to come or not. If she should come, her father would certainly be with her. Dick had promised, and thought he could bring Elsie. Of course the young schoolmaster will come, and that poor tired-out looking Helen, if only to get out of sight of those horrid Peckham wretches. They don’t get such invitations every day. The others she felt sure of,—all but the old Doctor,—he might have some horrid patient or other to visit; tell him Elsie Venner’s going to be there,—he always likes to have an eye on her, they say,—oh, he’d come fast enough, without any more coaxing.

She wanted the Doctor, particularly. It was odd, but she was afraid of Elsie. She felt as if she should be safe enough, if the old Doctor were there to see to the girl; and then she should have leisure to devote herself more freely to the young lady’s father, for whom all her sympathies were in a state of lively excitement.

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It was a long time since the Widow had seen so many persons round her table as she had now invited. Better have the plates set and see how they will fill it up with the leaf in.—A little too scattering with only eight plates set: if she could find two more people, now, that would bring the chairs a little closer,—snug, you know,—which makes the company sociable. The Widow thought over her acquaintances. Why how stupid! there was her good minister, the same who had married her, and might—might—bury her for aught she knew, and his granddaughter staying with him,—nice little girl, pretty, and not old enough to be dangerous;—for the Widow had no notion of making a tea-party and asking people to it that would be like to stand between her and any little project she might happen to have on anybody's heart,—not she! It was all right now; Blanche was married and so forth; Letty was a child; Elsie was his daughter; Helen Darley was a nice, worthy drudge,—poor thing!—faded, faded,—colors wouldn't wash, just what she wanted to show off against. Now, if the Dudley mansion-house people would only come,—that was the great point.

"Here's a note for us, Elsie," said her father, as they sat round the breakfast-table. "Mrs. Rowens wants us all to come to tea."

It was one of "Elsie's days," as old Sophy called them. The light in her eyes was still, but very bright. She looked up so full of perverse and wilful impulses, that Dick knew he could make her go with him and her father. He had his own motives for bringing her to this determination,—and his own way of setting about it.

"I don't want to go," he said. "What do you say, uncle?"

"To tell the truth, Richard, I don't much fancy the Major's widow. I don't like to see her weeds flowering out quite so strong. I suppose you don't care about going, Elsie?"

Elsie looked up in her father's face with an expression which he knew but too well. She was just in the state which the plain sort of people call "contrary," when they have to deal with it in animals. She would insist on going to that tea-party; he knew it just as well before she spoke as after she had spoken. If Dick had said he wanted to go and her father had seconded his wishes, she would have insisted on staying at home. It was no great matter, her father said to himself, after all; very likely it would amuse her; the Widow was a lively woman enough,—perhaps a little *comme il ne faut pas* socially, compared with the Thorntons and some other families; but what did he care for these petty village distinctions?

Elsie spoke.

"I mean to go. You must go with me, Dudley. You may do as you like, Dick."

That settled the Dudley-mansion business, of course. They all three accepted, as fortunately did all the others who had been invited.

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Hyacinth Cottage was a pretty place enough, a little too much choked round with bushes, and too much overrun with climbing-roses, which, in the season of slugs and rose-bugs, were apt to show so brown about the leaves and so coleopterous about the flowers, that it might be questioned whether their buds and blossoms made up for these unpleasant animal combinations,—especially as the smell of whale-oil soap was very commonly in the ascendant over that of the roses. It had its patch of grass called “the lawn,” and its glazed closet known as “the conservatory,” according to that system of harmless fictions characteristic of the rural imagination and shown in the names applied to many familiar objects. The interior of the cottage was more tasteful and ambitious than that of the ordinary two-story dwellings. In place of the prevailing hair-cloth covered furniture, the visitor had the satisfaction of seating himself upon a chair covered with some of the Widow’s embroidery, or a sofa luxurious with soft caressing plush. The sporting tastes of the late Major showed in various prints on the wall: Herring’s “Plenipotentiary,” the “red bullock” of the ’34 Derby; “Cadland” and “The Colonel;” “Crucifix;” “West-Australian,” fastest of modern racers; and among native celebrities, ugly, game old “Boston,” with his straight neck and ragged hips; and gray “Lady Suffolk,” queen, in her day, not of the turf but of the track, “extending” herself till she measured a rod, more or less, skimming along within a yard of the ground, her legs opening and shutting under her with a snap, like the four blades of a compound jack-knife.

These pictures were much more refreshing than those dreary fancy death-bed scenes, common in two-story country-houses, in which Washington and other distinguished personages are represented as obligingly devoting their last moments to taking a prominent part in a tableau, in which weeping relatives, attached servants, professional assistants, and celebrated personages who might by a stretch of imagination be supposed present, are grouped in the most approved style of arrangement about the chief actor’s pillow.

A single glazed bookcase held the family library, which was hidden from vulgar eyes by green silk curtains behind the glass. It would have been instructive to get a look at it, as it always is to peep into one’s neighbor’s book-shelves. From other sources and opportunities a partial idea of it has been obtained. The Widow had inherited some books from her mother, who was something of a reader: Young’s “Night-Thoughts;” “The Preceptor;” “The Task, a Poem,” by William Cowper; Hervey’s “Meditations;” “Alonzo and Melissa;” “Buccaneers of America;” “The Triumphs of Temper;” “La Belle Assemblee;” Thomson’s “Seasons;” and a few others. The Major had brought in “Tom Jones” and “Peregrine Pickle;” various works by Mr. Pierce Egan; “Boxiana,” “The Racing Calendar;” and a “Book of Lively Songs and Jests.” The Widow had added the

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Poems of Lord Byron and T. Moore; "Eugene Aram;" "The Tower of London," by Harrison Ainsworth; some of Scott's Novels; "The Pickwick Papers;" a volume of Plays, by W. Shakespeare; "Proverbial Philosophy;" "Pilgrim's Progress;" "The Whole Duty of Man" (a present when she was married); with two celebrated religious works, one by William Law and the other by Philip Doddridge, which were sent her after her husband's death, and which she had tried to read, but found that they did not agree with her. Of course the bookcase held a few school manuals and compendiums, and one of Mr. Webster's Dictionaries. But the gilt-edged Bible always lay on the centre-table, next to the magazine with the fashion-plates and the scrap-book with pictures from old annuals and illustrated papers.

The reader need not apprehend the recital, at full length, of such formidable preparations for the Widow's tea-party as were required in the case of Colonel Sprowle's Social Entertainment. A tea-party, even in the country, is a comparatively simple and economical piece of business. As soon as the Widow found that all her company were coming, she set to work, with the aid of her "smart" maid-servant and a daughter of her own, who was beginning to stretch and spread at a fearful rate, but whom she treated as a small child, to make the necessary preparations. The silver had to be rubbed; also the grand plated urn,—her mother's before hers,—style of the Empire,—looking as if it might have been made to hold the Major's ashes. Then came the making and baking of cake and gingerbread, the smell whereof reached even as far as the sidewalk in front of the cottage, so that small boys returning from school snuffed it in the breeze, and discoursed with each other on its suggestions; so that the Widow Leech, who happened to pass, remembered she had n't called on Marilly Raowens for a consid'ble spell, and turned in at the gate and rang three times with long intervals,—but all in vain, the inside Widow having "spotted" the outside one through the blinds, and whispered to her aides-de-camp to let the old thing ring away till she pulled the bell out by the roots, but not to stir to open the door.

Widow Rowens was what they called a real smart, capable woman, not very great on books, perhaps, but knew what was what and who was who as well as another,—knew how to make the little cottage look pretty, how to set out a tea-table, and, what a good many women never can find out, knew her own style and "got herself up tip-top," as our young friend Master Geordie, Colonel Sprowle's heir-apparent, remarked to his friend from one of the fresh-water colleges. Flowers were abundant now, and she had dressed her rooms tastefully with them. The centre-table had two or three gilt-edged books lying carelessly about on it, and some prints and a stereoscope with stereographs to match, chiefly groups of picnics, weddings, *etc.*, in which the same somewhat fatigued looking ladies of fashion and brides received the

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attentions of the same unpleasant-looking young men, easily identified under their different disguises, consisting of fashionable raiment such as gentlemen are supposed to wear habitually. With these, however, were some pretty English scenes,—pretty except for the old fellow with the hanging under-lip who infests every one of that interesting series; and a statue or two, especially that famous one commonly called the Lahcoon, so as to rhyme with moon and spoon, and representing an old man with his two sons in the embraces of two monstrous serpents.

There is no denying that it was a very dashing achievement of the Widow's to bring together so considerable a number of desirable guests. She felt proud of her feat; but as to the triumph of getting Dudley Venner to come out for a visit to Hyacinth Cottage, she was surprised and almost frightened at her own success. So much might depend on the impressions of that evening!

The next thing was to be sure that everybody should be in the right place at the tea-table, and this the Widow thought she could manage by a few words to the older guests and a little shuffling about and shifting when they got to the table. To settle everything the Widow made out a diagram, which the reader should have a chance of inspecting in an authentic copy, if these pages were allowed under any circumstances to be the vehicle of illustrations. If, however, he or she really wishes to see the way the pieces stood as they were placed at the beginning of the game, (the Widow's gambit,) he or she had better at once take a sheet of paper, draw an oval, and arrange the characters according to the following schedule.

At the head of the table, the Hostess, Widow Marilla Rowens. Opposite her, at the other end, Rev. Dr. Honeywood. At the right of the Hostess, Dudley Veneer, next him Helen Darley, next her Dr. Kittredge, next him Mrs. Blanche Creamer, then the Reverend Doctor. At the left of the Hostess, Bernard Langdon, next him Letty Forrester, next Letty Mr. Richard Veneer, next him Elsie, and so to the Reverend Doctor again.

The company came together a little before the early hour at which it was customary to take tea in Rockland. The Widow knew everybody, of course: who was there in Rockland she did not know? But some of them had to be introduced: Mr. Richard Veneer to Mr. Bernard, Mr. Bernard to Miss Letty, Dudley Veneer to Miss Helen Darley, and so on. The two young men looked each other straight in the eyes, both full of youthful life, but one of frank and fearless aspect, the other with a dangerous feline beauty alien to the New England half of his blood.

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The guests talked, turned over the prints, looked at the flowers, opened the “Proverbial Philosophy” with gilt edges, and the volume of Plays by W. Shakespeare, examined the horse-pictures on the walls, and so passed away the time until tea was announced, when they paired off for the room where it was in readiness. The Widow had managed it well; everything was just as she wanted it. Dudley Veneer was between herself and the poor tired-looking schoolmistress with her faded colors. Blanche Creamer, a lax, tumble-to-pieces, Greuze-ish looking blonde, whom the Widow hated because the men took to her, was purgatoried between the two old Doctors, and could see all the looks that passed between Dick Venner and his cousin. The young schoolmaster could talk to Miss Letty: it was his business to know how to talk to schoolgirls. Dick would amuse himself with his cousin Elsie. The old Doctors only wanted to be well fed and they would do well enough.

It would be very pleasant to describe the tea-table; but in reality, it did not pretend to offer a plethoric banquet to the guests. The Widow had not visited the mansion-houses for nothing, and she had learned there that an overloaded tea-table may do well enough for farm-hands when they come in at evening from their work and sit down unwashed in their shirtsleeves, but that for decently bred people such an insult to the memory of a dinner not yet half-assimilated is wholly inadmissible. Everything was delicate, and almost everything of fair complexion: white bread and biscuits, frosted and sponge cake, cream, honey, straw-colored butter; only a shadow here and there, where the fire had crisped and browned the surfaces of a stack of dry toast, or where a preserve had brought away some of the red sunshine of the last year’s summer. The Widow shall have the credit of her well-ordered tea-table, also of her bountiful cream-pitchers; for it is well known that city-people find cream a very scarce luxury in a good many country-houses of more pretensions than Hyacinth Cottage. There are no better maids for ladies who give tea-parties than these:

Cream is thicker than water. Large heart never loved little cream pot.

There is a common feeling in genteel families that the third meal of the day is not so essential a part of the daily bread as to require any especial acknowledgment to the Providence which bestows it. Very devout people, who would never sit down to a breakfast or a dinner without the grace before meat which honors the Giver of it, feel as if they thanked Heaven enough for their tea and toast by partaking of them cheerfully without audible petition or ascription. But the Widow was not exactly mansion-house-bred, and so thought it necessary to give the Reverend Doctor a peculiar look which he understood at once as inviting his professional services. He, therefore, uttered a few simple words of gratitude, very quietly,—much to the satisfaction of some of the guests, who had expected one of those elaborate effusions, with rolling up of the eyes and rhetorical accents, so frequent with eloquent divines when they address their Maker in genteel company.

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Everybody began talking with the person sitting next at hand. Mr. Bernard naturally enough turned his attention first to the Widow; but somehow or other the right side of the Widow seemed to be more wide awake than the left side, next him, and he resigned her to the courtesies of Mr. Dudley Venner, directing himself, not very unwillingly, to the young girl next him on the other side. Miss Letty Forrester, the granddaughter of the Reverend Doctor, was city-bred, as anybody might see, and city-dressed, as any woman would know at sight; a man might only feel the general effect of clear, well-matched colors, of harmonious proportions, of the cut which makes everything cling like a bather's sleeve where a natural outline is to be kept, and ruffle itself up like the hackle of a pitted fighting-cock where art has a right to luxuriate in silken exuberance. How this citybred and city-dressed girl came to be in Rockland Mr. Bernard did not know, but he knew at any rate that she was his next neighbor and entitled to his courtesies. She was handsome, too, when he came to look, very handsome when he came to look again,—endowed with that city beauty which is like the beauty of wall-fruit, something finer in certain respects than can be reared off the pavement.

The miserable routinists who keep repeating invidiously Cowper's

“God made the country and man made the town,”

as if the town were a place to kill out the race in, do not know what they are talking about. Where could they raise such Saint-Michael pears, such Saint-Germains, such Brown-Beurres, as we had until within a few years growing within the walls of our old city-gardens? Is the dark and damp cavern where a ragged beggar hides himself better than a town-mansion which fronts the sunshine and backs on its own cool shadow, with gas and water and all appliances to suit all needs? God made the cavern and man made the house! What then?

There is no doubt that the pavement keeps a deal of mischief from coming up out of the earth, and, with a dash off of it in summer, just to cool the soles of the feet when it gets too hot, is the best place for many constitutions, as some few practical people have already discovered. And just so these beauties that grow and ripen against the city-walls, these young fellows with cheeks like peaches and young girls with cheeks like nectarines, show that the most perfect forms of artificial life can do as much for the human product as garden-culture for strawberries and blackberries.

If Mr. Bernard had philosophized or prosed in this way, with so pretty, nay, so lovely a neighbor as Miss Letty Forrester waiting for him to speak to her, he would have to be dropped from this narrative as a person unworthy of his good-fortune, and not deserving the kind reader's further notice. On the contrary, he no sooner set his eyes fairly on her than he said to himself that she was charming, and that he wished she were one of his scholars at the Institute.

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So he began talking with her in an easy way; for he knew something of young girls by this time, and, of course, could adapt himself to a young lady who looked as if she might be not more than fifteen or sixteen years old, and therefore could hardly be a match in intellectual resources for the seventeen and eighteen year-old first-class scholars of the Apollinean Institute. But city-wall-fruit ripens early, and he soon found that this girl's training had so sharpened her wits and stored her memory, that he need not be at the trouble to stoop painfully in order to come down to her level.

The beauty of good-breeding is that it adjusts itself to all relations without effort, true to itself always however the manners of those around it may change. Self-respect and respect for others,—the sensitive consciousness poises itself in these as the compass in the ship's binnacle balances itself and maintains its true level within the two concentric rings which suspend it on their pivots. This thorough-bred school-girl quite enchanted Mr. Bernard. He could not understand where she got her style, her way of dress, her enunciation, her easy manners. The minister was a most worthy gentleman, but this was not the Rockland native-born manner; some new element had come in between the good, plain, worthy man and this young girl, fit to be a Crown Prince's partner where there were a thousand to choose from.

He looked across to Helen Darley, for he knew she would understand the glance of admiration with which he called her attention to the young beauty at his side; and Helen knew what a young girl could be, as compared with what too many a one is, as well as anybody.

This poor, dear Helen of ours! How admirable the contrast between her and the Widow on the other side of Dudley Venner! But, what was very odd, that gentleman apparently thought the contrast was to the advantage of this poor, dear Helen. At any rate, instead of devoting himself solely to the Widow, he happened to be just at that moment talking in a very interested and, apparently, not uninteresting way to his right-hand neighbor, who, on her part, never looked more charmingly,—as Mr. Bernard could not help saying to himself,—but, to be sure, he had just been looking at the young girl next him, so that his eyes were brimful of beauty, and may have spilled some of it on the first comer: for you know M. Becquerel has been showing us lately how everything is phosphorescent; that it soaks itself with light in an instant's exposure, so that it is wet with liquid sunbeams, or, if you will, tremulous with luminous vibrations, when first plunged into the negative bath of darkness, and betrays itself by the light which escapes from its surface.

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Whatever were the reason, this poor, dear Helen never looked so sweetly. Her plainly parted brown hair, her meek, blue eyes, her cheek just a little tinged with color, the almost sad simplicity of her dress, and that look he knew so well,—so full of cheerful patience, so sincere, that he had trusted her from the first moment as the believers of the larger half of Christendom trust the Blessed Virgin,—Mr. Bernard took this all in at a glance, and felt as pleased as if it had been his own sister Dorothea Elizabeth that he was looking at. As for Dudley Veneer, Mr. Bernard could not help being struck by the animated expression of his countenance. It certainly showed great kindness, on his part, to pay so much attention to this quiet girl, when he had the thunder-and-lightning Widow on the other side of him.

Mrs. Marilla Rowens did not know what to make of it. She had made her tea-party expressly for Mr. Dudley Veneer. She had placed him just as she wanted, between herself and a meek, delicate woman who dressed in gray, wore a plain breastpin with hair in it, who taught a pack of girls up there at the school, and looked as if she were born for a teacher,—the very best foil that she could have chosen; and here was this man, polite enough to herself, to be sure, but turning round to that very undistinguished young person as if he rather preferred her conversation of the two!

The truth was that Dudley Veneer and Helen Darley met as two travellers might meet in the desert, wearied, both of them, with their long journey, one having food, but no water, the other water, but no food. Each saw that the other had been in long conflict with some trial; for their voices were low and tender, as patiently borne sorrow and humbly uttered prayers make every human voice. Through these tones, more than by what they said, they came into natural sympathetic relations with each other. Nothing could be more unstudied. As for Dudley Venner, no beauty in all the world could have so soothed and magnetized him as the very repose and subdued gentleness which the Widow had thought would make the best possible background for her own more salient and effective attractions. No doubt, Helen, on her side, was almost too readily pleased with the confidence this new acquaintance she was making seemed to show her from the very first. She knew so few men of any condition! Mr. Silas Peckham: he was her employer, and she ought to think of him as well as she could; but every time she thought of him it was with a shiver of disgust. Mr. Bernard Langdon: a noble young man, a true friend, like a brother to her,—God bless him, and send him some young heart as fresh as his own! But this gentleman produced a new impression upon her, quite different from any to which she was accustomed. His rich, low tones had the strangest significance to her; she felt sure he must have lived through long experiences, sorrowful like her own. Elsie's father! She looked into his dark

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eyes, as she listened to him, to see if they had any glimmer of that peculiar light, diamond-bright, but cold and still, which she knew so well in Elsie's. Anything but that! Never was there more tenderness, it seemed to her, than in the whole look and expression of Elsie's father. She must have been a great trial to him; yet his face was that of one who had been saddened, not soured, by his discipline. Knowing what Elsie must be to him, how hard she must make any parent's life, Helen could not but be struck with the interest Mr. Dudley Venner showed in her as his daughter's instructress. He was too kind to her; again and again she meekly turned from him, so as to leave him free to talk to the showy lady at his other side, who was looking all the while

"like the night
Of cloudless realms and starry skies;"

but still Mr. Dudley Venner, after a few courteous words, came back to the blue eyes and brown hair; still he kept his look fixed upon her, and his tones grew sweeter and lower as he became more interested in talk, until this poor, dear Helen, what with surprise, and the bashfulness natural to one who had seen little of the gay world, and the stirring of deep, confused sympathies with this suffering father, whose heart seemed so full of kindness, felt her cheeks glowing with unwonted flame, and betrayed the pleasing trouble of her situation by looking so sweetly as to arrest Mr. Bernard's eye for a moment, when he looked away from the young beauty sitting next him.

Elsie meantime had been silent, with that singular, still, watchful look which those who knew her well had learned to fear. Her head just a little inclined on one side, perfectly motionless for whole minutes, her eyes seeming to, grow small and bright, as always when she was under her evil influence, she was looking obliquely at the young girl on the other side of her cousin Dick and next to Bernard Langdon. As for Dick himself, she seemed to be paying very little attention to him. Sometimes her eyes would wander off to Mr. Bernard, and their expression, as old Dr. Kittredge, who watched her for a while pretty keenly, noticed, would change perceptibly. One would have said that she looked with a kind of dull hatred at the girl, but with a half-relenting reproachful anger at Mr. Bernard.

Miss Letty Forrester, at whom Elsie had been looking from time to time in this fixed way, was conscious meanwhile of some unusual influence. First it was a feeling of constraint,—then, as it were, a diminished power over the muscles, as if an invisible elastic cobweb were spinning round her,—then a tendency to turn away from Mr. Bernard, who was making himself very agreeable, and look straight into those eyes which would not leave her, and which seemed to be drawing her towards them, while at the same time they chilled the blood in all her veins.

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Mr. Bernard saw this influence coming over her. All at once he noticed that she sighed, and that some little points of moisture began to glisten on her forehead. But she did not grow pale perceptibly; she had no involuntary or hysteric movements; she still listened to him and smiled naturally enough. Perhaps she was only nervous at being stared at. At any rate, she was coming under some unpleasant influence or other, and Mr. Bernard had seen enough of the strange impression Elsie sometimes produced to wish this young girl to be relieved from it, whatever it was. He turned toward Elsie and looked at her in such a way as to draw her eyes upon him. Then he looked steadily and calmly into them. It was a great effort, for some perfectly inexplicable reason. At one instant he thought he could not sit where he was; he must go and speak to Elsie. Then he wanted to take his eyes away from hers; there was something intolerable in the light that came from them. But he was determined to look her down, and he believed he could do it, for he had seen her countenance change more than once when he had caught her gaze steadily fixed on him. All this took not minutes, but seconds. Presently she changed color slightly,—lifted her head, which was inclined a little to one side,—shut and opened her eyes two or three times, as if they had been pained or wearied,—and turned away baffled, and shamed, as it would seem, and shorn for the time of her singular and formidable or at least evil-natured power of swaying the impulses of those around her.

It takes too long to describe these scenes where a good deal of life is concentrated into a few silent seconds. Mr. Richard Veneer had sat quietly through it all, although this short pantomime had taken place literally before his face. He saw what was going on well enough, and understood it all perfectly well. Of course the schoolmaster had been trying to make Elsie jealous, and had succeeded. The little schoolgirl was a decoy-duck,—that was all. Estates like the Dudley property were not to be had every day, and no doubt the Yankee usher was willing to take some pains to make sure of Elsie. Does n't Elsie look savage? Dick involuntarily moved his chair a little away from her, and thought he felt a pricking in the small white scars on his wrist. A dare-devil fellow, but somehow or other this girl had taken strange hold of his imagination, and he often swore to himself, that, when he married her, he would carry a loaded revolver with him to his bridal chamber.

Mrs. Blanche Creamer raged inwardly at first to find herself between the two old gentlemen of the party. It very soon gave her great comfort, however, to see that Marilla, Rowens had just missed it in her calculations, and she chuckled immensely to find Dudley Veneer devoting himself chiefly to Helen Darley. If the Rowens woman should hook Dudley, she felt as if she should gnaw all her nails off for spite.

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To think of seeing her barouching about Rockland behind a pair of long-tailed bays and a coachman with a band on his hat, while she, Blanche Creamer, was driving herself about in a one-horse "carriage"! Recovering her spirits by degrees, she began playing her surfaces off at the two old Doctors, just by way of practice. First she heaved up a glaring white shoulder, the right one, so that the Reverend Doctor should be stunned by it, if such a thing might be. The Reverend Doctor was human, as the Apostle was not ashamed to confess himself. Half-devoutly and half-mischievously he repeated inwardly, "Resist the Devil and he will flee from you." As the Reverend Doctor did not show any lively susceptibility, she thought she would try the left shoulder on old Dr. Kittredge. That worthy and experienced student of science was not at all displeased with the manoeuvre, and lifted his head so as to command the exhibition through his glasses. "Blanche is good for half a dozen years or so, if she is careful," the Doctor said to himself, "and then she must take to her prayer-book." After this spasmodic failure of Mrs. Blanche Creamer's to stir up the old Doctors, she returned again to the pleasing task of watching the Widow in her evident discomfiture. But dark as the Widow looked in her half-concealed pet, she was but as a pale shadow, compared to Elsie in her silent concentration of shame and anger.

"Well, there is one good thing," said Mrs. Blanche Creamer; "Dick doesn't get much out of that cousin of his this evening! Does n't he look handsome, though?"

So Mrs. Blanche, being now a good deal taken up with her observations of those friends of hers and ours, began to be rather careless of her two old Doctors, who naturally enough fell into conversation with each other across the white surfaces of that lady, perhaps not very politely, but, under the, circumstances, almost as a matter of necessity.

When a minister and a doctor get talking together, they always have a great deal to say; and so it happened that the company left the table just as the two Doctors were beginning to get at each other's ideas about various interesting matters. If we follow them into the other parlor, we can, perhaps, pick up something of their conversation.

CHAPTER XXII.

Why doctors differ.

The company rearranged itself with some changes after leaving the tea-table. Dudley Veneer was very polite to the Widow; but that lady having been called off for a few moments for some domestic arrangement, he slid back to the side of Helen Darley, his daughter's faithful teacher. Elsie had got away by herself, and was taken up in studying the stereoscopic Laocoon. Dick, being thus set free, had been seized upon by Mrs. Blanche Creamer, who had diffused herself over three-quarters of a sofa and beckoned

him to the remaining fourth. Mr. Bernard and Miss Letty were having a snug fete-'a-fete in the recess of a bay-window. The two Doctors had taken two arm-chairs and sat squared off against each other. Their conversation is perhaps as well worth reporting as that of the rest of the company, and, as it was carried on in a louder tone, was of course more easy to gather and put on record.

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It was a curious sight enough to see those two representatives of two great professions brought face to face to talk over the subjects they had been looking at all their lives from such different points of view. Both were old; old enough to have been moulded by their habits of thought and life; old enough to have all their beliefs “fretted in,” as vintners say, —thoroughly worked up with their characters. Each of them looked his calling. The Reverend Doctor had lived a good deal among books in his study; the Doctor, as we will call the medical gentleman, had been riding about the country for between thirty and forty years. His face looked tough and weather-worn; while the Reverend Doctor’s, hearty as it appeared, was of finer texture. The Doctor’s was the graver of the two; there was something of grimness about it, partly owing to the northeasters he had faced for so many years, partly to long companionship with that stern personage who never deals in sentiment or pleasantries. His speech was apt to be brief and peremptory; it was a way he had got by ordering patients; but he could discourse somewhat, on occasion, as the reader may find out. The Reverend Doctor had an open, smiling expression, a cheery voice, a hearty laugh, and a cordial way with him which some thought too lively for his cloth, but which children, who are good judges of such matters, delighted in, so that he was the favorite of all the little rogues about town. But he had the clerical art of sobering down in a moment, when asked to say grace while somebody was in the middle of some particularly funny story; and though his voice was so cheery in common talk, in the pulpit, like almost all preachers, he had a wholly different and peculiar way of speaking, supposed to be more acceptable to the Creator than the natural manner. In point of fact, most of our anti-papal and anti-prelatical clergymen do really intone their prayers, without suspecting in the least that they have fallen into such a Romish practice.

This is the way the conversation between the Doctor of Divinity and the Doctor of Medicine was going on at the point where these notes take it up.

“Obi tres medici, duo athei, you know, Doctor. Your profession has always had the credit of being lax in doctrine,—though pretty stringent in practice, ha! ha!”

“Some priest said that,” the Doctor answered, dryly. “They always talked Latin when they had a bigger lie than common to get rid of.”

“Good!” said the Reverend Doctor; “I’m afraid they would lie a little sometimes. But isn’t there some truth in it, Doctor? Don’t you think your profession is apt to see ‘Nature’ in the place of the God of Nature,—to lose sight of the great First Cause in their daily study of secondary causes?”

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"I've thought about that," the Doctor answered, "and I've talked about it and read about it, and I've come to the conclusion that nobody believes in God and trusts in God quite so much as the doctors; only it is n't just the sort of Deity that some of your profession have wanted them to take up with. There was a student of mine wrote a dissertation on the Natural Theology of Health and Disease, and took that old lying proverb for his motto. He knew a good deal more about books than ever I did, and had studied in other countries. I'll tell you what he said about it. He said the old Heathen Doctor, Galen, praised God for his handiwork in the human body, just as if he had been a Christian, or the Psalmist himself. He said they had this sentence set up in large letters in the great lecture-room in Paris where he attended: I dressed his wound and God healed him. That was an old surgeon's saying. And he gave a long list of doctors who were not only Christians, but famous ones. I grant you, though, ministers and doctors are very apt to see differently in spiritual matters."

"That's it," said the Reverend Doctor; "you are apt to see 'Nature' where we see God, and appeal to 'Science' where we are contented with Revelation."

"We don't separate God and Nature, perhaps, as you do," the Doctor answered. "When we say that God is omnipresent and omnipotent and omniscient, we are a little more apt to mean it than your folks are. We think, when a wound heals, that God's presence and power and knowledge are there, healing it, just as that old surgeon did. We think a good many theologians, working among their books, don't see the facts of the world they live in. When we tell 'em of these facts, they are apt to call us materialists and atheists and infidels, and all that. We can't help seeing the facts, and we don't think it's wicked to mention 'em."

"Do tell me," the Reverend Doctor said, "some of these facts we are in the habit of overlooking, and which your profession thinks it can see and understand."

"That's very easy," the Doctor replied. "For instance: you don't understand or don't allow for idiosyncrasies as we learn to. We know that food and physic act differently with different people; but you think the same kind of truth is going to suit, or ought to suit, all minds. We don't fight with a patient because he can't take magnesia or opium; but you are all the time quarrelling over your beliefs, as if belief did not depend very much on race and constitution, to say nothing of early training."

"Do you mean to say that every man is not absolutely free to choose his beliefs?"

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"The men you write about in your studies are, but not the men we see in the real world. There is some apparently congenital defect in the Indians, for instance, that keeps them from choosing civilization and Christianity. So with the Gypsies, very likely. Everybody knows that Catholicism or Protestantism is a good deal a matter of race. Constitution has more to do with belief than people think for. I went to a Universalist church, when I was in the city one day, to hear a famous man whom all the world knows, and I never saw such pews-full of broad shoulders and florid faces, and substantial, wholesome-looking persons, male and female, in all my life. Why, it was astonishing. Either their creed made them healthy, or they chose it because they were healthy. Your folks have never got the hang of human nature."

"I am afraid this would be considered a degrading and dangerous view of human beliefs and responsibility for them," the Reverend Doctor replied. "Prove to a man that his will is governed by something outside of himself, and you have lost all hold on his moral and religious nature. There is nothing bad men want to believe so much as that they are governed by necessity. Now that which is at once degrading and dangerous cannot be true."

"No doubt," the Doctor replied, "all large views of mankind limit our estimate of the absolute freedom of the will. But I don't think it degrades or endangers us, for this reason, that, while it makes us charitable to the rest of mankind, our own sense of freedom, whatever it is, is never affected by argument. Conscience won't be reasoned with. We feel that we can practically do this or that, and if we choose the wrong, we know we are responsible; but observation teaches us that this or that other race or individual has not the same practical freedom of choice. I don't see how we can avoid this conclusion in the instance of the American Indians. The science of Ethnology has upset a good many theoretical notions about human nature."

"Science!" said the Reverend Doctor, "science! that was a word the Apostle Paul did not seem to think much of, if we may judge by the Epistle to Timothy: 'Oppositions of science falsely so called.' I own that I am jealous of that word and the pretensions that go with it. Science has seemed to me to be very often only the handmaid of skepticism."

"Doctor!" the physician said, emphatically, "science is knowledge. Nothing that is not known properly belongs to science. Whenever knowledge obliges us to doubt, we are always safe in doubting. Astronomers foretell eclipses, say how long comets are to stay with us, point out where a new planet is to be found. We see they know what they assert, and the poor old Roman Catholic Church has at last to knock under. So Geology proves a certain succession of events, and the best Christian in the world must make the earth's history square with it. Besides, I don't think you remember what great revelations of himself the Creator has made in the minds of the men who have built up science. You seem to me to hold his human masterpieces very cheap. Don't you think the 'inspiration of the Almighty' gave Newton and Cuvier 'understanding'?"

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The Reverend Doctor was not arguing for victory. In fact, what he wanted was to call out the opinions of the old physician by a show of opposition, being already predisposed to agree with many of them. He was rather trying the common arguments, as one tries tricks of fence merely to learn the way of parrying. But just here he saw a tempting opening, and could not resist giving a home-thrust.

“Yes; but you surely would not consider it inspiration of the same kind as that of the writers of the Old Testament?”

That cornered the Doctor, and he paused a moment before he replied. Then he raised his head, so as to command the Reverend Doctor’s face through his spectacles, and said,

“I did not say that. You are clear, I suppose, that the Omniscient spoke through Solomon, but that Shakespeare wrote without his help?”

The Reverend Doctor looked very grave. It was a bold, blunt way of putting the question. He turned it aside with the remark, that Shakespeare seemed to him at times to come as near inspiration as any human being not included among the sacred writers.

“Doctor,” the physician began, as from a sudden suggestion, “you won’t quarrel with me, if I tell you some of my real thoughts, will you?”

“Say on, my dear Sir, say on,” the minister answered, with his most genial smile; “your real thoughts are just what I want to get at. A man’s real thoughts are a great rarity. If I don’t agree with you, I shall like to hear you.”

The Doctor began; and in order to give his thoughts more connectedly, we will omit the conversational breaks, the questions and comments of the clergyman, and all accidental interruptions.

“When the old ecclesiastics said that where there were three doctors there were two atheists, they lied, of course. They called everybody who differed from them atheists, until they found out that not believing in God was n’t nearly so ugly a crime as not believing in some particular dogma; then they called them heretics, until so many good people had been burned under that name that it began to smell too strong of roasting flesh,—and after that infidels, which properly means people without faith, of whom there are not a great many in any place or time. But then, of course, there was some reason why doctors shouldn’t think about religion exactly as ministers did, or they never would have made that proverb. It ’s very likely that something of the same kind is true now; whether it is so or not, I am going to tell you the reasons why it would not be strange, if doctors should take rather different views from clergymen about some matters of belief. I don’t, of course, mean all doctors nor all clergymen. Some doctors go as far as any

old New England divine, and some clergymen agree very well with the doctors that think least according to rule.

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"To begin with their ideas of the Creator himself. They always see him trying to help his creatures out of their troubles. A man no sooner gets a cut, than the Great Physician, whose agency we often call Nature, goes to work, first to stop the blood, and then to heal the wound, and then to make the scar as small as possible. If a man's pain exceeds a certain amount, he faints, and so gets relief. If it lasts too long, habit comes in to make it tolerable. If it is altogether too bad, he dies. That is the best thing to be done under the circumstances. So you see, the doctor is constantly in presence of a benevolent agency working against a settled order of things, of which pain and disease are the accidents, so to speak. Well, no doubt they find it harder than clergymen to believe that there can be any world or state from which this benevolent agency is wholly excluded. This may be very wrong; but it is not unnatural.

"They can hardly conceive of a permanent state of being in which cuts would never try to heal, nor habit render suffering endurable. This is one effect of their training.

"Then, again, their attention is very much called to human limitations. Ministers work out the machinery of responsibility in an abstract kind of way; they have a sort of algebra of human nature, in which friction and strength (or weakness) of material are left out. You see, a doctor is in the way of studying children from the moment of birth upwards. For the first year or so he sees that they are just as much pupils of their Maker as the young of any other animals. Well, their Maker trains them to pure selfishness. Why? In order that they may be sure to take care of themselves. So you see, when a child comes to be, we will say a year and a day old, and makes his first choice between right and wrong, he is at a disadvantage; for he, has that vis a tergo, as we doctors call it, that force from behind, of a whole year's life of selfishness, for which he is no more to blame than a calf is to blame for having lived in the same way, purely to gratify his natural appetites. Then we see that baby grow up to a child, and, if he is fat and stout and red and lively, we expect to find him troublesome and noisy, and, perhaps, sometimes disobedient more or less; that's the way each new generation breaks its egg-shell; but if he is very weak and thin, and is one of the kind that may be expected to die early, he will very likely sit in the house all day and read good books about other little sharp-faced children just like himself, who died early, having always been perfectly indifferent to all the out-door amusements of the wicked little red-cheeked children.

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“Some of the little folks we watch grow up to be young women, and occasionally one of them gets nervous, what we call hysterical, and then that girl will begin to play all sorts of pranks,—to lie and cheat, perhaps, in the most unaccountable way, so that she might seem to a minister a good example of total depravity. We don't see her in that light. We give her iron and valerian, and get her on horseback, if we can, and so expect to make her will come all right again. By and by we are called in to see an old baby, threescore years and ten or more old. We find this old baby has never got rid of that first year's teaching which led him to fill his stomach with all he could pump into it, and his hands with everything he could grab. People call him a miser. We are sorry for him; but we can't help remembering his first year's training, and the natural effect of money on the great majority of those that have it. So while the ministers say he 'shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven,' we like to remind them that 'with God all things are possible.'

“Once more, we see all kinds of monomania and insanity. We learn from them to recognize all sorts of queer tendencies in minds supposed to be sane, so that we have nothing but compassion for a large class of persons condemned as sinners by theologians, but considered by us as invalids. We have constant reasons for noticing the transmission of qualities from parents to offspring, and we find it hard to hold a child accountable in any moral point of view for inherited bad temper or tendency to drunkenness,—as hard as we should to blame him for inheriting gout or asthma. I suppose we are more lenient with human nature than theologians generally are. We know that the spirits of men and their views of the present and the future go up and down with the barometer, and that a permanent depression of one inch in the mercurial column would affect the whole theology of Christendom.

“Ministers talk about the human will as if it stood on a high look-out, with plenty of light, and elbowroom reaching to the horizon. Doctors are constantly noticing how it is tied up and darkened by inferior organization, by disease, and all sorts of crowding interferences, until they get to look upon Hottentots and Indians—and a good many of their own race as a kind of self-conscious blood-clocks with very limited power of self-determination. That's the tendency, I say, of a doctor's experience. But the people to whom they address their statements of the results of their observation belong to the thinking class of the highest races, and they are conscious of a great deal of liberty of will. So in the face of the fact that civilization with all it offers has proved a dead failure with the aboriginal races of this country,—on the whole, I say, a dead failure,—they talk as if they knew from their own will all about that of a Digger Indian! We are more apt to go by observation of the facts in the case. We

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are constantly seeing weakness where you see depravity. I don't say we're right; I only tell what you must often find to be the fact, right or wrong, in talking with doctors. You see, too, our notions of bodily and moral disease, or sin, are apt to go together. We used to be as hard on sickness as you were on sin. We know better now. We don't look at sickness as we used to, and try to poison it with everything that is offensive, burnt toads and earth-worms and viper-broth, and worse things than these. We know that disease has something back of it which the body isn't to blame for, at least in most cases, and which very often it is trying to get rid of. Just so with sin. I will agree to take a hundred new-born babes of a certain stock and return seventy-five of them in a dozen years true and honest, if not 'pious' children. And I will take another hundred, of a different stock, and put them in the hands of certain Ann-Street or Five-Points teachers, and seventy-five of them will be thieves and liars at the end of the same dozen years. I have heard of an old character, Colonel Jaques, I believe it was, a famous cattle-breeder, who used to say he could breed to pretty much any pattern he wanted to. Well, we doctors see so much of families, how the tricks of the blood keep breaking out, just as much in character as they do in looks, that we can't help feeling as if a great many people hadn't a fair chance to be what is called 'good,' and that there isn't a text in the Bible better worth keeping always in mind than that one, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged.'

"As for our getting any quarter at the hands of theologians, we don't expect it, and have no right to. You don't give each other any quarter. I have had two religious books sent me by friends within a week or two. One is Mr. Brownson's; he is as fair and square as Euclid; a real honest, strong thinker, and one that knows what he is talking about,—for he has tried all sorts of religions, pretty much. He tells us that the Roman Catholic Church is the one 'through which alone we can hope for heaven.' The other is by a worthy Episcopal rector, who appears to write as if he were in earnest, and he calls the Papacy the 'Devil's Masterpiece,' and talks about the 'Satanic scheme' of that very Church 'through which alone,' as Mr. Brownson tells us, 'we can hope for heaven'

"What's the use in our caring about hard words after this,—'atheists,' heretics, infidels, and the like? They're, after all, only the cinders picked up out of those heaps of ashes round the stumps of the old stakes where they used to burn men, women, and children for not thinking just like other folks. They 'll 'crock' your fingers, but they can't burn us.

"Doctors are the best-natured people in the world, except when they get fighting with each other. And they have some advantages over you. You inherit your notions from a set of priests that had no wives and no children, or none to speak of, and so let their humanity die out of them. It did n't seem much to them to condemn a few thousand millions of people to purgatory or worse for a mistake of judgment. They didn't know what it was to have a child look up in their faces and say 'Father!' It will take you a

hundred or two more years to get decently humanized, after so many centuries of de-humanizing celibacy.

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“Besides, though our libraries are, perhaps, not commonly quite so big as yours, God opens one book to physicians that a good many of you don’t know much about,—the Book of Life. That is none of your dusty folios with black letters between pasteboard and leather, but it is printed in bright red type, and the binding of it is warm and tender to every touch. They reverence that book as one of the Almighty’s infallible revelations. They will insist on reading you lessons out of it, whether you call them names or not. These will always be lessons of charity. No doubt, nothing can be more provoking to listen to. But do beg your folks to remember that the Smithfield fires are all out, and that the cinders are very dirty and not in the least dangerous. They’d a great deal better be civil, and not be throwing old proverbs in the doctors’ faces, when they say that the man of the old monkish notions is one thing and the man they watch from his cradle to his coffin is something very different.”

It has cost a good deal of trouble to work the Doctor’s talk up into this formal shape. Some of his sentences have been rounded off for him, and the whole brought into a more rhetorical form than it could have pretended to, if taken as it fell from his lips. But the exact course of his remarks has been followed, and as far as possible his expressions have been retained. Though given in the form of a discourse, it must be remembered that this was a conversation, much more fragmentary and colloquial than it seems as just read.

The Reverend Doctor was very far from taking offence at the old physician’s freedom of speech. He knew him to be honest, kind, charitable, self-denying, wherever any sorrow was to be alleviated, always reverential, with a cheerful trust in the great Father of all mankind. To be sure, his senior deacon, old Deacon Shearer,—who seemed to have got his Scripture-teachings out of the “Vinegar Bible,” (the one where Vineyard is misprinted Vinegar; which a good many people seem to have adopted as the true reading,)—his senior deacon had called Dr. Kittredge an “infidel.” But the Reverend Doctor could not help feeling, that, unless the text, “By their fruits ye shall know them,” were an interpolation, the Doctor was the better Christian of the two. Whatever his senior deacon might think about it, he said to himself that he shouldn’t be surprised if he met the Doctor in heaven yet, inquiring anxiously after old Deacon Shearer.

He was on the point of expressing himself very frankly to the Doctor, with that benevolent smile on his face which had sometimes come near giving offence to the readers of the “Vinegar” edition, but he saw that the physician’s attention had been arrested by Elsie. He looked in the same direction himself, and could not help being struck by her attitude and expression. There was something singularly graceful in the curves of her neck and the rest of her figure, but she was so perfectly still that it

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seemed as if she were hardly breathing. Her eyes were fixed on the young girl with whom Mr. Bernard was talking. He had often noticed their brilliancy, but now it seemed to him that they appeared dull, and the look on her features was as of some passion which had missed its stroke. Mr. Bernard's companion seemed unconscious that she was the object of this attention, and was listening to the young master as if he had succeeded in making himself very agreeable.

Of course Dick Veneer had not mistaken the game that was going on. The schoolmaster meant to make Elsie jealous,—and he had done it. That 's it: get her savage first, and then come wheedling round her,—a sure trick, if he isn't headed off somehow. But Dick saw well enough that he had better let Elsie alone just now, and thought the best way of killing the evening would be to amuse himself in a little lively talk with Mrs. Blanche Creamer, and incidentally to show Elsie that he could make himself acceptable to other women, if not to herself.

The Doctor presently went up to Elsie, determined to engage her in conversation and get her out of her thoughts, which he saw, by her look, were dangerous. Her father had been on the point of leaving Helen Darley to go to her, but felt easy enough when he saw the old Doctor at her side, and so went on talking. The Reverend Doctor, being now left alone, engaged the Widow Rowens, who put the best face on her vexation she could, but was devoting herself to all the underground deities for having been such a fool as to ask that pale-faced thing from the Institute to fill up her party.

There is no space left to report the rest of the conversation. If there was anything of any significance in it, it will turn up by and by, no doubt. At ten o'clock the Reverend Doctor called Miss Letty, who had no idea it was so late; Mr. Bernard gave his arm to Helen; Mr. Richard saw to Mrs. Blanche Creamer; the Doctor gave Elsie a cautioning look, and went off alone, thoughtful; Dudley Venner and his daughter got into their carriage and were whirled away. The Widow's gambit was played, and she had not won the game.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The wild Huntsman.

The young master had not forgotten the old Doctor's cautions. Without attributing any great importance to the warning he had given him, Mr. Bernard had so far complied with his advice that he was becoming a pretty good shot with the pistol. It was an amusement as good as many others to practise, and he had taken a fancy to it after the first few days.

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The popping of a pistol at odd hours in the backyard of the Institute was a phenomenon more than sufficiently remarkable to be talked about in Rockland. The viscous intelligence of a country-village is not easily stirred by the winds which ripple the fluent thought of great cities, but it holds every straw and entangles every insect that lights upon it. It soon became rumored in the town that the young master was a wonderful shot with the pistol. Some said he could hit a fo'pence-ha'penny at three rod; some, that he had shot a swallow, flying, with a single ball; some, that he snuffed a candle five times out of six at ten paces, and that he could hit any button in a man's coat he wanted to. In other words, as in all such cases, all the common feats were ascribed to him, as the current jokes of the day are laid at the door of any noted wit, however innocent he may be of them.

In the natural course of things, Mr. Richard Venner, who had by this time made some acquaintances, as we have seen, among that class of the population least likely to allow a live cinder of gossip to go out for want of air, had heard incidentally that the master up there at the Institute was all the time practising with a pistol, that they say he can snuff a candle at ten rods, (that was Mrs. Blanche Creamer's version,) and that he could hit anybody he wanted to right in the eye, as far as he could see the white of it.

Dick did not like the sound of all this any too well. Without believing more than half of it, there was enough to make the Yankee schoolmaster too unsafe to be trifled with. However, shooting at a mark was pleasant work enough; he had no particular objection to it himself. Only he did not care so much for those little popgun affairs that a man carries in his pocket, and with which you could n't shoot a fellow,—a robber, say,—without getting the muzzle under his nose. Pistols for boys; long-range rifles for men. There was such a gun lying in a closet with the fowling-pieces. He would go out into the fields and see what he could do as a marksman.

The nature of the mark which Dick chose for experimenting upon was singular. He had found some panes of glass which had been removed from an old sash, and he placed these successively before his target, arranging them at different angles. He found that a bullet would go through the glass without glancing or having its force materially abated. It was an interesting fact in physics, and might prove of some practical significance hereafter. Nobody knows what may turn up to render these out-of-the-way facts useful. All this was done in a quiet way in one of the bare spots high up the side of The Mountain. He was very thoughtful in taking the precaution to get so far away; rifle-bullets are apt to glance and come whizzing about people's ears, if they are fired in the neighborhood of houses. Dick satisfied himself that he could be tolerably sure of hitting a pane of glass at a distance of thirty rods, more or less, and that, if there happened to be anything behind it, the glass would not materially alter the force or direction of the bullet.

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About this time it occurred to him also that there was an old accomplishment of his which he would be in danger of losing for want of practice, if he did not take some opportunity to try his hand and regain its cunning, if it had begun to be diminished by disuse. For his first trial, he chose an evening when the moon was shining, and after the hour when the Rockland people were like to be stirring abroad. He was so far established now that he could do much as he pleased without exciting remark.

The prairie horse he rode, the mustang of the Pampas, wild as he was, had been trained to take part in at least one exercise. This was the accomplishment in which Mr. Richard now proposed to try himself. For this purpose he sought the implement of which, as it may be remembered, he had once made an incidental use,—the lasso, or long strip of hide with a slip-noose at the end of it. He had been accustomed to playing with such a thong from his boyhood, and had become expert in its use in capturing wild cattle in the course of his adventures. Unfortunately, there were no wild bulls likely to be met with in the neighborhood, to become the subjects of his skill. A stray cow in the road, an ox or a horse in a pasture, must serve his turn,—dull beasts, but moving marks to aim at, at any rate.

Never, since he had galloped in the chase over the Pampas, had Dick Venner felt such a sense of life and power as when he struck the long spurs into his wild horse's flanks, and dashed along the road with the lasso lying like a coiled snake at the saddle-bow. In skilful hands, the silent, bloodless noose, flying like an arrow, but not like that leaving a wound behind it,—sudden as a pistol-shot, but without the telltale explosion,—is one of the most fearful and mysterious weapons that arm the hand of man. The old Romans knew how formidable, even in contest with a gladiator equipped with sword, helmet, and shield, was the almost naked retiarius, with his net in one hand and his three-pronged javelin in the other. Once get a net over a man's head, or a cord round his neck, or, what is more frequently done nowadays, bonnet him by knocking his hat down over his eyes, and he is at the mercy of his opponent. Our soldiers who served against the Mexicans found this out too well. Many a poor fellow has been lassoed by the fierce riders from the plains, and fallen an easy victim to the captor who had snared him in the fatal noose.

But, imposing as the sight of the wild huntsmen of the Pampas might have been, Dick could not help laughing at the mock sublimity of his situation, as he tried his first experiment on an unhappy milky mother who had strayed from her herd and was wandering disconsolately along the road, laying the dust, as slue went, with thready streams from her swollen, swinging udders. "Here goes the Don at the windmill!" said Dick, and tilted full speed at her, whirling the lasso round his head as he rode. The creature swerved

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to one side of the way, as the wild horse and his rider came rushing down upon her, and presently turned and ran, as only cows and it would n't be safe to say it—can run. Just before he passed,—at twenty or thirty feet from her,—the lasso shot from his hand, uncoiling as it flew, and in an instant its loop was round her horns. “Well cast!” said Dick, as he galloped up to her side and dexterously disengaged the lasso. “Now for a horse on the run!”

He had the good luck to find one, presently, grazing in a pasture at the road-side. Taking down the rails of the fence at one point, he drove the horse into the road and gave chase. It was a lively young animal enough, and was easily roused to a pretty fast pace. As his gallop grew more and more rapid, Dick gave the reins to the mustang, until the two horses stretched themselves out in their longest strides. If the first feat looked like play, the one he was now to attempt had a good deal the appearance of real work. He touched the mustang with the spur, and in a few fierce leaps found himself nearly abreast of the frightened animal he was chasing. Once more he whirled the lasso round and round over his head, and then shot it forth, as the rattlesnake shoots his head from the loops against which it rests. The noose was round the horse's neck, and in another instant was tightened so as almost to stop his breath. The prairie horse knew the trick of the cord, and leaned away from the captive, so as to keep the thong tensely stretched between his neck and the peak of the saddle to which it was fastened. Struggling was of no use with a halter round his windpipe, and he very soon began to tremble and stagger,—blind, no doubt, and with a roaring in his ears as of a thousand battle-trumpets,—at any rate, subdued and helpless. That was enough. Dick loosened his lasso, wound it up again, laid it like a pet snake in a coil at his saddle-bow, turned his horse, and rode slowly along towards the mansion-house.

The place had never looked more stately and beautiful to him than as he now saw it in the moonlight. The undulations of the land,—the grand mountain screen which sheltered the mansion from the northern blasts, rising with all its hanging forests and parapets of naked rock high towards the heavens,—the ancient mansion, with its square chimneys, and bodyguard of old trees, and cincture of low walls with marble-pillared gateways,—the fields, with their various coverings,—the beds of flowers,—the plots of turf, one with a gray column in its centre bearing a sundial on which the rays of the moon were idly shining, another with a white stone and a narrow ridge of turf,—over all these objects, harmonized with all their infinite details into one fair whole by the moonlight, the prospective heir, as he deemed himself, looked with admiring eyes.

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But while he looked, the thought rose up in his mind like waters from a poisoned fountain, that there was a deep plot laid to cheat him of the inheritance which by a double claim he meant to call his own. Every day this ice-cold beauty, this dangerous, handsome cousin of his, went up to that place,—that usher's girl-trap. Everyday,—regularly now,—it used to be different. Did she go only to get out of his, her cousin's, reach? Was she not rather becoming more and more involved in the toils of this plotting Yankee?

If Mr. Bernard had shown himself at that moment a few rods in advance, the chances are that in less than one minute he would have found himself with a noose round his neck, at the heels of a mounted horseman. Providence spared him for the present. Mr. Richard rode his horse quietly round to the stable, put him up, and proceeded towards the house. He got to his bed without disturbing the family, but could not sleep. The idea had fully taken possession of his mind that a deep intrigue was going on which would end by bringing Elsie and the schoolmaster into relations fatal to all his own hopes. With that ingenuity which always accompanies jealousy, he tortured every circumstance of the last few weeks so as to make it square with this belief. From this vein of thought he naturally passed to a consideration of every possible method by which the issue he feared might be avoided.

Mr. Richard talked very plain language with himself in all these inward colloquies. Supposing it came to the worst, what could be done then? First, an accident might happen to the schoolmaster which should put a complete and final check upon his projects and contrivances. The particular accident which might interrupt his career must, evidently, be determined by circumstances; but it must be of a nature to explain itself without the necessity of any particular person's becoming involved in the matter. It would be unpleasant to go into particulars; but everybody knows well enough that men sometimes get in the way of a stray bullet, and that young persons occasionally do violence to themselves in various modes,—by firearms, suspension, and other means,—in consequence of disappointment in love, perhaps, oftener than from other motives. There was still another kind of accident which might serve his purpose. If anything should happen to Elsie, it would be the most natural thing in the world that his uncle should adopt him, his nephew and only near relation, as his heir. Unless, indeed, uncle Dudley should take it into his head to marry again. In that case, where would he, Dick, be? This was the most detestable complication which he could conceive of. And yet he had noticed—he could not help noticing—that his uncle had been very attentive to, and, as it seemed, very much pleased with, that young woman from the school. What did that mean? Was it possible that he was going to take a fancy to her?

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It made him wild to think of all the several contingencies which might defraud him of that good-fortune which seemed but just now within his grasp. He glared in the darkness at imaginary faces: sometimes at that of the handsome, treacherous schoolmaster; sometimes at that of the meek-looking, but no doubt, scheming, lady-teacher; sometimes at that of the dark girl whom he was ready to make his wife; sometimes at that of his much respected uncle, who, of course, could not be allowed to peril the fortunes of his relatives by forming a new connection. It was a frightful perplexity in which he found himself, because there was no one single life an accident to which would be sufficient to insure the fitting and natural course of descent to the great Dudley property. If it had been a simple question of helping forward a casualty to any one person, there was nothing in Dick's habits of thought and living to make that a serious difficulty. He had been so much with lawless people, that a life between his wish and his object seemed only as an obstacle to be removed, provided the object were worth the risk and trouble. But if there were two or three lives in the way, manifestly that altered the case.

His Southern blood was getting impatient. There was enough of the New-Englander about him to make him calculate his chances before he struck; but his plans were liable to be defeated at any moment by a passionate impulse such as the dark-hued races of Southern Europe and their descendants are liable to. He lay in his bed, sometimes arranging plans to meet the various difficulties already mentioned, sometimes getting into a paroxysm of blind rage in the perplexity of considering what object he should select as the one most clearly in his way. On the whole, there could be no doubt where the most threatening of all his embarrassments lay. It was in the probable growing relation between Elsie and the schoolmaster. If it should prove, as it seemed likely, that there was springing up a serious attachment tending to a union between them, he knew what he should do, if he was not quite so sure how he should do it.

There was one thing at least which might favor his projects, and which, at any rate, would serve to amuse him. He could, by a little quiet observation, find out what were the schoolmaster's habits of life: whether he had any routine which could be calculated upon; and under what circumstances a strictly private interview of a few minutes with him might be reckoned on, in case it should be desirable. He could also very probably learn some facts about Elsie. whether the young man was in the habit of attending her on her way home from school; whether she stayed about the schoolroom after the other girls had gone; and any incidental matters of interest which might present themselves.

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He was getting more and more restless for want of some excitement. A mad gallop, a visit to Mrs. Blanche Creamer, who had taken such a fancy to him, or a chat with the Widow Rowens, who was very lively in her talk, for all her sombre colors, and reminded him a good deal of some of his earlier friends, the señoritas,—all these were distractions, to be sure, but not enough to keep his fiery spirit from fretting itself in longings for more dangerous excitements. The thought of getting a knowledge of all Mr. Bernard's ways, so that he would be in his power at any moment, was a happy one.

For some days after this he followed Elsie at a long distance behind, to watch her until she got to the schoolhouse. One day he saw Mr. Bernard join her: a mere accident, very probably, for it was only once this happened. She came on her homeward way alone,—quite apart from the groups of girls who strolled out of the schoolhouse yard in company. Sometimes she was behind them all,—which was suggestive. Could she have stayed to meet the schoolmaster?

If he could have smuggled himself into the school, he would have liked to watch her there, and see if there was not some understanding between her and the master which betrayed itself by look or word. But this was beyond the limits of his audacity, and he had to content himself with such cautious observations as could be made at a distance. With the aid of a pocket-glass he could make out persons without the risk of being observed himself.

Mr. Silos Peckham's corps of instructors was not expected to be off duty or to stand at ease for any considerable length of time. Sometimes Mr. Bernard, who had more freedom than the rest, would go out for a ramble in the daytime, but more frequently it would be in the evening, after the hour of "retiring," as bedtime was elegantly termed by the young ladies of the Apollinean Institute. He would then not unfrequently walk out alone in the common roads, or climb up the sides of The Mountain, which seemed to be one of his favorite resorts. Here, of course, it was impossible to follow him with the eye at a distance. Dick had a hideous, gnawing suspicion that somewhere in these deep shades the schoolmaster might meet Elsie, whose evening wanderings he knew so well. But of this he was not able to assure himself. Secrecy was necessary to his present plans, and he could not compromise himself by over-eager curiosity. One thing he learned with certainty. The master returned, after his walk one evening, and entered the building where his room was situated. Presently a light betrayed the window of his apartment. From a wooded bank, some thirty or forty rods from this building, Dick Venner could see the interior of the chamber, and watch the master as he sat at his desk, the light falling strongly upon his face, intent upon the book or manuscript before him. Dick contemplated him very long in this attitude. The sense of watching his every motion, himself meanwhile utterly unseen, was delicious. How little the master was thinking what eyes were on him!

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Well,—there were two things quite certain. One was, that, if he chose, he could meet the schoolmaster alone, either in the road or in a more solitary place, if he preferred to watch his chance for an evening or two. The other was, that he commanded his position, as he sat at his desk in the evening, in such a way that there would be very little difficulty,—so far as that went; of course, however, silence is always preferable to noise, and there is a great difference in the marks left by different casualties. Very likely nothing would come of all this espionage; but, at any rate, the first thing to be done with a man you want to have in your power is to learn his habits.

Since the tea-party at the Widow Rowens's, Elsie had been more fitful and moody than ever. Dick understood all this well enough, you know. It was the working of her jealousy against that young schoolgirl to whom the master had devoted himself for the sake of piquing the heiress of the Dudley mansion. Was it possible, in any way, to exasperate her irritable nature against him, and in this way to render her more accessible to his own advances? It was difficult to influence her at all. She endured his company without seeming to enjoy it. She watched him with that strange look of hers, sometimes as if she were on her guard against him, sometimes as if she would like to strike at him as in that fit of childish passion. She ordered him about with a haughty indifference which reminded him of his own way with the dark-eyed women whom he had known so well of old. All this added a secret pleasure to the other motives he had for worrying her with jealous suspicions. He knew she brooded silently on any grief that poisoned her comfort,—that she fed on it, as it were, until it ran with every drop of blood in her veins,—and that, except in some paroxysm of rage, of which he himself was not likely the second time to be the object, or in some deadly vengeance wrought secretly, against which he would keep a sharp lookout, so far as he was concerned, she had no outlet for her dangerous, smouldering passions.

Beware of the woman who cannot find free utterance for all her stormy inner life either in words or song! So long as a woman can talk, there is nothing she cannot bear. If she cannot have a companion to listen to her woes, and has no musical utterance, vocal or instrumental,—then, if she is of the real woman sort, and has a few heartfuls of wild blood in her, and you have done her a wrong,—double-bolt the door which she may enter on noiseless slipper at midnight,—look twice before you taste of any cup whose draught the shadow of her hand may have darkened!

But let her talk, and, above all, cry, or, if she is one of the coarser-grained tribe, give her the run of all the red-hot expletives in the language, and let her blister her lips with them until she is tired, she will sleep like a lamb after it, and you may take a cup of coffee from her without stirring it up to look for its sediment.

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So, if she can sing, or play on any musical instrument, all her wickedness will run off through her throat or the tips of her fingers. How many tragedies find their peaceful catastrophe in fierce roulades and strenuous bravuras! How many murders are executed in double-quick time upon the keys which stab the air with their dagger-strokes of sound! What would our civilization be without the piano? Are not Erard and Broadwood and Chickering the true humanizers of our time? Therefore do I love to hear the all-pervading tum tum jarring the walls of little parlors in houses with double door-plates on their portals, looking out on streets and courts which to know is to be unknown, and where to exist is not to live, according to any true definition of living. Therefore complain I not of modern degeneracy, when, even from the open window of the small unlovely farmhouse, tenanted by the hard-handed man of bovine flavors and the flat-patterned woman of broken-down countenance, issue the same familiar sounds. For who knows that Almira, but for these keys, which throb away her wild impulses in harmless discords would not have been floating, dead, in the brown stream which slides through the meadows by her father's door,—or living, with that other current which runs beneath the gas-lights over the slimy pavement, choking with wretched weeds that were once in spotless flower?

Poor Elsie! She never sang nor played. She never shaped her inner life in words: such utterance was as much denied to her nature as common articulate speech to the deaf mute. Her only language must be in action. Watch her well by day and by night, old Sophy! watch her well! or the long line of her honored name may close in shame, and the stately mansion of the Dudleys remain a hissing and a reproach till its roof is buried in its cellar!

CHAPTER XXIV.

On his tracks.

"Able!" said the old Doctor, one morning, "after you've harnessed Caustic, come into the study a few minutes, will you?"

Abel nodded. He was a man of few words, and he knew that the "will you" did not require an answer, being the true New-England way of rounding the corners of an employer's order,—a tribute to the personal independence of an American citizen.

The hired man came into the study in the course of a few minutes. His face was perfectly still, and he waited to be spoken to; but the Doctor's eye detected a certain meaning in his expression, which looked as if he had something to communicate.

"Well?" said the Doctor.



“He’s up to mischief o’ some kind, I guess,” said Abel. “I jest happened daown by the mansion-haouse last night, ‘n’ he come aout o’ the gate on that queer-lookin’ creator’ o’ his. I watched him, ‘n’ he rid, very slow, all raoun’ by the Institoot, ‘n’ acted as ef he was spyin’ ababout. He looks to me like a man that’s calc’latin’ to do some kind of ill-turn to somebody. I should n’t like to have him raoun’ me, ‘f there wa’n’t a pitchfork or an eel-spear or some sech weep’n within reach. He may be all right; but I don’t like his looks, ‘n’ I don’t see what he’s lurkin’ raoun’ the Institoot for, after folks is abed.”

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"Have you watched him pretty close for the last few days?" said the Doctor.

"W'll, yes,—I've had my eye on him consid'ble o' the time. I haf to be pooty shy abaout it, or he'll find aout th't I'm on his tracks. I don' want him to get a spite ag'inst me, 'f I c'n help it; he looks to me like one o' them kind that kerries what they call slung-shot, 'n' hits ye on the side o' th' head with 'em so suddin y' never know what hurts ye."

"Why," said the Doctor, sharply,—“have you ever seen him with any such weapon about him?”

"W'll, no,—I caan't say that I hev," Abel answered. "On'y he looks kin' o' dangerous. Maybe he's all jest 'z he ought to be,—I caan't say that he a'n't,—but he's aout late nights, 'n' lurkin' raonn' jest 'z ef he was spyin' somebody, 'n' somehaow I caan't help mistrustin' them Portagee-lookin' fellahs. I caan't keep the run o' this chap all the time; but I've a notion that old black woman daown 't the mansion-haouse knows 'z much abaout him 'z anybody."

The Doctor paused a moment, after hearing this report from his private detective, and then got into his chaise, and turned Caustic's head in the direction of the Dudley mansion. He had been suspicious of Dick from the first. He did not like his mixed blood, nor his looks, nor his ways. He had formed a conjecture about his projects early. He had made a shrewd guess as to the probable jealousy Dick would feel of the schoolmaster, had found out something of his movements, and had cautioned Mr. Bernard,—as we have seen. He felt an interest in the young man,—a student of his own profession, an intelligent and ingenuously unsuspecting young fellow, who had been thrown by accident into the companionship or the neighborhood of two persons, one of whom he knew to be dangerous, and the other he believed instinctively might be capable of crime.

The Doctor rode down to the Dudley mansion solely for the sake of seeing old Sophy. He was lucky enough to find her alone in her kitchen. He began taking with her as a physician; he wanted to know how her rheumatism had been. The shrewd old woman saw through all that with her little beady black eyes. It was something quite different he had come for, and old Sophy answered very briefly for her aches and ails.

"Old folks' bones a'n't like young folks'," she said. "It's the Lord's doin's, 'n' 't a'n't much matter. I sha'n' be long roan' this kitchen. It's the young Missis, Doctor,—it 's our Elsie,—it 's the baby, as we use' t' call her,—don' you remember, Doctor? Seventeen year ago, 'n' her poor mother cryin' for her,—'Where is she? where is she? Let me see her! —'n' how I run up-stairs,—I could run then,—'n' got the coral necklace 'n' put it round her little neck, 'n' then showed her to her mother,—'n' how her mother looked at her, 'n' looked, 'n' then put out her poor thin fingers 'n' lifted the necklace,—'n' fell right back on her piller, as white as though she was laid out to bury?"

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The Doctor answered her by silence and a look of grave assent. He had never chosen to let old Sophy dwell upon these matters, for obvious reasons. The girl must not grow up haunted by perpetual fears and prophecies, if it were possible to prevent it.

“Well, how has Elsie seemed of late?” he said, after this brief pause.

The old woman shook her head. Then she looked up at the Doctor so steadily and searchingly that the diamond eyes of Elsie herself could hardly have pierced more deeply.

The Doctor raised his head, by his habitual movement, and met the old woman’s look with his own calm and scrutinizing gaze, sharpened by the glasses through which he now saw her.

Sophy spoke presently in an awed tone, as if telling a vision.

“We shall be havin’ trouble before long. The’ ‘s somethin’ comin’ from the Lord. I’ve had dreams, Doctor. It’s many a year I’ve been a-dreamin’, but now they’re comin’ over ‘n’ over the same thing. Three times I’ve dreamed one thing, Doctor,—one thing!”

“And what was that?” the Doctor said, with that shade of curiosity in his tone which a metaphysician would probably say is an index of a certain tendency to belief in the superstition to which the question refers.

“I ca’n’ jestly tell y’ what it was, Doctor,” the old woman answered, as if bewildered and trying to clear up her recollections; “but it was somethin’ fearful, with a great noise ‘n’ a great cryin’ o’ people,—like the Las’ Day, Doctor! The Lord have mercy on my poor chil’, ‘n’ take care of her, if anything happens! But I’s feared she’ll never live to see the Las’ Day, ‘f ‘t don’ come pooty quick.”

Poor Sophy, only the third generation from cannibalism, was, not unnaturally, somewhat confused in her theological notions. Some of the Second-Advent preachers had been about, and circulated their predictions among the kitchen—population of Rockland. This was the way in which it happened that she mingled her fears in such a strange manner with their doctrines.

The Doctor answered solemnly, that of the day and hour we knew not, but it became us to be always ready.—“Is there anything going on in the household different from common?”

Old Sophy’s wrinkled face looked as full of life and intelligence, when she turned it full upon the Doctor, as if she had slipped off her infirmities and years like an outer garment. All those fine instincts of observation which came straight to her from her savage grandfather looked out of her little eyes. She had a kind of faith that the Doctor was a mighty conjurer, who, if he would, could bewitch any of them. She had relieved

her feelings by her long talk with the minister, but the Doctor was the immediate adviser of the family, and had watched them through all their troubles. Perhaps he could tell them what to do. She had but one real object of affection in the world,—this child that she had tended from infancy to womanhood. Troubles were gathering thick round her; how soon they would break upon her, and blight or destroy her, no one could tell; but there was nothing in all the catalogue of terrors which might not come upon the household at any moment. Her own wits had sharpened themselves in keeping watch by day and night, and her face had forgotten its age in the excitement which gave life to its features.

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"Doctor," old Sophy said, "there's strange things goin' on here by night and by day. I don' like that man,—that Dick,—I never liked him. He giv' me some o' these things I' got on; I take 'em 'cos I know it make him mad, if I no take 'em; I wear 'em, so that he need n' feel as if I did n' like him; but, Doctor, I hate him,—jes' as much as a member of the church has the Lord's leave to hate anybody."

Her eyes sparkled with the old savage light, as if her ill-will to Mr. Richard Veneer might perhaps go a little farther than the Christian limit she had assigned. But remember that her grandfather was in the habit of inviting his friends to dine with him upon the last enemy he had bagged, and that her grandmother's teeth were filed down to points, so that they were as sharp as a shark's.

"What is that you have seen about Mr. Richard Veneer that gives you such a spite against him, Sophy?" asked the Doctor.

"What I' seen 'bout Dick Veneer?" she replied, fiercely. "I'll tell y' what I' seen. Dick wan's to marry our Elsie,—that 's what he wan's; 'n' he don' love her, Doctor,—he hates her, Doctor, as bad as I hate him! He wan's to marry our Elsie, In' live here in the big house, 'n' have nothin' to do but jes' lay still 'n' watch Massa Venner 'n' see how long 't Ill take him to die, 'n' 'f he don' die fas' 'puff, help him some way t' die fasser!—Come close up t' me, Doctor! I wan' t' tell you somethin' I tol' th' minister t' other day. Th' minister, he come down 'n' prayed 'n' talked good,—he's a good man, that Doctor Honeywood, 'n' I tol' him all 'bout our Elsie, but he did n' tell nobody what to do to stop all what I' been dreamin' about happenin'. Come close up to me, Doctor!"

The Doctor drew his chair close up to that of the old woman.

"Doctor, nobody mus'n' never marry our Elsie 's longs she lives! Nobody mus' n' never live with Elsie but ol Sophy; 'n' ol Sophy won't never die 's long 's Elsie 's alive to be took care of. But I's feared, Doctor, I's greatly feared Elsie wan' to marry somebody. The' 's a young gen'l'm'n up at that school where she go,—so some of 'em tells me, 'n' she loves t' see him 'n' talk wi' him, 'n' she talks about him when she 's asleep sometimes. She mus 'n' never marry nobody, Doctor! If she do, he die, certain!"

"If she has a fancy for the young man up at the school there," the Doctor said, "I shouldn't think there would be much danger from Dick."

"Doctor, nobody know nothin' 'bout Elsie but of Sophy. She no like any other creator' th't ever drawed the bref o' life. If she ca'n' marry one man 'cos she love him, she marry another man 'cos she hate him."

"Marry a man because she hates him, Sophy? No woman ever did such a thing as that, or ever will do it."

“Who tol’ you Elsie was a woman, Doctor?” said old Sophy, with a flash of strange intelligence in her eyes.

The Doctor’s face showed that he was startled. The old woman could not know much about Elsie that he did not know; but what strange superstition had got into her head, he was puzzled to guess. He had better follow Sophy’s lead and find out what she meant.

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"I should call Elsie a woman, and a very handsome one," he said. "You don't mean that she has any mark about her, except—you know—under the necklace?"

The old woman resented the thought of any deformity about her darling.

"I did n' say she had nothin'—but jes' that—you know. My beauty have anything ugly? She's the beautifulest-shaped lady that ever had a shinin' silk gown drawed over her shoulders. On'y she a'n't like no other woman in none of her ways. She don't cry 'n' laugh like other women. An' she ha'n' got the same kind o' feelin's as other women.—Do you know that young gen'l'm'n up at the school, Doctor?"

"Yes, Sophy, I've met him sometimes. He's a very nice sort of young man, handsome, too, and I don't much wonder Elsie takes to him. Tell me, Sophy, what do you think would happen, if he should chance to fall in love with Elsie, and she with him, and he should marry her?"

"Put your ear close to my lips, Doctor, dear!" She whispered a little to the Doctor, then added aloud, "He die,—that's all."

"But surely, Sophy, you a'n't afraid to have Dick marry her, if she would have him for any reason, are you? He can take care of himself, if anybody can."

"Doctor!" Sophy answered, "nobody can take care of hisself that live wi' Elsie! Nobody never in all this worl' mus' live wi' Elsie but of Sophy, I tell you. You don' think I care for Dick? What do I care, if Dick Venner die? He wan's to marry our Elsie so 's to live in the big house 'n' get all the money 'n' all the silver things 'n' all the chists full o' linen 'n' beautiful clothes. That's what Dick wan's. An' he hates Elsie 'cos she don' like him. But if he marry Elsie, she 'll make him die some wrong way or other, 'n' they'll take her 'n' hang her, or he'll get mad with her 'n' choke her.—Oh, I know his chokin' tricks!—he don' leave his keys roun' for nothin'"

"What's that you say, Sophy? Tell me what you mean by all that."

So poor Sophy had to explain certain facts not in all respects to her credit. She had taken the opportunity of his absence to look about his chamber, and, having found a key in one of his drawers, had applied it to a trunk, and, finding that it opened the trunk, had made a kind of inspection for contraband articles, and, seeing the end of a leather thong, had followed it up until she saw that it finished with a noose, which, from certain appearances, she inferred to have seen service of at least doubtful nature. An unauthorized search; but old Sophy considered that a game of life and death was going on in the household, and that she was bound to look out for her darling.

The Doctor paused a moment to think over this odd piece of information. Without sharing Sophy's belief as to the kind of use this mischievous-looking piece of property

had been put to, it was certainly very odd that Dick should have such a thing at the bottom of his trunk. The Doctor remembered reading or hearing something about the lasso and the lariat and the bolas, and had an indistinct idea that they had been sometimes used as weapons of warfare or private revenge; but they were essentially a huntsman's implements, after all, and it was not very strange that this young man had brought one of them with him. Not strange, perhaps, but worth noting.

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"Do you really think Dick means mischief to anybody, that he has such dangerous-looking things?" the Doctor said, presently.

"I tell you, Doctor. Dick means to have Elsie. If he ca'n' get her, he never let nobody else have her! Oh, Dick 's a dark man, Doctor! I know him! I 'member him when he was little boy,—he always cunin'. I think he mean mischief to somebody. He come home late nights,—come in softly,—oh, I hear him! I lay awake, 'n' got sharp ears,—I hear the cats walkin' over the roofs,—'n' I hear Dick Veneer, when he comes up in his stockin'-feet as still as a cat. I think he mean' mischief to somebody. I no like his looks these las' days.—Is that a very pooty gen'l'm'n up at the schoolhouse, Doctor?"

"I told you he was good-looking. What if he is?"

"I should like to see him, Doctor,—I should like to see the pooty gen'l'm'n that my poor Elsie loves. She mus 'n' never marry nobody, —but, oh, Doctor, I should like to see him, 'n' jes' think a little how it would ha' been, if the Lord had n' been so hard on Elsie."

She wept and wrung her hands. The kind Doctor was touched, and left her a moment to her thoughts.

"And how does Mr. Dudley Veneer take all this?" he said, by way of changing the subject a little.

"Oh, Massa Veneer, he good man, but he don' know nothin' 'bout Elsie, as of Sophy do. I keep close by her; I help her when she go to bed, 'n' set by her sometime when she—'sleep; I come to her in th' mornin' 'n' help her put on her things."—Then, in a whisper;—"Doctor, Elsie lets of Sophy take off that necklace for her. What you think she do, 'f anybody else tech it?"

"I don't know, I'm sure, Sophy,—strike the person, perhaps."

"Oh, yes, strike 'em! but not with her han's, Doctor!"—The old woman's significant pantomime must be guessed at.

"But you haven't told me, Sophy, what Mr. Dudley Veneer thinks of his nephew, nor whether he has any notion that Dick wants to marry Elsie."

"I tell you. Massa Venner, he good man, but he no see nothin' 'bout what goes on here in the house. He sort o' broken-hearted, you know,—sort o' giv up,—don' know what to do wi' Elsie, 'xcep' say 'Yes, yes.' Dick always look smilin' 'n' behave well before him. One time I thought Massa Veneer b'lieve Dick was goin' to take to Elsie; but now he don' seem to take much notice,—he kin' o' stupid-' like 'bout sech things. It's trouble, Doctor; 'cos Massa Veneer bright man naterally,—'n' he's got a great heap o' books. I don' think Massa Veneer never been jes' heself sence Elsie 's born. He done all he know how,—but, Doctor, that wa'n' a great deal. You men-folks don' know nothin' 'bout



these young gals; 'n' 'f you knowed all the young gals that ever lived, y' would n' know nothin' 'bout our Elsie."

"No,—but, Sophy, what I want to know is, whether you think Mr. Veneer has any kind of suspicion about his nephew,—whether he has any notion that he's a dangerous sort of fellow,—or whether he feels safe to have him about, or has even taken a sort of fancy to him."

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“Lar’ bless you, Doctor, Massa Veneer no more idee ’f any mischief ’bout Dick than he has ’bout you or me. Y’ see, he very fond o’ the Cap’n,—that Dick’s father,—’n’ he live so long alone here, ’long wi’ us, that he kin’ o’ like to see mos’ anybody ’t ’s got any o’ th’ of family-blood in ’em. He ha’n’t got no more suspicions ’n a baby,—y’ never see sech a man ’n y’r life. I kin’ o’ think he don’ care for nothin’ in this world ’xcep’ jes’ t’ do what Elsie wan’s him to. The fus’ year after young Madam die he do nothin’ but jes’ set at the window ’n’ look out at her grave, ’n’ then come up ’n’ look at the baby’s neck ’n’ say, ‘It’s fadin’, Sophy, a’n’t it?’ ’n’ then go down in the study ’n’ walk ’n’ walk, ’n’ them kneel down ’n’ pray. Doctor, there was two places in the old carpet that was all threadbare, where his knees had worn ’em. An’ sometimes, you remember ’bout all that,—he’d go off up into The Mountain, ’n’ be gone all day, ’n’ kill all the Ugly Things he could find up there. —Oh, Doctor, I don’ like to think o’ them days!—An’ by ’n’ by he grew kin’ o’ still, ’n’ begun to read a little, ’n’ ’t las’ he got ’s quiet’s a lamb, ’n’ that’s the way he is now. I think he’s got religion, Doctor; but he a’n’t so bright about what’s goin’ on, ’n’ I don’ believe he never suspec’ nothin’ till somethin’ happens; for the’ ’s somethin’ goin’ to happen, Doctor, if the Las’ Day does n’ come to stop it; ’n’ you mus’ tell us what to do, ’n’ save my poor Elsie, my baby that the Lord has n’ took care of like all his other childer.”

The Doctor assured the old woman that he was thinking a great deal about them all, and that there were other eyes on Dick besides her own. Let her watch him closely about the house, and he would keep a look-out elsewhere. If there was anything new, she must let him know at once. Send up one of the menservants, and he would come down at a moment’s warning.

There was really nothing definite against this young man; but the Doctor was sure that he was meditating some evil design or other. He rode straight up to the Institute. There he saw Mr. Bernard, and had a brief conversation with him, principally on matters relating to his personal interests.

That evening, for some unknown reason, Mr. Bernard changed the place of his desk and drew down the shades of his windows. Late that night Mr. Richard Venner drew the charge of a rifle, and put the gun back among the fowling-pieces, swearing that a leather halter was worth a dozen of it.

CHAPTER XXV.

The perilous hour.

Up to this time Dick Venner had not decided on the particular mode and the precise period of relieving himself from the unwarrantable interference which threatened to defeat his plans. The luxury of feeling that he had his man in his power was its own reward. One who watches in the dark, outside, while his enemy, in utter unconsciousness, is illuminating his apartment and himself so that every movement of

his head and every button on his coat can be seen and counted, experiences a peculiar kind of pleasure, if he holds a loaded rifle in his hand, which he naturally hates to bring to its climax by testing his skill as a marksman upon the object of his attention.

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Besides, Dick had two sides in his nature, almost as distinct as we sometimes observe in those persons who are the subjects of the condition known as double consciousness. On his New England side he was cunning and calculating, always cautious, measuring his distance before he risked his stroke, as nicely as if he were throwing his lasso. But he was liable to intercurrent fits of jealousy and rage, such as the light-hued races are hardly capable of conceiving, blinding paroxysms of passion, which for the time overmastered him, and which, if they found no ready outlet, transformed themselves into the more dangerous forces that worked through the instrumentality of his cool craftiness.

He had failed as yet in getting any positive evidence that there was any relation between Elsie and the schoolmaster other than such as might exist unsuspected and unblamed between a teacher and his pupil. A book, or a note, even, did not prove the existence of any sentiment. At one time he would be devoured by suspicions, at another he would try to laugh himself out of them. And in the mean while he followed Elsie's tastes as closely as he could, determined to make some impression upon her,—to become a habit, a convenience, a necessity,—whatever might aid him in the attainment of the one end which was now the aim of his life.

It was to humor one of her tastes already known to the reader, that he said to her one morning,—“Come, Elsie, take your castanets, and let us have a dance.”

He had struck the right vein in the girl's fancy, for she was in the mood for this exercise, and very willingly led the way into one of the more empty apartments. What there was in this particular kind of dance which excited her it might not be easy to guess; but those who looked in with the old Doctor, on a former occasion, and saw her, will remember that she was strangely carried away by it, and became almost fearful in the vehemence of her passion. The sound of the castanets seemed to make her alive all over. Dick knew well enough what the exhibition would be, and was almost afraid of her at these moments; for it was like the dancing mania of Eastern devotees, more than the ordinary light amusement of joyous youth,—a convulsion of the body and the mind, rather than a series of voluntary modulated motions.

Elsie rattled out the triple measure of a saraband. Her eyes began to glitter more brilliantly, and her shape to undulate in freer curves. Presently she noticed that Dick's look was fixed upon her necklace. His face betrayed his curiosity; he was intent on solving the question, why she always wore something about her neck. The chain of mosaics she had on at that moment displaced itself at every step, and he was peering with malignant, searching eagerness to see if an unsunned ring of fairer hue than the rest of the surface, or any less easily explained peculiarity, were hidden by her ornaments.

She stopped suddenly, caught the chain of mosaics and settled it hastily in its place, flung down her castanets, drew herself back, and stood looking at him, with her head a little on one side, and her eyes narrowing in the way he had known so long and well.

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"What is the matter, Cousin Elsie? What do you stop for?" he said.

Elsie did not answer, but kept her eyes on him, full of malicious light. The jealousy which lay covered up under his surface-thoughts took this opportunity to break out.

"You would n't act so, if you were dancing with Mr. Langdon,—would you, Elsie?" he asked.

It was with some effort that he looked steadily at her to see the effect of his question.

Elsie colored,—not much, but still perceptibly. Dick could not remember that he had ever seen her show this mark of emotion before, in all his experience of her fitful changes of mood. It had a singular depth of significance, therefore, for him; he knew how hardly her color came. Blushing means nothing, in some persons; in others, it betrays a profound inward agitation,—a perturbation of the feelings far more trying than the passions which with many easily moved persons break forth in tears. All who have observed much are aware that some men, who have seen a good deal of life in its less chastened aspects and are anything but modest, will blush often and easily, while there are delicate and sensitive women who can faint, or go into fits, if necessary, but are very rarely seen to betray their feelings in their cheeks, even when their expression shows that their inmost soul is blushing scarlet. Presently she answered, abruptly and scornfully, "Mr. Langdon is a gentleman, and would not vex me as you do."

"A gentleman!" Dick answered, with the most insulting accent,— "a gentleman! Come, Elsie, you 've got the Dudley blood in your veins, and it does n't do for you to call this poor, sneaking schoolmaster a gentleman!"

He stopped short. Elsie's bosom was heaving, the faint flush on her cheek was becoming a vivid glow. Whether it were shame or wrath, he saw that he had reached some deep-lying centre of emotion. There was no longer any doubt in his mind. With another girl these signs of confusion might mean little or nothing; with her they were decisive and final. Elsie Venner loved Bernard Langdon.

The sudden conviction, absolute, overwhelming, which rushed upon him, had well-nigh led to an explosion of wrath, and perhaps some terrible scene which might have fulfilled some of old Sophy's predictions. This, however, would never do. Dick's face whitened with his thoughts, but he kept still until he could speak calmly.

"I've nothing against the young fellow," he said; "only I don't think there's anything quite good enough to keep the company of people that have the Dudley blood in them. You a'n't as proud as I am. I can't quite make up my mind to call a schoolmaster a gentleman, though this one may be well enough. I've nothing against him, at any rate."

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Elsie made no answer, but glided out of the room and slid away to her own apartment. She bolted the door and drew her curtains close. Then she threw herself on the floor, and fell into a dull, slow ache of passion, without tears, without words, almost without thoughts. So she remained, perhaps, for a half-hour, at the end of which time it seemed that her passion had become a sullen purpose. She arose, and, looking cautiously round, went to the hearth, which was ornamented with curious old Dutch tiles, with pictures of Scripture subjects. One of these represented the lifting of the brazen serpent. She took a hair-pin from one of her braids, and, insinuating its points under the edge of the tile, raised it from its place. A small leaden box lay under the tile, which she opened, and, taking from it a little white powder, which she folded in a scrap of paper, replaced the box and the tile over it.

Whether Dick had by any means got a knowledge of this proceeding, or whether he only suspected some unmentionable design on her part, there is no sufficient means of determining. At any rate, when they met, an hour or two after these occurrences, he could not help noticing how easily she seemed to have got over her excitement. She was very pleasant with him,—too pleasant, Dick thought. It was not Elsie's way to come out of a fit of anger so easily as that. She had contrived some way of letting off her spite; that was certain. Dick was pretty cunning, as old Sophy had said, and, whether or not he had any means of knowing Elsie's private intentions, watched her closely, and was on his guard against accidents.

For the first time, he took certain precautions with reference to his diet, such as were quite alien to his common habits. On coming to the dinner-table, that day, he complained of headache, took but little food, and refused the cup of coffee which Elsie offered him, saying that it did not agree with him when he had these attacks.

Here was a new complication. Obviously enough, he could not live in this way, suspecting everything but plain bread and water, and hardly feeling safe in meddling with them. Not only had this school-keeping wretch come between him and the scheme by which he was to secure his future fortune, but his image had so infected his cousin's mind that she was ready to try on him some of those tricks which, as he had heard hinted in the village, she had once before put in practice upon a person who had become odious to her.

Something must be done, and at once, to meet the double necessities of this case. Every day, while the young girl was in these relations with the young man, was only making matters worse. They could exchange words and looks, they could arrange private interviews, they would be stooping together over the same book, her hair touching his cheek, her breath mingling with his, all the magnetic attractions drawing them together with strange, invisible effluences. As her passion

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for the schoolmaster increased, her dislike to him, her cousin, would grow with it, and all his dangers would be multiplied. It was a fearful point he had, reached. He was tempted at one moment to give up all his plans and to disappear suddenly from the place, leaving with the schoolmaster, who had come between him and his object, an anonymous token of his personal sentiments which would be remembered a good while in the history of the town of Rockland. This was but a momentary thought; the great Dudley property could not be given up in that way.

Something must happen at once to break up all this order of things. He could think of but one Providential event adequate to the emergency,—an event foreshadowed by various recent circumstances, but hitherto floating in his mind only as a possibility. Its occurrence would at once change the course of Elsie's feelings, providing her with something to think of besides mischief, and remove the accursed obstacle which was thwarting all his own projects. Every possible motive, then,—his interest, his jealousy, his longing for revenge, and now his fears for his own safety,—urged him to regard the happening of a certain casualty as a matter of simple necessity. This was the self-destruction of Mr. Bernard Langdon.

Such an event, though it might be surprising to many people, would not be incredible, nor without many parallel cases. He was poor, a miserable fag, under the control of that mean wretch up there at the school, who looked as if he had sour buttermilk in his veins instead of blood. He was in love with a girl above his station, rich, and of old family, but strange in all her ways, and it was conceivable that he should become suddenly jealous of her. Or she might have frightened him with some display of her peculiarities which had filled him with a sudden repugnance in the place of love. Any of these things were credible, and would make a probable story enough,—so thought Dick over to himself with the New-England half of his mind.

Unfortunately, men will not always take themselves out of the way when, so far as their neighbors are concerned, it would be altogether the most appropriate and graceful and acceptable service they could render. There was at this particular moment no special reason for believing that the schoolmaster meditated any violence to his own person. On the contrary, there was good evidence that he was taking some care of himself. He was looking well and in good spirits, and in the habit of amusing himself and exercising, as if to keep up his standard of health, especially of taking certain evening-walks, before referred to, at an hour when most of the Rockland people had “retired,” or, in vulgar language, “gone to bed.”

Dick Veneer settled it, however, in his own mind, that Mr. Bernard Langdon must lay violent hands upon himself. He even went so far as to determine the precise hour, and the method in which the “rash act,” as it would undoubtedly be called in the next issue of “The Rockland Weekly Universe,” should be committed. Time,—this evening. Method,

asphyxia, by suspension. It was, unquestionably, taking a great liberty with a man to decide that he should become *felo de se* without his own consent. Such, however, was the decision of Mr. Richard Veneer with regard to Mr. Bernard Langdon.

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If everything went right, then, there would be a coroner's inquest to-morrow upon what remained of that gentleman, found suspended to the branch of a tree somewhere within a mile of the Apollinean Institute. The "Weekly Universe" would have a startling paragraph announcing a "*Sad event!!!*" which had "thrown the town into an intense state of excitement. Mr. Barnard Langden, a well-known teacher at the Appolinian Institute, was found, *etc.*, *etc.* The vital spark was extinct. The motive to the rash act can only be conjectured, but is supposed to be disappointed affection. The name of an accomplished young lady of the highest respectability and great beauty is mentioned in connection with this melancholy occurrence."

Dick Venner was at the tea-table that evening, as usual.—No, he would take green tea, if she pleased,—the same that her father drank. It would suit his headache better.—Nothing,—he was much obliged to her. He would help himself,—which he did in a little different way from common, naturally enough, on account of his headache. He noticed that Elsie seemed a little nervous while she was rinsing some of the teacups before their removal.

"There's something going on in that witch's head," he said to himself. "I know her,—she 'd be savage now, if she had n't got some trick in hand. Let 's see how she looks to-morrow!"

Dick announced that he should go to bed early that evening, on account of this confounded headache which had been troubling him so much. In fact, he went up early, and locked his door after him, with as much noise as he could make. He then changed some part of his dress, so that it should be dark throughout, slipped off his boots, drew the lasso out from the bottom of the contents of his trunk, and, carrying that and his boots in his hand, opened his door softly, locked it after him, and stole down the back-stairs, so as to get out of the house unnoticed. He went straight to the stable and saddled the mustang. He took a rope from the stable with him, mounted his horse, and set forth in the direction of the Institute.

Mr. Bernard, as we have seen, had not been very profoundly impressed by the old Doctor's cautions,—enough, however, to follow out some of his hints which were not troublesome to attend to. He laughed at the idea of carrying a loaded pistol about with him; but still it seemed only fair, as the old Doctor thought so much of the matter, to humor him about it. As for not going about when and where he liked, for fear he might have some lurking enemy, that was a thing not to be listened to nor thought of. There was nothing to be ashamed of or troubled about in any of his relations with the school-girls. Elsie, no doubt, showed a kind of attraction towards him, as did perhaps some others; but he had been perfectly discreet, and no father or brother or lover had any just cause of quarrel with him. To be sure,

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that dark young man at the Dudley mansion-house looked as if he were his enemy, when he had met him; but certainly there was nothing in their relations to each other, or in his own to Elsie, that would be like to stir such malice in his mind as would lead him to play any of his wild Southern tricks at his, Mr. Bernard's, expense. Yet he had a vague feeling that this young man was dangerous, and he had been given to understand that one of the risks he ran was from that quarter.

On this particular evening, he had a strange, unusual sense of some impending peril. His recent interview with the Doctor, certain remarks which had been dropped in his hearing, but above all an unaccountable impression upon his spirits, all combined to fill his mind with a foreboding conviction that he was very near some overshadowing danger. It was as the chill of the ice-mountain toward which the ship is steering under full sail. He felt a strong impulse to see Helen Darley and talk with her. She was in the common parlor, and, fortunately, alone.

"Helen," he said,—for they were almost like brother and sister now,—“I have been thinking what you would do, if I should have to leave the school at short notice, or be taken away suddenly by any accident.”

“Do?” she said, her cheek growing paler than its natural delicate hue,—“why, I do not know how I could possibly consent to live here, if you left us. Since you came, my life has been almost easy; before, it was getting intolerable. You must not talk about going, my dear friend; you have spoiled me for my place. Who is there here that I can have any true society with, but you? You would not leave us for another school, would you?”

“No, no, my dear Helen,” Mr. Bernard said, “if it depends on myself, I shall stay out my full time, and enjoy your company and friendship. But everything is uncertain in this world. I have been thinking that I might be wanted elsewhere, and called when I did not think of it;—it was a fancy, perhaps,—but I can't keep it out of my mind this evening. If any of my fancies should come true, Helen, there are two or three messages I want to leave with you. I have marked a book or two with a cross in pencil on the fly-leaf;—these are for you. There is a little hymn-book I should like to have you give to Elsie from me;—it may be a kind of comfort to the poor girl.”

Helen's eyes glistened as she interrupted him,—

“What do you mean? You must not talk so, Mr. Langdon. Why, you never looked better in your life. Tell me now, you are not in earnest, are you, but only trying a little sentiment on me?”

Mr. Bernard smiled, but rather sadly.

“About half in earnest,” he said. “I have had some fancies in my head,—superstitions, I suppose,—at any rate, it does no harm to tell you what I should like to have done, if anything should happen,—very likely nothing ever will. Send the rest of the books home, if you please, and write a letter to my mother. And, Helen, you will find one small volume in my desk enveloped and directed, you will see to whom;—give this with your own hands; it is a keepsake.”

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The tears gathered in her eyes; she could not speak at first. Presently, "Why, Bernard, my dear friend, my brother, it cannot be that you are in danger? Tell me what it is, and, if I can share it with you, or counsel you in any way, it will only be paying back the great debt I owe you. No, no,—it can't be true,—you are tired and worried, and your spirits have got depressed. I know what that is;—I was sure, one winter, that I should die before spring; but I lived to see the dandelions and buttercups go to seed. Come, tell me it was nothing but your imagination."

She felt a tear upon her cheek, but would not turn her face away from him; it was the tear of a sister.

"I am really in earnest, Helen," he said. "I don't know that there is the least reason in the world for these fancies. If they all go off and nothing comes of them, you may laugh at me, if you like. But if there should be any occasion, remember my requests. You don't believe in presentiments, do you?"

"Oh, don't ask-me, I beg you," Helen answered. "I have had a good many frights for every one real misfortune I have suffered. Sometimes I have thought I was warned beforehand of coming trouble, just as many people are of changes in the weather, by some unaccountable feeling,—but not often, and I don't like to talk about such things. I wouldn't think about these fancies of yours. I don't believe you have exercised enough;—don't you think it's confinement in the school has made you nervous?"

"Perhaps it has; but it happens that I have thought more of exercise lately, and have taken regular evening walks, besides playing my old gymnastic tricks every day."

They talked on many subjects, but through all he said Helen perceived a pervading tone of sadness, and an expression as of a dreamy foreboding of unknown evil. They parted at the usual hour, and went to their several rooms. The sadness of Mr. Bernard had sunk into the heart of Helen, and she mingled many tears with her prayers that evening, earnestly entreating that he might be comforted in his days of trial and protected in his hour of danger.

Mr. Bernard stayed in his room a short time before setting out for his evening walk. His eye fell upon the Bible his mother had given him when he left home, and he opened it in the New Testament at a venture. It happened that the first words he read were these,—"Lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping." In the state of mind in which he was at the moment, the text startled him. It was like a supernatural warning. He was not going to expose himself to any particular danger this evening; a walk in a quiet village was as free from risk as Helen Darley or his own mother could ask; yet he had an unaccountable feeling of apprehension, without any definite object. At this moment he remembered the old Doctor's counsel, which he had sometimes neglected, and, blushing at the feeling which led him to do it, he took the pistol his suspicious old friend

had forced upon him, which he had put away loaded, and, thrusting it into his pocket, set out upon his walk.

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The moon was shining at intervals, for the night was partially clouded. There seemed to be nobody stirring, though his attention was unusually awake, and he could hear the whirr of the bats overhead, and the pulsating croak of the frogs in the distant pools and marshes. Presently he detected the sound of hoofs at some distance, and, looking forward, saw a horseman coming in his direction. The moon was under a cloud at the moment, and he could only observe that the horse and his rider looked like a single dark object, and that they were moving along at an easy pace. Mr. Bernard was really ashamed of himself, when he found his hand on the butt of his pistol. When the horseman was within a hundred and fifty yards of him, the moon shone out suddenly and revealed each of them to the other. The rider paused for a moment, as if carefully surveying the pedestrian, then suddenly put his horse to the full gallop, and dashed towards him, rising at the same instant in his stirrups and swinging something round his head, what, Mr. Bernard could not make out. It was a strange manoeuvre,—so strange and threatening in aspect that the young man forgot his nervousness in an instant, cocked his pistol, and waited to see what mischief all this meant. He did not wait long. As the rider came rushing towards him, he made a rapid motion and something leaped five-and-twenty feet through the air, in Mr. Bernard's direction. In an instant he felt a ring, as of a rope or thong, settle upon his shoulders. There was no time to think, he would be lost in another second. He raised his pistol and fired,—not at the rider, but at the horse. His aim was true; the mustang gave one bound and fell lifeless, shot through the head. The lasso was fastened to his saddle, and his last bound threw Mr. Bernard violently to the earth, where he lay motionless, as if stunned.

In the mean time, Dick Venner, who had been dashed down with his horse, was trying to extricate himself,—one of his legs being held fast under the animal, the long spur on his boot having caught in the saddle-cloth. He found, however, that he could do nothing with his right arm, his shoulder having been in some way injured in his fall. But his Southern blood was up, and, as he saw Mr. Bernard move as if he were coming to his senses, he struggled violently to free himself.

"I 'll have the dog, yet," he said,—“only let me get at him with the knife!”

He had just succeeded in extricating his imprisoned leg, and was ready to spring to his feet, when he was caught firmly by the throat, and looking up, saw a clumsy barbed weapon, commonly known as a hay fork, within an inch of his breast.

“Hold on there! What 'n thunder 'r' y' abaout, y' darned Portagee?” said a voice, with a decided nasal tone in it, but sharp and resolute.

Dick looked from the weapon to the person who held it, and saw a sturdy, plain man standing over him, with his teeth clinched, and his aspect that of one all ready for mischief.

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"Lay still, naow!" said Abel Stebbins, the Doctor's man; "'f y' don't, I'll stick ye, 'z sure 'z y' 'r alive! I been arter ye f'r a week, 'n' I got y' naow! I knowed I'd ketch ye at some darned trick or 'nother 'fore I'd done 'ith ye!"

Dick lay perfectly still, feeling that he was crippled and helpless, thinking all the time with the Yankee half of his mind what to do about it. He saw Mr. Bernard lift his head and look around him. He would get his senses again in a few minutes, very probably, and then he, Mr. Richard Venner, would be done for.

"Let me up! let me up!" he cried, in a low, hurried voice,—“I 'll give you a hundred dollars in gold to let me go. The man a'n't hurt,—don't you see him stirring? He'll come to himself in two minutes. Let me up! I'll give you a hundred and fifty dollars in gold, now, here on the spot,—and the watch out of my pocket; take it yourself, with your own hands!"

"I'll see y' darned fust! Ketch me lett'n' go!" was Abel's emphatic answer. "Yeou lay still, 'n' wait t'll that man comes tew."

He kept the hay-fork ready for action at the slightest sign of resistance.

Mr. Bernard, in the mean time, had been getting, first his senses, and then some few of his scattered wits, a little together.

"What is it?"—he said. "Who'shurt? What's happened?"

"Come along here 'z quick 'z y' ken," Abel answered, "'n' haalp me fix this fellah. Y' been hurt, y'rself, 'n' the' 's murder come pooty nigh happenin'."

Mr. Bernard heard the answer, but presently stared about and asked again, "Who's hurt? What's happened?"

"Y' 'r hurt, y'rself, I tell ye," said Abel; "'n' the' 's been a murder, pooty nigh."

Mr. Bernard felt something about his neck, and, putting his hands up, found the loop of the lasso, which he loosened, but did not think to slip over his head, in the confusion of his perceptions and thoughts. It was a wonder that it had not choked him, but he had fallen forward so as to slacken it.

By this time he was getting some notion of what he was about, and presently began looking round for his pistol, which had fallen. He found it lying near him, cocked it mechanically, and walked, somewhat unsteadily, towards the two men, who were keeping their position as still as if they were performing in a tableau.

“Quick, naow!” said Abel, who had heard the click of cocking the pistol, and saw that he held it in his hand, as he came towards him. “Gi’ me that pistil, and yeou fetch that ‘ere rope layin’ there. I ’ll have this here fella,h fixed ’n less ’n two minutes.”

Mr. Bernard did as Abel said,—stupidly and mechanically, for he was but half right as yet. Abel pointed the pistol at Dick’s head.

“Naow hold up y’r hands, yeou fellah,” he said, “‘n’ keep ’em up, while this man puts the rope mound y’r wrists.”

Dick felt himself helpless, and, rather than have his disabled arm roughly dealt with, held up his hands. Mr. Bernard did as Abel said; he was in a purely passive state, and obeyed orders like a child. Abel then secured the rope in a most thorough and satisfactory complication of twists and knots.

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"Naow get up, will ye?" he said; and the unfortunate Dick rose to his feet.

"Who's hurt? What's happened?" asked poor Mr. Bernard again, his memory having been completely jarred out of him for the time.

"Come, look here naow, yeou, don' Stan' askin' questions over 'n' over;—'t beats all! ha'n't I tol' y' a dozen times?"

As Abel spoke, he turned and looked at Mr. Bernard.

"Hullo! What 'n thunder's that 'ere raoun' y'r neck? Ketched ye 'ith a slippernoose, hey? Wal, if that a'n't the craowner! Hol' on a minute, Cap'n, 'n' I'll show ye what that 'ere halter's good for."

Abel slipped the noose over Mr. Bernard's head, and put it round the neck of the miserable Dick Veneer, who made no sign of resistance,—whether on account of the pain he was in, or from mere helplessness, or because he was waiting for some unguarded moment to escape,—since resistance seemed of no use.

"I 'm go'n' to kerry y' home," said Abel; "'T' th' ol Doctor, he's got a gre't cur'osity t' see ye. Jes' step along naow,—off that way, will ye?—'n' I Ill hol' on t' th' bridle, f' fear y' sh'd run away."

He took hold of the leather thong, but found that it was fastened at the other end to the saddle. This was too much for Abel.

"Wal, naow, yeou be a pooty chap to hev raound! A fellah's neck in a slippernoose at one eend of a halter, 'n' a hors on th' full spring at t' other eend!"

He looked at him from' head to foot as a naturalist inspects a new specimen. His clothes had suffered in his fall, especially on the leg which had been caught under the horse.

"Hullo! look o' there, naow! What's that 'ere stickin' aout o' y'r boot?"

It was nothing but the handle of an ugly knife, which Abel instantly relieved him of.

The party now took up the line of march for old Doctor Kittredge's house, Abel carrying the pistol and knife, and Mr. Bernard walking in silence, still half-stunned, holding the hay-fork, which Abel had thrust into his hand. It was all a dream to him as yet. He remembered the horseman riding at him, and his firing the pistol; but whether he was alive, and these walls around him belonged to the village of Rockland, or whether he had passed the dark river, and was in a suburb of the New Jerusalem, he could not as yet have told.

They were in the street where the Doctor's house was situated.

"I guess I'll fire off one o' these here berrils," said Abel.

He fired.

Presently there was a noise of opening windows, and the nocturnal head-dresses of Rockland flowered out of them like so many developments of the Nightblooming Cereus. White cotton caps and red bandanna handkerchiefs were the prevailing forms of efflorescence. The main point was that the village was waked up. The old Doctor always waked easily, from long habit, and was the first among those who looked out to see what had happened.



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"Why, Abel!" he called out, "what have you got there? and what 's all this noise about?"

"We've ketched the Portagee!" Abel answered, as laconically as the hero of Lake Erie, in his famous dispatch. "Go in there, you fellah!"

The prisoner was marched into the house, and the Doctor, who had bewitched his clothes upon him in a way that would have been miraculous in anybody but a physician, was down in presentable form as soon as if it had been a child in a fit that he was sent for.

"Richard Veneer!" the Doctor exclaimed. "What is the meaning of all this? Mr. Langdon, has anything happened to you?"

Mr. Bernard put his hand to his head.

"My mind is confused," he said. "I've had a fall.—Oh, yes!—wait a minute and it will all come back to me."

"Sit down, sit down," the Doctor said. "Abel will tell me about it. Slight concussion of the brain. Can't remember very well for an hour or two,—will come right by to-morrow."

"Been stunded," Abel said. "He can't tell nothin'."

Abel then proceeded to give a Napoleonic bulletin of the recent combat of cavalry and infantry and its results,—none slain, one captured.

The Doctor looked at the prisoner through his spectacles.

"What 's the matter with your shoulder, Venner?"

Dick answered sullenly, that he didn't know, fell on it when his horse came down. The Doctor examined it as carefully as he could through his clothes.

"Out of joint. Untie his hands, Abel"

By this time a small alarm had spread among the neighbors, and there was a circle around Dick, who glared about on the assembled honest people like a hawk with a broken wing.

When the Doctor said, "Untie his hands," the circle widened perceptibly.

"Isn't it a leetle rash to give him the use of his hands? I see there's females and children standin' near."

This was the remark of our old friend, Deacon Soper, who retired from the front row, as he spoke, behind a respectable-looking, but somewhat hastily dressed person of the defenceless sex, the female help of a neighboring household, accompanied by a boy, whose unsmoothed shock of hair looked like a last year's crow's-nest.

But Abel untied his hands, in spite of the Deacon's considerate remonstrance.

"Now," said the Doctor, "the first thing is to put the joint back."

"Stop," said Deacon Soper,—“stop a minute. Don't you think it will be safer—for the women-folks—jest to wait till mornin', afore you put that j'int into the socket?"

Colonel Sprowle, who had been called by a special messenger, spoke up at this moment.

"Let the women-folks and the deacons go home, if they're scared, and put the fellah's j'int in as quick as you like. I 'll resk him, j'int in or out."

"I want one of you to go straight down to Dudley Venner's with a message," the Doctor said. "I will have the young man's shoulder in quick enough."

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"Don't send that message!" said Dick, in a hoarse voice;—"do what you like with my arm, but don't send that message! Let me go,—I can walk, and I'll be off from this place. There's nobody hurt but myself. Damn the shoulder!—let me go! You shall never hear of me again!"

Mr. Bernard came forward.

"My friends," he said, "I am not injured,—seriously, at least. Nobody need complain against this man, if I don't. The Doctor will treat him like a human being, at any rate; and then, if he will go, let him. There are too many witnesses against him here for him to want to stay."

The Doctor, in the mean time, without saying a word to all this, had got a towel round the shoulder and chest and another round the arm, and had the bone replaced in a very few minutes.

"Abel, put Cassia into the new chaise," he said, quietly. "My friends and neighbors, leave this young man to me."

"Colonel Sprowle, you're a justice of the peace," said Deacon Soper, "and you know what the law says in cases like this. It a'n't so clear that it won't have to come afore the Grand Jury, whether we will or no."

"I guess we'll set that j'int to-morrow mornin'," said Colonel Sprowle,—which made a laugh at the Deacon's expense, and virtually settled the question.

"Now trust this young man in my care," said the old Doctor, "and go home and finish your naps. I knew him when he was a boy and I'll answer for it, he won't trouble you any more. The Dudley blood makes folks proud, I can tell you, whatever else they are."

The good people so respected and believed in the Doctor that they left the prisoner with him.

Presently, Cassia, the fast Morgan mare, came up to the front-door, with the wheels of the new, light chaise flashing behind her in the moonlight. The Doctor drove Dick forty miles at a stretch that night, out of the limits of the State.

"Do you want money?" he said, before he left him.

Dick told him the secret of his golden belt.

"Where shall I send your trunk after you from your uncle's?"

Dick gave him a direction to a seaport town to which he himself was going, to take passage for a port in South America.

“Good-bye, Richard,” said the Doctor. “Try to learn something from to-night’s lesson.”

The Southern impulses in Dick’s wild blood overcame him, and he kissed the old Doctor on both cheeks, crying as only the children of the sun can cry, after the first hours in the dewy morning of life. So Dick Venner disappears from this story. An hour after dawn, Cassia pointed her fine ears homeward, and struck into her square, honest trot, as if she had not been doing anything more than her duty during her four hours’ stretch of the last night.

Abel was not in the habit of questioning the Doctor’s decisions.

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"It's all right," he said to Mr. Bernard. "The fellah 's Squire Venner's relation, anyhaow. Don't you want to wait here, jest a little while, till I come back? The's a consid'able nice saddle 'n' bridle on a dead boss that's layin' daown there in the road 'n' I guess the' a'n't no use in lettin' on 'em spite,—so I'll jest step aout 'n' fetch 'em along. I kind o' calc'late 't won't pay to take the cretur's shoes 'n' hide off to-night,—'n' the' won't be much iron on that hose's huffs an haour after daylight, I'll bate ye a quarter."

"I'll walk along with you," said Mr. Bernard; "I feel as if I could get along well enough now."

So they set off together. There was a little crowd round the dead mustang already, principally consisting of neighbors who had adjourned from the Doctor's house to see the scene of the late adventure. In addition to these, however, the assembly was honored by the presence of Mr. Principal Silas Peckham, who had been called from his slumbers by a message that Master Langdon was shot through the head by a highway-robber, but had learned a true version of the story by this time. His voice was at that moment heard above the rest,—sharp, but thin, like bad cider-vinegar.

"I take charge of that property, I say. Master Langdon 's actin' under my orders, and I claim that hoss and all that's on him. Hiram! jest slip off that saddle and bridle, and carry 'em up to the Institoot, and bring down a pair of pinchers and a file,—and—stop—fetch a pair of shears, too; there's hosshair enough in that mane and tail to stuff a bolster with."

"You let that hoss alone!" spoke up Colonel Sprowle. "When a fellah goes out huntin' and shoots a squirrel, do you think he's go'n' to let another fellah pick him up and kerry him off? Not if he's got a double-berril gun, and t'other berril ha'n't been fired off yet! I should like to see the mahn that'll take off that seddle 'n' bridle, excep' the one th't hez a fair right to the whole concern!"

Hiram was from one of the lean streaks in New Hampshire, and, not being overfed in Mr. Silas Peckham's kitchen, was somewhat wanting in stamina, as well as in stomach, for so doubtful an enterprise, as undertaking to carry out his employer's orders in the face of the Colonel's defiance.

Just then Mr. Bernard and Abel came up together. "Here they be," said the Colonel. "Stan' beck, gentlemen!"

Mr. Bernard, who was pale and still a little confused, but gradually becoming more like himself, stood and looked in silence for a moment.

All his thoughts seemed to be clearing themselves in this interval. He took in the whole series of incidents: his own frightful risk; the strange, instinctive, nay, Providential impulse, which had led him so suddenly to do the one only thing which could possibly

have saved him; the sudden appearance of the Doctor's man, but for which he might yet have been lost; and the discomfiture and capture of his dangerous enemy.

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It was all past now, and a feeling of pity rose in Mr. Bernard's heart.

"He loved that horse, no doubt," he said,—“and no wonder. A beautiful, wild—looking creature! Take off those things that are on him, Abel, and have them carried to Mr. Dudley Veneer's. If he does not want them, you may keep them yourself, for all that I have to say. One thing more. I hope nobody will lift his hand against this noble creature to mutilate him in any way. After you have taken off the saddle and bridle, Abel, bury him just as he is. Under that old beech-tree will be a good place. You'll see to it,—won't you, Abel?”

Abel nodded assent, and Mr. Bernard returned to the Institute, threw himself in his clothes on the bed, and slept like one who is heavy with wine.

Following Mr. Bernard's wishes, Abel at once took off the high-peaked saddle and the richly ornamented bridle from the mustang. Then, with the aid of two or three others, he removed him to the place indicated. Spades and shovels were soon procured, and before the moon had set, the wild horse of the Pampas was at rest under the turf at the wayside, in the far village among the hills of New England.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The news reaches the Dudley mansion.

Early the next morning Abel Stebbins made his appearance at Dudley Veneer's, and requested to see the maan o' the haouse ababout somethin' o' consequence. Mr. Veneer sent word that the messenger should wait below, and presently appeared in the study, where Abel was making himself at home, as is the wont of the republican citizen, when he hides the purple of empire beneath the apron of domestic service.

"Good mornin', Squire!" said Abel, as Mr. Venner entered. "My name's Stebbins, 'n' I'm stoppin' f'r a spell 'ith of Doctor Kittredge."

"Well, Stebbins," said Mr. Dudley Veneer, "have you brought any special message from the Doctor?"

"Y' ha'n't heerd nothin' ababout it, Squire, d' ye mean t' say?" said Abel,—beginning to suspect that he was the first to bring the news of last evening's events.

"About what?" asked Mr. Veneer, with some interest.

"Dew tell, naow! Waal, that beats all! Why, that 'ere Portagee relation o' yourn 'z been tryin' t' ketch a fellah 'n a slippernoose, 'n' got ketched himself,—that's all. Y' ha'n't heerd noth'n' ababout it?"

“Sit down,” said Mr. Dudley Veneer, calmly, “and tell me all you have to say.”

So Abel sat down and gave him an account of the events of the last evening. It was a strange and terrible surprise to Dudley Veneer to find that his nephew, who had been an inmate of his house and the companion of his daughter, was to all intents and purposes guilty of the gravest of crimes. But the first shock was no sooner over than he began to think what effect the news would have on Elsie. He imagined that there was a kind of friendly feeling between them, and he feared some crisis would be provoked in his daughter’s mental condition by the discovery. He would wait, however, until she came from her chamber, before disturbing her with the evil tidings.

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Abel did not forget his message with reference to the equipments of the dead mustang.

"The' was some things on the hoss, Squire, that the man he ketched said he did n' care no gre't abaout; but perhaps you'd like to have 'em fetched to the mansion-haouse. Ef y' did n' care abaout 'em, though, I should n' min' keepin' on 'em; they might come handy some time or 'nother; they say, holt on t' anything for ten year 'n' there 'll be some kin' o' use for 't."

"Keep everything," said Dudley Veneer. "I don't want to see anything belonging to that young man."

So Abel nodded to Mr. Veneer, and left the study to find some of the men about the stable to tell and talk over with them the events of the last evening. He presently came upon Elbridge, chief of the equine department, and driver of the family-coach.

"Good mornin', Abe," said Elbridge. "What's fetched y' daown here so all-fired airly?"

"You're a darned pooty lot daown here, you be!"

Abel answered. "Better keep your Portagees t' home nex' time, ketchin' folks 'ith slippernooses raoun' their necks, 'n' kerryin' knives 'n their boots!"

"What 'r' you jawin' abaout?" Elbridge said, looking up to see if he was in earnest, and what he meant.

"Jawin' abaout? You'll find aout'z soon 'z y' go into that 'ere stable o' yourn! Y' won't curry that 'ere long-tailed black hoss no more; 'n' y' won't set y'r eyes on the fellah that rid him, ag'in, in a hurry!"

Elbridge walked straight to the stable, without saying a word, found the door unlocked, and went in.

"Th' critter's gone, sure enough!" he said. "Glad on 't! The darndest, kickin'est, bitin'est beast th't ever I see, 'r ever wan' t' see ag'in! Good reddance! Don' wan' no snappin'-turkles in my stable! Whar's the man gone th't brought the critter?"

"Whar he's gone? Guess y' better go 'n ask my ol man; he kerried him off lass' night; 'n' when he comes back, mebbe he 'll tell ye whar he's gone tew!"

By this time Elbridge had found out that Abel was in earnest, and had something to tell. He looked at the litter in the mustang's stall, then at the crib.

"Ha'n't eat b't haalf his feed. Ha'n't been daown on his straw. Must ha' been took aout somewhere abaout ten 'r 'levee o'clock. I know that 'ere critter's ways. The fellah's had



him aout nights afore; b't I never thought nothin' o' no mischief. He 's a kin' o' haalf Injin. What is 't the chap's been a-doin' on? Tell 's all abaout it."

Abel sat down on a meal-chest, picked up a straw and put it into his mouth. Elbridge sat down at the other end, pulled out his jack-knife, opened the penknife-blade, and began sticking it into the lid of the meal-chest. The Doctor's man had a story to tell, and he meant to get all the enjoyment out of it. So he told it with every luxury of circumstance. Mr. Veneer's man heard it

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all with open mouth. No listener in the gardens of Stamboul could have found more rapture in a tale heard amidst the perfume of roses and the voices of birds and tinkling of fountains than Elbridge in following Abel's narrative, as they sat there in the aromatic ammoniacal atmosphere of the stable, the grinding of the horses' jaws keeping evenly on through it all, with now and then the interruption of a stamping hoof, and at intervals a ringing crow from the barn-yard.

Elbridge stopped a minute to think, after Abel had finished.

"Who's took care o' them things that was on the hoss?" he said, gravely.

"Waal, Langden, he seemed to kin 'o' think I'd ought to have 'em,—'n' the Squire; he did n' seem to have no 'bjection; 'n' so,—waal, I calc'late I sh'll jes' holt on to 'em myself; they a'n't good f' r much, but they're curious t' keep t' look at."

Mr. Veneer's man did not appear much gratified by this arrangement, especially as he had a shrewd suspicion that some of the ornaments of the bridle were of precious metal, having made occasional examinations of them with the edge of a file. But he did not see exactly what to do about it, except to get them from Abel in the way of bargain.

"Waal, no,—they a'n't good for much 'xcep' to look at. 'F y' ever rid on that seddle once, y' would n' try it ag'in, very spry,—not 'f y' c'd haalp y'rsaalf.

"I tried it,—darned 'f I sot daown f'r th' nex' week,—eat all my victuals stan'in'. I sh'd like t' hev them things wal enough to heng up 'n the stable; 'f y' want t' trade some day, fetch 'em along daown."

Abel rather expected that Elbridge would have laid claim to the saddle and bridle on the strength of some promise or other presumptive title, and thought himself lucky to get off with only offering to think abaout tradin'.

When Elbridge returned to the house, he found the family in a state of great excitement. Mr. Venner had told Old Sophy, and she had informed the other servants. Everybody knew what had happened, excepting Elsie. Her father had charged them all to say nothing about it to her; he would tell her, when she came down.

He heard her step at last,—alight, gliding step,—so light that her coming was often unheard, except by those who perceived the faint rustle that went with it. She was paler than common this morning, as she came into her father's study.

After a few words of salutation, he said quietly, "Elsie, my dear, your cousin Richard has left us."

She grew still paler, as she asked,

“Is he dead?”

Dudley Venner started to see the expression with which Elsie put this question.

“He is living,—but dead to us from this day forward,” said her father.

He proceeded to tell her, in a general way, the story he had just heard from Abel. There could be no doubting it;—he remembered him as the Doctor’s man; and as Abel had seen all with his own eyes, as Dick’s chamber, when unlocked with a spare key, was found empty, and his bed had not been slept in, he accepted the whole account as true.

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When he told of Dick's attempt on the young schoolmaster, ("You know Mr. Langdon very well, Elsie,—a perfectly inoffensive young man, as I understand,") Elsie turned her face away and slid along by the wall to the window which looked out on the little grass-plot with the white stone standing in it. Her father could not see her face, but he knew by her movements that her dangerous mood was on her. When she heard the sequel of the story, the discomfiture and capture of Dick, she turned round for an instant, with a look of contempt and of something like triumph upon her face. Her father saw that her cousin had become odious to her: He knew well, by every change of her countenance, by her movements, by every varying curve of her graceful figure, the transitions from passion to repose, from fierce excitement to the dull languor which often succeeded her threatening paroxysms.

She remained looking out at the window. A group of white fan-tailed pigeons had lighted on the green plot before it and clustered about one of their companions who lay on his back, fluttering in a strange way, with outspread wings and twitching feet. Elsie uttered a faint cry; these were her special favorites and often fed from her hand. She threw open the long window, sprang out, caught up the white fantail, and held it to her bosom. The bird stretched himself out, and then lay still, with open eyes, lifeless. She looked at him a moment, and, sliding in through the open window and through the study, sought her own apartment, where she locked herself in, and began to sob and moan like those that weep. But the gracious solace of tears seemed to be denied her, and her grief, like her anger, was a dull ache, longing, like that, to finish itself with a fierce paroxysm, but wanting its natural outlet.

This seemingly trifling incident of the death of her favorite appeared to change all the current of her thought. Whether it were the sight of the dying bird, or the thought that her own agency might have been concerned in it, or some deeper grief, which took this occasion to declare itself,—some dark remorse or hopeless longing,—whatever it might be, there was an unwonted tumult in her soul. To whom should she go in her vague misery? Only to Him who knows all His creatures' sorrows, and listens to the faintest human cry. She knelt, as she had been taught to kneel from her childhood, and tried to pray. But her thoughts refused to flow in the language of supplication. She could not plead for herself as other women plead in their hours of anguish. She rose like one who should stoop to drink, and find dust in the place of water. Partly from restlessness, partly from an attraction she hardly avowed to herself, she followed her usual habit and strolled listlessly along to the school.

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Of course everybody at the Institute was full of the terrible adventure of the preceding evening. Mr. Bernard felt poorly enough; but he had made it a point to show himself the next morning, as if nothing had happened. Helen Darley knew nothing of it all until she had risen, when the gossipy matron of the establishment made her acquainted with all its details, embellished with such additional ornamental appendages as it had caught up in transmission from lip to lip. She did not love to betray her sensibilities, but she was pale and tremulous and very nearly tearful when Mr. Bernard entered the sitting-room, showing on his features traces of the violent shock he had received and the heavy slumber from which he had risen with throbbing brows. What the poor girl's impulse was, on seeing him, we need not inquire too curiously. If he had been her own brother, she would have kissed him and cried on his neck; but something held her back. There is no galvanism in kiss-your-brother; it is copper against copper: but alien bloods develop strange currents, when they flow close to each other, with only the films that cover lip and cheek between them. Mr. Bernard, as some of us may remember, violated the proprieties and laid himself open to reproach by his enterprise with a bouncing village-girl, to whose rosy cheek an honest smack was not probably an absolute novelty. He made it all up by his discretion and good behavior now. He saw by Helen's moist eye and trembling lip that her woman's heart was off its guard, and he knew, by the infallible instinct of sex, that he should be forgiven, if he thanked her for her sisterly sympathies in the most natural way,—expressive, and at the same time economical of breath and utterance. He would not give a false look to their friendship by any such demonstration. Helen was a little older than himself, but the aureole of young womanhood had not yet begun to fade from around her. She was surrounded by that enchanted atmosphere into which the girl walks with dreamy eyes, and out of which the woman passes with a story written on her forehead. Some people think very little of these refinements; they have not studied magnetism and the law of the square of the distance.

So Mr. Bernard thanked Helen for her interest without the aid of the twenty-seventh letter of the alphabet,—the love labial,—the limping consonant which it takes two to speak plain. Indeed, he scarcely let her say a word, at first; for he saw that it was hard for her to conceal her emotion. No wonder; he had come within a hair's-breadth of losing his life, and he had been a very kind friend and a very dear companion to her.

There were some curious spiritual experiences connected with his last evening's adventure which were working very strongly in his mind. It was borne in upon him irresistibly that he had been dead since he had seen Helen,—as dead as the son of the Widow of Nain before the bier was touched and he sat up and began to speak. There was an interval between two conscious moments which appeared to him like a temporary annihilation, and the thoughts it suggested were worrying him with strange perplexities.

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He remembered seeing the dark figure on horseback rise in the saddle and something leap from its hand. He remembered the thrill he felt as the coil settled on his shoulders, and the sudden impulse which led him to fire as he did. With the report of the pistol all became blank, until he found himself in a strange, bewildered state, groping about for the weapon, which he had a vague consciousness of having dropped. But, according to Abel's account, there must have been an interval of some minutes between these recollections, and he could not help asking, Where was the mind, the soul, the thinking principle, all this time?

A man is stunned by a blow with a stick on the head. He becomes unconscious. Another man gets a harder blow on the head from a bigger stick, and it kills him. Does he become unconscious, too? If so, when does he come to his consciousness? The man who has had a slight or moderate blow comes to himself when the immediate shock passes off and the organs begin to work again, or when a bit of the skull is pried up, if that happens to be broken. Suppose the blow is hard enough to spoil the brain and stop the play of the organs, what happens then?

A British captain was struck by a cannon-ball on the head, just as he was giving an order, at the Battle of the Nile. Fifteen months afterwards he was trephined at Greenwich Hospital, having been insensible all that time. Immediately after the operation his consciousness returned, and he at once began carrying out the order he was giving when the shot struck him. Suppose he had never been trephined, when would his consciousness have returned? When his breath ceased and his heart stopped beating?

When Mr. Bernard said to Helen, "I have been dead since I saw you," it startled her not a little; for his expression was that of perfect good faith, and she feared that his mind was disordered. When he explained, not as has been done just now, at length, but in a hurried, imperfect way, the meaning of his strange assertion, and the fearful Sadduceeisms which it had suggested to his mind, she looked troubled at first, and then thoughtful. She did not feel able to answer all the difficulties he raised, but she met them with that faith which is the strength as well as the weakness of women,—which makes them weak in the hands of man, but strong in the presence of the Unseen.

"It is a strange experience," she said; "but I once had something like it. I fainted, and lost some five or ten minutes out of my life, as much as if I had been dead. But when I came to myself, I was the same person every way, in my recollections and character. So I suppose that loss of consciousness is not death. And if I was born out of unconsciousness into infancy with many family-traits of mind and body, I can believe, from my own reason, even without help from Revelation, that I shall be born again out of the unconsciousness of death with my individual traits of mind and body. If death is, as it should seem to be, a loss of consciousness, that does not shake my faith; for I have been put into a body once already to fit me for living here, and I hope to be in some way

fitted after this life to enjoy a better one. But it is all trust in God and in his Word. These are enough for me; I hope they are for you.”

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Helen was a minister's daughter, and familiar from her childhood with this class of questions, especially with all the doubts and perplexities which are sure to assail every thinking child bred in any inorganic or not thoroughly vitalized faith,—as is too often the case with the children of professional theologians. The kind of discipline they are subjected to is like that of the Flat-Head Indian papposes. At five or ten or fifteen years old they put their hands up to their foreheads and ask, What are they strapping down my brains in this way for? So they tear off the sacred bandages of the great Flat-Head tribe, and there follows a mighty rush of blood to the long-compressed region. This accounts, in the most lucid manner, for those sudden freaks with which certain children of this class astonish their worthy parents at the period of life when they are growing fast, and, the frontal pressure beginning to be felt as something intolerable, they tear off the holy compresses.

The hour for school came, and they went to the great hall for study. It would not have occurred to Mr. Silas Peckham to ask his assistant whether he felt well enough to attend to his duties; and Mr. Bernard chose to be at his post. A little headache and confusion were all that remained of his symptoms.

Later, in the course of the forenoon, Elsie Venner came and took her place. The girls all stared at her—naturally enough; for it was hardly to have been expected that she would show herself, after such an event in the household to which she belonged. Her expression was somewhat peculiar, and, of course, was attributed to the shock her feelings had undergone on hearing of the crime attempted by her cousin and daily companion. When she was looking on her book, or on any indifferent object, her countenance betrayed some inward disturbance, which knitted her dark brows, and seemed to throw a deeper shadow over her features. But, from time to time, she would lift her eyes toward Mr. Bernard, and let them rest upon him, without a thought, seemingly, that she herself was the subject of observation or remark. Then they seemed to lose their cold glitter, and soften into a strange, dreamy tenderness. The deep instincts of womanhood were striving to grope their way to the surface of her being through all the alien influences which overlaid them. She could be secret and cunning in working out any of her dangerous impulses, but she did not know how to mask the unwonted feeling which fixed her eyes and her thoughts upon the only person who had ever reached the spring of her hidden sympathies.

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The girls all looked at Elsie, whenever they could steal a glance unperceived, and many of them were struck with this singular expression her features wore. They had long whispered it around among each other that she had a liking for the master; but there were too many of them of whom something like this could be said, to make it very remarkable. Now, however, when so many little hearts were fluttering at the thought of the peril through which the handsome young master had so recently passed, they were more alive than ever to the supposed relation between him and the dark school-girl. Some had supposed there was a mutual attachment between them; there was a story that they were secretly betrothed, in accordance with the rumor which had been current in the village. At any rate, some conflict was going on in that still, remote, clouded soul, and all the girls who looked upon her face were impressed and awed as they had never been before by the shadows that passed over it.

One of these girls was more strongly arrested by Elsie's look than the others. This was a delicate, pallid creature, with a high forehead, and wide-open pupils, which looked as if they could take in all the shapes that flit in what, to common eyes, is darkness,—a girl said to be clairvoyant under certain influences. In the recess, as it was called, or interval of suspended studies in the middle of the forenoon, this girl carried her autograph-book,—for she had one of those indispensable appendages of the boarding-school miss of every degree,—and asked Elsie to write her name in it. She had an irresistible feeling, that, sooner or later, and perhaps very soon, there would attach an unusual interest to this autograph. Elsie took the pen and wrote, in her sharp Italian hand,

Elsie Venner, Infelix.

It was a remembrance, doubtless, of the forlorn queen of the “AENEID”; but its coming to her thought in this way confirmed the sensitive school-girl in her fears for Elsie, and she let fall a tear upon the page before she closed it.

Of course, the keen and practised observation of Helen Darley could not fail to notice the change of Elsie's manner and expression. She had long seen that she was attracted to the young master, and had thought, as the old Doctor did, that any impression which acted upon her affections might be the means of awakening a new life in her singularly isolated nature. Now, however, the concentration of the poor girl's thoughts upon the one object which had had power to reach her deeper sensibilities was so painfully revealed in her features, that Helen began to fear once more, lest Mr. Bernard, in escaping the treacherous violence of an assassin, had been left to the equally dangerous consequences of a violent, engrossing passion in the breast of a young creature whose love it would be ruin to admit and might be deadly to reject. She knew her own heart too well to fear that any jealousy might mingle with her new apprehensions. It

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was understood between Bernard and Helen that they were too good friends to tamper with the silences and edging proximities of lovemaking. She knew, too, the simply human, not masculine, interest which Mr. Bernard took in Elsie; he had been frank with Helen, and more than satisfied her that with all the pity and sympathy which overflowed his soul, when he thought of the stricken girl, there mingled not one drop of such love as a youth may feel for a maiden.

It may help the reader to gain some understanding of the anomalous nature of Elsie Veneer, if we look with Helen into Mr. Bernard's opinions and feelings with reference to her, as they had shaped themselves in his consciousness at the period of which we are speaking.

At first he had been impressed by her wild beauty, and the contrast of all her looks and ways with those of the girls around her. Presently a sense of some ill-defined personal element, which half-attracted and half-repelled those who looked upon her, and especially those on whom she looked, began to make itself obvious to him, as he soon found it was painfully sensible to his more susceptible companion, the lady-teacher. It was not merely in the cold light of her diamond eyes, but in all her movements, in her graceful postures as she sat, in her costume, and, he sometimes thought, even in her speech, that this obscure and exceptional character betrayed itself. When Helen had said, that, if they were living in times when human beings were subject to possession, she should have thought there was something not human about Elsie, it struck an unsuspected vein of thought in his own mind, which he hated to put in words, but which was continually trying to articulate itself among the dumb thoughts which lie under the perpetual stream of mental whispers.

Mr. Bernard's professional training had made him slow to accept marvellous stories and many forms of superstition. Yet, as a man of science, he well knew that just on the verge of the demonstrable facts of physics and physiology there is a nebulous border-land which what is called "common sense" perhaps does wisely not to enter, but which uncommon sense, or the fine apprehension of privileged intelligences, may cautiously explore, and in so doing find itself behind the scenes which make up for the gazing world the show which is called Nature.

It was with something of this finer perception, perhaps with some degree of imaginative exaltation, that he set himself to solving the problem of Elsie's influence to attract and repel those around her. His letter already submitted to the reader hints in what direction his thoughts were disposed to turn. Here was a magnificent organization, superb in vigorous womanhood, with a beauty such as never comes but after generations of culture; yet through all this rich nature there ran some alien current of influence, sinuous and dark, as when a clouded streak seams the white marble of a perfect statue.

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It would be needless to repeat the particular suggestions which had come into his mind, as they must probably have come into that of the reader who has noted the singularities of Elsie's tastes and personal traits. The images which certain poets had dreamed of seemed to have become a reality before his own eyes. Then came that unexplained adventure of The Mountain,—almost like a dream in recollection, yet assuredly real in some of its main incidents,—with all that it revealed or hinted. This girl did not fear to visit the dreaded region, where danger lurked in every nook and beneath every tuft of leaves. Did the tenants of the fatal ledge recognize some mysterious affinity which made them tributary to the cold glitter of her diamond eyes? Was she from her birth one of those frightful children, such as he had read about, and the Professor had told him of, who form unnatural friendships with cold, writhing ophidians? There was no need of so unwelcome a thought as this; she had drawn him away from the dark opening in the rock at the moment when he seemed to be threatened by one of its malignant denizens; that was all he could be sure of; the counter-fascination might have been a dream, a fancy, a coincidence. All wonderful things soon grow doubtful in our own minds, as do even common events, if great interests prove suddenly to attach to their truth or falsehood.

—I, who am telling of these occurrences, saw a friend in the great city, on the morning of a most memorable disaster, hours after the time when the train which carried its victims to their doom had left. I talked with him, and was for some minutes, at least, in his company. When I reached home, I found that the story had gone before that he was among the lost, and I alone could contradict it to his weeping friends and relatives. I did contradict it; but, alas! I began soon to doubt myself, penetrated by the contagion of their solicitude; my recollection began to question itself; the order of events became dislocated; and when I heard that he had reached home in safety, the relief was almost as great to me as to those who had expected to see their own brother's face no more.

Mr. Bernard was disposed, then, not to accept the thought of any odious personal relationship of the kind which had suggested itself to him when he wrote the letter referred to. That the girl had something of the feral nature, her wild, lawless rambles in forbidden and blasted regions of The Mountain at all hours, her familiarity with the lonely haunts where any other human foot was so rarely seen, proved clearly enough. But the more he thought of all her strange instincts and modes of being, the more he became convinced that whatever alien impulse swayed her will and modulated or diverted or displaced her affections came from some impression that reached far back into the past, before the days when the faithful Old Sophy had rocked her in the cradle. He believed that she had brought her ruling tendency, whatever it was, into the world with her.

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When the school was over and the girls had all gone, Helen lingered in the schoolroom to speak with Mr. Bernard.

“Did you remark Elsie’s ways this forenoon?” she said.

“No, not particularly; I have not noticed anything as sharply as I commonly do; my head has been a little queer, and I have been thinking over what we were talking about, and how near I came to solving the great problem which every day makes clear to such multitudes of people. What about Elsie?”

“Bernard, her liking for you is growing into a passion. I have studied girls for a long while, and I know the difference between their passing fancies and their real emotions. I told you, you remember, that Rosa would have to leave us; we barely missed a scene, I think, if not a whole tragedy, by her going at the right moment. But Elsie is infinitely more dangerous to herself and others. Women’s love is fierce enough, if it once gets the mastery of them, always; but this poor girl does not know what to do with a passion.”

Mr. Bernard had never told Helen the story of the flower in his Virgil, or that other adventure—which he would have felt awkwardly to refer to; but it had been perfectly understood between them that Elsie showed in her own singular way a well-marked partiality for the young master.

“Why don’t they take her away from the school, if she is in such a strange, excitable state?” said Mr. Bernard.

“I believe they are afraid of her,” Helen answered. “It is just one of those cases that are ten thousand thousand times worse than insanity. I don’t think from what I hear, that her father has ever given up hoping that she will outgrow her peculiarities. Oh, these peculiar children for whom parents go on hoping every morning and despairing every night! If I could tell you half that mothers have told me, you would feel that the worst of all diseases of the moral sense and the will are those which all the Bedlams turn away from their doors as not being cases of insanity!”

“Do you think her father has treated her judiciously?” said Mr. Bernard.

“I think,” said Helen, with a little hesitation, which Mr. Bernard did not happen to notice, —“I think he has been very kind and indulgent, and I do not know that he could have treated her otherwise with a better chance of success.”

“He must of course be fond of her,” Mr. Bernard said; “there is nothing else in the world for him to love.”

Helen dropped a book she held in her hand, and, stooping to pick it up, the blood rushed into her cheeks.

"It is getting late," she said; "you must not stay any longer in this close schoolroom. Pray, go and get a little fresh air before dinner-time."

CHAPTER XXVII.

A soul in distress.

The events told in the last two chapters had taken place toward the close of the week. On Saturday evening the Reverend Chauncy Fairweather received a note which was left at his door by an unknown person who departed without saying a word. Its words were these: "One who is in distress of mind requests the prayers of this congregation that God would be pleased to look in mercy upon the soul that he has afflicted."

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There was nothing to show from whom the note came, or the sex or age or special source of spiritual discomfort or anxiety of the writer. The handwriting was delicate and might well be a woman's. The clergyman was not aware of any particular affliction among his parishioners which was likely to be made the subject of a request of this kind. Surely neither of the Venners would advertise the attempted crime of their relative in this way. But who else was there? The more he thought about it, the more it puzzled him, and as he did not like to pray in the dark, without knowing for whom he was praying, he could think of nothing better than to step into old Doctor Kittredge's and see what he had to say about it.

The old Doctor was sitting alone in his study when the Reverend Mr. Fairweather was ushered in. He received his visitor very pleasantly, expecting, as a matter of course, that he would begin with some new grievance, dyspeptic, neuralgic, bronchitic, or other. The minister, however, began with questioning the old Doctor about the sequel of the other night's adventure; for he was already getting a little Jesuitical, and kept back the object of his visit until it should come up as if accidentally in the course of conversation.

"It was a pretty bold thing to go off alone with that reprobate, as you did," said the minister.

"I don't know what there was bold about it," the Doctor answered. "All he wanted was to get away. He was not quite a reprobate, you see; he didn't like the thought of disgracing his family or facing his uncle. I think he was ashamed to see his cousin, too, after what he had done."

"Did he talk with you on the way?"

"Not much. For half an hour or so he did n't speak a word. Then he asked where I was driving him. I told him, and he seemed to be surprised into a sort of grateful feeling. Bad enough, no doubt, but might be worse. Has some humanity left in him yet. Let him go. God can judge him,—I can't."

"You are too charitable, Doctor," the minister said. "I condemn him just as if he had carried out his project, which, they say, was to make it appear as if the schoolmaster had committed suicide. That's what people think the rope found by him was for. He has saved his neck,—but his soul is a lost one, I am afraid, beyond question."

"I can't judge men's souls," the Doctor said. "I can judge their acts, and hold them responsible for those,—but I don't know much about their souls. If you or I had found our soul in a half-breed body; and been turned loose to run among the Indians, we might have been playing just such tricks as this fellow has been trying. What if you or I had inherited all the tendencies that were born with his cousin Elsie?"

“Oh, that reminds me,”—the minister said, in a sudden way,—“I have received a note, which I am requested to read from the pulpit tomorrow. I wish you would just have the kindness to look at it and see where you think it came from.”

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The Doctor examined it carefully. It was a woman's or girl's note, he thought. Might come from one of the school-girls who was anxious about her spiritual condition. Handwriting was disguised; looked a little like Elsie Veneer's, but not characteristic enough to make it certain. It would be a new thing, if she had asked public prayers for herself, and a very favorable indication of a change in her singular moral nature. It was just possible Elsie might have sent that note. Nobody could foretell her actions. It would be well to see the girl and find out whether any unusual impression had been produced on her mind by the recent occurrence or by any other cause.

The Reverend Mr. Fairweather folded the note and put it into his pocket.

"I have been a good deal exercised in mind lately, myself," he said.

The old Doctor looked at him through his spectacles, and said, in his usual professional tone,

"Put out your tongue."

The minister obeyed him in that feeble way common with persons of weak character,—for people differ as much in their mode of performing this trifling act as Gideon's soldiers in their way of drinking at the brook. The Doctor took his hand and placed a finger mechanically on his wrist.

"It is more spiritual, I think, than bodily," said the Reverend Mr. Fairweather.

"Is your appetite as good as usual?" the Doctor asked.

"Pretty good," the minister answered; "but my sleep, my sleep, Doctor,—I am greatly troubled at night with lying awake and thinking of my future, I am not at ease in mind."

He looked round at all the doors, to be sure they were shut, and moved his chair up close to the Doctor's.

"You do not know the mental trials I have been going through for the last few months."

"I think I do," the old Doctor said. "You want to get out of the new church into the old one, don't you?"

The minister blushed deeply; he thought he had been going on in a very quiet way, and that nobody suspected his secret. As the old Doctor was his counsellor in sickness, and almost everybody's confidant in trouble, he had intended to impart cautiously to him some hints of the change of sentiments through which he had been passing. He was too late with his information, it appeared, and there was nothing to be done but to throw himself on the Doctor's good sense and kindness, which everybody knew, and get what

hints he could from him as to the practical course he should pursue. He began, after an awkward pause,

“You would not have me stay in a communion which I feel to be alien to the true church, would you?”

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"Have you stay, my friend?" said the Doctor, with a pleasant, friendly look,—“have you stay? Not a month, nor a week, nor a day, if I could help it. You have got into the wrong pulpit, and I have known it from the first. The sooner you go where you belong, the better. And I'm very glad you don't mean to stop half-way. Don't you know you've always come to me when you've been dyspeptic or sick anyhow, and wanted to put yourself wholly into my hands, so that I might order you like a child just what to do and what to take? That 's exactly what you want in religion. I don't blame you for it. You never liked to take the responsibility of your own body; I don't see why you should want to have the charge of your own soul. But I'm glad you're going to the Old Mother of all. You wouldn't have been contented short of that.”

The Reverend Mr. Fairweather breathed with more freedom. The Doctor saw into his soul through those awful spectacles of his,—into it and beyond it, as one sees through a thin fog. But it was with a real human kindness, after all. He felt like a child before a strong man; but the strong man looked on him with a father's indulgence. Many and many a time, when he had come desponding and bemoaning himself on account of some contemptible bodily infirmity, the old Doctor had looked at him through his spectacles, listened patiently while he told his ailments, and then, in his large parental way, given him a few words of wholesome advice, and cheered him up so that he went off with a light heart, thinking that the heaven he was so much afraid of was not so very near, after all. It was the same thing now. He felt, as feeble natures always do in the presence of strong ones, overmastered, circumscribed, shut in, humbled; but yet it seemed as if the old Doctor did not despise him any more for what he considered weakness of mind than he used to despise him when he complained of his nerves or his digestion.

Men who see into their neighbors are very apt to be contemptuous; but men who see through them find something lying behind every human soul which it is not for them to sit in judgment on, or to attempt to sneer out of the order of God's manifold universe.

Little as the Doctor had said out of which comfort could be extracted, his genial manner had something grateful in it. A film of gratitude came over the poor man's cloudy, uncertain eye, and a look of tremulous relief and satisfaction played about his weak mouth. He was gravitating to the majority, where he hoped to find “rest”; but he was dreadfully sensitive to the opinions of the minority he was on the point of leaving.

The old Doctor saw plainly enough what was going on in his mind.

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"I sha'n't quarrel with you," he said,—“you know that very well; but you mustn't quarrel with me, if I talk honestly with you; it isn't everybody that will take the trouble. You flatter yourself that you will make a good many enemies by leaving your old communion. Not so many as you think. This is the way the common sort of people will talk:—'You have got your ticket to the feast of life, as much as any other man that ever lived.

Protestantism says,—“Help yourself; here's a clean plate, and a knife and fork of your own, and plenty of fresh dishes to choose from.” The Old Mother says,—“Give me your ticket, my dear, and I'll feed you with my gold spoon off these beautiful old wooden trenchers. Such nice bits as those good old gentlemen have left for you!” There is no quarrelling with a man who prefers broken victuals. That's what the rougher sort will say; and then, where one scolds, ten will laugh. But, mind you, I don't either scold or laugh. I don't feel sure that you could very well have helped doing what you will soon do. You know you were never easy without some medicine to take when you felt ill in body. I'm afraid I've given you trashy stuff sometimes, just to keep you quiet. Now, let me tell you, there is just the same difference in spiritual patients that there is in bodily ones. One set believes in wholesome ways of living, and another must have a great list of specifics for all the soul's complaints. You belong with the last, and got accidentally shuffled in with the others.”

The minister smiled faintly, but did not reply. Of course, he considered that way of talking as the result of the Doctor's professional training. It would not have been worth while to take offence at his plain speech, if he had been so disposed; for he might wish to consult him the next day as to “what he should take” for his dyspepsia or his neuralgia.

He left the Doctor with a hollow feeling at the bottom of his soul, as if a good piece of his manhood had been scooped out of him. His hollow aching did not explain itself in words, but it grumbled and worried down among the unshaped thoughts which lie beneath them. He knew that he had been trying to reason himself out of his birthright of reason. He knew that the inspiration which gave him understanding was losing its throne in his intelligence, and the almighty Majority-Vote was proclaiming itself in its stead. He knew that the great primal truths, which each successive revelation only confirmed, were fast becoming hidden beneath the mechanical forms of thought, which, as with all new converts, engrossed so large a share of his attention. The “peace,” the “rest,” which he had purchased were dearly bought to one who had been trained to the arms of thought, and whose noble privilege it might have been to live in perpetual warfare for the advancing truth which the next generation will claim as the legacy of the present.

The Reverend Mr. Fairweather was getting careless about his sermons. He must wait the fitting moment to declare himself; and in the mean time he was preaching to heretics. It did not matter much what he preached, under such circumstances. He pulled out two old yellow sermons from a heap of such, and began looking over that for

the forenoon. Naturally enough, he fell asleep over it, and, sleeping, he began to dream.

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He dreamed that he was under the high arches of an old cathedral, amidst a throng of worshippers. The light streamed in through vast windows, dark with the purple robes of royal saints, or blazing with yellow glories around the heads of earthly martyrs and heavenly messengers. The billows of the great organ roared among the clustered columns, as the sea breaks amidst the basaltic pillars which crowd the stormy cavern of the Hebrides. The voice of the alternate choirs of singing boys swung back and forward, as the silver censer swung in the hands of the white-robed children. The sweet cloud of incense rose in soft, fleecy mists, full of penetrating suggestions of the East and its perfumed altars. The knees of twenty generations had worn the pavement; their feet had hollowed the steps; their shoulders had smoothed the columns. Dead bishops and abbots lay under the marble of the floor in their crumbled vestments; dead warriors, in rusted armor, were stretched beneath their sculptured effigies. And all at once all the buried multitudes who had ever worshipped there came thronging in through the aisles. They choked every space, they swarmed into all the chapels, they hung in clusters over the parapets of the galleries, they clung to the images in every niche, and still the vast throng kept flowing and flowing in, until the living were lost in the rush of the returning dead who had reclaimed their own. Then, as his dream became more fantastic, the huge cathedral itself seemed to change into the wreck of some mighty antediluvian vertebrate; its flying-buttresses arched round like ribs, its piers shaped themselves into limbs, and the sound of the organ-blast changed to the wind whistling through its thousand-jointed skeleton.

And presently the sound lulled, and softened and softened, until it was as the murmur of a distant swarm of bees. A procession of monks wound along through an old street, chanting, as they walked. In his dream he glided in among them and bore his part in the burden of their song. He entered with the long train under a low arch, and presently he was kneeling in a narrow cell before an image of the Blessed Maiden holding the Divine Child in her arms, and his lips seemed to whisper,

Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis!

He turned to the crucifix, and, prostrating himself before the spare, agonizing shape of the Holy Sufferer, fell into a long passion of tears and broken prayers. He rose and flung himself, worn-out, upon his hard pallet, and, seeming to slumber, dreamed again within his dream. Once more in the vast cathedral, with throngs of the living choking its aisles, amidst jubilant peals from the cavernous depths of the great organ, and choral melodies ringing from the fluty throats of the singing boys. A day of great rejoicings,—for a prelate was to be consecrated, and the bones of the mighty skeleton-minster were shaking with anthems, as if there were life of its own within its buttressed ribs. He looked down at his feet; the folds of the sacred robe were flowing about them: he put his hand to his head; it was crowned with the holy mitre. A long sigh, as of perfect content in the consummation of all his earthly hopes, breathed through the dreamer's lips, and shaped itself, as it escaped, into the blissful murmur,

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Ego sum Episcopus!

One grinning gargoyle looked in from beneath the roof through an opening in a stained window. It was the face of a mocking fiend, such as the old builders loved to place under the eaves to spout the rain through their open mouths. It looked at him, as he sat in his mitred chair, with its hideous grin growing broader and broader, until it laughed out aloud, such a hard, stony, mocking laugh, that he awoke out of his second dream through his first into his common consciousness, and shivered, as he turned to the two yellow sermons which he was to pick over and weed of the little thought they might contain, for the next day's service.

The Reverend Chauncy Fairweather was too much taken up with his own bodily and spiritual condition to be deeply mindful of others. He carried the note requesting the prayers of the congregation in his pocket all day; and the soul in distress, which a single tender petition might have soothed, and perhaps have saved from despair or fatal error, found no voice in the temple to plead for it before the Throne of Mercy!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The secret is whispered.

The Reverend Chauncy Fairweather's congregation was not large, but select. The lines of social cleavage run through religious creeds as if they were of a piece with position and fortune. It is expected of persons of a certain breeding, in some parts of New England, that they shall be either Episcopalians or Unitarians. The mansion-house gentry of Rockland were pretty fairly divided between the little chapel, with the stained window and the trained rector, and the meeting-house where the Reverend Mr. Fairweather officiated.

It was in the latter that Dudley Venner worshipped, when he attended service anywhere, —which depended very much on the caprice of Elsie. He saw plainly enough that a generous and liberally cultivated nature might find a refuge and congenial souls in either of these two persuasions, but he objected to some points of the formal creed of the older church, and especially to the mechanism which renders it hard to get free from its outworn and offensive formulae,—remembering how Archbishop Tillotson wished in vain that it could be “well rid of” the Athanasian Creed. This, and the fact that the meeting-house was nearer than the chapel, determined him, when the new rector, who was not quite up to his mark in education, was appointed, to take a pew in the “liberal” worshippers' edifice.

Elsie was very uncertain in her feeling about going to church. In summer, she loved rather to stroll over The Mountain, on Sundays. There was even a story, that she had one of the caves before mentioned fitted up as an oratory, and that she had her own

wild way of worshipping the God whom she sought in the dark chasms of the dreaded cliffs. Mere fables, doubtless; but they showed the common belief,

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that Elsie, with all her strange and dangerous elements of character, had yet strong religious feeling mingled with them. The hymn-book which Dick had found, in his midnight invasion of her chamber, opened to favorite hymns, especially some of the Methodist and Quietist character. Many had noticed, that certain tunes, as sung by the choir, seemed to impress her deeply; and some said, that at such times her whole expression would change, and her stormy look would soften so as to remind them of her poor, sweet mother.

On the Sunday morning after the talk recorded in the last chapter, Elsie made herself ready to go to meeting. She was dressed much as usual, excepting that she wore a thick veil, turned aside, but ready to conceal her features. It was natural enough that she should not wish to be looked in the face by curious persons who would be staring to see what effect the occurrence of the past week had had on her spirits. Her father attended her willingly; and they took their seats in the pew, somewhat to the surprise of many, who had hardly expected to see them, after so humiliating a family development as the attempted crime of their kinsman had just been furnishing for the astonishment of the public.

The Reverend Mr. Fairweather was now in his coldest mood. He had passed through the period of feverish excitement which marks a change of religious opinion. At first, when he had begun to doubt his own theological positions, he had defended them against himself with more ingenuity and interest, perhaps, than he could have done against another; because men rarely take the trouble to understand anybody's difficulties in a question but their own. After this, as he began to draw off from different points of his old belief, the cautious disentangling of himself from one mesh after another gave sharpness to his intellect, and the tremulous eagerness with which he seized upon the doctrine which, piece by piece, under various pretexts and with various disguises, he was appropriating, gave interest and something like passion to his words. But when he had gradually accustomed his people to his new phraseology, and was really adjusting his sermons and his service to disguise his thoughts, he lost at once all his intellectual acuteness and all his spiritual fervor.

Elsie sat quietly through the first part of the service, which was conducted in the cold, mechanical way to be expected. Her face was hidden by her veil; but her father knew her state of feeling, as well by her movements and attitudes as by the expression of her features. The hymn had been sung, the short prayer offered, the Bible read, and the long prayer was about to begin. This was the time at which the "notes" of any who were in affliction from loss of friends, the sick who were doubtful of recovery, those who had cause to be grateful for preservation of life or other signal blessing, were wont to be read.

Just then it was that Dudley Veneer noticed that his daughter was trembling,—a thing so rare, so unaccountable, indeed, under the circumstances, that he watched her closely, and began to fear that some nervous paroxysm, or other malady, might have just begun to show itself in this way upon her.

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The minister had in his pocket two notes. One, in the handwriting of Deacon Soper, was from a member of this congregation, returning thanks for his preservation through a season of great peril, supposed to be the exposure which he had shared with others, when standing in the circle around Dick Veneer. The other was the anonymous one, in a female hand, which he had received the evening before. He forgot them both. His thoughts were altogether too much taken up with more important matters. He prayed through all the frozen petitions of his expurgated form of supplication, and not a single heart was soothed or lifted, or reminded that its sorrows were struggling their way up to heaven, borne on the breath from a human soul that was warm with love.

The people sat down as if relieved when the dreary prayer was finished. Elsie alone remained standing until her father touched her. Then she sat down, lifted her veil, and looked at him with a blank, sad look, as if she had suffered some pain or wrong, but could not give any name or expression to her vague trouble. She did not tremble any longer, but remained ominously still, as if she had been frozen where she sat.

—Can a man love his own soul too well? Who, on the whole, constitute the nobler class of human beings? those who have lived mainly to make sure of their own personal welfare in another and future condition of existence, or they who have worked with all their might for their race, for their country, for the advancement of the kingdom of God, and left all personal arrangements concerning themselves to the sole charge of Him who made them and is responsible to himself for their safe-keeping? Is an anchorite who has worn the stone floor of his cell into basins with his knees bent in prayer, more acceptable than the soldier who gives his life for the maintenance of any sacred right or truth, without thinking what will specially become of him in a world where there are two or three million colonists a month, from this one planet, to be cared for? These are grave questions, which must suggest themselves to those who know that there are many profoundly selfish persons who are sincerely devout and perpetually occupied with their own future, while there are others who are perfectly ready to sacrifice themselves for any worthy object in this world, but are really too little occupied with their exclusive personality to think so much as many do about what is to become of them in another.

The Reverend Chauncy Fairweather did not, most certainly, belong to this latter class. There are several kinds of believers, whose history we find among the early converts to Christianity.

There was the magistrate, whose social position was such that he preferred a private interview in the evening with the Teacher to following him—with the street-crowd. He had seen extraordinary facts which had satisfied him that the young Galilean had a divine commission. But still he cross-questioned the Teacher himself. He was not ready to accept statements without explanation. That was the right kind of man. See how he stood up for the legal rights of his Master, when the people were for laying hands on him!

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And again, there was the government official, intrusted with public money, which, in those days, implied that he was supposed to be honest. A single look of that heavenly countenance, and two words of gentle command, were enough for him. Neither of these men, the early disciple, nor the evangelist, seems to have been thinking primarily about his own personal safety.

But now look at the poor, miserable turnkey, whose occupation shows what he was like to be, and who had just been thrusting two respectable strangers, taken from the hands of a mob, covered with stripes and stripped of clothing, into the inner prison, and making their feet fast in the stocks. His thought, in the moment of terror, is for himself: first, suicide; then, what he shall do,—not to save his household,—not to fulfil his duty to his office,—not to repair the outrage he has been committing,—but to secure his own personal safety. Truly, character shows itself as much in a man's way of becoming a Christian as in any other!

—Elsie sat, statue-like, through the sermon. It would not be fair to the reader to give an abstract of that. When a man who has been bred to free thought and free speech suddenly finds himself stepping about, like a dancer amidst his eggs, among the old addled majority-votes which he must not tread upon, he is a spectacle for men and angels. Submission to intellectual precedent and authority does very well for those who have been bred to it; we know that the underground courses of their minds are laid in the Roman cement of tradition, and that stately and splendid structures may be reared on such a foundation. But to see one laying a platform over heretical quicksands, thirty or forty or fifty years deep, and then beginning to build upon it, is a sorry sight. A new convert from the reformed to the ancient faith may be very strong in the arms, but he will always have weak legs and shaky knees. He may use his hands well, and hit hard with his fists, but he will never stand on his legs in the way the man does who inherits his belief.

The services were over at last, and Dudley Venner and his daughter walked home together in silence. He always respected her moods, and saw clearly enough that some inward trouble was weighing upon her. There was nothing to be said in such cases, for Elsie could never talk of her griefs. An hour, or a day, or a week of brooding, with perhaps a sudden flash of violence: this was the way in which the impressions which make other women weep, and tell their griefs by word or letter, showed their effects in her mind and acts.

She wandered off up into the remoter parts of The Mountain, that day, after their return. No one saw just where she went,—indeed, no one knew its forest-recesses and rocky fastnesses as she did. She was gone until late at night; and when Old Sophy, who had watched for her, bound up her long hair for her sleep, it was damp with the cold dews.

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The old black woman looked at her without speaking, but questioning her with every feature as to the sorrow that was weighing on her.

Suddenly she turned to Old Sophy.

"You want to know what there is troubling me;" she said. "Nobody loves me. I cannot love anybody. What is love, Sophy?"

"It's what poor Ol' Sophy's got for her Elsie," the old woman answered. "Tell me, darlin',—don' you love somebody?—don' you love? you know,—oh, tell me, darlin', don' you love to see the gen'l'man that keeps up at the school where you go? They say he's the pootiest gen'l'man that was ever in the town here. Don' be 'fraid of poor Ol' Sophy, darlin',—she loved a man once,—see here! Oh, I've showed you this often enough!"

She took from her pocket a half of one of the old Spanish silver coins, such as were current in the earlier part of this century. The other half of it had been lying in the deep sea-sand for more than fifty years.

Elsie looked her in the face, but did not answer in words. What strange intelligence was that which passed between them through the diamond eyes and the little beady black ones?—what subtle intercommunication, penetrating so much deeper than articulate speech? This was the nearest approach to sympathetic relations that Elsie ever had: a kind of dumb intercourse of feeling, such as one sees in the eyes of brute mothers looking on their young. But, subtle as it was, it was narrow and individual; whereas an emotion which can shape itself in language opens the gate for itself into the great community of human affections; for every word we speak is the medal of a dead thought or feeling, struck in the die of some human experience, worn smooth by innumerable contacts, and always transferred warm from one to another. By words we share the common consciousness of the race, which has shaped itself in these symbols. By music we reach those special states of consciousness which, being without form, cannot be shaped with the mosaics of the vocabulary. The language of the eyes runs deeper into the personal nature, but it is purely individual, and perishes in the expression.

If we consider them all as growing out of the consciousness as their root, language is the leaf, music is the flower; but when the eyes meet and search each other, it is the uncovering of the blanched stem through which the whole life runs, but which has never taken color or form from the sunlight.

For three days Elsie did not return to the school. Much of the time she was among the woods and rocks. The season was now beginning to wane, and the forest to put on its autumnal glory. The dreamy haze was beginning to soften the landscape, and the most delicious days of the year were lending their attraction to the scenery of The Mountain.

It was not very singular that Elsie should be lingering in her old haunts, from which the change of season must soon drive her. But Old Sophy saw clearly enough that

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some internal conflict was going on, and knew very well that it must have its own way and work itself out as it best could. As much as looks could tell Elsie had told her. She had said in words, to be sure, that she could not love. Something warped and thwarted the emotion which would have been love in another, no doubt; but that such an emotion was striving with her against all malign influences which interfered with it the old woman had a perfect certainty in her own mind.

Everybody who has observed the working of emotions in persons of various temperaments knows well enough that they have periods of incubation, which differ with the individual, and with the particular cause and degree of excitement, yet evidently go through a strictly self-limited series of evolutions, at the end of which, their result—an act of violence, a paroxysm of tears, a gradual subsidence into repose, or whatever it may be—declares itself, like the last stage of an attack of fever and ague. No one can observe children without noticing that there is a personal equation, to use the astronomer's language, in their tempers, so that one sulks an hour over an offence which makes another a fury for five minutes, and leaves him or her an angel when it is over.

At the end of three days, Elsie braided her long, glossy, black hair, and shot a golden arrow through it. She dressed herself with more than usual care, and came down in the morning superb in her stormy beauty. The brooding paroxysm was over, or at least her passion had changed its phase. Her father saw it with great relief; he had always many fears for her in her hours and days of gloom, but, for reasons before assigned, had felt that she must be trusted to herself, without appealing to actual restraint, or any other supervision than such as Old Sophy could exercise without offence.

She went off at the accustomed hour to the school. All the girls had their eyes on her. None so keen as these young misses to know an inward movement by an outward sign of adornment: if they have not as many signals as the ships that sail the great seas, there is not an end of ribbon or a turn of a ringlet which is not a hieroglyphic with a hidden meaning to these little cruisers over the ocean of sentiment.

The girls all looked at Elsie with a new thought; for she was more sumptuously arrayed than perhaps ever before at the school; and they said to themselves that she had come meaning to draw the young master's eyes upon her. That was it; what else could it be? The beautiful cold girl with the diamond eyes meant to dazzle the handsome young gentleman. He would be afraid to love her; it couldn't be true, that which some people had said in the village; she was n't the kind of young lady to make Mr. Langdon happy. Those dark people are never safe: so one of the young blondes said to herself. Elsie was not literary enough for such a scholar: so thought Miss Charlotte Ann Wood, the young poetess. She couldn't have a good temper, with those scowling eyebrows: this

was the opinion of several broad-faced, smiling girls, who thought, each in her own snug little mental sanctum, that, if, *etc.*, *etc.*, she could make him so happy!

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Elsie had none of the still, wicked light in her eyes, that morning. She looked gentle, but dreamy; played with her books; did not trouble herself with any of the exercises,—which in itself was not very remarkable, as she was always allowed, under some pretext or other, to have her own way.

The school-hours were over at length. The girls went out, but she lingered to the last. She then came up to Mr. Bernard, with a book in her hand, as if to ask a question.

“Will you walk towards my home with me today?” she said, in a very low voice, little more than a whisper.

Mr. Bernard was startled by the request, put in such a way. He had a presentiment of some painful scene or other. But there was nothing to be done but to assure her that it would give him great pleasure.

So they walked along together on their way toward the Dudley mansion.

“I have no friend,” Elsie said, all at once. “Nothing loves me but one old woman. I cannot love anybody. They tell me there is something in my eyes that draws people to me and makes them faint: Look into them, will you?”

She turned her face toward him. It was very pale, and the diamond eyes were glittering with a film, such as beneath other lids would have rounded into a tear.

“Beautiful eyes, Elsie,” he said,—“sometimes very piercing,—but soft now, and looking as if there were something beneath them that friendship might draw out. I am your friend, Elsie. Tell me what I can do to render your life happier.”

“Love me!” said Elsie Venner.

What shall a man do, when a woman makes such a demand, involving such an avowal? It was the tenderest, cruellest, humblest moment of Mr. Bernard’s life. He turned pale, he trembled almost, as if he had been a woman listening to her lover’s declaration.

“Elsie,” he said, presently, “I so long to be of some use to you, to have your confidence and sympathy, that I must not let you say or do anything to put us in false relations. I do love you, Elsie, as a suffering sister with sorrows of her own,—as one whom I would save at the risk of my happiness and life,—as one who needs a true friend more than—any of all the young girls I have known. More than this you would not ask me to say. You have been through excitement and trouble lately, and it has made you feel such a need more than ever. Give me your hand, dear Elsie, and trust me that I will be as true a friend to you as if we were children of the same mother.”



Elsie gave him her hand mechanically. It seemed to him that a cold aura shot from it along his arm and chilled the blood running through his heart. He pressed it gently, looked at her with a face full of grave kindness and sad interest, then softly relinquished it.

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It was all over with poor Elsie. They walked almost in silence the rest of the way. Mr. Bernard left her at the gate of the mansion-house, and returned with sad forebodings. Elsie went at once to her own room, and did not come from it at the usual hours. At last Old Sophy began to be alarmed about her, went to her apartment, and, finding the door unlocked, entered cautiously. She found Elsie lying on her bed, her brows strongly contracted, her eyes dull, her whole look that of great suffering. Her first thought was that she had been doing herself a harm by some deadly means or other. But Elsie, saw her fear, and reassured her.

“No,” she said, “there is nothing wrong, such as you are thinking of; I am not dying. You may send for the Doctor; perhaps he can take the pain from my head. That is all I want him to do. There is no use in the pain, that I know of; if he can stop it, let him.”

So they sent for the old Doctor. It was not long before the solid trot of Caustic, the old bay horse, and the crashing of the gravel under the wheels, gave notice that the physician was driving up the avenue.

The old Doctor was a model for visiting practitioners. He always came into the sick-room with a quiet, cheerful look, as if he had a consciousness that he was bringing some sure relief with him. The way a patient snatches his first look at his doctor's face, to see whether he is doomed, whether he is reprieved, whether he is unconditionally pardoned, has really something terrible about it. It is only to be met by an imperturbable mask of serenity, proof against anything and everything in a patient's aspect. The physician whose face reflects his patient's condition like a mirror may do well enough to examine people for a life-insurance office, but does not belong to the sickroom. The old Doctor did not keep people waiting in dread suspense, while he stayed talking about the case,—the patient all the time thinking that he and the friends are discussing some alarming symptom or formidable operation which he himself is by-and-by—to hear of.

He was in Elsie's room almost before she knew he was in the house. He came to her bedside in such a natural, quiet way, that it seemed as if he were only a friend who had dropped in for a moment to say a pleasant word. Yet he was very uneasy about Elsie until he had seen her; he never knew what might happen to her or those about her, and came prepared for the worst.

“Sick, my child?” he said, in a very soft, low voice.

Elsie nodded, without speaking.

The Doctor took her hand,—whether with professional views, or only in a friendly way, it would have been hard to tell. So he sat a few minutes, looking at her all the time with a kind of fatherly interest, but with it all noting how she lay, how she breathed, her color, her expression, all that teaches the practised eye so much without a single question being asked. He saw she was in suffering, and said presently,



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"You have pain somewhere; where is it?"

She put her hand to her head.

As she was not disposed to talk, he watched her for a while, questioned Old Sophy shrewdly a few minutes, and so made up his mind as to the probable cause of disturbance and the proper remedies to be used.

Some very silly people thought the old Doctor did not believe in medicine, because he gave less than certain poor half-taught creatures in the smaller neighboring towns, who took advantage of people's sickness to disgust and disturb them with all manner of ill-smelling and ill-behaving drugs. In truth, he hated to give anything noxious or loathsome to those who were uncomfortable enough already, unless he was very sure it would do good,—in which case, he never played with drugs, but gave good, honest, efficient doses. Sometimes he lost a family of the more boorish sort, because they did not think they got their money's worth out of him, unless they had something more than a taste of everything he carried in his saddlebags.

He ordered some remedies which he thought would relieve Elsie, and left her, saying he would call the next day, hoping to find her better. But the next day came, and the next, and still Elsie was on her bed, feverish, restless, wakeful, silent. At night she tossed about and wandered, and it became at length apparent that there was a settled attack, something like what they called, formerly, a "nervous fever."

On the fourth day she was more restless than common. One of the women of the house came in to help to take care of her; but she showed an aversion to her presence.

"Send me Helen Darley," she said, at last.

The old Doctor told them, that, if possible, they must indulge this fancy of hers. The caprices of sick people were never to be despised, least of all of such persons as Elsie, when rendered irritable and exacting by pain and weakness.

So a message was sent to Mr. Silas Peckham at the Apollinean Institute, to know if he could not spare Miss Helen Darley for a few days, if required, to give her attention to a young lady who attended his school and who was now lying ill,—no other person than the daughter of Dudley Venner.

A mean man never agrees to anything without deliberately turning it over, so that he may see its dirty side, and, if he can, sweating the coin he pays for it. If an archangel should offer to save his soul for sixpence, he would try to find a sixpence with a hole in it. A gentleman says yes to a great many things without stopping to think: a shabby fellow is known by his caution in answering questions, for fear of, compromising his pocket or himself.



Mr. Silas Peckham looked very grave at the request. The dooties of Miss Darley at the Institoot were important, very important. He paid her large sums of money for her time, —more than she could expect to get in any other institootion for the edoocation of female youth. A deduction from her selary would be necessary, in case she should retire from the sphere of her dooties for a season. He should be put to extry expense, and have to perform additional labors himself. He would consider of the matter. If any arrangement could be made, he would send word to Squire Venner's folks.

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"Miss Darley," said Silas Peckham, "the 's a message from Squire Venner's that his daughter wants you down at the mansion-house to see her. She's got a fever, so they inform me. If it's any kind of ketchin' fever, of course you won't think of goin' near the mansion-house. If Doctor Kittredge says it's safe, perfec'ly safe, I can't object to your goin', on sech conditions as seem to be fair to all' concerned. You will give up your pay for the whole time you are absent,—portions of days to be caounted as whole days. You will be charged with board the same as if you eat your victuals with the household. The victuals are of no use after they're cooked but to be eat, and your bein' away is no savin' to our folks. I shall charge you a reasonable compensation for the damage to the school by the absence of a teacher. If Miss Crabs undertakes any dooties belongin' to your department of instruction, she will look to you for sech pecooniary considerations as you may agree upon between you. On these conditions I am willin' to give my consent to your temporary absence from the post of dooty. I will step down to Doctor Kittredge's myself, and make inquiries as to the natur' of the complaint."

Mr. Peckham took up a rusty and very narrow-brimmed hat, which he cocked upon one side of his head, with an air peculiar to the rural gentry. It was the hour when the Doctor expected to be in his office, unless he had some special call which kept him from home.

He found the Reverend Chauncy Fairweather just taking leave of the Doctor. His hand was on the pit of his stomach, and his countenance was expressive of inward uneasiness.

"Shake it before using," said the Doctor; "and the sooner you make up your mind to speak right out, the better it will be for your digestion."

"Oh, Mr. Peckham! Walk in, Mr. Peckham! Nobody sick up at the school, I hope?"

"The haalth of the school is fust-rate," replied Mr. Peckham. "The sitooation is uncommonly favorable to saloobrity." (These last words were from the Annual Report of the past year.) "Providence has spared our female youth in a remarkable measure. I've come with reference to another consideration. Dr. Kittredge, is there any ketchin' complaint goin' about in the village?"

"Well, yes," said the Doctor, "I should say there was something of that sort. Measles. Mumps. And Sin,—that's always catching."

The old Doctor's eye twinkled; once in a while he had his little touch of humor.

Silas Peckham slanted his eye up suspiciously at the Doctor, as if he was getting some kind of advantage over him. That is the way people of his constitution are apt to take a bit of pleasantry.



“I don’t mean sech things, Doctor; I mean fevers. Is there any ketchin’ fevers—bilious, or nervous, or typus, or whatever you call ’em—now goin’ round this village? That’s what I want to ascertain, if there’s no impropriety.”

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The old Doctor looked at Silas through his spectacles.

“Hard and sour as a green cider-apple,” he thought to himself. “No,”; he said,—“I don’t know any such cases.”

“What’s the matter with Elsie Venner?” asked Silas, sharply, as if he expected to have him this time.

“A mild feverish attack, I should call it in anybody else; but she has a peculiar constitution, and I never feel so safe about her as I should about most people.”

“Anything ketchin’ about it?” Silas asked, cunningly.

“No, indeed!” said the Doctor,—“catching? no,—what put that into your head, Mr. Peckham?”

“Well, Doctor,” the conscientious Principal answered, “I naterally feel a graat responsibility, a very graaat responsibility, for the noomerous and lovely young ladies committed to my charge. It has been a question, whether one of my assistants should go, accordin’ to request, to stop with Miss Venner for a season. Nothin’ restrains my givin’ my full and free consent to her goin’ but the fear lest contagious maladies should be introdooed among those lovely female youth. I shall abide by your opinion,—I understan’ you to say distinc’ly, her complaint is not ketchin’?—and urge upon Miss Darley to fulfil her dooties to a sufferin’ fellow-creature at any cost to myself and my establishment. We shall miss her very much; but it is a good cause, and she shall go, —and I shall trust that Providence will enable us to spare her without permanent damage to the interests of the Institootion.”

Saying this, the excellent Principal departed, with his rusty narrow-brimmed hat leaning over, as if it had a six-knot breeze abeam, and its gunwale (so to speak) was dipping into his coat-collar. He announced the result of his inquiries to Helen, who had received a brief note in the mean time from a poor relation of Elsie’s mother, then at the mansion-house, informing her of the critical situation of Elsie and of her urgent desire that Helen should be with her. She could not hesitate. She blushed as she thought of the comments that might be made; but what were such considerations in a matter of life and death? She could not stop to make terms with Silas Peckham. She must go. He might fleece her, if he would; she would not complain,—not even to Bernard, who, she knew, would bring the Principal to terms, if she gave the least hint of his intended extortions.

So Helen made up her bundle of clothes to be sent after her, took a book or two with her to help her pass the time, and departed for the Dudley mansion. It was with a great inward effort that she undertook the sisterly task which was thus forced upon her. She had a kind of terror of Elsie; and the thought of having charge of her, of being alone with her, of coming under the full influence of those diamond eyes,—if, indeed, their light

were not dimmed by suffering and weariness,—was one she shrank from. But what could she do? It might be a turning-point in the life of the poor girl; and she must overcome all her fears, all her repugnance, and go to her rescue.

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"Is Helen come?" said Elsie, when she heard, with her fine sense quickened by the irritability of sickness, a light footfall on the stair, with a cadence unlike that of any inmate of the house.

"It's a strange woman's step," said Old Sophy, who, with her exclusive love for Elsie, was naturally disposed to jealousy of a new-comer. "Let Ol' Sophy set at 'th' foot o' th' bed, if th' young missis sets by th' pillar,—won' y', darlin'? The' 's nobody that's white can love y' as th' of black woman does;—don' sen' her away, now, there 's a dear soul!"

Elsie motioned her to sit in the place she had pointed to, and Helen at that moment entered the room. Dudley Venner followed her.

"She is your patient," he said, "except while the Doctor is here. She has been longing to have you with her, and we shall expect you to make her well in a few days."

So Helen Darley found herself established in the most unexpected manner as an inmate of the Dudley mansion. She sat with Elsie most of the time, by day and by night, soothing her, and trying to enter into her confidence and affections, if it should prove that this strange creature was really capable of truly sympathetic emotions.

What was this unexplained something which came between her soul and that of every other human being with whom she was in relations? Helen perceived, or rather felt, that she had, folded up in the depths of her being, a true womanly nature. Through the cloud that darkened her aspect, now and then a ray would steal forth, which, like the smile of stern and solemn people, was all the more impressive from its contrast with the expression she wore habitually. It might well be that pain and fatigue had changed her aspect; but, at any rate, Helen looked into her eyes without that nervous agitation which their cold glitter had produced on her when they were full of their natural light. She felt sure that her mother must have been a lovely, gentle woman. There were gleams of a beautiful nature shining through some ill-defined medium which disturbed and made them flicker and waver, as distant images do when seen through the rippling upward currents of heated air. She loved, in her own way, the old black woman, and seemed to keep up a kind of silent communication with her, as if they did not require the use of speech. She appeared to be tranquillized by the presence of Helen, and loved to have her seated at the bedside. Yet something, whatever it was, prevented her from opening her heart to her kind companion; and even now there were times when she would lie looking at her, with such a still, watchful, almost dangerous expression, that Helen would sigh, and change her place, as persons do whose breath some cunning orator had been sucking out of them with his spongy eloquence, so that, when he stops, they must get some air and stir about, or they feel as if they should be half smothered and palsied.

It was too much to keep guessing what was the meaning of all this. Helen determined to ask Old Sophy some questions which might probably throw light upon her doubts.

She took the opportunity one evening when Elsie was lying asleep and they were both sitting at some distance from her bed.

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"Tell me, Sophy," she said, "was Elsie always as shy as she seems to be now, in talking with those to whom she is friendly?"

"Alway jes' so, Miss Darlin', ever sense she was little chil'. When she was five, six year old, she lisp some,—call me Thophy; that make her kin' o' 'shamed, perhaps: after she grow up, she never lisp, but she kin' o' got the way o' not talkin' much. Fac' is, she don' like talkin' as common gals do, 'xcep' jes' once in a while wi' some partic'lar folks,—'n' then not much."

"How old is Elsie?"

"Eighteen year this las' September."

"How long ago did her mother die?" Helen asked, with a little trembling in her voice.

"Eighteen year ago this October," said Old Sophy.

Helen was silent for a moment. Then she whispered, almost inaudibly,—for her voice appeared to fail her,

"What did her mother die of, Sophy?"

The old woman's small eyes dilated until a ring of white showed round their beady centres. She caught Helen by the hand and clung to it, as if in fear. She looked round at Elsie, who lay sleeping, as if she might be listening. Then she drew Helen towards her and led her softly out of the room.

"'Sh!—'sh!" she said, as soon as they were outside the door. "Don' never speak in this house 'bout what Elsie's mother died of!" she said. "Nobody never says nothin' 'bout it. Oh, God has made Ugly Things wi' death in their mouths, Miss Darlin', an' He knows what they're for; but my poor Elsie!—to have her blood changed in her before—It was in July Mistress got her death, but she liv' till three week after my poor Elsie was born."

She could speak no more. She had said enough. Helen remembered the stories she had heard on coming to the village, and among them one referred to in an early chapter of this narrative. All the unaccountable looks and tastes and ways of Elsie came back to her in the light of an ante-natal impression which had mingled an alien element in her nature. She knew the secret of the fascination which looked out of her cold, glittering eyes. She knew the significance of the strange repulsion which she felt in her own intimate consciousness underlying the inexplicable attraction which drew her towards the young girl in spite of this repugnance. She began to look with new feelings on the contradictions in her moral nature,—the longing for sympathy, as shown by her wishing for Helen's company, and the impossibility of passing beyond the cold circle of isolation within which she had her being. The fearful truth of that instinctive feeling of hers, that there was something not human looking out of Elsie's eyes, came upon her with a

sudden flash of penetrating conviction. There were two warring principles in that superb organization and proud soul. One made her a woman, with all a woman's powers and longings. The other chilled all the currents of outlet for her emotions. It made her tearless and mute,

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when another woman would have wept and pleaded. And it infused into her soul something—it was cruel now to call it malice—which was still and watchful and dangerous, which waited its opportunity, and then shot like an arrow from its bow out of the coil of brooding premeditation. Even those who had never seen the white scars on Dick Venner's wrist, or heard the half-told story of her supposed attempt to do a graver mischief, knew well enough by looking at her that she was one of the creatures not to be tampered with,—silent in anger and swift in vengeance.

Helen could not return to the bedside at once after this communication. It was with altered eyes that she must look on the poor girl, the victim of such an unheard-of fatality. All was explained to her now. But it opened such depths of solemn thought in her awakened consciousness, that it seemed as if the whole mystery of human life were coming up again before her for trial and judgment. "Oh," she thought, "if, while the will lies sealed in its fountain, it may be poisoned at its very source, so that it shall flow dark and deadly through its whole course, who are we that we should judge our fellow-creatures by ourselves?" Then came the terrible question, how far the elements themselves are capable of perverting the moral nature: if valor, and justice, and truth, the strength of man and the virtue of woman, may not be poisoned out of a race by the food of the Australian in his forest, by the foul air and darkness of the Christians cooped up in the "tenement-houses" close by those who live in the palaces of the great cities?

She walked out into the garden, lost in thought upon these dark and deep matters. Presently she heard a step behind her, and Elsie's father came up and joined her. Since his introduction to Helen at the distinguished tea-party given by the Widow Rowens, and before her coming to sit with Elsie, Mr. Dudley Venner had in the most accidental way in the world met her on several occasions: once after church, when she happened to be caught in a slight shower and he insisted on holding his umbrella over her on her way home;—once at a small party at one of the mansion-houses, where the quick-eyed lady of the house had a wonderful knack of bringing people together who liked to see each other;—perhaps at other times and places; but of this there is no certain evidence.

They naturally spoke of Elsie, her illness, and the aspect it had taken. But Helen noticed in all that Dudley Venner said about his daughter a morbid sensitiveness, as it seemed to her, an aversion to saying much about her physical condition or her peculiarities,—a wish to feel and speak as a parent should, and yet a shrinking, as if there were something about Elsie which he could not bear to dwell upon. She thought she saw through all this, and she could interpret it all charitably. There were circumstances about his daughter which recalled the great sorrow of his life; it was not strange that this perpetual reminder should in some degree have modified his feelings as a father. But what a life he must have been leading for so many years, with this perpetual source of distress which he could not name! Helen knew well enough, now,

the meaning of the sadness which had left such traces in his features and tones, and it made her feel very kindly and compassionate towards him.

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So they walked over the crackling leaves in the garden, between the lines of box breathing its fragrance of eternity;—for this is one of the odors which carry us out of time into the abysses of the unbeginning past; if we ever lived on another ball of stone than this, it must be that there was box growing on it. So they walked, finding their way softly to each other's sorrows and sympathies, each matching some counterpart to the other's experience of life, and startled to see how the different, yet parallel, lessons they had been taught by suffering had led them step by step to the same serene acquiescence in the orderings of that Supreme Wisdom which they both devoutly recognized.

Old Sophy was at the window and saw them walking up and down the garden-alleys. She watched them as her grandfather the savage watched the figures that moved among the trees when a hostile tribe was lurking about his mountain.

"There'll be a weddin' in the ol house," she said, "before there's roses on them bushes ag'in. But it won' be my poor Elsie's weddin', 'n' ol' Sophy won' be there."

When Helen prayed in the silence of her soul that evening, it was not that Elsie's life might be spared. She dared not ask that as a favor of Heaven. What could life be to her but a perpetual anguish, and to those about her but an ever-present terror? Might she but be so influenced by divine grace, that what in her was most truly human, most purely woman-like, should overcome the dark, cold, unmentionable instinct which had pervaded her being like a subtle poison that was all she could ask, and the rest she left to a higher wisdom and tenderer love than her own.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The white ash.

When Helen returned to Elsie's bedside, it was with a new and still deeper feeling of sympathy, such as the story told by Old Sophy might well awaken. She understood, as never before, the singular fascination and as singular repulsion which she had long felt in Elsie's presence. It had not been without a great effort that she had forced herself to become the almost constant attendant of the sick girl; and now she was learning, but not for the first time, the blessed truth which so many good women have found out for themselves, that the hardest duty bravely performed soon becomes a habit, and tends in due time to transform itself into a pleasure.

The old Doctor was beginning to look graver, in spite of himself. The fever, if such it was, went gently forward, wasting the young girl's powers of resistance from day to day; yet she showed no disposition to take nourishment, and seemed literally to be living on air. It was remarkable that with all this her look was almost natural, and her features were hardly sharpened so as to suggest that her life was burning away. He did not like



this, nor various other unobtrusive signs of danger which his practised eye detected. A very small matter might turn the balance which held life and death poised against each other. He surrounded her with precautions, that Nature might have every opportunity of cunningly shifting the weights from the scale of death to the scale of life, as she will often do if not rudely disturbed or interfered with.

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Little tokens of good-will and kind remembrance were constantly coming to her from the girls in the school and the good people in the village. Some of the mansion-house people obtained rare flowers which they sent her, and her table was covered with fruits which tempted her in vain. Several of the school-girls wished to make her a basket of their own handiwork, and, filling it with autumnal flowers, to send it as a joint offering. Mr. Bernard found out their project accidentally, and, wishing to have his share in it, brought home from one of his long walks some boughs full of variously tinted leaves, such as were still clinging to the stricken trees. With these he brought also some of the already fallen leaflets of the white ash, remarkable for their rich olive-purple color, forming a beautiful contrast with some of the lighter-hued leaves. It so happened that this particular tree, the white ash, did not grow upon The Mountain, and the leaflets were more welcome for their comparative rarity. So the girls made their basket, and the floor of it they covered with the rich olive-purple leaflets. Such late flowers as they could lay their hands upon served to fill it, and with many kindly messages they sent it to Miss Elsie Venner at the Dudley mansion-house.

Elsie was sitting up in her bed when it came, languid, but tranquil, and Helen was by her, as usual, holding her hand, which was strangely cold, Helen thought, for one who was said to have some kind of fever. The school-girls' basket was brought in with its messages of love and hopes for speedy recovery. Old Sophy was delighted to see that it pleased Elsie, and laid it on the bed before her. Elsie began looking at the flowers, and taking them from the basket, that she might see the leaves. All at once she appeared to be agitated; she looked at the basket, then around, as if there were some fearful presence about her which she was searching for with her eager glances. She took out the flowers, one by one, her breathing growing hurried, her eyes staring, her hands trembling,—till, as she came near the bottom of the basket, she flung out all the rest with a hasty movement, looked upon the olive-purple leaflets as if paralyzed for a moment, shrunk up, as it were, into herself in a curdling terror, dashed the basket from her, and fell back senseless, with a faint cry which chilled the blood of the startled listeners at her bedside.

"Take it away!—take it away!—quick!" said Old Sophy, as she hastened to her mistress's pillow. "It 's the leaves of the tree that was always death to her,—take it away! She can't live wi' it in the room!"

The poor old woman began chafing Elsie's hands, and Helen to try to rouse her with hartshorn, while a third frightened attendant gathered up the flowers and the basket and carried them out of the apartment, She came to herself after a time, but exhausted and then wandering. In her delirium she talked constantly as if she were in a cave, with such exactness of circumstance that Helen could not doubt at all that she had some such retreat among the rocks of The Mountain, probably fitted up in her own fantastic way, where she sometimes hid herself from all human eyes, and of the entrance to which she alone possessed the secret.

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All this passed away, and left her, of course, weaker than before. But this was not the only influence the unexplained paroxysm had left behind it. From this time forward there was a change in her whole expression and her manner. The shadows ceased flitting over her features, and the old woman, who watched her from day to day and from hour to hour as a mother watches her child, saw the likeness she bore to her mother coming forth more and more, as the cold glitter died out of the diamond eyes, and the stormy scowl disappeared from the dark brows and low forehead.

With all the kindness and indulgence her father had bestowed upon her, Elsie had never felt that he loved her. The reader knows well enough what fatal recollections and associations had frozen up the springs of natural affection in his breast. There was nothing in the world he would not do for Elsie. He had sacrificed his whole life to her. His very seeming carelessness about restraining her was all calculated; he knew that restraint would produce nothing but utter alienation. Just so far as she allowed him, he shared her studies, her few pleasures, her thoughts; but she was essentially solitary and uncommunicative. No person, as was said long ago, could judge him, because his task was not merely difficult, but simply impracticable to human powers. A nature like Elsie's had necessarily to be studied by itself, and to be followed in its laws where it could not be led.

Every day, at different hours, during the whole of his daughter's illness, Dudley Venner had sat by her, doing all he could to soothe and please her. Always the same thin film of some emotional non-conductor between them; always that kind of habitual regard and family-interest, mingled with the deepest pity on one side and a sort of respect on the other, which never warmed into outward evidences of affection.

It was after this occasion, when she had been so profoundly agitated by a seemingly insignificant cause, that her father and Old Sophy were sitting, one at one side of her bed and one at the other. She had fallen into a light slumber. As they were looking at her, the same thought came into both their minds at the same moment. Old Sophy spoke for both, as she said, in a low voice,

"It 's her mother's look,—it 's her mother's own face right over again,—she never look' so before, the Lord's hand is on her! His will be done!"

When Elsie woke and lifted her languid eyes upon her father's face, she saw in it a tenderness, a depth of affection, such as she remembered at rare moments of her childhood, when she had won him to her by some unusual gleam of sunshine in her fitful temper.

"Elsie, dear," he said, "we were thinking how much your expression was sometimes like that of your sweet mother. If you could but have seen her, so as to remember her!"

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The tender look and tone, the yearning of the daughter's heart for the mother she had never seen, save only with the unfixed, undistinguishing eyes of earliest infancy, perhaps the under-thought that she might soon rejoin her in another state of being,—all came upon her with a sudden overflow of feeling which broke through all the barriers between her heart and her eyes, and Elsie wept. It seemed to her father as if the malign influence—evil spirit it might almost be called—which had pervaded her being, had at last been driven forth or exorcised, and that these tears were at once the sign and the pledge of her redeemed nature. But now she was to be soothed, and not excited. After her tears she slept again, and the look her face wore was peaceful as never before.

Old Sophy met the Doctor at the door and told him all the circumstances connected with the extraordinary attack from which Elsie had suffered. It was the purple leaves, she said. She remembered that Dick once brought home a branch of a tree with some of the same leaves on it, and Elsie screamed and almost fainted then. She, Sophy, had asked her, after she had got quiet, what it was in the leaves that made her feel so bad. Elsie could n't tell her,—did n't like to speak about it,—shuddered whenever Sophy mentioned it.

This did not sound so strangely to the old Doctor as it does to some who listen to his narrative. He had known some curious examples of antipathies, and remembered reading of others still more singular. He had known those who could not bear the presence of a cat, and recollected the story, often told, of a person's hiding one in a chest when one of these sensitive individuals came into the room, so as not to disturb him; but he presently began to sweat and turn pale, and cried out that there must be a cat hid somewhere. He knew people who were poisoned by strawberries, by honey, by different meats, many who could not endure cheese,—some who could not bear the smell of roses. If he had known all the stories in the old books, he would have found that some have swooned and become as dead men at the smell of a rose,—that a stout soldier has been known to turn and run at the sight or smell of rue,—that cassia and even olive-oil have produced deadly faintings in certain. individuals,—in short, that almost everything has seemed to be a poison to somebody.

"Bring me that basket, Sophy," said the old Doctor, "if you can find it."

Sophy brought it to him,—for he had not yet entered Elsie's apartment.

"These purple leaves are from the white ash," he said. "You don't know the notion that people commonly have about that tree, Sophy?"

"I know they say the Ugly Things never go where the white ash grows," Sophy answered. "Oh, Doctor dear, what I'm thinkin' of a'n't true, is it?"

The Doctor smiled sadly, but did not answer. He went directly to Elsie's room. Nobody would have known by his manner that he saw any special change in his patient. He spoke with her as usual, made some slight alteration in his prescriptions, and left the room with a kind, cheerful look. He met her father on the stairs.

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"Is it as I thought?" said Dudley Veneer.

"There is everything to fear," the Doctor said, "and not much, I am afraid, to hope. Does not her face recall to you one that you remember, as never before?"

"Yes," her father answered,—“oh, yes! What is the meaning of this change which has come over her features, and her voice, her temper, her whole being? Tell me, oh, tell me, what is it? Can it be that the curse is passing away, and my daughter is to be restored to me,—such as her mother would have had her,—such as her mother was?"

"Walk out with me into the garden," the Doctor said, "and I will tell you all I know and all I think about this great mystery of Elsie's life."

They walked out together, and the Doctor began: "She has lived a double being, as it were,—the consequence of the blight which fell upon her in the dim period before consciousness. You can see what she might have been but for this. You know that for these eighteen years her whole existence has taken its character from that influence which we need not name. But you will remember that few of the lower forms of life last as human beings do; and thus it might have been hoped and trusted with some show of reason, as I have always suspected you hoped and trusted, perhaps more confidently than myself, that the lower nature which had become engrafted on the higher would die out and leave the real woman's life she inherited to outlive this accidental principle which had so poisoned her childhood and youth. I believe it is so dying out; but I am afraid,—yes, I must say it, I fear it has involved the centres of life in its own decay. There is hardly any pulse at Elsie's wrist; no stimulants seem to rouse her; and it looks as if life were slowly retreating inwards, so that by-and-by she will sleep as those who lie down in the cold and never wake."

Strange as it may seem, her father heard all this not without deep sorrow, and such marks of it as his thoughtful and tranquil nature, long schooled by suffering, claimed or permitted, but with a resignation itself the measure of his past trials. Dear as his daughter might become to him, all he dared to ask of Heaven was that she might be restored to that truer self which lay beneath her false and adventitious being. If he could once see that the icy lustre in her eyes had become a soft, calm light,—that her soul was at peace with all about her and with Him; above,—this crumb from the children's table was enough for him, as it was for the Syro-Phoenician woman who asked that the dark spirit might go out from her daughter.

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There was little change the next day, until all at once she said in a clear voice that she should like to see her master at the school, Mr. Langdon. He came accordingly, and took the place of Helen at her bedside. It seemed as if Elsie had forgotten the last scene with him. Might it be that pride had come in, and she had sent for him only to show how superior she had grown to the weakness which had betrayed her into that extraordinary request, so contrary to the instincts and usages of her sex? Or was it that the singular change which had come over her had involved her passionate fancy for him and swept it away with her other habits of thought and feeling? Or could it be that she felt that all earthly interests were becoming of little account to her, and wished to place herself right with one to whom she had displayed a wayward movement of her unbalanced imagination? She welcomed Mr. Bernard as quietly as she had received Helen Darley. He colored at the recollection of that last scene, when he came into her presence; but she smiled with perfect tranquillity. She did not speak to him of any apprehension; but he saw that she looked upon herself as doomed. So friendly, yet so calm did she seem through all their interview, that Mr. Bernard could only look back upon her manifestation of feeling towards him on their walk from the school as a vagary of a mind laboring under some unnatural excitement, and wholly at variance with the true character of Elsie Venner as he saw her before him in her subdued, yet singular beauty. He looked with almost scientific closeness of observation into the diamond eyes; but that peculiar light which he knew so well was not there. She was the same in one sense as on that first day when he had seen her coiling and uncoiling her golden chain; yet how different in every aspect which revealed her state of mind and emotion! Something of tenderness there was, perhaps, in her tone towards him; she would not have sent for him, had she not felt more than an ordinary interest in him. But through the whole of his visit she never lost her gracious self-possession. The Dudley race might well be proud of the last of its daughters, as she lay dying, but unconquered by the feeling of the present or the fear of the future.

As for Mr. Bernard, he found it very hard to look upon her, and listen to her unmoved. There was nothing that reminded him of the stormy—browed, almost savage girl he remembered in her fierce loveliness,—nothing of all her singularities of air and of costume. Nothing? Yes, one thing. Weak and suffering as she was, she had never parted with one particular ornament, such as a sick person would naturally, as it might be supposed, get rid of at once. The golden cord which she wore round her neck at the great party was still there. A bracelet was lying by her pillow; she had unclasped it from her wrist.

Before Mr. Bernard left her, she said,

“I shall never see you again. Some time or other, perhaps, you will mention my name to one whom you love. Give her this from your scholar and friend Elsie.”

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He took the bracelet, raised her hand to his lips, then turned his face away; in that moment he was the weaker of the two.

“Good-bye,” she said; “thank you for coming.”

His voice died away in his throat, as he tried to answer her. She followed him with her eyes as he passed from her sight through the door, and when it closed after him sobbed tremulously once or twice, but stilled herself, and met Helen, as she entered, with a composed countenance.

“I have had a very pleasant visit from Mr. Langdon,” Elsie said. “Sit by me, Helen, awhile without speaking; I should like to sleep, if I can,—and to dream.”

CHAPTER XXX.

The golden cord is loosed.

The Reverend Chauncy Fairweather, hearing that his parishioner's daughter, Elsie, was very ill, could do nothing less than come to the mansion-house and tender such consolations as he was master of. It was rather remarkable that the old Doctor did not exactly approve of his visit. He thought that company of every sort might be injurious in her weak state. He was of opinion that Mr. Fairweather, though greatly interested in religious matters, was not the most sympathetic person that could be found; in fact, the old Doctor thought he was too much taken up with his own interests for eternity to give himself quite 'so heartily to the need of other people as some persons got up on a rather more generous scale (our good neighbor Dr. Honeywood, for instance) could do. However, all these things had better be arranged to suit her wants; if she would like to talk with a clergyman, she had a great deal better see one as often as she liked, and run the risk of the excitement, than have a hidden wish for such a visit and perhaps find herself too weak to see him by-and-by.

The old Doctor knew by sad experience that dreadful mistake against which all medical practitioners should be warned. His experience may well be a guide for others. Do not overlook the desire for spiritual advice and consolation which patients sometimes feel, and, with the frightful *mauvaise honte* peculiar to Protestantism, alone among all human beliefs, are ashamed to tell. As a part of medical treatment, it is the physician's business to detect the hidden longing for the food of the soul, as much as for any form of bodily nourishment. Especially in the higher walks of society, where this unutterably miserable false shame of Protestantism acts in proportion to the general acuteness of the cultivated sensibilities, let no unwillingness to suggest the sick person's real need suffer him to languish between his want and his morbid sensitiveness. What an infinite advantage the Mussulmans and the Catholics have over many of our more exclusively

spiritual sects in the way they keep their religion always by them and never blush for it!
And besides this spiritual longing, we should never forget that

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"On some fond breast the parting soul relies,"

and the minister of religion, in addition to the sympathetic nature which we have a right to demand in him, has trained himself to the art of entering into the feelings of others.

The reader must pardon this digression, which introduces the visit of the Reverend Chauncy Fairweather to Elsie Veneer. It was mentioned to her that he would like to call and see how she was, and she consented,—not with much apparent interest, for she had reasons of her own for not feeling any very deep conviction of his sympathy for persons in sorrow. But he came, and worked the conversation round to religion, and confused her with his hybrid notions, half made up of what he had been believing and teaching all his life, and half of the new doctrines which he had veneered upon the surface of his old belief. He got so far as to make a prayer with her,—a cool, well-guarded prayer, which compromised his faith as little as possible, and which, if devotion were a game played against Providence, might have been considered a cautious and sagacious move.

When he had gone, Elsie called Old Sophy to her.

"Sophy," she said, "don't let them send that cold hearted man to me any more. If your old minister comes—to see you, I should like to hear him talk. He looks as if he cared for everybody, and would care for me. And, Sophy, if I should die one of these days, I should like to have that old minister come and say whatever is to be said over me. It would comfort Dudley more, I know, than to have that hard man here, when you're in trouble, for some of you will be sorry when I'm gone,—won't you, Sophy?"

The poor old black woman could not stand this question. The cold minister had frozen Elsie until she felt as if nobody cared for her or would regret her,—and her question had betrayed this momentary feeling.

"Don' talk so! don' talk so, darlin'!" she cried, passionately. "When you go, Ol' Sophy'll go; 'n' where you go, Ol' Sophy'll go: 'n' we'll both go t' th' place where th' Lord takes care of all his children, whether their faces are white or black. Oh, darlin', darlin'! if th' Lord should let me die firs', you shall fin' all ready for you when you come after me. On'y don' go 'n' leave poor Ol' Sophy all 'lone in th' world!"

Helen came in at this moment and quieted the old woman with a look. Such scenes were just what were most dangerous, in the state in which Elsie was lying: but that is one of the ways in which an affectionate friend sometimes unconsciously wears out the life which a hired nurse, thinking of nothing but her regular duties and her wages, would have spared from all emotional fatigue.

The change which had come over Elsie's disposition was itself the cause of new excitements. How was it possible that her father could keep away from her, now that



she was coming back to the nature and the very look of her mother, the bride of his youth? How was it possible to refuse her, when she said to Old Sophy, that she should like to have her minister come in and sit by her, even though his presence might perhaps prove a new source of excitement?

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But the Reverend Doctor did come and sit by her, and spoke such soothing words to her, words of such peace and consolation, that from that hour she was tranquil as never before. All true hearts are alike in the hour of need; the Catholic has a reserved fund of faith for his fellow-creature's trying moment, and the Calvinist reveals those springs of human brotherhood and charity in his soul which are only covered over by the iron tables inscribed with the harder dogmas of his creed. It was enough that the Reverend Doctor knew all Elsie's history. He could not judge her by any formula, like those which have been moulded by past ages out of their ignorance. He did not talk with her as if she were an outside sinner worse than himself. He found a bruised and languishing soul, and bound up its wounds. A blessed office,—one which is confined to no sect or creed, but which good men in all times, under various names and with varying ministries, to suit the need of each age, of each race, of each individual soul, have come forward to discharge for their suffering fellow-creatures.

After this there was little change in Elsie, except that her heart beat more feebly every day,—so that the old Doctor himself, with all his experience, could see nothing to account for the gradual failing of the powers of life, and yet could find no remedy which seemed to arrest its progress in the smallest degree.

"Be very careful," he said, "that she is not allowed to make any muscular exertion. Any such effort, when a person is so enfeebled, may stop the heart in a moment; and if it stops, it will never move again."

Helen enforced this rule with the greatest care. Elsie was hardly allowed to move her hand or to speak above a whisper. It seemed to be mainly the question now, whether this trembling flame of life would be blown out by some light breath of air, or whether it could be so nursed and sheltered by the hollow of these watchful hands that it would have a chance to kindle to its natural brightness.

—Her father came in to sit with her in the evening. He had never talked so freely with her as during the hour he had passed at her bedside, telling her little circumstances of her mother's life, living over with her all that was pleasant in the past, and trying to encourage her with some cheerful gleams of hope for the future. A faint smile played over her face, but she did not answer his encouraging suggestions. The hour came for him to leave her with those who watched by her.

"Good-night, my dear child," he said, and stooping down, kissed her cheek.

Elsie rose by a sudden effort, threw her arms round his neck, kissed him, and said, "Good-night, my dear father!"

The suddenness of her movement had taken him by surprise, or he would have checked so dangerous an effort. It was too late now. Her arms slid away from him like

lifeless weights,—her head fell back upon her pillow,—along sigh breathed through her lips.

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"She is faint," said Helen, doubtfully; "bring me the hartshorn, Sophy."

The old woman had started from her place, and was now leaning over her, looking in her face, and listening for the sound of her breathing.

"She 's dead! Elsie 's dead! My darlin 's dead!" she cried aloud, filling the room with her utterance of anguish.

Dudley Venner drew her away and silenced her with a voice of authority, while Helen and an assistant plied their restoratives. It was all in vain.

The solemn tidings passed from the chamber of death through the family. The daughter, the hope of that old and honored house, was dead in the freshness of her youth, and the home of its solitary representative was hereafter doubly desolate.

A messenger rode hastily out of the avenue. A little after this the people of the village and the outlying farm-houses were startled by the sound of a bell.

One,—two,—three,—four,

They stopped in every house, as far as the wavering vibrations reached, and listened—

five,—six,—seven,—

It was not the little child which had been lying so long at the point of death; that could not be more than three or four years old—

eight,—nine,—ten,—and so on to fifteen, sixteen,—seventeen, —eighteen—

The pulsations seemed to keep on,—but it was the brain, and not the bell, that was throbbing now.

"Elsie 's dead!" was the exclamation at a hundred firesides.

"Eighteen year old," said old Widow Peake, rising from her chair. "Eighteen year ago I laid two gold eagles on her mother's eyes,—he wouldn't have anything but gold touch her eyelids,—and now Elsie's to be straightened,—the Lord have mercy on her poor sinful soul!"

Dudley Venner prayed that night that he might be forgiven, if he had failed in any act of duty or kindness to this unfortunate child of his, now freed from all the woes born with her and so long poisoning her soul. He thanked God for the brief interval of peace which had been granted her, for the sweet communion they had enjoyed in these last days, and for the hope of meeting her with that other lost friend in a better world.



Helen mingled a few broken thanks and petitions with her tears: thanks that she had been permitted to share the last days and hours of this poor sister in sorrow; petitions that the grief of bereavement might be lightened to the lonely parent and the faithful old servant.

Old Sophy said almost nothing, but sat day and night by her dead darling. But sometimes her anguish would find an outlet in strange sounds, something between a cry and a musical note,—such as noise had ever heard her utter before. These were old remembrances surging up from her childish days, coming through her mother from the cannibal chief, her grandfather,—death-wails, such as they sing in the mountains of Western Africa, when they see the fires on distant hill-sides and know that their own wives and children are undergoing the fate of captives.

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The time came when Elsie was to be laid by her mother in the small square marked by the white stone.

It was not unwillingly that the Reverend Chauncy Fairweather had relinquished the duty of conducting the service to the Reverend Doctor Honeywood, in accordance with Elsie's request. He could not, by any reasoning, reconcile his present way of thinking with a hope for the future of his unfortunate parishioner. Any good old Roman Catholic priest, born and bred to his faith and his business, would have found a loophole into some kind of heaven for her, by virtue of his doctrine of "invincible ignorance," or other special proviso; but a recent convert cannot enter into the working conditions of his new creed. Beliefs must be lived in for a good while, before they accommodate themselves to the soul's wants, and wear loose enough to be comfortable.

The Reverend Doctor had no such scruples. Like thousands of those who are classed nominally with the despairing believers, he had never prayed over a departed brother or sister without feeling and expressing a guarded hope that there was mercy in store for the poor sinner, whom parents, wives, children, brothers and sisters could not bear to give up to utter ruin without a word,—and would not, as he knew full well, in virtue of that human love and sympathy which nothing can ever extinguish. And in this poor Elsie's history he could read nothing which the tears of the recording angel might not wash away. As the good physician of the place knew the diseases that assailed the bodies of men and women, so he had learned the mysteries of the sickness of the soul.

So many wished to look upon Elsie's face once more, that her father would not deny them; nay, he was pleased that those who remembered her living should see her in the still beauty of death. Helen and those with her arrayed her for this farewell-view. All was ready for the sad or curious eyes which were to look upon her. There 'was no painful change to be concealed by any artifice. Even her round neck was left uncovered, that she might be more like one who slept. Only the golden cord was left in its place: some searching eye might detect a trace of that birthmark which it was whispered she had always worn a necklace to conceal.

At the last moment, when all the preparations were completed, Old Sophy stooped over her, and, with trembling hand, loosed the golden cord. She looked intently; for some little space: there was no shade nor blemish where the ring of gold had encircled her throat. She took it gently away and laid it in the casket which held her ornaments.

"The Lord be praised!" the old woman cried, aloud. "He has taken away the mark that was on her; she's fit to meet his holy angels now!"

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So Elsie lay for hours in the great room, in a kind of state, with flowers all about her,—her black hair braided as in life,—her brows smooth, as if they had never known the scowl of passion,—and on her lips the faint smile with which she had uttered her last “Good—night.” The young girls from the school looked at her, one after another, and passed on, sobbing, carrying in their hearts the picture that would be with them all their days. The great people of the place were all there with their silent sympathy. The lesser kind of gentry, and many of the plainer folk of the village, half-pleased to find themselves passing beneath the stately portico of the ancient mansion-house, crowded in, until the ample rooms were overflowing. All the friends whose acquaintance we have made were there, and many from remoter villages and towns.

There was a deep silence at last. The hour had come for the parting words to be spoken over the dead. The good old minister’s voice rose out of the stillness, subdued and tremulous at first, but growing firmer and clearer as he went on, until it reached the ears of the visitors who were in the far, desolate chambers, looking at the pictured hangings and the old dusty portraits. He did not tell her story in his prayer. He only spoke of our dear departed sister as one of many whom Providence in its wisdom has seen fit to bring under bondage from their cradles. It was not for us to judge them by any standard of our own. He who made the heart alone knew the infirmities it inherited or acquired. For all that our dear sister had presented that was interesting and attractive in her character we were to be grateful; for whatever was dark or inexplicable we must trust that the deep shadow which rested on the twilight dawn of her being might render a reason before the bar of Omniscience; for the grace which had lightened her last days we should pour out our hearts in thankful acknowledgment. From the life and the death of this our dear sister we should learn a lesson of patience with our fellow-creatures in their inborn peculiarities, of charity in judging what seem to us wilful faults of character, of hope and trust, that, by sickness or affliction, or such inevitable discipline as life must always bring with it, if by no gentler means, the soul which had been left by Nature to wander into the path of error and of suffering might be reclaimed and restored to its true aim, and so led on by divine grace to its eternal welfare. He closed his prayer by commending each member of the afflicted family to the divine blessing.

Then all at once rose the clear sound of the girls’ voices, in the sweet, sad melody of a funeral hymn,—one of those which Elsie had marked, as if prophetically, among her own favorites.

And so they laid her in the earth, and showered down flowers upon her, and filled her grave, and covered it with green sods. By the side of it was another oblong ridge, with a white stone standing at its head. Mr. Bernard looked upon it, as he came close to the place where Elsie was laid, and read the inscription,

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Catalina

Wife to Dudley Venner

Died

October 13th 1840

Aged XX years

A gentle rain fell on the turf after it was laid. This was the beginning of a long and dreary autumnal storm, a deferred "equinoctial," as many considered it. The mountain streams were all swollen and turbulent, and the steep declivities were furrowed in every direction by new channels. It made the house seem doubly desolate to hear the wind howling and the rain beating upon the roofs. The poor relation who was staying at the house would insist on Helen's remaining a few days: Old Sophy was in such a condition, that it kept her in continual anxiety, and there were many cares which Helen could take off from her.

The old black woman's life was buried in her darling's grave. She did nothing but moan and lament for her. At night she was restless, and would get up and wander to Elsie's apartment and look for her and call her by name. At other times she would lie awake and listen to the wind and the rain,—sometimes with such a wild look upon her face, and with such sudden starts and exclamations, that it seemed as if she heard spirit-voices and were answering the whispers of unseen visitants. With all this were mingled hints of her old superstition,—forebodings of something fearful about to happen,—perhaps the great final catastrophe of all things, according to the prediction current in the kitchens of Rockland.

"Hark!" Old Sophy would say,—“don' you hear th' crackin' 'n' th' snappin' up in Th' Mountain, 'n' th' rollin' o' th' big stones? The' 's somethin' stirrin' among th' rocks; I hear th' soun' of it in th' night, when th' wind has stopped blowin'. Oh, stay by me a little while, Miss Darlin'! stay by me! for it's th' Las' Day, maybe, that's close on us, 'n' I feel as if I could n' meet th' Lord all alone!"

It was curious,—but Helen did certainly recognize sounds, during the lull of the storm, which were not of falling rain or running streams,—short snapping sounds, as of tense cords breaking,—long uneven sounds, as of masses rolling down steep declivities. But the morning came as usual; and as the others said nothing of these singular noises, Helen did not think it necessary to speak of them. All day long she and the humble relative of Elsie's mother, who had appeared as poor relations are wont to in the great prizes of life, were busy in arranging the disordered house, and looking over the various objects which Elsie's singular tastes had brought together, to dispose of them as her father might direct. They all met together at the usual hour for tea. One of the servants came in, looking very blank, and said to the poor relation,

“The well is gone dry; we have nothing but rainwater.”

Dudley Venner’s countenance changed; he sprang to, his feet and went to—assure himself of the fact, and, if he could, of the reason of it. For a well to dry up during such a rain-storm was extraordinary,—it was ominous.

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He came back, looking very anxious.

"Did any of you notice any remarkable sounds last night," he said,— "or this morning? Hark! do you hear anything now?"

They listened in perfect silence for a few moments. Then there came a short cracking sound, and two or three snaps, as of parting cords.

Dudley Venner called all his household together.

"We are in danger here, as I think, to-night," he said,— "not very great danger, perhaps, but it is a risk I do not wish you to run. These heavy rains have loosed some of the rocks above, and they may come down and endanger the house. Harness the horses, Elbridge, and take all the family away. Miss Darley will go to the Institute; the others will pass the night at the Mountain House. I shall stay here, myself: it is not at all likely that anything will come of these warnings; but if there should, I choose to be there and take my chance."

It needs little, generally, to frighten servants, and they were all ready enough to go. The poor relation was one of the timid sort, and was terribly uneasy to be got out of the house. This left no alternative, of course, for Helen, but to go also. They all urged upon Dudley Veneer to go with them: if there was danger, why should he remain to risk it, when he sent away the others?

Old Sophy said nothing until the time came for her to go with the second of Elbridge's carriage-loads.

"Come, Sophy," said Dudley Veneer, "get your things and go. They will take good care of you at the Mountain House; and when we have made sure that there is no real danger, you shall come back at once."

"No, Masse!" Sophy answered. "I've seen Elsie into th' ground, 'n' I a'n't goin' away to come back 'n' fin' Masse Veneer buried under th' rocks. My darlin' 's gone; 'n' now, if Masse goes, 'n' th' of place goes, it's time for Ol' Sophy to go, too. No, Masse Veneer, we'll both stay in th' of mansion 'n' wait for th' Lord!"

Nothing could change the old woman's determination; and her master, who only feared, but did not really expect the long-deferred catastrophe, was obliged to consent to her staying. The sudden drying of the well at such a time was the most alarming sign; for he remembered that the same thing had been observed just before great mountain-slides. This long rain, too, was just the kind of cause which was likely to loosen the strata of rock piled up in the ledges; if the dreaded event should ever come to pass, it would be at such a time.

He paced his chamber uneasily until long past midnight. If the morning came without accident, he meant to have a careful examination made of all the rents and fissures above, of their direction and extent, and especially whether, in case of a mountain-slide, the huge masses would be like to reach so far to the east and so low down the declivity as the mansion.

At two o'clock in the morning he was dozing in his chair. Old Sophy had lain down on her bed, and was muttering in troubled dreams.

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All at once a loud crash seemed to rend the very heavens above them: a crack as of the thunder that follows close upon the bolt,—a rending and crashing as of a forest snapped through all its stems, torn, twisted, splintered, dragged with all its ragged boughs into one chaotic ruin. The ground trembled under them as in an earthquake; the old mansion shuddered so that all its windows chattered in their casements; the great chimney shook off its heavy cap-stones, which came down on the roof with resounding concussions; and the echoes of The Mountain roared and bellowed in long reduplication, as if its whole foundations were rent, and this were the terrible voice of its dissolution.

Dudley Venner rose from his chair, folded his arms, and awaited his fate. There was no knowing where to look for safety; and he remembered too well the story of the family that was lost by rushing out of the house, and so hurrying into the very jaws of death.

He had stood thus but for a moment, when he heard the voice of Old Sophy in a wild cry of terror:

“It’s th’ Las’ Day! It’s th’ Las’ Day! The Lord is comin’ to take us all!”

“Sophy!” he called; but she did not hear him or heed him, and rushed out of the house.

The worst danger was over. If they were to be destroyed, it would necessarily be in a few seconds from the first thrill of the terrible convulsion. He waited in awful suspense, but calm. Not more than one or two minutes could have passed before the frightful tumult and all its sounding echoes had ceased. He called Old Sophy; but she did not answer. He went to the western window and looked forth into the darkness. He could not distinguish the outlines of the landscape, but the white stone was clearly visible, and by its side the new-made mound. Nay, what was that which obscured its outline, in shape like a human figure? He flung open the window and sprang through. It was all that there was left of poor Old Sophy, stretched out lifeless, upon her darling’s grave.

He had scarcely composed her limbs and drawn the sheet over her, when the neighbors began to arrive from all directions. Each was expecting to hear of houses overwhelmed and families destroyed; but each came with the story that his own household was safe. It was not until the morning dawned that the true nature and extent of the sudden movement was ascertained. A great seam had opened above the long cliff, and the terrible Rattlesnake Ledge, with all its envenomed reptiles, its dark fissures and black caverns, was buried forever beneath a mighty incumbent mass of ruin.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Mr. Silas Peckham renders his account.

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The morning rose clear and bright. The long storm was over, and the calm autumnal sunshine was now to return, with all its infinite repose and sweetness. With the earliest dawn exploring parties were out in every direction along the southern slope of The Mountain, tracing the ravages of the great slide and the track it had followed. It proved to be not so much a slide as the breaking off and falling of a vast line of cliff, including the dreaded Ledge. It had folded over like the leaves of a half-opened book when they close, crushing the trees below, piling its ruins in a glacis at the foot of what had been the overhanging wall of the cliff, and filling up that deep cavity above the mansion-house which bore the ill-omened name of Dead Man's Hollow. This it was which had saved the Dudley mansion. The falling masses, or huge fragments breaking off from them, would have swept the house and all around it to destruction but for this deep shelving dell, into which the stream of ruin was happily directed. It was, indeed, one of Nature's conservative revolutions; for the fallen masses made a kind of shelf, which interposed a level break between the inclined planes above and below it, so that the nightmare-fancies of the dwellers in the Dudley mansion, and in many other residences under the shadow of The Mountain, need not keep them lying awake hereafter to listen for the snapping of roots and the splitting of the rocks above them.

Twenty-four hours after the falling of the cliff, it seemed as if it had happened ages ago. The new fact had fitted itself in with all the old predictions, forebodings, fears, and acquired the solidarity belonging to all events which have slipped out of the fingers of Time and dissolved in the antecedent eternity.

Old Sophy was lying dead in the Dudley mansion. If there were tears shed for her, they could not be bitter ones; for she had lived out her full measure of days, and gone—who could help fondly believing it?—to rejoin her beloved mistress. They made a place for her at the foot of the two mounds. It was thus she would have chosen to sleep, and not to have wronged her humble devotion in life by asking to lie at the side of those whom she had served so long and faithfully. There were very few present at the simple ceremony. Helen Darley was one of these few. The old black woman had been her companion in all the kind offices of which she had been the ministering angel to Elsie.

After it was all over, Helen was leaving with the rest, when Dudley Veneer begged her to stay a little, and he would send her back: it was a long walk; besides, he wished to say some things to her, which he had not had the opportunity of speaking. Of course Helen could not refuse him; there must be many thoughts coming into his mind which he would wish to share with her who had known his daughter so long and been with her in her last days.

She returned into the great parlor with the wrought cornices and the medallion-portraits on the ceiling.

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"I am now alone in the world," Dudley Veneer said.

Helen must have known that before he spoke. But the tone in which he said it had so much meaning, that she could not find a word to answer him with. They sat in silence, which the old tall clock counted out in long seconds; but it was silence which meant more than any words they had ever spoken.

"Alone in the world. Helen, the freshness of my life is gone, and there is little left of the few graces which in my younger days might have fitted me to win the love of women. Listen to me,—kindly, if you can; forgive me, at least. Half my life has been passed in constant fear and anguish, without any near friend to share my trials. My task is done now; my fears have ceased to prey upon me; the sharpness of early sorrows has yielded something of its edge to time. You have bound me to you by gratitude in the tender care you have taken of my poor child. More than this. I must tell you all now, out of the depth of this trouble through which I am passing. I have loved you from the moment we first met; and if my life has anything left worth accepting, it is yours. Will you take the offered gift?"

Helen looked in his face, surprised, bewildered.

"This is not for me,—not for me," she said. "I am but a poor faded flower, not worth the gathering, of such a one as you. No, no,—I have been bred to humble toil all my days, and I could not be to you what you ought to ask. I am accustomed to a kind of loneliness and self-dependence. I have seen nothing, almost, of the world, such as you were born to move in. Leave me to my obscure place and duties; I shall at least have peace;—and you—you will surely find in due time some one better fitted by Nature and training to make you happy."

"No, Miss Darley!" Dudley Venner said, almost sternly. "You must not speak to a man, who has lived through my experiences, of looking about for a new choice after his heart has once chosen. Say that you can never love me; say that I have lived too long to share your young life; say that sorrow has left nothing in me for Love to find his pleasure in; but do not mock me with the hope of a new affection for some unknown object. The first look of yours brought me to your side. The first tone of your voice sunk into my heart. From this moment my life must wither out or bloom anew. My home is desolate. Come under my roof and make it bright once more,—share my life with me,—or I shall give the halls of the old mansion to the bats and the owls, and wander forth alone without a hope or a friend!"

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To find herself with a man's future at the disposal of a single word of hers!—a man like this, too, with a fascination for her against which she had tried to shut her heart, feeling that he lived in another sphere than hers, working as she was for her bread a poor operative in the factory of a hard master and jealous overseer, the salaried drudge of Mr. Silas Peckham! Why, she had thought he was grateful to her as a friend of his daughter; she had even pleased herself with the feeling that he liked her, in her humble place, as a woman of some cultivation and many sympathetic points of relation with himself; but that he loved her,—that this deep, fine nature, in a man so far removed from her in outward circumstance, should have found its counterpart in one whom life had treated so coldly as herself,—that Dudley Venner should stake his happiness on a breath of hers,—poor Helen Darley's,—it was all a surprise, a confusion, a kind of fear not wholly fearful. Ah, me! women know what it is, that mist over the eyes, that trembling in the limbs, that faltering of the voice, that sweet, shame-faced, unspoken confession of weakness which does not wish to be strong, that sudden overflow in the soul where thoughts loose their hold on each other and swim single and helpless in the flood of emotion,—women know what it is!

No doubt she was a little frightened and a good deal bewildered, and that her sympathies were warmly excited for a friend to whom she had been brought so near, and whose loneliness she saw and pitied. She lost that calm self-possession she had hoped to maintain.

"If I thought that I could make you happy,—if I should speak from my heart, and not my reason,—I am but a weak woman,—yet if I can be to you—What can I say?"

What more could this poor, dear Helen say?

"Elbridge, harness the horses and take Miss Darley back to the school."

What conversation had taken place since Helen's rhetorical failure is not recorded in the minutes from which this narrative is constructed. But when the man who had been summoned had gone to get the carriage ready, Helen resumed something she had been speaking of.

"Not for the world. Everything must go on just as it has gone on, for the present. There are proprieties to be consulted. I cannot be hard with you, that out of your very affliction has sprung this—this well—you must name it for me,—but the world will never listen to explanations. I am to be Helen Darley, lady assistant in Mr. Silas Peckham's school, as long as I see fit to hold my office. And I mean to attend to my scholars just as before; so that I shall have very little time for visiting or seeing company. I believe, though, you are one of the Trustees and a Member of the Examining Committee; so that, if you should happen to visit the school, I shall try to be civil to you."

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Every lady sees, of course, that Helen was quite right; but perhaps here and there one will think that Dudley Venner was all wrong,—that he was too hasty,—that he should have been too full of his recent grief for such a confession as he has just made, and the passion from which it sprung. Perhaps they do not understand the sudden recoil of a strong nature long compressed. Perhaps they have not studied the mystery of allotropism in the emotions of the human heart. Go to the nearest chemist and ask him to show you some of the dark-red phosphorus which will not burn without fierce heating, but at 500 deg. Fahrenheit, changes back again to the inflammable substance we know so well. Grief seems more like ashes than like fire; but as grief has been love once, so it may become love again. This is emotional allotropism.

Helen rode back to the Institute and inquired for Mr. Peckham. She had not seen him during the brief interval between her departure from the mansion-house and her return to Old Sophy's funeral. There were various questions about the school she wished to ask.

"Oh, how's your haalth, Miss Darley?" Silas began. "We've missed you consid'able. Glad to see you back at the post of dooty. Hope the Squire treated you hahnsomely,—liberal pecooniary compensation,—hey? A'n't much of a loser, I guess, by acceptin' his propositions?"

Helen blushed at this last question, as if Silas had meant something by it beyond asking what money she had received; but his own double-meaning expression and her blush were too nice points for him to have taken cognizance of. He was engaged in a mental calculation as to the amount of the deduction he should make under the head of "damage to the institootion,"—this depending somewhat on that of the "pecooniary compensation" she might have received for her services as the friend of Elsie Venner.

So Helen slid back at once into her routine, the same faithful, patient creature she had always been. But what was this new light which seemed to have kindled in her eyes? What was this look of peace, which nothing could disturb, which smiled serenely through all the little meannesses with which the daily life of the educational factory surrounded her, which not only made her seem resigned, but overflowed all her features with a thoughtful, subdued happiness? Mr. Bernard did not know,—perhaps he did not guess. The inmates of the Dudley mansion were not scandalized by any mysterious visits of a veiled or unveiled lady. The vibrating tongues of the "female youth" of the Institute were not set in motion by the standing of an equipage at the gate, waiting for their lady-teacher. The servants at the mansion did not convey numerous letters with superscriptions in a bold, manly hand, sealed with the arms of a well-known house, and directed to Miss Helen Darley; nor, on the other hand, did Hiram, the man from the lean streak in New Hampshire, carry sweet-smelling, rose-hued, many-layered, criss-crossed, fine-stitch-lettered packages of note-paper directed to Dudley Venner, Esq., and all too scanty to hold that incredible expansion of the famous three words which a

woman was born to say,—that perpetual miracle which astonishes all the go-betweens who wear their shoes out in carrying a woman's infinite variations on the theme—

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"I love you."

But the reader must remember that there are walks in country-towns where people are liable to meet by accident, and that the hollow of an old tree has served the purpose of a post-office sometimes; so that he has her choice (to divide the pronouns impartially) of various hypotheses to account for the new glory of happiness which seemed to have irradiated our poor Helen's features, as if her dreary life were awakening in the dawn of a blessed future.

With all the alleviations which have been hinted at, Mr. Dudley Venner thought that the days and the weeks had never moved so slowly as through the last period of the autumn that was passing. Elsie had been a perpetual source of anxiety to him, but still she had been a companion. He could not mourn for her; for he felt that she was safer with her mother, in that world where there are no more sorrows and dangers, than she could have been with him. But as he sat at his window and looked at the three mounds, the loneliness of the great house made it seem more like the sepulchre than these narrow dwellings where his beloved and her daughter lay close to each other, side by side,—Catalina, the bride of his youth, and Elsie, the child whom he had nurtured, with poor Old Sophy, who had followed them like a black shadow, at their feet, under the same soft turf, sprinkled with the brown autumnal leaves. It was not good for him to be thus alone. How should he ever live through the long months of November and December?

The months of November and December did, in some way or other, get rid of themselves at last, bringing with them the usual events of village-life and a few unusual ones. Some of the geologists had been up to look at the great slide, of which they gave those prolix accounts which everybody remembers who read the scientific journals of the time. The engineers reported that there was little probability of any further convulsion along the line of rocks which overhung the more thickly settled part of the town. The naturalists drew up a paper on the "Probable Extinction of the *Crotalus Durissus* in the Township of Rockland." The engagement of the Widow Rowens to a Little Millionville merchant was announced,—"Sudding 'n' onexpected," Widow Leech said,—"*waal*thy, or she wouldn't ha' looked at him,—fifty year old, if he is a day, 'n' hu'n't got a white hair in his head." The Reverend Chauncy Fairweather had publicly announced that he was going to join the Roman Catholic communion,—not so much to the surprise or consternation of the religious world as he had supposed. Several old ladies forthwith proclaimed their intention of following him; but, as one or two of them were deaf, and another had been threatened with an attack of that mild, but obstinate complaint, *dementia senilis*, many thought it was not so much the force of his arguments as a kind of tendency to jump as the bellwether jumps, well known in flocks not included in the Christian

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fold. His bereaved congregation immediately began pulling candidates on and off, like new boots, on trial. Some pinched in tender places; some were too loose; some were too square-toed; some were too coarse, and did n't please; some were too thin, and would n't last;—in short, they could n't possibly find a fit. At last, people began to drop in to hear old Doctor Honeywood. They were quite surprised to find what a human old gentleman he was, and went back and told the others, that, instead of being a case of confluent sectarianism, as they supposed, the good old minister had been so well vaccinated with charitable virus that he was now a true, open-souled Christian of the mildest type. The end of all which was, that the liberal people went over to the old minister almost in a body, just at the time that Deacon Shearer and the "Vinegar-Bible" party split off, and that not long afterwards they sold their own meeting-house to the malecontents, so that Deacon Soper used often to remind Colonel Sprowle of his wish that "our little man and him [the Reverend Doctor] would swop pulpits," and tell him it had "pooty nigh come trew."—But this is anticipating the course of events, which were much longer in coming about; for we have but just got through that terrible long month, as Mr. Dudley Venner found it, of December.

On the first of January, Mr. Silas Peckham was in the habit of settling his quarterly accounts, and making such new arrangements as his convenience or interest dictated. New Year was a holiday at the Institute. No doubt this accounted for Helen's being dressed so charmingly,—always, to be sure in, her own simple way, but yet with such a true lady's air, that she looked fit to be the mistress of any mansion in the land.

She was in the parlor alone, a little before noon, when Mr. Peckham came in.

"I'm ready to settle my accaount with you now, Miss Darley," said Silas.

"As you please, Mr. Peckham," Helen answered, very graciously.

"Before payin' you your selary," the Principal continued, "I wish to come to an understandin' as to the futur'. I consider that I've been payin' high, very high, for the work you do. Women's wages can't be expected to do more than feed and clothe 'em, as a ginerall thing, with a little savin', in case of sickness, and to bury 'em, if they break daown, as all of 'em are liable to do at any time. If I a'n't misinformed, you not only support yourself out of my establishment, but likewise relatives of yours, who I don't know that I'm called upon to feed and clothe. There is a young woman, not burdened with destitute relatives, has signified that she would be glad to take your dooties for less peconniary compensation, by a consid'able amaount, than you now receive. I shall be willin', however, to retain your services at sech redooced rate as we shall fix upon,—provided sech redooced rate be as low or lower than the same services can be obtained elsewhere."

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"As you please, Mr. Peckham," Helen answered, with a smile so sweet that the Principal (who of course had trumped up this opposition-teacher for the occasion) said to himself she would stand being cut down a quarter, perhaps a half, of her salary.

"Here is your accaount, Miss Darley, and the balance doo you," said Silas Peckham, handing her a paper and a small roll of infectious-flavored bills wrapping six poisonous coppers of the old coinage.

She took the paper and began looking at it. She could not quite make up her mind to touch the feverish bills with the cankering coppers in them, and left them airing themselves on the table.

The document she held ran as follows:

Silas Peckham, Esq., Principal of the Apollinean Institute, In Account with Helen Darley, Assist. Teacher.

Dr. Cr.

To salary for quarter	By Deduction for absence
ending Jan 1st @ \$75 per	1 week 3 days\$10.00
quarter \$75.00	
"Board, lodging, etc for	
10 days @ 75 cts per day.. 7.50	

"Damage to Institution by
absence of teacher from
duties, say 25.00

"Stationary furnished43

"Postage-stamp01

"Balance due Helen Darley. 32.06

-----	-----
\$75.00	\$75.00

Rockland, Jan. 1st, 1859.

Now Helen had her own private reasons for wishing to receive the small sum which was due her at this time without any unfair deduction,—reasons which we need not inquire

into too particularly, as we may be very sure that they were right and womanly. So, when she looked over this account of Mr. Silas Peckham's, and saw that he had contrived to pare down her salary to something less than half its stipulated amount, the look which her countenance wore was as near to that of righteous indignation as her gentle features and soft blue eyes would admit of its being.

"Why, Mr. Peckham," she said, "do you mean this? If I am of so much value to you that you must take off twenty-five dollars for ten days' absence, how is it that my salary is to be cut down to less than seventy-five dollars a quarter, if I remain here?"

"I gave you fair notice," said Silas. "I have a minute of it I took down immed'ately after the intervoo."

He lugged out his large pocket-book with the strap going all round it, and took from it a slip of paper which confirmed his statement.

"Besides," he added, slyly, "I presoom you have received a liberal pecooniary compensation from Squire Venner for nussin' his daughter."

Helen was looking over the bill while he was speaking.

"Board and lodging for ten days, Mr. Peckham,—whose board and lodging, pray?"

The door opened before Silas Peckham could answer, and Mr. Bernard walked into the parlor. Helen was holding the bill in her hand, looking as any woman ought to look who has been at once wronged and insulted.

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"The last turn of the thumbscrew!" said Mr. Bernard to himself.

"What is it, Helen? You look troubled."

She handed him the account.

He looked at the footing of it. Then he looked at the items. Then he looked at Silas Peckham.

At this moment Silas was sublime. He was so transcendently unconscious of the emotions going on in Mr. Bernard's mind at the moment, that he had only a single thought.

"The accaount's correc'ly cast, I presoom;—if the' 's any mistake of figgers or addin' 'em up, it'll be made all right. Everything's accordin' to agreement. The minute written immed'ately after the intervoo is here in my possession."

Mr. Bernard looked at Helen. Just what would have happened to Silas Peckham, as he stood then and there, but for the interposition of a merciful Providence, nobody knows or ever will know; for at that moment steps were heard upon the stairs, and Hiram threw open the parlor-door for Mr. Dudley Venner to enter.

He saluted them all gracefully with the good-wishes of the season, and each of them returned his compliment,—Helen blushing fearfully, of course, but not particularly noticed in her embarrassment by more than one.

Silas Peckham reckoned with perfect confidence on his Trustees, who had always said what he told them to, and done what he wanted. It was a good chance now to show off his power, and, by letting his instructors know the unstable tenure of their offices, make it easier to settle his accounts and arrange his salaries. There was nothing very strange in Mr. Venner's calling; he was one of the Trustees, and this was New Year's Day. But he had called just at the lucky moment for Mr. Peckham's object.

"I have thought some of makin' changes in the department of instruction," he began. "Several accomplished teachers have applied to me, who would be glad of sitooations. I understand that there never have been so many fust-rate teachers, male and female, out of employment as doorin' the present season. If I can make sahtisfahctory arrangements with my present corpse of teachers, I shall be glad to do so; otherwise I shell, with the permission of the Trustees, make sech noo arrangements as circumstahnces compel."

"You may make arrangements for a new assistant in my department, Mr. Peckham," said Mr. Bernard, "at once,—this day,—this hour. I am not safe to be trusted with your person five minutes out of this lady's presence,—of whom I beg pardon for this strong language. Mr. Venner, I must beg you, as one of the Trustees of this Institution, to look

at the manner in which its Principal has attempted to swindle this faithful teacher whose toils and sacrifices and self-devotion to the school have made it all that it is, in spite of this miserable trader's incompetence. Will you look at the paper I hold?"

Dudley Venner took the account and read it through, without changing a feature. Then he turned to Silas Peckham.

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"You may make arrangements for a new assistant in the branches this lady has taught. Miss Helen Darley is to be my wife. I had hoped to have announced this news in a less abrupt and ungraceful manner. But I came to tell you with my own lips what you would have learned before evening from my friends in the village."

Mr. Bernard went to Helen, who stood silent, with downcast eyes, and took her hand warmly, hoping she might find all the happiness she deserved. Then he turned to Dudley Venner, and said, "She is a queen, but has never found it out. The world has nothing nobler than this dear woman, whom you have discovered in the disguise of a teacher. God bless her and you!"

Dudley Venner returned his friendly grasp, without answering a word in articulate speech.

Silas remained dumb and aghast for a brief space. Coming to himself a little, he thought there might have been some mistake about the items,—would like to have Miss barley's bill returned,—would make it all right,—had no idee that Squire Venner had a special int'rest in Miss barley,—was sorry he had given offence,—if he might take that bill and look it over—

"No. Mr. Peckham," said Mr. Dudley Venner, "there will be a full meeting of the Board next week, and the bill, and such evidence with reference to the management of the Institution and the treatment of its instructors as Mr. Langdon sees fit to bring forward will be laid before them."

Miss Helen Darley became that very day the guest of Miss Arabella Thornton, the Judge's daughter. Mr. Bernard made his appearance a week or two later at the Lectures, where the Professor first introduced him to the reader.

He stayed after the class had left the room.

"Ah, Mr. Langdon! how do you do? Very glad to see you back again. How have you been since our correspondence on Fascination and other curious scientific questions?"

It was the Professor who spoke,—whom the reader will recognize as myself, the teller of this story.

"I have been well," Mr. Bernard answered, with a serious look which invited a further question.

"I hope you have had none of those painful or dangerous experiences you seemed to be thinking of when you wrote; at any rate, you have escaped having your obituary written."

"I have seen some things worth remembering. Shall I call on you this evening and tell you about them?"

"I shall be most happy to see you."

This was the way in which I, the Professor, became acquainted with some of the leading events of this story. They interested me sufficiently to lead me to avail myself of all those other extraordinary methods of obtaining information well known to writers of narrative.

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Mr. Langdon seemed to me to have gained in seriousness and strength of character by his late experiences. He threw his whole energies into his studies with an effect which distanced all his previous efforts. Remembering my former hint, he employed his spare hours in writing for the annual prizes, both of which he took by a unanimous vote of the judges. Those who heard him read his Thesis at the Medical Commencement will not soon forget the impression made by his fine personal appearance and manners, nor the universal interest excited in the audience, as he read, with his beautiful enunciation, that striking paper entitled "Unresolved Nebulae in Vital Science." It was a general remark of the Faculty,—and old Doctor Kittredge, who had come down on purpose to hear Mr. Langdon, heartily agreed to it,—that there had never been a diploma filled up, since the institution which conferred upon him the degree of Doctor Medicine was founded, which carried with it more of promise to the profession than that which bore the name of

BERNARDUS *Caryl Langdon*

CHAPTER XXXII.

CONCLUSION.

Mr. Bernard Langdon had no sooner taken his degree, than, in accordance with the advice of one of his teachers whom he frequently consulted, he took an office in the heart of the city where he had studied. He had thought of beginning in a suburb or some remoter district of the city proper.

"No," said his teacher,—to wit, myself,—“don't do any such thing. You are made for the best kind of practice; don't hamper yourself with an outside constituency, such as belongs to a practitioner of the second class. When a fellow like you chooses his beat, he must look ahead a little. Take care of all the poor that apply to you, but leave the half-pay classes to a different style of doctor,—the people who spend one half their time in taking care of their patients, and the other half in squeezing out their money. Go for the swell-fronts and south-exposure houses; the folks inside are just as good as other people, and the pleasantest, on the whole, to take care of. They must have somebody, and they like a gentleman best. Don't throw yourself away. You have a good presence and pleasing manners. You wear white linen by inherited instinct. You can pronounce the word view. You have all the elements of success; go and take it. Be polite and generous, but don't undervalue yourself. You will be useful, at any rate; you may just as well be happy, while you are about it. The highest social class furnishes incomparably the best patients, taking them by and large. Besides, when they won't get well and bore you to death, you can send 'em off to travel. Mind me now, and take the tops of your sparrowgrass. Somebody must have 'em,—why shouldn't you? If you don't take your chance, you'll get the butt-ends as a matter of course.”



Mr. Bernard talked like a young man full of noble sentiments. He wanted to be useful to his fellow-beings. Their social differences were nothing to him. He would never court the rich,—he would go where he was called. He would rather save the life of a poor mother of a family than that of half a dozen old gouty millionnaires whose heirs had been yawning and stretching these ten years to get rid of them.

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"Generous emotions!" I exclaimed. "Cherish 'em; cling to 'em till you are fifty, till you are seventy, till you are ninety! But do as I tell you,—strike for the best circle of practice, and you 'll be sure to get it!"

Mr. Langdon did as I told him,—took a genteel office, furnished it neatly, dressed with a certain elegance, soon made a pleasant circle of acquaintances, and began to work his way into the right kind of business. I missed him, however, for some days, not long after he had opened his office. On his return, he told me he had been up at Rockland, by special invitation, to attend the wedding of Mr. Dudley Venner and Miss Helen Darley. He gave me a full account of the ceremony, which I regret that I cannot relate in full. "Helen looked like an angel,"—that, I am sure, was one of his expressions. As for her dress, I should like to give the details, but am afraid of committing blunders, as men always do, when they undertake to describe such matters. White dress, anyhow,—that I am sure of,—with orange-flowers, and the most wonderful lace veil that was ever seen or heard of. The Reverend Doctor Honeywood performed the ceremony, of course. The good people seemed to have forgotten they ever had had any other minister, except Deacon Shearer and his set of malcontents, who were doing a dull business in the meeting-house lately occupied by the Reverend Mr. Fairweather.

"Who was at the wedding?"

"Everybody, pretty much. They wanted to keep it quiet, but it was of no use. Married at church. Front pews, old Dr. Kittredge and all the mansionhouse people and distinguished strangers,—Colonel Sprowle and family, including Matilda's young gentleman, a graduate of one of the fresh-water colleges,—Mrs. Pickins (late Widow Rowens) and husband,—Deacon Soper and numerous parishioners. A little nearer the door, Abel, the Doctor's man, and Elbridge, who drove them to church in the family-coach. Father Fairweather, as they all call him now, came in late with Father McShane."

"And Silas Peckham?"

"Oh, Silas had left The School and Rockland. Cut up altogether too badly in the examination instituted by the Trustees. Had removed over to Tamarack, and thought of renting a large house and 'farming' the town-poor."

Some time after this, as I was walking with a young friend along by the swell-fronts and south-exposures, whom should I see but Mr. Bernard Langdon, looking remarkably happy, and keeping step by the side of a very handsome and singularly well-dressed young lady? He bowed and lifted his hat as we passed.

"Who is that pretty girl my young doctor has got there?" I said to my companion.

"Who is that?" he answered. "You don't know? Why, that is neither more nor less than Miss Letitia Forrester, daughter of—of—why, the great banking firm, you know, Bilyuns

Brothers & Forrester. Got acquainted with her in the country, they say. There 's a story that they're engaged, or like to be, if the firm consents."

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“Oh” I said.

I did not like the look of it in the least. Too young,—too young. Has not taken any position yet. No right to ask for the hand of Bilyuns Brothers & Co.’s daughter. Besides, it will spoil him for practice, if he marries a rich girl before he has formed habits of work.

I looked in at his office the other day. A box of white kids was lying open on the table. A three-cornered note, directed in a very delicate lady’s-hand, was distinguishable among a heap of papers. I was just going to call him to account for his proceedings, when he pushed the three-cornered note aside and took up a letter with a great corporation-seal upon it. He had received the offer of a professor’s chair in an ancient and distinguished institution.

“Pretty well for three-and-twenty, my boy,” I said. “I suppose you’ll think you must be married one of these days, if you accept this office.”

Mr. Langdon blushed.—There had been stories about him, he knew. His name had been mentioned in connection with that of a very charming young lady. The current reports were not true. He had met this young lady, and been much pleased with her, in the country, at the house of her grandfather, the Reverend Doctor Honeywood,—you remember Miss Letitia Forrester, whom I have mentioned repeatedly? On coming to town, he found his country-acquaintance in a social position which seemed to discourage his continued intimacy. He had discovered, however; that he was a not unwelcome visitor, and had kept up friendly relations with her. But there was no truth in the current reports,—none at all.’

Some months had passed, after this visit, when I happened one evening to stroll into a box in one of the principal theatres of the city. A small party sat on the seats before me: a middle-aged gentleman and his lady, in front, and directly behind them my young doctor and the same very handsome young lady I had seen him walking with on the sidewalk before the swell-fronts and south-exposures. As Professor Langdon seemed to be very much taken up with his companion, and both of them looked as if they were enjoying themselves, I determined not to make my presence known to my young friend, and to withdraw quietly after feasting my eyes with the sight of them for a few minutes.

“It looks as if something might come of it,” I said to myself. At that moment the young lady lifted her arm accidentally in such a way that the light fell upon the clasp of a chain which encircled her wrist. My eyes filled with tears as I read upon the clasp, in sharp-cut Italic letters, E. Y. They were tears at once of sad remembrance and of joyous anticipation; for the ornament on which I looked was the double pledge of a dead sorrow and a living affection. It was the golden bracelet,—the parting-gift of Elsie Venner. the golden bracelet,—the parting-gift of Elsie Venner.

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL

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by Oliver Wendell Holmes

TO MY READERS.

“A new Preface” is, I find, promised with my story. If there are any among my readers who loved Aesop’s Fables chiefly on account of the Moral appended, they will perhaps be pleased to turn backward and learn what I have to say here.

This tale forms a natural sequence to a former one, which some may remember, entitled “Elsie Venner.” Like that,—it is intended for two classes of readers, of which the smaller one includes the readers of the “Morals” in Aesop and of this Preface.

The first of the two stories based itself upon an experiment which some thought cruel, even on paper. It imagined an alien element introduced into the blood of a human being before that being saw the light. It showed a human nature developing itself in conflict with the ophidian characteristics and instincts impressed upon it during the pre-natal period. Whether anything like this ever happened, or was possible, mattered little: it enabled me, at any rate, to suggest the limitations of human responsibility in a simple and effective way.

The story which follows comes more nearly within the range of common experience. The successive development of inherited bodily aspects and habitudes is well known to all who have lived long enough to see families grow up under their own eyes. The same thing happens, but less obviously to common observation, in the mental and moral nature. There is something frightful in the way in which not only characteristic qualities, but particular manifestations of them, are repeated from generation to generation. Jonathan Edwards the younger tells the story of a brutal wretch in New Haven who was abusing his father, when the old man cried out, “Don’t drag me any further, for I did n’t drag my father beyond this tree.” [The original version of this often-repeated story may be found in Aristotle’s Ethics, Book 7th, Chapter 7th.] I have attempted to show the successive evolution of some inherited qualities in the character of Myrtle Hazard, not so obtrusively as to disturb the narrative, but plainly enough to be kept in sight by the small class of preface-readers.

If I called these two stories Studies of the Reflex Function in its higher sphere, I should frighten away all but the professors and the learned ladies. If I should proclaim that they were protests against the scholastic tendency to shift the total responsibility of all human action from the Infinite to the finite, I might alarm the jealousy of the cabinet-keepers of our doctrinal museums. By saying nothing about it, the large majority of those whom my book reaches, not being preface-readers, will never suspect anything to harm them beyond the simple facts of the narrative.

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Should any professional alarmist choose to confound the doctrine of limited responsibility with that which denies the existence of any self-determining power, he may be presumed to belong to the class of intellectual half-breeds, of which we have many representatives in our new country, wearing the garb of civilization, and even the gown of scholarship. If we cannot follow the automatic machinery of nature into the mental and moral world, where it plays its part as much as in the bodily functions, without being accused of laying "all that we are evil in to a divine thrusting on," we had better return at once to our old demonology, and reinstate the Leader of the Lower House in his time-honored prerogatives.

As fiction sometimes seems stranger than truth, a few words may be needed here to make some of my characters and statements appear probable. The long-pending question involving a property which had become in the mean time of immense value finds its parallel in the great De Haro land-case, decided in the Supreme Court while this story was in progress (May 14th, 1867). The experiment of breaking the child's will by imprisonment and fasting is borrowed from a famous incident, happening long before the case lately before one of the courts of a neighboring Commonwealth, where a little girl was beaten to death because she would not say her prayers. The mental state involving utter confusion of different generations in a person yet capable of forming a correct judgment on other matters, is almost a direct transcript from nature. I should not have ventured to repeat the questions of the daughters of the millionaires to Myrtle Hazard about her family conditions, and their comments, had not a lady of fortune and position mentioned to me a similar circumstance in the school history of one of her own children. Perhaps I should have hesitated in reproducing Myrtle Hazard's "Vision," but for a singular experience of his own related to me by the late Mr. Forceythe Willson.

Gifted Hopkins (under various alliasis) has been a frequent correspondent of mine. I have also received a good many communications, signed with various names, which must have been from near female relatives of that young gentleman. I once sent a kind of encyclical letter to the whole family connection; but as the delusion under which they labor is still common, and often leads to the wasting of time, the contempt of honest study or humble labor, and the misapplication of intelligence not so far below mediocrity as to be incapable of affording a respectable return when employed in the proper direction, I thought this picture from life might also be of service. When I say that no genuine young poet will apply it to himself, I think I have so far removed the sting that few or none will complain of being wounded.

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It is lamentable to be forced to add that the Reverend Joseph Bellamy Stoker is only a softened copy of too many originals to whom, as a regular attendant upon divine worship from my childhood to the present time, I have respectfully listened, while they dealt with me and mine and the bulk of their fellow-creatures after the manner of their sect. If, in the interval between his first showing himself in my story and its publication in a separate volume, anything had occurred to make me question the justice or expediency of drawing and exhibiting such a portrait, I should have reconsidered it, with the view of retouching its sharper features. But its essential truthfulness has been illustrated every month or two, since my story has been in the course of publication, by a fresh example from real life, stamped in darker colors than any with which I should have thought of staining my pages.

There are a great many good clergymen to one bad one, but a writer finds it hard to keep to the true proportion of good and bad persons in telling a story. The three or four good ministers I have introduced in this narrative must stand for many whom I have known and loved, and some of whom I count to-day among my most valued friends. I hope the best and wisest of them will like this story and approve it. If they cannot all do this, I know they will recognize it as having been written with a right and honest purpose. *Boston*, 1867.

PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION.

It is a quarter of a century since the foregoing Preface was written, and that is long enough to allow a story to be forgotten by the public, and very possibly by the writer of it also. I will not pretend that I have forgotten all about "The Guardian Angel," but it is long since I have read it, and many of its characters and incidents are far from being distinct in my memory. There are, however, a few points which hold their place among my recollections. The revolt of Myrtle Hazard from the tyranny of that dogmatic dynasty now breaking up in all directions has found new illustrations since this tale was written. I need only refer to two instances of many. The first is from real life. Mr. Robert C. Adams's work, "Travels in Faith from Tradition to Reason," is the outcome of the teachings of one of the most intransigent of our New England Calvinists, the late Reverend Nehemiah Adams. For an example in fiction,—fiction which bears all the marks of being copied from real life,—I will refer to "The Story of an African Farm." The boy's honest, but terrible outburst, "I hate God," was, I doubt not, more acceptable in the view of his Maker than the lying praise of many a hypocrite who, having enthroned a demon as Lord of the Universe, thinks to conciliate his favor by using the phrases which the slaves of Eastern despots are in the habit of addressing to their masters. I have had many private letters showing the same revolt of reasoning natures against doctrines which shock the more highly civilized part of mankind in this nineteenth century and are leading to those dissensions which have long shown as cracks, and are fast becoming lines of cleavage in some of the largest communions of Protestantism.



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The principle of heredity has been largely studied since this story was written. This tale, like "Elsie Venner," depends for its deeper significance on the ante-natal history of its subject. But the story was meant to be readable for those who did not care for its underlying philosophy. If it fails to interest the reader who ventures upon it, it may find a place on an unfrequented bookshelf in common with other "medicated novels."

Perhaps I have been too hard with Gifted Hopkins and the tribe of rhymesters to which he belongs. I ought not to forget that I too introduced myself to the reading world in a thin volume of verses; many of which had better not have been written, and would not be reprinted now, but for the fact that they have established a right to a place among my poems in virtue of long occupancy. Besides, although the writing of verses is often a mark of mental weakness, I cannot forget that Joseph Story and George Bancroft each published his little book, of rhymes, and that John Quincy Adams has left many poems on record, the writing of which did not interfere with the vast and important labors of his illustrious career.

Beverly farms, mass., August 7, 1891.
O. W. H.

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL

CHAPTER I.

An advertisement.

On Saturday, the 18th day of June, 1859, the "State Banner and Delphian Oracle," published weekly at Oxbow Village, one of the principal centres in a thriving river-town of New England, contained an advertisement which involved the story of a young life, and stained the emotions of a small community. Such faces of dismay, such shaking of heads, such gatherings at corners, such halts of complaining, rheumatic wagons, and dried-up, chirruping chaises, for colloquy of their still-faced tenants, had not been known since the rainy November Friday, when old Malachi Withers was found hanging in his garret up there at the lonely house behind the poplars.

The number of the "Banner and Oracle" which contained this advertisement was a fair specimen enough of the kind of newspaper to which it belonged. Some extracts from a stray copy of the issue of the date referred to will show the reader what kind of entertainment the paper was accustomed to furnish its patrons, and also serve some incidental purposes of the writer in bringing into notice a few personages who are to figure in this narrative.

The copy in question was addressed to one of its regular subscribers,—“B. Gridley, Esq.” The sarcastic annotations at various points, enclosed in brackets and italicised

that they may be distinguished from any other comments, were taken from the pencilled remarks of that gentleman, intended for the improvement of a member of the family in which he resided, and are by no means to be attributed to the harmless pen which reproduces them.

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Byles Gridley, A. M., as he would have been styled by persons acquainted with scholarly dignities, was a bachelor, who had been a schoolmaster, a college tutor, and afterwards for many years professor,—a man of learning, of habits, of whims and crotchets, such as are hardly to be found, except in old, unmarried students,—the double flowers of college culture, their stamina all turned to petals, their stock in the life of the race all funded in the individual. Being a man of letters, Byles Gridley naturally rather undervalued the literary acquirements of the good people of the rural district where he resided, and, having known much of college and something of city life, was apt to smile at the importance they attached to their little local concerns. He was, of course, quite as much an object of rough satire to the natural observers and humorists, who are never wanting in a New England village,—perhaps not in any village where a score or two of families are brought together,—enough of them, at any rate, to furnish the ordinary characters of a real-life stock company.

The old Master of Arts was a permanent boarder in the house of a very worthy woman, relict of the late Ammi Hopkins, by courtesy Esquire, whose handsome monument—in a finished and carefully colored lithograph, representing a finely shaped urn under a very nicely groomed willow—hung in her small, well-darkened, and, as it were, monumental parlor. Her household consisted of herself, her son, nineteen years of age, of whom more hereafter, and of two small children, twins, left upon her doorstep when little more than mere marsupial possibilities, taken in for the night, kept for a week, and always thereafter cherished by the good soul as her own; also of Miss Susan Posey, aged eighteen, at school at the “Academy” in another part of the same town, a distant relative, boarding with her.

What the old scholar took the village paper for it would be hard to guess, unless for a reason like that which carried him very regularly to hear the preaching of the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker, colleague of the old minister of the village parish; namely, because he did not believe a word of his favorite doctrines, and liked to go there so as to growl to himself through the sermon, and go home scolding all the way about it.

The leading article of the “Banner and Oracle” for June 18th must have been of superior excellence, for, as Mr. Gridley remarked, several of the “metropolitan” journals of the date of June 15th and thereabout had evidently conversed with the writer and borrowed some of his ideas before he gave them to the public. The Foreign News by the Europa at Halifax, 15th, was spread out in the amplest dimensions the type of the office could supply. More battles! The Allies victorious! The King and General Cialdini beat the Austrians at Palestro! 400 Austrians drowned in a canal! Anti-French feeling in Germany! Allgermine Zeiturg talks of conquest of Allsatia

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and Loraine and the occupation of Paris! [Vicious digs with a pencil through the above proper names.] Race for the Derby won by Sir Joseph Hawley's Musjid! [That's what England cares for! Hooray for the Darby! Italy be deedeed!] Visit of Prince Alfred to the Holy Land. Letter from our, own Correspondent. [Oh! Oh! A West Minkville?] Cotton advanced. Breadstuffs declining.—Deacon Rumrill's barn burned down on Saturday night. A pig missing; supposed to have "fallen a prey to the devouring element." [Got roasted.] A yellow mineral had been discovered on the Doolittle farm, which, by the report of those who had seen it, bore a strong resemblance to California gold ore. Much excitement in the neighborhood in consequence [Idiots! Iron pyrites!] A hen at Four Corners had just laid an egg measuring 7 by 8 inches. Fetch on your biddies! [Editorial wit!] A man had shot an eagle measuring six feet and a half from tip to tip of his wings.—Crops suffering for want of rain [Always just so. "Dry times, Father Noah!"] The editors had received a liberal portion of cake from the happy couple whose matrimonial union was recorded in the column dedicated to Hymen. Also a superior article of [article of! bah!] steel pen from the enterprising merchant [shopkeeper] whose advertisement was to be found on the third page of this paper.—An interesting Surprise Party [cheap theatricals] had transpired [bah!] on Thursday evening last at the house of the Rev. Mr. Stoker. The parishioners had donated [donated! *Give* is a good word enough for the Lord's Prayer. *Donate* our daily bread!] a bag of meal, a bushel of beans, a keg of pickles, and a quintal of salt-fish. The worthy pastor was much affected, *etc.*, *etc.* [Of course. Call'em. *Sensation* parties and done with it!] The Rev. Dr. Pemberton and the venerable Dr. Hurlbut honored the occasion with their presence.—We learn that the Rev. Ambrose Eveleth, rector of St. Bartholomew's Chapel, has returned from his journey, and will officiate to-morrow.

Then came strings of advertisements, with a luxuriant vegetation of capitals and notes of admiration. More of those *prime goods*! Full Assortments of every Article in our line! [Except the one thing you want!] Auction Sale. Old furniture, feather-beds, bed-spreads [spreads! ugh!], setts [setts!] crockery-ware, odd vols., ullage bbls. of this and that, with other household goods, *etc.*, *etc.*, *etc.*,—the etceteras meaning all sorts of insane movables, such as come out of their bedlam-holes when an antiquated domestic establishment disintegrates itself at a country "vandoo."—Several announcements of "Feed," whatever that may be,—not restaurant dinners, anyhow,—also of "Shorts,"—terms mysterious to city ears as jute and cudbear and gunnybags to such as drive oxen in the remote interior districts.—Then the marriage column above alluded to, by the fortunate recipients of the cake. Right opposite, as if

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for matrimonial ground-bait, a Notice that Whereas my wife, Lucretia Babb, has left my bed and board, I will not be responsible, *etc.*, *etc.*, from this date.—Jacob Penhallow (of the late firm Wibird and Penhallow) had taken Mr. William Murray Bradshaw into partnership, and the business of the office would be carried on as usual under the title Penhallow and Bradshaw, Attorneys at Law. Then came the standing professional card of Dr. Lemuel Hurlbut and Dr. Fordyce Hurlbut, the medical patriarch of the town and his son. Following this, hideous quack advertisements, some of them with the certificates of Honorables, Esquires, and Clergymen.—Then a cow, strayed or stolen from the subscriber.—Then the advertisement referred to in our first paragraph:

Myrtle hazard has been missing from her home in this place since Thursday morning, June 16th. She is fifteen years old, tall and womanly for her age, has dark hair and eyes, fresh complexion, regular features, pleasant smile and voice, but shy with strangers. Her common dress was a black and white gingham check, straw hat, trimmed with green ribbon. It is feared she may have come to harm in some way, or be wandering at large in a state of temporary mental alienation. Any information relating to the missing child will be gratefully received and properly rewarded by her afflicted aunt,

Miss silence withers, Residing at the Withers Homestead, otherwise known as “The Poplars,” in this village.

CHAPTER II.

GREAT EXCITEMENT

The publication of the advertisement in the paper brought the village fever of the last two days to its height. Myrtle Hazard's disappearance had been pretty well talked round through the immediate neighborhood, but now that forty-eight hours of search and inquiry had not found her, and the alarm was so great that the young girl's friends were willing to advertise her in a public journal, it was clear that the gravest apprehensions were felt and justified. The paper carried the tidings to many who had not heard it. Some of the farmers who had been busy all the week with their fields came into the village in their wagons on Saturday, and there first learned the news, and saw the paper, and the placards which were posted up, and listened, open-mouthed, to the whole story.

Saturday was therefore a day of much agitation in Oxbow Village, and some stir in the neighboring settlements. Of course there was a great variety of comment, its character depending very much on the sense, knowledge, and disposition of the citizens, gossips, and young people who talked over the painful and mysterious occurrence.

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The Withers Homestead was naturally the chief centre of interest. Nurse Byloe, an ancient and voluminous woman, who had known the girl when she was a little bright-eyed child, handed over “the baby” she was holding to another attendant, and got on her things to go straight up to The Poplars. She had been holding “the baby” these forty years and more, but somehow it never got to be more than a month or six weeks old. She reached The Poplars after much toil and travail. Mistress Fagan, Irish, house-servant, opened the door, at which Nurse Byloe knocked softly, as she was in the habit of doing at the doors of those who sent for her.

“Have you heerd anything yet, Kitty Fagan?” asked Nurse Byloe.

“Niver a blissed word,” said she. “Miss Withers is upstairs with Miss Bathsheby, a cryin’ and a lamentin’. Miss Badlam’s in the parlor. The men has been draggin’ the pond. They have n’t found not one thing, but only jest two, and that was the old coffeepot and the gray cat,—it’s them nigger boys hanged her with a string they tied round her neck and then drowned her.” [P. Fagan, Jr., Aet. 14, had a snarl of similar string in his pocket.]

Mistress Fagan opened the door of the best parlor. A woman was sitting there alone, rocking back and forward, and fanning herself with the blackest of black fans.

“Nuss Byloe, is that you? Well, to be sure, I’m glad to see you, though we ’re all in trouble. Set right down, Nuss, do. Oh, it’s dreadful times!”

A handkerchief which was in readiness for any emotional overflow was here called on for its function.

Nurse Byloe let herself drop into a flaccid squab chair with one of those soft cushions, filled with slippery feathers, which feel so fearfully like a very young infant, or a nest of little kittens, as they flatten under the subsiding person.

The woman in the rocking-chair was Miss Cynthia Badlam, second-cousin of Miss Silence Withers, with whom she had been living as a companion at intervals for some years. She appeared to be thirty-five years old, more or less, and looked not badly for that stage of youth, though of course she might have been handsomer at twenty, as is often the case with women. She wore a not unbecoming cap; frequent headaches had thinned her locks somewhat of late years. Features a little too sharp, a keen, gray eye, a quick and restless glance, which rather avoided being met, gave the impression that she was a wide-awake, cautious, suspicious, and, very possibly, crafty person.

“I could n’t help comin’,” said Nurse Byloe, “we do so love our babies,—how can we help it, Miss Badlam?”

The spinster colored up at the nurse's odd way of using the possessive pronoun, and dropped her eyes, as was natural on hearing such a speech.

"I never tended children as you have, Nuss," she said. "But I 've known Myrtle Hazard ever since she was three years old, and to think she should have come to such an end, —'The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked,'"—and she wept.

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"Why, Cynthia Badlam, what do y' mean?" said Nurse Byloe. "Y' don't think anything dreadful has come o' that child's wild nater, do ye?"

"Child!" said Cynthia Badlam,—“child enough to wear this very gown I have got on and not find it too big for her neither.” [It would have pinched Myrtle here and there pretty shrewdly.]

The two women looked each other in the eyes with subtle interchange of intelligence, such as belongs to their sex in virtue of its specialty. Talk without words is half their conversation, just as it is all the conversation of the lower animals. Only the dull senses of men are dead to it as to the music of the spheres.

Their minds travelled along, as if they had been yoked together, through whole fields of suggestive speculation, until the dumb growths of thought ripened in both their souls into articulate speech, consentingly, as the movement comes after the long stillness of a Quaker meeting.

Their lips opened at the same moment. “You don't mean”—began Nurse Byloe, but stopped as she heard Miss Badlam also speaking.

“They need n't drag the pond,” she said. “They need n't go beating the woods as if they were hunting a patridge,—though for that matter Myrtle Hazard was always more like a patridge than she was like a pullet. Nothing ever took hold of that girl,—not catechising, nor advising, nor punishing. It's that dreadful will of hers never was broke. I've always been afraid that she would turn out a child of wrath. Did y' ever watch her at meetin' playing with posies and looking round all the time of the long prayer? That's what I've seen her do many and many a time. I'm afraid—Oh dear! Miss Byloe, I'm afraid to say—what I'm afraid of. Men are so wicked, and young girls are full of deceit and so ready to listen to all sorts of artful creturs that take advantage of their ignorance and tender years.” She wept once more, this time with sobs that seemed irrepressible.

“Dear suz!” said the nurse, “I won't believe no sech thing as wickedness about Myrtle Hazard. You mean she's gone an' run off with some good-for-nothin' man or other? If that ain't what y' mean, what do y' mean? It can't be so, Miss Badlam: she's one o' my babies. At any rate, I handled her when she fust come to this village,—and none o' my babies never did sech a thing. Fifteen year old, and be bringin' a whole family into disgrace! If she was thirty year old, or five-an'-thirty or more, and never'd had a chance to be married, and if one o' them artful creturs you was talkin' of got hold of her, then, to be sure,—why, dear me!—law! I never thought, Miss Badlam!—but then of course you could have had your pickin' and choosin' in the time of it; and I don't mean to say it's too late now if you felt called that way, for you're better lookin' now than some that's younger, and there's no accountin' for tastes.”

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A sort of hysteric twitching that went through the frame of Cynthia Badlam dimly suggested to the old nurse that she was not making her slightly indiscreet personality much better by her explanations. She stopped short, and surveyed the not uncomely person of the maiden lady sitting before her with her handkerchief pressed to her eyes, and one hand clenching the arm of the reeking-chair, as if some spasm had clamped it there. The nurse looked at her with a certain growing interest she had never felt before. It was the first time for some years that she had had such a chance, partly because Miss Cynthia had often been away for long periods,—partly because she herself had been busy professionally. There was no occasion for her services, of course, in the family at The Poplars; and she was always following round from place to place after that everlasting migratory six-weeks or less old baby.

There was not a more knowing pair of eyes, in their way, in a circle of fifty miles, than those kindly tranquil orbs that Nurse Byloe fixed on Cynthia Badlam. The silver threads in the side fold of hair, the delicate lines at the corner of the eye, the slight drawing down at the angle of the mouth,—almost imperceptible, but the nurse dwelt upon it,—a certain moulding of the features as of an artist's clay model worked by delicate touches with the fingers, showing that time or pain or grief had had a hand in shaping them, the contours, the adjustment of every fold of the dress, the attitude, the very way of breathing, were all passed through the searching inspection of the ancient expert, trained to know all the changes wrought by time and circumstance. It took not so long as it takes to describe it, but it was an analysis of imponderables, equal to any of Bunsen's with the spectroscope.

Miss Badlam removed her handkerchief and looked in a furtive, questioning way, in her turn, upon the nurse.

"It's dreadful close here,—I'm 'most smothered," Nurse Byloe said; and, putting her hand to her throat, unclasped the catch of the necklace of gold beads she had worn since she was a baby,—a bead having been added from time to time as she thickened. It lay in a deep groove of her large neck, and had not troubled her in breathing before, since the day when her husband was run over by an ox-team.

At this moment Miss Silence Withers entered, followed by Bathsheba Stoker, daughter of Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker.

She was the friend of Myrtle, and had come to comfort Miss Silence, and consult with her as to what further search they should institute. The two, Myrtle's aunt and her friend, were as unlike as they could well be. Silence Withers was something more than forty years old, a shadowy, pinched, sallow, dispirited, bloodless woman, with the habitual look of the people in the funeral carriage which follows next to the hearse, and the tone in speaking that may be noticed in a household where one of its members is lying white

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and still in a cool, darkened chamber overhead. Bathsheba Stoker was not called handsome; but she had her mother's youthful smile, which was so fresh and full of sweetness that she seemed like a beauty while she was speaking or listening; and she could never be plain so long as any expression gave life to her features. In perfect repose, her face, a little prematurely touched by sad experiences,—for she was but seventeen years old,—had the character and decision stamped in its outlines which any young man who wanted a companion to warn, to comfort, and command him, might have depended on as warranting the courage, the sympathy, and the sense demanded for such a responsibility. She had been trying her powers of consolation on Miss Silence. It was a sudden freak of Myrtle's. She had gone off on some foolish but innocent excursion. Besides, she was a girl that would take care of herself; for she was afraid of nothing, and nimbler than any boy of her age, and almost as strong as any. As for thinking any bad thoughts about her, that was a shame; she cared for none of the young fellows that were round her. Cyprian Eveleth was the one she thought most of; but Cyprian was as true as his sister Olive, and who else was there?

To all this Miss Silence answered only by sighing and moaning, For two whole days she had been kept in constant fear and worry, afraid every minute of some tragical message, perplexed by the conflicting advice of all manner of officious friends, sleepless of course through the two nights, and now utterly broken down and collapsed.

Bathsheba had said all she could in the way of consolation, and hastened back to her mother's bedside, which she hardly left, except for the briefest of visits.

"It's a great trial, Miss Withers, that's laid on you," said Nurse Byloe.

"If I only knew that she was dead, and had died in the Lord," Miss Silence answered,—
"if I only knew that but if she is living in sin, or dead in wrong—doing, what is to become of me?—Oh, what is to become of me when 'He maketh inquisition far blood'?"

"Cousin Silence," said Miss Cynthia, "it is n't your fault, if that young girl has taken to evil ways. If going to meeting three times every Sabbath day, and knowing the catechism by heart, and reading of good books, and the best of daily advice, and all needful discipline, could have corrected her sinful nature, she would never have run away from a home where she enjoyed all these privileges. It's that Indian blood, Cousin Silence. It's a great mercy you and I have n't got any of it in our veins! What can you expect of children that come from heathens and savages? You can't lay it to yourself, Cousin Silence, if Myrtle Hazard goes wrong"—

"The Lord will lay it to me,—the Lord will lay it to me," she moaned. "Did n't he say to Cain, 'Where is Abel, thy brother?'"

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Nurse Byloe was getting very red in the face. She had had about enough of this talk between the two women. "I hope the Lard 'll take care of Myrtle Hazard fust, if she's in trouble, 'n' wants help," she said; "'n' then look out for them that comes next. Y' 're too suspicious, Miss Badlam; y' 're too easy to believe stories. Myrtle Hazard was as pretty a child and as good a child as ever I see, if you did n't rile her; 'n' d' d y' ever see one o' them hearty lively children, that had n't a sperrit of its own? For my part, I'd rather handle one of 'em than a dozen o' them little waxy, weak-eyed, slim-necked creturs that always do what they tell 'em to, and die afore they're a dozen year old; and never was the time when I've seen Myrtle Hazard, sence she was my baby, but what it's always been, 'Good mornin', Miss Byloe,' and 'How do you do, Miss Byloe? I'm so glad to see you.' The handsomest young woman, too, as all the old folks will agree in tellin' you, s'ence the time o' Judith Pride that was,—the Pride of the County they used to call her, for her beauty. Her great-grandma, y' know, Miss Cynthy, married old King David Withers. What I want to know is, whether anything has been heerd, and jest what's been done about findin' the poor thing. How d' ye know she has n't fell into the river? Have they fired cannon? They say that busts the gall of drownded folks, and makes the corpse rise. Have they looked in the woods everywhere? Don't believe no wrong of nobody, not till y' must,—least of all of them that come o' the same folks, partly, and has lived with yo all their days. I tell y', Myrtle Hazard's jest as innocent of all what y' 've been thinkin' about,—bless the poor child; she's got a soul that's as clean and sweet-well, as a pond-lily when it fust opens of a mornin', without a speck on it no more than on the fust pond-lily God Almighty ever made!"

That gave a turn to the two women's thoughts, and their handkerchiefs went up to their faces. Nurse Byloe turned her eyes quickly on Cynthia Badlam, and repeated her close inspection of every outline and every light and shadow in her figure. She did not announce any opinion as to the age or good looks or general aspect or special points of Miss Cynthia; but she made a sound which the books write humph! but which real folks make with closed lips, thus: m'!—a sort of half-suppressed labio-palato-nasal utterance, implying that there is a good deal which might be said, and all the vocal organs want to have a chance at it, if there is to be any talking.

Friends and neighbors were coming in and out; and the next person that came was the old minister, of whom, and of his colleague, the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker, some account may here be introduced.

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The Rev. Eliphalet Pemberton Father Pemberton as brother ministers called him, Priest Pemberton as he was commonly styled by the country people—would have seemed very old, if the medical patriarch of the village had not been so much older. A man over ninety is a great comfort to all his elderly neighbors: he is a picket-guard at the extreme outpost; and the young folks of sixty and seventy feel that the enemy must get by him before he can come near their camp. Dr. Hurlbut, at ninety-two, made Priest Pemberton seem comparatively little advanced; but the college catalogue showed that he must be seventy-five years old, if, as we may suppose, he was twenty at the time of his graduation.

He was a man of noble presence always, and now, in the grandeur of his flowing silver hair and with the gray shaggy brows overhanging his serene and solemn eyes, with the slow gravity of motion and the measured dignity of speech which gave him the air of an old pontiff, he was an imposing personage to look upon, and could be awful, if the occasion demanded it. His creed was of the sternest: he was looked up to as a bulwark against all the laxities which threatened New England theology. But it was a creed rather of the study and of the pulpit than of every-day application among his neighbors. He dealt too much in the lofty abstractions which had always such fascinations for the higher class of New England divines, to busy himself as much as he might have done with the spiritual condition of individuals. He had also a good deal in him of what he used to call the Old Man, which, as he confessed, he had never succeeded in putting off,—meaning thereby certain qualities belonging to humanity, as much as the natural gifts of the dumb creatures belong to them, and tending to make a man beloved by his weak and erring fellow-mortals.

In the olden time he would have lived and died king of his parish, monarch, by Divine right, as the noblest, grandest, wisest of all that made up the little nation within hearing of his meeting-house bell. But Young Calvinism has less reverence and more love of novelty than its forefathers. It wants change, and it loves young blood. Polyandry is getting to be the normal condition of the Church; and about the time a man is becoming a little overripe for the livelier human sentiments, he may be pretty sure the women are looking round to find him a colleague. In this way it was that the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker became the colleague of the Rev. Eliphalet Pemberton.

If one could have dived deep below all the Christian graces—the charity, the sweetness of disposition, the humility—of Father Pemberton, he would have found a small remnant of the “Old Man,” as the good clergyman would have called it, which was never in harmony with the Rev. Mr. Stoker. The younger divine felt his importance, and made his venerable colleague feel that he felt it. Father Pemberton had a fair chance at rainy Sundays and hot summer-afternoon services; but the junior pushed him aside without ceremony whenever he thought there was like to be a good show in the pews. As for those courtesies which the old need, to soften the sense of declining faculties and failing attractions, the younger pastor bestowed them in public, but was negligent of them, to say the least, when not on exhibition.

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Good old Father Pemberton could not love this man, but he would not hate him, and he never complained to him or of him. It would have been of no use if he had: the women of the parish had taken up the Rev. Mr. Stoker; and when the women run after a minister or a doctor, what do the men signify?

Why the women ran after him, some thought it was not hard to guess. He was not ill-looking, according to the village standard, parted his hair smoothly, tied his white cravat carefully, was fluent, plausible, had a gift in prayer, was considered eloquent, was fond of listening to their spiritual experiences, and had a sickly wife. This is what Byles Gridley said; but he was apt to be caustic at times.

Father Pemberton visited his people but rarely. Like Jonathan Edwards, like David Osgood, he felt his call to be to study-work, and was impatient of the egotisms and spiritual megrims, in listening to which, especially from the younger females of his flock, his colleague had won the hearts of so many of his parishioners. His presence had a wonderful effect in restoring the despondent Miss Silence to her equanimity; for not all the hard divinity he had preached for half a century had spoiled his kindly nature; and not the gentle Melanchthon himself, ready to welcome death as a refuge from the rage and bitterness of theologians, was more in contrast with the disputants with whom he mingled, than the old minister, in the hour of trial, with the stern dogmatist in his study, forging thunderbolts to smite down sinners.

It was well that there were no tithing-men about on that next day, Sunday; for it shone no Sabbath day for the young men within half a dozen miles of the village. They were out on Bear Hill the whole day, beating up the bushes as if for game, scaring old crows out of their ragged nests, and in one dark glen startling a fierce-eyed, growling, bobtailed catamount, who sat spitting and looking all ready to spring at them, on the tall tree where he clung with his claws unsheathed, until a young fellow came up with a gun and shot him dead. They went through and through the swamp at Musquash Hollow; but found nothing better than a wicked old snapping-turtle, evil to behold, with his snaky head and alligator tail, but worse to meddle with, if his horny jaws were near enough to spring their man-trap on the curious experimenter. At Wood-End there were some Indians, ill-conditioned savages in a dirty tent, making baskets, the miracle of which was that they were so clean. They had seen a young lady answering the description, about a week ago. She had bought a basket. Asked them if they had a canoe they wanted to sell.—Eyes like hers (pointing to a squaw with a man's hat on).

At Pocasset the young men explored all the thick woods,—some who ought to have known better taking their guns, which made a talk, as one might well suppose it would. Hunting on a Sabbath day! They did n't mean to shoot Myrtle Hazard, did they? it was keenly asked. A good many said it was all nonsense, and a mere excuse to get away from meeting and have a sort of frolic on pretence that it was a work of necessity and mercy, one or both.

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While they were scattering themselves about in this way, some in earnest, some rejoicing in the unwonted license, lifting off for a little while that enormous Sabbath-day pressure which weighs like forty atmospheres on every true-born Puritan, two young men had been since Friday in search of the lost girl, each following a clue of his own, and determined to find her if she was among the living.

Cyprian Eveleth made for the village of Mapleton, where his sister Olive was staying, trusting that, with her aid, he might get a clue to the mystery of Myrtle's disappearance.

William Murray Bradshaw struck for a railroad train going to the great seaport, at a station where it stops for wood and water.

In the mean time, a third young man, Gifted Hopkins by name, son of the good woman already mentioned, sat down, with tears in his eyes, and wrote those touching stanzas, "The Lost Myrtle," which were printed in the next "Banner and Oracle," and much admired by many who read them.

CHAPTER III.

Antecedents.

The Withers Homestead was the oldest mansion in town. It was built on the east bank of the river, a little above the curve which gave the name to Oxbow Village. It stood on an elevation, its west gable close to the river's edge, an old orchard and a small pond at the foot of the slope behind it, woods at the east, open to the south, with a great row of Lombardy poplars standing guard in front of the house. The Hon. Selah Withers, Esq., a descendant of one of the first colonists, built it for his own residence, in the early part of the last century. Deeply impressed with his importance in the order of things, he had chosen to place it a little removed from the cluster of smaller dwellings about the Oxbow; and with some vague fancy in his mind of the castles that overlook the Rhine and the Danube, he had selected this eminence on which to place his substantial gambrel roofed dwelling-house. Long afterwards a bay-window, almost a little room of itself, had been thrown out of the second story on the west side, so that it looked directly down on the river running beneath it. The chamber, thus half suspended in the air, had been for years the special apartment of Myrtle Hazard; and as the boys paddling about on the river would often catch glimpses, through the window, of the little girl dressed in the scarlet jacket she fancied in those days, one of them, Cyprian Eveleth had given it a name which became current among the young people, and indeed furnished to Gifted Hopkins the subject of one of his earliest poems, to wit, "The Fire-hang-bird's Nest."

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If we would know anything about the persons now living at the Withers Homestead, or The Poplars, as it was more commonly called of late years, we must take a brief inventory of some of their vital antecedents. It is by no means certain that our individual personality is the single inhabitant of these our corporeal frames. Nay, there is recorded an experience of one of the living persons mentioned in this narrative,—to be given in full in its proper place, which, so far as it is received in evidence, tends to show that some, at least, who have long been dead, may enjoy a kind of secondary and imperfect, yet self-conscious life, in these bodily tenements which we are in the habit of considering exclusively our own. There are many circumstances, familiar to common observers, which favor this belief to a certain extent. Thus, at one moment we detect the look, at another the tone of voice, at another some characteristic movement of this or that ancestor, in our relations or others. There are times when our friends do not act like themselves, but apparently in obedience to some other law than that of their own proper nature. We all do things both awake and asleep which surprise us. Perhaps we have cotenants in this house we live in. No less than eight distinct personalities are said to have coexisted in a single female mentioned by an ancient physician of unimpeachable authority. In this light we may perhaps see the meaning of a sentence, from a work which will be repeatedly referred to in this narrative, *viz.*: “This body in which we journey across the isthmus between the two oceans is not a private carriage, but an omnibus.”

The ancestry of the Withers family had counted a martyr to their faith before they were known as Puritans. The record was obscure in some points; but the portrait, marked “Ann Holyoake, burned by ye bloody Papists, ano 15..” (figures illegible), was still hanging against the panel over the fireplace in the west parlor at The Poplars. The following words were yet legible on the canvas: “Thou hast made a covenant O Lord with mee and my Children forever.”

The story had come down, that Ann Holyoake spoke these words in a prayer she offered up at the stake, after the fagots were kindled. There had always been a secret feeling in the family, that none of her descendants could finally fall from grace, in virtue of this solemn “covenant.”

There had been also a legend in the family, that the martyred woman's spirit exercised a kind of supervision over her descendants; that she either manifested herself to them, or in some way impressed them, from time to time; as in the case of the first pilgrim before he cast his lot with the emigrants,—of one Mrs. Winslow, a descendant in the third generation, when the Indians were about to attack the settlement where she lived,—and of another, just before he was killed at Quebec.

There was a remarkable resemblance between the features of Ann Holyoake, as shown in the portrait, and the miniature likeness of Myrtle's mother. Myrtle adopted the nearly obsolete superstition more readily on this account, and loved to cherish the fancy that

the guardian spirit which had watched over her ancestors was often near her, and would be with her in her time of need.

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The wife of Selah Withers was accused of sorcery in the evil days of that delusion. A careless expression in one of her letters, that “ye Parson was as lyke to bee in league with ye Divell as anie of em,” had got abroad, and given great offence to godly people. There was no doubt that some odd “manifestations,” as they would be called nowadays, had taken place in the household when she was a girl, and that she presented many of the conditions belonging to what are at the present day called mediums.

Major Gideon Withers, her son, was of the very common type of hearty, loud, portly men, who like to show themselves at militia trainings, and to hear themselves shout orders at musters, or declaim patriotic sentiments at town-meetings and in the General Court. He loved to wear a crimson sash and a military cap with a large red feather, in which the village folk used to say he looked as “hahnsome as a piny,”—meaning a favorite flower of his, which is better spelt peony, and to which it was not unnatural that his admirers should compare him.

If he had married a wife like himself, there might probably enough have sprung from the alliance a family of moon-faced children, who would have dropped into their places like posts into their holes, asking no questions of life, contented, like so many other honest folks, with the part of supernumeraries in the drama of being, their wardrobe of flesh and bones being furnished them gratis, and nothing to do but to walk across the stage wearing it. But Major Gideon Withers, for some reason or other, married a slender, sensitive, nervous, romantic woman, which accounted for the fact that his son David, “King David,” as he was called in his time, had a very different set of tastes from his father, showing a turn for literature and sentiment in his youth, reading Young’s “Night Thoughts,” and Thomson’s “Seasons,” and sometimes in those early days writing verses himself to Celia or to Chloe, which sounded just as fine to him as Effie and Minnie sound to young people now, as Musidora, as Saccharissa, as Lesbia, as Helena, as Adah and Zillah, have all sounded to young people in their time,—ashes of roses as they are to us now, and as our endearing Scotch diminutives will be to others by and by.

King David Withers, who got his royal prefix partly because he was rich, and partly because he wrote hymns occasionally, when he grew too old to write love-poems, married the famous beauty before mentioned, Miss Judith Pride, and the race came up again in vigor. Their son, Jeremy, took for his first wife a delicate, melancholic girl, who matured into a sad-eyed woman, and bore him two children, Malachi and Silence.

When she died, he mourned for her bitterly almost a year, and then put on a ruffled shirt and went across the river to tell his grief to Miss Virginia Wild, there residing. This lady was said to have a few drops of genuine aboriginal blood in her veins; and it is certain that her cheek had a little of the russet tinge which a Seckel pear shows on its warmest cheek when it blushes.—Love shuts itself up in sympathy like a knife-blade in its handle, and opens as easily. All the rest followed in due order according to Nature’s kindly programme.

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Captain Charles Hazard, of the ship *Orient Pearl*, fell desperately in love with the daughter of this second wife, married her, and carried her to India, where their first and only child was born, and received the name of Myrtle, as fitting her cradle in the tropics. So her earliest impressions,—it would not be exact to call them recollections,—besides the smiles of her father and mother, were of dusky faces, of loose white raiment, of waving fans, of breezes perfumed with the sweet exhalations of sandal-wood, of gorgeous flowers and glowing fruit, of shady verandas, of gliding palanquins, and all the languid luxury of the South. The pestilence which has its natural home in India, but has journeyed so far from its birth place in these later years, took her father and mother away, suddenly, in the very freshness of their early maturity. A relation of Myrtle's father, wife of another captain, was returning to America on a visit, and the child was sent back, under her care, while still a mere infant, to her relatives at the old homestead. During the long voyage, the strange mystery of the ocean was wrought into her consciousness so deeply, that it seemed to have become a part of her being. The waves rocked her, as if the sea had been her mother; and, looking over the vessel's side from the arms that held her with tender care, she used to watch the play of the waters, until the rhythm of their movement became a part of her, almost as much as her own pulse and breath.

The instincts and qualities belonging to the ancestral traits which predominated in the conflict of mingled lives lay in this child in embryo, waiting to come to maturity. It was as when several grafts, bearing fruit that ripens at different times, are growing upon the same stock. Her earlier impulses may have been derived directly from her father and mother, but all the ancestors who have been mentioned, and more or less obscurely many others, came uppermost in their time, before the absolute and total result of their several forces had found its equilibrium in the character by which she was to be known as an individual. These inherited impulses were therefore many, conflicting, some of them dangerous. The World, the Flesh, and the Devil held mortgages on her life before its deed was put in her hands; but sweet and gracious influences were also born with her; and the battle of life was to be fought between them, God helping her in her need, and her own free choice siding with one or the other. The formal statement of this succession of ripening characteristics need not be repeated, but the fact must be borne in mind.

This was the child who was delivered into the hands of Miss Silence Withers, her mother's half—sister, keeping house with her brother Malachi, a bachelor, already called Old Malachi, though hardly entitled by his years to such a venerable prefix. Both these persons had inherited the predominant traits of their sad-eyed mother. Malachi, the chief heir of the family property, was rich, but felt very poor. He owned this fine old estate of some hundreds of acres. He had moneys in the bank, shares in various companies, wood-lots in the town; and a large tract of Western land, the subject of a lawsuit which seemed as if it would never be settled, and kept him always uneasy.

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Some said he hoarded gold somewhere about the old house, but nobody knew this for a certainty. In spite of his abundant means, he talked much of poverty, and kept the household on the narrowest footing of economy. One Irishwoman, with a little aid from her husband now and then, did all their work; and the only company they saw was Miss Cynthia Badlam, who, as a relative, claimed a home with them whenever she was so disposed.

The “little Indian,” as Malachi called her, was an awkward accession to the family. Silence Withers knew no more about children and their ways and wants than if she had been a female ostrich. Thus it was that she found it necessary to send for a woman well known in the place as the first friend whose acquaintance many of the little people of the town had made in this vale of tears.

Thirty years of practice had taught Nurse Byloe the art of handling the young of her species with the soft firmness which one may notice in cats with their kittens,—more grandly in a tawny lioness mouthing her cubs. Myrtle did not know she was held; she only felt she was lifted, and borne up, as a cherub may feel upon a white-woolly cloud, and smiled accordingly at the nurse, as if quite at home in her arms.

“As fine a child as ever breathed the breath of life. But where did them black eyes come from? Born in Injy,—that ’s it, ain’t it? No, it’s her poor mother’s eyes to be sure. Does n’t it seem as if there was a kind of Injin look to ’em? She’ll be a lively one to manage, if I know anything about childun. See her clinchin’ them little fists!”

This was when Miss Silence came near her and brought her rather severe countenance close to the child for inspection of its features. The ungracious aspect of the woman and the defiant attitude of the child prefigured in one brief instant the history of many long coming years.

It was not a great while before the two parties in that wearing conflict of alien lives, which is often called education, began to measure their strength against each other. The child was bright, observing, of restless activity, inquisitively curious, very hard to frighten, and with a will which seemed made for mastery, not submission.

The stern spinster to whose care this vigorous life was committed was disposed to discharge her duty to the girl faithfully and conscientiously; but there were two points in her character and belief which had a most important bearing on the manner in which she carried out her laudable intentions. First, she was one of that class of human beings whose one single engrossing thought is their own welfare,—in the next world, it is true, but still their own personal welfare. The Roman Church recognizes this class, and provides every form of specific to meet their spiritual condition. But in so far as Protestantism has thrown out works as a means of insuring future safety, these unfortunates are as badly off as nervous

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patients who have no drops, pills, potions, no doctors' rules, to follow. Only tell a poor creature what to do, and he or she will do it, and be made easy, were it a pilgrimage of a thousand miles, with shoes full of split peas instead of boiled ones; but if once assured that doing does no good, the drooping Little-faiths are left at leisure to worry about their souls, as the other class of weaklings worry about their bodies. The effect on character does not seem to be very different in the two classes. Metaphysicians may discuss the nature of selfishness at their leisure; if to have all her thoughts centring on the one point of her own well-being by and by was selfishness, then Silence Withers was supremely selfish; and if we are offended with that form of egotism, it is no more than ten of the twelve Apostles were, as the reader may see by turning to the Gospel of St. Matthew, the twentieth chapter and the twenty-fourth verse.

The next practical difficulty was, that she attempted to carry out a theory which, whatever might be its success in other cases, did not work kindly in the case of Myrtle Hazard, but, on the contrary, developed a mighty spirit of antagonism in her nature, which threatened to end in utter lawlessness. Miss Silence started from the approved doctrine, that all children are radically and utterly wrong in all their motives, feelings, thoughts, and deeds, so long as they remain subject to their natural instincts. It was by the eradication, and not the education, of these instincts, that the character of the human being she was moulding was to be determined. The first great preliminary process, so soon as the child manifested any evidence of intelligent and persistent self-determination, was to break her will.

There is no doubt that this was a legitimate conclusion from the teaching of Priest Pemberton, but it required a colder and harder nature than his own to carry out many of his dogmas to their practical application. He wrought in the pure mathematics, so to speak, of theology, and left the working rules to the good sense and good feeling of his people.

Miss Silence had been waiting for her opportunity to apply the great doctrine, and it came at last in a very trivial way.

"Myrtle does n't want brown bread. Myrtle won't have brown bread. Myrtle will have white bread."

"Myrtle is a wicked child. She will have what Aunt Silence says she shall have. She won't have anything but brown bread."

Thereupon the bright red lip protruded, the hot blood mounted to her face, the child untied her little "tire," got down from the table, took up her one forlorn, featureless doll, and went to bed without her supper. The next morning the worthy woman thought that hunger and reflection would have subdued the rebellious spirit. So there stood

yesterday's untouched supper waiting for her breakfast. She would not taste it, and it became necessary to enforce that extreme

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penalty of the law which had been threatened, but never yet put in execution. Miss Silence, in obedience to what she felt to be a painful duty, without any passion, but filled with high, inexorable purpose, carried the child up to the garret, and, fastening her so that she could not wander about and hurt herself, left her to her repentant thoughts, awaiting the moment when a plaintive entreaty for liberty and food should announce that the evil nature had yielded and the obdurate will was broken.

The garret was an awful place. All the skeleton-like ribs of the roof showed in the dim light, naked overhead, and the only floor to be trusted consisted of the few boards which bridged the lath and plaster. A great, mysterious brick tower climbed up through it,—it was the chimney, but it looked like a horrible cell to put criminals into. The whole place was festooned with cobwebs,—not light films, such as the housewife's broom sweeps away before they have become a permanent residence, but vast gray draperies, loaded with dust, sprinkled with yellow powder from the beams where the worms were gnawing day and night, the home of old, hairy spiders who had, lived there since they were eggs and would leave it for unborn spiders who would grow old and huge like themselves in it, long after the human tenants had left the mansion for a narrower home. Here this little criminal was imprisoned, six, twelve,—tell it not to mothers,—eighteen dreadful hours, hungry until she was ready to gnaw her hands, a prey to all childish imaginations; and here at her stern guardian's last visit she sat, pallid, chilled, almost fainting, but sullen and unsubdued. The Irishwoman, poor stupid Kitty Fagan, who had no theory of human nature, saw her over the lean shoulders of the spinster, and, forgetting all differences of condition and questions of authority, rushed to her with a cry of maternal tenderness, and, with a tempest of passionate tears and kisses, bore her off to her own humble realm, where the little victorious martyr was fed from the best stores of the house, until there was as much danger from repletion as there had been from famine. How the experiment might have ended but for this empirical and most unphilosophical interference, there is no saying; but it settled the point that the rebellious nature was not to be subjugated in a brief conflict.

The untamed disposition manifested itself in greater enormities as she grew older. At the age of four years she was detected in making a cat's-cradle at meeting, during sermon-time, and, on being reprimanded for so doing, laughed out loud, so as to be heard by Father Pemberton, who thereupon bent his threatening, shaggy brows upon the child, and, to his shame be it spoken, had such a sudden uprising of weak, foolish, grandfatherly feelings, that a mist came over his eyes, and he left out his "ninthly" altogether, thereby spoiling the logical sequence of propositions which had kept his large forehead knotty for a week.

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At eight years old she fell in love with the high-colored picture of Major Gideon Withers in the crimson sash and the red feather of his exalted military office. It was then for the first time that her aunt Silence remarked a shade of resemblance between the child and the portrait. She had always, up to this time, been dressed in sad colors, as was fitting, doubtless, for a forlorn orphan; but happening one day to see a small negro girl peacocking round in a flaming scarlet petticoat, she struck for bright colors in her own apparel, and carried her point at last. It was as if a ground-sparrow had changed her gray feathers for the burning plumage of some tropical wanderer; and it was natural enough that Cyprian Eveleth should have called her the fire-hang-bird, and her little chamber the fire-hang-bird's nest,—using the country boy's synonyme for the Baltimore oriole.

At ten years old she had one of those great experiences which give new meaning to the life of a child.

Her uncle Malachi had seemed to have a strong liking for her at one time, but of late years his delusions had gained upon him, and under their influence he seemed to regard her as an encumbrance and an extravagance. He was growing more and more solitary in his habits, more and more negligent of his appearance. He was up late at night, wandering about the house from the cellar to the garret, so that, his light being seen flitting from window to window, the story got about that the old house was haunted.

One dreary, rainy Friday in November, Myrtle was left alone in the house. Her uncle had been gone since the day before. The two women were both away at the village. At such times the child took a strange delight in exploring all the hiding-places of the old mansion. She had the mysterious dwelling-place of so many of the dead and the living all to herself. What a fearful kind of pleasure in its silence and loneliness! The old clock that Marmaduke Storr made in London more than a hundred years ago was clicking the steady pulse-beats of its second century. The featured moon on its dial had lifted one eye, as if to watch the child, as it had watched so many generations of children, while the swinging pendulum ticked them along into youth, maturity, gray hairs, deathbeds,—ticking through the prayer at the funeral, ticking without grief through all the still or noisy woe of mourning,—ticking without joy when the smiles and gayety of comforted heirs had come back again. She looked at herself in the tall, bevelled mirror in the best chamber. She pulled aside the curtains of the stately bedstead whereon the heads of the house had slept until they died and were stretched out upon it, and the sheet shaped itself to them in vague, awful breadth of outline, like a block of monumental marble the sculptor leaves just hinted by the chisel.

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She groped her way up to the dim garret, the scene of her memorable punishment. A rusty hook projected from one of the joists a little higher than a man's head. Something was hanging from it,—an old garment, was it? She went bravely up and touched—a cold hand. She did what most children of that age would do,—uttered a cry and ran downstairs with all her might. She rushed out of the door and called to the man Patrick, who was doing some work about the place. What could be done was done, but it was too late.

Uncle Malachi had made away with himself. That was plain on the face of thing. In due time the coroner's verdict settled it. It was not so strange as it seemed; but it made a great talk in the village and all the country round about. Everybody knew he had money enough, and yet he had hanged himself for fear of starving to death.

For all that, he was found to have left a will, dated some years before, leaving his property to his sister Silence, with the exception of a certain moderate legacy to be paid in money to Myrtle Hazard when she should arrive at the age of twenty years.

The household seemed more chilly than ever after this tragical event. Its depressing influence followed the child to school, where she learned the common branches of knowledge. It followed her to the Sabbath-day catechisings, where she repeated the answers about the federal headship of Adam, and her consequent personal responsibilities, and other technicalities which are hardly milk for babes, perhaps as well as other children, but without any very profound remorse for what she could not help, so far as she understood the matter, any more than her sex or stature, and with no very clear comprehension of the phrases which the New England followers of the Westminster divines made a part of the elementary instruction of young people.

At twelve years old she had grown tall and womanly enough to attract the eyes of the youth and older boys, several of whom made advances towards her acquaintance. But the dreary discipline of the household had sunk into her soul, and she had been shaping an internal life for herself, which it was hard for friendship to penetrate. Bathsheba Stoker was chained to the bedside of an invalid mother. Olive Eveleth, a kind, true-hearted girl, belonged to another religious communion; and this tended to render their meetings less frequent, though Olive was still her nearest friend. Cyprian was himself a little shy, and rather held to Myrtle through his sister than by any true intimacy directly with herself. Of the other young men of the village Gifted Hopkins was perhaps the most fervent of her admirers, as he had repeatedly shown by effusions in verse, of which, under the thinnest of disguises, she was the object.

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William Murray Bradshaw, ten years older than herself, a young man of striking aspect and claims to exceptional ability, had kept his eye on her of late; but it was generally supposed that he would find a wife in the city, where he was in the habit of going to visit a fashionable relative, Mrs. Clymer Ketchum, of 24 Carat Place. She, at any rate, understood very well that he meant, to use his own phrase, "to go in for a corner lot,"—understanding thereby a young lady with possessions and without encumbrances. If the old man had only given his money to Myrtle, William Murray Bradshaw would have made sure of her; but she was not likely ever to get much of it. Miss Silence Withers, it was understood, would probably leave her money as the Rev. Mr. Stoker, her spiritual director, should indicate, and it seemed likely that most of it would go to a rising educational institution where certain given doctrines were to be taught through all time, whether disproved or not, and whether those who taught them believed them or not, provided only they would say they believed them.

Nobody had promised to say masses for her soul if she made this disposition of her property, or pledged the word of the Church that she should have plenary absolution. But she felt that she would be making friends in Influential Quarters by thus laying up her treasure, and that she would be safe if she had the good-will of the ministers of her sect.

Myrtle Hazard had nearly reached the age of fourteen, and, though not like to inherit much of the family property, was fast growing into a large dower of hereditary beauty. Always handsome, her features shaped themselves in a finer symmetry, her color grew richer, her figure promised a perfect womanly development, and her movements had the grace which high-breeding gives the daughter of a queen, and which Nature now and then teaches the humblest of village maidens. She could not long escape the notice of the lovers and flatterers of beauty, and the time of danger was drawing near.

At this period of her life she made two discoveries which changed the whole course of her thoughts, and opened for her a new world of ideas and possibilities.

Ever since the dreadful event of November, 1854, the garret had been a fearful place to think of, and still more to visit. The stories that the house was haunted gained in frequency of repetition and detail of circumstance. But Myrtle was bold and inquisitive, and explored its recesses at such times as she could creep among them undisturbed. Hid away close under the eaves she found an old trunk covered with dust and cobwebs. The mice had gnawed through its leather hinges, and, as it had been hastily stuffed full, the cover had risen, and two or three volumes had fallen to the floor. This trunk held the papers and books which her great-grandmother, the famous beauty, had left behind her, records of the romantic days when she was the belle of the county,—storybooks, memoirs, novels, and poems, and not a few love-letters,—a strange collection, which, as so often happens with such deposits in old families, nobody had cared to meddle with, and nobody had been willing to destroy, until at last they had passed out of mind, and waited for a new generation to bring them into light again.

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The other discovery was of a small hoard of coin. Under one of the boards which formed the imperfect flooring of the garret was hidden an old leather mitten. Instead of a hand, it had a fat fist of silver dollars, and a thumb of gold half-eagles.

Thus knowledge and power found their way to the simple and secluded maiden. The books were hers to read as much as any other's; the gold and silver were only a part of that small provision which would be hers by and by, and if she borrowed it, it was borrowing of herself. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil had shaken its fruit into her lap, and, without any serpent to tempt her, she took thereof and did eat.

CHAPTER IV.

Byles Gridley, A. M.

The old Master of Arts was as notable a man in his outside presentment as one will find among five hundred college alumni as they file in procession. His strong, squared features, his formidable scowl, his solid-looking head, his iron-gray hair, his positive and as it were categorical stride, his slow, precise way of putting a statement, the strange union of trampling radicalism in some directions and high-stepping conservatism in others, which made it impossible to calculate on his unexpressed opinions, his testy ways and his generous impulses, his hard judgments and kindly actions, were characteristics that gave him a very decided individuality.

He had all the aspects of a man of books. His study, which was the best room in Mrs. Hopkins's house, was filled with a miscellaneous-looking collection of volumes, which his curious literary taste had got together from the shelves of all the libraries that had been broken up during his long life as a scholar. Classics, theology, especially of the controversial sort, statistics, politics, law, medicine, science, occult and overt, general literature,—almost every branch of knowledge was represented. His learning was very various, and of course mixed up, useful and useless, new and ancient, dogmatic and rational,—like his library, in short; for a library gathered like his is a looking-glass in which the owner's mind is reflected.

The common people about the village did not know what to make of such a phenomenon. He did not preach, marry, christen, or bury, like the ministers, nor jog around with medicines for sick folks, nor carry cases into court for quarrelsome neighbors. What was he good for? Not a great deal, some of the wiseacres thought,—had “all sorts of sense but common sense,”—“smart mahn, but not prahctical.” There were others who read him more shrewdly. He knowed more, they said, than all the ministers put together, and if he'd stan' for Ripresentative they 'd like to vote for him,—they hed n't hed a smart mahn in the Ginerall Court sence Squire Wibird was thar.

They may have overdone the matter in comparing his knowledge with that of all the ministers together, for Priest Pemberton was a real scholar in his special line of study,—as all D. D.'s are supposed to be, or they would not have been honored with that distinguished title. But Mr. Byles Gridley not only had more learning than the deep-sea line of the bucolic intelligence could fathom; he had more wisdom also than they gave him credit for, even those among them who thought most of his abilities.

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In his capacity of schoolmaster he had sharpened his wits against those of the lively city boys he had in charge, and made such a reputation as "Master" Gridley, that he kept that title even after he had become a college tutor and professor. As a tutor he had to deal with many of these same boys, and others like them, in the still more vivacious period of their early college life. He got rid of his police duties when he became a professor, but he still studied the pupils as carefully as he used once to watch them, and learned to read character with a skill which might have fitted him for governing men instead of adolescents. But he loved quiet and he dreaded mingling with the brawlers of the market-place, whose stock in trade is a voice and a vocabulary. So it was that he had passed his life in the patient mechanical labor of instruction, leaving too many of his instincts and faculties in abeyance.

The alluvium of all this experience bore a nearer resemblance to worldly wisdom than might have been conjectured; much nearer, indeed, than it does in many old instructors, whose eyes get fish-like as their blood grows cold, and who are not fit to be trusted with anything more practical than a gerund or a cosine. Master Gridley not only knew a good deal of human nature, but he knew how to keep his knowledge to himself upon occasion. He understood singularly well the ways and tendencies of young people. He was shrewd in the detection of trickery, and very confident in those who had once passed the ordeal of his well-schooled observing powers. He had no particular tendency to meddle with the personal relations of those about him; but if they were forced upon him in any way, he was like to see into them at least as quickly as any of his neighbors who thought themselves most endowed with practical skill.

In leaving the duties of his office he considered himself, as he said a little despondently, like an old horse unharnessed and turned out to pasture. He felt that he had separated himself from human interests, and was henceforth to live in his books with the dead, until he should be numbered with them himself. He had chosen this quiet village as a place where he might pass his days undisturbed, and find a peaceful resting-place in its churchyard, where the gravel was dry, and the sun lay warm, and the glowing woods of autumn would spread their many-colored counterpane over the bed where he would be taking his rest. It sometimes came over him painfully that he was never more to be of any importance to his fellow-creatures. There was nobody living to whom he was connected by any very near ties. He felt kindly enough to the good woman in whose house he lived; he sometimes gave a few words of counsel to her son; he was not unamiable with the few people he met; he bowed with great consideration to the Rev. Dr. Pemberton; and he studied with no small interest the physiognomy of the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker, to whose sermons he listened, with a black scowl now and then, and a nostril dilating with ominous intensity of meaning. But he said sadly to himself, that his life had been a failure,—that he had nothing to show for it, and his one talent was ready in its napkin to give back to his Lord.

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He owed something of this sadness, perhaps, to a cause which many would hold of small significance. Though he had mourned for no lost love, at least so far as was known, though he had never suffered the pang of parting with a child, though he seemed isolated from those joys and griefs which come with the ties of family, he too had his private urn filled with the ashes of extinguished hopes. He was the father of a dead book.

Why "Thoughts on the Universe, by Byles Gridley, A. M.," had not met with an eager welcome and a permanent demand from the discriminating public, it would take us too long to inquire in detail. Indeed; he himself was never able to account satisfactorily for the state of things which his bookseller's account made evident to him. He had read and re-read his work; and the more familiar he became with it, the less was he able to understand the singular want of popular appreciation of what he could not help recognizing as its excellences. He had a special copy of his work, printed on large paper and sumptuously bound. He loved to read in this, as people read over the letters of friends who have long been dead; and it might have awakened a feeling of something far removed from the ludicrous, if his comments on his own production could have been heard. "That's a thought, now, for you!—See Mr. Thomas Babington Macaulay's Essay printed six years after thus book." "A felicitous image! and so everybody would have said if only Mr. Thomas Carlyle had hit upon it." "If this is not genuine pathos, where will you find it, I should like to know? And nobody to open the book where it stands written but one poor old man—in this generation, at least—in this generation!" It may be doubted whether he would ever have loved his book with such jealous fondness if it had gone through a dozen editions, and everybody was quoting it to his face. But now it lived only for him; and to him it was wife and child, parent, friend, all in one, as Hector was all in all to his spouse. He never tired of it, and in his more sanguine moods he looked forward to the time when the world would acknowledge its merits, and his genius would find full recognition. Perhaps he was right: more than one book which seemed dead and was dead for contemporary readers has had a resurrection when the rivals who triumphed over it lived only in the tombstone memory of antiquaries. Comfort for some of us, dear fellow-writer.

It followed from the way in which he lived that he must have some means of support upon which he could depend. He was economical, if not over frugal in some of his habits; but he bought books, and took newspapers and reviews, and had money when money was needed; the fact being, though it was not generally known, that a distant relative had not long before died, leaving him a very comfortable property.

His money matters had led him to have occasional dealings with the late legal firm of Wibird and Penhallow, which had naturally passed into the hands of the new partnership, Penhallow and Bradshaw. He had entire confidence in the senior partner, but not so much in the young man who had been recently associated in the business.

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Mr. William Murray Bradshaw, commonly called by his last two names, was the son of a lawyer of some note for his acuteness, who marked out his calling for him in having him named after the great Lord Mansfield. Murray Bradshaw was about twenty-five years old, by common consent good-looking, with a finely formed head, a searching eye, and a sharp-cut mouth, which smiled at his bidding without the slightest reference to the real condition of his feeling at the moment. This was a great convenience; for it gave him an appearance of good-nature at the small expense of a slight muscular movement which was as easy as winking, and deceived everybody but those who had studied him long and carefully enough to find that this play of his features was what a watch maker would call a detached movement.

He had been a good scholar in college, not so much by hard study as by skilful veneering, and had taken great pains to stand well with the Faculty, at least one of whom, Byles Gridley, A. M., had watched him with no little interest as a man with a promising future, provided he were not so astute as to outwit and overreach himself in his excess of contrivance. His classmates could not help liking him; as to loving him, none of them would have thought of that. He was so shrewd, so keen, so full of practical sense, and so good-humored as long as things went on to his liking, that few could resist his fascination. He had a way of talking with people about what they were interested in, as if it were the one matter in the world nearest to his heart. But he was commonly trying to find out something, or to produce some impression, as a juggler is working at his miracle while he keeps people's attention by his voluble discourse and make-believe movements. In his lightest talk he was almost always edging towards a practical object, and it was an interesting and instructive amusement to watch for the moment at which he would ship the belt of his colloquial machinery on to the tight pulley. It was done so easily and naturally that there was hardly a sign of it. Master Gridley could usually detect the shifting action, but the young man's features and voice never betrayed him.

He was a favorite with the other sex, who love poetry and romance, as he well knew, for which reason he often used the phrases of both, and in such a way as to answer his purpose with most of those whom he wished to please. He had one great advantage in the sweepstakes of life: he was not handicapped with any burdensome ideals. He took everything at its marked value. He accepted the standard of the street as a final fact for to-day, like the broker's list of prices.

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His whole plan of life was laid out. He knew that law was the best introduction to political life, and he meant to use it for this end. He chose to begin his career in the country, so as to feel his way more surely and gradually to its ultimate aim; but he had no intention of burning his shining talents in a grazing district, however tall its grass might grow. His business was not with these stiff-jointed, slow-witted graziers, but with the supple, dangerous, far-seeing men who sit scheming by the gas-light in the great cities, after all the lamps and candles are out from the Merrimac to the Housatonic. Every strong and every weak point of those who might probably be his rivals were laid down on his charts, as winds and currents and rocks are marked on those of a navigator. All the young girls in the country, and not a few in the city, with which, as mentioned, he had frequent relations, were on his list of possible availabilities in the matrimonial line of speculation, provided always that their position and prospects were such as would make them proper matches for so considerable a person as the future Hon. William Murray Bradshaw.

Master Gridley had made a careful study of his old pupil since they had resided in the same village. The old professor could not help admiring him, notwithstanding certain suspicious elements in his character; for after muddy village talk, a clear stream of intelligent conversation was a great luxury to the hard-headed scholar. The more he saw of him, the more he learned to watch his movements, and to be on his guard in talking with him. The old man could be crafty, with all his simplicity, and he had found out that under his good-natured manner there often lurked some design more or less worth noting, and which might involve other interests deserving protection.

For some reason or other the old Master of Arts had of late experienced a certain degree of relenting with regard to himself, probably brought about by the expressions of gratitude from worthy Mrs. Hopkins for acts of kindness to which he himself attached no great value. He had been kind to her son Gifted; he had been fatherly with Susan Posey, her relative and boarder; and he had shown himself singularly and unexpectedly amiable with the little twins who had been adopted by the good woman into her household. In fact, ever since these little creatures had begun to toddle about and explode their first consonants, he had looked through his great round spectacles upon them with a decided interest; and from that time it seemed as if some of the human and social sentiments which had never leafed or flowered in him, for want of their natural sunshine, had begun growing up from roots which had never lost their life. His liking for the twins may have been an illustration of that singular law which old Dr. Hurlbut used to lay down, namely, that at a certain period of life, say from fifty to sixty and upward, the grand-paternal instinct awakens in bachelors, the rhythms of Nature reaching them in spite of her defeated intentions; so that when men marry late they love their autumn child with a twofold affection,—father's and grandfather's both in one.

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However this may be, there is no doubt that Mr. Byles Gridley was beginning to take a part in his neighbors' welfare and misfortunes, such as could hardly have been expected of a man so long lost in his books and his scholastic duties. And among others, Myrtle Hazard had come in for a share of his interest. He had met her now and then in her walks to and from school and meeting, and had been taken with her beauty and her apparent unconsciousness of it, which he attributed to the forlorn kind of household in which she had grown up. He had got so far as to talk with her now and then, and found himself puzzled, as well he might be, in talking with a girl who had been growing into her early maturity in antagonism with every influence that surrounded her.

"Love will reach her by and by," he said, "in spite of the dragons up at the den yonder.

"Centum fronte oculos, centum cervice gerebat
Argus, et hos unus saepe fefellit amor."

But there was something about Myrtle,—he hardly knew whether to call it dignity, or pride, or reserve, or the mere habit of holding back brought about by the system of repression under which she had been educated,—which kept even the old Master of Arts at his distance. Yet he was strongly drawn to her, and had a sort of presentiment that he might be able to help her some day, and that very probably she would want his help; for she was alone in the world, except for the dragons, and sure to be assailed by foes from without and from within.

He noticed that her name was apt to come up in his conversations with Murray Bradshaw; and, as he himself never introduced it, of course the young man must have forced it, as conjurers force a card, and with some special object. This set him thinking hard; and, as a result of it, he determined the next time Mr. Bradshaw brought her name up to set him talking.

So he talked, not suspecting how carefully the old man listened.

"It was a demonish hard case," he said, "that old Malachi had left his money as he did. Myrtle Hazard was going to be the handsomest girl about, when she came to her beauty, and she was coming to it mighty fast. If they could only break that will, but it was no use trying. The doctors said he was of sound mind for at least two years after making it. If Silence Withers got the land claim, there'd be a pile, sure enough. Myrtle Hazard ought to have it. If the girl had only inherited that property—whew? She'd have been a match for any fellow. That old Silence Withers would do just as her minister told her,—even chance whether she gives it to the Parson-factory, or marries Bellamy Stoker, and gives it to him after his wife's dead. He'd take it if he had to take her with it. Earn his money, hey, Master Gridley?"

"Why, you don't seem to think very well of the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker?" said Mr. Gridley, smiling.



“Think well of him? Too fond of using the Devil’s pitchfork for my fancy! Forks over pretty much all the world but himself and his lot into—the bad place, you know; and toasts his own cheese with it with very much the same kind of comfort that other folks seem to take in that business. Besides, he has a weakness for pretty saints—and sinners. That’s an odd name he has. More belle amie than Joseph about him, I rather guess!”

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The old professor smiled again. "So you don't think he believes all the mediaeval doctrines he is in the habit of preaching, Mr. Bradshaw?"

"No, sir; I think he belongs to the class I have seen described somewhere. 'There are those who hold the opinion that truth is only safe when diluted,—about one fifth to four fifths lies,—as the oxygen of the air is with its nitrogen. Else it would burn us all up.'"

Byles Gridley colored and started a little. This was one of his own sayings in "Thoughts on the Universe." But the young man quoted it without seeming to suspect its authorship.

"Where did you pick up that saying, Mr. Bradshaw?"

"I don't remember. Some paper, I rather think. It's one of those good things that get about without anybody's knowing who says 'em. Sounds like Coleridge."

"That's what I call a compliment worth having," said Byles Gridley to himself, when he got home. "Let me look at that passage."

He took down "Thoughts on the Universe," and got so much interested, reading on page after page, that he did not hear the little tea-bell, and Susan Posey volunteered to run up to his study and call him down to tea.

CHAPTER V

The twins.

Miss Suzan Posey knocked timidly at his door and informed him that tea was waiting. He rather liked Susan Posey. She was a pretty creature, slight, blonde, a little too light, a village beauty of the second or third grade, effective at picnics and by moonlight,—the kind of girl that very young men are apt to remember as their first love. She had a taste for poetry, and an admiration of poets; but, what was better, she was modest and simple, and a perfect sister and mother and grandmother to the two little forlorn twins who had been stranded on the Widow Hopkins's doorstep.

These little twins, a boy and girl, were now between two and three years old. A few words will make us acquainted with them. Nothing had ever been known of their origin. The sharp eyes of all the spinsters had been through every household in the village and neighborhood, and not a suspicion fixed itself on any one. It was a dark night when they were left; and it was probable that they had been brought from another town, as the sound of wheels had been heard close to the door where they were found, had stopped for a moment, then been heard again, and lost in the distance.



How the good woman of the house took them in and kept them has been briefly mentioned. At first nobody thought they would live a day, such little absurd attempts at humanity did they seem. But the young doctor came and the old doctor came, and the infants were laid in cotton-wool, and the room heated up to keep them warm, and baby-teaspoonfuls of milk given them, and after being kept alive in this way, like the young of opossums and kangaroos, they came to a conclusion about which they did not seem to have made up their thinking-pulps for some weeks, namely, to go on trying to cross the sea of life by tugging at the four-and-twenty oars which must be pulled day and night until the unknown shore is reached, and the oars lie at rest under the folded hands.

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As it was not very likely that the parents who left their offspring round on doorsteps were of saintly life, they were not presented for baptism like the children of church-members. Still, they must have names to be known by, and Mrs. Hopkins was much exercised in the matter. Like many New England parents, she had a decided taste for names that were significant and sonorous. That which she had chosen for her oldest child, the young poet, was either a remarkable prophecy, or it had brought with it the endowments it promised. She had lost, or, in her own more pictorial language, she had buried, a daughter to whom she had given the names, at once of cheerful omen and melodious effect, Wealthy Amadora.

As for them poor little creturs, she said, she believed they was rained down out o' the skies, jest as they say toads and tadpoles come. She meant to be a mother to 'em for all that, and give 'em jest as good names as if they was the governor's children, or the minister's. If Mr. Gridley would be so good as to find her some kind of a real handsome Chris'n name for 'em, she'd provide 'em with the other one. Hopkinses they shall be bred and taught, and Hopkinses they shall be called. Ef their father and mother was ashamed to own 'em, she was n't. Couldn't Mr. Gridley pick out some pooty sounding names from some of them great books of his. It's jest as well to have 'em pooty as long as they don't cost any more than if they was Tom and Sally.

A grim smile passed over the rugged features of Byles Gridley. "Nothing is easier than that, Mrs. Hopkins," he said. "I will give you two very pretty names that I think will please you and other folks. They're new names, too. If they shouldn't like to keep them, they can change them before they're christened, if they ever are. Isosceles will be just the name for the boy, and I'm sure you won't find a prettier name for the girl in a hurry than Helminthia."

Mrs. Hopkins was delighted with the dignity and novelty of these two names, which were forthwith adopted. As they were rather long for common use in the family, they were shortened into the easier forms of Sossy and Minthy, under which designation the babes began very soon to thrive mightily, turning bread and milk into the substance of little sinners at a great rate, and growing as if they were put out at compound interest.

This short episode shows us the family conditions surrounding Byles Gridley, who, as we were saying, had just been called down to tea by Miss Susan Posey.

"I am coming, my dear," he said,—which expression quite touched Miss Susan, who did not know that it was a kind of transferred caress from the delicious page he was reading. It was not the living child that was kissed, but the dead one lying under the snow, if we may make a trivial use of a very sweet and tender thought we all remember.

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Not long after this, happening to call in at the lawyer's office, his eye was caught by the corner of a book lying covered up by a pile of papers. Somehow or other it seemed to look very natural to him. Could that be a copy of "Thoughts on the Universe"? He watched his opportunity, and got a hurried sight of the volume. His own treatise, sure enough! Leaves Uncut. Opened of itself to the one hundred and twentieth page. The axiom Murray Bradshaw had quoted—he did not remember from what,—“sounded like Coleridge”—was staring him in the face from that very page. When he remembered how he had pleased himself with that compliment the other day, he blushed like a school-girl; and then, thinking out the whole trick,—to hunt up his forgotten book, pick out a phrase or two from it, and play on his weakness with it, to win his good opinion,—for what purpose he did not know, but doubtless to use him in some way,—he grinned with a contempt about equally divided between himself and the young schemer.

“Ah ha!” he muttered scornfully. “Sounds like Coleridge, hey? Niccolo Macchiavelli Bradshaw!”

From this day forward he looked on all the young lawyer's doings with even more suspicion than before. Yet he would not forego his company and conversation; for he was very agreeable and amusing to study; and this trick he had played him was, after all, only a diplomatist's way of flattering his brother plenipotentiary. Who could say? Some time or other he might cajole England or France or Russia into a treaty with just such a trick. Shallower men than he had gone out as ministers of the great Republic. At any rate, the fellow was worth watching.

CHAPTER VI.

The use of spectacles.

The old Master of Arts had a great reputation in the house where he lived for knowing everything that was going on. He rather enjoyed it; and sometimes amused himself with surprising his simple-hearted landlady and her boarders with the unaccountable results of his sagacity. One thing was quite beyond her comprehension. She was perfectly sure that Mr. Gridley could see out of the back of his head, just as other people see with their natural organs. Time and again he had told her what she was doing when his back was turned to her, just as if he had been sitting squarely in front of her. Some laughed at this foolish notion; but others, who knew more of the nebulous sciences, told her it was like's not jes' so. Folks had read letters laid ag'in' the pits o' their stomachs, 'n' why should n't they see out o' the backs o' their heads?

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Now there was a certain fact at the bottom of this belief of Mrs. Hopkins; and as it would be a very small thing to make a mystery of so simple a matter, the reader shall have the whole benefit of knowing all there is in it,—not quite yet, however, of knowing all that came of it. It was not the mirror trick, of course, which Mrs. Felix Lorraine and other dangerous historical personages have so long made use of. It was nothing but this: Mr. Byles Gridley wore a pair of formidable spectacles with large round glasses. He had often noticed the reflection of objects behind him when they caught their images at certain angles, and had got the habit of very often looking at the reflecting surface of one or the other of the glasses, when he seemed to be looking through them. It put a singular power into his possession, which might possibly hereafter lead to something more significant than the mystification of the Widow Hopkins.

A short time before Myrtle Hazard's disappearance, Mr. Byles Gridley had occasion to call again at the office of Penhallow and Bradshaw on some small matter of business of his own. There were papers to look over, and he put on his great round-glassed spectacles. He and Mr. Penhallow sat down at the table, and Mr. Bradshaw was at a desk behind them. After sitting for a while, Mr. Penhallow seemed to remember something he had meant to attend to, for he said all at once: "Excuse me, Mr. Gridley. Mr. Bradshaw, if you are not busy, I wish you would look over this bundle of papers. They look like old receipted bills and memoranda of no particular use; but they came from the garret of the Withers place, and might possibly have something that would be of value. Look them over, will you, and see whether there is anything there worth saving."

The young man took the papers, and Mr. Penhallow sat down again at the table with Mr. Byles Gridley.

This last-named gentleman felt just then a strong impulse to observe the operations of Murray Bradshaw. He could not have given any very good reason for it, any more than any of us can for half of what we do.

"I should like to examine that conveyance we were speaking of once more," said he. "Please to look at this one in the mean time, will you, Mr. Penhallow?"

Master Gridley held the document up before him. He did not seem to find it quite legible, and adjusted his spectacles carefully, until they were just as he wanted them. When he had got them to suit himself, sitting there with his back to Murray Bradshaw, he could see him and all his movements, the desk at which he was standing, and the books in the shelves before him,—all this time appearing as if he were intent upon his own reading.

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The young man began in a rather indifferent way to look over the papers. He loosened the band round them, and took them up one by one, gave a careless glance at them, and laid them together to tie up again when he had gone through them. Master Gridley saw all this process, thinking what a fool he was all the time to be watching such a simple proceeding. Presently he noticed a more sudden movement: the young man had found something which arrested his attention, and turned his head to see if he was observed. The senior partner and his client were both apparently deep in their own affairs. In his hand Mr. Bradshaw held a paper folded like the others, the back of which he read, holding it in such a way that Master Gridley saw very distinctly three large spots of ink upon it, and noticed their position. Murray Bradshaw took another hurried glance at the two gentlemen, and then quickly opened the paper. He ran it over with a flash of his eye, folded it again, and laid it by itself. With another quick turn of his head, as if to see whether he were observed or like to be, he reached his hand out and took a volume down from the shelves. In this volume he shut the document, whatever it was, which he had just taken out of the bundle, and placed the book in a very silent and as it were stealthy way back in its place. He then gave a look at each of the other papers, and said to his partner: "Old bills, old leases, and insurance policies that have run out. Malachi seems to have kept every scrap of paper that had a signature to it."

"That 's the way with the old misers, always," said Mr. Penhallow.

Byles Gridley had got through reading the document he held,—or pretending to read it. He took off his spectacles.

"We all grow timid and cautious as we get old, Mr. Penhallow." Then turning round to the young man, he slowly repeated the lines,

"*Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda, vel quod
Quaerit et inventis miser abstinet, ac timet uti;
Vel quod res omnes timide, gelideque ministrat*"

"You remember the passage, Mr. Bradshaw?"

While he was reciting these words from Horace, which he spoke slowly as if he relished every syllable, he kept his eyes on the young man steadily, but with out betraying any suspicion. His old habits as a teacher made that easy.

Murray Bradshaw's face was calm as usual, but there was a flush on his cheek, and Master Gridley saw the slight but unequivocal signs of excitement.

"Something is going on inside there," the old man said to himself. He waited patiently, on the pretext of business, until Mr. Bradshaw got up and left the office. As soon as he and the senior partner were alone, Master Gridley took a lazy look at some of the books

in his library. There stood in the book-shelves a copy of the *Corpus Juris Civilis*,—the fine Elzevir edition of 1664. It was bound in parchment, and thus readily distinguishable

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at a glance from all the books round it. Now Mr. Penhallow was not much of a Latin scholar, and knew and cared very little about the civil law. He had fallen in with this book at an auction, and bought it to place in his shelves with the other “properties” of the office, because it would look respectable. Anything shut up in one of those two octavos might stay there a lifetime without Mr. Penhallow’s disturbing it; that Master Gridley knew, and of course the young man knew it too.

We often move to the objects of supreme curiosity or desire, not in the lines of castle or bishop on the chess-board, but with the knight’s zigzag, at first in the wrong direction, making believe to ourselves we are not after the thing coveted. Put a lump of sugar in a canary-bird’s cage, and the small creature will illustrate the instinct for the benefit of inquirers or sceptics. Byles Gridley went to the other side of the room and took a volume of Reports from the shelves. He put it back and took a copy of “Fearne on Contingent Remainders,” and looked at that for a moment in an idling way, as if from a sense of having nothing to do. Then he drew the back of his forefinger along the books on the shelf, as if nothing interested him in them, and strolled to the shelf in front of the desk at which Murray Bradshaw had stood. He took down the second volume of the Corpus Juris Civilis, turned the leaves over mechanically, as if in search of some title, and replaced it.

He looked round for a moment. Mr. Penhallow was writing hard at his table, not thinking of him, it was plain enough. He laid his hand on the *first* volume of the Corpus Juris Civilis. There was a document shut up in it. His hand was on the book, whether taking it out or putting it back was not evident, when the door opened and Mr. William Murray Bradshaw entered.

“Ah, Mr. Gridley,” he said, “you are not studying the civil law, are you?” He strode towards him as he spoke, his face white, his eyes fixed fiercely on him.

“It always interests me, Mr. Bradshaw,” he answered, “and this is a fine edition of it. One may find a great many valuable things in the Corpus Juris Civilis.”

He looked impenetrable, and whether or not he had seen more than Mr. Bradshaw wished him to see, that gentleman could not tell. But there stood the two books in their place, and when, after Master Gridley had gone, he looked in the first volume, there was the document he had shut up in it.

CHAPTER VII.

Myrtle’s letter—the young men’s pursuit.

"You know all about it, Olive?" Cyprian Eveleth said to his sister, after a brief word of greeting.

"Know of what, Cyprian?"

"Why, sister, don't you know that Myrtle Hazard is missing,—gone!—gone nobody knows where, and that we are looking in all directions to find her?"

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Olive turned very pale and was silent for a moment. At the end of that moment the story seemed almost old to her. It was a natural ending of the prison-life which had been round Myrtle since her earliest years. When she got large and strong enough, she broke out of jail,—that was all. The nursery-bar is always climbed sooner or later, whether it is a wooden or an iron one. Olive felt as if she had dimly foreseen just such a finishing to the tragedy of the poor girl's home bringing-up. Why could not she have done something to prevent it? Well,—what shall we do now, and as it is?—that is the question.

“Has she left no letter,—no explanation of her leaving in this way?”

“Not a word, so far as anybody in the village knows.”

“Come over to the post-office with me; perhaps we may find a letter. I think we shall.”

Olive's sagacity and knowledge of her friend's character had not misled her. She found a letter from Myrtle to herself, which she opened and read as here follows:

My dearest olive:—Think no evil of me for what I have done. The fire-hang-bird's nest, as Cyprian called it, is empty, and the poor bird is flown.

I can live as I have lived no longer. This place is chilling all the life out of me, and I must find another home. It is far, far away, and you will not hear from me again until I am there. Then I will write to you.

You know where I was born,—under a hot sun and in the midst of strange, lovely scenes that I seem still to remember. I must visit them again: my heart always yearns for them. And I must cross the sea to get there,—the beautiful great sea that I have always longed for and that my river has been whispering about to me ever so many years. My life is pinched and starved here. I feel as old as aunt Silence, and I am only fifteen,—a child she has called me within a few days. If this is to be a child, what is it to be a woman?

I love you dearly,—and your brother is almost to me as if he were mine. I love our sweet, patient Bathsheba,—yes, and the old man that has spoken so kindly with me, good Master Gridley; I hate to give you pain,—to leave you all,—but my way of life is killing me, and I am too young to die. I cannot take the comfort with you, my dear friends, that I would; for it seems as if I carried a lump of ice in my heart, and all the warmth I find in you cannot thaw it out.

I have had a strange warning to leave this place, Olive. Do you remember how the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph and told him to flee into Egypt? I have had a dream like that, Olive. There is an old belief in our family that the spirit of one who died many generations ago watches over some of her descendants. They say it led our first

ancestor to come over here when it was a wilderness. I believe it has appeared to others of the family in times of trouble. I have had a strange dream at any rate, and the one I saw, or thought I saw, told me to leave this place. Perhaps I should have stayed if it had not been for that, but it seemed like an angel's warning.

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Nobody will know how I have gone, or which way I have taken. On Monday, you may show this letter to my friends, not before. I do not think they will be in danger of breaking their hearts for me at our house. Aunt Silence cares for nothing but her own soul, and the other woman hates me, I always thought. Kitty Fagan will cry hard. Tell her perhaps I shall come back by and by. There is a little box in my room, with some keepsakes marked,—one is for poor Kitty. You can give them to the right ones. Yours is with them.

Good-by, dearest. Keep my secret, as I told you, till Monday. And if you never see me again, remember how much I loved you. Never think hardly of me, for you have grown up in a happy home, and do not know how much misery can be crowded into fifteen years of a young girl's life. God be with you!

Myrtle hazard.

Olive could not restrain her tears, as she handed the letter to Cyprian. "Her secret is as safe with you as with me," she said. "But this is madness, Cyprian, and we must keep her from doing herself a wrong.

"What she means to do, is to get to Boston, in some way or other, and sail for India. It is strange that they have not tracked her. There is no time to be lost. She shall not go out into the world in this way, child that she is. No; she shall come back, and make her home with us, if she cannot be happy with these people. Ours is a happy and a cheerful home, and she shall be to me as a younger sister, and your sister too, Cyprian. But you must see her; you must leave this very hour; and you may find her. Go to your cousin Edward, in Boston, at once; tell him your errand, and get him to help you find our poor dear sister. Then give her the note I will write, and say I know your heart, Cyprian, and I can trust that to tell you what to say."

In a very short time Cyprian Eveleth was on his way to Boston. But another, keener even in pursuit than he, was there before him.

Ever since the day when Master Gridley had made that over-curious observation of the young lawyer's proceedings at the office, Murray Bradshaw had shown a far livelier interest than before in the conditions and feelings of Myrtle Hazard. He had called frequently at The Poplars to talk over business matters, which seemed of late to require a deal of talking. He had been very deferential to Miss Silence, and had wound himself into the confidence of Miss Badlam. He found it harder to establish any very near relations with Myrtle, who had never seemed to care much for any young man but Cyprian Eveleth, and to care for him quite as much as Olive's brother as for any personal reason. But he carefully studied Myrtle's tastes and ways of thinking and of life, so that, by and by, when she should look upon herself as a young woman, and not as a girl, he would have a great advantage in making her more intimate acquaintance.

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Thus, she corresponded with a friend of her mother's in India. She talked at times as if it were her ideal home, and showed many tastes which might well be vestiges of early Oriental impressions. She made herself a rude hammock,—such as are often used in hot climates,—and swung it between two elms. Here she would lie in the hot summer days, and fan herself with the sandal-wood fan her friend in India had sent her,—the perfume of which, the women said, seemed to throw her into day-dreams, which were almost like trances.

These circumstances gave a general direction to his ideas, which were presently fixed more exactly by two circumstances which he learned for himself and kept to himself; for he had no idea of making a hue and cry, and yet he did not mean that Myrtle Hazard should get away if he could help it.

The first fact was this. He found among the copies of the city newspaper they took at The Poplars a recent number from which a square had been cut out. He procured another copy of this paper of the same date, and found that the piece cut out was an advertisement to the effect that the A 1 Ship Swordfish, Captain Hawkins, was to sail from Boston for Calcutta, on the 20th of June.

The second fact was the following. On the window-sill of her little hanging chamber, which the women allowed him to inspect, he found some threads of long, black, glossy hair caught by a splinter in the wood. They were Myrtle's of course. A simpleton might have constructed a tragedy out of this trivial circumstance,—how she had cast herself from the window into the waters beneath it,—how she had been thrust out after a struggle, of which this shred from her tresses was the dreadful witness,—and so on. Murray Bradshaw did not stop to guess and wonder. He said nothing about it, but wound the shining threads on his finger, and, as soon as he got home, examined them with a magnifier. They had been cut off smoothly, as with a pair of scissors. This was part of a mass of hair, then, which had been shorn and thrown from the window. Nobody would do that but she herself. What would she do it for? To disguise her sex, of course. The other inferences were plain enough.

The wily young man put all these facts and hints together, and concluded that he would let the rustics drag the ponds and the river, and scour the woods and swamps, while he himself went to the seaport town from which she would without doubt sail if she had formed the project he thought on the whole most probable.

Thus it was that we found him hurrying to the nearest station to catch the train to Boston, while they were all looking for traces of the missing girl nearer home. In the cars he made the most suggestive inquiries he could frame, to stir up the gentlemanly conductor's memory. Had any young fellow been on the train within a day or two, who had attracted his notice? Smooth, handsome face, black eyes, short black hair, new clothes, not fitting very well,

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looked away when he paid his fare, had a soft voice like a woman's,—had he seen anybody answering to some such description as this? The gentlemanly conductor had not noticed,—was always taking up and setting down way-passengers,—might have had such a young man aboard,—there was two or three students one day in the car singing college songs,—he did n't care how folks looked if they had their tickets ready,—and minded their own business,—and, so saying, he poked a young man upon whose shoulder a ringleted head was reclining with that delightful abandon which the railroad train seems to provoke in lovely woman,—“Fare!”

It is a fine thing to be set down in a great, overcrowded hotel, where they do not know you, looking dusty, and for the moment shabby, with nothing but a carpet-bag in your hand, feeling tired, and anything but clean, and hungry, and worried, and every way miserable and mean, and to undergo the appraising process of the gentleman in the office, who, while he shoves the book round to you for your name, is making a hasty calculation as to how high up he can venture to doom you. But Murray Bradshaw's plain dress and carpet-bag were more than made up for by the air and tone which imply the habit of being attended to. The clerk saw that in a glance, and, as he looked at the name and address in the book, spoke sharply in the explosive dialect of his tribe,—

“Jun! ta'tha'genlm'n'scarpetbag'n'showhimupt'thirtyone!”

When Cyprian Eveleth reached the same hotel late at night, he appeared in his best clothes and with a new valise; but his amiable countenance and gentle voice and modest manner sent him up two stories higher, where he found himself in a room not much better than a garret, feeling lonely enough, for he did not know he had an acquaintance in the same house. The two young men were in and out so irregularly that it was not very strange that they did not happen to meet each other.

The young lawyer was far more likely to find Myrtle if she were in the city than the other, even with the help of his cousin Edward. He was not only older, but sharper, better acquainted with the city and its ways, and, whatever might be the strength of Cyprian's motives, his own were of such intensity that he thought of nothing else by day, and dreamed of nothing else by night. He went to work, therefore, in the most systematic manner. He first visited the ship *Swordfish*, lying at her wharf, saw her captain, and satisfied himself that as yet nobody at all corresponding to the description of Myrtle Hazard had been seen by any person on board. He visited all the wharves, inquiring on every vessel where it seemed possible she might have been looking about. Hotels, thoroughfares, every place where he might hear of her or meet her, were all searched. He took some of the police into his confidence, and had half a dozen pairs of eyes besides his own opened pretty widely, to discover the lost girl.

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On Sunday, the 19th, he got the first hint which encouraged him to think he was on the trail of his fugitive. He had gone down again to the wharf where the *Swordfish*, advertised to sail the next day, was lying. The captain was not on board, but one of the mates was there, and he addressed his questions to him, not with any great hope of hearing anything important, but determined to lose no chance, however small. He was startled with a piece of information which gave him such an exquisite pang of delight that he could hardly keep the usual quiet of his demeanor. A youth corresponding to his description of Myrtle Hazard in her probable disguise had been that morning on board the *Swordfish*, making many inquiries as to the hour at which she was to sail, and who were to be the passengers, and remained some time on board, going all over the vessel, examining her cabin accommodations, and saying he should return to-morrow before she sailed,—doubtless intending to take passage in her, as there was plenty of room on board. There could be little question, from the description, who this young person was. It was a rather delicate—looking, dark—haired youth, smooth-faced, somewhat shy and bashful in his ways, and evidently excited and nervous. He had apparently been to look about him, and would come back at the last moment, just as the vessel was ready to sail, and in an hour or two be beyond the reach of inquiry.

Murray Bradshaw returned to his hotel, and, going to his chamber, summoned all his faculties in state council to determine what course he should follow, now that he had the object of his search certainly within reaching distance. There was no danger now of her eluding him; but the grave question arose, what was he to do when he stood face to face with her. She must not go,—that was fixed. If she once got off in that ship, she might be safe enough; but what would become of certain projects in which he was interested,—that was the question. But again, she was no child, to be turned away from her adventure by cajolery, or by any such threats as common truants would find sufficient to scare them back to their duty. He could tell the facts of her disguise and the manner of her leaving home to the captain of the vessel, and induce him to send her ashore as a stray girl, to be returned to her relatives. But this would only make her furious with him; and he must not alienate her from himself, at any rate. He might plead with her in the name of duty, for the sake of her friends, for the good name of the family. She had thought all these things over before she ran away. What if he should address her as a lover, throw himself at her feet, implore her to pity him and give up her rash scheme, and, if things came to the very worst, offer to follow her wherever she went, if she would accept him in the only relation that would render it possible. Fifteen years old,—he nearly ten years older,—but such things had happened before, and this was no time to stand on trifles.

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He worked out the hypothesis of the matrimonial offer as he would have reasoned out the probabilities in a law case he was undertaking.

1. He would rather risk that than lose all hold upon her. The girl was handsome enough for his ambitious future, wherever it might carry him. She came of an honorable family, and had the great advantage of being free from a tribe of disagreeable relatives, which is such a drawback on many otherwise eligible parties. To these considerations were to be joined other circumstances which we need not here mention, of a nature to add greatly to their force, and which would go far of themselves to determine his action.

2. How was it likely she would look on such an extraordinary proposition? At first, no doubt, as Lady Anne looked upon the advances of Richard. She would be startled, perhaps shocked. What then? She could not help feeling flattered at such an offer from him,—him, William Murray Bradshaw, the rising young man of his county, at her feet, his eyes melting with the love he would throw into them, his tones subdued to their most sympathetic quality, and all those phrases on his lips which every day beguile women older and more discreet than this romantic, long-imprisoned girl, whose rash and adventurous enterprise was an assertion of her womanhood and her right to dispose of herself as she chose. He had not lived to be twenty-five years old without knowing his power with women. He believed in himself so thoroughly, that his very confidence was a strong promise of success.

3. In case all his entreaties, arguments, and offers made no impression, should he make use of that supreme resource, not to be employed save in extreme need, but which was of a nature, in his opinion, to shake a resolution stronger than this young girl was like to oppose to it? That would be like Christian's coming to his weapon called All-prayer, he said to himself, with a smile that his early readings of Bunyan should have furnished him an image for so different an occasion. The question was one he could not settle till the time came,—he must leave it to the instinct of the moment.

The next morning found him early waking after a night of feverish dreams. He dressed himself with more than usual care, and walked down to the wharf where the Swordfish was moored. The ship had left the wharf, and was lying out in the stream: A small boat had just reached her, and a slender youth, as he appeared at that distance, climbed, not over-adroitly, up the vessel's side.

Murray Bradshaw called to a boatman near by and ordered the man to row him over as fast as he could to the vessel lying in the stream. He had no sooner reached the deck of the Swordfish than he asked for the young person who had just been put on board.

"He is in the cabin, sir, just gone down with the captain," was the reply.

His heart beat, in spite of his cool temperament, as he went down the steps leading to the cabin. The young person was talking earnestly with the captain, and, on his turning

round, Mr. William Murray Bradshaw had the pleasure of recognizing his young friend, Mr. Cyprian Eveleth.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Down the river.

Look at the flower of a morning-glory the evening before the dawn which is to see it unfold. The delicate petals are twisted into a spiral, which at the appointed hour, when the sunlight touches the hidden springs of its life, will uncoil itself and let the day into the chamber of its virgin heart. But the spiral must unwind by its own law, and the hand that shall try to hasten the process will only spoil the blossom which would have expanded in symmetrical beauty under the rosy fingers of morning.

We may take a hint from Nature's handling of the flower in dealing with young souls, and especially with the souls of young girls, which, from their organization and conditions, require more careful treatment than those of their tougher-fibred brothers. Many parents reproach themselves for not having enforced their own convictions on their children in the face of every inborn antagonism they encountered. Let them not be too severe in their self-condemnation. A want of judgment in this matter has sent many a young person to Bedlam, whose nature would have opened kindly enough if it had only been trusted to the sweet influences of morning sunshine. In such cases it may be that the state we call insanity is not always an unalloyed evil. It may take the place of something worse, the wretchedness of a mind not yet dethroned, but subject to the perpetual interferences of another mind governed by laws alien and hostile to its own. Insanity may perhaps be the only palliative left to Nature in this extremity. But before she comes to that, she has many expedients. The mind does not know what diet it can feed on until it has been brought to the starvation point. Its experience is like that of those who have been long drifting about on rafts or in long-boats. There is nothing out of which it will not contrive to get some sustenance. A person of note, long held captive for a political offence, is said to have owed the preservation of his reason to a pin, out of which he contrived to get exercise and excitement by throwing it down carelessly on the dark floor of his dungeon, and then hunting for it in a series of systematic explorations until he had found it.

Perhaps the most natural thing Myrtle Hazard could have done would have been to go crazy, and be sent to the nearest asylum, if Providence, which in its wisdom makes use of the most unexpected agencies, had not made a special provision for her mental welfare. She was in that arid household as the prophet in the land where there was no dew nor rain for these long years. But as he had the brook Cherith, and the bread and flesh in the morning and the bread and flesh in the evening which the ravens brought him, so she had the river and her secret store of books.

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The river was light and life and music and companionship to her. She learned to row herself about upon it, to swim boldly in it, for it had sheltered nooks but a little way above The Poplars. But there was more than that in it,—it was infinitely sympathetic. A river is strangely like a human soul. It has its dark and bright days, its troubles from within, and its disturbances from without. It often runs over ragged rocks with a smooth surface, and is vexed with ripples as it slides over sands that are level as a floor. It betrays its various moods by aspects which are the commonplaces of poetry, as smiles and dimples and wrinkles and frowns. Its face is full of winking eyes, when the scattering rain-drops first fall upon it, and it scowls back at the storm-cloud, as with knitted brows, when the winds are let loose. It talks, too, in its own simple dialect, murmuring, as it were, with busy lips all the way to the ocean, as children seeking the mother's breast and impatient of delay. Prisoners who know what a flower or an insect has been to them in their solitary cell, invalids who have employed their vacant minds in studying the patterns of paper-hangings on the walls of their sick-chambers, can tell what the river was to the lonely, imaginative creature who used to sit looking into its depths, hour after hour, from the airy height of the Fire-hang-bird's Nest.

Of late a thought had mingled with her fancies which had given to the river the aspect of something more than a friend and a companion. It appeared all at once as a Deliverer. Did not its waters lead, after long wanderings, to the great highway of the world, and open to her the gates of those cities from which she could take her departure unchallenged towards the lands of the morning or of the sunset? Often, after a freshet, she had seen a child's miniature boat floating down on its side past her window, and traced it in imagination back to some crystal brook flowing by the door of a cottage far up a blue mountain in the distance. So she now began to follow down the stream the airy shallop that held her bright fancies. These dreams of hers were colored by the rainbows of an enchanted fountain,—the books of adventure, the romances, the stories which fortune had placed in her hands,—the same over which the heart of the Pride of the County had throbbed in the last century, and on the pages of some of which the traces of her tears might still be seen.

The literature which was furnished for Myrtle's improvement was chiefly of a religious character, and, however interesting and valuable to those to whom it was adapted, had not been chosen with any wise regard to its fitness for her special conditions. Of what use was it to offer books like the "Saint's Rest" to a child whose idea of happiness was in perpetual activity? She read "Pilgrim's Progress," it is true, with great delight. She liked the idea of travelling with a pack on one's back, the odd shows at the House of the interpreter, the fighting, the adventures, the pleasing young ladies at the palace the name of which was Beautiful, and their very interesting museum of curiosities. As for the allegorical meaning, it went through her consciousness like a peck of wheat through a bushel measure with the bottom out, without touching.

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But the very first book she got hold of out of the hidden treasury threw the “Pilgrim’s Progress” quite into the shade. It was the story of a youth who ran away and lived on an island,—one Crusoe,—a homely narrative, but evidently true, though full of remarkable adventures. There too was the history, coming much nearer home, of Deborah Sampson, the young woman who served as a soldier in the Revolutionary War, with a portrait of her in man’s attire, looking intrepid rather than lovely. A virtuous young female she was, and married well, as she deserved to, and raised a family with as good a name as wife and mother as the best of them. But perhaps not one of these books and stories took such hold of her imagination as the tale of Rasselas, which most young persons find less entertaining than the “Vicar of Wakefield,” with which it is nowadays so commonly bound up. It was the prince’s discontent in the Happy Valley, the iron gate opening to the sound of music, and closing forever on those it admitted, the rocky boundaries of the imprisoning valley, the visions of the world beyond, the projects of escape, and the long toil which ended in their accomplishment, which haunted her sleeping and waking. She too was a prisoner, but it was not in the Happy Valley. Of the romances and the love-letters we must take it for granted that she selected wisely, and read discreetly; at least we know nothing to the contrary.

There were mysterious reminiscences and hints of her past coming over her constantly. It was in the course of the long, weary spring before her disappearance, that a dangerous chord was struck which added to her growing restlessness. In an old closet were some seashells and coral-fans, and dried star-fishes and sea, horses, and a natural mummy of a rough-skinned dogfish. She had not thought of them for years, but now she felt impelled to look after them. The dim sea odors which still clung to them penetrated to the very inmost haunts of memory, and called up that longing for the ocean breeze which those who have once breathed and salted their blood with it never get over, and which makes the sweetest inland airs seem to them at last tame and tasteless. She held a tigershell to her ear, and listened to that low, sleepy murmur, whether in the sense or in the soul we hardly know, like that which had so often been her lullaby,—a memory of the sea, as Landor and Wordsworth have sung.

“You are getting to look like your father,” Aunt Silence said one day; “I never saw it before. I always thought you took after old Major Gideon Withers. Well, I hope you won’t come to an early grave like poor Charles,—or at any rate, that you may be prepared.”

It did not seem very likely that the girl was going out of the world at present, but she looked Miss Silence in the face very seriously, and said, “Why not an early grave, Aunt, if this world is such a bad place as you say it is?”

“I’m afraid you are not fit for a better.”

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She wondered if Silence Withers and Cynthia Badlam were just ripe for heaven.

For some months Miss Cynthia Badlam, who, as was said, had been an habitual visitor at The Poplars, had lived there as a permanent resident. Between her and Silence Withers, Myrtle Hazard found no rest for her soul. Each of them was for untwisting the morning-glory without waiting for the sunshine to do it. Each had her own wrenches and pincers to use for that purpose. All this promised little for the nurture and admonition of the young girl, who, if her will could not be broken by imprisonment and starvation at three years old, was not likely to be over-tractable to any but gentle and reasonable treatment at fifteen.

Aunt Silence's engine was responsibility,—her own responsibility, and the dreadful consequences which would follow to her, Silence, if Myrtle should in any way go wrong. Ever since her failure in that moral coup d'etat by which the sinful dynasty of the natural self-determining power was to be dethroned, her attempts in the way of education had been a series of feeble efforts followed by plaintive wails over their utter want of success. The face she turned upon the young girl in her solemn expostulations looked as if it were inscribed with the epitaphs of hope and virtue. Her utterances were pitched in such a forlorn tone, that the little bird in his cage, who always began twittering at the sound of Myrtle's voice, would stop in his song, and cock his head with a look of inquiry full of pathos, as if he wanted to know what was the matter, and whether he could do anything to help.

The specialty of Cynthia Badlam was to point out all the dangerous and unpardonable transgressions into which young people generally, and this young person in particular, were likely to run, to hold up examples of those who had fallen into evil ways and come to an evil end, to present the most exalted standard of ascetic virtue to the lively girl's apprehension, leading her naturally to the conclusion that a bright example of excellence stood before her in the irreproachable relative who addressed her. Especially with regard to the allurements which the world offers to the young and inexperienced female, Miss Cynthia Badlam was severe and eloquent. Sometimes poor Myrtle would stare, not seeing the meaning of her wise caution, sometimes look at Miss Cynthia with a feeling that there was something about her that was false and forced, that she had nothing in common with young people, that she had no pity for them, only hatred of their sins, whatever these might be,—a hatred which seemed to extend to those sources of frequent temptation, youth and beauty, as if they were in themselves objectionable.

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Both the lone women at The Poplars were gifted with a thin vein of music. They gave it expression in psalmody, of course, in which Myrtle, who was a natural singer, was expected to bear her part. This would have been pleasantry if the airs most frequently selected had been cheerful or soothing, and if the favorite hymns had been of a sort to inspire a love for what was lovely in this life, and to give some faint foretaste of the harmonies of a better world to come. But there is a fondness for minor keys and wailing cadences common to the monotonous chants of cannibals and savages generally, to such war-songs as the wild, implacable “Marseillaise,” and to the favorite tunes of low—spirited Christian pessimists. That mournful “China,” which one of our most agreeable story-tellers has justly singled out as the cry of despair itself, was often sung at The Poplars, sending such a sense of utter misery through the house, that poor Kitty Fagan would cross herself, and wring her hands, and think of funerals, and wonder who was going to die,—for she fancied she heard the Banshee’s warning in those most dismal ululations.

On the first Saturday of June, a fortnight before her disappearance, Myrtle strolled off by the river shore, along its lonely banks, and came home with her hands full of leaves and blossoms. Silence Withers looked at them as if they were a kind of melancholy manifestation of frivolity on the part of the wicked old earth. Not that she did not inhale their faint fragrance with a certain pleasure, and feel their beauty as none whose souls are not wholly shriveled and hardened can help doing, but the world was, in her estimate, a vale of tears, and it was only by a momentary forgetfulness that she could be moved to smile at anything.

Miss Cynthia, a sharper-edged woman, had formed the habit of crushing everything for its moral, until it lost its sweetness and grew almost odious, as flower-de-luces do when handled roughly. “There’s a worm in that leaf, Myrtle. He has rolled it all round him, and hidden himself from sight; but there is a horrid worm in it, for all it is so young and fresh. There is a worm in every young soul, Myrtle.”

“But there is not a worm in every leaf, Miss Cynthia. Look,” she said, “all these are open, and you can see all over and under them, and there is nothing there. Are there never any worms in the leaves after they get old and yellow, Miss Cynthia?”

That was a pretty fair hit for a simple creature of fifteen, but perhaps she was not so absolutely simple as one might have thought.

It was on the evening of this same day that they were sitting together. The sweet season was opening, and it seemed as if the whispering of the leaves, the voices of the birds, the softness of the air, the young life stirring in everything, called on all creatures to join the universal chorus of praise that was going up around them.

“What shall we sing this evening?” said Miss Silence.

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"Give me one of the books, if you please, Cousin Silence," said Miss Cynthia. "It is Saturday evening. Holy time has begun. Let us prepare our minds for the solemnities of the Sabbath."

She took the book, one well known to the schools and churches of this nineteenth century.

"Book Second. Hymn 44. Long metre. I guess 'Putney' will be as good a tune as any to sing it to."

The trio began,—

"With holy fear, and humble song,"

and got through the first verse together pretty well. Then came the second verse:

"Far in the deep where darkness dwells,
The land of horror and despair,
Justice has built a dismal hell,
And laid her stores of vengeance there."

Myrtle's voice trembled a little in singing this verse, and she hardly kept up her part with proper spirit.

"Sing out, Myrtle," said Miss Cynthia, and she struck up the third verse:

"Eternal plagues and heavy chains,
Tormenting racks and fiery coals,
And darts t' inflict immortal pains,
Dyed in the blood of damned souls."

This last verse was a duet, and not a trio. Myrtle closed her lips while it was singing, and when it was done threw down the book with a look of anger and disgust. The hunted soul was at bay.

"I won't sing such words," she said, "and I won't stay here to hear them sung. The boys in the streets say just such words as that, and I am not going to sing them. You can't scare me into being good with your cruel hymn-book!"

She could not swear: she was not a boy. She would not cry: she felt proud, obdurate, scornful, outraged. All these images, borrowed from the holy Inquisition, were meant to frighten her—and had simply irritated her. The blow of a weapon that glances off, stinging, but not penetrating, only enrages. It was a moment of fearful danger to her character, to her life itself.



Without heeding the cries of the two women, she sprang up-stairs to her hanging chamber. She threw open the window and looked down into the stream. For one moment her head swam with the sudden, overwhelming, almost maddening thought that came over her,—the impulse to fling herself headlong into those running waters and dare the worst these dreadful women had threatened her with. Something she often thought afterwards it was an invisible hand held her back during that brief moment, and the paroxysm—just such a paroxysm as throws many a young girl into the Thames or the Seine—passed away. She remained looking, in a misty dream, into the water far below. Its murmur recalled the whisper of the ocean waves. And through the depths it seemed as if she saw into that strange, half—remembered world of palm-trees and white robes and dusky faces, and amidst them, looking upon her with ineffable love and tenderness, until all else faded from her sight, the face of a fair woman,—was it hers, so long, long dead, or that dear young mother's who was to her less a recollection than a dream?

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Could it have been this vision that soothed her, so that she unclasped her hands and lifted her bowed head as if she had heard a voice whispering to her from that unknown world where she felt there was a spirit watching over her? At any rate, her face was never more serene than when she went to meeting with the two maiden ladies on the following day, Sunday, and heard the Rev. Mr. Stoker preach a sermon from Luke vii. 48, which made both the women shed tears, but especially so excited Miss Cynthia that she was in a kind of half-hysterical condition all the rest of the day.

After that Myrtle was quieter and more docile than ever before. Could it be, Miss Silence thought, that the Rev. Mr. Stoker's sermon had touched her hard heart? However that was, she did not once wear the stormy look with which she had often met the complaining remonstrances Miss Silence constantly directed against all the spontaneous movements of the youthful and naturally vivacious subject of her discipline.

June is an uncertain month, as everybody knows, and there were frosts in many parts of New England in the June of 1859. But there were also beautiful days and nights, and the sun was warm enough to be fast ripening the strawberries,—also certain plants which had been in flower some little time. Some preparations had been going on in a quiet way, so that at the right moment a decisive movement could be made. Myrtle knew how to use her needle, and always had a dexterous way of shaping any article of dress or ornament,—a natural gift not very rare, but sometimes very needful, as it was now.

On the morning of the 15th of June she was wandering by the shores of the river, some distance above The Poplars, when a boat came drifting along by her, evidently broken loose from its fastenings farther up the stream. It was common for such waifs to show themselves after heavy rains had swollen the river. They might have run the gauntlet of nobody could tell how many farms, and perhaps passed by half a dozen towns and villages in the night, so that, if of common, cheap make, they were retained without scruple, by any who might find them, until the owner called for them, if he cared to take the trouble.

Myrtle took a knife from her pocket, cut down a long, slender sapling, and coaxed the boat to the side of the bank. A pair of old oars lay in the bottom of the boat; she took one of these and paddled it into a little cove, where it could lie hid among the thick alders. Then she went home and busied herself about various little matters more interesting to her than to us.

She was never more amiable and gracious than on this day. But she looked often at the clock, as they remembered afterwards, and studied over a copy of the Farmer's Almanac which was lying in the kitchen, with a somewhat singular interest. The days were nearly at their longest, the weather was mild, the night promised to be clear and bright.

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The household was, to all appearance, asleep at the usual early hour. When all seemed quiet, Myrtle lighted her lamp, stood before her mirror, and untied the string that bound her long and beautiful dark hair, which fell in its abundance over her shoulders and below her girdle.

She lifted its heavy masses with one hand, and severed it with a strong pair of scissors, with remorseless exaction of every wandering curl, until she stood so changed by the loss of that outward glory of her womanhood, that she felt as if she had lost herself and found a brother she had never seen before.

“Good-by, Myrtle!” she said, and, opening her window very gently, she flung the shining tresses upon the running water, and watched them for a few moments as they floated down the stream. Then she dressed herself in the character of her imaginary brother, took up the carpet-bag in which she had placed what she chose to carry with her, stole softly down-stairs, and let herself out of a window on the lower floor, shutting it very carefully so as to be sure that nobody should be disturbed.

She glided along, looking all about her, fearing she might be seen by some curious wanderer, and reached the cove where the boat she had concealed was lying. She got into it, and, taking the rude oars, pulled herself into the middle of the swollen stream. Her heart beat so that it seemed to her as if she could hear it between the strokes of the oar. The lights were not all out in the village, and she trembled lest she should see the figure of some watcher looking from the windows in sight of which she would have to pass, and that a glimpse of this boat stealing along at so late an hour might give the clue to the secret of her disappearance, with which the whole region was to be busied in the course of the next day.

Presently she came abreast of The Poplars. The house lay so still, so peaceful,—it would wake to such dismay! The boat slid along beneath her own overhanging chamber.

“No song to-morrow from the Fire-hang-bird’s Nest!” she said. So she floated by the slumbering village, the flow of the river carrying her steadily on, and the careful strokes of the oars adding swiftness to her flight.

At last she came to the “Broad Meadows,” and knew that she was alone, and felt confident that she had got away unseen. There was nothing, absolutely nothing, to point out which way she had gone. Her boat came from nobody knew where, her disguise had been got together at different times in such a manner as to lead to no suspicion, and not a human being ever had the slightest hint that she had planned and meant to carry out the enterprise which she had now so fortunately begun.

Not till the last straggling house had been long past, not till the meadows were stretched out behind her as well as before her, spreading far off into the distance on each side,



did she give way to the sense of wild exultation which was coming fast over her. But then, at last, she drew a long, long breath, and, standing up in the boat, looked all around her. The stars were shining over her head and deep down beneath her. The cool wind came fresh upon her cheek over the long grassy reaches. No living thing moved in all the wide level circle which lay about her. She had passed the Red Sea, and was alone in the Desert.

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She threw down her oars, lifted her hands like a priestess, and her strong, sweet voice burst into song,—the song of the Jewish maiden when she went out before the chorus of, women and sang that grand solo, which we all remember in its ancient words, and in their modern paraphrase,

“Sound the loud timbrel o’er Egypt’s dark sea!
Jehovah hath triumphed, his people are free!”

The poor child’s repertory was limited to songs of the religious sort mainly, but there was a choice among these. Her aunt’s favorites, beside “China,” already mentioned, were “Bangor,” which the worthy old New England clergyman so admired that he actually had the down-east city called after it, and “Windsor,” and “Funeral Hymn.” But Myrtle was in no mood for these. She let off her ecstasy in “Balerna,” and “Arlington,” and “Silver Street,” and at last in that most riotous of devotional hymns, which sounds as if it had been composed by a saint who had a cellar under his chapel,—“Jordan.” So she let her wild spirits run loose; and then a tenderer feeling stole over her, and she sang herself into a more tranquil mood with the gentle music of “Dundee.” And again she pulled quietly and steadily at her oars, until she reached the wooded region through which the river winds after leaving the “Broad Meadows.”

The tumult in her blood was calmed, yet every sense and faculty was awake to the manifold delicious, mysterious impressions of that wonderful June night, The stars were shining between the tall trees, as if all the jewels of heaven had been set in one belt of midnight sky. The voices of the wind, as they sighed through the pines, seemed like the breath of a sleeping child, and then, as they lisped from the soft, tender leaves of beeches and maples, like the half-articulate whisper of the mother hushing all the intrusive sounds that might awaken it. Then came the pulsating monotone of the frogs from a far-off pool, the harsh cry of an owl from an old tree that overhung it, the splash of a mink or musquash, and nearer by, the light step of a woodchuck, as he cantered off in his quiet way to his hole in the nearest bank. The laurels were just coming into bloom,—the yellow lilies, earlier than their fairer sisters, pushing their golden cups through the water, not content, like those, to float on the surface of the stream that fed them, emblems of showy wealth, and, like that, drawing all manner of insects to feed upon them. The miniature forests of ferns came down to the edge of the stream, their tall, bending plumes swaying in the night breeze. Sweet odors from oozing pines, from dewy flowers, from spicy leaves, stole out of the tangled thickets, and made the whole scene more dream-like with their faint, mingled suggestions.

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By and by the banks of the river grew lower and marshy, and in place of the larger forest-trees which had covered them stood slender tamaracks, sickly, mossy, looking as if they had been moon-struck and were out of their wits, their tufts of leaves staring off every way from their spindling branches. The winds came cool and damp out of the hiding-places among their dark recesses. The country people about here called this region the "Witches' Hollow," and had many stories about the strange things that happened there. The Indians used to hold their "powwows," or magical incantations, upon a broad mound which rose out of the common level, and where some old hemlocks and beeches formed a dark grove, which served them as a temple for their demon-worship. There were many legends of more recent date connected with this spot, some of them hard to account for, and no superstitious or highly imaginative person would have cared to pass through it alone in the dead of the night, as this young girl was doing.

She knew nothing of all these fables and fancies. Her own singular experiences in this enchanted region were certainly not suggested by anything she had heard, and may be considered psychologically curious by those who would not think of attributing any mystical meaning to them. We are at liberty to report many things without attempting to explain them, or committing ourselves to anything beyond the fact that so they were told us. The reader will find Myrtle's "Vision," as written out at a later period from her recollections, at the end of this chapter.

The night was passing, and she meant to be as far away as possible from the village she had left, before morning. But the boat, like all craft on country rivers, was leaky, and she had to work until tired, bailing it out, before she was ready for another long effort. The old tin measure, which was all she had to bail with, leaked as badly as the boat, and her task was a tedious one. At last she got it in good trim, and sat down to her oars with the determination to pull steadily as long as her strength would hold out.

Hour after hour she kept at her work, sweeping round the long bends where the river was hollowing out one bank and building new shore on the opposite one, so as gradually to shift its channel; by clipper-shaped islands, sharp at the bows looking up stream, sharp too at the stern, looking down,—their shape solving the navigator's problem of least resistance, as a certain young artist had pointed out; by slumbering villages; by outlying farm-houses; between cornfields where the young plants were springing up in little thready fountains; in the midst of stumps where the forest had just been felled; through patches, where the fire of the last great autumnal drought had turned all the green beauty of the woods into brown desolation; and again amidst broad expanses of open meadow stretching as far as the eye could reach in the uncertain light.

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A faint yellow tinge was beginning to stain the eastern horizon. Her boat was floating quietly along, for she had at last taken in her oars, and she was now almost tired out with toil and excitement. She rested her head upon her hands, and felt her eyelids closing in spite of herself. And now there stole upon her ear a low, gentle, distant murmur, so soft that it seemed almost to mingle with the sound of her own breathing, but so steady, so uniform, that it soothed her to sleep, as if it were the old cradle-song the ocean used to sing to her, or the lullaby of her fair young mother.

So she glided along, slowly, slowly, down the course of the winding river, and the flushing dawn kindled around her as she slumbered, and the low, gentle murmur grew louder and louder, but still she slept, dreaming of the murmuring ocean.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VIII.

Myrtle hazard's statement.

"A Vision seen by me, Myrtle Hazard, aged fifteen, on the night of June 15, 1859. Written out at the request of a friend from my recollections.

"The place where I saw these sights is called, as I have been told since, Witches' Hollow. I had never been there before, and did not know that it was called so, or anything about it.

"The first strange thing that I noticed was on coming near a kind of hill or mound that rose out of the low meadows. I saw a burning cross lying on the slope of that mound. It burned with a pale greenish light, and did not waste, though I watched it for a long time, as the boat I was in moved slowly with the current and I had stopped rowing.

"I know that my eyes were open, and I was awake while I was looking at this cross. I think my eyes were open when I saw these other appearances, but I felt just as if I were dreaming while awake.

"I heard a faint rustling sound, and on looking up I saw many figures moving around me, and I seemed to see myself among them as if I were outside of myself.

"The figures did not walk, but slid or glided with an even movement, as if without any effort. They made many gestures, and seemed to speak, but I cannot tell whether I heard what they said, or knew its meaning in some other way.

"I knew the faces of some of these figures. They were the same I have seen in portraits, as long as I can remember, at the old house where I was brought up, called The Poplars. I saw my father and my mother as they look in the two small pictures; also



my grandmother, and her father and mother and grandfather, and one other person, who lived a great while ago. All of these have been long dead, and the longer they had been dead the less like substance they looked and the more like shadows, so that the oldest was like one's breath of a frosty morning, but shaped like the living figure.

"There was no motion of their breasts, and their lips seemed to be moving as if they were saying, Breath! Breath! Breath! I thought they wanted to breathe the air of this world again in my shape, which I seemed to see as it were empty of myself and of these other selves, like a sponge that has water pressed out of it.

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“Presently it seemed to me that I returned to myself, and then those others became part of me by being taken up, one by one, and so lost in my own life.

“My father and mother came up, hand in hand, looking more real than any of the rest. Their figures vanished, and they seemed to have become a part of me; for I felt all at once the longing to live over the life they had led, on the sea and in strange countries.

“Another figure was just like the one we called the Major, who was a very strong, hearty-looking man, and who is said to have drank hard sometimes, though there is nothing about it on his tombstone, which I used to read in the graveyard. It seemed to me that there was something about his life that I did not want to make a part of mine, but that there was some right he had in me through my being of his blood, and so his health and his strength went all through me, and I was always to have what was left of his life in that shadow-like shape, forming a portion of mine.

“So in the same way with the shape answering to the portrait of that famous beauty who was the wife of my great-grandfather, and used to be called the Pride of the County.

“And so too with another figure which had the face of that portrait marked on the back, Ruth Bradford, who married one of my ancestors, and was before the court, as I have heard, in the time of the witchcraft trials.

“There was with the rest a dark, wild-looking woman, with a head-dress of feathers. She kept as it were in shadow, but I saw something of my own features in her face.

“It was on my mind very strongly that the shape of that woman of our blood who was burned long ago by the Papists came very close to me, and was in some way made one with mine, and that I feel her presence with me since, as if she lived again in me; but not always,—only at times,—and then I feel borne up as if I could do anything in the world. I had a feeling as if she were my guardian and protector.

“It seems to me that these, and more, whom I have not mentioned, do really live over some part of their past lives in my life. I do not understand it all, and perhaps it can be accounted for in some way I have not thought of. I write it down as nearly as I can give it from memory, by request, and if it is printed at this time had rather have all the real names withheld.

“Myrtle hazard.”

NOTE BY THE FRIEND.

“This statement must be accounted for in some way, or pass into the category of the supernatural. Probably it was one of those intuitions, with objective projection, which sometimes come to imaginative young persons, especially girls, in certain exalted

nervous conditions. The study of the portraits, with the knowledge of some parts of the history of the persons they represented, and the consciousness of instincts inherited in all probability from these

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same ancestors, formed the basis of Myrtle's 'Vision.' The lives of our progenitors are, as we know, reproduced in different proportions in ourselves. Whether they as individuals have any consciousness of it, is another matter. It is possible that they do get a second as it were fractional life in us. It might seem that many of those whose blood flows in our veins struggle for the mastery, and by and by one or more get the predominance, so that we grow to be like father, or mother, or remoter ancestor, or two or more are blended in us, not to the exclusion, however, it must be understood, of a special personality of our own, about which these others are grouped. Independently of any possible scientific value, this 'Vision' serves to illustrate the above-mentioned fact of common experience, which is not sufficiently weighed by most moralists.

"How much it may be granted to certain young persons to see, not in virtue of their intellectual gifts, but through those direct channels which worldly wisdom may possibly close to the luminous influx, each reader must determine for himself by his own standards of faith and evidence.

"One statement of the narrative admits of a simple natural explanation, which does not allow the lovers of the marvellous to class it with the quasi-miraculous appearance seen by Colonel Gardiner, and given in full by Dr. Doddridge in his Life of that remarkable Christian soldier. Decaying wood is often phosphorescent, as many readers must have seen for themselves. The country people are familiar with the sight of it in wild timberland, and have given it the name of 'Fox-fire.' Two trunks of trees in this state, lying across each other, will account for the fact observed, and vindicate the truth of the young girl's story without requiring us to suppose any exceptional occurrence outside of natural laws."

CHAPTER IX.

Mr. Clement Lindsay receives A letter, and begins his answer.

It was already morning when a young man living in the town of Alderbank, after lying awake for an hour thinking the unutterable thoughts that nineteen years of life bring to the sleeping and waking dreams of young people, rose from his bed, and, half dressing himself, sat down at his desk, from which he took a letter, which he opened and read. It was written in a delicate, though hardly formed female hand, and crossed like a checker-board, as is usual with these redundant manuscripts. The letter was as follows:

Oxbow village, June 13, 1859.

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My dearest Clement,—You was so good to write me such a sweet little bit of a letter,—only, dear, you never seem to be in quite so good spirits as you used to be. I wish your Susie was with you to cheer you up; but no, she must be patient, and you must be patient too, for you are so ambitious! I have heard you say so many times that nobody could be a great artist without passing years and years at work, and growing pale and lean with thinking so hard. You won't grow pale and lean, I hope; for I do so love to see that pretty color in your cheeks you have always had ever since I have known you; and besides, I do not believe you will have to work so very hard to do something great,—you have so much genius, and people of genius do such beautiful things with so little trouble. You remember those beautiful lines out of our newspaper I sent you? Well, Mr. Hopkins told me he wrote those lines in one evening without stopping! I wish you could see Mr. Hopkins,—he is a very talented person. I cut out this little piece about him from the paper on purpose to show you,—for genius loves genius,—and you would like to hear him read his own poetry,—he reads it beautifully. Please send this piece from the paper back, as I want to put it in my scrapbook, under his autograph:—

“Our young townsman, Mr. Gifted Hopkins, has proved himself worthy of the name he bears. His poetical effusions are equally creditable to his head and his heart, displaying the highest order of genius and powers of imagination and fancy hardly second to any writer of the age. He is destined to make a great sensation in the world of letters.”

Mrs. Hopkins is the same good soul she always was. She is very proud of her son, as is natural, and keeps a copy of everything he writes. I believe she cries over them every time she reads them. You don't know how I take to little Sossy and Minthy, those two twins I have written to you about before. Poor little creatures,—what a cruel thing it was in their father and mother not to take care of them! What do you think? Old bachelor Gridley lets them come up into his room, and builds forts and castles for them with his big books! “The world's coming to an end,” Mrs. Hopkins said the first time he did so. He looks so savage with that scowl of his, and talks so gruff when he is scolding at things in general, that nobody would have believed he would have let such little things come anywhere near him. But he seems to be growing kind to all of us and everybody. I saw him talking to the Fire-hang-bird the other day. You know who the Fire-hang-bird is, don't you? Myrtle Hazard her name is. I wish you could see her. I don't know as I do, though. You would want to make a statue of her, or a painting, I know. She is so handsome that all the young men stand round to see her come out of meeting. Some say that Lawyer Bradshaw is after her; but my! he is ten years older than she is.

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She is nothing but a girl, though she looks as if she was eighteen. She lives up at a place called The Poplars, with an old woman that is her aunt or something, and nobody seems to be much acquainted with her except Olive Eveleth, who is the minister's daughter at Saint Bartholomew's Church. She never has beaux round her, as some young girls do—they say that she is not happy with her aunt and another woman that stays with her, and that is the reason she keeps so much to herself. The minister came to see me the other day,—Mr. Stoker his name is. I was all alone, and it frightened me, for he looks, oh, so solemn on Sundays! But he called me "My dear," and did n't say anything horrid, you know, about my being such a dreadful, dreadful sinner, as I have heard of his saying to some people,—but he looked very kindly at me, and took my hand, and laid his hand on my shoulder like a brother, and hoped I would come and see him in his study. I suppose I must go, but I don't want to. I don't seem to like him exactly.

I hope you love me as well as ever you did. I can't help feeling sometimes as if you was growing away from me,—you know what I mean,—getting to be too great a person for such a small person as I am.

I know I can't always understand you when you talk about art, and that you know a great deal too much for such a simple girl as I am. Oh, if I thought I could never make you happy!... There, now! I am almost ashamed to send this paper so spotted. Gifted Hopkins wrote some beautiful verses one day on "A Maiden Weeping." He compared the tears falling from her eyes to the drops of dew which one often sees upon the flowers in the morning. Is n't it a pretty thought?

I wish I loved art as well as I do poetry; but I am afraid I have not so much taste as some girls have. You remember how I liked that picture in the illustrated magazine, and you said it was horrid. I have been afraid since to like almost anything, for fear you should tell me some time or other it was horrid. Don't you think I shall ever learn to know what is nice from what is n't?

Oh, dear Clement, I wish you would do one thing to please me. Don't say no, for you can do everything you try to,—I am sure you can. I want you to write me some poetry,—just three or four little verses *to Suzie*. Oh, I should feel so proud to have some lines written all on purpose for me. Mr. Hopkins wrote some the other day, and printed them in the paper, "To M—e." I believe he meant them for Myrtle,—the first and last letter of her name, you see, "M" and "e."

Your letter was a dear one, only so short! I wish you would tell me all about what you are doing at Alderbank. Have you made that model of Innocence that is to have my forehead, and hair parted like mine! Make it pretty, do, that is a darling.

Now don't make a face at my letter. It is n't a very good one, I know; but your poor little Susie does the best she can, and she loves you so much!

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Now do be nice and write me one little bit of a mite of a poem,—it will make me just as happy!

I am very well, and as happy as I can be when you are away.

Your affectionate *Susie*.

(Directed to Mr. Clement Lindsay, Alderbank.)

The envelope of this letter was unbroken, as was before said, when the young man took it from his desk. He did not tear it with the hot impatience of some lovers, but cut it open neatly, slowly, one would say sadly. He read it with an air of singular effort, and yet with a certain tenderness. When he had finished it, the drops were thick on his forehead; he groaned and put his hands to his face, which was burning red.

This was what the impulse of boyhood, years ago, had brought him to! He was a stately youth, of noble bearing, of high purpose, of fastidious taste; and, if his broad forehead, his clear, large blue eyes, his commanding features, his lips, firm, yet plastic to every change of thought and feeling, were not an empty mask, might not improbably claim that Promethean quality of which the girl's letter had spoken,—the strange, divine, dread gift of genius.

This poor, simple, innocent, trusting creature, so utterly incapable of coming into any true relation with his aspiring mind, his large and strong emotions,—this mere child, all simplicity and goodness, but trivial and shallow as the little babbling brooklet that ran by his window to the river, to lose its insignificant being in the swift torrent he heard rushing over the rocks,—this pretty idol for a weak and kindly and easily satisfied worshipper, was to be enthroned as the queen of his affections, to be adopted as the companion of his labors! The boy, led by the commonest instinct, the mere attraction of biped to its female, which accident had favored, had thrown away the dearest possession of manhood,—liberty,—and this bauble was to be his lifelong reward! And yet not a bauble either, for a pleasing person and a gentle and sweet nature, which had once made her seem to him the very paragon of loveliness, were still hers. Alas! her simple words were true,—he had grown away from her. Her only fault was that she had not grown with him, and surely he could not reproach her with that.

“No,” he said to himself, “I will never leave her so long as her heart clings to me. I have been rash, but she shall not pay the forfeit. And if I may think of myself, my life need not be wretched because she cannot share all my being with me. The common human qualities are more than all exceptional gifts. She has a woman's heart; and what talent of mine is to be named by the love a true woman can offer in exchange for these divided and cold affections? If it had pleased God to mate me with one more equal in other ways, who could share my thoughts, who could kindle my inspiration, who had

wings to rise into the air with me as well as feet to creep by my side upon the earth,—
what cannot such a woman do for a man!

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"What! cast away the flower I took in the bud because it does not show as I hoped it would when it opened? I will stand by my word; I will be all as a man that I promised as a boy. Thank God, she is true and pure and sweet. My nest will be a peaceful one; but I must take wing alone,—alone."

He drew one long sigh, and the cloud passed from his countenance. He must answer that letter now, at once. There were reasons, he thought, which made it important. And so, with the cheerfulness which it was kind and becoming to show, so far as possible, and yet with a little excitement on one particular point, which was the cause of his writing so promptly, he began his answer.

Alderbank, Thursday morning, June 16, 1859.

My dear Susie,—I have just been reading your pleasant letter; and if I do not send you the poem you ask for so eloquently, I will give you a little bit of advice, which will do just as well,—won't it, my dear? I was interested in your account of various things going on at Oxbow Village. I am very glad you find young Mr. Hopkins so agreeable a friend. His poetry is better than some which I see printed in the village papers, and seems generally unexceptionable in its subjects and tone. I do not believe he is a dangerous companion, though the habit of writing verse does not always improve the character. I think I have seen it make more than one of my acquaintances idle, conceited, sentimental, and frivolous,—perhaps it found them so already. Don't make too much of his talent, and particularly don't let him think that because he can write verses he has nothing else to do in this world. That is for his benefit, dear, and you must skilfully apply it.

Now about yourself. My dear Susie, there was something in your letter that did not please me. You speak of a visit from the Rev. Mr. Stoker, and of his kind, brotherly treatment, his cordiality of behavior, and his asking you to visit him in his study. I am very glad to hear you say that you "don't seem to like him." He is very familiar, it seems to me, for so new an acquaintance. What business had he to be laying his hand on your shoulder? I should like to see him try these free-and-easy ways in my presence! He would not have taken that liberty, my dear! No, he was alone with you, and thought it safe to be disrespectfully familiar. I want you to maintain your dignity always with such persons, and I beg you not to go to the study of this clergyman, unless some older friend goes with you on every occasion, and sits through the visit. I must speak plainly to you, my dear, as I have a right to. If the minister has anything of importance to say, let it come through the lips of some mature person. It may lose something of the fervor with which it would have been delivered at first hand, but the great rules of Christian life are not so dependent on the particular individual who speaks them, that you must go to this or that young man to find out what they are. If to any man, I should prefer the old gentleman whom you have mentioned in your letters, Father Pemberton. You understand me, my dear girl, and the subject is not grateful. You know how truly I am interested in all that relates to you,—that I regard you with an affection which—



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Help! Help! Help!

A cry as of a young person's voice was heard faintly, coming from the direction of the river. Something in the tone of it struck to his heart, and he sprang as if he had been stabbed. He flung open his chamber window and leaped from it to the ground. He ran straight to the bank of the river by the side of which the village of Alderbank was built, a little farther down the stream than the house in which he was living.

Everybody that travels in that region knows the beautiful falls which break the course of the river just above the village; narrow and swift, and surrounded by rocks of such picturesque forms that they are sought and admired by tourists. The stream was now swollen, and rushed in a deep and rapid current over the ledges, through the rocky straits, plunging at last in tumult and foam, with loud, continuous roar, into the depths below the cliff from which it tumbled.

A short distance above the fall there projected from the water a rock which had, by parsimonious saving during a long course of years, hoarded a little soil, out of which a small tuft of bushes struggled to support a decent vegetable existence. The high waters had nearly submerged it, but a few slender twigs were seen above their surface.

A skiff was lying close to this rock, between it and the brink of the fall, which was but a few rods farther down. In the skiff was a youth of fourteen or fifteen years, holding by the slender twigs, the boat dragging at them all the time, and threatening to tear them away and go over the fall. It was not likely that the boy would come to shore alive if it did. There were stories, it is true, that the Indians used to shoot the fall in their canoes with safety; but everybody knew that at least three persons had been lost by going over it since the town was settled; and more than one dead body had been found floating far down the river, with bruises and fractured bones, as if it had taken the same fatal plunge.

There was no time to lose. Clement ran a little way up the river-bank, flung off his shoes, and sprang from the bank as far as he could leap into the water. The current swept him toward the fall, but he worked nearer and nearer the middle of the stream. He was making for the rock, thinking he could plant his feet upon it and at the worst hold the boat until he could summon other help by shouting. He had barely got his feet upon the rock, when the twigs by which the boy was holding gave way. He seized the boat, but it dragged him from his uncertain footing, and with a desperate effort he clambered over its side and found himself its second doomed passenger.

There was but an instant for thought.

"Sit still," he said, "and, just as we go over, put your arms round me under mine, and don't let go for your life!"

He caught up the single oar, and with a few sharp paddle-strokes brought the skiff into the blackest centre of the current, where it was deepest, and would plunge them into the deepest pool.

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"Hold your breath! God save us! Now!"

They rose, as if with one will, and stood for an instant, the arms of the younger closely embracing the other as he had directed.

A sliding away from beneath them of the floor on which they stood, as the drop fails under the feet of a felon. A great rush of air, and a mighty, awful, stunning roar,—an involuntary gasp, a choking flood of water that came bellowing after them, and hammered them down into the black depths so far that the young man, though used to diving and swimming long distances underwater, had well-nigh yielded to the fearful need of air, and sucked in his death in so doing.

The boat came up to the surface, broken in twain, splintered, a load of firewood for those who raked the river lower down. It had turned crosswise, and struck the rocks. A cap rose to the surface, such a one as boys wear,—the same that boy had on. And then—after how many seconds by the watch cannot be known, but after a time long enough, as the young man remembered it, to live his whole life over in memory—Clement Lindsay felt the blessed air against his face, and, taking a great breath, came to his full consciousness. The arms of the boy were still locked around him as in the embrace of death. A few strokes brought him to the shore, dragging his senseless burden with him.

He unclasped the arms that held him so closely encircled, and laid the slender form of the youth he had almost died to save gently upon the grass. It was as if dead. He loosed the ribbon that was round the neck, he tore open the checked shirt—

The story of Myrtle Hazard's sex was told; but she was deaf to his cry of surprise, and no blush came to her cold cheek. Not too late, perhaps, to save her,—not too late to try to save her, at least!

He placed his lips to hers, and filled her breast with the air from his own panting chest. Again and again he renewed these efforts, hoping, doubting, despairing,—once more hoping, and at last, when he had almost ceased to hope, she gasped, she breathed, she moaned, and rolled her eyes wildly round her, she was born again into this mortal life.

He caught her up in his arms, bore her to the house, laid her on a sofa, and, having spent his strength in this last effort, reeled and fell, and lay as one over whom have just been whispered the words,

"He is gone."

CHAPTER X.

Mr. Clement Lindsay finishes his letter—what came of it.

The first thing Clement Lindsay did, when he was fairly himself again, was to finish his letter to Susan Posey. He took it up where it left off, “with an affection which——” and drew a long dash, as above. It was with great effort he wrote the lines which follow, for he had got an ugly blow on the forehead, and his eyes were “in mourning,” as the gentlemen of the ring say, with unbecoming levity.

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“An adventure! Just as I was writing these last words, I heard the cry of a young person, as it sounded, for help. I ran to the river and jumped in, and had the pleasure of saving a life. I got some bruises which have laid me up for a day or two; but I am getting over them very well now, and you need not worry about me at all. I will write again soon; so pray do not fret yourself, for I have had no hurt that will trouble me for any time.”

Of course, poor Susan Posey burst out crying, and cried as if her heart would break. Oh dear! Oh dear! what should she do! He was almost killed, she knew he was, or he had broken some of his bones. Oh dear! Oh dear! She would go and see him, there!—she must and would. He would die, she knew he would,—and so on.

It was a singular testimony to the evident presence of a human element in Mr. Bytes Gridley that the poor girl, on her extreme trouble, should think of him as a counsellor. But the wonderful relenting kind of look on his grave features as he watched the little twins tumbling about his great books, and certain marks of real sympathy he had sometimes shown for her in her lesser woes, encouraged her, and she went straight to his study, letter in hand. She gave a timid knock at the door of that awful sanctuary.

“Come in, Susan Posey,” was its answer, in a pleasant tone. The old master knew her light step and the maidenly touch of her small hand on the panel.

What a sight! 'there were Sossy and Minthy intrenched in a Sebastopol which must have cost a good half-hour's engineering, and the terrible Bytes Gridley besieging the fortress with hostile manifestations of the most singular character. He was actually discharging a large sugar-plum at the postern gate, which having been left unclosed, the missile would certainly have reached one of the garrison, when he paused as the door opened, and the great round spectacles and four wide, staring infants' eyes were levelled at Miss Susan Posey.

She almost forgot her errand, grave as it was, in astonishment at this manifestation. The old man had emptied his shelves of half their folios to build up the fort, in the midst of which he had seated the two delighted and uproarious babes. There was his Cave's "Historia Literaria," and Sir Walter Raleigh's "History of the World," and a whole array of Christian Fathers, and Plato, and Aristotle, and Stanley's book of Philosophers, with Effigies, and the Junta Galen, and the Hippocrates of Foesius, and Walton's Polyglot, supported by Father Sanchez on one side and Fox's "Acts and Monuments" on the other,—an odd collection, as folios from lower shelves are apt to be.

The besieger discharged his sugar-plum, which was so well aimed that it fell directly into the lap of Minthy, who acted with it as if the garrison had been on short rations for some time.

He saw at once, on looking up, that there was trouble. "What now, Susan Posey, my dear?"

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"O Mr. Gridley, I am in such trouble! What shall I do? What shall I do?"

She turned back the name and the bottom of the letter in such a way that Mr. Gridley could read nothing but the few lines relating their adventure.

"So Mr. Clement Lindsay has been saving a life, has he, and got some hard knocks doing it, hey, Susan Posey? Well, well, Clement Lindsay is a brave fellow, and there is no need of hiding his name, my child. Let me take the letter again a moment, Susan Posey. What is the date of it? June 16th. Yes,—yes,—yes!"

He read the paragraph over again, and the signature too, if he wanted to; for poor Susan had found that her secret was hardly opaque to those round spectacles and the eyes behind them, and, with a not unbecoming blush, opened the fold of the letter before she handed it back.

"No, no, Susan Posey. He will come all right. His writing is steady, and if he had broken any bones he would have mentioned it. It's a thing his wife will be proud of, if he is ever married, Susan Posey," (blushes,) "and his children too," (more blushes running up to her back hair,) "and there 's nothing to be worried about. But I'll tell you what, my dear, I've got a little business that calls me down the river tomorrow, and I shouldn't mind stopping an hour at Alderbank and seeing how our young friend Clement Lindsay is; and then, if he was going to have a long time of it, why we could manage it somehow that any friend who had any special interest in him could visit him, just to while away the tiresomeness of being sick. That's it, exactly. I'll stop at Alderbank, Susan Posey. Just clear up these two children for me, will you, my dear? Isosceles, come now,—that 's a good child. Helminthia, carry these sugar-plums down—stairs for me, and take good care of them, mind!"

It was a case of gross bribery and corruption, for the fortress was immediately, evacuated on the receipt of a large paper of red and white comfits, and the garrison marched down—stairs much like conquerors, under the lead of the young lady, who was greatly eased in mind by the kind words and the promise of Mr. Byles Gridley.

But he, in the mean time, was busy with thoughts she did not suspect. "A young person," he said to himself,—“why a young person? Why not say a boy, if it was a boy? What if this should be our handsome truant?—’June 16th, Thursday morning!’—About time to get to Alderbank by the river, I should think. None of the boats missing? What then? She may have made a raft, or picked up some stray skiff. Who knows? And then got shipwrecked, very likely. There are rapids and falls farther along the river. It will do no harm to go down there and look about, at any rate.”

On Saturday morning, therefore, Mr. Byles Gridley set forth to procure a conveyance to make a visit, as he said, dawn the river, and perhaps be gone a day or two. He went to a stable in the village, and asked if they could let him have a horse.

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The man looked at him with that air of native superiority which the companionship of the generous steed confers on all his associates, down to the lightest weight among the jockeys.

“Wal, I hain’t got nothin’ in the shape of a h’oss, Mr. Gridley. I’ve got a mare I s’pose I could let y’ have.”

“Oh, very well,” said the old master, with a twinkle in his eye as sly as the other’s wink, —he had parried a few jokes in his time,—“they charge half-price for mares always, I believe.”

That was a new view of the subject. It rather took the wind out of the stable-keeper, and set a most ammoniacal fellow, who stood playing with a currycomb, grinning at his expense. But he rallied presently.

“Wal, I b’lieve they do for some mares, when they let ’em to some folks; but this here ain’t one o’ them mares, and you ain’t one o’ them folks. All my cattle’s out but this critter, ‘n’ I don’t jestly want to have nobody drive her that ain’t pretty car’ful,—she’s faast, I tell ye,—don’t want no whip.—How fur d’ d y’ want t’ go?”

Mr. Gridley was quite serious now, and let the man know that he wanted the mare and a light covered wagon, at once, to be gone for one or two days, and would waive the question of sex in the matter of payment.

Aldersbank was about twenty miles down the river by the road. On arriving there, he inquired for the house where a Mr. Lindsay lived. There was only one Lindsay family in town,—he must mean Dr. William Lindsay. His house was up there a little way above the village, lying a few rods back from the river.

He found the house without difficulty, and knocked at the door. A motherly-looking woman opened it immediately, and held her hand up as if to ask him to speak and move softly.

“Does Mr. Clement Lindsay live here?”

“He is staying here for the present. He is a nephew of ours. He is in his bed from an injury.”

“Nothing very serious, I hope?”

“A bruise on his head,—not very bad, but the doctor was afraid of erysipelas. Seems to be doing well enough now.”

“Is there a young person here, a stranger?”

“There is such a young person here. Do you come with any authority to make inquiries?”

“I do. A young friend of mine is missing, and I thought it possible I might learn something here about it. Can I see this young person?”

The matron came nearer to Byles Gridley, and said: “This person is a young woman disguised as a boy. She was rescued by my nephew at the risk of his life, and she has been delirious ever since she has recovered her consciousness. She was almost too far gone to be resuscitated, but Clement put his mouth to hers and kept her breathing until her own breath returned and she gradually came to.”

“Is she violent in her delirium?”

“Not now. No; she is quiet enough, but wandering,—wants to know where she is, and whose the strange faces are,—mine and my husband's,—that 's Dr. Lindsay,—and one of my daughters, who has watched with her.”

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"If that is so, I think I had better see her. If she is the person I suspect her to be, she will know me; and a familiar face may bring back her recollections and put a stop to her wanderings. If she does not know me, I will not stay talking with her. I think she will, if she is the one I am seeking after. There is no harm in trying."

Mrs. Lindsay took a good long look at the old man. There was no mistaking his grave, honest, sturdy, wrinkled, scholarly face. His voice was assured and sincere in its tones. His decent black coat was just what a scholar's should be,—old, not untidy, a little shiny at the elbows with much leaning on his study-table, but neatly bound at the cuffs, where worthy Mrs. Hopkins had detected signs of fatigue and come to the rescue. His very hat looked honest as it lay on the table. It had moulded itself to a broad, noble head, that held nothing but what was true and fair, with a few harmless crotchets just to fill in with, and it seemed to know it.

The good woman gave him her confidence at once. "Is the person you are seeking a niece or other relative of yours?"

(Why did not she ask if the girl was his daughter? What is that look of paternity and of maternity which observing and experienced mothers and old nurses know so well in men and in women?)

"No, she is not a relative. But I am acting for those who are."

"Wait a moment and I will go and see that the room is all right."

She returned presently. "Follow me softly, if you please. She is asleep,—so beautiful,—so innocent!"

Byles Gridley, Master of Arts, retired professor, more than sixty years old, childless, loveless, stranded in a lonely study strewn with wrecks of the world's thought, his work in life finished, his one literary venture gone down with all it held, with nobody to care for him but accidental acquaintances, moved gently to the side of the bed and looked upon the pallid, still features of Myrtle Hazard. He strove hard against a strange feeling that was taking hold of him, that was making his face act rebelliously, and troubling his eyes with sudden films. He made a brief stand against this invasion. "A weakness,—a weakness!" he said to himself. "What does all this mean? Never such a thing for these twenty years! Poor child! poor child!—Excuse me, madam," he said, after a little interval, but for what offence he did not mention. A great deal might be forgiven, even to a man as old as Byles Gridley, looking upon such a face,—so lovely, yet so marked with the traces of recent suffering, and even now showing by its changes that she was struggling in some fearful dream. Her forehead contracted, she started with a slight convulsive movement, and then her lips parted, and the cry escaped from them,—how heart-breaking when there is none to answer it,—"Mother!"

Gone back again through all the weary, chilling years of her girlhood to that hardly remembered morning of her life when the cry she uttered was answered by the light of loving eyes, the kiss of clinging lips, the embrace of caressing arms!



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"It is better to wake her," Mrs. Lindsay said; "she is having a troubled dream. Wake up, my child, here is a friend waiting to see you."

She laid her hand very gently on Myrtle's forehead. Myrtle opened her eyes, but they were vacant as yet.

"Are we dead?" she said. "Where am I? This is n't heaven—there are no angels—Oh, no, no, no! don't send me to the other place—fifteen years,—only fifteen years old—no father, no mother—nobody loved me. Was it wicked in me to live?" Her whole theological training was condensed in that last brief question.

The, old man took her hand and looked her in the face, with a wonderful tenderness in his squared features. "Wicked to live, my dear? No indeed! Here! look at me, my child; don't you know your old friend Byles Gridley?"

She was awake now. The sight of a familiar countenance brought back a natural train of thought. But her recollection passed over everything that had happened since Thursday morning.

"Where is the boat I was in?" she said. "I have just been in the water, and I was dreaming that I was drowned. Oh! Mr. Gridley, is that you? Did you pull me out of the water?"

"No, my dear, but you are out of it, and safe and sound: that is the main point. How do you feel now you are awake?"

She yawned, and stretched her arms and looked round, but did not answer at first. This was all natural, and a sign that she was coming right. She looked down at her dress. It was not inappropriate to her sex, being a loose gown that belonged to one of the girls in the house.

"I feel pretty well," she answered, "but a little confused. My boat will be gone, if you don't run and stop it now. How did you get me into dry clothes so quick?"

Master Byles Gridley found himself suddenly possessed by a large and luminous idea of the state of things, and made up his mind in a moment as to what he must do. There was no time to be lost. Every day, every hour, of Myrtle's absence was not only a source of anxiety and a cause of useless searching but it gave room for inventive fancies to imagine evil. It was better to run some risk of injury to health, than to have her absence prolonged another day.

"Has this adventure been told about in the village, Mrs. Lindsay?"

“No, we thought it best to wait until she could tell her own story, expecting her return to consciousness every hour, and thinking there might be some reason for her disguise which it would be kinder to keep quiet about.”

“You know nothing about her, then?”

“Not a word. It was a great question whether to tell the story and make inquiries; but she was safe, and could hardly bear disturbance, and, my dear sir, it seemed too probable that there was some sad story behind this escape in disguise, and that the poor child might need shelter and retirement. We meant to do as well as we could for her.”

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"All right, Mrs. Lindsay. You do not know who she is, then?"

"No, sir, and perhaps it is as well that I should not know. Then I shall not have to answer any questions about it."

"Very good, madam,—just as it should be. And your family, are they as discreet as yourself?"

"Not one word of the whole story has been or will be told by any one of us. That was agreed upon among us."

"Now then, madam. My name, as you heard me say, is Byles Gridley. Your husband will know it, perhaps; at any rate I will wait until he comes back. This child is of good family and of good name. I know her well, and mean, with your kind help, to save her from the consequences which her foolish adventure might have brought upon her. Before the bells ring for meeting to-morrow morning this girl must be in her bed at her home, at Oxbow Village, and we must keep her story to ourselves as far as may be. It will all blow over, if we do. The gossips will only know that she was upset in the river and cared for by some good people,—good people and sensible people too, Mrs. Lindsay. And now I want to see the young man that rescued my friend here,—Clement Lindsay, I have heard his name before."

Clement was not a beauty for the moment, but Master Gridley saw well enough that he was a young man of the right kind. He knew them at sight, fellows with lime enough in their bones and iron enough in their blood to begin with,—shapely, large-nerved, firm-fibred and fine-fibred, with well-spread bases to their heads for the ground-floor of the faculties, and well-vaulted arches for the upper range of apprehensions and combinations. "Plenty of basements," he used to say, "without attics and skylights. Plenty of skylights without rooms enough and space enough below." But here was "a three-story brain," he said to himself as he looked at it, and this was the youth who was to find his complement in our pretty little Susan Posey! His judgment may seem to have been hasty, but he took the measure of young men of twenty at sight from long and sagacious observation, as Nurse Byloe knew the "heft" of a baby the moment she fixed her old eyes on it.

Clement was well acquainted with Byles Gridley, though he had never seen him, for Susan's letters had had a good deal to say about him of late. It was agreed between them that the story should be kept as quiet as possible, and that the young girl should not know the name of her deliverer,—it might save awkward complications. It was not likely that she would be disposed to talk of her adventure, which had ended so disastrously, and thus the whole story would soon die out.

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The effect of the violent shock she had experienced was to change the whole nature of Myrtle for the time. Her mind was unsettled: she could hardly recall anything except the plunge over the fall. She was perfectly docile and plastic,—was ready to go anywhere Mr. Gridley wanted her to go, without any sign of reluctance. And so it was agreed that he should carry her back in his covered wagon that very night. All possible arrangements were made to render her journey comfortable. The fast mare had to trot very gently, and the old master would stop and adjust the pillows from time to time, and administer the restoratives which the physician had got ready, all as naturally and easily as if he had been bred a nurse, vastly to his own surprise, and with not a little gain to his self-appreciation. He was a serviceable kind of body on occasion, after all, was he not, hey, Mr. Byles Gridley? he said to himself.

At half past four o'clock on Sunday morning the shepherd brought the stray lamb into the paved yard at The Poplars, and roused the slumbering household to receive back the wanderer.

It was the Irishwoman, Kitty Fagan, huddled together in such amorphous guise, that she looked as if she had been fitted in a tempest of petticoats and a whirlwind of old shawls, who presented herself at the door.

But there was a very warm heart somewhere in that queer-looking bundle of clothes, and it was not one of those that can throb or break in silence. When she saw the long covered wagon, and the grave face of the old master, she thought it was all over with the poor girl she loved, and that this was the undertaker's wagon bringing back only what had once been Myrtle Hazard. She screamed aloud,—so wildly that Myrtle lifted her head from the pillow against which she had rested it, and started forward.

The Irishwoman looked at her for a moment to assure herself that it was the girl she loved, and not her ghost. Then it all came over her,—she had been stolen by thieves, who had carried her off by night, and been rescued by the brave old man who had brought her back. What crying and kisses and prayers and blessings were poured forth, in a confusion of which her bodily costume was a fitting type, those who know the vocabulary and the enthusiasm of her eloquent race may imagine better than we could describe it.

The welcome of the two other women was far less demonstrative. There were awful questions to be answered before the kind of reception she was to have could be settled. What they were, it is needless to suggest; but while Miss Silence was weeping, first with joy that her "responsibility" was removed, then with a fair share of pity and kindness, and other lukewarm emotions,—while Miss Badlam waited for an explanation before giving way to her feelings,—Mr. Gridley put the essential facts before them in a few words. She had gone down the river some miles in her boat, which was upset

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by a rush of the current, and she had come very near being drowned. She was got out, however, by a person living near by, and cared for by some kind women in a house near the river, where he had been fortunate enough to discover her.—Who cut her hair off? Perhaps those good people,—she had been out of her head. She was alive and unharmed, at any rate, wanting only a few days' rest. They might be very thankful to get her back, and leave her to tell the rest of her story when she had got her strength and memory, for she was not quite herself yet, and might not be for some days.

And so there she was at last laid in her own bed, listening again to the ripple of the waters beneath her, Miss Silence sitting on one side looking as sympathetic as her insufficient nature allowed her to look; the Irishwoman uncertain between delight at Myrtle's return and sorrow for her condition; and Miss Cynthia Badlam occupying herself about house-matters, not unwilling to avoid the necessity of displaying her conflicting emotions.

Before he left the house, Mr. Gridley repeated the statement in the most precise manner,—some miles down the river—upset and nearly drowned—rescued almost dead—brought to and cared for by kind women in the house where he, Byles Gridley, found her. These were the facts, and nothing more than this was to be told at present. They had better be made known at once, and the shortest and best way would be to have it announced by the minister at meeting that forenoon. With their permission, he would himself write the note for Mr. Stoker to read, and tell the other ministers that they might announce it to their people.

The bells rang for meeting, but the little household at The Poplars did not add to the congregation that day. In the mean time Kitty Fagan had gone down with Mr. Byles Gridley's note, to carry it to the Rev. Mr. Stoker. But, on her way, she stopped at the house of one Mrs. Finnegan, a particular friend of hers; and the great event of the morning furnishing matter for large discourse, and various social allurements adding to the fascination of having a story to tell, Kitty Fagan forgot her note until meeting had begun and the minister had read the text of his sermon. "Bless my soul! and sure I've forgot ahl about the letter!" she cried all at once, and away she tramped for the meeting-house. The sexton took the note, which was folded, and said he would hand it up to the pulpit after the sermon,—it would not do to interrupt the preacher.

The Rev. Mr. Stoker had, as was said, a somewhat remarkable gift in prayer,—an endowment by no means confined to profoundly spiritual persons,—in fact, not rarely owing much of its force to a strong animal nature underlying the higher attributes. The sweet singer of Israel would never have written such petitions and such hymns if his manhood had been less complete; the flavor of remembered frailties could not help giving a character to his most devout exercises,

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or they would not have come quite home to our common humanity. But there is no gift more dangerous to the humility and sincerity of a minister. While his spirit ought to be on its knees before the throne of grace, it is too apt to be on tiptoe, following with admiring look the flight of its own rhetoric. The essentially intellectual character of an extemporaneous composition spoken to the Creator with the consciousness that many of his creatures are listening to criticise or to admire, is the great argument for set forms of prayer.

The congregation on this particular Sunday was made up chiefly of women and old men. The young men were hunting after Myrtle Hazard. Mr. Byles Gridley was in his place, wondering why the minister did not read his notice before the prayer. This prayer, was never reported, as is the questionable custom with regard to some of these performances, but it was wrought up with a good deal of rasping force and broad pathos. When he came to pray for "our youthful sister, missing from her pious home, perhaps nevermore to return to her afflicted relatives," and the women and old men began crying, Byles Gridley was on the very point of getting up and cutting short the whole matter by stating the simple fact that she had got back, all right, and suggesting that he had better pray for some of the older and tougher sinners before him. But on the whole it would be more decorous to wait, and perhaps he was willing to hear what the object of his favorite antipathy had to say about it. So he waited through the prayer. He waited through the hymn, "Life is the time"—He waited to hear the sermon.

The minister gave out his text from the Book of Esther, second chapter, seventh verse: "For she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful." It was to be expected that the reverend gentleman, who loved to produce a sensation, would avail himself of the excitable state of his audience to sweep the key-board of their emotions, while, as we may, say, all the stops were drawn out. His sermon was from notes; for, though absolutely extemporaneous composition may be acceptable to one's Maker, it is not considered quite the thing in speaking to one's fellow-mortals. He discoursed for a time on the loss of parents, and on the dangers to which the unfortunate orphan is exposed. Then he spoke of the peculiar risks of the tender female child, left without its natural guardians. Warming with his subject, he dilated with wonderful unction on the temptations springing from personal attractions. He pictured the "fair and beautiful" women of Holy Writ, lingering over their names with lover-like devotion. He brought Esther before his audience, bathed and perfumed for the royal presence of Ahasuerus. He showed them the sweet young Ruth, lying down in her innocence at the feet of the lord of the manor. He dwelt with special luxury on the charms which seduced the royal psalmist,—the soldier's wife for whom he broke the commands

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of the decalogue, and the maiden for whose attentions, in his cooler years, he violated the dictates of prudence and propriety. All this time Byles Gridley had his stern eyes on him. And while he kindled into passionate eloquence on these inspiring themes, poor Bathsheba, whom her mother had sent to church that she might get a little respite from her home duties, felt her blood growing cold in her veins, as the pallid image of the invalid wife, lying on her bed of suffering, rose in the midst of the glowing pictures which borrowed such warmth from her husband's imagination.

The sermon, with its hinted application to the event of the past week, was over at last. The shoulders of the nervous women were twitching with sobs. The old men were crying in their vacant way. But all the while the face of Byles Gridley, firm as a rock in the midst of this lachrymal inundation, was kept steadily on the preacher, who had often felt the look that came through the two round glasses searching into the very marrow of his bones.

As the sermon was finished, the sexton marched up through the broad aisle and handed the note over the door of the pulpit to the clergyman, who was wiping his face after the exertion of delivering his discourse. Mr. Stoker looked at it, started, changed color,—his vision of "The Dangers of Beauty, a Sermon printed by Request," had vanished,—and passed the note to Father Pemberton, who sat by him in the pulpit. With much pains he deciphered its contents, for his eyes were dim with years, and, having read it, bowed his head upon his hands in silent thanksgiving. Then he rose in the beauty of his tranquil and noble old age, so touched with the message he had to proclaim to his people, that the three deep furrows on his forehead, which some said he owed to the three dogmas of original sin, predestination, and endless torment, seemed smoothed for the moment, and his face was as that of an angel while he spoke.

"Sisters and Brethren,—Rejoice with us, for we have found our lamb which had strayed from the fold. This our daughter was dead and is alive again; she was lost and is found. Myrtle Hazard, rescued from great peril of the waters, and cared for by good Samaritans, is now in her home. Thou, O Lord, who didst let the water-flood overflow her, didst not let the deep swallow her up, nor the pit shut its mouth upon her. Let us return our thanks to the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, who is our God and Father, and who hath wrought this great deliverance."

After his prayer, which it tried him sorely to utter in unbroken tones, he gave out the hymn,

"Lord, thou hast heard thy servant cry,
And rescued from the grave;"



but it was hardly begun when the leading female voice trembled and stopped,—and another,—and then a third,—and Father Pemberton, seeing that they were all overcome, arose and stretched out his arms, and breathed over them his holy benediction.

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The village was soon alive with the news. The sexton forgot the solemnity of the Sabbath, and the bell acted as if it was crazy, tumbling heels over head at such a rate, and with such a clamor, that a good many thought there was a fire, and, rushing out from every quarter, instantly caught the great news with which the air was ablaze.

A few of the young men who had come back went even further in their demonstrations. They got a small cannon in readiness, and without waiting for the going down of the sun, began firing rapidly, upon which the Rev. Mr. Stoker sallied forth to put a stop to this violation of the Sabbath. But in the mean time it was heard on all the hills, far and near. Some said they were firing in the hope of raising the corpse; but many who heard the bells ringing their crazy peals guessed what had happened. Before night the parties were all in, one detachment bearing the body of the bob-tailed catamount swung over a pole, like the mighty cluster of grapes from Eshcol, and another conveying with wise precaution that monstrous snapping-turtle which those of our friends who wish to see will find among the specimens marked Chelydra, Serpentine in the great collection at Cantabridge.

CHAPTER XI.

Vexed with A devil.

It was necessary at once to summon a physician to advise as to the treatment of Myrtle, who had received a shock, bodily and mental, not lightly to be got rid of, and very probably to be followed by serious and varied disturbances. Her very tranquillity was suspicious, for there must be something of exhaustion in it, and the reaction must come sooner or later.

Old Dr. Lemuel Hurlbut, at the age of ninety-two, very deaf, very nearly blind, very feeble, liable to odd lapses of memory, was yet a wise counsellor in doubtful and difficult cases, and on rare occasions was still called upon to exercise his ancient skill. Here was a case in which a few words from him might soothe the patient and give confidence to all who were interested in her. Miss Silence Withers went herself to see him.

"Miss Withers, father, wants to talk with you about her niece, Miss Hazard," said Dr. Fordyce Hurlbut.

"Miss Withers, Miss Withers?—Oh, Silence Withers,—lives up at The Poplars. How's the Deacon, Miss Withers?" [Ob. 1810.]

"My grandfather is not living, Dr. Hurlbut," she screamed into his ear.

"Dead, is he? Well, it isn't long since he was with us; and they come and go,—they come and go. I remember his father, Major Gideon Withers. He had a great red feather

on training-days,—that was what made me remember him. Who did you say was sick and wanted to see me, Fordyce?”

“Myrtle Hazard, father,—she has had a narrow escape from drowning, and it has left her in a rather nervous state. They would like to have you go up to The Poplars and take a look at her. You remember Myrtle Hazard? She is the great-granddaughter of your old friend the Deacon.”

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He had to wait a minute before his thoughts would come to order; with a little time, the proper answer would be evolved by the slow automatic movement of the rusted mental machinery.

After the silent moment: "Myrtle Hazard, Myrtle Hazard,—yes, yes, to be sure! The old Withers stock,—good constitutions,—a little apt to be nervous, one or two of 'em. I've given 'em a good deal of valerian and assafoetida,—not quite so much since the new blood came in. There is n't the change in folks people think,—same thing over and over again. I've seen six fingers on a child that had a six-fingered great-uncle, and I've seen that child's grandchild born with six fingers. Does this girl like to have her own way pretty well, like the rest of the family?"

"A little too well, I suspect, father. You will remember all about her when you come to see her and talk with her. She would like to talk with you, and her aunt wants to see you too; they think there's nobody like the 'old Doctor'."

He was not too old to be pleased with this preference, and said he was willing to go when they were ready. With no small labor of preparation he was at last got to the house, and crept with his son's aid up to the little room over the water, where his patient was still lying.

There was a little too much color in Myrtle's cheeks and a glistening lustre in her eyes that told of unnatural excitement. It gave a strange brilliancy to her beauty, and might have deceived an unpractised observer. The old man looked at her long and curiously, his imperfect sight excusing the closeness of his scrutiny.

He laid his trembling hand upon her forehead, and then felt her pulse with his shriveled fingers. He asked her various questions about herself, which she answered with a tone not quite so calm as natural, but willingly and intelligently. They thought she seemed to the old Doctor to be doing very well, for he spoke cheerfully to her, and treated her in such a way that neither she nor any of those around her could be alarmed. The younger physician was disposed to think she was only suffering from temporary excitement, and that it would soon pass off.

They left the room to talk it over.

"It does not amount to much, I suppose, father," said Dr. Fordyce Hurlbut. "You made the pulse about ninety,—a little hard,—did n't you; as I did? Rest, and low diet for a day or two, and all will be right, won't it?"

Was it the feeling of sympathy, or was it the pride of superior sagacity, that changed the look of the old man's wrinkled features? "Not so fast,—not so fast, Fordyce," he said. "I've seen that look on another face of the same blood,—it 's a great many years ago, and she was dead before you were born, my boy,—but I've seen that look, and it meant

trouble then, and I'm afraid it means trouble now. I see some danger of a brain fever.
And if she doesn't have that, then look out

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for some hysteric fits that will make mischief. Take that handkerchief off of her head, and cut her hair close, and keep her temples cool, and put some drawing plasters to the soles of her feet, and give her some of my pilulae compositae, and follow them with some doses of sal polychrest. I've been through it all before—in that same house. Live folks are only dead folks warmed over. I can see 'em all in that girl's face, Handsome Judith, to begin with. And that queer woman, the Deacon's mother,—there 's where she gets that hysteric look. Yes, and the black-eyed woman with the Indian blood in her,—look out for that,—look out for that. And—and—my son, do you remember Major Gideon Withers?" [Ob. 1780.]

"Why no, father, I can't say that I remember the Major; but I know the picture very well. Does she remind you of him?"

He paused again, until the thoughts came slowly straggling, up to the point where the question left him. He shook his head solemnly, and turned his dim eyes on his son's face.

Four generations—four generations; man and wife,—yes, five generations, for old Selah Withers took me in his arms when I was a child, and called me 'little gal,' for I was in girl's clothes,—five generations before this Hazard child I 've looked on with these old eyes. And it seems to me that I can see something of almost every one of 'em in this child's face, it's the forehead of this one, and it's the eyes of that one, and it's that other's mouth, and the look that I remember in another, and when she speaks, why, I've heard that same voice before—yes, yes as long ago as when I was first married; for I remember Rachel used to think I praised Handsome Judith's voice more than it deserved,—and her face too, for that matter. You remember Rachel, my first wife,—don't you, Fordyce?"

"No, father, I don't remember her, but I know her portrait." (As he was the son of the old Doctor's second wife, he could hardly be expected to remember her predecessor.)

The old Doctor's sagacity was not in fault about the somewhat threatening aspect of Myrtle's condition. His directions were followed implicitly; for with the exception of the fact of sluggishness rather than loss of memory, and of that confusion of dates which in slighter degrees is often felt as early as middle-life, and increases in most persons from year to year, his mind was still penetrating, and his advice almost as trustworthy, as in his best days.

It was very fortunate that the old Doctor ordered Myrtle's hair to be cut, and Miss Silence took the scissors and trimmed it at once. So, whenever she got well and was seen about, there would be no mystery about the loss of her locks,—the Doctor had been afraid of brain fever, and ordered them to cut her hair.

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Many things are uncertain in this world, and among them the effect of a large proportion of the remedies prescribed by physicians. Whether it was by the use of the means ordered by the old Doctor, or by the efforts of nature, or by both together, at any rate the first danger was averted, and the immediate risk from brain fever soon passed over. But the impression upon her mind and body had been too profound to be dissipated by a few days' rest. The hysteric stage which the wise old man had apprehended began to manifest itself by its usual signs, if anything can be called usual in a condition the natural order of which is disorder and anomaly.

And now the reader, if such there be, who believes in the absolute independence and self-determination of the will, and the consequent total responsibility of every human being for every irregular nervous action and ill-governed muscular contraction, may as well lay down this narrative, or he may lose all faith in poor Myrtle Hazard, and all patience with the writer who tells her story.

The mental excitement so long sustained, followed by a violent shock to the system, coming just at the period of rapid development, gave rise to that morbid condition, accompanied with a series of mental and moral perversions, which in ignorant ages and communities is attributed to the influence of evil spirits, but for the better-instructed is the malady which they call hysteria. Few households have ripened a growth of womanhood without witnessing some of its manifestations, and its phenomena are largely traded in by scientific pretenders and religious fanatics. Into this cloud, with all its risks and all its humiliations, Myrtle Hazard is about to enter. Will she pass through it unharmed, or wander from her path, and fall over one of those fearful precipices which lie before her?

After the ancient physician had settled the general plan of treatment, its details and practical application were left to the care of his son. Dr. Fordyce Hurlbut was a widower, not yet forty years old, a man of a fine masculine aspect and a vigorous nature. He was a favorite with his female patients,—perhaps many of them would have said because he was good-looking and pleasant in his manners, but some thought in virtue of a special magnetic power to which certain temperaments were impressible, though there was no explaining it. But he himself never claimed any such personal gift, and never attempted any of the exploits which some thought were in his power if he chose to exercise his faculty in that direction. This girl was, as it were, a child to him, for he had seen her grow up from infancy, and had often held her on his knee in her early years. The first thing he did was to get her a nurse, for he saw that neither of the two women about her exercised a quieting influence upon her nerves. So he got her old friend, Nurse Byloe, to come and take care of her.

The old nurse looked calm enough at one or two of his first visits, but the next morning her face showed that something had been going wrong. "Well, what has been the trouble, Nurse?" the Doctor said, as soon as he could get her out of the room.

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"She's been attackted, Doctor, sence you been here, dreadful. It's them high stirricks, Doctor, 'n' I never see 'em higher, nor more of 'em. Laughin' as ef she would bust. Cryin' as ef she'd lost all her friends, 'n' was a follerin' their corpse to their graves. And spassums,—sech spassums! And ketchin' at her throat, 'n' sayin' there was a great ball a risin' into it from her stommick. One time she had a kind o' lockjaw like. And one time she stretched herself out 'n' laid jest as stiff as ef she was dead. And she says now that her head feels as ef a nail had been driv' into it,—into the left temple, she says, and that's what makes her look so distressed now."

The Doctor came once more to her bedside. He saw that her forehead was contracted, and that she was evidently suffering from severe pain somewhere.

"Where is your uneasiness, Myrtle?" he asked.

She moved her hand very slowly, and pressed it on her left temple. He laid his hand upon the same spot, kept it there a moment, and then removed it. She took it gently with her own, and placed it on her temple again. As he sat watching her, he saw that her features were growing easier, and in a short time her deep, even breathing showed that she was asleep.

"It beats all," the old nurse said. "Why, she's been a complainin' ever sence daylight, and she hain't slep' not a wink afore, sence twelve o'clock las' night! It's jes' like them magnetizers,—I never heerd you was one o' them kind, Dr. Hurlbut."

"I can't say how it is, Nurse,—I have heard people say my hand was magnetic, but I never thought of its quieting her so quickly. No sleep since twelve o'clock last night, you say?"

"Not a wink, 'n' actin' as ef she was possessed a good deal o' the time. You read your Bible, Doctor, don't you? You're pious? Do you remember about that woman in Scriptur' out of whom the Lord cast seven devils? Well, I should ha' thought there was seventy devils in that gal last night, from the way she carr'd on. And now she lays there jest as peaceful as a new-born babe,—that is, accordin' to the sayin' about 'em; for as to peaceful new-born babes, I never see one that come t' anything, that did n't screech as ef the haouse was afire 'n' it wanted to call all the fire-ingines within ten mild."

The Doctor smiled, but he became thoughtful in a moment. Did he possess a hitherto unexercised personal power, which put the key of this young girl's nervous system into his hands? The remarkable tranquillizing effect of the contact of his hand with her forehead looked like an immediate physical action.

It might have been a mere coincidence, however. He would not form an opinion until his next visit.



At that next visit it did seem as if some of Nurse Byloe's seventy devils had possession of the girl. All the strange spasmodic movements, the chokings, the odd sounds, the wild talk, the laughing and crying, were in full blast. All the remedies which had been ordered seemed to have been of no avail. The Doctor could hardly refuse trying his quasi magnetic influence, and placed the tips of his fingers on her forehead. The result was the same that had followed the similar proceeding the day before,—the storm was soon calmed, and after a little time she fell into a quiet sleep, as in the first instance.

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Here was an awkward affair for the physician, to be sure! He held this power in his hands, which no remedy and no other person seemed to possess. How long would he be chained to her; and she to him, and what would be the consequence of the mysterious relation which must necessarily spring up between a man like him, in the plenitude of vital force, of strongly attractive personality, and a young girl organized for victory over the calmest blood and the steadiest resistance?

Every day after this made matters worse. There was something almost partaking of the miraculous in the influence he was acquiring over her. His "Peace, be still!" was obeyed by the stormy elements of this young soul, as if it had been a supernatural command. How could he resist the dictate of humanity which called him to make his visits more frequent, that her intervals of rest might be more numerous? How could he refuse to sit at her bedside for a while in the evening, that she might be quieted, instead of beginning the night sleepless and agitated?

The Doctor was a man of refined feeling as well as of principle, and he had besides a sacred memory in the deepest heart of his affections. It was the common belief in the village that he would never marry again, but that his first and only love was buried in the grave of the wife of his youth. It did not easily occur to him to suspect himself of any weakness with regard to this patient of his, little more than a child in years. It did not at once suggest itself to him that she, in her strange, excited condition, might fasten her wandering thoughts upon him, too far removed by his age, as it seemed, to strike the fancy of a young girl under almost any conceivable conditions.

Thus it was that many of those beautiful summer evenings found him sitting by his patient, the river rippling and singing beneath them, the moon shining over them, sweet odors from the thickets on the banks of the stream stealing in on the soft air that came through the open window, and every time they were thus together, the subtle influence which bound them to each other bringing them more and more into inexplicable harmonies and almost spiritual identity.

But all this did not hinder the development of new and strange conditions in Myrtle Hazard. Her will was losing its power. "I cannot help it"—the hysteric motto—was her constant reply. It is not pleasant to confess the truth, but she was rapidly undergoing a singular change of her moral nature. She had been a truthful child. If she had kept her secret about what she had found in the garret, she thought she was exercising her rights, and she had never been obliged to tell any lies about it.

But now she seemed to have lost the healthy instincts for veracity and honesty. She feigned all sorts of odd symptoms, and showed a wonderful degree of cunning in giving an appearance of truth to them. It became next to impossible to tell what was real and what was simulated. At one time she could not be touched ever so lightly without shrinking and crying out. At another time she would squint, and again she would be half

paralyzed for a time. She would pretend to fast for days, living on food she had concealed and took secretly in the night.

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The nurse was getting worn out. Kitty Fagan would have had the priest come to the house and sprinkle it with holy water. The two women were beginning to get nervous themselves. The Rev. Mr. Stoker said in confidence to Miss Silence, that there was reason to fear she might have been given over for a time to the buffetings of Satan, and that perhaps his (Mr. Stoker's) personal attentions might be useful in that case. And so it appeared that the "young doctor" was the only being left with whom she had any complete relations and absolute sympathy. She had become so passive in his hands that it seemed as if her only healthy life was, as it were, transmitted through him, and that she depended on the transfer of his nervous power, as the plant upon the light for its essential living processes.

The two young men who had met in so unexpected a manner on board the ship *Swordfish* had been reasonably discreet in relating their adventures. Myrtle Hazard may or may not have had the plan they attributed to her; however that was, they had looked rather foolish when they met, and had not thought it worth while to be very communicative about the matter when they returned. It had at least given them a chance to become a little better acquainted with each other, and it was an opportunity which the elder and more artful of the two meant to turn to advantage.

Of all Myrtle's few friends only one was in the habit of seeing her often during this period, namely, Olive Eveleth, a girl so quiet and sensible that she, if anybody, could be trusted with her. But Myrtle's whole character seemed to have changed, and Olive soon found that she was in some mystic way absorbed into another nature. Except when the physician's will was exerted upon her, she was drifting without any self-directing power, and then any one of those manifold impulses which would in some former ages have been counted as separate manifestations on the part of distinct demoniacal beings might take possession of her. Olive did little, therefore, but visit Myrtle from time to time to learn if any change had occurred in her condition. All this she reported to Cyprian, and all this was got out of him by Mr. William Murray Bradshaw.

That gentleman was far from being pleased with the look of things as they were represented. What if the Doctor, who was after all in the prime of life and younger-looking than some who were born half a dozen years after him, should get a hold on this young woman,—girl now, if you will, but in a very few years certain to come within possible, nay, not very improbable, matrimonial range of him? That would be pleasant, wouldn't it? It had happened sometimes, as he knew, that these magnetizing tricks had led to infatuation on the part of the subjects of the wonderful influence. So he concluded to be ill and consult the younger Dr. Hurlbut, and incidentally find out how the land lay.

The next question was, what to be ill with. Some not ungentlemanly malady, not hereditary, not incurable, not requiring any obvious change in habits of life. Dyspepsia would answer the purpose well enough: so Mr. Murray Bradshaw picked up a medical book and read ten minutes or more for that complaint. At the end of this time he was an

accomplished dyspeptic; for lawyers half learn a thing quicker than the members of any other profession.

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He presented himself with a somewhat forlorn countenance to Dr. Fordyce Hurlbut, as suffering from some of the less formidable symptoms of that affection. He got into a very interesting conversation with him, especially about some nervous feelings which had accompanied his attack of indigestion. Thence to nervous complaints in general. Thence to the case of the young lady at The Poplars whom he was attending. The Doctor talked with a certain reserve, as became his professional relations with his patient; but it was plain enough that, if this kind of intercourse went on much longer, it would be liable to end in some emotional explosion or other, and there was no saying how it would at last turn out.

Murray Bradshaw was afraid to meddle directly. He knew something more about the history of Myrtle's adventure than any of his neighbors, and, among other things, that it had given Mr. Byles Gridley a peculiar interest in her, of which he could take advantage. He therefore artfully hinted his fears to the old man, and left his hint to work itself out.

However suspicious Master Gridley was of him and his motives, he thought it worth while to call up at The Poplars and inquire for himself of the nurse what was this new relation growing up between the physician and his young patient.

She imparted her opinion to him in a private conversation with great freedom. "Sech doin's! sech doin's! The gal's jest as much bewitched as ever any gal was sence them that was possessed in Scriptur'. And every day it 's wus and wus. Ef that Doctor don't stop comin', she won't breathe without his helpin' her to before long. And, Mr. Gridley, I don't like to say so,—but I can't help thinkin' he's gettin' a little bewitched too. I don't believe he means to take no kind of advantage of her; but, Mr. Gridley, you've seen them millers fly round and round a candle, and you know how it ginerally comes out. Men is men and gals is gals. I would n't trust no man, not ef he was much under a hundred year old,—and as for a gal—!"

"Mulieri ne mortuae quidem credendum est," said Mr. Gridley. "You wouldn't trust a woman even if she was dead, hey, Nurse?"

"Not till she was buried, 'n' the grass growin' a foot high over her," said Nurse Byloe, "unless I'd know'd her sence she was a baby. I've know'd this one sence she was two or three year old; but this gal ain't Myrtle Hazard no longer,—she's bewitched into somethin' different. I'll tell ye what, Mr. Gridley; you get old Dr. Hurlbut to come and see her once a day for a week, and get the young doctor to stay away. I'll resk it. She 'll have some dreadful tantrums at fust, but she'll come to it in two or three, days."

Master Byles Gridley groaned in spirit. He had come to this village to end his days in peace, and here he was just going to make a martyr of himself for the sake of a young person to whom he was under no obligation, except that he had saved her from the consequences of her own foolish act, at the expense of a great overturn of all his

domestic habits. There was no help for it. The nurse was right, and he must perform the disagreeable duty of letting the Doctor know that he was getting into a track which might very probably lead to mischief, and that he must back out as fast as he could.

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At 2 P. M. Gifted Hopkins presented the following note at the Doctor's door:

"Mr. Byles Gridley would be much obliged to Dr. Fordyce Hurlbut if he would call at his study this evening."

"Odd, is n't it, father, the old man's asking me to come and see him? Those old stub-twist constitutions never want patching."

"Old man! old man! Who's that you call old,—not Byles Gridley, hey? Old! old! Sixty year, more or less! How old was Floyer when he died, Fordyce? Ninety-odd, was n't it? Had the asthma though, or he'd have lived to be as old as Dr. Holyoke,—a hundred year and over. That's old. But men live to be a good deal more than that sometimes. What does Byles Gridley want of you, did you say?"

"I'm sure I can't tell, father; I'll go and find out." So he went over to Mrs. Hopkins's in the evening, and was shown up into the study.

Master Gridley treated the Doctor to a cup of such tea as bachelors sometimes keep hid away in mysterious caddies. He presently began asking certain questions about the grand climacteric, which eventful period of life he was fast approaching. Then he discoursed of medicine, ancient and modern, tasking the Doctor's knowledge not a little, and evincing a good deal of acquaintance with old doctrines and authors.

He had a few curious old medical books in his library, which he said he should like to show Dr. Hurlbut.

"There, now! What do you say to this copy of Joannes de Ketam, Venice, 1522? Look at these woodcuts,—the first anatomical pictures ever printed, Doctor, unless these others of Jacobus Berengarius are older! See this scene of the plague-patient, the doctor smelling at his pouncet-box, the old nurse standing square at the bedside, the young nurse with the bowl, holding back and turning her head away, and the old burial-hag behind her, shoving her forward, a very curious book, Doctor, and has the first phrenological picture in it ever made. Take a look, too, at my Vesalius,—not the Leyden edition, Doctor, but the one with the grand old original figures,—so good that they laid them to Titian. And look here, Doctor, I could n't help getting this great folio Albinus, 1747,—and the nineteenth century can't touch it, Doctor,—can't touch it for completeness and magnificence, so all the learned professors tell me! Brave old fellows, Doctor, and put their lives into their books as you gentlemen don't pretend to do nowadays. And good old fellows, Doctor,—high-minded, scrupulous, conscientious, punctilious,—remembered their duties to man and to woman, and felt all the responsibilities of their confidential relation to families. Did you ever read the oldest of medical documents,—the Oath of Hippocrates?"

The Doctor thought he had read it, but did not remember much about it.

“It ’s worth reading, Doctor,—it’s worth remembering; and, old as it is, it is just as good to-day as it was when it was laid down as a rule of conduct four hundred years before the Sermon on the Mount was delivered. Let me read it to you, Dr. Hurlbut.”

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There was something in Master Gridley's look that made the Doctor feel a little nervous; he did not know just what was coming.

Master Gridley took out his great Hippocrates, the edition of Foesius, and opened to the place. He turned so as to face the Doctor, and read the famous Oath aloud, Englishing it as he went along. When he came to these words which follow, he pronounced them very slowly and with special emphasis.

"My life shall be pure and holy."

"Into whatever house I enter, I will go for the good of the patient:

"I will abstain from inflicting any voluntary injury, and from leading away any, whether man or woman, bond or free."

The Doctor changed color as he listened, and the moisture broke out on his forehead.

Master Gridley saw it, and followed up his advantage. "Dr. Fordyce Hurlbut, are you not in danger of violating the sanctities of your honorable calling, and leading astray a young person committed to your sacred keeping?"

While saying these words, Master Gridley looked full upon him, with a face so charged with grave meaning, so impressed with the gravity of his warning accents, that the Doctor felt as if he were before some dread tribunal, and remained silent. He was a member of the Rev. Mr. Stoker's church, and the words he had just listened to were those of a sinful old heathen who had never heard a sermon in his life; but they stung him, for all that, as the parable of the prophet stung the royal transgressor.

He spoke at length, for the plain honest words had touched the right spring of consciousness at the right moment; not too early, for he now saw whither he was tending,—not too late, for he was not yet in the inner spirals of the passion which whirls men and women to their doom in ever-narrowing coils, that will not unwind at the command of God or man.

He spoke as one who is humbled by self-accusation, yet in a manly way, as became his honorable and truthful character.

"Master Gridley," he said, "I stand convicted before you. I know too well what you are thinking of. It is true, I cannot continue my attendance on Myrtle—on Miss Hazard, for you mean her—without peril to both of us. She is not herself. God forbid that I should cease to be myself! I have been thinking of a summer tour, and I will at once set out upon it, and leave this patient in my father's hands. I think he will find strength to visit her under the circumstances."

The Doctor went off the next morning without saying a word to Myrtle Hazard, and his father made the customary visit in his place.

That night the spirit tare her, as may well be supposed, and so the second night. But there was no help for it: her doctor was gone, and the old physician, with great effort, came instead, sat by her, spoke kindly to her, left wise directions to her attendants, and above all assured them that, if they would have a little patience, they would see all this storm blow over.

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On the third night after his visit, the spirit rent her sore, and came out of her, or, in the phrase of to-day, she had a fierce paroxysm, after which the violence of the conflict ceased, and she might be called convalescent so far as that was concerned.

But all this series of nervous disturbances left her in a very impressible and excitable condition. This was just the state to invite the spiritual manipulations of one of those theological practitioners who consider that the treatment of all morbid states of mind short of raving madness belongs to them and not to the doctors. This same condition was equally favorable for the operations of any professional experimenter who would use the flame of religious excitement to light the torch of an earthly passion. So many fingers that begin on the black keys stray to the white ones before the tune is played out!

If Myrtle Hazard was in charge of any angelic guardian, the time was at hand when she would need all celestial influences; for the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker was about to take a deep interest in her spiritual welfare.'

CHAPTER XII.

Skirmishing.

"So the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker has called upon you, Susan Posey, has he? And wants you to come and talk religion with him in his study, Susan Posey, does he? Religion is a good thing, my dear, the best thing in the world, and never better than when we are young, and no young people need it more than young girls. There are temptations to all, and to them as often as to any, Susan Posey. And temptations come to them in places where they don't look for them, and from persons they never thought of as tempters. So I am very glad to have your thoughts called to the subject of religion. 'Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth.'

"But Susan Posey, my dear, I think you had better not break in upon the pious meditations of the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker in his private study. A monk's cell and a minister's library are hardly the places for young ladies. They distract the attention of these good men from their devotions and their sermons. If you think you must go, you had better take Mrs. Hopkins with you. She likes religious conversation, and it will do her good too, and save a great deal of time for the minister, conversing with two at once. She is of discreet age, and will tell you when it is time to come away,—you might stay too long, you know. I've known young persons stay a good deal too long at these interviews,—a great deal too long, Susan Posey!"

Such was the fatherly counsel of Master Byles Gridley.



Susan was not very quick of apprehension, but she could not help seeing the justice of Master Gridley's remark, that for a young person to go and break in on the hours that a minister requires for his studies, without being accompanied by a mature friend who would remind her when it was time to go, would be taking an unfair advantage of his kindness in asking her to call upon him. She promised, therefore, that she would never go without having Mrs. Hopkins as her companion, and with this assurance her old friend rested satisfied.

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It is altogether likely that he had some deeper reason for his advice than those with which he satisfied the simple nature of Susan Posey. Of that it will be easier to judge after a glance at the conditions and character of the minister and his household.

The Rev. Mr. Stoker had, in addition to the personal advantages already alluded to, some other qualities which might prove attractive to many women. He had, in particular, that art of sliding into easy intimacy with them which implies some knowledge of the female nature, and, above all, confidence in one's powers. There was little doubt, the gossips maintained, that many of the younger women of his parish would have been willing, in certain contingencies, to lift for him that other end of his yoke under which poor Mrs. Stoker was fainting, unequal to the burden.

That lady must have been some years older than her husband,—how many we need not inquire too curiously,—but in vitality she had long passed the prime in which he was still flourishing. She had borne him five children, and cried her eyes hollow over the graves of three of them. Household cares had dragged upon her; the routine of village life wearied her; the parishioners expected too much of her as the minister's wife; she had wanted more fresh air and more cheerful companionship; and her thoughts had fed too much on death and sin,—good bitter tonics to increase the appetite for virtue, but not good as food and drink for the spirit.

But there was another grief which lay hidden far beneath these obvious depressing influences. She felt that she was no longer to her husband what she had been to him, and felt it with something of self-reproach,—which was a wrong to herself, for she had been a true and tender wife. Deeper than all the rest was still another feeling, which had hardly risen into the region of inwardly articulated thought, but lay unshaped beneath all the syllabled trains of sleeping or waking consciousness.

The minister was often consulted by his parishioners upon spiritual matters, and was in the habit of receiving in his study visitors who came with such intent. Sometimes it was old weak-eyed Deacon Rumrill, in great iron-bowed spectacles, with hanging nether lip and tremulous voice, who had got his brain onto a muddle about the beast with two horns, or the woman that fled into the wilderness, or other points not settled to his mind in Scott's Commentary. The minister was always very busy at such times, and made short work of his deacon's doubts. Or it might be that an ancient woman, a mother or a grandmother in Israel, came with her questions and her perplexities to her pastor; and it was pretty certain that just at that moment he was very deep in his next sermon, or had a pressing visit to make.

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But it would also happen occasionally that one of the tenderer ewe-lambs of the flock needed comfort from the presence of the shepherd. Poor Mrs. Stoker noticed, or thought she noticed, that the good man had more leisure for the youthful and blooming sister than for the more discreet and venerable matron or spinster. The sitting was apt to be longer; and the worthy pastor would often linger awhile about the door, to speed the parting guest, perhaps, but a little too much after the fashion of young people who are not displeased with each other, and who often find it as hard to cross a threshold single as a witch finds it to get over a running stream. More than once, the pallid, faded wife had made an errand to the study, and, after a keen look at the bright young cheeks, flushed with the excitement of intimate spiritual communion, had gone back to her chamber with her hand pressed against her heart, and the bitterness of death in her soul.

The end of all these bodily and mental trials was, that the minister's wife had fallen into a state of habitual invalidism, such as only women, who feel all the nerves which in men are as insensible as telegraph-wires, can experience.

The doctor did not know what to make of her case,—whether she would live or die,—whether she would languish for years, or, all at once, roused by some strong impression, or in obedience to some unexplained movement of the vital forces, take up her bed and walk. For her bed had become her home, where she lived as if it belonged to her organism. There she lay, a not displeasing invalid to contemplate, always looking resigned, patient, serene, except when the one deeper grief was stirred, always arrayed with simple neatness, and surrounded with little tokens that showed the constant presence with her of tasteful and thoughtful affection. She did not know, nobody could know, how steadily, how silently all this artificial life was draining the veins and blanching the cheek of her daughter Bathsheba, one of the everyday, air-breathing angels without nimbus or aureole who belong to every story which lets us into a few households, as much as the stars and the flowers belong to everybody's verses.

Bathsheba's devotion to her mother brought its own reward, but it was not in the shape of outward commendation. Some of the more censorious members of her father's congregation were severe in their remarks upon her absorption in the supreme object of her care. It seems that this had prevented her from attending to other duties which they considered more imperative. They did n't see why she shouldn't keep a Sabbath-school as well as the rest, and as to her not comin' to meetin' three times on Sabbath day like other folks, they couldn't account for it, except because she calculated that she could get along without the means of grace, bein' a minister's daughter. Some went so far as to doubt if she had ever experienced religion, for all she was a professor. There

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was a good many indulged a false hope. To this, others objected her life of utter self-denial and entire surrender to her duties towards her mother as some evidence of Christian character. But old Deacon Rumrill put down that heresy by showing conclusively from Scott's Commentary on Romans xi. 1-6, that this was altogether against her chance of being called, and that the better her disposition to perform good works, the more unlikely she was to be the subject of saving grace. Some of these severe critics were good people enough themselves, but they loved active work and stirring companionship, and would have found their real cross if they had been called to sit at an invalid's bedside.

As for the Rev. Mr. Stoker, his duties did not allow him to give so much time to his suffering wife as his feelings would undoubtedly have prompted. He therefore relinquished the care of her (with great reluctance we may naturally suppose) to Bathsheba, who had inherited not only her mother's youthful smile, but that self-forgetfulness which, born with some of God's creatures, is, if not "grace," at least a manifestation of native depravity which might well be mistaken for it.

The intimacy of mother and daughter was complete, except on a single point. There was one subject on which no word ever passed between them. The excuse of duties to others was by a tacit understanding a mantle to cover all short-comings in the way of attention from the husband and father, and no word ever passed between them implying a suspicion of the loyalty of his affections. Bathsheba came at last so to fill with her tenderness the space left empty in the neglected heart, that her mother only spoke her habitual feeling when she said, "I should think you were in love with me, my darling, if you were not my daughter."

This was a dangerous state of things for the minister. Strange suggestions and unsafe speculations began to mingle with his dreams and reveries. The thought once admitted that another's life is becoming superfluous and a burden, feeds like a ravenous vulture on the soul. Woe to the man or woman whose days are passed in watching the hour-glass through which the sands run too slowly for longings that are like a skulking procession of bloodless murders! Without affirming such horrors of the Rev. Mr. Stoker, it would not be libellous to say that his fancy was tampering with future possibilities, as it constantly happens with those who are getting themselves into training for some act of folly, or some crime, it may be, which will in its own time evolve itself as an idea in the consciousness, and by and by ripen into fact.

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It must not be taken for granted that he was actually on the road to some fearful deed, or that he was an utterly lost soul. He was ready to yield to temptation if it came in his way; he would even court it, but he did not shape out any plan very definitely in his mind, as a more desperate sinner would have done. He liked the pleasurable excitement of emotional relations with his pretty lambs, and enjoyed it under the name of religious communion. There is a border land where one can stand on the territory of legitimate instincts and affections, and yet be so near, the pleasant garden of the Adversary, that his dangerous fruits and flowers are within easy reach. Once tasted, the next step is like to be the scaling of the wall. The Rev. Mr. Stoker was very fond of this border land. His imagination was wandering over it too often when his pen was travelling almost of itself along the weary parallels of the page before him. All at once a blinding flash would come over him the lines of his sermon would run together, the fresh manuscript would shrivel like a dead leaf, and the rows of hard-hearted theology on the shelves before him, and the broken-backed Concordance, and the Holy Book itself, would fade away as he gave himself up to the enchantment of his delirious dream.

The reader will probably consider it a discreet arrangement that pretty Susan Posey should seek her pastor in grave company. Mrs. Hopkins willingly consented to the arrangement which had been proposed, and agreed to go with the young lady on her visit to the Rev. Mr. Stoker's study. They were both arrayed in their field-day splendors on this occasion. Susan was lovely in her light curls and blue ribbons, and the becoming dress which could not help betraying the modestly emphasized crescendos and gently graded diminuendos of her figure. She was as round as if she had been turned in a lathe, and as delicately finished as if she had been modelled for a Flora. She had naturally an airy toss of the head and a springy movement of the joints, such as some girls study in the glass (and make dreadful work of it), so that she danced all over without knowing it, like a little lively bobolink on a bulrush. In short, she looked fit to spoil a homily for Saint Anthony himself.

Mrs. Hopkins was not less perfect in her somewhat different style. She might be called impressive and imposing in her grand-costume, which she wore for this visit. It was a black silk dress, with a crape shawl, a firmly defensive bonnet, and an alpaca umbrella with a stern-looking and decided knob presiding as its handle. The dried-leaf rustle of her silk dress was suggestive of the ripe autumn of life, bringing with it those golden fruits of wisdom and experience which the grave teachers of mankind so justly prefer to the idle blossoms of adolescence.

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It is needless to say that the visit was conducted with the most perfect propriety in all respects. Mrs. Hopkins was disposed to take upon herself a large share of the conversation. The minister, on the other hand, would have devoted himself more particularly to Miss Susan, but, with a very natural make-believe obtuseness, the good woman drew his fire so constantly that few of his remarks, and hardly any of his insinuating looks, reached the tender object at which they were aimed. It is probable that his features or tones betrayed some impatience at having thus been foiled of his purpose, for Mrs. Hopkins thought he looked all the time as if he wanted to get rid of her. The three parted, therefore, not in the best humor all round. Mrs. Hopkins declared she'd see the minister in Jericho before she'd fix herself up as if she was goin' to a weddin' to go and see him again. Why, he did n't make any more of her than if she'd been a tabby-cat. She believed some of these ministers thought women's souls dried up like peas in a pod by the time they was forty year old; anyhow, they did n't seem to care any great about 'em, except while they was green and tender. It was all Miss Se-usan, Miss Se-usan, Miss Se-usan, my dear! but as for her, she might jest as well have gone with her apron on, for any notice he took of her. She did n't care, she was n't goin' to be left out when there was talkin' goin' on, anyhow.

Susan Posey, on her part, said she did n't like him a bit. He looked so sweet at her, and held his head on one side,—law! just as if he had been a young beau! And,—don't tell, —but he whispered that he wished the next time I came I wouldn't bring that Hopkins woman!

It would not be fair to repeat what the minister said to himself; but we may own as much as this, that, if worthy Mrs. Hopkins had heard it, she would have treated him to a string of adjectives which would have greatly enlarged his conceptions of the female vocabulary.

CHAPTER XIII.

Battle.

In tracing the history of a human soul through its commonplace nervous perturbations, still more through its spiritual humiliations, there is danger that we shall feel a certain contempt for the subject of such weakness. It is easy to laugh at the erring impulses of a young girl; but you who remember when _____, only fifteen years old, untouched by passion, unsullied in name, was found in the shallow brook where she had sternly and surely sought her death,—(too true! too true!—ejus animae Jesu miserere!—but a generation has passed since then,)—will not smile so scornfully.

Myrtle Hazard no longer required the physician's visits, but her mind was very far from being poised in the just balance of its faculties. She was of a good natural constitution and a fine temperament; but she had been overwrought by all that she had passed

through, and, though happening to have been born in another land, she was of American descent. Now, it has long been noticed that there is something in the influences, climatic or other, here prevailing, which predisposes to morbid religious excitement. The graver reader will not object to seeing the exact statement of a competent witness belonging to a by-gone century, confirmed as it is by all that we see about us.

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"There is no Experienced Minister of the Gospel who hath not in the Cases of Tempted Souls often had this Experience, that the ill Cases of their distempered Bodies are the frequent Occasion and Original of their Temptations." "The Vitiated Humours in many Persons, yield the Steams whereinto Satan does insinuate himself, till he has gained a sort of Possession in them, or at least an Opportunity to shoot into the Mind as many Fiery Darts as may cause a sad Life unto them; yea, 't is well if Self-Murder be not the sad end into which these hurried. People are thus precipitated. New England, a country where Splenetic Maladies are prevailing and pernicious, perhaps above any other, hath afforded Numberless Instances, of even pious People, who have contracted these Melancholy Indispositions which have unhinged them from all Service or Comfort; yea, not a few Persons have been hurried thereby to lay Violent Hands upon themselves at the last. These are among the unsearchable Judgments of God!"

Such are the words of the Rev. Cotton Mather.

The minister had hardly recovered from his vexatious defeat in the skirmish where the Widow Hopkins was his principal opponent, when he received a note from Miss Silence Withers, which promised another and more important field of conflict. It contained a request that he would visit Myrtle Hazard, who seemed to be in a very excitable and impressible condition, and who might perhaps be easily brought under those influences which she had resisted from her early years, through inborn perversity of character.

When the Rev. Mr. Stoker received this note, he turned very pale,—which was a bad sign. Then he drew a long breath or two, and presently a flush tingled up to his cheek, where it remained a fixed burning glow. This may have been from the deep interest he felt in Myrtle's spiritual welfare; but he had often been sent for by aged sinners in more immediate peril, apparently, without any such disturbance of the circulation.

To know whether a minister, young or still in flower; is in safe or dangerous paths, there are two psychometers, a comparison between which will give as infallible a return as the dry and wet bulbs of the ingenious "Hygrodeik." The first is the black broadcloth forming the knees of his pantaloons; the second, the patch of carpet before his mirror. If the first is unworn and the second is frayed and threadbare, pray for him. If the first is worn and shiny, while the second keeps its pattern and texture, get him to pray for you.

The Rev. Mr. Stoker should have gone down on his knees then and there, and sought fervently for the grace which he was like to need in the dangerous path just opening before him. He did not do this; but he stood up before his looking-glass and parted his hair as carefully as if he had been separating the saints of his congregation from the sinners, to send the list to the statistical columns of a religious newspaper.

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He selected a professional neckcloth, as spotlessly pure as if it had been washed in innocence, and adjusted it in a tie which was like the white rose of Sharon. Myrtle Hazard was, he thought, on the whole, the handsomest girl he had ever seen; Susan Posey was to her as a buttercup from the meadow is to a tiger-lily. He, knew the nature of the nervous disturbances through which she had been passing, and that she must be in a singularly impressible condition. He felt sure that he could establish intimate spiritual relations with her by drawing out her repressed sympathies, by feeding the fires of her religious imagination, by exercising all those lesser arts of fascination which are so familiar to the Don Giovannis, and not always unknown to the San Giovannis.

As for the hard doctrines which he used to produce sensations with in the pulpit, it would have been a great pity to worry so lovely a girl, in such a nervous state, with them. He remembered a savory text about being made all things to all men, which would bear application particularly well to the case of this young woman. He knew how to weaken his divinity, on occasion, as well as an old housewife to weaken her tea, lest it should keep people awake.

The Rev. Mr. Stoker was a man of emotions. He loved to feel his heart beat; he loved all the forms of non-alcoholic drunkenness, which are so much better than the vinous, because they taste themselves so keenly, whereas the other (according to the statement of experts who are familiar with its curious phenomena) has a certain sense of unreality connected with it. He delighted in the reflex stimulus of the excitement he produced in others by working on their feelings. A powerful preacher is open to the same sense of enjoyment—an awful, tremulous, goose-flesh sort of state, but still enjoyment—that a great tragedian feels when he curdles the blood of his audience.

Mr. Stoker was noted for the vividness of his descriptions of the future which was in store for the great bulk of his fellow-townsmen and fellow-worlds-men. He had three sermons on this subject, known to all the country round as the sweating sermon, the fainting sermon, and the convulsion-fit sermon, from the various effects said to have been produced by them when delivered before large audiences. It might be supposed that his reputation as a terrorist would have interfered with his attempts to ingratiate himself with his young favorites. But the tragedian who is fearful as Richard or as Iago finds that no hindrance to his success in the part of Romeo. Indeed, women rather take to terrible people; prize-fighters, pirates, highwaymen, rebel generals, Grand Turks, and Bluebeards generally have a fascination for the sex; your virgin has a natural instinct to saddle your lion. The fact, therefore, that the young girl had sat under his tremendous pulpittings, through the sweating sermon, the fainting sermon, and the convulsion-fit sermon, did not secure her against the influence of his milder approaches.

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Myrtle was naturally surprised at receiving a visit from him; but she was in just that unbalanced state in which almost any impression is welcome. He showed so much interest, first in her health, then in her thoughts and feelings, always following her lead in the conversation, that before he left her she felt as if she had made a great discovery; namely, that this man, so formidable behind the guns of his wooden bastion, was a most tenderhearted and sympathizing person when he came out of it unarmed. How delightful he was as he sat talking in the twilight in low and tender tones, with respectful pauses of listening, in which he looked as if he too had just made a discovery,—of an angel, to wit, to whom he could not help unbosoming his tenderest emotions, as to a being from another sphere!

It was a new experience to Myrtle. She was all ready for the spiritual manipulations of an expert. The excitability which had been showing itself in spasms and strange paroxysms had been transferred to those nervous centres, whatever they may be, cerebral or ganglionic, which are concerned in the emotional movements of the religious nature. It was taking her at an unfair disadvantage, no doubt. In the old communion, some priest might have wrought upon her while in this condition, and we might have had at this very moment among us another Saint Theresa or Jacqueline Pascal. She found but a dangerous substitute in the spiritual companionship of a saint like the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker.

People think the confessional is unknown in our Protestant churches. It is a great mistake. The principal change is, that there is no screen between the penitent and the father confessor. The minister knew his rights, and very soon asserted them. He gave aunt Silence to understand that he could talk more at ease if he and his young disciple were left alone together. Cynthia Badlam did not like this arrangement. She was afraid to speak about it; but she glared at them aslant, with the look of a biting horse when his eyes follow one sideways until they are all white but one little vicious spark of pupil.

It was not very long before the Rev. Mr. Stoker had established pretty intimate relations with the household at The Poplars. He had reason to think, he assured Miss Silence, that Myrtle was in a state of mind which promised a complete transformation of her character. He used the phrases of his sect, of course, in talking with the elderly lady; but the language which he employed with the young girl was free from those mechanical expressions which would have been like to offend or disgust her.

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As to his rougher formulae, he knew better than to apply them to a creature of her fine texture. If he had been disposed to do so, her simple questions and answers to his inquiries would have made it difficult. But it was in her bright and beautiful eyes, in her handsome features, and her winning voice, that he found his chief obstacle. How could he look upon her face in its loveliness, and talk to her as if she must be under the wrath and curse of God for the mere fact of her existence? It seemed more natural and it certainly was more entertaining, to question her in such a way as to find out what kind of theology had grown up in her mind as the result of her training in the complex scheme of his doctrinal school. And as he knew that the merest child, so soon as it begins to think at all, works out for itself something like a theory of human nature, he pretty soon began sounding Myrtle's thoughts on this matter.

What was her own idea; he would be pleased to know, about her natural condition as one born of a sinful race, and her inherited liabilities on that account?

Myrtle smiled like a little heathen, as she was, according to the standard of her earlier teachings. That kind of talk used to worry her when she was a child, sometimes. Yes, she remembered its coming back to her in a dream she had, when—when—(She did not finish her sentence.) Did he think she hated every kind of goodness and loved every kind of evil? Did he think she was hateful to the Being who made her?

The minister looked straight into the bright, brave, tender eyes, and answered, "Nothing in heaven or on earth could help loving you, Myrtle!"

Pretty well for a beginning!

Myrtle saw nothing but pious fervor in this florid sentiment. But as she was honest and clear-sighted, she could not accept a statement which seemed so plainly in contradiction with his common teachings, without bringing his flattering assertion to the test of another question.

Did he suppose, she asked, that any persons could be Christians, who could not tell the day or the year of their change from children of darkness to children of light.

The shrewd clergyman, whose creed could be lax enough on occasion, had provided himself with authorities of all kinds to meet these awkward questions in casuistical divinity. He had hunted up recipes for spiritual neuralgia, spasms, indigestion, psora, hypochondriasis, just as doctors do for their bodily counterparts.

To be sure they could. Why, what did the great Richard Baxter say in his book on Infant Baptism? That at a meeting of many eminent Christians, some of them very famous ministers, when it was desired that every one should give an account of the time and manner of his conversion, there was but one of them all could do it. And as for himself, Mr. Baxter said, he could not remember the day or the year when he began to be

sincere, as he called it. Why, did n't President Wheelock say to a young man who consulted him, that some persons might be true Christians without suspecting it?

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All this was so very different from the uncompromising way in which religious doctrines used to be presented to the young girl from the pulpit, that it naturally opened her heart and warmed her affections. Remember, if she needs excuse, that the defeated instincts of a strong nature were rushing in upon her, clamorous for their rights, and that she was not yet mature enough to understand and manage them. The paths of love and religion are at the fork of a road which every maiden travels. If some young hand does not open the turnpike gate of the first, she is pretty sure to try the other, which has no toll-bar. It is also very commonly noticed that these two paths, after diverging awhile, run into each other. True love leads many wandering souls into the better way. Nor is it rare to see those who started in company for the gates of pearl seated together on the banks that border the avenue to that other portal, gathering the roses for which it is so famous.

It was with the most curious interest that the minister listened to the various heresies into which her reflections had led her. Somehow or other they did not sound so dangerous coming from her lips as when they were uttered by the coarser people of the less rigorous denominations, or preached in the sermons of heretical clergymen. He found it impossible to think of her in connection with those denunciations of sinners for which his discourses had been noted. Some of the sharp old church-members began to complain that his exhortations were losing their pungency. The truth was, he was preaching for Myrtle Hazard. He was getting bewitched and driven beside himself by the intoxication of his relations with her.

All this time she was utterly unconscious of any charm that she was exercising, or of being herself subject to any personal fascination. She loved to read the books of ecstatic contemplation which he furnished her. She loved to sing the languishing hymns which he selected for her. She loved to listen to his devotional rhapsodies, hardly knowing sometimes whether she were in the body, or out of the body, while he lifted her upon the wings of his passion-kindled rhetoric. The time came when she had learned to listen for his step, when her eyes glistened at meeting him, when the words he uttered were treasured as from something more than a common mortal, and the book he had touched was like a saintly relic. It never suggested itself to her for an instant that this was anything more than such a friendship as Mercy might have cultivated with Great-Heart. She gave her confidence simply because she was very young and innocent. The green tendrils of the growing vine must wind round something.

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The seasons had been changing their scenery while the events we have told were occurring, and the loveliest days of autumn were now shining. To those who know the "Indian summer" of our Northern States, it is needless to describe the influence it exerts on the senses and the soul. The stillness of the landscape in that beautiful time is as if the planet were sleeping, like a top, before it begins to rock with the storms of autumn. All natures seem to find themselves more truly in its light; love grows more tender, religion more spiritual, memory sees farther back into the past, grief revisits its mossy marbles, the poet harvests the ripe thoughts which he will tie in sheaves of verses by his winter fireside.

The minister had got into the way of taking frequent walks with Myrtle, whose health had seemed to require the open air, and who was fast regaining her natural look. Under the canopy of the scarlet, orange, and crimson leaved maples, of the purple and violet clad oaks, of the birches in their robes of sunshine, and the beeches in their clinging drapery of sober brown, they walked together while he discoursed of the joys of heaven, the sweet communion of kindred souls, the ineffable bliss of a world where love would be immortal and beauty should never know decay. And while she listened, the strange light of the leaves irradiated the youthful figure of Myrtle, as when the stained window let in its colors on Madeline, the rose-bloom and the amethyst and the glory.

"Yes! we shall be angels together," exclaimed the Rev. Mr. Stoker. "Our souls were made for immortal union. I know it; I feel it in every throb of my heart. Even in this world you are as an angel to me, lifting me into the heaven where I shall meet you again, or it will not be heaven. Oh, if on earth our communion could have been such as it must be hereafter! O Myrtle, Myrtle!"

He stretched out his hands as if to clasp hers between them in the rapture of his devotion. Was it the light reflected from the glossy leaves of the poison sumach which overhung the path that made his cheek look so pale? Was he going to kneel to her?

Myrtle turned her dark eyes on him with a simple wonder that saw an excess of saintly ardor in these demonstrations, and drew back from it.

"I think of heaven always as the place where I shall meet my mother," she said calmly.

These words recalled the man to himself for a moment and he was silent. Presently he seated himself on a stone. His lips were tremulous as he said, in a low tone, "Sit down by me, Myrtle."

"No," she answered, with something which chilled him in her voice, "we will not stay here any longer; it is time to go home."



“Full time!” muttered Cynthia Badlam, whose watchful eyes had been upon them, peering through a screen of yellow leaves, that turned her face pale as if with deadly passion.

CHAPTER XIV.

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Flank movement.

Miss Cynthia Badlam was in the habit of occasionally visiting the Widow Hopkins. Some said but then people will talk, especially in the country, where they have not much else to do, except in haying-time. She had always known the widow, long before Mr. Gridley came there to board, or any other special event happened in her family. No matter what people said.

Miss Badlam called to see Mrs. Hopkins, then, and the two had a long talk together, of which only a portion is on record. Here are such fragments as have been preserved.

"What would I do about it? Why, I'd put a stop to such carry'n's on, mighty quick, if I had to tie the girl to the bedpost, and have a bulldog that would take the seat out of any pair of black pantaloons that come within forty rods of her,—that's what I'd do about it! He undertook to be mighty sweet with our Susan one while, but ever since he's been talkin' religion with Myrtle Hazard he's let us alone. Do as I did when he asked our Susan to come to his study,—stick close to your girl and you 'll put a stop to all this business. He won't make love to two at once, unless they 're both pretty young, I 'll warrant. Follow her round, Miss Cynthy, and keep your eyes on her."

"I have watched her like a cat, Mrs. Hopkins, but I can't follow her everywhere,—she won't stand what Susan Posey 'll stand. There's no use our talking to her,—we 've done with that at our house. You never know what that Indian blood of hers will make her do. She's too high-strung for us to bit and bridle. I don't want to see her name in the paper again, alongside of that" (She did not finish the sentence.) "I'd rather have her fished dead out of the river, or find her where she found her uncle Malachi!"

"You don't think, Miss Cynthy, that the man means to inveigle the girl with the notion of marryin' her by and by, after poor Mrs. Stoker's dead and gone?"

"The Lord in heaven forbid!" exclaimed Miss Cynthia, throwing up her hands. "A child of fifteen years old, if she is a woman to look at!"

"It's too bad,—it's too bad to think of, Miss Cynthy; and there's that poor woman dyin' by inches, and Miss Bathsbeby settin' with her day and night, she has n't got a bit of her father in her, it's all her mother,—and that man, instead of bein' with her to comfort her as any man ought to be with his wife, in sickness and in health, that's what he promised. I 'm sure when my poor husband was sick.... To think of that man goin' about to talk religion to all the prettiest girls he can find in the parish, and his wife at home like to leave him so soon,—it's a shame,—so it is, come now! Miss Cynthy, there's one of the best men and one of the learnedest men that ever lived that's a real friend of Myrtle Hazard, and a better friend to her than she knows of,—for ever since he brought her home, he feels jest like a father to her,—and that man is Mr. Gridley,

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that lives in this house. It's him I 'll speak to about the minister's carry'in's on. He knows about his talking sweet to our Susan, and he'll put things to rights! He's a master hand when he does once take hold of anything, I tell you that! Jest get him to shet up them books of his, and take hold of anybody's troubles, and you'll see how he 'll straighten 'em out."

There was a pattering of little feet on the stairs, and the two small twins, "Sossy" and "Minthy," in the home dialect, came hand in hand into the room, Miss Susan leaving them at the threshold, not wishing to interrupt the two ladies, and being much interested also in listening to Mr. Gifted Hopkins, who was reading some of his last poems to her, with great delight to both of them.

The good woman rose to take them from Susan, and guide their uncertain steps. "My babies, I call 'em, Miss Cynthy. Ain't they nice children? Come to go to bed, little dears? Only a few minutes, Miss Cynthy."

She took them into the bedroom on the same floor, where they slept, and, leaving the door open, began undressing them. Cynthia turned her rocking-chair round so as to face the open door. She looked on while the little creatures were being undressed; she heard the few words they lisped as their infant prayer, she saw them laid in their beds, and heard their pretty good-night.

A lone woman to whom all the sweet cares of maternity have been denied cannot look upon a sight like this without feeling the void in her own heart where a mother's affection should have nestled. Cynthia sat perfectly still, without rocking, and watched kind Mrs. Hopkins at her quasi parental task. A tear stole down her rigid face as she saw the rounded limbs of the children bared in their white beauty, and their little heads laid on the pillow. They were sleeping quietly when Mrs. Hopkins left the room for a moment on some errand of her own. Cynthia rose softly from her chair, stole swiftly to the bedside, and printed a long, burning kiss on each of their foreheads.

When Mrs. Hopkins came back, she found the maiden lady sitting in her place just as she left her, but rocking in her chair and sobbing as one in sudden pangs of grief.

"It is a great trouble, Miss Cynthy," she said,—“a great trouble to have such a child as Myrtle to think of and to care for. If she was like our Susan Posey, now!—but we must do the best we can; and if Mr. Gridley once sets himself to it, you may depend upon it he 'll make it all come right. I wouldn't take on about it if I was you. You let me speak to our Mr. Gridley. We all have our troubles. It is n't everybody that can ride to heaven in a C-spring shay, as my poor husband used to say; and life 's a road that 's got a good many thank-you-ma'ams to go bumpin' over, says he."

Miss Badlam acquiesced in the philosophical reflections of the late Mr. Ammi Hopkins, and left it to his widow to carry out her own suggestion in reference to consulting Master Gridley. The good woman took the first opportunity she had to introduce the matter, a little diffusely, as is often the way of widows who keep boarders.

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"There's something going on I don't like, Mr. Gridley. They tell me that Minister Stoker is following round after Myrtle Hazard, talking religion at her jest about the same way he'd have liked to with our Susan, I calculate. If he wants to talk religion to me or Silence Withers,—well, no, I don't feel sure about Silence,—she ain't as young as she used to be, but then ag'in she ain't so fur gone as some, and she's got money,—but if he wants to talk religion with me, he may come and welcome. But as for Myrtle Hazard, she's been sick, and it's left her a little flighty by what they say, and to have a minister round her all the time ravin' about the next world as if he had a latch-key to the front door of it, is no way to make her come to herself again. I 've seen more than one young girl sent off to the asylum by that sort of work, when, if I'd only had 'em, I'd have made 'em sweep the stairs, and mix the puddin's, and tend the babies, and milk the cow, and keep 'em too busy all day to be thinkin' about themselves, and have 'em dress up nice evenin's and see some young folks and have a good time, and go to meetin' Sundays, and then have done with the minister, unless it was old Father Pemberton. He knows forty times as much about heaven as that Stoker man does, or ever 's like to,—why don't they run after him, I should like to know? Ministers are men, come now; and I don't want to say anything against women, Mr. Gridley, but women are women, that's the fact of it, and half of 'em are hystericky when they're young; and I've heard old Dr. Hurlbut say many a time that he had to lay in an extra stock of valerian and assafaetida whenever there was a young minister round,—for there's plenty of religious ravin', says he, that's nothin' but hysterics."

[Mr. Fronde thinks that was the trouble with Bloody Queen Mary, but the old physician did not get the idea from him.]

"Well, and what do you propose to do about the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker and his young proselyte, Miss Myrtle Hazard?" said Mr. Gridley, when Mrs. Hopkins at last gave him a chance to speak.

"Mr. Gridley,"—Mrs. Hopkins looked full upon him as she spoke,—“people used to say that you was a good man and a great man and one of the learnedest men alive, but that you didn't know much nor care for much except books. I know you used to live pretty much to yourself when you first came to board in this house. But you've been very good to my son; ...and if Gifted lives till you ...till you are in ...your grave, ...he will write a poem—I know he will—that will tell your goodness to babes unborn."

[Here Master Gridley groaned, and repeated to himself silently,

"Scindentur vestes gemmae frangentur et aurum,
Carmina quam tribuent fama perennis erit."

All this inwardly, and without interrupting the worthy woman's talk.]

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"And if ever Gifted makes a book,—don't say anything about it, Mr. Gridley, for goodness' sake, for he wouldn't have anybody know it, only I can't help thinking that some time or other he will print a book,—and if he does, I know whose name he'll put at the head of it,—'Dedicated to B. G., with the gratitude and respect—' There, now, I had n't any business to say a word about it, and it's only jest in case he does, you know. I'm sure you deserve it all. You've helped him with the best of advice. And you've been kind to me when I was in trouble. And you've been like a grandfather" [Master Gridley winced,—why could n't the woman have said father?—that grand struck his ear like a spade going into the gravel] "to those babes, poor little souls! left on my door-step like a couple of breakfast rolls,—only you know it's the baker left then. I believe in you, Mr. Gridley, as I believe in my Maker and in Father Pemberton,—but, poor man, he's old, and you won't be old these twenty years yet."

[Master Gridley shook his head as if to say that was n't so, but felt comforted and refreshed.]

"You've got to help Myrtle Hazard again. You brought her home when she come so nigh drowning. You got the old doctor to go and see her when she come so nigh being bewitched with the magnetism and nonsense, whatever they call it, and the young doctor was so nigh bein' crazy, too. I know, for Nurse Byloe told me all about it. And now Myrtle's gettin' run away with by that pesky Minister Stoker. Cynthy Badlam was here yesterday crying and sobbing as if her heart would break about it. For my part, I did n't think Cynthy cared so much for the girl as all that, but I saw her takin' on dreadfully with my own eyes. That man's like a hen-hawk among the chickens, first he picks up one, and then he picks up another. I should like to know if nobody but young folks has souls to be saved, and specially young women!"

"Tell me all you know about Myrtle Hazard and Joseph Bellamy Stoker," said Master Gridley.

Thereupon that good lady related all that Miss Badlam had imparted to her, of which the reader knows the worst, being the interview of which the keen spinster had been a witness, having followed them for the express purpose of knowing, in her own phrase, what the minister was up to.

It is not to be supposed that Myrtle had forgotten the discreet kindness of Master Gridley in bringing her back and making the best of her adventure. He, on his part, had acquired a kind of right to consider himself her adviser, and had begun to take a pleasure in the thought that he, the worn-out and useless old pedant, as he had been in the way of considering himself, might perhaps do something even more important than his previous achievement to save this young girl from the dangers that surrounded her. He loved his classics and his old books; he took an interest, too, in the newspapers and periodicals that brought the

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fermenting thought and the electric life of the great world into his lonely study; but these things just about him were getting strong hold on him, and most of all the fortunes of this beautiful young woman. How strange! For a whole generation he had lived in no nearer relation to his fellow-creatures than that of a half-fossilized teacher; and all at once he found himself face to face with the very most intense form of life, the counsellor of threatened innocence, the champion of imperilled loveliness. What business was it of his? growled the lower nature, of which he had said in "Thoughts on the Universe,"—"Every man leads or is led by something that goes on four legs."

Then he remembered the grand line of the African freedman, that makes all human interests everybody's business, and had a sudden sense of dilatation and evolution, as it were, in all his dimensions, as if he were a head taller, and a foot bigger round the chest, and took in an extra gallon of air at every breath, Then—you who have written a book that holds your heart-leaves between its pages will understand the movement—he took down "Thoughts on the Universe" for a refreshing draught from his own wellspring. He opened as chance ordered it, and his eyes fell on the following passage:

"The true American formula was well phrased by the late Samuel Patch, the Western Empedocles, 'Some things can be done as well as others.' A homely utterance, but it has virtue to overthrow all dynasties and hierarchies. These were all built up on the Old-World dogma that some things can *not* be done as well as others."

"There, now!" he said, talking to himself in his usual way, "is n't that good? It always seems to me that I find something to the point when I open that book. 'Some things can be done as well as others,' can they? Suppose I should try what I can do by visiting Miss Myrtle Hazard? I think I may say I am old and incombustible enough to be trusted. She does not seem to be a safe neighbor to very inflammable bodies?"

Myrtle was sitting in the room long known as the Study, or the Library, when Master Byles Gridley called at The Poplars to see her. Miss Cynthia, who received him, led him to this apartment and left him alone with Myrtle. She welcomed him very cordially, but colored as she did so,—his visit was a surprise. She was at work on a piece of embroidery. Her first instinctive movement was to thrust it out of sight with the thought of concealment; but she checked this, and before the blush of detection had reached her cheek, the blush of ingenuous shame for her weakness had caught and passed it, and was in full possession. She sat with her worsted pattern held bravely in sight, and her cheek as bright as its liveliest crimson.

"Miss Cynthia has let me in upon you," he said, "or I should not have ventured to disturb you in this way. A work of art, is it, Miss Myrtle Hazard?"

"Only a pair of slippers, Mr. Gridley,—for my pastor."

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"Oh! oh! That is well. A good old man. I have a great regard for the Rev. Eliphalet Pemberton. I wish all ministers were as good and simple and pure-hearted as the Rev. Eliphalet Pemberton. And I wish all the young people thought as much about their elders as you do, Miss Myrtle Hazard. We that are old love little acts of kindness. You gave me more pleasure than you knew of, my dear, when you worked that handsome cushion for me. The old minister will be greatly pleased,—poor old man!"

"But, Mr. Gridley, I must not let you think these are for Father Pemberton. They are for —Mr. Stoker."

"The Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker! He is not an old man, the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker. He may perhaps be a widower before a great while.—Does he know that you are working those slippers for him?"

"Dear me! no, Mr. Gridley. I meant them for a surprise to him. He has been so kind to me, and understands me so much better than I thought anybody did. He is so different from what I thought; he makes religion so perfectly simple, it seems as if everybody would agree with him, if they could only hear him talk."

"Greatly interested in the souls of his people, is n't he?"

"Too much, almost, I am afraid. He says he has been too hard in his sermons sometimes, but it was for fear he should not impress his hearers enough."

"Don't you think he worries himself about the souls of young women rather more than for those of old ones, Myrtle?"

There was something in the tone of this question that helped its slightly sarcastic expression. Myrtle's jealousy for her minister's sincerity was roused.

"How can you ask that, Mr. Gridley? I am sure I wish you or anybody could have heard him talk as I have. There is no age in souls, he says; and I am sure that it would do anybody good to hear him, old or young."

"No age in souls,—no age in souls. Souls of forty as young as souls of fifteen; that 's it." Master Gridley did not say this loud. But he did speak as follows: "I am glad to hear what you say of the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker's love of being useful to people of all ages. You have had comfort in his companionship, and there are others who might be very glad to profit by it. I know a very excellent person who has had trials, and is greatly interested in religious conversation. Do you think he would be willing to let this friend of mine share in the privileges of spiritual intercourse which you enjoy?"

There was but one answer possible. Of course he would.



"I hope it is so, my dear young lady. But listen to me one moment. I love you, my dear child, do you know, as if I were your own—grandfather." (There was moral heroism in that word.) "I love you as if you were of my own blood; and so long as you trust me, and suffer me, I mean to keep watch against all dangers that threaten you in mind, body, or estate. You may wonder at me, you may sometimes doubt me; but until you say you distrust me, when any trouble comes near you, you will find me there. Now, my dear child, you ought to know that the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker has the reputation of being too fond of prosecuting religious inquiries with young and handsome women."



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Myrtle's eyes fell,—a new suspicion seemed to have suggested itself.

"He wanted to get up a spiritual intimacy with our Susan Posey,—a very pretty girl, as you know."

Myrtle tossed her head almost imperceptibly, and bit her lip.

"I suppose there are a dozen young people that have been talked about with him. He preaches cruel sermons in his pulpit, cruel as death, and cold-blooded enough to freeze any mother's blood if nature did not tell her he lied, and then smooths it all over with the first good-looking young woman he can get to listen to him."

Myrtle had dropped the slipper she was working on.

"Tell me, my dear, would you be willing to give up meeting this man alone, and gratify my friend, and avoid all occasion of reproach?"

"Of course I would," said Myrtle, her eyes flashing, for her doubts, her shame, her pride, were all excited. "Who is your friend, Mr. Gridley?"

"An excellent woman,—Mrs. Hopkins. You know her, Gifted Hopkins's mother, with whom I am residing. Shall the minister be given to understand that you will see him hereafter in her company?"

Myrtle came pretty near a turn of her old nervous perturbations. "As you say," she answered. "Is there nobody that I can trust, or is everybody hunting me like a bird?" She hid her face in her hands.

"You can trust me, my dear," said Byles Gridley. "Take your needle, my child, and work at your pattern,—it will come out a rose by and by. Life is like that, Myrtle, one stitch at a time, taken patiently, and the pattern will come out all right like the embroidery. You can trust me. Good-by, my dear."

"Let her finish the slippers," the old man said to himself as he trudged home, "and make 'em big enough for Father Pemberton. He shall have his feet in 'em yet, or my name is n't Byles Gridley!"

CHAPTER XV.

Arrival of reinforcements.

Myrtle Hazard waited until the steps of Master Byles Gridley had ceased to be heard, as he walked in his emphatic way through the long entry of the old mansion. Then she went to her little chamber and sat down in a sort of revery. She could not doubt his

sincerity, and there was something in her own consciousness which responded to the suspicions he had expressed with regard to the questionable impulses of the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker.

It is not in the words that others say to us, but in those other words which these make us say to ourselves, that we find our gravest lessons and our sharpest rebukes. The hint another gives us finds whole trains of thought which have been getting themselves ready to be shaped in inwardly articulated words, and only awaited the touch of a burning syllable, as the mottoes of a pyrotechnist only wait for a spark to become letters of fire.

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The artist who takes your photograph must carry you with him into his “developing” room, and he will give you a more exact illustration of the truth just mentioned. There is nothing to be seen on the glass just taken from the camera. But there is a potential, though invisible, picture hid in the creamy film which covers it. Watch him as he pours a wash over it, and you will see that miracle wrought which is at once a surprise and a charm,—the sudden appearance of your own features where a moment before was a blank without a vestige of intelligence or beauty.

In some such way the grave warnings of Master Byles Gridley had called up a fully shaped, but hitherto unworded, train of thought in the consciousness of Myrtle Hazard. It was not merely their significance, it was mainly because they were spoken at the fitting time. If they had been uttered a few weeks earlier, when Myrtle was taking the first stitch on the embroidered slippers, they would have been as useless as the artist’s developing solution on a plate which had never been exposed in the camera. But she had been of late in training for her lesson in ways that neither she nor anybody else dreamed of. The reader who has shrugged his (or her) shoulders over the last illustration will perhaps hear this one which follows more cheerfully. The physician in the Arabian Nights made his patient play at ball with a bat, the hollow handle of which contained drugs of marvellous efficacy. Whether it was the drugs that made the sick man get well, or the exercise, is not of so much consequence as the fact that he did at any rate get well.

These walks which Myrtle had taken with her reverend counsellor had given her a new taste for the open air, which was what she needed just now more than confessions of faith or spiritual paroxysms. And so it happened that, while he had been stimulating all those imaginative and emotional elements of her nature which responded to the keys he loved to play upon, the restoring influences of the sweet autumnal air, the mellow sunshine, the soothing aspects of the woods and fields and sky, had been quietly doing their work. The color was fast returning to her cheek, and the discords of her feelings and her thoughts gradually resolving themselves into the harmonious and cheerful rhythms of bodily and mental health. It needed but the timely word from the fitting lips to change the whole programme of her daily mode of being. The word had been spoken. She saw its truth; but how hard it is to tear away a cherished illusion, to cast out an unworthy intimate! How hard for any!—but for a girl so young, and who had as yet found so little to love and trust, how cruelly hard!

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She sat, still and stony, like an Egyptian statue. Her eyes were fixed on a vacant chair opposite the one on which she was sitting. It was a very singular and fantastic old chair, said to have been brought over by the first emigrant of her race. The legs and arms were curiously turned in spirals, the suggestions of which were half pleasing and half repulsive. Instead of the claw-feet common in furniture of a later date, each of its legs rested on a misshapen reptile, which it seemed to flatten by its weight, as if it were squeezing the breath out of the ugly creature. Over this chair hung the portrait of her beautiful ancestress, her neck and arms, the specialty of her beauty, bare, except for a bracelet on the left wrist, and her shapely figure set off by the ample folds of a rich crimson brocade. Over Myrtle's bed hung that other portrait, which was to her almost as the pictures of the Mater Dolorosa to trustful souls of the Roman faith. She had longed for these pictures while she was in her strange hysteric condition, and they had been hung up in her chamber.

The night was far gone, as she knew by the declining of the constellations which she had seen shining brightly almost overhead in the early evening, when she awoke, and found herself still sitting in the very attitude in which she was sitting hours before. Her lamp had burned out, and the starlight but dimly illuminated her chamber. She started to find herself sitting there, chilled and stiffened by long remaining in one posture; and as her consciousness returned, a great fear seized her, and she sprang for a match. It broke with the quick movement she made to kindle it, and she snatched another as if a fiend were after her. It flashed and went out. Oh the terror, the terror! The darkness seemed alive with fearful presences. The lurid glare of her own eyeballs flashed backwards into her brain. She tried one more match; it kindled as it should, and she lighted another lamp. Her first impulse was to assure herself that nothing was changed in the familiar objects around her. She held the lamp up to the picture of Judith Pride. The beauty looked at her, it seemed as if with a kind of lofty recognition in her eyes; but there she was, as always. She turned the light upon the pale face of the martyr-portrait. It looked troubled and faded, as it seemed to Myrtle, but still it was the same face she remembered from her childhood. Then she threw the light on the old chair, and, shuddering, caught up a shawl and flung it over the spiral-wound arms and legs, and the flattened reptiles on which it stood.

In those dead hours of the night which had passed over her sitting there, still and stony, as it should seem, she had had strange visitors. Two women had been with her, as real as any that breathed the breath of life,—so it appeared to her,—yet both had long been what is called, in our poor language, dead. One came in all the glory of her ripened beauty, bare-necked, bare-armed, full dressed by nature in that splendid animal equipment which in its day had captivated the eyes of all the lusty lovers of complete muliebrity. The other,—how delicate, how translucent, how aerial she seemed! yet real and true to the lineaments of her whom the young girl looked upon as her hereditary protector.

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The beautiful woman turned, and, with a face full of loathing and scorn, pointed to one of the reptiles beneath the feet of the chair. And while Myrtle's eyes followed hers, the flattened and half-crushed creature seemed to swell and spread like his relative in the old fable, like the black dog in Faust, until he became of tenfold size, and at last of colossal proportions. And, fearful to relate, the batrachian features humanized themselves as the monster grew, and, shaping themselves more and more into a remembered similitude, Myrtle saw in them a hideous likeness of—No! no! it was too horrible, was that the face which had been so close to hers but yesterday? were those the lips, the breath from which had stirred her growing curls as he leaned over her while they read together some passionate stanza from a hymn that was as much like a love-song as it dared to be in godly company? A shadow of disgust—the natural repugnance of loveliness for deformity—ran all through her, and she shrieked, as she thought, and threw herself at the feet of that other figure. She felt herself lifted from the floor, and then a cold thin hand seemed to take hers. The warm life went out of her, and she was to herself as a dimly conscious shadow that glided with passive acquiescence wherever it was led. Presently she found herself in a half-lighted apartment, where there were books on the shelves around, and a desk with loose manuscripts lying on it, and a little mirror with a worn bit of carpet before it. And while she looked, a great serpent writhed in through the half-open door, and made the circuit of the room, laying one huge ring all round it, and then, going round again, laid another ring over the first, and so on until he was wound all round the room like the spiral of a mighty cable, leaving a hollow in the centre; and then the serpent seemed to arch his neck in the air, and bring his head close down to Myrtle's face; and the features were not those of a serpent, but of a man, and it hissed out the words she had read that very day in a little note which said, "Come to my study to-morrow, and we will read hymns together."

Again she was back in her little chamber, she did not know how, and the two women were looking into her eyes with strange meaning in their own. Something in them seemed to plead with her to yield to their influence, and her choice wavered which of them to follow, for each would have led her her own way,—whither she knew not. It was the strife of her "Vision," only in another form,—the contest of two lives her blood inherited for the mastery of her soul. The might of beauty conquered. Myrtle resigned herself to the guidance of the lovely phantom, which seemed so much fuller of the unextinguished fire of life, and so like herself as she would grow to be when noon should have ripened her into maturity.

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Doors opened softly before them; they climbed stairs, and threaded corridors, and penetrated crypts, strange yet familiar to her eyes, which seemed to her as if they could see, as it were, in darkness. Then came a confused sense of eager search for something that she knew was hidden, whether in the cleft of a rock, or under the boards of a floor, or in some hiding-place among the skeleton rafters, or in a forgotten drawer, or in a heap of rubbish, she could not tell; but somewhere there was something which she was to find, and which, once found, was to be her talisman. She was in the midst of this eager search when she awoke.

The impression was left so strongly on her mind that with all her fears she could not resist the desire to make an effort to find what meaning there was in this frightfully real dream. Her courage came back as her senses assured her that all around her was natural, as when she left it. She determined to follow the lead of the strange hint her nightmare had given her.

In one of the upper chambers of the old mansion there stood a tall, upright desk of the ancient pattern, with folding doors above and large drawers below. "That desk is yours, Myrtle," her uncle Malachi had once said to her; "and there is a trick or two about it that it will pay you to study." Many a time Myrtle had puzzled herself about the mystery of the old desk. All the little drawers, of which there were a considerable number, she had pulled out, and every crevice, as she thought, she had carefully examined. She determined to make one more trial. It was the dead of the night, and this was a fearful old place to be wandering about; but she was possessed with an urgent feeling which would not let her wait until daylight.

She stole like a ghost from her chamber. She glided along the narrow entries as she had seemed to move in her dream. She opened the folding doors of the great upright desk. She had always before examined it by daylight, and though she had so often pulled all the little drawers out, she had never thoroughly explored the recesses which received them. But in her new-born passion of search, she held her light so as to illuminate all these deeper spaces. At once she thought she saw the marks of pressure with a finger. She pressed her own finger on this place, and, as it yielded with a slight click, a small mahogany pilaster sprang forward, revealing its well-kept secret that it was the mask of a tall, deep, very narrow drawer. There was something heavy in it, and, as Myrtle turned it over, a golden bracelet fell into her hand. She recognized it at once as that which had been long ago the ornament of the fair woman whose portrait hung in her chamber. She clasped it upon her wrist, and from that moment she felt as if she were the captive of the lovely phantom who had been with her in her dream.

"The old man walked last night, God save us!" said Kitty Fagan to Biddy Finnegan, the day after Myrtle's nightmare and her curious discovery.

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CHAPTER XVI.

Victory.

It seems probable enough that Myrtle's whole spiritual adventure was an unconscious dramatization of a few simple facts which her imagination tangled together into a kind of vital coherence. The philosopher who goes to the bottom of things will remark that all the elements of her fantastic melodrama had been furnished her while waking. Master Byles Gridley's penetrating and stinging caution was the text, and the grotesque carvings and the portraits furnished the "properties" with which her own mind had wrought up this scenic show.

The philosopher who goes to the bottom of things might not find it so easy to account for the change which came over Myrtle Hazard from the hour when she clasped the bracelet of Judith Pride upon her wrist. She felt a sudden loathing of the man whom she had idealized as a saint. A young girl's caprice? Possibly. A return of the natural instincts of girlhood with returning health? Perhaps so. An impression produced by her dream? An effect of an influx from another sphere of being? The working of Master Byles Gridley's emphatic warning? The magic of her new talisman?

We may safely leave these questions for the present. As we have to tell, not what Myrtle Hazard ought to have done, and why she should have done it, but what she did do, our task is a simpler one than it would be to lay bare all the springs of her action. Until this period, she had hardly thought of herself as a born beauty. The flatteries she had received from time to time were like the chips and splinters under the green wood, when the chill women pretended to make a fire in the best parlor at The Poplars, which had a way of burning themselves out, hardly warming, much less kindling, the fore-stick and the back-log.

Myrtle had a tinge of what some call superstition, and she began to look upon her strange acquisition as a kind of amulet. Its suggestions betrayed themselves in one of her first movements. Nothing could be soberer than the cut of the dresses which the propriety of the severe household had established as the rule of her costume. But the girl was no sooner out of bed than a passion came over her to see herself in that less jealous arrangement of drapery which the Beauty of the last century had insisted on as presenting her most fittingly to the artist. She rolled up the sleeves of her dress, she turned down its prim collar and neck, and glanced from her glass to the portrait, from the portrait back to the glass. Myrtle was not blind nor dull, though young, and in many things untaught. She did not say in so many words, "I too am a beauty," but she could not help seeing that she had many of the attractions of feature and form which had made the original of the picture before her famous. The same stately carriage of the head, the same full-rounded neck, the same more than hinted outlines of figure, the same finely shaped arms and hands, and something very like the same features startled

her by their identity in the permanent image of the canvas and the fleeting one of the mirror.

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The world was hers then,—for she had not read romances and love-letters without finding that beauty governs it in all times and places. Who was this middle-aged minister that had been hanging round her and talking to her about heaven, when there was not a single joy of earth that she had as yet tasted? A man that had been saying all his fine things to Miss Susan Posey, too, had he, before he had bestowed his attentions on her? And to a dozen other girls, too, nobody knows who!

The revulsion was a very sadden one. Such changes of feeling are apt to be sudden in young people whose nerves have been tampered with, and Myrtle was not of a temperament or an age to act with much deliberation where a pique came in to the aid of a resolve. Master Gridley guessed sagaciously what would be the effect of his revelation, when he told her of the particular attentions the minister had paid to pretty Susan Posey and various other young women.

The Rev. Mr. Stoker had parted his hair wonderfully that morning, and made himself as captivating as his professional costume allowed. He had drawn down the shades of his windows so as to let in that subdued light which is merciful to crow's-feet and similar embellishments, and wheeled up his sofa so that two could sit at the table and read from the same book.

At eleven o'clock he was pacing the room with a certain feverish impatience, casting a glance now and then at the mirror as he passed it. At last the bell rang, and he himself went to answer it, his heart throbbing with expectation of meeting his lovely visitor.

Myrtle Hazard appeared by an envoy extraordinary, the bearer of sealed despatches. Mistress Kitty Fagan was the young lady's substitute, and she delivered into the hand of the astonished clergyman the following missive:

To the Rev. Mr. Stoker.

Reverend Sir,—I shall not come to your study this day. I do not feel that I have any more need of religious counsel at this time, and I am told by a friend that there are others who will be glad to hear you talk on this subject. I hear that Mrs. Hopkins is interested in religious subjects, and would have been glad to see you in my company. As I cannot go with her, perhaps Miss Susan Posey will take my place. I thank you for all the good things you have said to me, and that you have given me so much of your company. I hope we shall sing hymns together in heaven some time, if we are good enough, but I want to wait for that awhile, for I do not feel quite ready. I am not going to see you any more alone, reverend sir. I think this is best, and I have good advice. I want to see more of young people of my own age, and I have a friend, Mr. Gridley, who I think is older than you are, that takes an interest in me; and as you have many others that you must be interested in, he can take the place of a father better than you can do. I return to you the hymn-book, I read one of those you marked, and do not care to read any more.



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Respectfully yours,

Myrtle hazard.

The Rev. Mr. Stoker uttered a cry of rage as he finished this awkwardly written, but tolerably intelligible letter. What could he do about it? It would hardly do to stab Myrtle Hazard, and shoot Byles Gridley, and strangle Mrs. Hopkins, every one of which homicides he felt at the moment that he could have committed. And here he was in a frantic paroxysm, and the next day was Sunday, and his morning's discourse was unwritten. His savage mediaeval theology came to his relief, and he clutched out of a heap of yellow manuscripts his well-worn "convulsion-fit" sermon. He preached it the next day as if it did his heart good, but Myrtle Hazard did not hear it, for she had gone to St. Bartholomew's with Olive Eveleth.

CHAPTER XVII.

SAINT AND SINNER

It happened a little after this time that the minister's invalid wife improved—somewhat unexpectedly in health, and, as Bathsheba was beginning to suffer from imprisonment in her sick-chamber, the physician advised very strongly that she should vary the monotony of her life by going out of the house daily for fresh air and cheerful companionship. She was therefore frequently at the house of Olive Eveleth; and as Myrtle wanted to see young people, and had her own way now as never before, the three girls often met at the parsonage. Thus they became more and more intimate, and grew more and more into each other's affections.

These girls presented three types of spiritual character which are to be found in all our towns and villages. Olive had been carefully trained, and at the proper age confirmed. Bathsheba had been prayed for, and in due time startled and converted. Myrtle was a simple daughter of Eve, with many impulses like those of the other two girls, and some that required more watching. She was not so safe, perhaps, as either of the other girls, for this world or the next; but she was on some accounts more interesting, as being a more genuine representative of that inexperienced and too easily deluded, yet always cherished, mother of our race, whom we must after all accept as embodying the creative idea of woman, and who might have been alive and happy now (though at a great age) but for a single fatal error.

The Rev. Ambrose Eveleth, Rector of Saint Bartholomew's, Olive's father, was one of a class numerous in the Anglican Church, a cultivated man, with pure tastes, with simple habits, a good reader, a neat writer, a safe thinker, with a snug and well-fenced mental pasturage, which his sermons kept cropped moderately close without any exhausting demand upon the soil. Olive had grown insensibly into her religious maturity, as into her

bodily and intellectual developments, which one might suppose was the natural order of things in a well-regulated Christian—household, where the children are brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

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Bathsheba had been worried over and perplexed and depressed with vague apprehensions about her condition, conveyed in mysterious phrases and graveyard expressions of countenance, until about the age of fourteen years, when she had one of those emotional paroxysms very commonly considered in some Protestant sects as essential to the formation of religious character. It began with a shivering sense of enormous guilt, inherited and practised from her earliest infancy. Just as every breath she ever drew had been malignantly poisoning the air with carbonic acid, so her every thought and feeling had been tainting the universe with sin. This spiritual chill or rigor had in due order been followed by the fever-flush of hope, and that in its turn had ushered in the last stage, the free opening of all the spiritual pores in the peaceful relaxation of self-surrender.

Good Christians are made by many very different processes. Bathsheba had taken her religion after the fashion of her sect; but it was genuine, in spite of the cavils of the formalists, who could not understand that the spirit which kept her at her mother's bedside was the same as that which poured the tears of Mary of Magdala on the feet of her Lord, and led her forth at early dawn with the other Mary to visit his sepulchre.

Myrtle was a child of nature, and of course, according to the out-worn formulae which still shame the distorted religion of humanity, hateful to the Father in Heaven who made her. She had grown up in antagonism with all that surrounded her. She had been talked to about her corrupt nature and her sinful heart, until the words had become an offence and an insult. Bathsheba knew her father's fondness for young company too well to suppose that his intercourse with Myrtle had gone beyond the sentimental and poetical stage, and was not displeased when she found that there was some breach between them. Myrtle herself did not profess to have passed through the technical stages of the customary spiritual paroxysm. Still, the gentle daughter of the terrible preacher loved her and judged her kindly. She was modest enough to think that perhaps the natural state of some girls might be at least as good as her own after the spiritual change of which she had been the subject. A manifest heresy, but not new, nor unamiable, nor inexplicable.

The excellent Bishop Joseph Hall, a painful preacher and solid divine of Puritan tendencies, declares that he prefers good-nature before grace in the election of a wife; because, saith he, "it will be a hard Task, where the Nature is peevish and froward, for Grace to make an entire Conquest whilst Life lasteth." An opinion apparently entertained by many modern ecclesiastics, and one which may be considered very encouraging to those young ladies of the politer circles who have a fancy for marrying bishops and other fashionable clergymen. Not of course that "grace" is so rare a gift among the young ladies of the upper social sphere; but they are in the habit of using the word with a somewhat different meaning from that which the good Bishop attached to it.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

Village poet.

It was impossible for Myrtle to be frequently at Olive's without often meeting Olive's brother, and her reappearance with the bloom on her cheek was a signal which her other admirers were not likely to overlook as a hint to recommence their flattering demonstrations; and so it was that she found herself all at once the centre of attraction to three young men with whom we have made some acquaintance, namely, Cyprian Eveleth, Gifted Hopkins, and Murray Bradshaw.

When the three girls were together at the house of Olive, it gave Cyprian a chance to see something of Myrtle in the most natural way. Indeed, they all became used to meeting him in a brotherly sort of relation; only, as he was not the brother of two of them, it gave him the inside track, as the sporting men say, with reference to any rivals for the good-will of either of these. Of course neither Bathsheba nor Myrtle thought of him in any other light than as Olive's brother, and would have been surprised with the manifestation on his part of any other feeling, if it existed. So he became very nearly as intimate with them as Olive was, and hardly thought of his intimacy as anything more than friendship, until one day Myrtle sang some hymns so sweetly that Cyprian dreamed about her that night; and what young person does not know that the woman or the man once idealized and glorified in the exalted state of the imagination belonging to sleep becomes dangerous to the sensibilities in the waking hours that follow? Yet something drew Cyprian to the gentler and more subdued nature of Bathsheba, so that he often thought, like a gayer personage than himself, whose divided affections are famous in song, that he could have been blessed to share her faithful heart, if Myrtle had not bewitched him with her unconscious and innocent sorceries. As for poor, modest Bathsheba, she thought nothing of herself, but was almost as much fascinated by Myrtle as if she had been one of the sex she was born to make in love with her.

The first rival Cyprian was to encounter in his admiration of Myrtle Hazard was Mr. Gifted Hopkins. This young gentleman had the enormous advantage of that all-subduing accomplishment, the poetical endowment. No woman, it is pretty generally understood, can resist the youth or man who addresses her in verse. The thought that she is the object of a poet's love is one which fills a woman's ambition more completely than all that wealth or office or social eminence can offer. Do the young millionnaires and the members of the General Court get letters from unknown ladies, every day, asking for their autographs and photographs? Well, then!

Mr. Gifted Hopkins, being a poet, felt that it was so, to the very depth of his soul. Could he not confer that immortality so dear to the human heart? Not quite yet, perhaps,—though the “Banner and Oracle” gave him already “an elevated niche in the Temple of Fame,” to quote its own words,—but in that glorious summer of his genius, of which

these spring blossoms were the promise. It was a most formidable battery, then, which Cyprian's first rival opened upon the fortress of Myrtle's affections.

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His second rival, Mr. William Murray Bradshaw, had made a half-playful bet with his fair relative, Mrs. Clymer Ketchum, that he would bag a girl within twelve months of date who should unite three desirable qualities, specified in the bet, in a higher degree than any one of the five who were on the matrimonial programme which she had laid out for him,—and Myrtle was the girl with whom he meant to win the bet. When a young fellow like him, cool and clever, makes up his mind to bring down his bird, it is no joke, but a very serious and a tolerably certain piece of business. Not being made a fool of by any boyish nonsense,—passion and all that,—he has a great advantage. Many a woman rejects a man because he is in love with her, and accepts another because he is not. The first is thinking too much of himself and his emotions,—the other makes a study of her and her friends, and learns what ropes to pull. But then it must be remembered that Murray Bradshaw had a poet for his rival, to say nothing of the brother of a bosom friend.

The qualities of a young poet are so exceptional, and such interesting objects of study, that a narrative like this can well afford to linger awhile in the delineation of this most envied of all the forms of genius. And by contrasting the powers and limitations of two such young persons as Gifted Hopkins and Cyprian Eveleth, we may better appreciate the nature of that divine inspiration which gives to poetry the superiority it claims over every other form of human expression.

Gifted Hopkins had shown an ear for rhythm, and for the simpler forms of music, from his earliest childhood. He began beating with his heels the accents of the psalm tunes sung at meeting at a very tender age,—a habit, indeed, of which he had afterwards to correct himself, as, though it shows a sensibility to rhythmical impulses like that which is beautifully illustrated when a circle join hands and emphasize by vigorous downward movements the leading syllables in the tune of Auld Lang Syne, yet it is apt to be too expressive when a large number of boots join in the performance. He showed a remarkable talent for playing on one of the less complex musical instruments, too limited in compass to satisfy exacting ears, but affording excellent discipline to those who wish to write in the simpler metrical forms,—the same which summons the hero from his repose and stirs his blood in battle.

By the time he was twelve years old he was struck with the pleasing resemblance of certain vocal sounds which, without being the same, yet had a curious relation which made them agree marvellously well in couples; as eyes with skies; as heart with art, also with part and smart; and so of numerous others, twenty or thirty pairs, perhaps, which number he considerably increased as he grew older, until he may have had fifty or more such pairs at his command.

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The union of so extensive a catalogue of words which matched each other, and of an ear so nice that it could tell if there were nine or eleven syllables in an heroic line, instead of the legitimate ten, constituted a rare combination of talents in the opinion of those upon whose judgment he relied. He was naturally led to try his powers in the expression of some just thought or natural sentiment in the shape of verse, that wonderful medium of imparting thought and feeling to his fellow-creatures which a bountiful Providence had made his rare and inestimable endowment.

It was at about this period of his life, that is to say, when he was of the age of thirteen, or we may perhaps say fourteen years, for we do not wish to overstate his precocity, that he experienced a sensation so entirely novel, that, to the best of his belief, it was such as no other young person had ever known, at least in anything like the same degree. This extraordinary emotion was brought on by the sight of Myrtle Hazard, with whom he had never before had any near relations, as they had been at different schools, and Myrtle was too reserved to be very generally known among the young people of his age.

Then it was that he broke forth in his virgin effort, "Lines to M——e," which were published in the village paper, and were claimed by all possible girls but the right one; namely, by two Mary Annes, one Minnie, one Mehitable, and one Marthie, as she saw fit to spell the name borrowed from her who was troubled about many things.

The success of these lines, which were in that form of verse known to the hymn-books as "common metre," was such as to convince the youth that, whatever occupation he might be compelled to follow for a time to obtain a livelihood or to assist his worthy parent, his true destiny was the glorious career of a poet. It was a most pleasing circumstance, that his mother, while she fully recognized the propriety of his being diligent in the prosaic line of business to which circumstances had called him, was yet as much convinced as he himself that he was destined to achieve literary fame. She had read Watts and Select Hymns all through, she said, and she did n't see but what Gifted could make the verses come out jest as slick, and the sound of the rhymes jest as pooty, as Izik Watts or the Selectmen, whoever they was,—she was sure they couldn't be the selectmen of this town, wherever they belonged. It is pleasant to say that the young man, though favored by nature with this rarest of talents, did not forget the humbler duties that Heaven, which dresses few singing-birds in the golden plumes of fortune, had laid upon him. After having received a moderate amount of instruction at one of the less ambitious educational institutions of the town, supplemented, it is true, by the judicious and gratuitous hints of Master Gridley, the young poet, in obedience to a feeling which did him the highest credit, relinquished, at least for the time, the Groves of Academus, and

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offered his youth at the shrine of Plutus, that is, left off studying and took to business. He became what they call a “clerk” in what they call a “store” up in the huckleberry districts, and kept such accounts as were required by the business of the establishment. His principal occupation was, however, to attend to the details of commerce as it was transacted over the counter. This industry enabled him, to his great praise be it spoken, to assist his excellent parent, to clothe himself in a becoming manner, so that he made a really handsome figure on Sundays and was always of presentable aspect, likewise to purchase a book now and then, and to subscribe for that leading periodical which furnishes the best models to the youth of the country in the various modes of composition.

Though Master Gridley was very kind to the young man, he was rather disposed to check the exuberance of his poetical aspirations. The truth was, that the old classical scholar did not care a great deal for modern English poetry. Give him an Ode of Horace, or a scrap from the Greek Anthology, and he would recite it with great inflation of spirits; but he did not think very much of “your Keatses, and your Tennysons, and the whole Hasheesh crazy lot,” as he called the dreamily sensuous idealists who belong to the same century that brought in ether and chloroform. He rather shook his head at Gifted Hopkins for indulging so largely in metrical composition.

“Better stick to your ciphering, my young friend,” he said to him, one day. “Figures of speech are all very well, in their way; but if you undertake to deal much in them, you’ll figure down your prospects into a mighty small sum. There’s some danger that it will take all the sense out of you, if you keep writing verses at this rate. You young scribblers think any kind of nonsense will do for the public, if it only has a string of rhymes tacked to it. Cut off the bobs of your kite, Gifted Hopkins, and see if it does n’t pitch, and stagger, and come down head-foremost. Don’t write any stuff with rhyming tails to it that won’t make a decent show for itself after you’ve chopped all the rhyming tails off. That’s my advice, Gifted Hopkins. Is there any book you would like to have out of my library? Have you ever read Spenser’s Faery Queen?”

He had tried, the young man answered, on the recommendation of Cyprian Eveleth, but had found it rather hard reading.

Master Gridley lifted his eyebrows very slightly, remembering that some had called Spenser the poet’s poet. “What a pity,” he said to himself, “that this Gifted Hopkins has n’t got the brains of that William Murray Bradshaw! What’s the reason, I wonder, that all the little earthen pots blow their covers off and froth over in rhymes at such a great rate, while the big iron pots keep their lids on, and do all their simmering inside?”

That is the way these old pedants will talk, after all their youth and all their poetry, if they ever had any, are gone. The smiles of woman, in the mean time, encouraged the young



poet to smite the lyre. Fame beckoned him upward from her templed steep. The rhymes which rose before him unbidden were as the rounds of Jacob's ladder, on which he would climb to a heaven of-glory.

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Master Gridley threw cold water on the young man's too sanguine anticipations of success. "All up with the boy, if he's going to take to rhyming when he ought to be doing up papers of brown sugar and weighing out pounds of tea. Poor-house,—that 's what it'll end in. Poets, to be sure! Sausage-makers! Empty skins of old phrases,—stuff 'em with odds and ends of old thoughts that never were good for anything,—cut 'em up in lengths and sell'em to fools!

"And if they ain't big fools enough to buy 'em, give'em away; and if you can't do that, pay folks to take'em. Bah! what a fine style of genius common-sense is! There's a passage in the book that would fit half these addle-headed rhymesters. What is that saying of mine about I squinting brains?"

He took down "Thoughts on the Universe," and read:—

"Of Squinting Brains.

"Where there is one man who squints with his eyes, there are a dozen who squint with their brains. It is an infirmity in one of the eyes, making the two unequal in power, that makes men squint. Just so it is an inequality in the two halves of the brain that makes some men idiots and others rascals. I knows a fellow whose right half is a genius, but his other hemisphere belongs to a fool; and I had a friend perfectly honest on one side, but who was sent to jail because the other had an inveterate tendency in the direction of picking pockets and appropriating *aes alienum*."

All this, talking and reading to himself in his usual fashion.

The poetical faculty which was so freely developed in Gifted Hopkins had never manifested itself in Cyprian Eveleth, whose look and voice might, to a stranger, have seemed more likely to imply an imaginative nature. Cyprian was dark, slender, sensitive, contemplative, a lover of lonely walks,—one who listened for the whispers of Nature and watched her shadows, and was alive to the symbolisms she writes over everything. But Cyprian had never shown the talent or the inclination for writing in verse.

He was on the pleasantest terms with the young poet, and being somewhat older, and having had the advantage of academic and college culture, often gave him useful hints as to the cultivation of his powers, such as genius frequently requires at the hands of humbler intelligences. Cyprian was incapable of jealousy; and although the name of Gifted Hopkins was getting to be known beyond the immediate neighborhood, and his autograph had been requested by more than one young lady living in another county, he never thought of envying the young poet's spreading popularity.

That the poet himself was flattered by these marks of public favor may be inferred from the growing confidence with which he expressed himself in his conversations with

Cyprian, more especially in one which was held at the “store” where he officiated as “clerk.”

“I become more and more assured, Cyprian,” he said, leaning over the counter, “that I was born to be a poet. I feel it in my marrow. I must succeed. I must win the laurel of fame. I must taste the sweets of”—

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"Molasses," said a bareheaded girl of ten who entered at that moment, bearing in her hand a cracked pitcher, "ma wants three gills of molasses."

Gifted Hopkins dropped his subject and took up a tin measure. He served the little maid with a benignity quite charming to witness, made an entry on a slate of .08, and resumed the conversation.

"Yes, I am sure of it, Cyprian. The very last piece I wrote was copied in two papers. It was 'Contemplations in Autumn,' and—don't think I am too vain—one young lady has told me that it reminded her of Pollok. You never wrote in verse, did you, Cyprian?"

"I never wrote at all, Gifted, except school and college exercises, and a letter now and then. Do you find it an easy and pleasant exercise to make rhymes?"

Pleasant! Poetry is to me a delight and a passion. I never know what I am going to write when I sit down. And presently the rhymes begin pounding in my brain,—it seems as if there were a hundred couples of them, paired like so many dancers,—and then these rhymes seem to take possession of me, like a surprise party, and bring in all sorts of beautiful thoughts, and I write and write, and the verses run measuring themselves out like"—

"Ribbins,—any narrer blue ribbins, Mr. Hopkins? Five eighths of a yard, if you please, Mr. Hopkins. How's your folks?" Then, in a lower tone, "Those last verses of yours in the Bannernoracle were sweet pooty."

Gifted Hopkins meted out the five eighths of blue ribbon by the aid of certain brass nails on the counter. He gave good measure, not prodigal, for he was loyal to his employer, but putting a very moderate strain on the ribbon, and letting the thumb-nail slide with a contempt of infinitesimals which betokened a large soul in its genial mood.

The young lady departed, after casting upon him one of those bewitching glances which the young poet—let us rather say the poet, without making odious distinctions—is in the confirmed habit of receiving from dear woman.

Mr. Gifted Hopkins resumed: "I do not know where this talent, as my friends call it, of mine, comes from. My father used to carry a chain for a surveyor sometimes, and there is a ten-foot pole in the house he used to measure land with. I don't see why that should make me a poet. My mother was always fond of Dr. Watts's hymns; but so are other young men's mothers, and yet they don't show poetical genius. But wherever I got it, it comes as easy to me to write in verse as to write in prose, almost. Don't you ever feel a longing to send your thoughts forth in verse, Cyprian?"

"I wish I had a greater facility of expression very often," Cyprian answered; "but when I have my best thoughts I do not find that I have words that seem fitting to clothe them. I



have imagined a great many poems, Gifted, but I never wrote a rhyming verse, or verse of any kind. Did you ever hear Olive play 'Songs without Words'? If you have ever heard her, you will know what I mean by unrhymed and unversed poetry."

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"I am sure I don't know what you mean, Cyprian, by poetry without rhyme or verse, any more than I should if you talked about pictures that were painted on nothing, or statues that were made out of nothing. How can you tell that anything is poetry, I should like to know, if there is neither a regular line with just so many syllables, nor a rhyme? Of course you can't. I never have any thoughts too beautiful to put in verse: nothing can be too beautiful for it."

Cyprian left the conversation at this point. It was getting more suggestive than interpenetrating, and he thought he might talk the matter over better with Olive. Just then a little boy came in, and bargained with Gifted for a Jews-harp, which, having obtained, he placed against his teeth, and began playing upon it with a pleasure almost equal to that of the young poet reciting his own verses.

"A little too much like my friend Gifted Hopkins's poetry," Cyprian said, as he left the "store." "All in one note, pretty much. Not a great many tunes, 'Hi Betty Martin,' 'Yankee Doodle,' and one or two more like them. But many people seem to like them, and I don't doubt it is as exciting to Gifted to write them as it is to a great genius to express itself in a poem."

Cyprian was, perhaps, too exacting. He loved too well the sweet intricacies of Spenser, the majestic and subtly interwoven harmonies of Milton. These made him impatient of the simpler strains of Gifted Hopkins.

Though he himself never wrote verses, he had some qualities which his friend the poet may have undervalued in comparison with the talent of modelling the symmetries of verse and adjusting the correspondences of rhyme. He had kept in a singular degree all the sensibilities of childhood, its simplicity, its reverence. It seemed as if nothing of all that he met in his daily life was common or unclean to him, for there was no mordant in his nature for what was coarse or vile, and all else he could not help idealizing into its own conception of itself, so to speak. He loved the leaf after its kind as well as the flower, and the root as well as the leaf, and did not exhaust his capacity of affection or admiration on the blossom or bud upon which his friend the poet lavished the wealth of his verse. Thus Nature took him into her confidence. She loves the men of science well, and tells them all her family secrets,—who is the father of this or that member of the group, who is brother, sister, cousin, and so on, through all the circle of relationship. But there are others to whom she tells her dreams; not what species or genus her lily belongs to, but what vague thought it has when it dresses in white, or what memory of its birthplace that is which we call its fragrance. Cyprian was one of these. Yet he was not a complete nature. He required another and a wholly different one to be the complement of his own. Olive came as near it as a sister could, but—we must

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borrow an old image—moonlight is no more than a cold and vacant glimmer on the sundial, which only answers to the great flaming orb of day. If Cyprian could but find some true, sweet-tempered, well-balanced woman, richer in feeling than in those special imaginative gifts which made the outward world at times unreal to him in the intense reality of his own inner life, how he could enrich and adorn her existence,—how she could direct and chasten and elevate the character of all his thoughts and actions!

“Bathsheba,” said Olive, “it seems to me that Cyprian is getting more and more fascinated with Myrtle Hazard. He has never got over the fancy he took to her when he first saw her in her red jacket, and called her the fire-hang-bird. Wouldn’t they suit each other by and by, after Myrtle has come to herself and grown into a beautiful and noble woman, as I feel sure she will in due time?”

“Myrtle is very lovely,” Bathsheba answered, “but is n’t she a little too—flighty—for one like your brother? Cyprian isn’t more like other young men than Myrtle is like other young girls. I have thought sometimes—I wondered whether out-of-the-way people and common ones do not get along best together. Does n’t Cyprian want some more everyday kind of girl to keep him straight? Myrtle is beautiful, beautiful,—fascinates everybody. Has Mr. Bradshaw been following after her lately? He is taken with her too. Didn’t you ever think she would have to give in to Murray Bradshaw at last? He looks to me like a man that would hold on desperately as a lover.”

If Myrtle Hazard, instead of being a half-finished school-girl, hardly sixteen years old, had been a young woman of eighteen or nineteen, it would have been plain sailing enough for Murray Bradshaw. But he knew what a distance their ages seemed just now to put between them,—a distance which would grow practically less and less with every year, and he did not wish to risk anything so long as there was no danger of interference. He rather encouraged Gifted Hopkins to write poetry to Myrtle. “Go in, Gifted,” he said, “there’s no telling what may come of it,” and Gifted did go in at a great rate.

Murray Bradshaw did not write poetry himself, but he read poetry with a good deal of effect, and he would sometimes take a hint from one of Gifted Hopkins’s last productions to recite a passionate lyric of Byron or Moore, into which he would artfully throw so much meaning that Myrtle was almost as much puzzled, in her simplicity, to know what it meant, as she had been by the religious fervors of the Rev. Mr. Stoker.

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He spoke well of Cyprian Eveleth. A good young man,—limited, but exemplary. Would succeed well as rector of a small parish. That required little talent, but a good deal of the humbler sort of virtue. As for himself, he confessed to ambition,—yes, a great deal of ambition. A failing, he supposed, but not the worst of failings. He felt the instinct to handle the larger interests of society. The village would perhaps lose sight of him for a time; but he meant to emerge sooner or later in the higher spheres of government or diplomacy. Myrtle must keep his secret. Nobody else knew it. He could not help making a confidant of her,—a thing he had never done before with any other person as to his plans in life. Perhaps she might watch his career with more interest from her acquaintance with him. He loved to think that there was one woman at least who would be pleased to hear of his success if he succeeded, as with life and health he would,—who would share his disappointment if fate should not favor him.—So he wound and wreathed himself into her thoughts.

It was not very long before Myrtle began to accept the idea that she was the one person in the world whose peculiar duty it was to sympathize with the aspiring young man whose humble beginnings she had the honor of witnessing. And it is not very far from being the solitary confidant, and the single source of inspiration, to the growth of a livelier interest, where a young man and a young woman are in question.

Myrtle was at this time her own mistress as never before. The three young men had access to her as she walked to and from meeting and in her frequent rambles, besides the opportunities Cyprian had of meeting her in his sister's company, and the convenient visits which, in connection with the great lawsuit, Murray Bradshaw could make, without question, at The Poplars.

It was not long before Cyprian perceived that he could never pass a certain boundary of intimacy with Myrtle. Very pleasant and sisterly always she was with him; but she never looked as if she might mean more than she said, and cherished a little spark of sensibility which might be fanned into the flame of love. Cyprian felt this so certainly that he was on the point of telling his grief to Bathsheba, who looked to him as if she would sympathize as heartily with him as his own sister, and whose sympathy would have a certain flavor in it,—something which one cannot find in the heart of the dearest sister that ever lived. But Bathsheba was herself sensitive, and changed color when Cyprian ventured a hint or two in the direction of his thought, so that he never got so far as to unburden his heart to her about Myrtle, whom she admired so sincerely that she could not have helped feeling a great interest in his passion towards her.

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As for Gifted Hopkins, the roses that were beginning to bloom fresher and fresher every day in Myrtle's cheeks unfolded themselves more and more freely, to speak metaphorically, in his song. Every week she would receive a delicately tinted note with lines to "Myrtle awaking," or to "Myrtle retiring," (one string of verses a little too Musidora-ish, and which soon found itself in the condition of a cinder, perhaps reduced to that state by spontaneous combustion,) or to "The Flower of the Tropics," or to the "Nymph of the River-side," or other poetical alias, such as bards affect in their sieges of the female heart.

Gifted Hopkins was of a sanguine temperament. As he read and re-read his verses it certainly seemed to him that they must reach the heart of the angelic being to whom they were addressed. That she was slow in confessing the impression they made upon her, was a favorable sign; so many girls called his poems "sweet pooty," that those charming words, though soothing, no longer stirred him deeply. Myrtle's silence showed that the impression his verses had made was deep. Time would develop her sentiments; they were both young; his position was humble as yet; but when he had become famous through the land-oh blissful thought!—the bard of Oxbow Village would bear a name that any woman would be proud to assume, and the M. H. which her delicate hands had wrought on the kerchiefs she wore would yet perhaps be read, not Myrtle Hazard, but Myrtle Hopkins.

CHAPTER XIX.

Susan's young man.

There seems no reasonable doubt that Myrtle Hazard might have made a safe thing of it with Gifted Hopkins, (if so inclined,) provided that she had only been secured against interference. But the constant habit of reading his verses to Susan Posey was not without its risk to so excitable a nature as that of the young poet. Poets were always capable of divided affections, and Cowley's "Chronicle" is a confession that would fit the whole tribe of them. It is true that Gifted had no right to regard Susan's heart as open to the wiles of any new-comer. He knew that she considered herself, and was considered by another, as pledged and plighted. Yet she was such a devoted listener, her sympathies were so easily roused, her blue eyes glistened so tenderly at the least poetical hint, such as "Never, oh never," "My aching heart," "Go, let me weep,"—any of those touching phrases out of the long catalogue which readily suggests itself, that her influence was getting to be such that Myrtle (if really anxious to secure him) might look upon it with apprehension, and the owner of Susan's heart (if of a jealous disposition) might have thought it worth while to make a visit to Oxbow Village to see after his property.

It may seem not impossible that some friend had suggested as much as this to the young lady's lover.

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The caution would have been unnecessary, or at least premature. Susan was loyal as ever to her absent friend. Gifted Hopkins had never yet presumed upon the familiar relations existing between them to attempt to shake her allegiance. It is quite as likely, after all, that the young gentleman about to make his appearance in Oxbow Village visited the place of his own accord, without a hint from anybody. But the fact concerns us more than the reason of it, just now.

"Who do you think is coming, Mr. Gridley? Who do you think is coming?" said Susan Posey, her face covered with a carnation such as the first season may see in a city belle, but not the second.

"Well, Susan Posey, I suppose I must guess, though I am rather slow at that business. Perhaps the Governor. No, I don't think it can be the Governor, for you would n't look so happy if it was only his Excellency. It must be the President, Susan Posey,—President James Buchanan. Have n't I guessed right, now, tell me, my dear?"

"O Mr. Gridley, you are too bad,—what do I care for governors and presidents? I know somebody that's worth fifty million thousand presidents,—and he 's coming,—my Clement is coming," said Susan, who had by this time learned to consider the awful Byles Gridley as her next friend and faithful counsellor.

Susan could not stay long in the house after she got her note informing her that her friend was soon to be with her. Everybody told everything to Olive Eveleth, and Susan must run over to the parsonage to tell her that there was a young gentleman coming to Oxbow Village; upon which Olive asked who it was, exactly as if she did not know; whereupon Susan dropped her eyes and said, "Clement,—I mean Mr. Lindsay."

That was a fair piece of news now, and Olive had her bonnet on five minutes after Susan was gone, and was on her way to Bathsheba's,—it was too bad that the poor girl who lived so out of the world shouldn't know anything of what was going on in it. Bathsheba had been in all the morning, and the Doctor had said she must take the air every day; so Bathsheba had on her bonnet a little after Olive had gone, and walked straight up to The Poplars to tell Myrtle Hazard that a certain young gentleman, Clement Lindsay, was coming to Oxbow Village.

It was perhaps fortunate that there was no special significance to Myrtle in the name of Clement Lindsay. Since the adventure which had brought these two young persons together, and, after coming so near a disaster, had ended in a mere humiliation and disappointment, and but for Master Gridley's discreet kindness might have led to foolish scandal, Myrtle had never referred to it in any way. Nobody really knew what her plans had been except Olive and Cyprian, who had observed a very kind silence about the whole matter. The common version of the story was harmless, and near enough to the truth,—down the river,—boat upset,—pulled out,—taken care of by some women in a



house farther down,—sick, brain fever,—pretty near it, anyhow,—old Dr. Hurlbut called in,—had her hair cut,—hystericky, *etc.*, *etc.*

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Myrtle was contented with this statement, and asked no questions, and it was a perfectly understood thing that nobody alluded to the subject in her presence. It followed from all this that the name of Clement Lindsay had no peculiar meaning for her. Nor was she like to recognize him as the youth in whose company she had gone through her mortal peril, for all her recollections were confused and dreamlike from the moment when she awoke and found herself in the foaming rapids just above the fall, until that when her senses returned, and she saw Master Byles Gridley standing over her with that look of tenderness in his square features which had lingered in her recollection, and made her feel towards him as if she were his daughter.

Now this had its advantage; for as Clement was Susan's young man, and had been so for two or three years, it would have been a great pity to have any such curious relations established between him and Myrtle Hazard as a consciousness on both sides of what had happened would naturally suggest.

"Who is this Clement Lindsay, Bathsheba?" Myrtle asked.

Why, Myrtle, don't you remember about Susan Posey's is-to-be,—the young man that has been well, I don't know, but I suppose engaged to her ever since they were children almost?"

"Yes, yes, I remember now. Oh dear! I have forgotten so many things, I should think I had been dead and was coming back to life again. Do you know anything about him, Bathsheba? Did n't somebody say he was very handsome? I wonder if he is really in love with Susan Posey. Such a simple thing? I want to see him. I have seen so few young men."

As Myrtle said these words, she lifted the sleeve a little on her left arm, by a half-instinctive and half-voluntary movement. The glimmering gold of Judith Pride's bracelet flashed out the yellow gleam which has been the reddening of so many hands and the blackening of so, many souls since that innocent sin-breeder was first picked up in the land of Havilah. There came a sudden light into her eye, such as Bathsheba had never seen there before. It looked to her as if Myrtle were saying unconsciously to herself that she had the power of beauty, and would like to try its influence on the handsome young man whom she was soon to meet, even at the risk of unseating poor little Susan in his affections. This pained the gentle and humble-minded girl, who, without having tasted the world's pleasures, had meekly consecrated herself to the lowly duties which lay nearest to her. For Bathsheba's phrasing of life was in the monosyllables of a rigid faith. Her conceptions of the human soul were all simplicity and purity, but elementary. She could not conceive the vast license the creative energy allows itself in mingling the instincts which, after long conflict, may come into harmonious adjustment. The flash which Myrtle's eye had caught from the gleam of the golden bracelet filled Bathsheba with a sudden fear that she was like to be led away by the vanities of that world lying in wickedness of which the minister's daughter had heard so much and seen so little.

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Not that Bathsheba made any fine moral speeches, to herself. She only felt a slight shock, such as a word or a look from one we love too often gives us,—such as a child's trivial gesture or movement makes a parent feel,—that impalpable something which in the slightest possible inflection of a syllable or gradation of a tone will sometimes leave a sting behind it, even in a trusting heart. This was all. But it was true that what she saw meant a great deal. It meant the dawning in Myrtle Hazard of one of her as yet un-lived secondary lives. Bathsheba's virgin perceptions had caught a faint early ray of its glimmering twilight.

She answered, after a very slight pause, which this explanation has made seem so long, that she had never seen the young gentleman, and that she did not know about Susan's sentiments. Only, as they had kept so long to each other, she supposed there must be love between them.

Myrtle fell into a reverie, with certain tableaux glowing along its perspectives which poor little Susan Posey would have shivered to look upon, if they could have been transferred from the purple clouds of Myrtle's imagination to the pale silvery mists of Susan's pretty fancies. She sat in her day-dream long after Bathsheba had left her, her eyes fixed, not on the faded portrait of her beatified ancestress, but on that other canvas where the dead Beauty seemed to live in all the splendors of her full-blown womanhood.

The young man whose name had set her thoughts roving was handsome, as the glance at him already given might have foreshadowed. But his features had a graver impress than his age seemed to account for, and the sober tone of his letter to Susan implied that something had given him a maturity beyond his years. The story was not an uncommon one. At sixteen he had dreamed-and told his dream. At eighteen he had awoken, and found, as he believed, that a young heart had grown to his so that its life was dependent on his own. Whether it would have perished if its filaments had been gently disentangled from the object to which they had attached themselves, experienced judges of such matters may perhaps question. To justify Clement in his estimate of the danger of such an experiment, we must remember that to young people in their teens a first passion is a portentous and unprecedented phenomenon. The young man may have been mistaken in thinking that Susan would die if he left her, and may have done more than his duty in sacrificing himself; but if so, it was the mistake of a generous youth, who estimated the depth of another's feelings by his own. He measured the depth of his own rather by what he felt they might be, than by that of any abysses they had yet sounded.

Clement was called a "genius" by those who knew him, and was consequently in danger of being spoiled early. The risk is great enough anywhere, but greatest in a new country, where there is an almost universal want of fixed standards of excellence.

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He was by nature an artist; a shaper with the pencil or the chisel, a planner, a contriver capable of turning his hand to almost any work of eye and hand. It would not have been strange if he thought he could do everything, having gifts which were capable of various application,—and being an American citizen. But though he was a good draughtsman, and had made some reliefs and modelled some figures, he called himself only an architect. He had given himself up to his art, not merely from a love of it and talent for it, but with a kind of heroic devotion, because he thought his country wanted a race of builders to clothe the new forms of religious, social, and national life afresh from the forest, the quarry, and the mine. Some thought he would succeed, others that he would be a brilliant failure.

“Grand notions,—grand notions,” the master with whom he studied said. “Large ground plan of life,—splendid elevation. A little wild in some of his fancies, perhaps, but he’s only a boy, and he’s the kind of boy that sometimes grows to be a pretty big man. Wait and see,—wait and see. He works days, and we can let him dream nights. There’s a good deal of him, anyhow.” His fellow-students were puzzled. Those who thought of their calling as a trade, and looked forward to the time when they should be embodying the ideals of municipal authorities in brick and stone, or making contracts with wealthy citizens, doubted whether Clement would have a sharp eye enough for business. “Too many whims, you know. All sorts of queer ideas in his head,—as if a boy like him were going to make things all over again!”.

No doubt there was something of youthful extravagance in his plans and expectations. But it was the untamed enthusiasm which is the source of all great thoughts and deeds, —a beautiful delirium which age commonly tames down, and for which the cold shower-bath the world furnishes gratis proves a pretty certain cure.

Creation is always preceded by chaos. The youthful architect’s mind was confused by the multitude of suggestions which were crowding in upon it, and which he had not yet had time or developed mature strength sufficient to reduce to order. The young American of any freshness of intellect is stimulated to dangerous excess by the conditions of life into which he is born. There is a double proportion of oxygen in the New World air. The chemists have not found it out yet, but human brains and breathing-organs have long since made the discovery.

Clement knew that his hasty entanglement had limited his possibilities of happiness in one direction, and he felt that there was a certain grandeur in the recompense of working out his defeated instincts through the ambitious medium of his noble art. Had not Pharaohs chosen it to proclaim their longings for immortality, Caesars their passion for pomp and luxury, and priests to symbolize their conceptions of the heavenly mansions?

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His dreams were on a grand scale; such, after all, are the best possessions of youth. Had he but been free, or mated with a nature akin to his own, he would have felt himself as truly the heir of creation as any young man that lived. But his lot was cast, and his youth had all the serious aspect to himself of thoughtful manhood. In the region of his art alone he hoped always to find freedom and a companionship which his home life could never give him.

Clement meant to have visited his beloved before he left Alderbank, but was called unexpectedly back to the city. Happily Susan was not exacting; she looked up to him with too great a feeling of distance between them to dare to question his actions. Perhaps she found a partial consolation in the company of Mr. Gifted Hopkins, who tried his new poems on her, which was the next best thing to addressing them to her. "Would that you were with us at this delightful season," she wrote in the autumn; "but no, your Susan must not repine. Yet, in the beautiful words of our native poet,

"Oh would, oh would that thou wast here,
For absence makes thee doubly dear;
Ah! what is life while thou 'rt away?
'T is night without the orb of day!"

The poet referred to, it need hardly be said, was our young and promising friend G. H., as he sometimes modestly signed himself. The letter, it is unnecessary to state, was voluminous,—for a woman can tell her love, or other matter of interest, over and over again in as many forms as another poet, not G. H., found for his grief in ringing the musical changes of "In Memoriam."

The answers to Susan's letters were kind, but not very long. They convinced her that it was a simple impossibility that Clement could come to Oxbow Village, on account of the great pressure of the work he had to keep him in the city, and the plans he must finish at any rate. But at last the work was partially got rid of, and Clement was coming; yes, it was so nice, and, oh dear! should n't she be real happy to see him?

To Susan he appeared as a kind of divinity, almost too grand for human nature's daily food. Yet, if the simple-hearted girl could have told herself the whole truth in plain words, she would have confessed to certain doubts which from time to time, and oftener of late, cast a shadow on her seemingly bright future. With all the pleasure that the thought of meeting Clement gave her, she felt a little tremor, a certain degree of awe, in contemplating his visit. If she could have clothed her self-humiliation in the gold and purple of the "Portuguese Sonnets," it would have been another matter; but the trouble with the most common sources of disquiet is that they have no wardrobe of flaming phraseology to air themselves in; the inward burning goes on without the relief and gratifying display of the crater.

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"A friend of mine is coming to the village," she said to Mr. Gifted Hopkins. "I want you to see him. He is a genius,—as some other young men are." (This was obviously personal, and the youthful poet blushed with ingenuous delight.) "I have known him for ever so many years. He and I are very good friends." The poet knew that this meant an exclusive relation between them; and though the fact was no surprise to him, his countenance fell a little. The truth was, that his admiration was divided between Myrtle, who seemed to him divine and adorable, but distant, and Susan, who listened to his frequent poems, whom he was in the habit of seeing in artless domestic costumes, and whose attractions had been gaining upon him of late in the enforced absence of his divinity.

He retired pensive from this interview, and, flinging himself at his desk, attempted wreaking his thoughts upon expression, to borrow the language of one of his brother bards, in a passionate lyric which he began thus—

"Another's!

"Another's! Oh the pang, the smart!
Fate owes to Love a deathless grudge,
—The barbed fang has rent a heart
Which—which

"judge—judge,—no, not judge. Budge, drudge, fudge—What a disgusting language English is! Nothing fit to couple with such a word as grudge! And the gush of an impassioned moment arrested in full flow, stopped short, corked up, for want of a paltry rhyme!

Judge,—budge,—drudge,—nudge, oh!—smudge,—misery!—fudge. In vain,—futile,—no use,—all up for to-night!"

While the poet, headed off in this way by the poverty of his native tongue, sought inspiration by retiring into the world of dreams,—went to bed, in short, his more fortunate rival was just entering the village, where he was to make his brief residence at the house of Deacon Rumrill, who, having been a loser by the devouring element, was glad to receive a stray boarder when any such were looking about for quarters.

For some reason or other he was restless that evening, and took out a volume he had brought with him to beguile the earlier hours of the night. It was too late when he arrived to disturb the quiet of Mrs. Hopkins's household, and whatever may have been Clement's impatience, he held it in check, and sat tranquilly until midnight over the pages of the book with which he had prudently provided himself.

"Hope you slept well last night," said the old Deacon, when Mr. Clement came down to breakfast the next morning.

“Very well, thank you,—that is, after I got to bed. But I sat up pretty late reading my favorite Scott. I am apt to forget how the hours pass when I have one of his books in my hand.”

The worthy Deacon looked at Mr. Clement with a sudden accession of interest.

“You couldn’t find better reading, young man. Scott is my favorite author. A great man. I have got his likeness in a gilt-frame hanging up in the other room. I have read him all through three times.”

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The young man's countenance brightened. He had not expected to find so much taste for elegant literature in an old village deacon.

"What are your favorites among his writings, Deacon? I suppose you have your particular likings, as the rest of us have."

The Deacon was flattered by the question. "Well," he answered, "I can hardly tell you. I like pretty much everything Scott ever wrote. Sometimes I think it is one thing, and sometimes another. Great on Paul's Epistles,—don't you think so?"

The honest fact was, that Clement remembered very little about "Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk,"—a book of Sir Walter's less famous than many of his others; but he signified his polite assent to the Deacon's statement, rather wondering at his choice of a favorite, and smiling at his queer way of talking about the Letters as Epistles.

"I am afraid Scott is not so much read now-a-days as he once was, and as he ought to be," said Mr. Clement: "Such character, such nature and so much grace."

"That's it,—that's it, young man," the Deacon broke in,—"Natur' and Grace,—Natur' and Grace. Nobody ever knew better what those two words meant than Scott did, and I'm very glad to see—you've chosen such good wholesome reading. You can't set up too late, young man, to read Scott. If I had twenty children, they should all begin reading Scott as soon as they were old enough to spell sin,—and that's the first word my little ones learned, next to 'pa' and I 'ma.' Nothing like beginning the lessons of life in good season."

"What a grim old satirist!" Clement said to himself. "I wonder if the old man reads other novelists.—Do tell me, Deacon, if you have read Thackeray's last story? "

"Thackeray's story? Published by the American Tract Society?"

"Not exactly," Clement answered, smiling, and quite delighted to find such an unexpected vein of grave pleasantry about the demure-looking church-dignitary; for the Deacon asked his question without moving a muscle, and took no cognizance whatever of the young man's tone and smile. First-class humorists are, as is well known, remarkable for the immovable solemnity of their features. Clement promised himself not a little amusement from the curiously sedate drollery of the venerable Deacon, who, it was plain from his conversation, had cultivated a literary taste which would make him a more agreeable companion than the common ecclesiastics of his grade in country villages.

After breakfast, Mr. Clement walked forth in the direction of Mrs. Hopkins's house, thinking as he went of the pleasant surprise his visit would bring to his longing and

doubtless pensive Susan; for though she knew he was coming, she did not know that he was at that moment in Oxbow Village.

As he drew near the house, the first thing he saw was Susan Posey, almost running against her just as he turned a corner. She looked wonderfully lively and rosy, for the weather was getting keen and the frosts had begun to bite. A young gentleman was walking at her side, and reading to her from a paper he held in his hand. Both looked deeply interested,—so much so that Clement felt half ashamed of himself for intruding upon them so abruptly.

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But lovers are lovers, and Clement could not help joining them. The first thing, of course, was the utterance of two simultaneous exclamations, "Why, Clement!" "Why, Susan!" What might have come next in the programme, but for the presence of a third party, is matter of conjecture; but what did come next was a mighty awkward look on the part of Susan Posey, and the following short speech: "Mr. Lindsay, let me introduce Mr. Hopkins, my friend, the poet I 've written to you about. He was just reading two of his poems to me. Some other time, Gifted—Mr. Hopkins."

"Oh no, Mr. Hopkins,—pray go on," said Clement. "I 'm very fond of poetry."

The poet did not require much urging, and began at once reciting over again the stanzas which were afterwards so much admired in the "Banner and Oracle,"—the first verse being, as the readers of that paper will remember,

"She moves in splendor, like the ray
That flashes from unclouded skies,
And all the charms of night and day
Are mingled in her hair and eyes."

Clement, who must have been in an agony of impatience to be alone with his beloved, commanded his feelings admirably. He signified his approbation of the poem by saying that the lines were smooth and the rhymes absolutely without blemish. The stanzas reminded him forcibly of one of the greatest poets of the century.

Gifted flushed hot with pleasure. He had tasted the blood of his own rhymes; and when a poet gets as far as that, it is like wringing the bag of exhilarating gas from the lips of a fellow sucking at it, to drag his piece away from him.

"Perhaps you will like these lines still better," he said; "the style is more modern:—

"O daughter of the spiced South,
Her bubbly grapes have spilled the wine
That staineth with its hue divine
The red flower of thy perfect mouth."

And so on, through a series of stanzas like these, with the pulp of two rhymes between the upper and lower crust of two others.

Clement was cornered. It was necessary to say something for the poet's sake,—perhaps for Susan's; for she was in a certain sense responsible for the poems of a youth of genius, of whom she had spoken so often and so enthusiastically.

"Very good, Mr. Hopkins, and a form of verse little used, I should think, until of late years. You modelled this piece on the style of a famous living English poet, did you not?"

“Indeed I did not, Mr. Lindsay,—I never imitate. Originality is, if I may be allowed to say so much for myself, my peculiar forte. Why, the critics allow as much as that. See here, Mr. Lindsay.”

Mr. Gifted Hopkins pulled out his pocket-book, and, taking therefrom a cutting from a newspaper,—which dropped helplessly open of itself, as if tired of the process, being very tender in the joints or creases, by reason of having been often folded and unfolded read aloud as follows:

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"The bard of Oxbow Pillage—our valued correspondent who writes over the signature of G. H.—is, in our opinion, more remarkable for his originality than for any other of his numerous gifts."

Clement was apparently silenced by this, and the poet a little elated with a sense of triumph. Susan could not help sharing his feeling of satisfaction, and without meaning it in the least, nay, without knowing it, for she was as simple and pure as new milk, edged a little bit—the merest infinitesimal atom—nearer to Gifted Hopkins, who was on one side of her, while Clement walked on the other. Women love the conquering party,—it is the way of their sex. And poets, as we have seen, are well-nigh irresistible when they exert their dangerous power of fascination upon the female heart. But Clement was above jealousy; and, if he perceived anything of this movement, took no notice of it.

He saw a good deal of his pretty Susan that day. She was tender in her expressions and manners as usual, but there was a little something in her looks and language from time to time that Clement did not know exactly what to make of. She colored once or twice when the young poet's name was mentioned. She was not so full of her little plans for the future as she had sometimes been, "everything was so uncertain," she said. Clement asked himself whether she felt quite as sure that her attachment would last as she once did. But there were no reproaches, not even any explanations, which are about as bad between lovers. There was nothing but an undefined feeling on his side that she did not cling quite so closely to him, perhaps, as he had once thought, and that, if he had happened to have been drowned that day when he went down with the beautiful young woman, it was just conceivable that Susan, who would have cried dreadfully, no doubt, would in time have listened to consolation from some other young man,—possibly from the young poet whose verses he had been admiring. Easy-crying widows take new husbands soonest; there is nothing like wet weather for transplanting, as Master Gridley used to say. Susan had a fluent natural gift for tears, as Clement well knew, after the exercise of which she used to brighten up like the rose which had been washed, just washed in a shower, mentioned by Cowper.

As for the poet, he learned more of his own sentiments during this visit of Clement's than he had ever before known. He wandered about with a dreadfully disconsolate look upon his countenance. He showed a falling-off in his appetite at tea-time, which surprised and disturbed his mother, for she had filled the house with fragrant suggestions of good things coming, in honor of Mr. Lindsay, who was to be her guest at tea. And chiefly the genteel form of doughnut called in the native dialect cymbal (Qu. Symbol? B. G.) which graced the board with its plastic forms, suggestive of the most pleasing objects,—the spiral ringlets pendent from the brow of beauty; the

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magic circlet, which is the pledge of plighted affection,—the indissoluble knot, which typifies the union of hearts, which organs were also largely represented; this exceptional delicacy would at any other time have claimed his special notice. But his mother remarked that he paid little attention to these, and his, “No, I thank you,” when it came to the preserved “damsels,” as some call them, carried a pang with it to the maternal bosom. The most touching evidence of his unhappiness—whether intentional or the result of accident was not evident was a broken heart, which he left upon his plate, the meaning of which was as plain as anything in the language of flowers. His thoughts were gloomy during that day, running a good deal on the more picturesque and impressive methods of bidding a voluntary farewell to a world which had allured him with visions of beauty only to snatch them from his impassioned gaze. His mother saw something of this, and got from him a few disjointed words, which led her to lock up the clothes-line and hide her late husband’s razors,—an affectionate, yet perhaps unnecessary precaution, for self-elimination contemplated from this point of view by those who have the natural outlet of verse to relieve them is rarely followed by a casualty. It may rather be considered as implying a more than average chance for longevity; as those who meditate an—imposing finish naturally save themselves for it, and are therefore careful of their health until the time comes, and this is apt to be indefinitely postponed so long as there is a poem to write or a proof to be corrected.

CHAPTER XX.

The second meeting.

Miss Eveleth requests the pleasure of Mr. Lindsay’s company to meet a few friends on the evening of the Feast of St. Ambrose, December 7th, Wednesday.

The parsonage, December 6th.

It was the luckiest thing in the world. They always made a little festival of that evening at the Rev. Ambrose Eveleth’s, in honor of his canonized namesake, and because they liked to have a good time. It came this year just at the right moment, for here was a distinguished stranger visiting in the place. Oxbow Village seemed to be running over with its one extra young man,—as may be seen sometimes in larger villages, and even in cities of moderate dimensions.

Mr. William Murray Bradshaw had called on Clement the day after his arrival. He had already met the Deacon in the street, and asked some questions about his transient boarder.

A very interesting young man, the Deacon said, much given to the reading of pious books. Up late at night after he came, reading Scott's Commentary. Appeared to be as fond of serious works as other young folks were of their novels and romances and other immoral publications. He, the Deacon, thought of having a few religious friends to meet the young gentleman, if he felt so disposed; and should like to have him, Mr. Bradshaw, come in and take a part in the exercises.—Mr. Bradshaw was unfortunately engaged. He thought the young gentleman could hardly find time for such a meeting during his brief visit.

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Mr. Bradshaw expected naturally to see a youth of imperfect constitution, and cachectic or dyspeptic tendencies, who was in training to furnish one of those biographies beginning with the statement that, from his infancy, the subject of it showed no inclination for boyish amusements, and so on, until he dies out, for the simple reason that there was not enough of him to live. Very interesting, no doubt, Master Byles Gridley would have said, but had no more to do with good, hearty, sound life than the history of those very little people to be seen in museums preserved in jars of alcohol, like brandy peaches.

When Mr. Clement Lindsay presented himself, Mr. Bradshaw was a good deal surprised to see a young fellow of such a mould. He pleased himself with the idea that he knew a man of mark at sight, and he set down Clement in that category at his first glance. The young man met his penetrating and questioning look with a frank, ingenuous, open aspect, before which he felt himself disarmed, as it were, and thrown upon other means of analysis. He would try him a little in talk.

"I hope you like these people you are with. What sort of a man do you find my old friend the Deacon?"

Clement laughed. "A very queer old character. Loves his joke as well, and is as sly in making it, as if he had studied Joe Miller instead of the Catechism."

Mr. Bradshaw looked at the young man to know what he meant. Mr. Lindsay talked in a very easy way for a serious young person. He was puzzled. He did not see to the bottom of this description of the Deacon. With a lawyer's instinct, he kept his doubts to himself and tried his witness with a new question.

"Did you talk about books at all with the old man?"

"To be sure I did. Would you believe it,—that aged saint is a great novel-reader. So he tells me. What is more, he brings up his children to that sort of reading, from the time when they first begin to spell. If anybody else had told me such a story about an old country deacon, I wouldn't have believed it; but he said so himself, to me, at breakfast this morning."

Mr. Bradshaw felt as if either he or Mr. Lindsay must certainly be in the first stage of mild insanity, and he did not think that he himself could be out of his wits. He must try one more question. He had become so mystified that he forgot himself, and began putting his interrogation in legal form.

"Will you state, if you please—I beg your pardon—may I ask who is your own favorite author?"

"I think just now I like to read Scott better than almost anybody."

“Do you mean the Rev. Thomas Scott, author of the Commentary?”

Clement stared at Mr. Bradshaw, and wondered whether he was trying to make a fool of him. The young lawyer hardly looked as if he could be a fool himself.

“I mean Sir Walter Scott,” he said, dryly.

“Oh!” said Mr. Bradshaw. He saw that there had been a slight misunderstanding between the young man and his worthy host, but it was none of his business, and there were other subjects of interest to talk about.

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"You know one of our charming young ladies very well, I believe, Mr. Lindsay. I think you are an old acquaintance of Miss Posey, whom we all consider so pretty."

Poor Clement! The question pierced to the very marrow of his soul, but it was put with the utmost suavity and courtesy, and honeyed with a compliment to the young lady, too, so that there was no avoiding a direct and pleasant answer to it.

"Yes," he said, "I have known the young lady you speak of for a long time, and very well,—in fact, as you must have heard, we are something more than friends. My visit here is principally on her account."

"You must give the rest of us a chance to see something of you during your visit, Mr. Lindsay. I hope you are invited to Miss Eveleth's to-morrow evening?"

"Yes, I got a note this morning. Tell me, Mr. Bradshaw, who is there that I shall meet if I go? I have no doubt there are girls here in the village I should like to see, and perhaps some young fellows that I should like to talk with. You know all that's prettiest and pleasantest, of course."

"Oh, we're a little place, Mr. Lindsay. A few nice people, the rest comme Va, you know. High-bush blackberries and low-bush black-berries,—you understand,—just so everywhere,—high-bush here and there, low-bush plenty. You must see the two parsons' daughters,—Saint Ambrose's and Saint Joseph's,—and another girl I want particularly to introduce you to. You shall form your own opinion of her. I call her handsome and stylish, but you have got spoiled, you know. Our young poet, too, one we raised in this place, Mr. Lindsay, and a superior article of poet, as we think,—that is, some of us, for the rest of us are jealous of him, because the girls are all dying for him and want his autograph. And Cyp,—yes, you must talk to Cyp,—he has ideas. But don't forget to get hold of old Byles Master Gridley I mean—before you go. Big head. Brains enough for a cabinet minister, and fit out a college faculty with what was left over. Be sure you see old Byles. Set him talking about his book, 'Thoughts on the Universe.' Did n't sell much, but has got knowing things in it. I'll show you a copy, and then you can tell him you know it, and he will take to you. Come in and get your dinner with me to-morrow. We will dine late, as the city folks do, and after that we will go over to the Rector's. I should like to show you some of our village people."

Mr. Bradshaw liked the thought of showing the young man to some of his friends there. As Clement was already "done for," or "bowled out," as the young lawyer would have expressed the fact of his being pledged in the matrimonial direction, there was nothing to be apprehended on the score of rivalry. And although Clement was particularly good-looking, and would have been called a distinguishable youth anywhere, Mr. Bradshaw considered himself far more than his match, in all probability, in social

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accomplishments. He expected, therefore, a certain amount of reflex credit for bringing such a fine young fellow in his company, and a second instalment of reputation from outshining him in conversation. This was rather nice calculating, but Murray Bradshaw always calculated. With most men life is like backgammon, half skill, and half luck, but with him it was like chess. He never pushed a pawn without reckoning the cost, and when his mind was least busy it was sure to be half a dozen moves ahead of the game as it was standing.

Mr. Bradshaw gave Clement a pretty dinner enough for such a place as Oxbow Village. He offered him some good wine, and would have made him talk so as to show his lining, to use one of his own expressions, but Clement had apparently been through that trifling experience, and could not be coaxed into saying more than he meant to say. Murray Bradshaw was very curious to find out how it was that he had become the victim of such a rudimentary miss as Susan Posey. Could she be an heiress in disguise? Why no, of course not; had not he made all proper inquiries about that when Susan came to town? A small inheritance from an aunt or uncle, or some such relative, enough to make her a desirable party in the eyes of certain villagers perhaps, but nothing to allure a man like this, whose face and figure as marketable possessions were worth say a hundred thousand in the girl's own right, as Mr. Bradshaw put it roughly, with another hundred thousand if his talent is what some say, and if his connection is a desirable one, a fancy price,—anything he would fetch. Of course not. Must have got caught when he was a child. Why the diavolo didn't he break it off, then?

There was no fault to find with the modest entertainment at the Parsonage. A splendid banquet in a great house is an admirable thing, provided always its getting up did not cost the entertainer an inward conflict, nor its recollection a twinge of economical regret, nor its bills a cramp of anxiety. A simple evening party in the smallest village is just as admirable in its degree, when the parlor is cheerfully lighted, and the board prettily spread, and the guests are made to feel comfortable without being reminded that anybody is making a painful effort.

We know several of the young people who were there, and need not trouble ourselves for the others. Myrtle Hazard had promised to come. She had her own way of late as never before; in fact, the women were afraid of her. Miss Silence felt that she could not be responsible for her any longer. She had hopes for a time that Myrtle would go through the customary spiritual paroxysm under the influence of the Rev. Mr. Stoker's assiduous exhortations; but since she had broken off with him, Miss Silence had looked upon her as little better than a backslider. And now that the girl was beginning to show the tendencies which seemed to come straight down to her from the belle of the last century, (whose rich physical developments

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seemed to the under-vitalized spinster as in themselves a kind of offence against propriety,) the forlorn woman folded her thin hands and looked on hopelessly, hardly venturing a remonstrance for fear of some new explosion. As for Cynthia, she was comparatively easy since she had, through Mr. Byles Gridley, upset the minister's questionable arrangement of religious intimacy. She had, in fact, in a quiet way, given Mr. Bradshaw to understand that he would probably meet Myrtle at the Parsonage if he dropped in at their small gathering. Clement walked over to Mrs. Hopkins's after his dinner with the young lawyer, and asked if Susan was ready to go with him. At the sound of his voice, Gifted Hopkins smote his forehead, and called himself, in subdued tones, a miserable being. His imagination wavered uncertain for a while between pictures of various modes of ridding himself of existence, and fearful deeds involving the life of others. He had no fell purpose of actually doing either, but there was a gloomy pleasure in contemplating them as possibilities, and in mentally sketching the "Lines written in Despair" which would be found in what was but an hour before the pocket of the youthful bard, G. H., victim of a hopeless passion. All this emotion was in the nature of a surprise to the young man. He had fully believed himself desperately in love with Myrtle Hazard; and it was not until Clement came into the family circle with the right of eminent domain over the realm of Susan's affections, that this unfortunate discovered that Susan's pretty ways and morning dress and love of poetry and liking for his company had been too much for him, and that he was henceforth to be wretched during the remainder of his natural life, except so far as he could unburden himself in song.

Mr. William Murray Bradshaw had asked the privilege of waiting upon Myrtle to the little party at the Eveleths. Myrtle was not insensible to the attractions of the young lawyer, though she had never thought of herself except as a child in her relations with any of these older persons. But she was not the same girl that she had been but a few months before. She had achieved her independence by her audacious and most dangerous enterprise. She had gone through strange nervous trials and spiritual experiences which had matured her more rapidly than years of common life would have done. She had got back her health, bringing with it a riper wealth of womanhood. She had found her destiny in the consciousness that she inherited the beauty belonging to her blood, and which, after sleeping for a generation or two as if to rest from the glare of the pageant that follows beauty through its long career of triumph, had come to the light again in her life, and was to repeat the legends of the olden time in her own history.

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Myrtle's wardrobe had very little of ornament, such as the modistes of the town would have thought essential to render a young girl like her presentable. There were a few heirlooms of old date, however, which she had kept as curiosities until now, and which she looked over until she found some lace and other convertible material, with which she enlivened her costume a little for the evening. As she clasped the antique bracelet around her wrist, she felt as if it were an amulet that gave her the power of charming which had been so long obsolete in her lineage. At the bottom of her heart she cherished a secret longing to try her fascinations on the young lawyer. Who could blame her? It was not an inwardly expressed intention,—it was the simple instinctive movement to subjugate the strongest of the other sex who had come in her way, which, as already said, is as natural to a woman as it is to a man to be captivated by the loveliest of those to whom he dares to aspire.

Before William Murray Bradshaw and Myrtle Hazard had reached the Parsonage, the girl's cheeks were flushed and her dark eyes were flashing with a new excitement. The young man had not made love to her directly, but he had interested her in herself by a delicate and tender flattery of manner, and so set her fancies working that she was taken with him as never before, and wishing that the Parsonage had been a mile farther from The Poplars. It was impossible for a young girl like Myrtle to conceal the pleasure she received from listening to her seductive admirer, who was trying all his trained skill upon his artless companion. Murray Bradshaw felt sure that the game was in his hands if he played it with only common prudence. There was no need of hurrying this child,—it might startle her to make downright love abruptly; and now that he had an ally in her own household, and was to have access to her with a freedom he had never before enjoyed, there was a refined pleasure in playing his fish,—this game of golden-scaled creatures,—which had risen to his fly, and which he wished to hook, but not to land, until he was sure it would be worth his while.

They entered the little parlor at the Parsonage looking so beaming, that Olive and Bathsheba exchanged glances which implied so much that it would take a full page to tell it with all the potentialities involved.

"How magnificent Myrtle is this evening, Bathsheba!" said Cyprian Eveleth, pensively.

"What a handsome pair they are, Cyprian!" said Bathsheba cheerfully.

Cyprian sighed. "She always fascinates me whenever I look upon her. Is n't she the very picture of what a poet's love should be,—a poem herself,—a glorious lyric,—all light and music! See what a smile the creature has! And her voice! When did you ever hear such tones? And when was it ever so full of life before."

Bathsheba sighed. "I do not know any poets but Gifted Hopkins. Does not Myrtle look more in her place by the side of Murray Bradshaw than she would with Gifted hitched on her arm?"

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Just then the poet made his appearance. He looked depressed, as if it had cost him an effort to come. He was, however, charged with a message which he must deliver to the hostess of the evening.

"They 're coming presently," he said. "That young man and Susan. Wants you to introduce him, Mr. Bradshaw."

The bell rang presently, and Murray Bradshaw slipped out into the entry to meet the two lovers.

"How are you, my fortunate friend?" he said, as he met them at the door. "Of course you're well and happy as mortal man can be in this vale of tears. Charming, ravishing, quite delicious, that way of dressing your hair, Miss Posey! Nice girls here this evening, Mr. Lindsay. Looked lovely when I came out of the parlor. Can't say how they will show after this young lady puts in an appearance." In reply to which florid speeches Susan blushed, not knowing what else to do, and Clement smiled as naturally as if he had been sitting for his photograph.

He felt, in a vague way, that he and Susan were being patronized, which is not a pleasant feeling to persons with a certain pride of character. There was no expression of contempt about Mr. Bradshaw's manner or language at which he could take offence. Only he had the air of a man who praises his neighbor without stint, with a calm consciousness that he himself is out of reach of comparison in the possessions or qualities which he is admiring in the other. Clement was right in his obscure perception of Mr. Bradshaw's feeling while he was making his phrases. That gentleman was, in another moment, to have the tingling delight of showing the grand creature he had just begun to tame. He was going to extinguish the pallid light of Susan's prettiness in the brightness of Myrtle's beauty. He would bring this young man, neutralized and rendered entirely harmless by his irrevocable pledge to a slight girl, face to face with a masterpiece of young womanhood, and say to him, not in words, but as plainly as speech could have told him, "Behold my captive!"

It was a proud moment for Murray Bradshaw. He had seen, or thought that he had seen, the assured evidence of a speedy triumph over all the obstacles of Myrtle's youth and his own present seeming slight excess of maturity. Unless he were very greatly mistaken, he could now walk the course; the plate was his, no matter what might be the entries. And this youth, this handsome, spirited-looking, noble-aired young fellow, whose artist-eye could not miss a line of Myrtle's proud and almost defiant beauty, was to be the witness of his power, and to look in admiration upon his prize! He introduced him to the others, reserving her for the last. She was at that moment talking with the worthy Rector, and turned when Mr. Bradshaw spoke to her.

"Miss Hazard, will you allow me to present to you my friend, Mr. Clement Lindsay?"

They looked full upon each other, and spoke the common words of salutation. It was a strange meeting; but we who profess to tell the truth must tell strange things, or we shall be liars.

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In poor little Susan's letter there was some allusion to a bust of Innocence which the young artist had begun, but of which he had said nothing in his answer to her. He had roughed out a block of marble for that impersonation; sculpture was a delight to him, though secondary to his main pursuit. After his memorable adventure, the image of the girl he had rescued so haunted him that the pale ideal which was to work itself out in the bust faded away in its perpetual presence, and—alas, poor Susan! in obedience to the impulse that he could not control, he left Innocence sleeping in the marble, and began modelling a figure of proud and noble and imperious beauty, to which he gave the name of Liberty.

The original which had inspired his conception was before him. These were the lips to which his own had clung when he brought her back from the land of shadows. The hyacinthine curl of her lengthening locks had added something to her beauty; but it was the same face which had haunted him. This was the form he had borne seemingly lifeless in his arms, and the bosom which heaved so visibly before him was that which his eyes they were the calm eyes of a sculptor, but of a sculptor hardly twenty years old.

Yes,—her bosom was heaving. She had an unexplained feeling of suffocation, and drew great breaths,—she could not have said why,—but she could not help it; and presently she became giddy, and had a great noise in her ears, and rolled her eyes about, and was on the point of going into an hysteric spasm. They called Dr. Hurlbut, who was making himself agreeable to Olive just then, to come and see what was the matter with Myrtle.

"A little nervous turn,—that is all," he said.

"Open the window. Loose the ribbon round her neck. Rub her hands. Sprinkle some water on her forehead.

"A few drops of cologne. Room too warm for her,—that 's all, I think."

Myrtle came to herself after a time without anything like a regular paroxysm. But she was excitable, and whatever the cause of the disturbance may have been, it seemed prudent that she should go home early; and the excellent Rector insisted on caring for her, much to the discontent of Mr. William Murray Bradshaw.

"Demonish odd," said this gentleman, "was n't it, Mr. Lindsay, that Miss Hazard should go off in that way. Did you ever see her before?"

"I—I—have seen that young lady before," Clement answered.

"Where did you meet her?" Mr. Bradshaw asked, with eager interest.

"I met her in the Valley of the Shadow of Death," Clement answered, very solemnly.—"I leave this place to-morrow morning. Have you any commands for the city?"

“Knows how to shut a fellow up pretty well for a young one, doesn’t he?” Mr. Bradshaw thought to himself.

“Thank you, no,” he answered, recovering himself. “Rather a melancholy place to make acquaintance in, I should think, that Valley you spoke of. I should like to know about it.”

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Mr. Clement had the power of looking steadily into another person's eyes in a way that was by no means encouraging to curiosity or favorable to the process of cross-examination. Mr. Bradshaw was not disposed to press his question in the face of the calm, repressive look the young man gave him.

"If he was n't bagged, I shouldn't like the shape of things any too well," he said to himself.

The conversation between Mr. Clement Lindsay and Miss Susan Posey, as they walked home together, was not very brilliant. "I am going to-morrow morning," he said, "and I must bid you good-by tonight." Perhaps it is as well to leave two lovers to themselves, under these circumstances.

Before he went he spoke to his worthy host, whose moderate demands he had to satisfy, and with whom he wished to exchange a few words.

"And by the way, Deacon, I have no use for this book, and as it is in a good type, perhaps you would like it. Your favorite, Scott, and one of his greatest works. I have another edition of it at home, and don't care for this volume."

"Thank you, thank you, Mr. Lindsay, much obleeged. I shall read that copy for your sake, the best of books next to the Bible itself."

After Mr. Lindsay had gone, the Deacon looked at the back of the book. "Scott's Works, Vol. IX." He opened it at hazard, and happened to fall on a well-known page, from which he began reading aloud, slowly,

"When Izrul, of the Lord beloved,
Out of the land of bondage came."

The whole hymn pleased the grave Deacon. He had never seen this work of the author of the Commentary. No matter; anything that such a good man wrote must be good reading, and he would save it up for Sunday. The consequence of this was, that, when the Rev. Mr. Stoker stopped in on his way to meeting on the "Sabbath," he turned white with horror at the spectacle of the senior Deacon of his church sitting, open-mouthed and wide-eyed, absorbed in the pages of "Ivanhoe," which he found enormously interesting; but, so far as he had yet read, not occupied with religious matters so much as he had expected.

Myrtle had no explanation to give of her nervous attack. Mr. Bradshaw called the day after the party, but did not see her. He met her walking, and thought she seemed a little more distant than common. That would never do. He called again at The Poplars a few days afterwards, and was met in the entry by Miss Cynthia, with whom he had a long conversation on matters involving Myrtle's interests and their own.

CHAPTER XXI.

Madness?

Mr. Clement Lindsay returned to the city and his usual labors in a state of strange mental agitation. He had received an impression for which he was unprepared. He had seen for the second time a young girl whom, for the peace of his own mind, and for the happiness of others, he should never again have looked upon until Time had taught their young hearts the lesson which all hearts must learn, sooner or later.

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What shall the unfortunate person do who has met with one of those disappointments, or been betrayed into one of those positions, which do violence to all the tenderest feelings, blighting the happiness of youth, and the prospects of after years?

If the person is a young man, he has various resources. He can take to the philosophic meerschau, and nicotine himself at brief intervals into a kind of buzzing and blurry insensibility, until he begins to "color" at last like the bowl of his own pipe, and even his mind gets the tobacco flavor. Or he can have recourse to the more suggestive stimulants, which will dress his future up for him in shining possibilities that glitter like Masonic regalia, until the morning light and the waking headache reveal his illusion. Some kind of spiritual anaesthetic he must have, if he holds his grief fast tied to his heartstrings. But as grief must be fed with thought, or starve to death, it is the best plan to keep the mind so busy in other ways that it has no time to attend to the wants of that ravening passion. To sit down and passively endure it, is apt to end in putting all the mental machinery into disorder.

Clement Lindsay had thought that his battle of life was already fought, and that he had conquered. He believed that he had subdued himself completely, and that he was ready, without betraying a shadow of disappointment, to take the insufficient nature which destiny had assigned him in his companion, and share with it all of his own larger being it was capable, not of comprehending, but of apprehending.

He had deceived himself. The battle was not fought and won. There had been a struggle, and what seemed to be a victory, but the enemy—intrenched in the very citadel of life—had rallied, and would make another desperate attempt to retrieve his defeat.

The haste with which the young man had quitted the village was only a proof that he felt his danger. He believed that, if he came into the presence of Myrtle Hazard for the third time, he should be no longer master of his feelings. Some explanation must take place between them, and how was it possible that it should be without emotion? and in what do all emotions shared by a young man with such a young girl as this tend to find their last expression?

Clement determined to stun his sensibilities by work. He would give himself no leisure to indulge in idle dreams of what might have been. His plans were never so carefully finished, and his studies were never so continuous as now. But the passion still wrought within him, and, if he drove it from his waking thoughts, haunted his sleep until he could endure it no longer, and must give it some manifestation. He had covered up the bust of Liberty so closely, that not an outline betrayed itself through the heavy folds of drapery in which it was wrapped. His thoughts recurred to his unfinished marble, as offering the one mode in which he could find a silent outlet to the feelings and thoughts which it was torture to keep imprisoned in his soul. The cold stone would tell them, but without passion; and having got the image which possessed him out of himself into a

lifeless form, it seemed as if he might be delivered from a presence which, lovely as it was, stood between him and all that made him seem honorable and worthy to himself.

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He uncovered the bust which he had but half shaped, and struck the first flake from the glittering marble. The toil, once begun, fascinated him strangely, and after the day's work was done, and at every interval he could snatch from his duties, he wrought at his secret task.

"Clement is graver than ever," the young men said at the office. "What's the matter, do you suppose? Turned off by the girl they say he means to marry by and by? How pale he looks too! Must have something worrying him: he used to look as fresh as a clove pink."

The master with whom he studied saw that he was losing color, and looking very much worn; and determined to find out, if he could, whether he was not overworking himself. He soon discovered that his light was seen burning late into the night, that he was neglecting his natural rest, and always busy with some unknown task, not called for in his routine of duty or legitimate study.

"Something is wearing on you, Clement," he said. "You are killing yourself with undertaking too much. Will you let me know what keeps you so busy when you ought to be asleep, or taking your ease and comfort in some way or other?"

Nobody but himself had ever seen his marble or its model. He had now almost finished it, laboring at it with such sleepless devotion, and he was willing to let his master have a sight of his first effort of the kind,—for he was not a sculptor, it must be remembered, though he had modelled in clay, not without some success, from time to time.

"Come with me," he said.

The master climbed the stairs with him up to his modest chamber. A closely shrouded bust stood on its pedestal in the light of the solitary window.

"That is my ideal personage," Clement said. "Wait one moment, and you shall see how far I have caught the character of our uncrowned queen."

The master expected, very naturally, to see the conventional young woman with classical wreath or feather headdress, whom we have placed upon our smallest coin, so that our children may all grow up loving Liberty.

As Clement withdrew the drapery that covered his work, the master stared at it in amazement. He looked at it long and earnestly, and at length turned his eyes, a little moistened by some feeling which thus betrayed itself, upon his scholar.

"This is no ideal, Clement. It is the portrait of a very young but very beautiful woman. No common feeling could have guided your hand in shaping such a portrait from memory. This must be that friend of yours of whom I have often heard as an amiable young person. Pardon me, for you know that nobody cares more for you than I do,—I

hope that you are happy in all your relations with this young friend of yours. How could one be otherwise?"

It was hard to bear, very hard. He forced a smile. "You are partly right," he said. "There is a resemblance, I trust, to a living person, for I had one in my mind."

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"Did n't you tell me once, Clement, that you were attempting a bust of Innocence? I do not see any block in your room but this. Is that done?"

"Done with!" Clement answered; and, as he said it, the thought stung through him that this was the very stone which was to have worn the pleasant blandness of pretty Susan's guileless countenance. How the new features had effaced the recollection of the others!

In a few days more Clement had finished his bust. His hours were again vacant to his thick-coming fancies. While he had been busy with his marble, his hands had required his attention, and he must think closely of every detail upon which he was at work. But at length his task was done, and he could contemplate what he had made of it. It was a triumph for one so little exercised in sculpture. The master had told him so, and his own eye could not deceive him. He might never succeed in any repetition of his effort, but this once he most certainly had succeeded. He could not disguise from himself the source of this extraordinary good fortune in so doubtful and difficult an attempt. Nor could he resist the desire of contemplating the portrait bust, which—it was foolish to talk about ideals—was not Liberty, but Myrtle Hazard.

It was too nearly like the story of the ancient sculptor; his own work was an over-match for its artist. Clement had made a mistake in supposing that by giving his dream a material form he should drive it from the possession of his mind. The image in which he had fixed his recollection of its original served only to keep her living presence before him. He thought of her as she clasped her arms around him, and they were swallowed up in the rushing waters, coming so near to passing into the unknown world together. He thought of her as he stretched her lifeless form upon the bank, and looked for one brief moment on her unsunned loveliness,—“a sight to dream of, not to tell.” He thought of her as his last fleeting glimpse had shown her, beautiful, not with the blossomy prettiness that passes away with the spring sunshine, but with a rich vitality of which noble outlines and winning expression were only the natural accidents. And that singular impression which the sight of him had produced upon her,—how strange! How could she but have listened to him,—to him, who was, as it were, a second creator to her, for he had bought her back from the gates of the unseen realm,—if he had recalled to her the dread moments they had passed in each other's arms, with death, not love, in all their thoughts. And if then he had told her how her image had remained with him, how it had colored all his visions, and mingled with all his conceptions, would not those dark eyes have melted as they were turned upon him? Nay, how could he keep the thought away, that she would not have been insensible to his passion, if he could have suffered its flame to kindle in his heart? Did it not seem as if Death had spared them for Love, and that Love should lead them together through life's long journey to the gates of Death?

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Never! never! never! Their fates were fixed. For him, poor insect as he was, a solitary flight by day, and a return at evening to his wingless mate! For her—he thought he saw her doom.

Could he give her up to the cold embraces of that passionless egotist, who, as he perceived plainly enough, was casting his shining net all around her? Clement read Murray Bradshaw correctly. He could not perhaps have spread his character out in set words, as we must do for him, for it takes a long apprenticeship to learn to describe analytically what we know as soon as we see it; but he felt in his inner consciousness all that we must tell for him. Fascinating, agreeable, artful, knowing, capable of winning a woman infinitely above himself, incapable of understanding her,—oh, if he could but touch him with the angel's spear, and bid him take his true shape before her whom he was gradually enveloping in the silken meshes of his subtle web! He would make a place for her in the world,—oh yes, doubtless. He would be proud of her in company, would dress her handsomely, and show her off in the best lights. But from the very hour that he felt his power over her firmly established, he would begin to remodel her after his own worldly pattern. He would dismantle her of her womanly ideals, and give her in their place his table of market-values. He would teach her to submit her sensibilities to her selfish interest, and her tastes to the fashion of the moment, no matter which world or half-world it came from. "As the husband is, the wife is,"—he would subdue her to what he worked in.

All this Clement saw, as in apocalyptic vision, stored up for the wife of Murray Bradshaw, if he read him rightly, as he felt sure he did, from the few times he had seen him. He would be rich by and by, very probably. He looked like one of those young men who are sharp, and hard enough to come to fortune. Then she would have to take her place in the great social exhibition where the gilded cages are daily opened that the animals may be seen, feeding on the sight of stereotyped toilets and the sound of impoverished tattle. O misery of semi-provincial fashionable life, where wealth is at its wit's end to avoid being tired of an existence which has all the labor of keeping up appearances, without the piquant profligacy which saves it at least from being utterly vapid! How many fashionable women at the end of a long season would be ready to welcome heaven itself as a relief from the desperate monotony of dressing, dawdling, and driving!

This could not go on so forever. Clement had placed a red curtain so as to throw a rose-bloom on his marble, and give it an aspect which his fancy turned to the semblance of life. He would sit and look at the features his own hand had so faithfully wrought, until it seemed as if the lips moved, sometimes as if they were smiling, sometimes as if they were ready to speak to him. His companions began to

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whisper strange things of him in the studio,—that his eye was getting an unnatural light,—that he talked as if to imaginary listeners,—in short, that there was a look as if something were going wrong with his brain, which it might be feared would spoil his fine intelligence. It was the undecided battle, and the enemy, as in his noblest moments he had considered the growing passion, was getting the better of him.

He was sitting one afternoon before the fatal bust which had smiled and whispered away his peace, when the post-man brought him a letter. It was from the simple girl to whom he had given his promise. We know how she used to prattle in her harmless way about her innocent feelings, and the trifling matters that were going on in her little village world. But now she wrote in sadness. Something, she did not too clearly explain what, had grieved her, and she gave free expression to her feelings. “I have no one that loves me but you,” she said; “and if you leave me I must droop and die. Are you true to me, dearest Clement,—true as when we promised each other that we would love while life lasted? Or have you forgotten one who will never cease to remember that she was once your own Susan?”

Clement dropped the letter from his hand, and sat a long hour looking at the exquisitely wrought features of her who had come between him and honor and his plighted word.

At length he arose, and, lifting the bust tenderly from its pedestal, laid it upon the cloth with which it had been covered. He wrapped it closely, fold upon fold, as the mother whom man condemns and God pities wraps the child she loves before she lifts her hand against its life. Then he took a heavy hammer and shattered his lovely idol into shapeless fragments. The strife was over.

CHAPTER XXII.

A change of programme.

Mr. William Murray Bradshaw was in pretty intimate relations with Miss Cynthia Badlam. It was well understood between them that it might be of very great advantage to both of them if he should in due time become the accepted lover of Myrtle Hazard. So long as he could be reasonably secure against interference, he did not wish to hurry her in making her decision. Two things he did wish to be sure of, if possible, before asking her the great question;—first, that she would answer it in the affirmative; and secondly, that certain contingencies, the turning of which was not as yet absolutely capable of being predicted, should happen as he expected. Cynthia had the power of furthering his wishes in many direct and indirect ways, and he felt sure of her cooperation. She had some reason to fear his enmity if she displeased him, and he had

taken good care to make her understand that her interests would be greatly promoted by the success of the plan which he had formed, and which was confided to her alone.

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He kept the most careful eye on every possible source of disturbance to this quietly maturing plan. He had no objection to have Gifted Hopkins about Myrtle as much as she would endure to have him. The youthful bard entertained her very innocently with his bursts of poetry, but she was in no danger from a young person so intimately associated with the yard-stick, the blunt scissors, and the brown-paper parcel. There was Cyprian too, about whom he did not feel any very particular solicitude. Myrtle had evidently found out that she was handsome and stylish and all that, and it was not very likely she would take up with such a bashful, humble, country youth as this. He could expect nothing beyond a possible rectorate in the remote distance, with one of those little pony chapels to preach in, which, if it were set up on a stout pole, would pass for a good-sized martin-house. Cyprian might do to practise on, but there was no danger of her looking at him in a serious way. As for that youth, Clement Lindsay, if he had not taken himself off as he did, Murray Bradshaw confessed to himself that he should have felt uneasy. He was too good-looking, and too clever a young fellow to have knocking about among fragile susceptibilities. But on reflection he saw there could be no danger.

“All up with him,—poor diavolo! Can’t understand it—such a little sixpenny miss—pretty enough boiled parsnip blonde, if one likes that sort of thing—pleases some of the old boys, apparently. Look out, Mr. L. remember Susanna and the Elders. Good!

“Safe enough if something new doesn’t turn up. Youngish. Sixteen’s a little early. Seventeen will do. Marry a girl while she’s in the gristle, and you can shape her bones for her. Splendid creature without her trimmings. Wants training. Must learn to dance, and sing something besides psalm-tunes.”

Mr. Bradshaw began humming the hymn, “When I can read my title clear,” adding some variations of his own. “That ’s the solo for my prima donna!”

In the mean time Myrtle seemed to be showing some new developments. One would have said that the instincts of the coquette, or at least of the city belle, were coming uppermost in her nature. Her little nervous attack passed away, and she gained strength and beauty every day. She was becoming conscious of her gifts of fascination, and seemed to please herself with the homage of her rustic admirers. Why was it that no one of them had the look and bearing of that young man she had seen but a moment the other evening? To think that he should have taken up with such a weakling as Susan Posey! She sighed, and not so much thought as felt how kind it would have been in Heaven to have made her such a man. But the image of the delicate blonde stood between her and all serious thought of Clement Lindsay. She saw the wedding in the distance, and very foolishly thought to herself that she could not and would not go to it.

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But Clement Lindsay was gone, and she must content herself with such worshippers as the village afforded. Murray Bradshaw was surprised and confounded at the easy way in which she received his compliments, and played with his advances, after the fashion of the trained ball-room belles, who know how to be almost caressing in manner, and yet are really as far off from the deluded victim of their suavities as the topmost statue of the Milan cathedral from the peasant that kneels on its floor. He admired her all the more for this, and yet he saw that she would be a harder prize to win than he had once thought. If he made up his mind that he would have her, he must go armed with all implements, from the red hackle to the harpoon.

The change which surprised Murray Bradshaw could not fail to be noticed by all those about her. Miss Silence had long ago come to pantomime, rolling up of eyes, clasping of hands, making of sad mouths, and the rest,—but left her to her own way, as already the property of that great firm of World & Co. which drives such sharp bargains for young souls with the better angels. Cynthia studied her for her own purposes, but had never gained her confidence. The Irish servant saw that some change had come over her, and thought of the great ladies she had sometimes looked upon in the old country. They all had a kind of superstitious feeling about Myrtle's bracelet, of which she had told them the story, but which Kitty half believed was put in the drawer by the fairies, who brought her ribbons and partridge feathers, and other slight adornments with which she contrived to set off her simple costume, so as to produce those effects which an eye for color and cunning fingers can bring out of almost nothing.

Gifted Hopkins was now in a sad, vacillating condition, between the two great attractions to which he was exposed. Myrtle looked so immensely handsome ere Sunday when he saw her going to church, not to meeting, for she would not go, except when she knew Father Pemberton was going to be the preacher, that the young poet was on the point of going down on his knees to her, and telling her that his heart was hers and hers alone. But he suddenly remembered that he had on his best trousers, and the idea of carrying the marks of his devotion in the shape of two dusty impressions on his most valued article of apparel turned the scale against the demonstration. It happened the next morning, that Susan Posey wore the most becoming ribbon she had displayed for a long time, and Gifted was so taken with her pretty looks that he might very probably have made the same speech to her that he had been on the point of making to Myrtle the day before, but that he remembered her plighted affections, and thought what he should have to say for himself when Clement Lindsay, in a frenzy of rage and jealousy, stood before him, probably armed with as many deadly instruments as a lawyer mentions by name in an indictment for murder.

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Cyprian Eveleth looked very differently on the new manifestations Myrtle was making of her tastes and inclinations. He had always felt dazzled, as well as attracted, by her; but now there was something in her expression and manner which made him feel still more strongly that they were intended for different spheres of life. He could not but own that she was born for a brilliant destiny,—that no ball-room would throw a light from its chandeliers too strong for her,—that no circle would be too brilliant for her to illuminate by her presence. Love does not thrive without hope, and Cyprian was beginning to see that it was idle in him to think of folding these wide wings of Myrtle's so that they would be shut up in any cage he could ever offer her. He began to doubt whether, after all, he might not find a meeker and humbler nature better adapted to his own. And so it happened that one evening after the three girls, Olive, Myrtle, and Bathsheba, had been together at the Parsonage, and Cyprian, availing himself of a brother's privilege, had joined them, he found he had been talking most of the evening with the gentle girl whose voice had grown so soft and sweet, during her long ministry in the sick-chamber, that it seemed to him more like music than speech. It would not be fair to say that Myrtle was piqued to see that Cyprian was devoting himself to Bathsheba. Her ambition was already reaching beyond her little village circle, and she had an inward sense that Cyprian found a form of sympathy in the minister's simple-minded daughter which he could not ask from a young woman of her own aspirations.

Such was the state of affairs when Master Byles Gridley was one morning surprised by an early call from Myrtle. He had a volume of Walton's Polyglot open before him, and was reading Job in the original, when she entered.

"Why, bless me, is that my young friend Miss Myrtle Hazard?" he exclaimed. "I might call you Keren-Happuch, which is Hebrew for Child of Beauty, and not be very far out of the way, Job's youngest daughter, my dear. And what brings my young friend out in such good season this morning? Nothing going wrong up at our ancient mansion, The Poplars, I trust?"

"I want to talk with you, dear Master Gridley," she answered. She looked as if she did not know just how to begin.

"Anything that interests you, Myrtle, interests me. I think you have some project in that young head of yours, my child. Let us have it, in all its dimensions, length, breadth, and thickness. I think I can guess, Myrtle, that we have a little plan of some kind or other. We don't visit Papa Job quite so early as this without some special cause,—do we, Miss Keren-Happuch?"

"I want to go to the city—to school," Myrtle said, with the directness which belonged to her nature.

"That is precisely what I want you to do myself, Miss Myrtle Hazard. I don't like to lose you from the village, but I think we must spare you for a while."

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"You're the best and dearest man that ever lived. What could have made you think of such a thing for me, Mr. Gridley?"

"Because you are ignorant, my child,—partly I want to see you fitted to take a look at the world without feeling like a little country miss. Has your aunt Silence promised to bear your expenses while you are in the city? It will cost a good deal of money."

"I have not said a word to her about it. I am sure I don't know what she would say. But I have some money, Mr. Gridley."

She showed him a purse with gold, telling him how she came by it. "There is some silver besides. Will it be enough?"

"No, no, my child, we must not meddle with that. Your aunt will let me put it in the bank for you, I think, where it will be safe. But that shall not make any difference. I have got a little money lying idle, which you may just as well have the use of as not. You can pay it back perhaps some time or other; if you did not, it would not make much difference. I am pretty much alone in the world, and except a book now and then—*Aut liberos aut libros*, as our valiant heretic has it,—you ought to know a little Latin, Myrtle, but never mind—I have not much occasion for money. You shall go to the best school that any of our cities can offer, Myrtle, and you shall stay there until we agree that you are fitted to come back to us an ornament to Oxbow Village, and to larger places than this if you are called there. We have had some talk about it, your aunt Silence and I, and it is all settled. Your aunt does not feel very rich just now, or perhaps she would do more for you. She has many pious and poor friends, and it keeps her funds low. Never mind, my child, we will have it all arranged for you, and you shall begin the year 1860 in Madam Delacoste's institution for young ladies. Too many rich girls and fashionable ones there, I fear, but you must see some of all kinds, and there are very good instructors in the school,—I know one,—he was a college boy with me,—and you will find pleasant and good companions there, so he tells me; only don't be in a hurry to choose your friends, for the least desirable young persons are very apt to cluster about a new-comer."

Myrtle was bewildered with the suddenness of the prospect thus held out to her. It is a wonder that she did not bestow an embrace upon the worthy old master. Perhaps she had too much tact. It is a pretty way enough of telling one that he belongs to a past generation, but it does tell him that not over-pleasing fact. Like the title of Emeritus Professor, it is a tribute to be accepted, hardly to be longed for.

When the curtain rises again, it will show Miss Hazard in a new character, and surrounded by a new world.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Myrtle hazard at the city school.

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Mr. Bradshaw was obliged to leave town for a week or two on business connected with the great land-claim. On his return, feeling in pretty good spirits, as the prospects looked favorable, he went to make a call at The Poplars. He asked first for Miss Hazard.

"Bliss your soul, Mr. Bridshaw," answered Mistress Kitty Fagan, "she's been gahn nigh a wake. It's to the city, to the big school, they've sint her."

This announcement seemed to make a deep impression on Murray Bradshaw, for his feelings found utterance in one of the most energetic forms of language to which ears polite or impolite are accustomed. He next asked for Miss Silence, who soon presented herself. Mr. Bradshaw asked, in a rather excited way, "Is it possible, Miss Withers, that your niece has quitted you to go to a city school?"

Miss Silence answered, with her chief—mourner expression, and her death-chamber tone: "Yes, she has left us for a season. I trust it may not be her destruction. I had hoped in former years that she would become a missionary, but I have given up all expectation of that now. Two whole years, from the age of four to that of six, I had prevailed upon her to give up sugar,—the money so saved to go to a graduate of our institution—who was afterwards—he labored among the cannibal-islanders. I thought she seemed to take pleasure in this small act of self-denial, but I have since suspected that Kitty gave her secret lumps. It was by Mr. Gridley's advice that she went, and by his pecuniary assistance. What could I do? She was bent on going, and I was afraid she would have fits, or do something dreadful, if I did not let her have her way. I am afraid she will come back to us spoiled. She has seemed so fond of dress lately, and once she spoke of learning—yes, Mr. Bradshaw, of learning to—dance! I wept when I heard of it. Yes, I wept."

That was such a tremendous thing to think of, and especially to speak of in Mr. Bradshaw's presence, for the most pathetic image in the world to many women is that of themselves in tears,—that it brought a return of the same overflow, which served as a substitute for conversation until Miss Badlam entered the apartment.

Miss Cynthia followed the same general course of remark. They could not help Myrtle's going if they tried. She had always maintained that, if they had only once broke her will when she was little, they would have kept the upper hand of her; but her will never was broke. They came pretty near it once, but the child would n't give in.

Miss Cynthia went to the door with Mr. Bradshaw, and the conversation immediately became short and informal.

"Demonish pretty business! All up for a year or more,—hey?"

Don't blame me,—I couldn't stop her."

“Give me her address,—I ’ll write to her. Any young men teach in the school?”

“Can’t tell you. She’ll write to Olive and Bathsheba, and I’ll find out all about it.”

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Murray Bradshaw went home and wrote a long letter to Mrs. Clymer Ketchum, of 24 Carat Place, containing many interesting remarks and inquiries, some of the latter relating to Madam Delacoste's institution for the education of young ladies.

While this was going on at Oxbow Village, Myrtle was establishing herself at the rather fashionable school to which Mr. Gridley had recommended her. Mrs. or Madam Delacoste's boarding-school had a name which on the whole it deserved pretty well. She had some very good instructors for girls who wished to get up useful knowledge in case they might marry professors or ministers. They had a chance to learn music, dancing, drawing, and the way of behaving in company. There was a chance, too, to pick up available acquaintances, for many rich people sent their daughters to the school, and it was something to have been bred in their company.

There was the usual division of the scholars into a first and second set, according to the social position, mainly depending upon the fortune, of the families to which they belonged. The wholesale dealer's daughter very naturally considered herself as belonging to a different order from the retail dealer's daughter. The keeper of a great hotel and the editor of a widely circulated newspaper were considered as ranking with the wholesale dealers, and their daughters belonged also to the untitled nobility which has the dollar for its armorial bearing. The second set had most of the good scholars, and some of the prettiest girls; but nobody knew anything about their families, who lived off the great streets and avenues, or vegetated in country towns.

Myrtle Hazard's advent made something like a sensation. They did not know exactly what to make of her. Hazard? Hazard? No great firm of that name. No leading hotel kept by any Hazard, was there? No newspaper of note edited by anybody called Hazard, was there? Came from where? Oxbow Village. Oh, rural district. Yes.—Still they could not help owning that she was handsome, a concession which of course had to be made with reservations.

"Don't you think she's vuiry good-lookin'?" said a Boston girl to a New York girl. "I think she's real pooty."

"I dew, indeed. I didn't think she was haaf so handsome the feeest time I saw her," answered the New York girl.

"What a pity she had n't been bawn in Bawston!"

"Yes, and moved very young to Ne Yock!"

"And married a sarsaparilla man, and lived in Fiff Avenoo, and moved in the fust society."

“Better dew that than be strong-mained, and dew your own cook’n, and live in your own kitch’n.”

“Don’t forgit to send your card when you are Mrs. Old Dr. Jacob!”

“Indeed I shaan’t. What’s the name of the alley, and which bell?” The New York girl took out a memorandum-book as if to put it down.

“Had n’t you better let me write it for you, dear?” said the Boston girl. “It is as well to have it legible, you know.”

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"Take it," said the New York girl. "There 's tew York shill'ns in it when I hand it to you."

"Your whole quarter's allowance, I bullieve,—ain't it?" said the Boston girl.

"Elegant manners, correct deportment, and propriety of language will be strictly attended to in this institution. The most correct standards of pronunciation will be inculcated by precept and example. It will be the special aim of the teachers to educate their pupils out of all provincialisms, so that they may be recognized as well-bred English scholars wherever the language is spoken in its purity."—Extract from the Prospectus of Madam Delacoste's Boarding-school.

Myrtle Hazard was a puzzle to all the girls. Striking, they all agreed, but then the criticisms began. Many of the girls chattered a little broken French, and one of them, Miss Euphrosyne De Lacy, had been half educated in Paris, so that she had all the phrases which are to social operators what his cutting instruments are to the surgeon. Her face she allowed was handsome; but her style, according to this oracle, was a little *bourgeoise*, and her air not exactly *comme il faut*. More specifically, she was guilty of *contours fortement prononces*,—*corsage de paysanne*,—*quelque chose de sauvage*, *etc.*, *etc.* This girl prided herself on her figure.

Miss Bella Pool, (La Belle Poule as the demi-Parisian girl had christened her,) the beauty of the school, did not think so much of Myrtle's face, but considered her figure as better than the De Lacy girl's.

The two sets, first and second, fought over her as the Greeks and Trojans over a dead hero, or the Yale College societies over a live freshman. She was nobody by her connections, it is true, so far as they could find out, but then, on the other hand, she had the walk of a queen, and she looked as if a few stylish dresses and a season or two would make her a belle of the first water. She had that air of indifference to their little looks and whispered comments which is surest to disarm all the critics of a small tattling community. On the other hand, she came to this school to learn, and not to play; and the modest and more plainly dressed girls, whose fathers did not sell by the cargo, or keep victualling establishments for some hundreds of people, considered her as rather in sympathy with them than with the daughters of the rough-and-tumble millionnaires who were grappling and rolling over each other in the golden dust of the great city markets.

She did not mean to belong exclusively to either of their sets. She came with that sense of manifold deficiencies, and eager ambition to supply them, which carries any learner upward, as if on wings, over the heads of the mechanical plodders and the indifferent routinists. She learned, therefore, in a way to surprise the experienced instructors. Her somewhat rude sketching soon began to show something of the artist's touch. Her voice, which

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had only been taught to warble the simplest melodies, after a little training began to show its force and sweetness and flexibility in the airs that enchant drawing-room audiences. She caught with great readiness the manner of the easiest girls, unconsciously, for she inherited old social instincts which became nature with the briefest exercise. Not much license of dress was allowed in the educational establishment of Madam Delacoste, but every girl had an opportunity to show her taste within the conventional limits prescribed. And Myrtle soon began to challenge remark by a certain air she contrived to give her dresses, and the skill with which she blended their colors.

"Tell you what, girls," said Miss Berengaria Topping, female representative of the great dynasty that ruled over the world-famous Planet Hotel, "she's got style, lots of it. I call her perfectly splendid, when she's got up in her swell clothes. That oriole's wing she wears in her bonnet makes her look gorgeous, she'll be a stunning Pocahontas for the next tableau."

Miss Rose Bugbee, whose family opulence grew out of the only merchantable article a Hebrew is never known to seek profit from, thought she could be made presentable in the first circles if taken in hand in good season. So it came about that, before many weeks had passed over her as a scholar in the great educational establishment, she might be considered as on the whole the most popular girl in the whole bevy of them. The studious ones admired her for her facility of learning, and her extraordinary appetite for every form of instruction, and the showy girls, who were only enduring school as the purgatory that opened into the celestial world of society, recognized in her a very handsome young person, who would be like to make a sensation sooner or later.

There were, however, it must be confessed, a few who considered themselves the thickest of the cream of the school-girls, who submitted her to a more trying ordeal than any she had yet passed.

"How many horses does your papa keep?" asked Miss Florence Smythe. "We keep nine, and a pony for Edgar."

Myrtle had to explain that she had no papa, and that they did not keep any horses. Thereupon Miss Florence Smythe lost her desire to form an acquaintance, and wrote home to her mother (who was an ex-bonnet-maker) that the school was getting common, she was afraid,—they were letting in persons one knew nothing about.

Miss Clare Browne had a similar curiosity about the amount of plate used in the household from which Myrtle came. Her father had just bought a complete silver service. Myrtle had to own that they used a good deal of china at her own home,—old china, which had been a hundred years in the family, some of it.

“A hundred years old!” exclaimed Miss Clare Browne. “What queer-looking stuff it must be! Why, everything in our house is just as new and bright! Papaa had all our pictures painted on purpose for us. Have you got any handsome pictures in your house?”

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"We have a good many portraits of members of the family," she said, "some of them older than the china."

"How very very odd! What do the dear old things look like?"

"One was a great beauty in her time."

"How jolly!"

"Another was a young woman who was put to death for her religion,—burned to ashes at the stake in Queen Mary's time."

"How very very wicked! It was n't nice a bit, was it? Ain't you telling me stories? Was that a hundred years ago?—But you 've got some new pictures and things, have n't you? Who furnished your parlors?"

"My great-grandfather, or his father, I believe."

"Stuff and nonsense. I don't believe it. What color are your carriage-horses?"

"Our woman, Kitty Fagan, told somebody once we didn't keep any horse but a cow."

"Not keep any horses! Do for pity's sake let me look at your feet."

Myrtle put out as neat a little foot as a shoemaker ever fitted with a pair of number two. What she would have been tempted to do with it, if she had been a boy, we will not stop to guess. After all, the questions amused her quite as much as the answers instructed Miss Clara Browne. Of that young lady's ancestral claims to distinction there is no need of discoursing. Her "papaa" commonly said sir in talking with a gentleman, and her "mammaa" would once in a while forget, and go down the area steps instead of entering at the proper door; but they lived behind a brown stone front, which veneers everybody's antecedents with a facing of respectability.

Miss Clara Browne wrote home to her mother in the same terms as Miss Florence Smythe,—that the school was getting dreadful common, and they were letting in very queer folks.

Still another trial awaited Myrtle, and one which not one girl in a thousand would have been so unprepared to meet. She knew absolutely nothing of certain things with which the vast majority of young persons were quite familiar.

There were literary young ladies, who had read everything of Dickens and Thackeray, and something at least of Sir Walter, and occasionally, perhaps, a French novel, which they had better have let alone. One of the talking young ladies of this set began upon Myrtle one day.

“Oh, is n’t ‘Pickwick’ nice?” she asked.

“I don’t know,” Myrtle replied; “I never tasted any.”

The girl stared at her as if she were a crazy creature. “Tasted any! Why, I mean the ‘Pickwick Papers,’ Dickens’s story. Don’t you think they’re nice.”

Poor Myrtle had to confess that she had never read them, and did n’t know anything about them.

“What! did you never read any novels?” said the young lady.

“Oh, to be sure I have,” said Myrtle, blushing as she thought of the great trunk and its contents. “I have read ‘Caleb Williams,’ and ‘Evelina,’ and ‘Tristram Shandy’” (naughty girl!), “and the ‘Castle of Otranto,’ and the ‘Mysteries of Udolpho,’ and the ‘Vicar of Wakefield,’ and ‘Don Quixote’—”

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The young lady burst out laughing. "Stop! stop! for mercy's sake," she cried. "You must be somebody that's been dead and buried and come back to life again. Why you're Rip Van Winkle in a petticoat! You ought to powder your hair and wear patches."

"We've got the oddest girl here," this young lady wrote home. "She has n't read any book that is n't a thousand years old. One of the girls says she wears a trilobite for a breastpin; some horrid old stone, I believe that is, that was a bug ever so long ago. Her name, she says, is Myrtle Hazard, but I call her Rip Van Myrtle."

Notwithstanding the quiet life which these young girls were compelled to lead, they did once in a while have their gatherings, at which a few young gentlemen were admitted. One of these took place about a month after Myrtle had joined the school. The girls were all in their best, and by and by they were to have a tableau. Myrtle came out in all her force. She dressed herself as nearly as she dared like the handsome woman of the past generation whom she resembled. The very spirit of the dead beauty seemed to animate every feature and every movement of the young girl whose position in the school was assured from that moment. She had a good solid foundation to build upon in the jealousy of two or three of the leading girls of the style of pretensions illustrated by some of their talk which has been given. There is no possible success without some opposition as a fulcrum: force is always aggressive, and crowds something or other, if it does not hit or trample on it.

The cruelest cut of all was the remark attributed to Mr. Livingston Jenkins, who was what the opposition girls just referred to called the great "swell" among the privileged young gentlemen who were present at the gathering.

"Rip Van Myrtle, you call that handsome girl, do you, Miss Clara? By Jove, she's the stylistest of the whole lot, to say nothing of being a first-class beauty. Of course you know I except one, Miss Clara. If a girl can go to sleep and wake up after twenty years looking like that, I know a good many who had better begin their nap without waiting. If I were Florence Smythe, I'd try it, and begin now,—eh, Clara?"

Miss Browne felt the praise of Myrtle to be slightly alleviated by the depreciation of Miss Smythe, who had long been a rival of her own. A little later in the evening Miss Smythe enjoyed almost precisely the same sensation, produced in a very economical way by Mr. Livingston Jenkins's repeating pretty nearly the same sentiments to her, only with a change in the arrangement of the proper names. The two young ladies were left feeling comparatively comfortable with regard to each other, each intending to repeat Mr. Livingston Jenkins's remark about her friend to such of her other friends as enjoyed clever sayings, but not at all comfortable with reference to Myrtle Hazard, who was evidently considered by the leading "swell" of their circle as the most noticeable personage of the assembly. The individual exception in each case did very well as a matter of politeness, but they knew well enough what he meant.

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It seemed to Myrtle Hazard, that evening, that she felt the bracelet on her wrist glow with a strange, unaccustomed warmth. It was as if it had just been unclasped from the arm of a young woman full of red blood and tingling all over with swift nerve-currents. Life had never looked to her as it did that evening. It was the swan's first breasting the water,—bred on the desert sand, with vague dreams of lake and river, and strange longings as the mirage came and dissolved, and at length afloat upon the sparkling wave. She felt as if she had for the first time found her destiny. It was to please, and so to command, to rule with gentle sway in virtue of the royal gift of beauty,—to enchant with the commonest exercise of speech, through the rare quality of a voice which could not help being always gracious and winning, of a manner which came to her as an inheritance of which she had just found the title. She read in the eyes of all that she was more than any other the centre of admiration. Blame her who may, the world was a very splendid vision as it opened before her eyes in its long vista of pleasures and of triumphs. How different the light of these bright saloons from the glimmer of the dim chamber at The Poplars! Silence Withers was at that very moment looking at the portraits of Anne Holyoake and of Judith Pride. "The old picture seems to me to be fading faster than ever," she was thinking. But when she held her lamp before the other, it seemed to her that the picture never was so fresh before, and that the proud smile upon its lips was more full of conscious triumph than she remembered it. A reflex, doubtless, of her own thoughts, for she believed that the martyr was weeping even in heaven over her lost descendant, and that the beauty, changed to the nature of the malignant spiritual company with which she had long consorted in the under-world, was pleasing herself with the thought that Myrtle was in due time to bring her news from the Satanic province overhead, where she herself had so long indulged in the profligacy of embonpoint and loveliness.

The evening at the school-party was to terminate with some tableaux. The girl who had suggested that Myrtle would look "stunning" or "gorgeous" or "jolly," or whatever the expression was, as Pocahontas, was not far out of the way, and it was so evident to the managing heads that she would make a fine appearance in that character, that the "Rescue of Captain John Smith" was specially got up to show her off.

Myrtle had sufficient reason to believe that there was a hint of Indian blood in her veins. It was one of those family legends which some of the members are a little proud of, and others are willing to leave uninvestigated. But with Myrtle it was a fixed belief that she felt perfectly distinct currents of her ancestral blood at intervals, and she had sometimes thought there were instincts and vague recollections which must have come from the old warriors

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and hunters and their dusky brides. The Indians who visited the neighborhood recognized something of their own race in her dark eyes, as the reader may remember they told the persons who were searching after her. It had almost frightened her sometimes to find how like a wild creature she felt when alone in the woods. Her senses had much of that delicacy for which the red people are noted, and she often thought she could follow the trail of an enemy, if she wished to track one through the forest, as unerringly as if she were a Pequot or a Mohegan.

It was a strange feeling that came over Myrtle, as they dressed her for the part she was to take. Had she never worn that painted robe before? Was it the first time that these strings of wampum had ever rattled upon her neck and arms? And could it be that the plume of eagle's feathers with which they crowned her dark, fast-lengthening locks had never shadowed her forehead until now? She felt herself carried back into the dim ages when the wilderness was yet untrodden save by the feet of its native lords. Think of her wild fancy as we may, she felt as if that dusky woman of her midnight vision on the river were breathing for one hour through her lips. If this belief had lasted, it is plain enough where it would have carried her. But it came into her imagination and vivifying consciousness with the putting on of her unwonted costume, and might well leave her when she put it off. It is not for us, who tell only what happened, to solve these mysteries of the seeming admission of unhoused souls into the fleshly tenements belonging to air-breathing personalities. A very little more, and from that evening forward the question would have been treated in full in all the works on medical jurisprudence published throughout the limits of Christendom. The story must be told or we should not be honest with the reader.

Tableau 1. Captain John Smith (Miss Euphrosyne de Lacy) was to be represented prostrate and bound, ready for execution; Powhatan (Miss Florence Smythe) sitting upon a log; savages with clubs (Misses Clara Browne, A. Van Boodle, E. Van Boodle, Heister, Booster, *etc.*, *etc.*) standing around; Pocahontas holding the knife in her hand, ready to cut the cords with which Captain John Smith is bound.—Curtain.

Tableau 2. Captain John Smith released and kneeling before Pocahontas, whose hand is extended in the act of raising him and presenting him to her father. Savages in various attitudes of surprise. Clubs fallen from their hands. Strontian flame to be kindled.—Curtain.

This was a portion of the programme for the evening, as arranged behind the scenes. The first part went off with wonderful eclat, and at its close there were loud cries for Pocahontas. She appeared for a moment. Bouquets were flung to her; and a wreath, which one of the young ladies had expected for herself in another part, was tossed upon the stage, and laid at her feet. The curtain fell.

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“Put the wreath on her for the next tableau,” some of them whispered, just as the curtain was going to rise, and one of the girls hastened to place it upon her head.

The disappointed young lady could not endure it, and, in a spasm of jealous passion, sprang at Myrtle, snatched it from her head, and trampled it under her feet at the very instant the curtain was rising. With a cry which some said had the blood-chilling tone of an Indian’s battle-shriek, Myrtle caught the knife up, and raised her arm against the girl who had thus rudely assailed her. The girl sank to the ground, covering her eyes in her terror. Myrtle, with her arm still lifted, and the blade glistening in her hand, stood over her, rigid as if she had been suddenly changed to stone. Many of those looking on thought all this was a part of the show, and were thrilled with the wonderful acting. Before those immediately around her had had time to recover from the palsy of their fright Myrtle had flung the knife away from her, and was kneeling, her head bowed and her hands crossed upon her breast. The audience went into a rapture of applause as the curtain came suddenly down; but Myrtle had forgotten all but the dread peril she had just passed, and was thanking God that his angel—her own protecting spirit, as it seemed to her had stayed the arm which a passion such as her nature had never known, such as she believed was alien to her truest self, had lifted with deadliest purpose. She alone knew how extreme the danger had been. “She meant to scare her,—that ’s all,” they said. But Myrtle tore the eagle’s feathers from her hair, and stripped off her colored beads, and threw off her painted robe. The metempsychosis was far too real for her to let her wear the semblance of the savage from whom, as she believed, had come the lawless impulse at the thought of which her soul recoiled in horror.

“Pocahontas has got a horrid headache,” the managing young ladies gave it out, “and can’t come to time for the last tableau.” So this all passed over, not only without loss of credit to Myrtle, but with no small addition to her local fame,—for it must have been acting; “and was n’t it stunning to see her with that knife, looking as if she was going to stab Bells, or to scalp her, or something?”

As Master Gridley had predicted, and as is the case commonly with new-comers at colleges and schools, Myrtle had come first in contact with those who were least agreeable to meet. The low-bred youth who amuse themselves with scurvy tricks on freshmen, and the vulgar girls who try to show off their gentility to those whom they think less important than themselves, are exceptions in every institution; but they make themselves odiously prominent before the quiet and modest young people have had time to gain the new scholar’s confidence. Myrtle found friends in due time, some of them daughters of rich people, some poor girls, who came with the same sincerity of purpose as herself. But not one was her match in the facility of acquiring knowledge. Not one promised to make such a mark in society, if she found an opening into its loftier circles. She was by no means ignorant of her natural gifts, and she cultivated them with the ambition which would not let her rest.



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During her stay at the great school, she made but one visit to Oxbow Village. She did not try to startle the good people with her accomplishments, but they were surprised at the change which had taken place in her. Her dress was hardly more showy, for she was but a school-girl, but it fitted her more gracefully. She had gained a softness of expression, and an ease in conversation, which produced their effect on all with whom she came in contact. Her aunt's voice lost something of its plaintiveness in talking with her. Miss Cynthia listened with involuntary interest to her stories of school and school-mates. Master Byles Gridley accepted her as the great success of his life, and determined to make her his chief heiress, if there was any occasion for so doing. Cyprian told Bathsheba that Myrtle must come to be a great lady. Gifted Hopkins confessed to Susan Posey that he was afraid of her, since she had been to the great city school. She knew too much and looked too much like a queen, for a village boy to talk with.

Mr. William Murray Bradshaw tried all his fascinations upon her, but she parried compliments so well, and put off all his nearer advances so dexterously, that he could not advance beyond the region of florid courtesy, and never got a chance, if so disposed, to risk a question which he would not ask rashly, believing that, if Myrtle once said No, there would be little chance of her ever saying Yes.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Mustering of forces.

Not long after the tableau performance had made Myrtle Hazard's name famous in the school and among the friends of the scholars, she received the very flattering attention of a call from Mrs. Clymer Ketchum, of 24 Carat Place. This was in consequence of a suggestion from Mr. Livingston Jenkins, a particular friend of the family.

"They've got a demonish splendid school-girl over there," he said to that lady, "made the stunningest looking Pocahontas at the show there the other day. Demonish plucky looking filly as ever you saw. Had a row with another girl,—gave the war-whoop, and went at her with a knife. Festive,—hey? Say she only meant to scare her,—looked as if she meant to stick her, anyhow. Splendid style. Why can't you go over to the shop and make 'em trot her out?"

The lady promised Mr. Livingston Jenkins that she certainly would, just as soon as she could find a moment's leisure,—which, as she had nothing in the world to do, was not likely to be very soon. Myrtle in the mean time was busy with her studies, little dreaming what an extraordinary honor was awaiting her.

That rare accident in the lives of people who have nothing to do, a leisure morning, did at last occur. An elegant carriage, with a coachman in a wonderful cape, seated on a



box lofty as a throne, and wearing a hat-band as brilliant as a coronet, stopped at the portal of Madam Delacoste's establishment. A card was sent in bearing the open sesame of Mrs. Clymer Ketchum, the great lady of 24 Carat Place. Miss Myrtle Hazard was summoned as a matter of course, and the fashionable woman and the young girl sat half an hour together in lively conversation.



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Myrtle was fascinated by her visitor, who had that flattering manner which, to those not experienced in the world's ways, seems to imply unfathomable depths of disinterested devotion. Then it was so delightful to look upon a perfectly appointed woman,—one who was as artistically composed as a poem or an opera,—in whose costume a kind of various rhythm undulated in one fluent harmony, from the spray that nodded on her bonnet to the rosette that blossomed on her sandal. As for the lady, she was captivated with Myrtle. There is nothing that your fashionable woman, who has ground and polished her own spark of life into as many and as glittering social facets as it will bear, has a greater passion for than a large rough diamond, which knows nothing of the sea of light it imprisons, and which it will be her pride to have cut into a brilliant under her own eye, and to show the world for its admiration and her own reflected glory. Mrs. Clymer Ketchum had taken the entire inventory of Myrtle's natural endowments before the interview was over. She had no marriageable children, and she was thinking what a killing bait Myrtle would be at one of her stylish parties.

She soon got another letter from Mr. William Murray Bradshaw, which explained the interest he had taken in Madam Delacoste's school,—all which she knew pretty nearly beforehand, for she had found out a good part of Myrtle's history in the half-hour they had spent in company.

"I had a particular reason for my inquiries about the school," he wrote. "There is a young girl there I take an interest in. She is handsome and interesting; and—though it is a shame to mention such a thing has possibilities in the way of fortune not to be undervalued. Why can't you make her acquaintance and be civil to her? A country girl, but fine old stock, and will make a figure some time or other, I tell you. Myrtle Hazard, —that's her name. A mere schoolgirl. Don't be malicious and badger me about her, but be polite to her. Some of these country girls have got 'blue blood' in them, let me tell you, and show it plain enough."

("In huckleberry season!") said Mrs. Clymer Ketchum, in a parenthesis,—and went on reading.

"Don't think I'm one of your love-in-a-cottage sort, to have my head turned by a village beauty. I've got a career before me, Mrs. K., and I know it. But this is one of my pets, and I want you to keep an eye on her. Perhaps when she leaves school you wouldn't mind asking her to come and stay with you a little while. Possibly I may come and see how she is getting on if you do,—won't that tempt you, Mrs. C. K.?"

Mrs. Clymer Ketchum wrote back to her relative how she had already made the young lady's acquaintance.

"Livingston Jerkins (you remember him) picked her out of the whole lot of girls as the 'prettiest filly in the stable.' That's his horrid way of talking. But your young milkmaid is really charming, and will come into form like a Derby three-year-old. There, now, I've

caught that odious creature's horse-talk, myself. You're dead in love with this girl, Murray, you know you are.

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"After all, I don't know but you're right. You would make a good country lawyer enough, I don't doubt. I used to think you had your ambitions, but never mind. If you choose to risk yourself on 'possibilities,' it is not my affair, and she's a beauty, there's no mistake about that.

"There are some desirable partis at the school with your dulcinea. There 's Rose Bugbee. That last name is a good one to be married from. Rose is a nice girl,—there are only two of them. The estate will cut up like one of the animals it was made out of, you know,—the sandwich-quadruped. Then there 's Berengaria. Old Topping owns the Planet Hotel among other things,—so big, they say, there's always a bell ringing from somebody's room day and night the year round. Only child—unit and six ciphers carries diamonds loose in her pocket—that's the story —good-looking—lively—a little slangy called Livingston Jerkins 'Living Jingo' to his face one day. I want you to see my lot before you do anything serious. You owe something to the family, Mr. William Murray Bradshaw! But you must suit yourself, after all: if you are contented with a humble position in life, it is nobody's business that I know of. Only I know what life is, Murray B. Getting married is jumping overboard, any way you look at it, and if you must save some woman from drowning an old maid, try to find one with a cork jacket, or she 'll carry you down with her."

Murray Bradshaw was calculating enough, but he shook his head over this letter. It was too demonish cold-blooded for him, he said to himself. (Men cannot pardon women for saying aloud what they do not hesitate to think in silence themselves.) Never mind,—he must have Mrs. Clymer Ketchum's house and influence for his own purposes. Myrtle Hazard must become her guest, and then if circumstances were favorable, he was certain obtaining her aid in his project.

The opportunity to invite Myrtle to the great mansion presented itself unexpectedly. Early in the spring of 1861 there were some cases of sickness in Madam Delacoste's establishment, which led to closing the school for a while. Mrs. Clymer Ketchum took advantage of the dispersion of the scholars to ask Myrtle to come and spend some weeks with her. There were reasons why this was more agreeable to the young girl than returning to Oxbow Village, and she very gladly accepted the invitation.

It was very remarkable that a man living as Master Byles Gridley had lived for so long a time should all at once display such liberality as he showed to a young woman who had no claim upon him, except that he had rescued her from the consequences of her own imprudence and warned her against impending dangers. Perhaps he cared more for her than if the obligation had been the other way,—students of human nature say it is commonly so. At any rate, either he had ampler resources than it was commonly supposed, or he was imprudently giving way to his generous impulses, or he thought he was making advances which would in due time be returned to him. Whatever the reason was, he furnished her with means, not only for her necessary expenses, but

sufficient to afford her many of the elegances which she would be like to want in the fashionable society with which she was for a short time to mingle.

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Mrs. Clymer Ketchum was so well pleased with the young lady she was entertaining, that she thought it worth while to give a party while Myrtle was staying with her. She had her jealousies and rivalries, as women of the world will, sometimes, and these may have had their share in leading her to take the trouble a large party involved. She was tired of the airs of Mrs. Pinnikle, who was of the great Apex family, and her terribly accomplished daughter Rhadamartha, and wanted to crush the young lady, and jaundice her mother, with a girl twice as brilliant and ten times handsomer. She was very willing, also, to take the nonsense out of the Capsheaf girls, who thought themselves the most stylish personages of their city world, and would bite their lips well to see themselves distanced by a country miss.

In the mean time circumstances were promising to bring into Myrtle's neighborhood several of her old friends and admirers. Mrs. Clymer Ketchum had written to Murray Bradshaw that she had asked his pretty milkmaid to come and stay awhile with her, but he had been away on business, and only arrived in the city a day or two before the party. But other young fellows had found out the attractions of the girl who was "hanging out at the Clymer Ketchum concern," and callers were plenty, reducing tete-a-tetes in a corresponding ratio. He did get one opportunity, however, and used it well. They had so many things to talk about in common, that she could not help finding him good company. She might well be pleased, for he was an adept in the curious art of being agreeable, as other people are in chess or billiards, and had made a special study of her tastes, as a physician studies a patient's constitution. What he wanted was to get her thoroughly interested in himself, and to maintain her in a receptive condition until such time as he should be ready for a final move. Any day might furnish the decisive motive; in the mean time he wished only to hold her as against all others.

It was well for her, perhaps, that others had flattered her into a certain consciousness of her own value. She felt her veins full of the same rich blood as that which had flushed the cheeks of handsome Judith in the long summer of her triumph. Whether it was vanity, or pride, or only the instinctive sense of inherited force and attraction, it was the best of defences. The golden bracelet on her wrist seemed to have brought as much protection with it as if it had been a shield over her heart.

But far away in Oxbow Village other events were in preparation. The "fugitive pieces" of Mr. Gifted Hopkins had now reached a number so considerable, that, if collected and printed in large type, with plenty of what the unpleasant printers call "fat,"—meaning thereby blank spaces,—upon a good, substantial, not to say thick paper, they might perhaps make a volume which would have substance enough to bear the title, printed lengthwise along the back, "Hopkins's Poems." Such a volume that author had in contemplation. It was to be the literary event of the year 1861.

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He could not mature such a project, one which he had been for some time contemplating, without consulting Mr. Byles Gridley, who, though he had not unfrequently repressed the young poet's too ardent ambition, had yet always been kind and helpful.

Mr. Gridley was seated in his large arm-chair, indulging himself in the perusal of a page or two of his own work before repeatedly referred to. His eye was glistening, for it had dust rested on the following passage:

"There is infinite pathos in unsuccessful authorship. The book that perishes unread is the deaf mute of literature. The great asylum of Oblivion is full of such, making inaudible signs to each other in leaky garrets and unattainable dusty upper shelves."

He shut the book, for the page grew a little dim as he finished this elegiac sentence, and sighed to think how much more keenly he felt its truth than when it was written,—than on that memorable morning when he saw the advertisement in all the papers, "This day published, 'Thoughts on the Universe.' By Byles Gridley, A. M."

At that moment he heard a knock at his door. He closed his eyelids forcibly for ten seconds, opened them, and said cheerfully, "Come in!"

Gifted Hopkins entered. He had a collection of manuscripts in his hands which it seemed to him would fill a vast number of pages. He did not know that manuscript is to type what fresh dandelions are to the dish of greens that comes to table, of which last Nurse Byloe, who considered them very wholesome spring grazing for her patients, used to say that they "biled down dreadful."

"I have brought the autographs of my poems, Master Gridley, to consult you about making arrangements for publication. They have been so well received by the public and the leading critics of this part of the State, that I think of having them printed in a volume. I am going to the city for that purpose. My mother has given her consent. I wish to ask you several business questions. Shall I part with the copyright for a downright sum of money, which I understand some prefer doing, or publish on shares, or take a percentage on the sales? These, I believe, are the different ways taken by authors."

Mr. Gridley was altogether too considerate to reply with the words which would most naturally have come to his lips. He waited as if he were gravely pondering the important questions just put to him, all the while looking at Gifted with a tenderness which no one who had not buried one of his soul's children could have felt for a young author trying to get clothing for his new-born intellectual offspring.

"I think," he said presently, "you had better talk with an intelligent and liberal publisher, and be guided by his advice. I can put you in correspondence with such a person, and

you had better trust him than me a great deal. Why don't you send your manuscript by mail?"

"What, Mr. Gridley? Trust my poems, some of which are unpublished, to the post-office? No, sir, I could never make up my mind to such a risk. I mean to go to the city myself, and read them to some of the leading publishers. I don't want to pledge myself to any one of them. I should like to set them bidding against each other for the copyright, if I sell it at all."

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Mr. Gridley gazed upon the innocent youth with a sweet wonder in his eyes that made him look like an angel, a little damaged in the features by time, but full of celestial feelings.

"It will cost you something to make this trip, Gifted. Have you the means to pay for your journey and your stay at a city hotel?"

Gifted blushed. "My mother has laid by a small sum for me," he said. "She knows some of my poems by heart, and she wants to see them all in print."

Master Gridley closed his eyes very firmly again, as if thinking, and opened them as soon as the foolish film had left them. He had read many a page of "Thoughts on the Universe" to his own old mother, long, long years ago, and she had often listened with tears of modest pride that Heaven had favored her with a son so full of genius.

"I'll tell you what, Gifted," he said. "I have been thinking for a good while that I would make a visit to the city, and if you have made up your mind to try what you can do with the publishers, I will take you with me as a companion. It will be a saving to you and your good mother, for I shall bear the expenses of the expedition."

Gifted Hopkins came very near going down on his knees. He was so overcome with gratitude that it seemed as if his very coattails wagged with his emotion.

"Take it quietly," said Master Gridley. "Don't make a fool of yourself. Tell your mother to have some clean shirts and things ready for you, and we will be off day after to-morrow morning."

Gifted hastened to impart the joyful news to his mother, and to break the fact to Susan Posey that he was about to leave them for a while, and rush into the deliriums and dangers of the great city.

Susan smiled. Gifted hardly knew whether to be pleased with her sympathy, or vexed that she did not take his leaving more to heart. The smile held out bravely for about a quarter of a minute. Then there came on a little twitching at the corners of the mouth. Then the blue eyes began to shine with a kind of veiled glimmer. Then the blood came up into her cheeks with a great rush, as if the heart had sent up a herald with a red flag from the citadel to know what was going on at the outworks. The message that went back was of discomfiture and capitulation. Poor Susan was overcome, and gave herself up to weeping and sobbing.

The sight was too much for the young poet. In a wild burst of passion he seized her hand, and pressed it to his lips, exclaiming, "Would that you could be mine forever!" and Susan forgot all that she ought to have remembered, and, looking half reproachfully but half tenderly through her tears, said, in tones of infinite sweetness, "O Gifted!"

CHAPTER XXV.

The poet and the publisher.

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It was settled that Master Byles Gridley and Mr. Gifted Hopkins should leave early in the morning of the day appointed, to take the nearest train to the city. Mrs. Hopkins labored hard to get them ready, so that they might make a genteel appearance among the great people whom they would meet in society. She brushed up Mr. Gridley's best black suit, and bound the cuffs of his dress-coat, which were getting a little worried. She held his honest-looking hat to the fire, and smoothed it while it was warm, until one would have thought it had just been ironed by the hatter himself. She had his boots and shoes brought into a more brilliant condition than they had ever known: if Gifted helped, it was to his credit as much as if he had shown his gratitude by polishing off a copy of verses in praise of his benefactor.

When she had got Mr. Gridley's encumbrances in readiness for the journey, she devoted herself to fitting out her son Gifted. First, she had down from the garret a capacious trunk, of solid wood, but covered with leather, and adorned with brass-headed nails, by the cunning disposition of which, also, the paternal initials stood out on the rounded lid, in the most conspicuous manner. It was his father's trunk, and the first thing that went into it, as the widow lifted the cover, and the smothering shut-up smell struck an old chord of associations, was a single tear-drop. How well she remembered the time when she first unpacked it for her young husband, and the white shirt bosoms showed their snowy plaits! O dear, dear!

But women decant their affection, sweet and sound, out of the old bottles into the new ones,—off from the lees of the past generation, clear and bright, into the clean vessels just made ready to receive it. Gifted Hopkins was his mother's idol, and no wonder. She had not only the common attachment of a parent for him, as her offspring, but she felt that her race was to be rendered illustrious by his genius, and thought proudly of the time when some future biographer would mention her own humble name, to be held in lasting remembrance as that of the mother of Hopkins.

So she took great pains to equip this brilliant but inexperienced young man with everything he could by any possibility need during his absence. The great trunk filled itself until it bulged with its contents like a boa-constrictor who has swallowed his blanket. Best clothes and common clothes, thick clothes and thin clothes, flannels and linens, socks and collars, with handkerchiefs enough to keep the pickpockets busy for a week, with a paper of gingerbread and some lozenges for gastralgia, and "hot drops," and ruled paper to write letters on, and a little Bible, and a phial with hiera picra, and another with paregoric, and another with "camphire" for sprains and bruises,

—Gifted went forth equipped for every climate from the tropic to the pole, and armed against every malady from Ague to Zoster. He carried also the paternal watch, a solid silver bull's-eye, and a large pocketbook, tied round with a long tape, and, by way of precaution, pinned into his breast-pocket. He talked about having a pistol, in case he were attacked by any of the ruffians who are so numerous in the city, but Mr. Gridley

told him, No! he would certainly shoot himself, and he shouldn't think of letting him take a pistol.

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They went forth, Mentor and Telemachus, at the appointed time, to dare the perils of the railroad and the snares of the city. Mrs. Hopkins was firm up to near the last moment, when a little quiver in her voice set her eyes off, and her face broke up all at once, so that she had to hide it behind her handkerchief. Susan Posey showed the truthfulness of her character in her words to Gifted at parting. "Farewell," she said, "and think of me sometimes while absent. My heart is another's, but my friendship, Gifted—my friendship—"

Both were deeply affected. He took her hand and would have raised it to his lips; but she did not forget herself, and gently withdrew it, exclaiming, "O Gifted!" this time with a tone of tender reproach which made him feel like a profligate. He tore himself away, and when at a safe distance flung her a kiss, which she rewarded with a tearful smile.

Master Byles Gridley must have had some good dividends from some of his property of late. There is no other way of accounting for the handsome style in which he did things on their arrival in the city. He went to a tailor's and ordered a new suit to be sent home as soon as possible, for he knew his wardrobe was a little rusty. He looked Gifted over from head to foot, and suggested such improvements as would recommend him to the fastidious eyes of the selecter sort of people, and put him in his own tailor's hands, at the same time saying that all bills were to be sent to him, B. Gridley, Esq., parlor No. 6, at the Planet Hotel. Thus it came to pass that in three days from their arrival they were both in an eminently presentable condition. In the mean time the prudent Mr. Gridley had been keeping the young man busy, and amusing himself by showing him such of the sights of the city and its suburbs as he thought would combine instruction with entertainment.

When they were both properly equipped and ready for the best company, Mr. Gridley said to the young poet, who had found it very hard to contain his impatience, that they would now call together on the publisher to whom he wished to introduce him, and they set out accordingly.

"My name is Gridley," he said with modest gravity, as he entered the publisher's private room. "I have a note of introduction here from one of your authors, as I think he called himself, a very popular writer for whom you publish."

The publisher rose and came forward in the most cordial and respectful manner. "Mr. Gridley? Professor Byles Gridley,—author of 'Thoughts on the Universe'?"

The brave-hearted old man colored as if he had been a young girl. His dead book rose before him like an apparition. He groped in modest confusion for an answer. "A child I buried long ago, my dear sir," he said. "Its title-page was its tombstone. I have brought this young friend with me,—this is Mr. Gifted Hopkins of Oxbow Village,—who wishes to converse with you about—"

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"I have come, sir—" the young poet began, interrupting him.

"Let me look at your manuscript, if you please, Mr. Popkins," said the publisher, interrupting in his turn.

"Hopkins, if you please, sir," Gifted suggested mildly, proceeding to extract the manuscript, which had got wedged into his pocket, and seemed to be holding on with all its might. He was wondering all the time over the extraordinary clairvoyance of the publisher, who had looked through so many thick folds, broadcloth, lining, brown paper, and seen his poems lying hidden in his breast-pocket. The idea that a young person coming on such an errand should have to explain his intentions would have seemed very odd to the publisher. He knew the look which belongs to this class of enthusiasts just as a horse-dealer knows the look of a green purchaser with the equine fever raging in his veins. If a young author had come to him with a scrap of manuscript hidden in his boots, like Major Andre's papers, the publisher would have taken one glance at him and said, "Out with it!"

While he was battling for the refractory scroll with his pocket, which turned half wrong side out, and acted as things always do when people are nervous and in a hurry, the publisher directed his conversation again to Master Byles Gridley.

"A remarkable book, that of yours, Mr. Gridley, would have a great run if it were well handled. Came out twenty years too soon,—that was the trouble. One of our leading scholars was speaking of it to me the other day. 'We must have a new edition,' he said; people are just ripe for that book.' Did you ever think of that? Change the form of it a little, and give it a new title, and it will be a popular book. Five thousand or more, very likely."

Mr. Gridley felt as if he had been rapidly struck on the forehead with a dozen distinct blows from a hammer not quite big enough to stun him. He sat still without saying a word. He had forgotten for the moment all about poor Gifted Hopkins, who had got out his manuscript at last, and was calming the disturbed corners of it. Coming to himself a little, he took a large and beautiful silk handkerchief, one of his new purchases, from his pocket, and applied it to his face, for the weather seemed to have grown very warm all at once. Then he remembered the errand on which he had come, and thought of this youth, who had got to receive his first hard lesson in life, and whom he had brought to this kind man that it should be gently administered.

"You surprise me," he said,—"you surprise me. Dead and buried. Dead and buried. I had sometimes thought that—at some future period, after I was gone, it might—but I hardly know what to say about your suggestions. But here is my young friend, Mr. Hopkins, who would like to talk with you, and I will leave him in your hands. I am at the Planet Hotel, if you should care to call upon me. Good morning. Mr. Hopkins will explain everything to you more at his ease, without me, I am confident."

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Master Gridley could not quite make up his mind to stay through the interview between the young poet and the publisher. The flush of hope was bright in Gifted's eye and cheek, and the good man knew that young hearts are apt to be over-sanguine, and that one who enters a shower-bath often feels very differently from the same person when he has pulled the string.

"I have brought you my Poems in the original autographs, sir," said Mr. Gifted Hopkins.

He laid the manuscript on the table, caressing the leaves still with one hand, as loath to let it go.

"What disposition had you thought of making of them?" the publisher asked, in a pleasant tone. He was as kind a man as lived, though he worked the chief engine in a chamber of torture.

"I wish to read you a few specimens of the poems," he said, "with reference to their proposed publication in a volume."

"By all means," said the kind publisher, who determined to be very patient with the protege of the hitherto little-known, but remarkable writer, Professor Gridley. At the same time he extended his foot in an accidental sort of way, and pressed it on the right hand knob of three which were arranged in a line beneath the table. A little bell in a distant apartment—the little bell marked C—gave one slight note; loud enough to start a small boy up, who looked at the clock, and knew that he was to go and call the publisher in just twenty-five minutes. "A, five minutes; B, ten minutes; C, twenty-five minutes";—that was the youngster's working formula. Mr. Hopkins was treated to the full allowance of time, as being introduced by Professor Gridley.

The young man laid open the manuscript so that the title-page, written out very handsomely in his own hand, should win the eye of the publisher.

Blossoms of the soul.
A wreath of verse; Original.

By gifted Hopkins.

"a youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown."—Gray.

"Shall I read you some of the rhymed pieces first, or some of the blank-verse poems, sir?" Gifted asked.

"Read what you think is best,—a specimen of your first-class style of composition."

"I will read you the very last poem I have written," he said, and he began:



"The triumph of song.

"I met that gold-haired maiden, all too dear;
And I to her: Lo! thou art very fair,
Fairer than all the ladies in the world
That fan the sweetened air with scented fans,
And I am scorched with exceeding love,
Yea, crisped till my bones are dry as straw.
Look not away with that high-arched brow,
But turn its whiteness that I may behold,
And lift thy great eyes till they blaze on mine,
And lay thy finger on thy perfect mouth,
And let thy lucent ears of careen pearl
Drink in the murmured music of my soul,
As the lush grass drinks in the globed dew;
For I have many scrolls of sweetest rhyme
I will unroll and make thee glad to hear.



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"Then she: O shaper of the marvellous phrase
That openeth woman's heart as Both a key,
I dare not hear thee—lest the bolt should slide
That locks another's heart within my own.
Go, leave me,—and she let her eyelids fall,
And the great tears rolled from her large blue eyes.

"Then I: If thou not hear me, I shall die,
Yea, in my desperate mood may lift my hand
And do myself a hurt no leach can mend;
For poets ever were of dark resolve,
And swift stern deed

"That maiden heard no more,
But spike: Alas! my heart is very weak,
And but for—Stay! And if some dreadful morn,
After great search and shouting thorough the wold,
We found thee missing,—strangled,—drowned i' the mere,
Then should I go distraught and be clean mad!

"O poet, read! read all thy wondrous scrolls.
Yea, read the verse that maketh glad to hear!
Then I began and read two sweet, brief hours,
And she forgot all love save only mine!"

"Is all this from real life?" asked the publisher.

"It—no, sir—not exactly from real life—that is, the leading female person is not wholly fictitious—and the incident is one which might have happened. Shall I read you the poems referred to in the one you have just heard, sir?"

"Allow me, one moment. Two hours' reading, I think, you said. I fear I shall hardly be able to spare quite time to hear them all. Let me ask what you intend doing with these productions, Mr.—rr Poplins."

"Hopkins, if you please, sir, not Poplins," said Gifted, plaintively. He expressed his willingness to dispose of the copyright, to publish on shares, or perhaps to receive a certain percentage on the profits.

"Suppose we take a glass of wine together, Mr.—Hopkins, before we talk business," the publisher said, opening a little cupboard and taking therefrom a decanter and two glasses. He saw the young man was looking nervous. He waited a few minutes, until the wine had comforted his epigastrium, and diffused its gentle glow through his unspoiled and consequently susceptible organisation.

“Come with me,” he said.

Gifted followed him into a dingy apartment in the attic, where one sat at a great table heaped and piled with manuscripts. By him was a huge basket, ha’f full of manuscripts also. As they entered he dropped another manuscript into the basket and looked up.

“Tell me,” said Gifted, “what are these papers, and who is he that looks upon them and drops them into the basket?”

“These are the manuscript poems that we receive, and the one sitting at the table is commonly spoken of among us as ‘The Butcher’. The poems he drops into the basket are those rejected as of no account”

“But does he not read the poems before he rejects them?”

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"He tastes them. Do you eat a cheese before you buy it?"

"And what becomes of all those that he drops into the basket?"

"If they are not claimed by their author in proper season, they go to the devil."

"What!" said Gifted, with his eyes stretched very round.

"To the paper factory, where they have a horrid machine they call the devil, that tears everything to bits,—as the critics treat our authors, sometimes, sometimes, Mr. Hopkins."

Gifted devoted a moment to silent reflection.

After this instructive sight they returned together to the publisher's private room. The wine had now warmed the youthful poet's praecordia, so that he began to feel a renewed confidence in his genius and his fortunes.

"I should like to know what that critic of yours would say to my manuscript," he said boldly.

"You can try it if you want to," the publisher replied, with an ominous dryness of manner which the sanguine youth did not perceive, or, perceiving, did not heed.

"How can we manage to get an impartial judgment?"

"Oh, I'll arrange that. He always goes to his luncheon about this time. Raw meat and vitriol punch,—that 's what the authors say. Wait till we hear him go, and then I will lay your manuscript so that he will come to it among the first after he gets back. You shall see with your own eyes what treatment it gets. I hope it may please him, but you shall see."

They went back to the publisher's private room and talked awhile. Then the little office-boy came up with some vague message about a gentleman—business—wants to see you, sir, *etc.*, according to the established programme; all in a vacant, mechanical sort of way, as if he were a talking-machine just running down.

The publisher told the boy that he was engaged, and the gentleman must wait. Very soon they heard The Butcher's heavy footstep as he went out to get his raw meat and vitriol punch.

"Now, then," said the publisher, and led forth the confiding literary lamb once more, to enter the fatal door of the critical shambles.

"Hand me your manuscript, if you please, Mr. Hopkins. I will lay it so that it shall be the third of these that are coming to hand. Our friend here is a pretty good judge of verse, and knows a merchantable article about as quick as any man in his line of business. If he forms a favorable opinion of your poems, we will talk over your propositions."

Gifted was conscious of a very slight tremor as he saw his precious manuscript deposited on the table, under two others, and over a pile of similar productions. Still he could not help feeling that the critic would be struck by his title. The quotation from Gray must touch his feelings. The very first piece in the collection could not fail to arrest him. He looked a little excited, but he was in good spirits.

"We will be looking about here when our friend comes back," the publisher said. "He is a very methodical person, and will sit down and go right to work just as if we were not here. We can watch him, and if he should express any particular interest in your poems, I will, if you say so, carry you up to him and reveal the fact that you are the author of the works that please him."

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They waited patiently until The Butcher returned, apparently refreshed by his ferocious refection, and sat down at his table. He looked comforted, and not in ill humor. The publisher and the poet talked in low tones, as if on business of their own, and watched him as he returned to his labor.

The Butcher took the first manuscript that came to hand, read a stanza here and there, turned over the leaves, turned back and tried again,—shook his head—held it for an instant over the basket, as if doubtful,—and let it softly drop. He took up the second manuscript, opened it in several places, seemed rather pleased with what he read, and laid it aside for further examination.

He took up the third. “Blossoms of the Soul,” *etc.* He glared at it in a dreadfully ogreish way. Both the lockers-on held their breath. Gifted Hopkins felt as if half a glass more of that warm sherry would not hurt him. There was a sinking at the pit of his stomach, as if he was in a swing, as high as he could go, close up to the swallows’ nests and spiders’ webs. The Butcher opened the manuscript at random, read ten seconds, and gave a short low grunt. He opened again, read ten seconds, and gave another grunt, this time a little longer and louder. He opened once more, read five seconds, and, with something that sounded like the snort of a dangerous animal, cast it impatiently into the basket, and took up the manuscript that came next in order.

Gifted Hopkins stood as if paralyzed for a moment.

“Safe, perfectly safe,” the publisher said to him in a whisper. “I’ll get it for you presently. Come in and take another glass of wine,” he said, leading him back to his own office.

“No, I thank you,” he said faintly, “I can bear it. But this is dreadful, sir. Is this the way that genius is welcomed to the world of letters?”

The publisher explained to him, in the kindest manner, that there was an enormous over-production of verse, and that it took a great part of one man’s time simply to overhaul the cart-loads of it that were trying to get themselves into print with the imprimatur of his famous house. “You are young, Mr. Hopkins. I advise you not to try to force your article of poetry on the market. The B——, our friend, there, that is, knows a thing that will sell as soon as he sees it. You are in independent circumstances, perhaps? If so, you can print—at your own expense—whatever you choose. May I take the liberty to ask your—profession?”

Gifted explained that he was “clerk” in a “store,” where they sold dry goods and West India goods, and goods promiscuous.

“Oh, well, then,” the publisher said, “you will understand me. Do you know a good article of brown sagas when you see it?”

Gifted Hopkins rather thought he did. He knew at sight whether it was a fair, salable article or not.

“Just so. Now our friend, there, knows verses that are salable and unsalable as well as you do brown sugar.—Keep quiet now, and I will go and get your manuscript for you.

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"There, Mr. Hopkins, take your poems,—they will give you a reputation in your village, I don't doubt, which, is pleasant, but it will cost you a good deal of money to print them in a volume. You are very young: you can afford to wait. Your genius is not ripe yet, I am confident, Mr. Hopkins. These verses are very well for a beginning, but a man of promise like you, Mr. Hopkins, must n't throw away his chance by premature publication! I should like to make you a present of a few of the books we publish. By and by, perhaps, we can work you into our series of poets; but the best pears ripen slowly, and so with genius.—Where shall I send the volumes?"

Gifted answered, to parlor No. 6, Planet Hotel, where he soon presented himself to Master Gridley, who could guess pretty well what was coming. But he let him tell his story.

"Shall I try the other publishers?" said the disconsolate youth.

"I would n't, my young friend, I would n't. You have seen the best one of them—all. He is right about it, quite right: you are young, and had better wait. Look here, Gifted, here is something to please you. We are going to visit the gay world together. See what has been left here this forenoon."

He showed him two elegant notes of invitation requesting the pleasure of Professor Byles Gridley's and of Mr. Gifted Hopkins's company on Thursday evening, as the guests of Mrs. Clymer Ketchum, of 24 Carat Place.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Mrs. Clymer Ketchum's party.

Myrtle Hazard had flowered out as beyond question the handsomest girl of the season, There were hints from different quarters that she might possibly be an heiress. Vague stories were about of some contingency which might possibly throw a fortune into her lap. The young men about town talked of her at the clubs in their free-and-easy way, but all agreed that she was the girl of the new crop,—“best filly this grass,” as Livingston Jenkins put it. The general understanding seemed to be that the young lawyer who had followed her to the city was going to capture her. She seemed to favor him certainly as much as anybody. But Myrtle saw many young men now, and it was not so easy as it would once have been to make out who was an especial favorite.

There had been times when Murray Bradshaw would have offered his heart and hand to Myrtle at once, if he had felt sure that she would accept him. But he preferred playing the safe game now, and only wanted to feel sure of her. He had done his best to be agreeable, and could hardly doubt that he had made an impression. He dressed well when in the city,—even elegantly,—he had many of the lesser social accomplishments,

was a good dancer, and compared favorably in all such matters with the more dashing young fellows in society. He was a better talker than most of them, and he knew more about the girl he was dealing with than they could know. "You have only got to say the word, Murray," Mrs. Clymer Ketchum said to her relative, "and you can have her. But don't be rash. I believe you can get Berengaria if you try; and there 's something better there than possibilities." Murray Bradshaw laughed, and told Mrs. Clymer Ketchum not to worry about him; he knew what he was doing.

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It so happened that Myrtle met Master Byles Gridley walking with Mr. Gifted Hopkins the day before the party. She longed to have a talk with her old friend, and was glad to have a chance of pleasing her poetical admirer. She therefore begged her hostess to invite them both to her party to please her, which she promised to do at once. Thus the two elegant notes were accounted for.

Mrs. Clymer Ketchum, though her acquaintances were chiefly in the world of fortune and of fashion, had yet a certain weakness for what she called clever people. She therefore always variegated her parties with a streak of young artists and writers, and a literary lady or two; and, if she could lay hands on a first-class celebrity, was as happy as an Amazon who had captured a Centaur.

"There's a demonish clever young fellow by the name of Lindsay," Mr. Livingston Jenkins said to her a little before the day of the party. "Better ask him. They say he 's the rising talent in his line, architecture mainly, but has done some remarkable things in the way of sculpture. There's some story about a bust he made that was quite wonderful. I'll find his address for you." So Mr. Clement Lindsay got his invitation, and thus Mrs. Clymer Ketchum's party promised to bring together a number of persons with whom we are acquainted, and who were acquainted with each other.

Mrs. Clymer Ketchum knew how to give a party. Let her only have carte blanche for flowers, music, and champagne, she used to tell her lord, and she would see to the rest, —lighting the rooms, tables, and toilet. He needn't be afraid: all he had to do was to keep out of the way.

Subdivision of labor is one of the triumphs of modern civilization. Labor was beautifully subdivided in this lady's household. It was old Ketchum's business to make money, and he understood it. It was Mrs. K.'s business to spend money, and she knew how to do it. The rooms blazed with light like a conflagration; the flowers burned like lamps of many-colored flame; the music throbbed into the hearts of the promenaders and tingled through all the muscles of the dancers.

Mrs. Clymer Ketchum was in her glory. Her point d'Alenyon must have spoiled ever so many French girls' eyes. Her bosom heaved beneath a kind of breastplate glittering with a heavy dew of diamonds. She glistened and sparkled with every movement, so that the admirer forgot to question too closely whether the eyes matched the brilliants, or the cheeks glowed like the roses. Not far from the great lady stood Myrtle Hazard. She was dressed as the fashion of the day demanded, but she had added certain audacious touches of her own, reminiscences of the time when the dead beauty had flourished, and which first provoked the question and then the admiration of the young people who had a natural eye for effect. Over the long white glove on her left arm was clasped a rich bracelet, of so quaint an antique pattern that

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nobody had seen anything like it, and as some one whispered that it was “the last thing out,” it was greatly admired by the fashion-plate multitude, as well as by the few who had a taste of their own. If the soul of Judith Pride, long divorced from its once beautifully moulded dust, ever lived in dim consciousness through any of those who inherited her blood, it was then and there that she breathed through the lips of Myrtle Hazard. The young girl almost trembled with the ecstasy of this new mode of being, soliciting every sense with light, with perfume, with melody,—all that could make her feel the wonderful complex music of a fresh life when all its chords first vibrate together in harmony. Miss Rhadamantha Pinnikle, whose mother was an Apex (of whose race it was said that they always made an obeisance when the family name was mentioned, and had all their portraits painted with halos round their heads), found herself extinguished in this new radiance. Miss Victoria Capsheaf stuck to the wall as if she had been a fresco on it. The fifty-year-old dynasties were dismayed and dismounted. Myrtle fossilized them as suddenly as if she had been a Gorgon instead of a beauty.

The guests in whom we may have some interest were in the mean time making ready for the party, which was expected to be a brilliant one; for 24 Carat Place was well known for the handsome style of its entertainments.

Clement Lindsay was a little surprised by his invitation. He had, however, been made a lion of several times of late, and was very willing to amuse himself once in a while with a peep into the great world.

It was but an empty show to him at best, for his lot was cast, and he expected to lead a quiet domestic life after his student days were over.

Master Byles Gridley had known what society was in his earlier time, and understood very well that all a gentleman of his age had to do was to dress himself in his usual plain way, only taking a little more care in his arrangements than was needed in the latitude of Oxbow Village. But Gifted must be looked after, that he should not provoke the unamiable comments of the city youth by any defect or extravagance of costume. The young gentleman had bought a light sky-blue neckerchief, and a very large breast-pin containing a gem which he was assured by the vender was a genuine stone. He considered that both these would be eminently effective articles of dress, and Mr. Gridley had some trouble to convince him that a white tie and plain shirt-buttons would be more fitted to the occasion.

On the morning of the day of the great party Mr. William Murray Bradshaw received a brief telegram, which seemed to cause him great emotion, as he changed color, uttered a forcible exclamation, and began walking up and down his room in a very nervous kind of way. It was a foreshadowing of a certain event now pretty sure to happen. Whatever bearing this telegram may have had upon his plans, he made up his mind that he

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would contrive an opportunity somehow that very evening to propose himself as a suitor to Myrtle Hazard. He could not say that he felt as absolutely certain of getting the right answer as he had felt at some previous periods. Myrtle knew her price, he said to himself, a great deal better than when she was a simple country girl. The flatteries with which she had been surrounded, and the effect of all the new appliances of beauty, which had set her off so that she could not help seeing her own attractions, rendered her harder to please and to satisfy. A little experience in society teaches a young girl the arts and the phrases which all the Lotharios have in common. Murray Bradshaw was ready to land his fish now, but he was not quite sure that she was yet hooked, and he had a feeling that by this time she knew every fly in his book. However, as he had made up his mind not to wait another day, he addressed himself to the trial before him with a determination to succeed, if any means at his command would insure success. He arrayed himself with faultless elegance: nothing must be neglected on such an occasion. He went forth firm and grave as a general going into a battle where all is to be lost or won. He entered the blazing saloon with the unfailing smile upon his lips, to which he set them as he set his watch to a particular hour and minute.

The rooms were pretty well filled when he arrived and made his bow before the blazing, rustling, glistening, waving, blushing appearance under which palpitated, with the pleasing excitement of the magic scene over which its owner presided, the heart of Mrs. Clymer Ketchum. He turned to Myrtle Hazard, and if he had ever doubted which way his inclinations led him, he could doubt no longer. How much dress and how much light can a woman bear? That is the way to measure her beauty. A plain girl in a simple dress, if she has only a pleasant voice, may seem almost a beauty in the rosy twilight. The nearer she comes to being handsome, the more ornament she will bear, and the more she may defy the sunshine or the chandelier.

Murray Bradshaw was fairly dazzled with the brilliant effect of Myrtle in full dress. He did not know before what handsome arms she had,—Judith Pride's famous arms—which the high-colored young men in top-boots used to swear were the handsomest pair in New England—right over again. He did not know before with what defiant effect she would light up, standing as she did directly under a huge lustre, in full flower of flame, like a burning azalea. He was not a man who intended to let his sentiments carry him away from the serious interests of his future, yet, as he looked upon Myrtle Hazard, his heart gave one throb which made him feel in every pulse that this way a woman who in her own right, simply as a woman, could challenge the homage of the proudest young man of her time. He hardly knew till this moment how much of passion mingled with other and

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calmer motives of admiration. He could say I love you as truly as such a man could ever speak these words, meaning that he admired her, that he was attracted to her, that he should be proud of her as his wife, that he should value himself always as the proprietor of so rare a person, that no appendage to his existence would take so high a place in his thoughts. This implied also, what is of great consequence to a young woman's happiness in the married state, that she would be treated with uniform politeness, with satisfactory evidences of affection, and with a degree of confidence quite equal to what a reasonable woman should expect from a very superior man, her husband.

If Myrtle could have looked through the window in the breast against which only authors are privileged to flatten their features, it is for the reader to judge how far the programme would have satisfied her.

Less than this, a great deal less, does appear to satisfy many young women; and it may be that the interior just drawn, fairly judged, belongs to a model lover and husband. Whether it does or not, Myrtle did not see this picture. There was a beautifully embroidered shirt-bosom in front of that window through which we have just looked, that intercepted all sight of what was going on within. She only saw a man, young, handsome, courtly, with a winning tongue, with an ambitious spirit, whose every look and tone implied his admiration of herself, and who was associated with her past life in such a way that they alone appeared like old friends in the midst of that cold alien throng. It seemed as if he could not have chosen a more auspicious hour than this; for she never looked so captivating, and her presence must inspire his lips with the eloquence of love. And she—was not this delirious atmosphere of light and music just the influence to which he would wish to subject her before trying the last experiment of all which can stir the soul of a woman? He knew the mechanism of that impressionable state which served Coleridge so excellently well,—

“All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve
The music, and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve,”—

though he hardly expected such startling results as happened in that case,—which might be taken as an awful warning not to sing moving ballads to young ladies of susceptible feelings, unless one is prepared for very serious consequences. Without expecting that Myrtle would rush into his arms, he did think that she could not help listening to him in the intervals of the delicious music, in some recess where the roses and jasmines and heliotropes made the air heavy with sweetness, and the crimson curtains drooped in heavy folds that half hid their forms from the curious eyes all round them. Her heart would swell like Genevieve's as he told her in simple phrase that she

was his life, his love, his all,—for in some two or three words like these he meant to put his appeal, and not in fine poetical phrases: that would do for Gifted Hopkins and rhyming tom-tits of that feather.

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Full of his purpose, involving the plans of his whole life, implying, as he saw clearly, a brilliant future or a disastrous disappointment, with a great unexploded mine of consequences under his feet, and the spark ready to fall into it, he walked about the gilded saloon with a smile upon his lips so perfectly natural and pleasant, that one would have said he was as vacant of any aim, except a sort of superficial good-matured disposition to be amused, as the blankest-eyed simpleton who had tied himself up in a white cravat and come to bore and be bored.

Yet under this pleasant smile his mind was so busy with its thoughts that he had forgotten all about the guests from Oxbow Village who, as Myrtle had told him, were to come this evening. His eye was all at once caught by a familiar figure, and he recognized Master Byles Gridley, accompanied by Mr. Gifted Hopkins, at the door of the saloon. He stepped forward at once to meet, and to present them.

Mr. Gridley in evening costume made an eminently dignified and respectable appearance. There was an unusual look of benignity upon his firmly moulded features, and an air of ease which rather surprised Mr. Bradshaw, who did not know all the social experiences which had formed a part of the old Master's history. The greeting between them was courteous, but somewhat formal, as Mr. Bradshaw was acting as one of the masters of ceremony. He nodded to Gifted in an easy way, and led them both into the immediate Presence.

"This is my friend Professor Gridley, Mrs. Ketchum, whom I have the honor of introducing to you,—a very distinguished scholar, as I have no doubt you are well aware. And this is my friend Mr. Gifted Hopkins, a young poet of distinction, whose fame will reach you by and by, if it has not come to your ears already."

The two gentlemen went through the usual forms, the poet a little crushed by the Presence, but doing his best. While the lady was making polite speeches to them, Myrtle Hazard came forward. She was greatly delighted to meet her old friend, and even looked upon the young poet with a degree of pleasure she would hardly have expected to receive from his company. They both brought with them so many reminiscences of familiar scenes and events, that it was like going back for the moment to Oxbow Village. But Myrtle did not belong to herself that evening, and had no opportunity to enter into conversation just then with either of them. There was to be dancing by and by, and the younger people were getting impatient that it should begin. At last the music sounded the well-known summons, and the floors began to ring to the tread of the dancers. As usual on such occasions there were a large number of noncombatants, who stood as spectators around those who were engaged in the campaign of the evening. Mr. Byles Gridley looked on gravely, thinking of the minuets and the gavots of his younger days. Mr. Gifted Hopkins, who had never acquired the desirable

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accomplishment of dancing, gazed with dazzled and admiring eyes at the wonderful evolutions of the graceful performers. The music stirred him a good deal; he had also been introduced to one or two young persons as Mr. Hopkins, the poet, and he began to feel a kind of excitement, such as was often the prelude of a lyric burst from his pen. Others might have wealth and beauty, he thought to himself, but what were these to the gift of genius? In fifty years the wealth of these people would have passed into other hands. In fifty years all these beauties would be dead, or wrinkled and double-wrinkled great-grandmothers. And when they were all gone and forgotten, the name of Hopkins would be still fresh in the world's memory. Inspiring thought! A smile of triumph rose to his lips; he felt that the village boy who could look forward to fame as his inheritance was richer than all the millionnaires, and that the words he should set in verse would have an enduring lustre to which the whiteness of pearls was cloudy, and the sparkle of diamonds dull.

He raised his eyes, which had been cast down in reflection, to look upon these less favored children of Fortune, to whom she had given nothing but perishable inheritances. Two or three pairs of eyes, he observed, were fastened upon him. His mouth perhaps betrayed a little self-consciousness, but he tried to show his features in an aspect of dignified self-possession. There seemed to be remarks and questionings going on, which he supposed to be something like the following:—

Which is it? Which is it?—Why, that one, there,—that young fellow,—don't you see?—What young fellow are you two looking at? Who is he? What is he?—Why, that is Hopkins, the poet.—Hopkins, the poet! Let me see him! Let me see him! Hopkins? What! Gifted Hopkins? *etc., etc.*

Gifted Hopkins did not hear these words except in fancy, but he did unquestionably find a considerable number of eyes concentrated upon him, which he very naturally interpreted as an evidence that he had already begun to enjoy a foretaste of the fame of which he should hereafter have his full allowance. Some seemed to be glancing furtively, some appeared as if they wished to speak, and all the time the number of those looking at him seemed to be increasing. A vision came through his fancy of himself as standing on a platform, and having persons who wished to look upon him and shake hands with him presented, as he had heard was the way with great people when going about the country. But this was only a suggestion, and by no means a serious thought, for that would have implied infatuation.

Gifted Hopkins was quite right in believing that he attracted many eyes. At last those of Myrtle Hazard were called to him, and she perceived that an accident was making him unenviably conspicuous. The bow of his rather large white neck-tie had slid round and got beneath his left ear. A not very good-natured or well-bred young fellow had pointed out the subject of this slight misfortune to one or two others of not much better taste or

breeding, and thus the unusual attention the youthful poet was receiving explained itself. Myrtle no sooner saw the little accident of which her rural friend was the victim than she left her place in the dance with a simple courage which did her credit.

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"I want to speak to you a minute," she said. "Come into this alcove."

And the courageous young lady not only told Gifted what had happened to him, but found a pin somehow, as women always do on a pinch, and had him in presentable condition again almost before the bewildered young man knew what was the matter. On reflection it occurred to him, as it has to other provincial young persons going to great cities, that he might perhaps have been hasty in thinking himself an object of general curiosity as yet. There had hardly been time for his name to have become very widely known. Still, the feeling had been pleasant for the moment, and had given him an idea of what the rapture would be, when, wherever he went, the monster digit (to hint a classical phrase) of the collective admiring public would be lifted to point him out, and the whisper would pass from one to another, "That's him! That's Hopkins!"

Mr. Murray Bradshaw had been watching the opportunity for carrying out his intentions, with his pleasant smile covering up all that was passing in his mind, and Master Byles Gridley, looking equally unconcerned, had been watching him. The young man's time came at last. Some were at the supper-table, some were promenading, some were talking, when he managed to get Myrtle a little apart from the rest, and led her towards one of the recesses in the apartment, where two chairs were invitingly placed. Her cheeks were flushed, her eyes were sparkling,—the influences to which he had trusted had not been thrown away upon her. He had no idea of letting his purpose be seen until he was fully ready. It required all his self-mastery to avoid betraying himself by look or tone, but he was so natural that Myrtle was thrown wholly off her guard. He meant to make her pleased with herself at the outset, and that not by point-blank flattery, of which she had had more than enough of late, but rather by suggestion and inference, so that she should find herself feeling happy without knowing how. It would be easy to glide from that to the impression she had produced upon him, and get the two feelings more or less mingled in her mind. And so the simple confession he meant to make would at length evolve itself logically, and hold by a natural connection to the first agreeable train of thought which he had called up. Not the way, certainly, that most young men would arrange their great trial scene; but Murray Bradshaw was a lawyer in love as much as in business, and considered himself as pleading a cause before a jury of Myrtle Hazard's conflicting motives. What would any lawyer do in a jury case but begin by giving the twelve honest men and true to understand, in the first place, that their intelligence and virtue were conceded by all, and that he himself had perfect confidence in them, and leave them to shape their verdict in accordance with these propositions and his own side of the case?

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Myrtle had, perhaps, never so seriously inclined her ear to the honeyed accents of the young pleader. He flattered her with so much tact, that she thought she heard an unconscious echo through his lips of an admiration which he only shared with all around him. But in him he made it seem discriminating, deliberate, not blind, but very real. This it evidently was which had led him to trust her with his ambitions and his plans,—they might be delusions, but he could never keep them from her, and she was the one woman in the world to whom he thought he could safely give his confidence.

The dread moment was close at hand. Myrtle was listening with an instinctive premonition of what was coming,—ten thousand mothers and grandmothers and great-grandmothers, and so on, had passed through it all in preceding generations until time reached backwards to the sturdy savage who asked no questions of any kind, but knocked down the primeval great-grandmother of all, and carried her off to his hole in the rock, or into the tree where he had made his nest. Why should not the coming question announce itself by stirring in the pulses and thrilling in the nerves of the descendant of all these grandmothers?

She was leaning imperceptibly towards him, drawn by the mere blind elemental force, as the plummet was attracted to the side of Schehallion. Her lips were parted, and she breathed a little faster than so healthy a girl ought to breathe in a state of repose. The steady nerves of William Murray Bradshaw felt unwonted thrills and tremors tingling through them, as he came nearer and nearer the few simple words with which he was to make Myrtle Hazard the mistress of his destiny. His tones were becoming lower and more serious; there were slight breaks once or twice in the conversation; Myrtle had cast down her eyes.

“There is but one word more to add,” he murmured softly, as he bent towards her—

A grave voice interrupted him. “Excuse me, Mr. Bradshaw,” said Master Bytes Gridley, “I wish to present a young gentleman to my friend here. I promised to show him the most charming young person I have the honor to be acquainted with, and I must redeem my pledge. Miss Hazard, I have the pleasure of introducing to your acquaintance my distinguished young friend, Mr. Clement Lindsay.”

Once mere, for the third time, these two young persons stood face to face. Myrtle was no longer liable to those nervous seizures which any sudden impression was liable to produce when she was in her half-hysterical state of mind and body. She turned to the new-comer, who found himself unexpectedly submitted to a test which he would never have risked of his own will. He must go through it, cruel as it was, with the easy self-command which belongs to a gentleman in the most trying social exigencies. He addressed her, therefore, in the usual terms of courtesy, and then turned and greeted Mr. Bradshaw, whom he had never

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met since their coming together at Oxbow Village. Myrtle was conscious, the instant she looked upon Clement Lindsay, of the existence of some peculiar relation between them; but what, she could not tell. Whatever it was, it broke the charm which had been weaving between her and Murray Bradshaw. He was not foolish enough to make a scene. What fault could he find with Clement Lindsay, who had only done as any gentleman would do with a lady to whom he had just been introduced, addressed a few polite words to her? After saying those words, Clement had turned very courteously to him, and they had spoken with each other. But Murray Bradshaw could not help seeing that Myrtle had transferred her attention, at least for the moment, from him to the new-comer. He folded his arms and waited,—but he waited in vain. The hidden attraction which drew Clement to the young girl with whom he had passed into the Valley of the Shadow of Death overmastered all other feelings, and he gave himself up to the fascination of her presence.

The inward rage of Murray Bradshaw at being interrupted just at the moment when he was, as he thought, about to cry checkmate and finish the first great game he had ever played may well be imagined. But it could not be helped. Myrtle had exercised the customary privilege of young ladies at parties, and had turned from talking with one to talking with another,—that was all. Fortunately, for him the young man who had been introduced at such a most critical moment was not one from whom he need apprehend any serious interference. He felt grateful beyond measure to pretty Susan Posey, who, as he had good reason for believing, retained her hold upon her early lover, and was looking forward with bashful interest to the time when she should become Mrs. Lindsay. It was better to put up quietly with his disappointment; and, if he could get no favorable opportunity that evening to resume his conversation at the interesting point where he left it off, he would call the next day and bring matters to a conclusion.

He called accordingly the next morning, but was disappointed in not seeing Myrtle. She had hardly slept that night, and was suffering from a bad headache, which last reason was her excuse for not seeing company.

He called again, the following day, and learned that Miss Hazard had just left the city, and gone on a visit to Oxbow Village:

CHAPTER XXVII.

Mine and countermine.

What the nature of the telegram was which had produced such an effect on the feelings and plans of Mr. William Murray Bradshaw nobody especially interested knew but himself. We may conjecture that it announced some fact, which had leaked out a little

prematurely, relating to the issue of the great land-case in which the firm was interested. However that might be, Mr. Bradshaw no sooner heard that Myrtle had suddenly

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left the city for Oxbow Village,—for what reason he puzzled himself to guess,—than he determined to follow her at once, and take up the conversation he had begun at the party where it left off. And as the young poet had received his quietus for the present at the publisher's, and as Master Gridley had nothing specially to detain him, they too returned at about the same time, and so our old acquaintances were once more together within the familiar precincts where we have been accustomed to see them.

Master Gridley did not like playing the part of a spy, but it must be remembered that he was an old college officer, and had something of the detective's sagacity, and a certain cunning derived from the habit of keeping an eye on mischievous students. If any underhand contrivance was at work, involving the welfare of any one in whom he was interested, he was a dangerous person for the plotters, for he had plenty of time to attend to them, and would be apt to take a kind of pleasure in matching his wits against another crafty person's,—such a one, for instance, as Mr. Macchiavelli Bradshaw.

Perhaps he caught some words of that gentleman's conversation at the party; at any rate, he could not fail to observe his manner. When he found that the young man had followed Myrtle back to the village, he suspected something more than a coincidence. When he learned that he was assiduously visiting The Poplars, and that he was in close communication with Miss Cynthia Badlam, he felt sure that he was pressing the siege of Myrtle's heart. But that there was some difficulty in the way was equally clear to him, for he ascertained, through channels which the attentive reader will soon have means of conjecturing, that Myrtle had seen him but once in the week following his return, and that in the presence of her dragons. She had various excuses when he called,—headaches, perhaps, among the rest, as these are staple articles on such occasions. But Master Gridley knew his man too well to think that slight obstacles would prevent his going forward to effect his purpose.

"I think he will get her; if he holds on," the old man said to himself, "and he won't let go in a hurry, if there were any real love about it—but surely he is incapable of such a human weakness as the tender passion. What does all this sudden concentration upon the girl mean? He knows something about her that we don't know,—that must be it. What did he hide that paper for, a year ago and more? Could that have anything to do with his pursuit of Myrtle Hazard today?"

Master Gridley paused as he asked this question of himself, for a luminous idea had struck him. Consulting daily with Cynthia Badlam, was he? Could there be a conspiracy between these two persons to conceal some important fact, or to keep something back until it would be for their common interest to have it made known?

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Now Mistress Kitty Fagan was devoted, heart and soul, to Myrtle Hazard, and ever since she had received the young girl from Mr. Gridley's hands, when he brought her back safe and sound after her memorable adventure, had considered him as Myrtle's best friend and natural protector. These simple creatures, whose thoughts are not taken up, like those of educated people, with the care of a great museum of dead phrases, are very quick to see the live facts which are going on about them. Mr. Gridley had met her, more or less accidentally, several times of late, and inquired very particularly about Myrtle, and how she got along at the house since her return, and whether she was getting over her headaches, and how they treated her in the family.

"Bliss your heart, Mr. Gridley," Kitty said to him on one of these occasions, "it's ahltogether changed intirely. Sure Miss Myrtle does jist iverythin' she likes, an' Miss Withers niver middles with her at ahl, excip' jist to roll up her eyes an' look as if she was the hid-moorner at a funeril whiniver Miss Myrtle says she wants to do this or that, or to go here or there. It's Miss Badlam that's ahlwiz after her, an' a-watchin' her,—she thinks she's cunnin'er than a cat, but there 's other folks that's got eyes an' ears as good as hers. It's that Mr. Bridshaw that's a puttin' his head together with Miss Badlam for somethin' or other, an' I don't believe there's no good in it, for what does the fox an' the cat be a whisperin' about, as if they was thaves an' incind'ries, if there ain't no mischief hatchin'?"

"Why, Kitty," he said, "what mischief do you think is going on, and who is to be harmed?"

"O Mr. Gridley," she answered, "if there ain't somebody to be chated somehow, then I don't know an honest man and woman from two rogues. An' have n't I heard Miss Myrtle's name whispered as if there was somethin' goin' on agin' her, an' they was afraid the tahk would go out through the doors, an' up through the chimbley? I don't want to tell no tales, Mr. Gridley, nor to hurt no honest body, for I'm a poor woman, Mr. Gridley, but I comes of dacent folks, an' I vallies my repitation an' character as much as if I was dressed in silks and satins instead of this mane old gown, savin' your presence, which is the best I 've got, an' niver a dollar to buy another. But if I iver I hears a word, Mr. Gridley, that manes any kind of a mischief to Miss Myrtle,—the Lard bliss her soul an' keep ahl the divils away from her!—I'll be runnin' straight down here to tell ye ahl about it,—be right sure o' that, Mr. Gridley."

"Nothing must happen to Myrtle," he said, "that we can help. If you see anything more that looks wrong, you had better come down here at once and let me know, as you say you will. At once, you understand. And, Kitty, I am a little particular about the dress of people who come to see me, so that if you would just take the trouble to get you a tidy pattern of gingham or calico, or whatever you like of that sort for a gown, you would please me; and perhaps this little trifle will be a convenience to you when you come to pay for it."

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Kitty thanked him with all the national accompaniments, and trotted off to the store, where Mr. Gifted Hopkins displayed the native amiability of his temper by fumbling down everything in the shape of gingham and calicoes they had on the shelves, without a murmur at the taste of his customer, who found it hard to get a pattern sufficiently emphatic for her taste. She succeeded at last, and laid down a five-dollar bill as if she were as used to the pleasing figure on its face as to the sight of her own five digits.

Master Byles Gridley had struck a spade deeper than he knew into his first countermines, for Kitty had none of those delicate scruples about the means of obtaining information which might have embarrassed a diplomatist of higher degree.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MR. BRADSHAW CALLS ON MISS BADLAM

"Is Miss Hazard in, Kitty?"

"Indade she's in, Mr. Bridshaw, but she won't see nobody."

"What's the meaning of that, Kitty? Here is the third time within three days you've told me I could n't see her. She saw Mr. Gridley yesterday, I know; why won't she see me to-day?"

"Y' must ask Miss Myrtle what the rason is, it's none o' my business, Mr. Bridshaw. That's the order she give me."

"Is Miss Badlam in?"

"Indade she's in, Mr. Bridshaw, an' I 'll go cahl her."

"Bedad," said Kitty Fagan to herself, "the cat an' the fox is goin' to have another o' thim big tahks together, an' sure the old hole for the stove-pipe has niver been stopped up yet."

Mr. Bradshaw and Miss Cynthia went into the parlor together, and Mistress Kitty retired to her kitchen. There was a deep closet belonging to this apartment, separated by a partition from the parlor. There was a round hole high up in this partition through which a stove-pipe had once passed. Mistress Kitty placed a stool just under this opening, upon which, as on a pedestal, she posed herself with great precaution in the attitude of the goddess of other people's secrets, that is to say, with her head a little on one side, so as to bring her liveliest ear close to the opening. The conversation which took place in the hearing of the invisible third party began in a singularly free-and-easy manner on Mr. Bradshaw's part.



"What the d—is the reason I can't see Myrtle, Cynthia?"

"That's more than I can tell you, Mr. Bradshaw. I can watch her goings on, but I can't account for her tantrums."

"You say she has had some of her old nervous whims,—has the doctor been to see her?"

"No indeed. She has kept to herself a good deal, but I don't think there's anything in particular the matter with her. She looks well enough, only she seems a little queer,—as girls do that have taken a fancy into their heads that they're in love, you know,—absent-minded,—does n't seem to be interested in things as you would expect after being away so long."

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Mr. Bradshaw looked as if this did not please him particularly. If he was the object of her thoughts she would not avoid him, surely.

“Have you kept your eye on her steadily?”

“I don’t believe there is an hour we can’t account for,—Kitty and I between us.”

“Are you sure you can depend on Kitty?”

[“Depind on Kitty, is it? Oh, an’ to be sure ye can depind on Kitty to kape watch at the stove-pipe hole, an’ to tell all y’r plottin’s an’ contrivin’s to them that’ll get the cheese out o’ y’r mousetrap for ye before ye catch any poor cratur in it.” This was the inaudible comment of the unseen third party.]

“Of course I can depend on her as far as I trust her. All she knows is that she must look out for the girl to see that she does not run away or do herself a mischief. The Biddies don’t know much, but they know enough to keep a watch on the—”

“Chickens.” Mr. Bradshaw playfully finished the sentence for Miss Cynthia.

[“An’ on the foxes, an’ the cats, an’ the wazels, an’ the hen-hahks, an’ ahl the other bastes,” added the invisible witness, in unheard soliloquy.]

“I ain’t sure whether she’s quite as stupid as she looks,” said the suspicious young lawyer. “There’s a little cunning twinkle in her eye sometimes that makes me think she might be up to a trick on occasion. Does she ever listen about to hear what people are saying?”

“Don’t trouble yourself about Kitty Fagan,’ for pity’s sake, Mr. Bradshaw. The Biddies are all alike, and they’re all as stupid as owls, except when you tell ’em just what to do, and how to do it. A pack of priest-ridden fools!”

The hot Celtic blood in Kitty Fagan’s heart gave a leap. The stout muscles gave an involuntary jerk. The substantial frame felt the thrill all through, and the rickety stool on which she was standing creaked sharply under its burden.

Murray Bradshaw started. He got up and opened softly all the doors leading from the room, one after another, and looked out.

“I thought I heard a noise as if somebody was moving, Cynthia. It’s just as well to keep our own matters to ourselves.”

“If you wait till this old house keeps still, Mr. Bradshaw, you might as well wait till the river has run by. It’s as full of rats and mice as an old cheese is of mites. There’s a hundred old rats in this house, and that’s what you hear.”

["An' one old cat; that's what I hear." Third party.]

"I told you, Cynthia, I must be off on this business to-morrow. I want to know that everything is safe before I go. And, besides, I have got something to say to you that's important, very important, mind you."

He got up once more and opened every door softly and looked out. He fixed his eye suspiciously on a large sofa at the other side of the room, and went, looking half ashamed of his extreme precaution, and peeped under it, to see if there was any one hidden thereto listen. Then he came back and drew his chair close up to the table at which Miss Badlam had seated herself. The conversation which followed was in a low tone, and a portion of it must be given in another place in the words of the third party. The beginning of it we are able to supply in this connection.

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"Look here, Cynthia; you know what I am going for. It's all right, I feel sure, for I have had private means of finding out. It's a sure thing; but I must go once more to see that the other fellows don't try any trick on us. You understand what is for my advantage is for yours, and, if I go wrong, you go overboard with me. Now I must leave the—you know—behind me. I can't leave it in the house or the office: they might burn up. I won't have it about me when I am travelling. Draw your chair a little more this way. Now listen."

["Indade I will," said the third party to herself. The reader will find out in due time whether she listened to any purpose or not.]

In the mean time Myrtle, who for some reason was rather nervous and restless, had found a pair of half-finished slippers which she had left behind her. The color came into her cheeks when she remembered the state of mind she was in when she was working on them for the Rev. Mr. Stoker. She recollected Master Gridley's mistake about their destination, and determined to follow the hint he had given. It would please him better if she sent them to good Father Pemberton, she felt sure, than if he should get them himself. So she enlarged them somewhat, (for the old man did not pinch his feet, as the younger clergyman was in the habit of doing, and was, besides, of portly dimensions, as the old orthodox three-deckers were apt to be,) and worked E. P. very handsomely into the pattern, and sent them to him with her love and respect, to his great delight; for old ministers do not have quite so many tokens of affection from fair hands as younger ones.

What made Myrtle nervous and restless? Why had she quitted the city so abruptly, and fled to her old home, leaving all the gayeties behind her which had so attracted and dazzled her?

She had not betrayed herself at the third meeting with the young man who stood in such an extraordinary relation to her,—who had actually given her life from his own breath,—as when she met him for the second time. Whether his introduction to her at the party, just at the instant when Murray Bradshaw was about to make a declaration, saved her from being in another moment the promised bride of that young gentleman, or not, we will not be so rash as to say. It looked, certainly, as if he was in a fair way to carry his point; but perhaps she would have hesitated, or shrunk back, when the great question came to stare her in the face.

She was excited, at any rate, by the conversation, so that, when Clement was presented to her, her thoughts could not at once be all called away from her other admirer, and she was saved from all danger of that sudden disturbance which had followed their second meeting. Whatever impression he made upon her developed itself gradually,—still, she felt strangely drawn towards him. It was not simply in his good looks, in his good manners, in his conversation,

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that she found this attraction, but there was a singular fascination which she felt might be dangerous to her peace, without explaining it to herself in words. She could hardly be in love with this young artist; she knew that his affections were plighted to another, a fact which keeps most young women from indulging unruly fancies; yet her mind was possessed by his image to such an extent that it left little room for that of Mr. William Murray Bradshaw.

Myrtle Hazard had been just ready to enter on a career of worldly vanity and ambition. It is hard to blame her, for we know how she came by the tendency. She had every quality, too, which fitted her to shine in the gay world; and the general law is, that those who have the power have the instinct to use it. We do not suppose that the bracelet on her arm was an amulet, but it was a symbol. It reminded her of her descent; it kept alive the desire to live over the joys and excitements of a bygone generation. If she had accepted Murray Bradshaw, she would have pledged herself to a worldly life. If she had refused him, it would perhaps have given her a taste of power that might have turned her into a coquette.

This new impression saved her for the time. She had come back to her nest in the village like a frightened bird; her heart was throbbing, her nerves were thrilling, her dreams were agitated; she wanted to be quiet, and could not listen to the flatteries or entreaties of her old lover.

It was a strong will and a subtle intellect that had arrayed their force and skill against the ill-defended citadel of Myrtle's heart. Murray Bradshaw was perfectly determined, and not to be kept back by any trivial hindrances, such as her present unwillingness to accept him, or even her repugnance to him, if a freak of the moment had carried her so far. It was a settled thing: Myrtle Hazard must become Mrs. Bradshaw; and nobody could deny that, if he gave her his name, they had a chance, at least, for a brilliant future.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Mistress Kitty Fagan calls on master Byles Gridley.

"I 'd like to go down to the store this mornin', Miss Withers, plase. Sure I've niver a shoe to my fut, only jist these two that I've got on, an' one other pair, and thim is so full of holes that whin I 'm standin' in 'em I'm outside of 'em intirely."

"You can go, Kitty," Miss Silence answered, funereally.



Thereupon Kitty Fagan proceeded to array herself in her most tidy apparel, including a pair of shoes not exactly answering to her description, and set out straight for the house of the Widow Hopkins. Arrived at that respectable mansion, she inquired for Mr. Gridley, and was informed that he was at home. Had a message for him,—could she see him in his study? She could if she would wait a little while. Mr. Gridley was busy just at this minute. Sit down, Kitty, and warm yourself at the cooking-stove.

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Mistress Kitty accepted Mrs. Hopkins's hospitable offer, and presently began orienting herself, and getting ready to make herself agreeable. The kindhearted Mrs. Hopkins had gathered about her several other pensioners besides the twins. These two little people, it may be here mentioned, were just taking a morning airing in charge of Susan Posey, who strolled along in company with Gifted Hopkins on his way to the store.

Mistress Kitty soon began the conversational blandishments so natural to her good-humored race. "It's a little blarney that'll jist suit th' old lady," she said to herself, as she made her first conciliatory advance.

"An' sure an' it's a beautiful kitten you've got there, Mrs. Hopkins. An' it's a splendid mouser she is, I'll be bound. Does n't she look as if she'd clans the house out o'them little bastes, bad luck to em."

Mrs. Hopkins looked benignantly upon the more than middle-aged tabby, slumbering as if she had never known an enemy, and turned smiling to Mistress Kitty. "Why, bless your heart, Kitty, our old puss would n't know a mouse by sight, if you showed her one. If I was a mouse, I'd as lieves have a nest in one of that old cat's ears as anywhere else. You couldn't find a safer place for one."

"Indade, an' to be sure she's too big an' too handsome a pussy to be after wastin' her time on them little bastes. It's that little tarrier dog of yours, Mrs. Hopkins, that will be after worryin' the mice an' the rats, an' the thaves too, I 'll warrant. Is n't he a fust-rate-lookin' watch-dog, an' a rig'ler rat-hound?"

Mrs. Hopkins looked at the little short-legged and short-winded animal of miscellaneous extraction with an expression of contempt and affection, mingled about half and half. "Worry 'em! If they wanted to sleep, I rather guess he would worry 'em! If barkin' would do their job for 'em, nary a mouse nor rat would board free gratis in my house as they do now. Noisy little good-for-nothing tike,—ain't you, Fret?"

Mistress Kitty was put back a little by two such signal failures. There was another chance, however, to make her point, which she presently availed herself of,—feeling pretty sure this time that she should effect a lodgement. Mrs. Hopkins's parrot had been observing Kitty, first with one eye and then with the other, evidently preparing to make a remark, but awkward with a stranger. "That 's a beautiful part y 've got there," Kitty said, buoyant with the certainty that she was on safe ground this time; "and tahks like a book, I 'll be bound. Poll! Poll! Poor Poll!"

She put forth her hand to caress the intelligent and affable bird, which, instead of responding as expected, "squawked," as our phonetic language has it, and, opening a beak imitated from a tooth-drawing instrument of the good old days, made a shrewd nip at Kitty's forefinger. She drew it back with a jerk.

“An’ is that the way your part tahks, Mrs. Hopkins?”

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"Talks, bless you, Kitty! why, that parrot hasn't said a word this ten year. He used to say Poor Poll! when we first had him, but he found it was easier to squawk, and that's all he ever does nowadays,—except bite once in a while."

"Well, an' to be sure," Kitty answered, radiant as she rose from her defeats, "if you'll kape a cat that does n't know a mouse when she sees it, an' a dog that only barks for his livin', and a part that only squawks an' bites an' niver spakes a word, ye must be the best-hearted woman that's alive, an' bliss ye, if ye was only a good Catholic, the Holy Father 'd make a saint of ye in less than no time!"

So Mistress Kitty Fagan got in her bit of Celtic flattery, in spite of her three successive discomfitures.

"You may come up now, Kitty," said Mr. Gridley over the stairs. He had just finished and sealed a letter.

"Well, Kitty, how are things going on up at The Poplars? And how does our young lady seem to be of late?"

"Whisht! whisht! your honor."

Mr. Bradshaw's lessons had not been thrown away on his attentive listener. She opened every door in the room, "by your lave," as she said. She looked all over the walls to see if there was any old stovepipe hole or other avenue to eye or ear. Then she went, in her excess of caution, to the window. She saw nothing noteworthy except Mr. Gifted Hopkins and the charge he convoyed, large and small, in the distance. The whole living fleet was stationary for the moment, he leaning on the fence with his cheek on his hand, in one of the attitudes of the late Lord Byron; she, very near him, listening, apparently, in the pose of Mignon aspirant au ciel, as rendered by Carlo Dolce Scheffer.

Kitty came back, apparently satisfied, and stood close to Mr. Gridley, who told her to sit down, which she did, first making a catch at her apron to dust the chair with, and then remembering that she had left that part of her costume at home.—Automatic movements, curious.

Mistress Kitty began telling in an undertone of the meeting between Mr. Bradshaw and Miss Badlam, and of the arrangements she made for herself as the reporter of the occasion. She then repeated to him, in her own way, that part of the conversation which has been already laid before the reader. There is no need of going over the whole of this again in Kitty's version, but we may fit what followed into the joints of what has been already told.

"He cahled her Cynthy, d' ye see, Mr. Gridley, an' tahked to her jist as asy as if they was two rogues, and she knowed it as well as he did. An' so, says he, I'm goin' away, says

he, an' I'm goin' to be gahn sival days, or perhaps longer, says he, an' you'd better kape it, says he."

"Keep what, Kitty? What was it he wanted her to keep?" said Mr. Gridley, who no longer doubted that he was on the trail of a plot, and meant to follow it. He was getting impatient with the "says he's" with which Kitty double-led her discourse.

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“An’ to be sure ain’t I tellin’ you, Mr. Gridley, jist as fast as my breath will let me? An’ so, says he, you’d better kape it, says he, mixed up with your other paupers, says he,” (Mr. Gridley started,) “an’ thin we can find it in the garret, says he, whinever we want it, says he. An’ if it all goes right out there, says he, it won’t be lahng before we shall want to find it, says he. And I can dipind on you, says he, for we’re both in the same boat, says he, an’ you knows what I knows, says he, an’ I knows what you knows, says be. And thin he taks a stack o’ paupers out of his pocket, an’ he pulls out one of ’em, an’ he says to her, says he, that’s the pauper, says he, an’ if you die, says be, niver lose sight of that day or night, says he, for it’s life an’ dith to both of us, says he. An’ thin he asks her if she has n’t got one o’ them paupers—what is ’t they cahls ’em?—divilops, or some sich kind of a name—that they wraps up their letters in; an’ she says no, she has n’t got none that’s big enough to hold it. So he says, give me a shate o’ pauper, says he. An’ thin he takes the pauper that she give him, an’ he folds it up like one o’ them—divilops, if that’s the name of ’em; and thin he pulls a stick o’ salin’-wax out of his pocket, an’ a stamp, an’ he takes the pauper an’ puts it into th’ other pauper, along with the rest of the paupers, an’ thin he folds th’ other pauper over the paupers, and thin he lights a candle, an’ he milts the salin’-wax, and he sales up the pauper that was outside th’ other paupers, an’ he writes on the back of the pauper, an’ thin he hands it to Miss Badlam.”

“Did you see the paper that he showed her before he fastened it up with the others, Kitty?”

“I did see it, indade, Mr. Gridley, and it’s the truth I’m tellin’ ye.”

“Did you happen to notice anything about it, Kitty?”

“I did, indade, Mr. Gridley. It was a longish kind of a pauper, and there was some blotches of ink on the back of it,—an’ they looked like a face without any mouth, for, says I, there’s two spots for the eyes, says I, and there’s a spot for the nose, says I, and there’s niver a spot for the mouth, says I.”

This was the substance of what Master Byles Gridley got out of Kitty Fagan. It was enough, yes, it was too much. There was some deep-laid plot between Murray Bradshaw and Cynthia Badlam, involving the interests of some of the persons connected with the late Malachi Withers; for that the paper described by Kitty was the same that he had seen the young man conceal in the Corpus Juris Civilis, it was impossible to doubt. If it had been a single spot an the back of it, or two, he might have doubted. But three large spots “blotches” she had called them, disposed thus *. * — would not have happened to be on two different papers, in all human probability.

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After grave consultation of all his mental faculties in committee of the whole, he arrived at the following conclusion,—that Miss Cynthia Badlam was the depositary of a secret involving interests which he felt it his business to defend, and of a document which was fraudulently withheld and meant to be used for some unfair purpose. And most assuredly, Master Gridley said to himself, he held a master-key, which, just so certainly as he could make up his mind to use it, would open any secret in the keeping of Miss Cynthia Badlam.

He proceeded, therefore, without delay, to get ready for a visit to that lady at The Poplars. He meant to go thoroughly armed, for he was a very provident old gentleman. His weapons were not exactly of the kind which a housebreaker would provide himself with, but of a somewhat peculiar nature.

Weapon number one was a slip of paper with a date and a few words written upon it. “I think this will fetch the document,” he said to himself, “if it comes to the worst. Not if I can help it,—not if I can help it. But if I cannot get at the heart of this thing otherwise, why, I must come to this. Poor woman!—Poor woman!”

Weapon number two was a small phial containing spirits of hartshorn, sal volatile, very strong, that would stab through the nostrils, like a stiletto, deep into the gray kernels that lie in the core of the brain. Excellent in cases of sudden syncope or fainting, such as sometimes require the opening of windows, the dashing on of cold water, the cutting of stays, perhaps, with a scene of more or less tumultuous perturbation and afflux of clamorous womanhood.

So armed, Byles Gridley, A. M., champion of unprotected innocence, grasped his ivory-handled cane and sallied forth on his way to The Poplars.

CHAPTER XXX.

Master Byles Gridley calls on miss Cynthia Badlam.

Miss Cynthia Badlam was seated in a small parlor which she was accustomed to consider her own during her long residences at The Poplars. The entry stove warmed it but imperfectly, and she looked pinched and cold, for the evenings were still pretty sharp, and the old house let in the chill blasts, as old houses are in the habit of doing. She was sitting at her table, with a little trunk open before her. She had taken some papers from it, which she was looking over, when a knock at her door announced a visitor, and Master Byles Gridley entered the parlor.

As he came into the room, she gathered the papers together and replaced them in the trunk, which she locked, throwing an unfinished piece of needle-work over it, putting the key in her pocket, and gathering herself up for company. Something of all this Master

Gridley saw through his round spectacles, but seemed not to see, and took his seat like a visitor making a call of politeness.

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A visitor at such an hour, of the male sex, without special provocation, without social pretext, was an event in the life of the desolate spinster. Could it be—No, it could not—and yet—and yet! Miss Cynthia threw back the rather common-looking but comfortable shawl which covered her shoulders, and showed her quite presentable figure, arrayed with a still lingering thought of that remote contingency which might yet offer itself at some unexpected moment; she adjusted the carefully plaited cap, which was not yet of the *lasciate ogni speranza* pattern, and as she obeyed these instincts of her sex, she smiled a welcome to the respectable, learned, and independent bachelor. Mr. Gridley had a frosty but kindly age before him, with a score or so of years to run, which it was after all not strange to fancy might be rendered more cheerful by the companionship of a well-conserved and amiably disposed woman, if any such should happen to fall in his way.

That smile came very near disconcerting the plot of Master Byles Gridley. He had come on an inquisitor's errand, his heart secure, as he thought, against all blandishments, his will steeled to break down all resistance. He had come armed with an instrument of torture worse than the thumb-screw, worse than the pulleys which attempt the miracle of adding a cubit to the stature, worse than the brazier of live coals brought close to the naked soles of the feet,—an instrument which, instead of trifling with the nerves, would clutch all the nerve-centres and the heart itself in its gripe, and hold them until it got its answer, if the white lips had life enough left to shape one. And here was this unfortunate maiden lady smiling at him, setting her limited attractions in their best light, pleading with him in that natural language which makes any contumacious bachelor feel as guilty as Cain before any single woman. If Mr. Gridley had been alone, he would have taken a good sniff at his own bottle of *sal volatile*; for his kind heart sunk within him as he thought of the errand upon which he had come. It would not do to leave the subject of his vivisection under any illusion as to the nature of his designs.

“Good evening, Miss Badlam,” he said, “I have come to visit you on a matter of business.”

What was the internal panorama which had unrolled itself at the instant of his entrance, and which rolled up as suddenly at the sound of his serious voice and the look of his grave features? It cannot be reproduced, though pages were given to it; for some of the pictures were near, and some were distant; some were clearly seen, and some were only hinted; some were not recognized in the intellect at all, and yet they were implied, as it were, behind the others. Many times we have all found ourselves glad or sorry, and yet we could not tell what thought it was that reflected the sunbeam or cast the shadow. Took into Cynthia's suddenly exalted consciousness and see the picture, actual and potential, unroll

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itself in all its details of the natural, the ridiculous, the selfish, the pitiful, the human. Glimpses, hints, echoes, suggestions, involving tender sentiments hitherto unknown, we may suppose, to that unclaimed sister's breast,—pleasant excitement of receiving congratulations from suddenly cordial friends; the fussy delights of buying furniture and shopping for new dresses,—(it seemed as if she could hear herself saying, "Heavy silks, —best goods, if you please,")—with delectable thumping down of flat-sided pieces of calico, cambric, "rep," and other stiffs, and rhythmic evolution of measured yards, followed by sharp snip of scissors, and that cry of rending tissues dearer to woman's ear than any earthly sound until she hears the voice of her own first-born,(much of this potentially, remember,)—thoughts of a comfortable settlement, an imposing social condition, a cheerful household, and by and by an Indian summer of serene widowhood,—all these, and infinite other involved possibilities had mapped themselves in one long swift flash before Cynthia's inward eye, and all vanished as the old man spoke those few words. The look on his face, and the tone of his cold speech, had instantly swept them all away, like a tea-set sliding in a single crash from a slippery tray.

What could be the "business" on which he had come to her with that solemn face?—she asked herself, as she returned his greeting and offered him a chair. She was conscious of a slight tremor as she put this question to her own intelligence.

"Are we like to be alone and undisturbed?" Mr. Gridley asked. It was a strange question,—men do act strangely sometimes. She hardly knew, whether to turn red or white.

"Yes, there is nobody like to come in at present," she answered. She did not know what to make of it. What was coming next,—a declaration, or an accusation of murder?

"My business," Mr. Gridley said, very gravely, "relates to this. I wish to inspect papers which I have reason to believe exist, and which have reference to the affairs of the late Malachi Withers. Can you help me to get sight of any of these papers not to be found at the Registry of Deeds or the Probate Office?"

"Excuse me, Mr. Gridley, but may I ask you what particular concern you have with the affairs of my relative, Cousin Malachi Withers, that's been dead and buried these half-dozen years?"

"Perhaps it would take some time to answer that question fully, Miss Badlam. Some of these affairs do concern those I am interested in, if not myself directly."

"May I ask who the person or persons may be on whose account you wish to look at papers belonging to my late relative, Malachi Withers?"



“You can ask me almost anything, Miss Badlam, but I should really be very much obliged if you would answer my question first. Can you help me to get a sight of any papers relating to the estate of Malachi Withers, not to be found at the Registry of Deeds or the Probate Office,—any of which you may happen to have any private and particular knowledge?”

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"I beg your pardon, Mr. Gridley; but I don't understand why you come to me with such questions. Lawyer Penhallow is the proper person, I should think, to go to. He and his partner that was—Mr. Wibird, you know—settled the estate, and he has got the papers, I suppose, if there are any, that ain't to be found in the offices you mention."

Mr. Gridley moved his chair a little, so as to bring Miss Badlam's face a little more squarely in view.

"Does Mr. William Murray Bradshaw know anything about any papers, such as I am referring to, that may have been sent to the office?"

The lady felt a little moisture stealing through all her pores, and at the same time a certain dryness of the vocal organs, so that her answer came in a slightly altered tone which neither of them could help noticing.

"You had better ask Mr. William Murray Bradshaw yourself about that," she answered. She felt the hook now, and her spines were rising, partly with apprehension, partly with irritation.

"Has that young gentleman ever delivered into your hands any papers relating to the affairs of the late Malachi Withers, for your safe keeping?"

"What do you mean by asking me these questions, Mr. Gridley? I don't choose to be catechised about Murray Bradshaw's business. Go to him, if you please, if you want to find out about it."

"Excuse my persistence, Miss Badlam, but I must prevail upon you to answer my question. Has Mr. William Murray Bradshaw ever delivered into your hands any papers relating to the affairs of the late Malachi Withers, for your safe keeping?"

"Do you suppose I am going to answer such questions as you are putting me because you repeat them over, Mr. Gridley? Indeed I cha'n't. Ask him, if you please, whatever you wish to know about his doings."

She drew herself up and looked savagely at him. She had talked herself into her courage. There was a color in her cheeks and a sparkle in her eye; she looked dangerous as a cobra.

"Miss Cynthia Badlam," Master Gridley said, very deliberately, "I am afraid we do not entirely understand each other. You must answer my question precisely, categorically, point-blank, and on the instant. Will you do this at once, or will you compel me to show you the absolute necessity of your doing it, at the expense of pain to both of us? Six words from me will make you answer all my questions."

"You can't say six words, nor sixty, Mr. Gridley, that will make me answer one question I do not choose to. I defy you!"

"I will not say one, Miss Cynthia Badlam. There are some things one does not like to speak in words. But I will show you a scrap of paper, containing just six words and a date; not one word more nor one less. You shall read them. Then I will burn the paper in the flame of your lamp. As soon after that as you feel ready, I will ask the same question again."

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Master Gridley took out from his pocket-book a scrap of paper, and handed it to Cynthia Badlam. Her hand shook as she received it, for she was frightened as well as enraged, and she saw that Mr. Gridley was in earnest and knew what he was doing.

She read the six words, he looking at her steadily all the time, and watching her as if he had just given her a drop of prussic acid.

No cry. No sound from her lips. She stared as if half stunned for one moment, then turned her head and glared at Mr. Gridley as if she would have murdered him if she dared. In another instant her face whitened, the scrap of paper fluttered to the floor, and she would have followed it but for the support of both Mr. Gridley's arms. He disengaged one of them presently, and felt in his pocket for the sal volatile. It served him excellently well, and stung her back again to her senses very quickly. All her defiant aspect had gone.

"Look!" he said, as he lighted the scrap of paper in the flame. "You understand me, and you see that I must be answered the next time I ask my question."

She opened her lips as if to speak. It was as when a bell is rung in a vacuum,—no words came from them,—only a faint gasping sound, an effort at speech. She was caught tight in the heart-screw.

"Don't hurry yourself, Miss Cynthia," he said, with a certain relenting tenderness of manner. "Here, take another sniff of the smelling-salts. Be calm, be quiet,—I am well disposed towards you,—I don't like to give you trouble. There, now, I must have the answer to that question; but take your time, take your time."

"Give me some water,—some water!" she said, in a strange hoarse whisper. There was a pitcher of water and a tumbler on an old marble sideboard near by. He filled the tumbler, and Cynthia emptied it as if she had just been taken from the rack, and could have swallowed a bucketful.

"What do you want to know?" she asked.

"I wish to know all that you can tell me about a certain paper, or certain papers, which I have reason to believe Mr. William Murray Bradshaw committed to your keeping."

"There is only one paper of any consequence. Do you want to make him kill me? or do you want to make me kill myself?"

"Neither, Miss Cynthia, neither. I wish to see that paper, but not for any bad purpose. Don't you think, on the whole, you have pretty good reason to trust me? I am a very quiet man, Miss Cynthia. Don't be afraid of me; only do what I ask,—it will be a great deal better for you in the end."

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She thrust her trembling hand into her pocket, and took out the key of the little trunk. She drew the trunk towards her, put the key in the lock, and opened it. It seemed like pressing a knife into her own bosom and turning the blade. That little trunk held all the records of her life the forlorn spinster most cherished;—a few letters that came nearer to love-letters than any others she had ever received; an album, with flowers of the summers of 1840 and 1841 fading between its leaves; two papers containing locks of hair, half of a broken ring, and other insignificant mementos which had their meaning, doubtless, to her,—such a collection as is often priceless to one human heart, and passed by as worthless in the auctioneer's inventory. She took the papers out mechanically, and laid them on the table. Among them was an oblong packet, sealed with what appeared to be the office seal of Messrs. Penhallow and Bradshaw.

“Will you allow me to take that envelope containing papers, Miss Badlam?” Mr. Gridley asked, with a suavity and courtesy in his tone and manner that showed how he felt for her sex and her helpless position.

She seemed to obey his will as if she had none of her own left. She passed the envelope to him, and stared at him vacantly while he examined it. He read on the back of the package: “Withers Estate—old papers—of no importance apparently. Examine hereafter.”

“May I ask when, where, and of whom you obtained these papers, Miss Badlam?”

“Have pity on me, Mr. Gridley,—have pity on me. I am a lost woman if you do not. Spare me! for God's sake, spare me! There will no wrong come of all this, if you will but wait a little while. The paper will come to light when it is wanted, and all will be right. But do not make me answer any more questions, and let me keep this paper. O Mr. Gridley! I am in the power of a dreadful man—”

“You mean Mr. William Murray Bradshaw?”

“I mean him.”

“Has there not been some understanding between you that he should become the approved suitor of Miss Myrtle Hazard?”

Cynthia wrung her hands and rocked herself backward and forward in her misery, but answered not a word. What could she answer, if she had plotted with this “dreadful man” against a young and innocent girl, to deliver her over into his hands, at the risk of all her earthly hopes and happiness?

Master Gridley waited long and patiently for any answer she might have the force to make. As she made none, he took upon himself to settle the whole matter without further torture of his helpless victim.

“This package must go into the hands of the parties who had the settlement of the estate of the late Malachi Withers. Mr. Penhallow is the survivor of the two gentlemen to whom that business was intrusted. How long is Mr. William Murray Bradshaw like to be away?”

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"Perhaps a few days,—perhaps weeks,—and then he will come back and kill me,—or—or—worse! Don't take that paper, Mr. Gridley,—he isn't like you! you would n't—but he would—he would send me to everlasting misery to gain his own end, or to save himself. And yet he is n't every way bad, and if he did marry Myrtle she'd think there never was such a man,—for he can talk her heart out of her, and the wicked in him lies very deep and won't ever come out, perhaps, if the world goes right with him." The last part of this sentence showed how Cynthia talked with her own conscience; all her mental and moral machinery lay open before the calm eyes of Master Byles Gridley.

His thoughts wandered a moment from the business before him; he had just got a new study of human nature, which in spite of himself would be shaping itself into an axiom for an imagined new edition of "Thoughts on the Universe," something like this, "The greatest saint may be a sinner that never got down to "hard pan." It was not the time to be framing axioms.

"Poh! poh!" he said to himself; "what are you about making phrases, when you have got a piece of work like this in hand?" Then to Cynthia, with great gentleness and kindness of manner: "Have no fear about any consequences to yourself. Mr. Penhallow must see that paper—I mean those papers. You shall not be a loser nor a sufferer if you do your duty now in these premises."

Master Gridley, treating her, as far as circumstances permitted, like a gentleman, had shown no intention of taking the papers either stealthily or violently. It must be with her consent. He had laid the package down upon the table, waiting for her to give him leave to take it. But just as he spoke these last words, Cynthia, whose eye had been glancing furtively at it while he was thinking out his axiom, and taking her bearings to it pretty carefully, stretched her hand out, and, seizing the package, thrust it into the sanctuary of her bosom.

"Mr. Penhallow must see those papers, Miss Cynthia Badlam," Mr. Gridley repeated calmly. "If he says they or any of them can be returned to your keeping, well and good. But see them he must, for they have his office seal and belong in his custody, and, as you see by the writing on the back, they have not been examined. Now there may be something among them which is of immediate importance to the relatives of the late deceased Malachi Withers, and therefore they must be forthwith submitted to the inspection of the surviving partner of the firm of Wibird and Penhallow. This I propose to do, with your consent, this evening. It is now twenty-five minutes past eight by the true time, as my watch has it. At half past eight exactly I shall have the honor of bidding you good evening, Miss Cynthia Badlam, whether you give me those papers or not. I shall go to the office of Jacob Penhallow, Esquire, and there make one of two communications to him; to wit, these papers and the facts connected therewith, or another statement, the nature of which you may perhaps conjecture."

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There is no need of our speculating as to what Mr. Byles Gridley, an honorable and humane man, would have done, or what would have been the nature of that communication which he offered as an alternative to the perplexed woman. He had not at any rate miscalculated the strength of his appeal, which Cynthia interpreted as he expected. She bore the heart-screw about two minutes. Then she took the package from her bosom, and gave it with averted face to Master Byles Gridley, who, on receiving it, made her a formal but not unkindly bow, and bade her good evening.

"One would think it had been lying out in the dew," he said, as he left the house and walked towards Mr. Penhallow's residence.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MASTER BYLES GRIDLEY CONSULTS WITH JACOB PENHALLOW, ESQUIRE

Lawyer Penhallow was seated in his study, his day's work over, his feet in slippers, after the comfortable but inelegant fashion which Sir Walter Scott reprobates, amusing himself with a volume of old Reports. He was a knowing man enough, a keen country lawyer but honest, and therefore less ready to suspect the honesty of others. He had a great belief in his young partner's ability, and, though he knew him to be astute, did not think him capable of roguery.

It was at his request that Mr. Bradshaw had undertaken his journey, which, as he believed,—and as Mr. Bradshaw had still stronger evidence of a strictly confidential nature which led him to feel sure,—would end in the final settlement of the great land claim in favor of their client. The case had been dragging along from year to year, like an English chancery suit; and while courts and lawyers and witnesses had been sleeping, the property had been steadily growing. A railroad had passed close to one margin of the township, some mines had been opened in the county, in which a village calling itself a city had grown big enough to have a newspaper and Fourth of July orations. It was plain that the successful issue of the long process would make the heirs of the late Malachi Withers possessors of an ample fortune, and it was also plain that the firm of Penhallow and Bradshaw were like to receive, in such case, the largest fee that had gladdened the professional existence of its members.

Mr. Penhallow had his book open before him, but his thoughts were wandering from the page. He was thinking of his absent partner, and the probable results of his expedition. What would be the consequence if all this property came into the possession of Silence Withers? Could she have any liberal intentions with reference to Myrtle Hazard, the young girl who had grown up with her, or was the common impression true, that she was bent on endowing an institution, and thus securing for herself a favorable consideration in the higher courts, where her beneficiaries would be, it might be supposed, influential advocates? He could not help thinking that Mr. Bradshaw believed

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that Myrtle Hazard would eventually come to apart at least of this inheritance. For the story was, that he was paying his court to the young lady whenever he got an opportunity, and that he was cultivating an intimacy with Miss Cynthia Badlam. "Bradshaw would n't make a move in that direction," Mr. Penhallow said to himself, "until he felt pretty sure that it was going to be a paying business. If he was only a young minister now, there'd be no difficulty about it. Let any man, young or old, in a clerical white cravat, step up to Myrtle Hazard, and ask her to be miserable in his company through this wretched life, and aunt Silence would very likely give them her blessing, and add something to it that the man in the white cravat would think worth even more than that was. But I don't know what she'll say to Bradshaw. Perhaps he 'd better have a hint to go to meeting a little more regularly. However, I suppose he knows what he's about."

He was thinking all this over when a visitor was announced, and Mr. Byles Gridley entered the study.

"Good evening, Mr. Penhallow," Mr. Gridley said, wiping his forehead. "Quite warm, is n't it, this evening?"

"Warm!" said Mr. Penhallow, "I should think it would freeze pretty thick to-night. I should have asked you to come up to the fire and warm yourself. But take off your coat, Mr. Gridley,—very glad to see you. You don't come to the house half as often as you come to the office. Sit down, sit down."

Mr. Gridley took off his outside coat and sat down. "He does look warm, does n't he?" Mr. Penhallow thought. "Wonder what has heated up the old gentleman so. Find out quick enough, for he always goes straight to business."

"Mr. Penhallow," Mr. Gridley began at once, "I have come on a very grave matter, in which you are interested as well as myself, and I wish to lay the whole of it before you as explicitly as I can, so that we may settle this night before I go what is to be done. I am afraid the good standing of your partner, Mr. William Murray Bradshaw, is concerned in the matter. Would it be a surprise to you, if he had carried his acuteness in some particular case like the one I am to mention beyond the prescribed limits?"

The question was put so diplomatically that there was no chance for an indignant denial of the possibility of Mr. Bradshaw's being involved in any discreditable transaction.

"It is possible," he answered, "that Bradshaw's keen wits may have betrayed him into sharper practice than I should altogether approve in any business we carried on together. He is a very knowing young man, but I can't think he is foolish enough, to say



nothing of his honesty, to make any false step of the kind you seem to hint. I think he might on occasion go pretty near the line, but I don't believe he would cross it."

"Permit me a few questions, Mr. Penhallow. You settled the estate of the late Malachi Withers, did you not?"

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"Mr. Wibird and myself settled it together."

"Have you received any papers from any of the family since the settlement of the estate?"

"Let me see. Yes; a roll of old plans of the Withers Place, and so forth,—not of much use, but labelled and kept. An old trunk with letters and account-books, some of them in Dutch,—mere curiosities. A year ago or more, I remember that Silence sent me over some papers she had found in an odd corner,—the old man hid things like a magpie. I looked over most of them,—trumpery not worth keeping,—old leases and so forth."

"Do you recollect giving some of them to Mr. Bradshaw to look over?"

"Now I come to think of it, I believe I did; but he reported to me, if I remember right, that they amounted to nothing."

"If any of those papers were of importance, should you think your junior partner ought to keep them from your knowledge?"

"I need not answer that question, Mr. Gridley. Will you be so good as to come at once to the facts on which you found your suspicions, and which lead you to put these questions to me?"

Thereupon Mr. Gridley proceeded to state succinctly the singular behavior of Murray Bradshaw in taking one paper from a number handed to him by Mr. Penhallow, and concealing it in a volume. He related how he was just on the point of taking out the volume which contained the paper, when Mr. Bradshaw entered and disconcerted him. He had, however, noticed three spots on the paper by which he should know it anywhere. He then repeated the substance of Kitty Fagan's story, accenting the fact that she too noticed three remarkable spots on the paper which Mr. Bradshaw had pointed out to Miss Badlam as the one so important to both of them. Here he rested the case for the moment.

Mr. Penhallow looked thoughtful. There was something questionable in the aspect of this business. It did obviously suggest the idea of an underhand arrangement with Miss Cynthia, possibly involving some very grave consequences. It would have been most desirable, he said, to have ascertained what these papers, or rather this particular paper, to which so much importance was attached, amounted to. Without that knowledge there was nothing, after all, which it might not be possible to explain. He might have laid aside the spotted paper to examine for some object of mere curiosity. It was certainly odd that the one the Fagan woman had seen should present three spots so like those on the other paper, but people did sometimes throw treys at backgammon, and that which not rarely happened with two dice of six faces might happen if they had sixty or six hundred faces. On the whole, he did not see that there was any ground, so



far, for anything more than a vague suspicion. He thought it not unlikely that Mr. Bradshaw was a little smitten with the young lady up at The Poplars, and that he had made some diplomatic overtures to the duenna, after the approved method of suitors. She was young for Bradshaw,—very young,—but he knew his own affairs. If he chose to make love to a child, it was natural enough that he should begin by courting her nurse.

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Master Byles Gridley lost himself for half a minute in a most discreditable inward discussion as to whether Laura Penhallow was probably one or two years older than Mr. Bradshaw. That was his way, he could not help it. He could not think of anything without these mental parentheses. But he came back to business at the end of his half-minute.

"I can lay the package before you at this moment, Mr. Penhallow. I have induced that woman in whose charge it was left to intrust it to my keeping, with the express intention of showing it to you. But it is protected by a seal, as I have told you, which I should on no account presume to meddle with."

Mr. Gridley took out the package of papers.

"How damp it is!" Mr. Penhallow said; "must have been lying in some very moist neighborhood."

"Very," Mr. Gridley answered, with a peculiar expression which said, "Never mind about that."

"Did the party give you possession of these documents without making any effort to retain them?" the lawyer asked.

"Not precisely. It cost some effort to induce Miss Badlam to let them go out of her hands. I hope you think I was justified in making the effort I did, not without a considerable strain upon my feelings, as well as her own, to get hold of the papers?"

"That will depend something on what the papers prove to be, Mr. Gridley. A man takes a certain responsibility in doing just what you have done. If, for instance, it should prove that this envelope contained matters relating solely to private transactions between Mr. Bradshaw and Miss Badlam, concerning no one but themselves,—and if the words on the back of the envelope and the seal had been put there merely as a protection for a package containing private papers of a delicate but perfectly legitimate character—"

The lawyer paused, as careful experts do, after bending the bow of an hypothesis, before letting the arrow go. Mr. Gridley felt very warm indeed, uncomfortably so, and applied his handkerchief to his face. Could n't be anything in such a violent supposition as that, and yet such a crafty fellow as that Bradshaw,—what trick was he not up to? Absurd! Cynthia was not acting,—Rachel would n't be equal to such a performance!—"why then, Mr. Gridley," the lawyer continued, "I don't see but what my partner would have you at an advantage, and, if disposed to make you uncomfortable, could do so pretty effectively. But this, you understand, is only a supposed case, and not a very likely one. I don't think it would have been prudent in you to meddle with that seal. But it is a very different matter with regard to myself. It makes no difference, so far as I am concerned, where this package came from, or how it was obtained. It is just as

absolutely within my control as any piece of property I call my own. I should not hesitate, if I saw fit, to break this seal at once, and proceed to the examination of any papers contained within the envelope. If I found any paper of the slightest importance relating to the estate, I should act as if it had never been out of my possession.

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“Suppose, however, I chose to know what was in the package, and, having ascertained, act my judgment about returning it to the party from whom you obtained it. In such case I might see fit to restore or cause it to be restored, to the party, without any marks of violence having been used being apparent. If everything is not right, probably no questions would be asked by the party having charge of the package. If there is no underhand work going on, and the papers are what they profess to be, nobody is compromised but yourself, so far as I can see, and you are compromised at any rate, Mr. Gridley, at least in the good graces of the party from whom you obtained the documents. Tell that party that I took the package without opening it, and shall return it, very likely, without breaking the seal. Will consider of the matter, say a couple of days. Then you shall hear from me, and she shall hear from you. So. So. Yes, that's it. A nice business. A thing to sleep on. You had better leave the whole matter of dealing with the package to me. If I see fit to send it back with the seal unbroken, that is my affair. But keep perfectly quiet, if you please, Mr. Gridley, about the whole matter. Mr. Bradshaw is off, as you know, and the business on which he is gone is important,—very important. He can be depended on for that; he has acted all along as if he had a personal interest in the success of our firm beyond his legal relation to it.”

Mr. Penhallow's light burned very late in the office that night, and the following one. He looked troubled and absent-minded, and when Miss Laura ventured to ask him how long Mr. Bradshaw was like to be gone, he answered her in such a way that the girl who waited at table concluded that he did n't mean to have Miss Laury keep company with Mr. Bradshaw, or he'd never have spoke so dreadful hash to her when she asked about him.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Susan Posey's trial.

A day or two after Myrtle Hazard returned to the village, Master Byles Gridley, accompanied by Gifted Hopkins, followed her, as has been already mentioned, to the same scene of the principal events of this narrative. The young man had been persuaded that it would be doing injustice to his talents to crowd their fruit prematurely upon the market. He carried his manuscript back with him, having relinquished the idea of publishing for the present. Master Byles Gridley, on the other hand, had in his pocket a very flattering proposal, from the same publisher to whom he had introduced the young poet, for a new and revised edition of his work, “Thoughts on the Universe,” which was to be remodelled in some respects, and to have a new title not quite so formidable to the average reader.

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It would be hardly fair to Susan Posey to describe with what delight and innocent enthusiasm she welcomed back Gifted Hopkins. She had been so lonely since he was away? She had read such of his poems as she possessed—duplicates of his printed ones, or autographs which he had kindly written out for her—over and over again, not without the sweet tribute of feminine sensibility, which is the most precious of all testimonials to a poet's power over the heart. True, her love belonged to another,—but then she was so used to Gifted! She did so love to hear him read his poems,—and Clement had never written that “little bit of a poem to Susie,” which she had asked him for so long ago! She received him therefore with open arms,—not literally, of course, which would have been a breach of duty and propriety, but in a figurative sense, which it is hoped no reader will interpret to her discredit.

The young poet was in need of consolation. It is true that he had seen many remarkable sights during his visit to the city; that he had got “smarted up,” as his mother called it, a good deal; that he had been to Mrs. Clymer Ketchum's party, where he had looked upon life in all its splendors; and that he brought back many interesting experiences, which would serve to enliven his conversation for a long time. But he had failed in the great enterprise he had undertaken. He was forced to confess to his revered parent, and his esteemed friend Susan Posey, that his genius, which was freely acknowledged, was not thought to be quite ripe as yet. He told the young lady some particulars of his visit to the publisher, how he had listened with great interest to one of his poems, “The Triumph of Song,”—how he had treated him with marked and flattering attention; but that he advised him not to risk anything prematurely, giving him the hope that by and by he would be admitted into that series of illustrious authors which it was the publisher's privilege to present to the reading public. In short, he was advised not to print. That was the net total of the matter, and it was a pang to the susceptible heart of the poet. He had hoped to have come home enriched by the sale of his copyright, and with the prospect of seeing his name before long on the back of a handsome volume.

Gifted's mother did all in her power to console him in his disappointment. There was plenty of jealous people always that wanted to keep young folks from rising in the world. Never mind, she did n't believe but what Gifted could make jest as good verses as any of them that they kept such a talk about. She had a fear that he might pine away in consequence of the mental excitement he had gone through, and solicited his appetite with her choicest appliances,—of which he partook in a measure which showed that there was no immediate cause of alarm.

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But Susan Posey was more than a consoler,—she was an angel to him in this time of his disappointment. “Read me all the poems over again,” she said,—“it is almost the only pleasure I have left, to hear you read your beautiful verses.” Clement Lindsay had not written to Susan quite so often of late as at some former periods of the history of their love. Perhaps it was that which had made her look paler than usual for some little time. Something was evidently preying on her. Her only delight seemed to be in listening to Gifted as he read, sometimes with fine declamatory emphasis, sometimes in low, tremulous tones, the various poems enshrined in his manuscript. At other times she was sad, and more than once Mrs. Hopkins had seen a tear steal down her innocent cheek, when there seemed to be no special cause for grief. She ventured to speak of it to Master Byles Gridley.

“Our Susan’s in trouble, Mr. Gridley, for some reason or other that’s unbeknown to me, and I can’t help wishing you could jest have a few words with her. You’re a kind of a grandfather, you know, to all the young folks, and they’d tell you pretty much everything about themselves. I calc’late she is n’t at ease in her mind about somethin’ or other, and I kind o’ think, Mr. Gridley, you could coax it out of her.”

“Was there ever anything like it?” said Master Byles Gridley to himself. “I shall have all the young folks in Oxbow Village to take care of at this rate. Susan Posey in trouble, too! Well, well, well, it’s easier to get a birch-bark canoe off the shallows than a big ship off the rocks. Susan Posey’s trouble will be come at easily enough; but Myrtle Hazard floats in deeper water. We must make Susan Posey tell her own story, or let her tell it, for it will all come out of itself.”

“I am going to dust the books in the open shelves this morning. I wonder if Miss Susan Posey would n’t like to help for half an hour or so,” Master Gridley remarked at the breakfast-table.

The amiable girl’s very pleasant countenance lighted up at the thought of obliging the old man who had been so kind to her and so liberal to her friend, the poet. She would be delighted to help him; she would dust them all for him, if he wanted her to. No, Master Gridley said, he always wanted to have a hand in it; and, besides, such a little body as she was could not lift those great folios out of the lower shelves without overstraining herself; she might handle the musketry and the light artillery, but he must deal with the heavy guns himself. “As low down as the octavos, Susan Posey, you shall govern; below that, the Salic law.”

Susan did not low much about the Salic law; but she knew he meant that he would dust the big books and she would attend to the little ones.

A very young and a very pretty girl is sometimes quite charming in a costume which thinks of nothing less than of being attractive. Susan appeared after breakfast in the study, her head bound with a kerchief of bright pattern, a little jacket she had outgrown



buttoned, in spite of opposition, close about her up to the throat, round which a white handkerchief was loosely tied, and a pair of old gauntlets protecting her hands, so that she suggested something between a gypsy, a jaunty soubrette, and the fille du regiment.

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Master Gridley took out a great volume from the lower shelf,—a folio in massive oaken covers with clasps like prison hinges, bearing the stately colophon, white on a ground of vermilion, of Nicholas Jenson and his associates. He opened the volume,—paused over its blue, and scarlet initial letter,—he turned page after page, admiring its brilliant characters, its broad, white marginal rivers, and the narrower white creek that separated the black-typed twin-columns, he turned back to the beginning and read the commendatory paragraph, “*Nam ipsorum omnia fidentur tum correctione dignissima, tum cura imprimendo splendida ac miranda,*” and began reading, “*Incipit proemium super apparatus decretalium...*” when it suddenly occurred to him that this was not exactly doing what he had undertaken to do, and he began whisking an ancient bandanna about the ears of the venerable volume. All this time Miss Susan Posey was catching the little books by the small of their backs, pulling them out, opening them, and clapping them together, ‘p-’p-’p!’ ‘p-’p-’p!’ and carefully caressing all their edges with a regular professional dusting-cloth, so persuasively that they yielded up every particle that a year had drifted upon them, and came forth refreshed and rejuvenated. This process went on for a while, until Susan had worked down among the octavos and Master Gridley had worked up among the quartos. He had got hold of Calmet’s Dictionary, and was caught by the article Solomon, so that he forgot his occupation again. All at once it struck him that everything was very silent,—the ‘p-’p-’p!’ of clapping the books had ceased, and the light rustle of Susan’s dress was no longer heard. He looked up and saw her standing perfectly still, with a book in one hand and her duster in the other. She was lost in thought, and by the shadow on her face and the glistening of her blue eyes he knew it was her hidden sorrow that had just come back to her. Master Gridley shut up his book, leaving Solomon to his fate, like the worthy Benedictine he was reading, without discussing the question whether he was saved or not.

“Susan Posey, child, what is your trouble?”

Poor Susan was in the state of unstable equilibrium which the least touch upsets, and fell to crying. It took her some time to get down the waves of emotion so that speech would live upon them. At last it ventured out,—showing at intervals, like the boat rising on the billow, sinking into the hollow, and climbing again into notice.

“O Mr. Grid-ley—I can’t—I can’t—tell you or—any-body—what ’s the mat-mat-matter. My heart will br-br-break.”

“No, no, no, child,” said Mr. Gridley, sympathetically stirred a little himself by the sight of Susan in tears and sobbing and catching her breath, “that mustn’t be, Susan Posey. Come off the steps, Susan Posey, and stop dusting the books,—I can finish them,—and tell me all about your troubles. I will try ’to help you out of them, and I have begun to think I know how to help young people pretty well. I have had some experience at it.”

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But Susan cried and sobbed all the more uncontrollably and convulsively. Master Gridley thought he had better lead her at once to what he felt pretty sure was the source of her grief, and that, when she had had her cry out, she would probably make the hole in the ice he had broken big enough in a very few minutes.

"I think something has gone wrong between you and your friend, the young gentleman with whom you are in intimate relations, my child, and I think you had better talk freely with me, for I can perhaps give you a little counsel that will be of service."

Susan cried herself quiet at last. "There's nobody in the world like you, Mr. Gridley," she said, "and I've been wanting to tell you something ever so long. My friend—Mr. Clem—Clement Lindsay does n't care for me as he used to,—I know he does n't. He hasn't written to me for—I don't know but it's a month. And O Mr. Gridley! he's such a great man, and I am such a simple person,—I can't help thinking—he would be happier with somebody else than poor little Susan Posey!"

This last touch of self-pity overcame her, as it is so apt to do those who indulge in that delightful misery, and she broke up badly, as a horse-fancier would say, so that it was some little time before she recovered her conversational road-gait.

"O Mr. Gridley," she began again, at length, "if I only dared to tell him what I think,—that perhaps it would be happier for us both—if we could forget each other! Ought I not to tell him so? Don't you think he would find another to make him happy? Wouldn't he forgive me for telling him he was free? Were we not too young to know each other's hearts when we promised each other that we would love as long as we lived? Sha'n't I write him a letter this very day and tell him all? Do you think it would be wrong in me to do it? O Mr. Gridley, it makes me almost crazy to think about it. Clement must be free! I cannot, cannot hold him to a promise he does n't want to keep."

There were so many questions in this eloquent rhapsody of Susan's that they neutralized each other, as one might say, and Master Gridley had time for reflection. His thoughts went on something in this way:

"Pretty clear case! Guess Mr. Clement can make up his mind to it. Put it well, did n't she? Not a word about our little Gifted! That's the trouble. Poets! how they do bewitch these schoolgirls! And having a chance every day, too, how could you expect her to stand it?" Then aloud: "Susan Posey, you are a good, honest little girl as ever was. I think you and Clement were too hasty in coming together for life before you knew what life meant. I think if you write Clement a letter, telling him that you cannot help fearing that you two are not perfectly adapted to each other, on account of certain differences for which neither of you is responsible, and that you propose that each should release the other from the pledge given so long ago,—in that case, I say, I believe he will think no worse of you for so doing, and may perhaps agree that it is best for both of you to seek your happiness elsewhere than in each other."

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The book-dusting came to as abrupt a close as the reading of Lancelot. Susan went straight to her room, dried her tears so as to write in a fair hand, but had to stop every few lines and take a turn at the “dust-layers,” as Mrs. Clymer Ketchum’s friend used to call the fountains of sensibility. It would seem like betraying Susan’s confidence to reveal the contents of this letter, but the reader may be assured that it was simple and sincere and very sweetly written, without the slightest allusion to any other young man, whether of the poetical or cheaper human varieties.

It was not long before Susan received a reply from Clement Lindsay. It was as kind and generous and noble as she could have asked. It was affectionate, as a very amiable brother’s letter might be, and candidly appreciative of the reasons Susan had assigned for her proposal. He gave her back her freedom, not that he should cease to feel an interest in her, always. He accepted his own release, not that he would ever think she could be indifferent to his future fortunes. And within a very brief period of time after sending his answer to Susan Posey, whether he wished to see her in person, or whether he had some other motive, he had packed his trunk, and made his excuses for an absence of uncertain length at the studio, and was on his way to Oxbow Village.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Just as you expected.

The spring of 1861 had now arrived,—that eventful spring which was to lift the curtain and show the first scene of the first act in the mighty drama which fixed the eyes of mankind during four bloody years. The little schemes of little people were going on in all our cities and villages without thought of the fearful convulsion which was soon coming to shatter the hopes and cloud the prospects of millions. Our little Oxbow Village, which held itself by no means the least of human centres, was the scene of its own commotions, as intense and exciting to those concerned as if the destiny of the nation had been involved in them.

Mr. Clement Lindsay appeared suddenly in that important locality, and repaired to his accustomed quarters at the house of Deacon Rumrill. That worthy person received him with a certain gravity of manner, caused by his recollections of the involuntary transgression into which Mr. Lindsay had led him by his present of “Ivanhoe.”—He was, on the whole, glad to see him, for his finances were not yet wholly recovered from the injury inflicted on them by the devouring element. But he could not forget that his boarder had betrayed him into a breach of the fourth commandment, and that the strict eyes of his clergyman had detected him in the very commission of the offence. He had no sooner seen Mr. Clement comfortably installed, therefore, than he presented himself at the door of his chamber with the book, enveloped in strong paper and very securely tied round with a stout string.

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"Here is your volumn, Mr. Lindsay," the Deacon said. "I understand it is not the work of that great and good mahn who I thought wrote it. I did not see anything immoral in it as fur as I read, but it belongs to what I consider a very dangerous class of publications. These novels and romances are awfully destructive to our youth. I should recommend you, as a young man of principle, to burn the volumn. At least I hope you will not leave it about anywhere unless it is carefully tied up. I have written upon the paper round it to warn off all the young persons of my household from meddling with it."

True enough, Mr. Clement saw in strong black letters on the back of the paper wrapping his unfortunate "Ivanhoe,"—

"Dangerous reading for Christian youth.

"Touch not the unclean thing."

"I thought you said you had Scott's picture hung up in your parlor, Deacon Rumrill," he said, a little amused with the worthy man's fear and precautions.

"It is the great Scott's likeness that I have in my parlor," he said; "I will show it to you if you will come with me."

Mr. Clement followed the Deacon into that sacred apartment.

"That is the portrait of the great Scott," he said, pointing to an engraving of a heavy-looking person whose phrenological developments were a somewhat striking contrast to those of the distinguished Sir Walter.

"I will take good care that none of your young people see this volume," Mr. Clement said; "I trust you read it yourself, however, and found something to please you in it. I am sure you are safe from being harmed by any such book. Did n't you have to finish it, Deacon, after you had once begun?"

"Well, I—I—perused a consid'able portion of the work," the Deacon answered, in a way that led Mr. Clement to think he had not stopped much short of Finis. "Anything new in the city?"

"Nothing except what you've all had,—Confederate States establishing an army and all that,—not very new either. What has been going on here lately, Deacon?"—

"Well, Mr. Lindsay, not a great deal. My new barn is pretty nigh done. I've got as fine a litter of pigs as ever you see. I don't know whether you're a judge of pigs or no. The Hazard gal's come back, spilt, pooty much, I guess. Been to one o' them fashionable schools,—I 've heerd that she 's learnt to dance. I've heerd say that that Hopkins boy's round the Posey gal, come to think, she's the one you went with some when you was here,—I 'm gettin' kind o' forgetful. Old Doctor Hurlbut's pretty low,—ninety-four year



old,—born in '67,—folks ain't ginerally very spry after they're ninety, but he held out wonderful."

"How's Mr. Bradshaw?"

"Well, the young squire, he's off travellin' somewhere in the West, or to Washin'ton, or somewhere else,—I don't jestly know where. They say that he's follerin' up the courts in the business about old Malachi's estate. I don' know much about it."

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The news got round Oxbow Village very speedily that Mr. Clement Lindsay, generally considered the accepted lover of Miss Susan Posey, had arrived in that place. Now it had come to be the common talk of the village that young Gifted Hopkins and Susan Posey were getting to be mighty thick with each other, and the prevailing idea was that Clement's visit had reference to that state of affairs. Some said that Susan had given her young man the mitten, meaning thereby that she had signified that his services as a suitor were dispensed with. Others thought there was only a wavering in her affection for her lover, and that he feared for her constancy, and had come to vindicate his rights.

Some of the young fellows, who were doubtless envious of Gifted's popularity with the fair sex, attempted in the most unjustifiable manner to play upon his susceptible nature. One of them informed him that he had seen that Lindsay fellah raound taown with the darndest big stick y' ever did see. Looked kind o' savage and wild like. Another one told him that perhaps he'd better keep a little shady; that are chap that had got the mittin was prawolin' abaout—with a pistil,—one o' them Darringers,—abaout as long as your thumb, an' fire a bullet as big as a p'tatah-ball,—'a fellah carries one in his breeches-pocket, an' shoots y' right through his own pahnts, withaout ever takin' on it aout of his pocket. The stable-keeper, who, it may be remembered, once exchanged a few playful words with Mr. Gridley, got a hint from some of these unfeeling young men, and offered the resources of his stable to the youth supposed to be in peril.

"I 've got a faast colt, Mr. Hopkins, that 'll put twenty mild betwixt you an' this here village, as quick as any four huffs 'll dew it in this here caounty, if you should want to get away suddin. I've heern tell there was some lookin' raound here that wouldn't be wholesome to meet,—jest say the word, Mr. Hopkins, an' I 'll have ye on that are colt's back in less than no time, an' start ye off full jump. There's a good many that's kind o' worried for fear something might happen to ye, Mr. Hopkins,—y' see fellahs don't like to have other chaps cuttin' on 'em aout with their gals."

Gifted Hopkins had become excessively nervous by this time. It is true that everything in his intimacy with Susan Posey, so far, might come under the general head of friendship; but he was conscious that something more was in both their thoughts. Susan had given him mysterious hints that her relations with Clement had undergone a change, but had never had quite courage enough, perhaps had too much delicacy, to reveal the whole truth.

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Gifted was walking home, deeply immersed in thoughts excited by the hints which hail been thus wantonly thrown out to inflame his imagination, when all at once, on lifting his eyes, he saw Clement Lindsay coming straight towards him. Gifted was unarmed, except with a pair of blunt scissors, which he carried habitually in his pocket. What should he do? Should he fly? But he was never a good runner, being apt to find himself scant o' breath, like Hamlet, after violent exercise. His demeanor on the occasion did credit to his sense of his own virtuous conduct and his self-possession. He put his hand out, while yet at a considerable distance, and marched up towards Clement, smiling with all the native amiability which belonged to him.

To his infinite relief, Clement put out his hand to grasp the one offered him, and greeted the young poet in the most frank and cordial manner.

"And how is Miss Susan Posey, Mr. Hopkins?" asked Clement, in the most cheerful tone. "It is a long while since I have seen her, and you must tell her that I hope I shall not leave the village without finding time to call upon her. She and I are good friends always, Mr. Hopkins, though perhaps I shall not be quite so often at your mother's as I was during my last visit to Oxbow Village."

Gifted felt somewhat as the subject of one of those old-fashioned forms of argument, formerly much employed to convince men of error in matters of religion, must have felt when the official who superintended the stretching-machine said, "Slack up!"

He told Mr. Clement all about Susan, and was on the point of saying that if he, Mr. Clement, did not claim any engrossing interest in her, he, Gifted, was ready to offer her the devotion of a poet's heart. Mr. Clement, however, had so many other questions to ask him about everybody in the village, more particularly concerning certain young persons in whom he seemed to be specially interested, that there was no chance to work in his own revelations of sentiment.

Clement Lindsay had come to Oxbow Village with a single purpose. He could now venture to trust himself in the presence of Myrtle Hazard. He was free, and he knew nothing to show that she had lost the liberty of disposing of her heart. But after an experience such as he had gone through, he was naturally distrustful of himself, and inclined to be cautious and reserved in yielding to a new passion. Should he tell her the true relations in which they stood to each other,—that she owed her life to him, and that he had very nearly sacrificed his own in saving hers? Why not? He had a claim on her gratitude for what he had done in her behalf, and out of this gratitude there might naturally spring a warmer feeling.

No, he could not try to win her affections by showing that he had paid for them beforehand. She seemed to be utterly unconscious of the fact that it was he who had been with her in the abyss of waters. If the thought came to her of itself, and she ever asked him, it would be time enough to tell her the story. If not, the moment might arrive

when he could reveal to her the truth that he was her deliverer, without accusing himself of bribing her woman's heart to reward him for his services. He would wait for that moment.

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It was the most natural thing in the world that Mr. Lindsay, a young gentleman from the city, should call to see Miss Hazard, a young lady whom he had met recently at a party. To that pleasing duty he addressed himself the evening after his arrival.

"The young gentleman's goin' a courtin', I calc'late," was the remark of the Deacon's wife when she saw what a comely figure Mr. Clement showed at the tea-table.

"A very hahnsome young mahn," the Deacon replied, "and looks as if he might know consid'able. An architect, you know,—a sort of a builder. Wonder if he has n't got any good plans for a hahnsome pigsty. I suppose he 'd charge somethin' for one, but it couldn't be much, an' he could take it out in board."

"Better ask him," his wife—said; "he looks mighty pleasant; there's nothin' lost by askin', an' a good deal got sometimes, grandma used to say."

The Deacon followed her advice. Mr. Clement was perfectly good-natured about it, asked the Deacon the number of snouts in his menagerie, got an idea of the accommodations required, and sketched the plaza of a neat, and appropriate edifice for the Porcellarium, as Master Gridley afterwards pleasantly christened it, which was carried out by the carpenter, and stands to this day a monument of his obliging disposition, and a proof that there is nothing so humble that taste cannot be shown in it.

"What'll be your charge for the plan of the pigsty, Mr. Lindsay?" the Deacon inquired with an air of interest,—he might have become involved more deeply than he had intended. "How much should you call about right for the picter an' figgerin'?"

"Oh, you're quite welcome to my sketch of a plan, Deacon. I've seen much showier buildings tenanted by animals not very different from those your edifice is meant for."

Mr. Clement found the three ladies sitting together in the chill, dim parlor at The Poplars. They had one of the city papers spread out on the table, and Myrtle was reading aloud the last news from Charleston Harbor. She rose as Mr. Clement entered, and stepped forward to meet him. It was a strange impression this young man produced upon her,—not through the common channels of the intelligence, not exactly that "magnetic" influence of which she had had experience at a former time. It did not over come her as at the moment of their second meeting. But it was something she must struggle against, and she had force and pride and training enough now to maintain her usual tranquillity, in spite of a certain inward commotion which seemed to reach her breathing and her pulse by some strange, inexplicable mechanism.

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Myrtle, it must be remembered, was no longer the simple country girl who had run away at fifteen, but a young lady of seventeen, who had learned all that more than a year's diligence at a great school could teach her, who had been much with girls of taste and of culture, and was familiar with the style and manners of those who came from what considered itself the supreme order in the social hierarchy. Her natural love for picturesque adornment was qualified by a knowledge of the prevailing modes not usual in so small a place as Oxbow Village. All this had not failed to produce its impression on those about her. Persons who, like Miss Silence Withers, believe, not in education, inasmuch as there is no healthy nature to be educated, but in transformation, worry about their charges up to a certain period of their lives. Then, if the transformation does not come, they seem to think their cares and duties are at an end, and, considering their theories of human destiny, usually accept the situation with wonderful complacency. This was the stage which Miss Silence Withers had reached with reference to Myrtle. It made her infinitely more agreeable, or less disagreeable, as the reader may choose one or the other statement, than when she was always fretting about her "responsibility." She even began to take an interest in some of Myrtle's worldly experiences, and something like a smile would now and then disarrange the chief-mourner stillness of her features, as Myrtle would tell some lively story she had brought away from the gay society she had frequented.

Cynthia Badlam kept her keen eyes on her like a hawk. Murray Bradshaw was away, and here was this handsome and agreeable youth coming in to poach on the preserve of which she considered herself the gamekeeper. What did it mean? She had heard the story about Susan's being off with her old love and on with a new one. Ah ha! this is the game, is it?

Clement Lindsay passed not so much a pleasant evening, as one of strange, perplexed, and mingled delight and inward conflict. He had found his marble once more turned to flesh and blood, and breathing before him. This was the woman he was born for; her form was fit to model his proudest ideal from, her eyes melted him when they rested for an instant on his face,—her voice reached the hidden sensibilities of his inmost nature; those which never betray their existence until the outward chord to which they vibrate in response sends its message to stir them. But was she not already pledged to that other,—that cold-blooded, contriving, venal, cynical, selfish, polished, fascinating man of the world, whose artful strategy would pass with nine women out of ten for the most romantic devotion?

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If he had known the impression he made, he would have felt less anxiety with reference to this particular possibility. Miss Silence expressed herself gratified with his appearance, and thought he looked like a good young man,—he reminded her of a young friend of hers who—[It was the same who had gone to one of the cannibal islands as a missionary,—and stayed there.] Myrtle was very quiet. She had nothing to say about Clement, except that she had met him at a party in the city, and found him agreeable. Miss Cynthia wrote a letter to Murray Bradshaw that very evening, telling him that he had better come back to Oxbow Village as quickly as he could, unless he wished to find his place occupied by an intruder.

In the mean time, the country was watching the garrison in Charleston Harbor. All at once the first gun of the four years' cannonade hurled its ball against the walls of Fort Sumter. There was no hamlet in the land which the reverberations of that cannon-roar did not reach. There was no valley so darkened by overshadowing hills that it did not see the American flag hauled down on the 13th of April. There was no loyal heart in the North that did not answer to the call of the country to its defenders which went forth two days later. The great tide of feeling reached the locality where the lesser events of our narrative were occurring. A meeting of the citizens was instantly called. The venerable Father Pemberton opened it with a prayer that filled every soul with courage and high resolve. The young farmers and mechanics of that whole region joined the companies to which they belonged, or organized in squads and marched at once, or got ready to march, to the scene of conflict.

The contagion of warlike patriotism reached the most peacefully inclined young persons.

"My country calls me," Gifted Hopkins said to Susan Posey, "and I am preparing to obey her summons. If I can pass the medical examination, which it is possible I may, though I fear my constitution may be thought too weak, and if no obstacle impedes me, I think of marching in the ranks of the Oxbow Invincibles. If I go, Susan, and I fall, will you not remember me . . . as one who . . . cherished the tenderest . . . sentiments . . . towards you . . . and who had looked forward to the time when . . . when . . ."

His eyes told the rest. He loved!

Susan forgot all the rules of reserve to which she had been trained. What were cold conventionalities at such a moment? "Never! never!" she said, throwing her arms about his neck and mingling her tears with his, which were flowing freely. "Your country does not need your sword but it does need . . . your pen. Your poems will inspire . . . our soldiers. . . . The Oxbow Invincibles will march to victory, singing your songs If you go . . . and if you.. . fall . . . O Gifted! . . . I . . . I . . . yes, I shall die too!"

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His love was returned. He was blest!

“Susan,” he said, “my own Susan, I yield to your wishes at every sacrifice. Henceforth they will be my law. Yes, I will stay and encourage my brave countrymen to go forward to the bloody field. My voice shall urge them on to the battle-ground. I will give my dearest breath to stimulate their ardor.

“O Susan! My own, own Susan!”

While these interesting events had been going on beneath the modest roof of the Widow Hopkins, affairs had been rapidly hastening to a similar conclusion under the statelier shadow of The Poplars. Clement Lindsay was so well received at his first visit that he ventured to repeat it several times, with so short intervals that it implied something more than a common interest in one of the members of the household. There was no room for doubt who this could be, and Myrtle Hazard could not help seeing that she was the object of his undisguised admiration. The belief was now general in the village that Gifted Hopkins and Susan Posey were either engaged or on the point of being so; and it was equally understood that, whatever might be the explanation, she and her former lover had parted company in an amicable manner.

Love works very strange transformations in young women. Sometimes it leads them to try every mode of adding to their attractions,—their whole thought is how to be most lovely in the eyes they would fill so as to keep out all other images. Poor darlings! We smile at their little vanities, as if they were very trivial things compared with the last Congressman’s speech or the great Election Sermon; but Nature knows well what she is about. The maiden’s ribbon or ruffle means a great deal more for her than the judge’s wig or the priest’s surplice.

It was not in this way that the gentle emotion awaking in the breast of Myrtle Hazard betrayed itself. As the thought dawned in her consciousness that she was loved, a change came over her such as the spirit that protected her, according to the harmless fancy she had inherited, might have wept for joy to behold, if tears could flow from angelic eyes. She forgot herself and her ambitions,—the thought of shining in the great world died out in the presence of new visions of a future in which she was not to be her own,—of feelings in the depth of which the shallow vanities which had drawn her young eyes to them for a while seemed less than nothing. Myrtle had not hitherto said to herself that Clement was her lover, yet her whole nature was expanding and deepening in the light of that friendship which any other eye could have known at a glance for the great passion.

Cynthia Badlam wrote a pressing letter to Murray Bradshaw. “There is no time to be lost; she is bewitched, and will be gone beyond hope if this business is not put a stop to.”

Love moves in an accelerating ratio; and there comes a time when the progress of the passion escapes from all human formulae, and brings two young hearts, which had been gradually drawing nearer and nearer together, into complete union, with a suddenness that puts an infinity between the moment when all is told and that which went just before.

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They were sitting together by themselves in the dimly lighted parlor. They had told each other many experiences of their past lives, very freely, as two intimate friends of different sex might do. Clement had happened to allude to Susan, speaking very kindly and tenderly of her. He hoped this youth to whom she was attached would make her life happy. "You know how simple-hearted and good she is; her image will always be a pleasant one in my memory,—second to but one other."

Myrtle ought, according to the common rules of conversation, to have asked, What other? but she did not. She may have looked as if she wanted to ask,—she may have blushed or turned pale, perhaps she could not trust her voice; but whatever the reason was, she sat still, with downcast eyes. Clement waited a reasonable time, but, finding it was of no use, began again.

"Your image is the one other,—the only one, let me say, for all else fades in its presence,—your image fills all my thought. Will you trust your life and happiness with one who can offer you so little beside his love? You know my whole heart is yours."

Whether Myrtle said anything in reply or not, whether she acted like Coleridge's Genevieve,—that is, "fled to him and wept," or suffered her feelings to betray themselves in some less startling confession, we will leave untold. Her answer, spoken or silent, could not have been a cruel one, for in another moment Clement was pressing his lips to hers, after the manner of accepted lovers.

"Our lips have met to-day for the second time," he said, presently.

She looked at him in wonder. What did he mean? The second time! How assuredly he spoke! She looked him calmly in the face, and awaited his explanation.

"I have a singular story to tell you. On the morning of the 16th of June, now nearly two years ago, I was sitting in my room at Alderbank, some twenty miles down the river, when I heard a cry for help coming from the river. I ran down to the bank, and there I saw a boy in an old boat—"

When it came to the "boy" in the old boat, Myrtle's cheeks flamed so that she could not bear it, and she covered her face with both her hands. But Clement told his story calmly through to the end, sliding gently over its later incidents, for Myrtle's heart was throbbing violently, and her breath a little catching and sighing, as when she had first lived with the new life his breath had given her.

"Why did you ask me for myself, when you could have claimed me?" she said.

"I wanted a free gift, Myrtle," Clement answered, "and I have it."

They sat in silence, lost in the sense of that new life which had suddenly risen on their souls.



The door-bell rang sharply. Kitty Fagan answered its summons, and presently entered the parlor and announced that Mr. Bradshaw was in the library, and wished to see the ladies.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

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Murray Bradshaw plays his last card.

"How can I see that man this evening, Mr. Lindsay?"

"May I not be Clement, dearest? I would not see him at all, Myrtle. I don't believe you will find much pleasure in listening to his fine speeches."

"I cannot endure it.—Kitty, tell him I am engaged, and cannot see him this evening. No, no! don't say engaged, say very much occupied."

Kitty departed, communing with herself in this wise:—"Ockipied, is it? An' that's what ye cah! it when ye 're kapin' company with one young gentleman an' don't want another young gentleman to come in an' help the two of ye? Ye won't get y'r pigs to market to-day, Mr. Bridshaw, no, nor to-morrow, nayther, Mr. Bridshaw. It's Mrs. Lindsay that Miss Myrtle is goin' to be,—an' a big cake there'll be at the weddin' frosted all over,—won't ye be plased with a slice o' that, Mr. Bridshaw?"

With these reflections in her mind, Mistress Kitty delivered her message, not without a gleam of malicious intelligence in her look that stung Mr. Bradshaw sharply. He had noticed a hat in the entry, and a little stick by it which he remembered well as one he had seen carried by Clement Lindsay. But he was used to concealing his emotions, and he greeted the two older ladies who presently came into the library so pleasantly, that no one who had not studied his face long and carefully would have suspected the bitterness of heart that lay hidden far down beneath his deceptive smile. He told Miss Silence, with much apparent interest, the story of his journey. He gave her an account of the progress of the case in which the estate of which she inherited the principal portion was interested. He did not tell her that a final decision which would settle the right to the great claim might be expected at any moment, and he did not tell her that there was very little doubt that it would be in favor of the heirs of Malachi Withers. He was very sorry he could not see Miss Hazard that evening,—hoped he should be more fortunate to-morrow forenoon, when he intended to call again,—had a message for her from one of her former school friends, which he was anxious to give her. He exchanged certain looks and hints with Miss Cynthia, which led her to withdraw and bring down the papers he had entrusted to her. At the close of his visit, she followed him into the entry with a lamp, as was her common custom.

"What's the meaning of all this, Cynthia? Is that fellow making love to Myrtle?"

"I'm afraid so, Mr. Bradshaw. He's been here several times, and they seem to be getting intimate. I couldn't do anything to stop it."

"Give me the papers,—quick!"

Cynthia pulled the package from her pocket. Murray Bradshaw looked sharply at it. A little crumpled,—crowded into her pocket. Seal unbroken. All safe.

“I shall come again to-morrow forenoon. Another day and it will be all up. The decision of the court will be known. It won’t be my fault if one visit is not enough.—You don’t suppose Myrtle is in love with this fellow?”

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"She acts as—if she might be. You know he's broke with Susan Posey, and there's nothing to hinder. If you ask my opinion, I think it's your last chance: she is n't a girl to half do things, and if she has taken to this man it will be hard to make her change her mind. But she's young, and she has had a liking for you, and if you manage it well there's no telling."

Two notes passed between Myrtle Hazard and Master Byles Gridley that evening. Mistress Kitty Fagan, who had kept her ears pretty wide open, carried them.

Murray Bradshaw went home in a very desperate state of feeling. He had laid his plans, as he thought, with perfect skill, and the certainty of their securing their end. These papers were to have been taken from the envelope, and found in the garret just at the right moment, either by Cynthia herself or one of the other members of the family, who was to be led on, as it were accidentally, to the discovery. The right moment must be close at hand. He was to offer his hand—and heart, of course—to Myrtle, and it was to be accepted. As soon as the decision of the land case was made known, or not long afterwards, there was to be a search in the garret for papers, and these were to be discovered in a certain dusty recess, where, of course, they would have been placed by Miss Cynthia.

And now the one condition which gave any value to these arrangements seemed like to fail. This obscure youth—this poor fool, who had been on the point of marrying a simpleton to whom he had made a boyish promise—was coming between him and the object of his long pursuit,—the woman who had every attraction to draw him to herself. It had been a matter of pride with Murray Bradshaw that he never lost his temper so as to interfere with the precise course of action which his cool judgment approved; but now he was almost beside himself with passion. His labors, as he believed, had secured the favorable issue of the great case so long pending. He had followed Myrtle through her whole career, if not as her avowed lover, at least as one whose friendship promised to flower in love in due season. The moment had come when the scene and the characters in this village drama were to undergo a change as sudden and as brilliant as is seen in those fairy spectacles where the dark background changes to a golden palace and the sober dresses are replaced by robes of regal splendor. The change was fast approaching; but he, the enchanter, as he had thought himself, found his wand broken, and his power given to another.

He could not sleep during that night. He paced his room, a prey to jealousy and envy and rage, which his calm temperament had kept him from feeling in their intensity up to this miserable hour. He thought of all that a maddened nature can imagine to deaden its own intolerable anguish. Of revenge. If Myrtle rejected his suit, should he take her life on the spot, that she might never be another's,—that

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neither man nor woman should ever triumph over him,—the proud ambitious man, defeated, humbled, scorned? No! that was a meanness of egotism which only the most vulgar souls could be capable of. Should he challenge her lover? It was not the way of the people and time, and ended in absurd complications, if anybody was foolish enough to try it. Shoot him? The idea floated through his mind, for he thought of everything; but he was a lawyer, and not a fool, and had no idea of figuring in court as a criminal. Besides, he was not a murderer,—cunning was his natural weapon, not violence. He had a certain admiration of desperate crime in others, as showing nerve and force, but he did not feel it to be his own style of doing business.

During the night he made every arrangement for leaving the village the next day, in case he failed to make any impression on Myrtle Hazard and found that his chance was gone. He wrote a letter to his partner, telling him that he had left to join one of the regiments forming in the city. He adjusted all his business matters so that his partner should find as little trouble as possible. A little before dawn he threw himself on the bed, but he could not sleep; and he rose at sunrise, and finished his preparations for his departure to the city.

The morning dragged along slowly. He could not go to the office, not wishing to meet his partner again. After breakfast he dressed himself with great care, for he meant to show himself in the best possible aspect. Just before he left the house to go to The Poplars, he took the sealed package from his trunk, broke open the envelope, took from it a single paper,—it had some spots on it which distinguished it from all the rest,—put it separately in his pocket, and then the envelope containing the other papers. The calm smile he wore on his features as he set forth cost him a greater effort than he had ever made before to put it on. He was moulding his face to the look with which he meant to present himself; and the muscles had been sternly fixed so long that it was a task to bring them to their habitual expression in company,—that of ingenuous good-nature.

He was shown into the parlor at The Poplars; and Kitty told Myrtle that he had called and inquired for her and was waiting down stairs.

“Tell him I will be down presently,” she said. “And, Kitty, now mind just what I tell you. Leave your kitchen door open, so that you can hear anything fall in the parlor. If you hear a book fall,—it will be a heavy one, and will make some noise,—run straight up here to my little chamber, and hang this red scarf out of the window. The left-hand side-sash, mind, so that anybody can see it from the road. If Mr. Gridley calls, show him into the parlor, no matter who is there.”

Kitty Fagan looked amazingly intelligent, and promised that she would do exactly as she was told. Myrtle followed her down stairs almost immediately, and went into the parlor, where Mr. Bradshaw was waiting.

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Never in his calmest moments had he worn a more insinuating smile on his features than that with which he now greeted Myrtle. So gentle, so gracious, so full of trust, such a completely natural expression of a kind, genial character did it seem, that to any but an expert it would have appeared impossible that such an effect could be produced by the skilful balancing of half a dozen pairs of little muscles that manage the lips and the corners of the mouth. The tones of his voice were subdued into accord with the look of his features; his whole manner was fascinating, as far as any conscious effort could make it so. It was just one of those artificially pleasing effects that so often pass with such as have little experience of life for the genuine expression of character and feeling. But Myrtle had learned the look that shapes itself on the features of one who loves with a love that seeketh not its own, and she knew the difference between acting and reality. She met his insinuating approach with a courtesy so carefully ordered that it was of itself a sentence without appeal. Artful persons often interpret sincere ones by their own standard. Murray Bradshaw thought little of this somewhat formal address,—a few minutes would break this thin film to pieces. He was not only a suitor with a prize to gain, he was a colloquial artist about to employ all the resources of his specialty.

He introduced the conversation in the most natural and easy way, by giving her the message from a former school-mate to which he had referred, coloring it so delicately, as he delivered it, that it became an innocent-looking flattery. Myrtle found herself in a rose-colored atmosphere, not from Murray Bradshaw's admiration, as it seemed, but only reflected by his mind from another source. That was one of his arts, always, if possible, to associate himself incidentally, as it appeared, and unavoidably, with an agreeable impression.

So Myrtle was betrayed into smiling and being pleased before he had said a word about himself or his affairs. Then he told her of the adventures and labors of his late expedition; of certain evidence which at the very last moment he had unearthed, and which was very probably the turning-point in the case. He could not help feeling that she must eventually reap some benefit from the good fortune with which his efforts had been attended. The thought that it might yet be so had been a great source of encouragement to him,—it would always be a great happiness to him to remember that he had done anything to make her happy.

Myrtle was very glad that he had been so far successful,—she did not know that it made much difference to her, but she was obliged to him for the desire of serving her that he had expressed.

“My services are always yours, Miss Hazard. There is no sacrifice I would not willingly make for your benefit. I have never had but one feeling toward you. You cannot be ignorant of what that feeling is.”

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"I know, Mr. Bradshaw, it has been one of kindness. I have to thank you for many friendly attentions, for which I hope I have never been ungrateful."

"Kindness is not all that I feel towards you, Miss Hazard. If that were all, my lips would not tremble as they do now in telling you my feelings.—I love you."

He sprang the great confession on Myrtle a little sooner than he had meant. It was so hard to go on making phrases! Myrtle changed color a little, for she was startled.

The seemingly involuntary movement she made brought her arm against a large dictionary, which lay very near the edge of the table on which it was resting. The book fell with a loud noise to the floor.

There it lay. The young man awaited her answer; he did not think of polite forms at such a moment.

"It cannot be, Mr. Bradshaw,—it must not be. I have known you long, and I am not ignorant of all your brilliant qualities, but you must not speak to me of love. Your regard,—your friendly interest, tell me that I shall always have these, but do not distress me with offering more than these."

"I do not ask you to give me your love in return; I only ask you not to bid me despair. Let me believe that the time may come' when you will listen to me,—no matter how distant. You are young,—you have a tender heart,—you would not doom one who only lives for you to wretchedness,—so long that we have known each other. It cannot be that any other has come between us—"

Myrtle blushed so deeply that there was no need of his finishing his question.

"Do you mean, Myrtle Hazard, that you have cast me aside for another?—for this stranger—this artist—who was with you yesterday when I came, bringing with me the story of all I had done for you, yes, for you,—and was ignominiously refused the privilege of seeing you?" Rage and jealousy had got the better of him this time. He rose as he spoke, and looked upon her with such passion kindling in his eyes that he seemed ready for any desperate act.

"I have thanked you for any services you may have rendered me, Mr. Bradshaw," Myrtle answered, very calmly, "and I hope you will add one more to them by sparing me this rude questioning. I wished to treat you as a friend; I hope you will not render that impossible."

He had recovered himself for one more last effort. "I was impatient overlook it, I beg you. I was thinking of all the happiness I have labored to secure for you, and of the ruin to us both it would be if you scornfully rejected the love I offer you,—if you refuse to leave me any hope for the future,—if you insist on throwing yourself away on this man,



so lately pledged to another. I hold the key of all your earthly fortunes in my hand. My love for you inspired me in all that I have done, and, now that I come to lay the result of my labors at your feet, you turn from me, and offer my reward to a stranger. I do not ask you to say this day that you will be mine,—I would not force your inclinations,—but I do ask you that you will hold yourself free of all others, and listen to me as one who may yet be more than a friend. Say so much as this, Myrtle, and you shall have such a future as you never dreamed of. Fortune, position, all that this world can give, shall be yours.”

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"Never! never! If you could offer me the whole world, or take away from me all that the world can give, it would make no difference to me. I cannot tell what power you hold over me, whether of life and death, or of wealth and poverty; but after talking to me of love, I should not have thought you would have wronged me by suggesting any meaner motive. It is only because we have been on friendly terms so long that I have listened to you as I have done. You have said more than enough, and I beg you will allow me to put an end to this interview."

She rose to leave the room. But Murray Bradshaw had gone too far to control himself,—he listened only to the rage which blinded him.

"Not yet!" he said. "Stay one moment, and you shall know what your pride and self-will have cost you!"

Myrtle stood, arrested, whether by fear, or curiosity, or the passive subjection of her muscles to his imperious will, it would be hard to say.

Murray Bradshaw took out the spotted paper from his breast-pocket, and held it up before her. "Look here!" he exclaimed. "This would have made you rich,—it would have crowned you a queen in society,—it would have given you all, and more than all, that you ever dreamed of luxury, of splendor, of enjoyment; and I, who won it for you, would have taught you how to make life yield every bliss it had in store to your wishes. You reject my offer unconditionally?"

Myrtle expressed her negative only by a slight contemptuous movement.

Murray Bradshaw walked deliberately to the fireplace, and laid the spotted paper upon the burning coals. It writhed and curled, blackened, flamed, and in a moment was a cinder dropping into ashes. He folded his arms, and stood looking at the wreck of Myrtle's future, the work of his cruel hand. Strangely enough, Myrtle herself was fascinated, as it were, by the apparent solemnity of this mysterious sacrifice. She had kept her eyes steadily on him all the time, and was still gazing at the altar on which her happiness had been in some way offered up, when the door was opened by Kitty Fagan, and Master Byles Gridley was ushered into the parlor.

"Too late, old man!" Murray Bradshaw exclaimed, in a hoarse and savage voice, as he passed out of the room, and strode through the entry and down the avenue. It was the last time the old gate of The Poplars was to open or close for him. The same day he left the village; and the next time his name was mentioned it was as an officer in one of the regiments just raised and about marching to the seat of war.

CHAPTER XXXV.

The spotted paper.

What Master Gridley may have said to Myrtle Hazard that served to calm her after this exciting scene cannot now be recalled. That Murray Bradshaw thought he was inflicting a deadly injury on her was plain enough. That Master Gridley did succeed in convincing her that no great harm had probably been done her is equally certain.

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Like all bachelors who have lived a lonely life, Master Byles Gridley had his habits, which nothing short of some terrestrial convulsion—or perhaps, in his case, some instinct that drove him forth to help somebody in trouble—could possibly derange. After his breakfast, he always sat and read awhile,—the paper, if a new one came to hand, or some pleasant old author,—if a little neglected by the world of readers, he felt more at ease with him, and loved him all the better.

But on the morning after his interview with Myrtle Hazard, he had received a letter which made him forget newspapers, old authors, almost everything, for the moment. It was from the publisher with whom he had had a conversation, it may be remembered, when he visited the city, and was to this effect: That Our Firm propose to print and stereotype the work originally published under the title of “Thoughts on the Universe”; said work to be remodelled according to the plan suggested by the Author, with the corrections, alterations, omissions, and additions proposed by him; said work to be published under the following title, to wit: _____: said work to be printed in 12mo, on paper of good quality, from new types, *etc.*, *etc.*, and for every copy thereof printed the author to receive, *etc.*, *etc.*

Master Gridley sat as in a trance, reading this letter over and over, to know if it could be really so. So it really was. His book had disappeared from the market long ago, as the elm seeds that carpet the ground and never germinate disappear. At last it had got a certain value as a curiosity for book-hunters. Some one of them, keener-eyed than the rest, had seen that there was a meaning and virtue in this unsuccessful book, for which there was a new audience educated since it had tried to breathe before its time. Out of this had grown at last the publisher’s proposal. It was too much: his heart swelled with joy, and his eyes filled with tears.

How could he resist the temptation? He took down his own particular copy of the book, which was yet to do him honor as its parent, and began reading. As his eye fell on one paragraph after another, he nodded approval of this sentiment or opinion, he shook his head as if questioning whether this other were not to be modified or left out, he condemned a third as being no longer true for him as when it was written, and he sanctioned a fourth with his hearty approval. The reader may like a few specimens from this early edition, now a rarity. He shall have them, with Master Gridley’s verbal comments. The book, as its name implied, contained “Thoughts” rather than consecutive trains of reasoning or continuous disquisitions. What he read and remarked upon were a few of the more pointed statements which stood out in the chapters he was turning over. The worth of the book must not be judged by these almost random specimens.

“The best thought, like the most perfect digestion, is done unconsciously.—Develop that.—Ideas at compound interest in the mind.—Be aye sticking in an idea,—while you’re sleeping it’ll be growing. Seed of a thought to-day,—flower to-morrow—next week—ten years from now, etc.—Article by and by for the....

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"Can the infinite be supposed to shift the responsibility of the ultimate destiny of any created thing to the finite? Our theologians pretend that it can. I doubt.—Heretical. Stet.

"Protestantism means none of your business. But it is afraid of its own logic.—Stet. No logical resting-place short of None of your business.

"The supreme self-indulgence is to surrender the will to A spiritual director.—Protestantism gave up a great luxury.—Did it though?

"Asiatic modes of thought and speech do not express the 'relations in which the American feels him self to stand to his superiors in this or any other sphere of being. Republicanism must have its own religious phraseology, which is not that borrowed from oriental DESPOTISMS.

"Idols and dogmas in place of character; pills and theories in place of wholesome living. See the histories of theology and medicine passim.—Hits 'em.

*"'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.' Do you mean to say Jean Chauvin, that
'heaven lies about us in our infancy'?*

"Why do you complain of your organization? Your soul was in A hurry, and made A rush for A body. There are patient spirits that have waited from eternity, and never found parents fit to be born of.—How do you know anything about all that? Dele.

"What sweet, smooth voices the negroes have! A hundred generations fed on bananas. —Compare them with our apple-eating white folks!—It won't do. Bananas came from the West Indies.

"To tell A man's temperament by his handwriting. See if the dots of his i's run ahead or not, and if they do, how far.—I have tried that—on myself.

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"Marrying into some families is the next thing to being canonized.—Not so true now as twenty or thirty years ago. As many bladders, but more pins.

"Fish and dandies only keep on ice.—Who will take? Explain in note how all warmth approaching blood heat spoils fops and flounders.

"Flying is A lost art among men and reptiles. Bats fly, and men ought to. Try A light turbine. Rise A mile straight, fall half A mile slanting,—rise half A mile straight, fall half A mile slanting, and so on. Or slant up and slant down.—Poh! You ain't such a fool as to think that is new,—are you?

"Put in my telegraph project. Central station. Cables with insulated wires running to it from different quarters of the city. These form the centripetal system. From central station, wires to all the livery stables, messenger stands, provision shops, etc., etc. These form the centrifugal system. Any house may have a wire in the nearest cable at small cost.

"Do you want to be remembered after the continents have gone under, and come up again, and dried, and bred new races? Have your name stamped on all your plates and cups and saucers. Nothing of you or yours will last like those. I never sit down at my table without looking at the china service, and saying, 'here are my monuments. That butter-dish is my urn. This soup-plate is my memorial tablet.' No need of A skeleton at my banquets! I feed from my tombstone and read my epitaph at the bottom of every teacup.—Good."

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He fell into a revery as he finished reading this last sentence. He thought of the dim and dread future,—all the changes that it would bring to him, to all the living, to the face of the globe, to the order of earthly things. He saw men of a new race, alien to all that had ever lived, excavating with strange, vast engines the old ocean-bed now become habitable land. And as the great scoops turned out the earth they had fetched up from the unexplored depths, a relic of a former simple civilization revealed the fact that here a tribe of human beings had lived and perished.—Only the coffee-cup he had in his hand half an hour ago.—Where would he be then? and Mrs. Hopkins, and Gifted, and Susan, and everybody? and President Buchanan? and the Boston State-House? and Broadway?—O Lord, Lord, Lord! And the sun perceptibly smaller, according to the astronomers, and the earth cooled down a number of degrees, and inconceivable arts practised by men of a type yet undreamed of, and all the fighting creeds merged in one great universal—

A knock at his door interrupted his revery. Miss Susan Posey informed him that a gentleman was waiting below who wished to see him.

“Show him up to my study, Susan Posey, if you please,” said Master Gridley.

Mr. Penhallow presented himself at Mr. Gridley’s door with a countenance expressive of a very high state of excitement.

“You have heard the news, Mr. Gridley, I suppose?”

“What news, Mr. Penhallow?”

“First, that my partner has left very unexpectedly to enlist in a regiment just forming. Second, that the great land case is decided in favor of the heirs of the late Malachi Withers.”

“Your partner must have known about it yesterday?”

“He did, even before I knew it. He thought himself possessed of a very important document, as you know, of which he has made, or means to make, some use. You are aware of the artifice I employed to prevent any possible evil consequences from any action of his. I have the genuine document, of course. I wish you to go over with me to The Poplars, and I should be glad to have good old Father Pemberton go with us; for it is a serious matter, and will be a great surprise to more than one of the family.”

They walked together to the old house, where the old clergyman had lived for more than half a century. He was used to being neglected by the people who ran after his younger colleague; and the attention paid him in asking him to be present on an important occasion, as he understood this to be, pleased him greatly. He smoothed his long white locks, and called a grand-daughter to help make him look fitly for such an occasion,

and, being at last got into his grandest Sunday aspect, took his faithful staff, and set out with the two gentlemen for The Poplars. On the way, Mr. Penhallow explained to him the occasion of their visit, and the general character of the facts he had to announce. He wished the venerable

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minister to prepare Miss Silence Withers for a revelation which would materially change her future prospects. He thought it might be well, also, if he would say a few words to Myrtle Hazard, for whom a new life, with new and untried temptations, was about to open. His business was, as a lawyer, to make known to these parties the facts just come to his own knowledge affecting their interests. He had asked Mr. Gridley to go with him, as having intimate relations with one of the parties referred to, and as having been the principal agent in securing to that party the advantages which were to accrue to her from the new turn of events. "You are a second parent to her, Mr. Gridley," he said. "Your vigilance, your shrewdness, and your-spectacles have saved her. I hope she knows the full extent of her obligations to you, and that she will always look to you for counsel in all her needs. She will want a wise friend, for she is to begin the world anew."

What had happened, when she saw the three grave gentlemen at the door early in the forenoon, Mistress Kitty Fagan could not guess. Something relating to Miss Myrtle, no doubt: she wasn't goin' to be married right off to Mr. Clement,—was she,—and no church, nor cake, nor anything? The gentlemen were shown into the parlor. "Ask Miss Withers to go into the library, Kitty," said Master Gridley. "Dr. Pemberton wishes to speak with her." The good old man was prepared for a scene with Miss Silence. He announced to her, in a kind and delicate way, that she must make up her mind to the disappointment of certain expectations which she had long entertained, and which, as her lawyer, Mr. Penhallow, had come to inform her and others, were to be finally relinquished from this hour.

To his great surprise, Miss Silence received this communication almost cheerfully. It seemed more like a relief to her than anything else. Her one dread in this world was her "responsibility"; and the thought that she might have to account for ten talents hereafter, instead of one, had often of late been a positive distress to her. There was also in her mind a secret disgust at the thought of the hungry creatures who would swarm round her if she should ever be in a position to bestow patronage. This had grown upon her as the habits of lonely life gave her more and more of that fastidious dislike to males in general, as such, which is not rare in maidens who have seen the roses of more summers than politeness cares to mention.

Father Pemberton then asked if he could see Miss Myrtle Hazard a few moments in the library before they went into the parlor, where they were to meet Mr. Penhallow and Mr. Gridley, for the purpose of receiving the lawyer's communication.

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What change was this which Myrtle had undergone since love had touched her heart, and her visions of worldly enjoyment had faded before the thought of sharing and ennobling the life of one who was worthy of her best affections,—of living for another, and of finding her own noblest self in that divine office of woman? She had laid aside the bracelet which she had so long worn as a kind of charm as well as an ornament. One would have said her features had lost something of that look of imperious beauty which had added to her resemblance to the dead woman whose glowing portrait hung upon her wall. And if it could be that, after so many generations, the blood of her who had died for her faith could show in her descendants veins, and the soul of that elect lady of her race look out from her far-removed offspring's dark eyes, such a transfusion of the martyr's life and spiritual being might well seem to manifest itself in Myrtle Hazard.

The large-hearted old man forgot his scholastic theory of human nature as he looked upon her face. He thought he saw in her the dawning of that grace which some are born with; which some, like Myrtle, only reach through many trials and dangers; which some seem to show for a while and then lose; which too many never reach while they wear the robes of earth, but which speaks of the kingdom of heaven already begun in the heart of a child of earth. He told her simply the story of the occurrences which had brought them together in the old house, with the message the lawyer was to deliver to its inmates. He wished to prepare her for what might have been too sudden a surprise.

But Myrtle was not wholly unprepared for some such revelation. There was little danger that any such announcement would throw her mind from its balance after the inward conflict through which she had been passing. For her lover had left her almost as soon as he had told her the story of his passion, and the relation in which he stood to her. He, too, had gone to answer his country's call to her children, not driven away by crime and shame and despair, but quitting all—his new-born happiness, the art in which he was an enthusiast, his prospects of success and honor—to obey the higher command of duty. War was to him, as to so many of the noble youth who went forth, only organized barbarism, hateful but for the sacred cause which alone redeemed it from the curse that blasted the first murderer. God only knew the sacrifice such young men as he made.

How brief Myrtle's dream had been! She almost doubted, at some moments, whether she would not awake from it, as from her other visions, and find it all unreal. There was no need of fearing any undue excitement of her mind after the alternations of feeling she had just experienced. Nothing seemed of much moment to her which could come from without,—her real world was within, and the light of its day and the breath of its life came from her love, made holy by the self-forgetfulness on both sides which was born with it.

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Only one member of the household was in danger of finding the excitement more than she could bear. Miss Cynthia knew that all Murray Bradshaw's plans, in which he had taken care that she should have a personal interest, had utterly failed. What he had done with the means of revenge in his power,—if, indeed, they were still in his power,—she did not know. She only knew that there had been a terrible scene, and that he had gone, leaving it uncertain whether he would ever return. It was with fear and trembling that she heard the summons which went forth, that the whole family should meet in the parlor to listen to a statement from Mr. Penhallow. They all gathered as requested, and sat round the room, with the exception of Mistress Kitty Fagan, who knew her place too well to be sittin' down with the likes o' them, and stood with attentive ears in the doorway.

Mr. Penhallow then read from a printed paper the decision of the Supreme Court in the land case so long pending, where the estate of the late Malachi Withers was the claimant, against certain parties pretending to hold under an ancient grant. The decision was in favor of the estate.

"This gives a great property to the heirs," Mr. Penhallow remarked, "and the question as to who these heirs are has to be opened. For the will under which Silence Withers, sister of the deceased, has inherited is dated some years previous to the decease, and it was not very strange that a will of later date should be discovered. Such a will has been discovered. It is the instrument I have here."

Myrtle Hazard opened her eyes very widely, for the paper Mr. Penhallow held looked exactly like that which Murray Bradshaw had burned, and, what was curious, had some spots on it just like some she had noticed on that.

"This will," Mr. Penhallow said, "signed by witnesses dead or absent from this place, makes a disposition of the testator's property in some respects similar to that of the previous one, but with a single change, which proves to be of very great importance."

Mr. Penhallow proceeded to read the will. The important change in the disposition of the property was this: in case the land claim was decided in favor of the estate, then, in addition to the small provision made for Myrtle Hazard, the property so coming to the estate should all go to her. There was no question about the genuineness and the legal sufficiency of this instrument. Its date was not very long after the preceding one, at a period when, as was well known, he had almost given up the hope of gaining his case, and when the property was of little value compared to that which it had at present.

A long silence followed this reading. Then, to the surprise of all, Miss Silence Withers rose, and went to Myrtle Hazard, and wished her joy with every appearance of sincerity. She was relieved of a great responsibility. Myrtle was young and could bear it better. She hoped that her young relative would live long to enjoy the blessings Providence had bestowed upon her, and to use them for the good of the community, and especially the

promotion of the education of deserving youth. If some fitting person could be found to advise Myrtle, whose affairs would require much care, it would be a great relief to her.

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They all went up to Myrtle and congratulated her on her change of fortune. Even Cynthia Badlam got out a phrase or two which passed muster in the midst of the general excitement. As for Kitty Fagan, she could not say a word, but caught Myrtle's hand and kissed it as if it belonged to her own saint; and then, suddenly applying her apron to her eyes, retreated from a scene which was too much for her, in a state of complete mental beatitude and total bodily discomfiture.

Then Silence asked the old minister to make a prayer, and he stretched his hands up to Heaven, and called down all the blessings of Providence upon all the household, and especially upon this young handmaiden, who was to be tried with prosperity, and would need all aid from above to keep her from its dangers.

Then Mr. Penhallow asked Myrtle if she had any choice as to the friend who should have charge of her affairs. Myrtle turned to Master Byles Gridley, and said, "You have been my friend and protector so far, will you continue to be so hereafter?"

Master Gridley tried very hard to begin a few words of thanks to her for her preference, but finding his voice a little uncertain, contented himself with pressing her hand and saying, "Most willingly, my dear daughter!"

CHAPTER XXXVI

CONCLUSION.

The same day the great news of Myrtle Hazard's accession to fortune came out, the secret was told that she had promised herself in marriage to Mr. Clement Lindsay. But her friends hardly knew how to congratulate her on this last event. Her lover was gone, to risk his life, not improbably to lose it, or to come home a wreck, crippled by wounds, or worn out with disease.

Some of them wondered to see her so cheerful in such a moment of trial. They could not know how the manly strength of Clement's determination had nerved her for womanly endurance. They had not learned that a great cause makes great souls, or reveals them to themselves,—a lesson taught by so many noble examples in the times that followed. Myrtle's only desire seemed to be to labor in some way to help the soldiers and their families. She appeared to have forgotten everything for this duty; she had no time for regrets, if she were disposed to indulge them, and she hardly asked a question as to the extent of the fortune which had fallen to her.

The next number of the "Banner and Oracle" contained two announcements which she read with some interest when her attention was called to them. They were as follows:

"A fair and accomplished daughter of this village comes, by the late decision of the Supreme Court, into possession of a property estimated at a million of dollars or more.

It consists of a large tract of land purchased many years ago by the late Malachi Withers, now become of immense value by the growth of a city in its neighborhood, the opening of mines, *etc.*, *etc.* It is rumored that the lovely and highly educated heiress has formed a connection looking towards matrimony with a certain distinguished artist.”

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"Our distinguished young townsman, William Murray Bradshaw, Esq., has been among the first to respond to the call of the country for champions to defend her from traitors. We understand that he has obtained a captaincy in the ___th regiment, about to march to the threatened seat of war. May victory perch on his banners!"

The two lovers, parted by their own self-sacrificing choice in the very hour that promised to bring them so much happiness, labored for the common cause during all the terrible years of warfare, one in the camp and the field, the other in the not less needful work which the good women carried on at home, or wherever their services were needed. Clement—now Captain Lindsay—returned at the end of his first campaign charged with a special office. Some months later, after one of the great battles, he was sent home wounded. He wore the leaf on his shoulder which entitled him to be called Major Lindsay. He recovered from his wound only too rapidly, for Myrtle had visited him daily in the military hospital where he had resided for treatment; and it was bitter parting. The telegraph wires were thrilling almost hourly with messages of death, and the long pine boxes came by almost every train,—no need of asking what they held.

Once more he came, detailed on special duty, and this time with the eagle on his shoulder,—he was Colonel Lindsay. The lovers could not part again of their own free will. Some adventurous women had followed their husbands to the camp, and Myrtle looked as if she could play the part of the Maid of Saragossa on occasion. So Clement asked her if she would return with him as his wife; and Myrtle answered, with as much willingness to submit as a maiden might fairly show under such circumstances, that she would do his bidding. Thereupon, with the shortest possible legal notice, Father Pemberton was sent for, and the ceremony was performed in the presence of a few witnesses in the large parlor at The Poplars, which was adorned with flowers, and hung round with all the portraits of the dead members of the family, summoned as witnesses to the celebration. One witness looked on with unmoved features, yet Myrtle thought there was a more heavenly smile on her faded lips than she had ever seen before beaming from the canvas,—it was Ann Holyoake, the martyr to her faith, the guardian spirit of Myrtle's visions, who seemed to breathe a holier benediction than any words—even those of the good old Father Pemberton himself—could convey.

They went back together to the camp. From that period until the end of the war, Myrtle passed her time between the life of the tent and that of the hospital. In the offices of mercy which she performed for the sick and the wounded and the dying, the dross of her nature seemed to be burned away. The conflict of mingled lives in her blood had ceased. No lawless impulses usurped the place of that serene resolve which had grown strong by every exercise of its high prerogative. If she had been called now to die for any worthy cause, her race would have been ennobled by a second martyr, true to the blood of her who died under the cruel Queen.

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Many sad sights she saw in the great hospital where she passed some months at intervals,—one never to be forgotten. An officer was brought into the ward where she was in attendance. “Shot through the lungs,—pretty nearly gone.”

She went softly to his bedside. He was breathing with great difficulty; his face was almost convulsed with the effort, but she recognized him in a moment; it was Murray Bradshaw,—Captain Bradshaw, as she knew by the bars on his coat flung upon the bed where he had just been laid.

She addressed him by name, tenderly as if he had been a dear brother; she saw on his face that hers were to be the last kind words he would ever hear.

He turned his glazing eyes upon her. “Who are you?” he said in a feeble voice.

“An old friend,” she answered; “you knew me as Myrtle Hazard.”

He started. “You by my bedside! You caring for me!—for me, that burned the title to your fortune to ashes before your eyes! You can’t forgive that,—I won’t believe it! Don’t you hate me, dying as I am?”

Myrtle was used to maintaining a perfect calmness of voice and countenance, and she held her feelings firmly down. “I have nothing to forgive you, Mr. Bradshaw. You may have meant to do me wrong, but Providence raised up a protector for me. The paper you burned was not the original,—it was a copy substituted for it—”

“And did the old man outwit me after all?” he cried out, rising suddenly in bed, and clasping his hands behind his head to give him a few more gasps of breath. “I knew he was cunning, but I thought I was his match. It must have been Byles Gridley,—nobody else. And so the old man beat me after all, and saved you from ruin! Thank God that it came out so! Thank God! I can die now. Give me your hand, Myrtle.”

She took his hand, and held it until it gently loosed its hold, and he ceased to breathe. Myrtle’s creed was a simple one, with more of trust and love in it than of systematized articles of belief. She cherished the fond hope that these last words of one who had erred so miserably were a token of some blessed change which the influences of the better world might carry onward until he should have outgrown the sins and the weaknesses of his earthly career.

Soon after this she rejoined her husband in the camp. From time to time they received stray copies of the “Banner and Oracle,” which, to Myrtle especially, were full of interest, even to the last advertisement. A few paragraphs may be reproduced here which relate to persons who have figured in this narrative.

“Temple of Hymen.”

“Married, on the 6th instant, Fordyce Hurlbut, M. D., to Olive, only daughter of the Rev. Ambrose Eveleth. The editor of this paper returns his acknowledgments for a bountiful slice of the wedding-cake. May their shadows never be less!”

Not many weeks after this appeared the following:

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"Died in this place, on the 28th instant, the venerable Lemuel Hurlbut, M. D., at the great age of *xvii* years.

"With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of days understanding."

Myrtle recalled his kind care of her in her illness, and paid the tribute of a sigh to his memory,—there was nothing in a death like his to call for any aching regret.

The usual routine of small occurrences was duly recorded in the village paper for some weeks longer, when she was startled and shocked by receiving a number containing the following paragraph:

Calamitous accident

"It is known to our readers that the steeple of the old meeting-house was struck by lightning about a month ago. The frame of the building was a good deal jarred by the shock, but no danger was apprehended from the injury it had received. On Sunday last the congregation came together as usual. The Rev. Mr. Stoker was alone in the pulpit, the Rev. Doctor Pemberton having been detained by slight indisposition. The sermon was from the text, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid." (Isaiah xi. 6.) The pastor described the millennium as—the reign of love and peace, in eloquent and impressive language. He was in the midst of the prayer which follows the sermon, and had just put up a petition that the spirit of affection and faith and trust might grow up and prevail among the flock of which he was the shepherd, more especially those dear lambs whom he gathered with his arm, and carried in his bosom, when the old sounding-board, which had hung safely for nearly a century,—loosened, no doubt by the bolt which had fallen on the church,—broke from its fastenings, and fell with a loud crash upon the pulpit, crushing the Rev. Mr. Stoker under its ruins. The scene that followed beggars description. Cries and shrieks resounded through the house. Two or three young women fainted entirely away. Mr. Penhallow, Deacon Rumrill, Gifted Hopkins, Esq., and others, came forward immediately, and after much effort succeeded in removing the wreck of the sounding-board, and extricating their unfortunate pastor. He was not fatally injured, it is hoped; but, sad to relate, he received such a violent blow upon the spine of the back, that palsy of the lower extremities is like to ensue. He is at present lying entirely helpless. Every attention is paid to him by his affectionately devoted family."

Myrtle had hardly got over the pain which the reading of this unfortunate occurrence gave her, when her eyes were gladdened by the following pleasing piece of intelligence, contained in a subsequent number of the village paper:

Imposing ceremony.

“The Reverend Doctor Pemberton performed the impressive rite of baptism upon the first-born child of our distinguished townsman, Gifted Hopkins, Esq., the Bard of Oxbow Village, and Mrs. Susan P. Hopkins, his amiable and respected lady. The babe conducted himself with singular propriety on this occasion. He received the Christian name of Byron Tennyson Browning. May he prove worthy of his name and his parentage!”

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The end of the war came at last, and found Colonel Lindsay among its unharmed survivors. He returned with Myrtle to her native village, and they established themselves, at the request of Miss Silence Withers, in the old family mansion. Miss Cynthia, to whom Myrtle made a generous allowance, had gone to live in a town not many miles distant, where she had a kind of home on sufferance, as well as at The Poplars. This was a convenience just then, because Nurse Byloe was invited to stay with them for a month or two; and one nurse and two single women under the same roof keep each other in a stew all the time, as the old dame somewhat sharply remarked.

Master Byles Gridley had been appointed Myrtle's legal protector, and, with the assistance of Mr. Penhallow, had brought the property she inherited into a more manageable and productive form; so that, when Clement began his fine studio behind the old mansion, he felt that at least he could pursue his art, or arts, if he chose to give himself to sculpture, without that dreadful hag, Necessity, standing by him to pinch the features of all his ideals, and give them something of her own likeness.

Silence Withers was more cheerful now that she had got rid of her responsibility. She embellished her spare person a little more than in former years. These young people looked so happy! Love was not so unendurable, perhaps, after all. No woman need despair,—especially if she has a house over her, and a snug little property. A worthy man, a former missionary, of the best principles, but of a slightly jocose and good-humored habit, thought that he could piece his widowed years with the not insignificant, fraction of life left to Miss Silence, to their mutual advantage. He came to the village, therefore, where Father Pemberton was very glad to have him supply the pulpit in the place of his unfortunate disabled colleague. The courtship soon began, and was brisk enough; for the good man knew there was no time to lose at his period of life,—or hers either, for that matter. It was a rather odd specimen of love-making; for he was constantly trying to subdue his features to a gravity which they were not used to, and she was as constantly endeavoring to be as lively as possible, with the innocent desire of pleasing her light-hearted suitor.

“Vieille fille fait jeune mariee.” Silence was ten years younger as a bride than she had seemed as a lone woman. One would have said she had got out of the coach next to the hearse, and got into one some half a dozen behind it,—where there is often good and reasonably cheerful conversation going on about the virtues of the deceased, the probable amount of his property, or the little slips he may have committed, and where occasionally a subdued pleasantry at his expense sets the four waistcoats shaking that were lifting with sighs a half-hour ago in the house of mourning. But Miss Silence, that was, thought that two families, with all the possible complications

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which time might bring, would be better in separate establishments. She therefore proposed selling The Poplars to Myrtle and her husband, and removing to a house in the village, which would be large enough for them, at least for the present. So the young folks bought the old house, and paid a mighty good price for it; and enlarged it, and beautified and glorified it, and one fine morning went together down to the Widow Hopkins's, whose residence seemed in danger of being a little crowded,—for Gifted lived there with his Susan,—and what had happened might happen again,—and gave Master Byles Gridley a formal and most persuasively worded invitation to come up and make his home with them at The Poplars.

Now Master Gridley has been betrayed into palpable and undisguised weakness at least once in the presence of this assembly, who are looking upon him almost for the last time before they part from him, and see his face no more. Let us not inquire too curiously, then, how he received this kind proposition. It is enough, that, when he found that a new study had been built on purpose for him, and a sleeping-room attached to it so that he could live there without disturbing anybody if he chose, he consented to remove there for a while, and that he was there established amidst great rejoicing.

Cynthia Badlam had fallen of late into poor health. She found at last that she was going; and as she had a little property of her own,—as almost all poor relations have, only there is not enough of it,—she was much exercised in her mind as to the final arrangements to be made respecting its disposition. The Rev. Dr. Pemberton was one day surprised by a message, that she wished to have an interview with him. He rode over to the town in which she was residing, and there had a long conversation with her upon this matter. When this was settled, her mind seemed too be more at ease. She died with a comfortable assurance that she was going to a better world, and with a bitter conviction that it would be hard to find one that would offer her a worse lot than being a poor relation in this.

Her little property was left to Rev. Eliphalet Pemberton and Jacob Penhallow, Esq., to be by them employed for such charitable purposes as they should elect, educational or other. Father Pemberton preached an admirable funeral sermon, in which he praised her virtues, known to this people among whom she had long lived, and especially that crowning act by which she devoted all she had to purposes of charity-and benevolence.

The old clergyman seemed to have renewed his youth since the misfortune of his colleague had incapacitated him from labor. He generally preached in the forenoon now, and to the great acceptance of the people,—for the truth was that the honest minister who had married Miss Silence was not young enough or good-looking enough to be an object of personal attentions like the Rev. Joseph Bellamy Stoker, and the old minister

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appeared to great advantage contrasted with him in the pulpit. Poor Mr. Stoker was now helpless, faithfully and tenderly waited upon by his own wife, who had regained her health and strength,—in no small measure, perhaps, from the great need of sympathy and active aid which her unfortunate husband now experienced. It was an astonishment to herself when she found that she who had so long been served was able to serve another. Some who knew his errors thought his accident was a judgment; but others believed that it was only a mercy in disguise,—it snatched him roughly from his sin, but it opened his heart to gratitude towards her whom his neglect could not alienate, and through gratitude to repentance and better thoughts. Bathsheba had long ago promised herself to Cyprian Eveleth; and, as he was about to become the rector of a parish in the next town, the marriage was soon to take place.

How beautifully serene Master Byles Gridley's face was growing! Clement loved to study its grand lines, which had so much strength and fine humanity blended in them. He was so fascinated by their noble expression that he sometimes seemed to forget himself, and looked at him more like an artist taking his portrait than like an admiring friend. He maintained that Master Gridley had a bigger bump of benevolence and as large a one of cautiousness as the two people most famous for the size of these organs on the phrenological chart he showed him, and proved it, or nearly proved it, by careful measurements of his head. Master Gridley laughed, and read him a passage on the pseudo-sciences out of his book.

The disposal of Miss Cynthia's bequest was much discussed in the village. Some wished the trustees would use it to lay the foundations of a public library. Others thought it should be applied for the relief of the families of soldiers who had fallen in the war. Still another set would take it to build a monument to the memory of those heroes. The trustees listened with the greatest candor to all these gratuitous hints. It was, however, suggested, in a well-written anonymous article which appeared in the village paper, that it was desirable to follow the general lead of the testator's apparent preference. The trustees were at liberty to do as they saw fit; but, other things being equal, same educational object should be selected.

If there were any orphan children in the place, it would seem to be very proper to devote the moderate sum bequeathed to educating them. The trustees recognized the justice of this suggestion. Why not apply it to the instruction and maintenance of those two pretty and promising children, virtually orphans, whom the charitable Mrs. Hopkins had cared for so long without any recompense, and at a cost which would soon become beyond her means? The good people of the neighborhood accepted this as the best solution of the difficulty. It was agreed upon at length by the trustees, that the Cynthia Badlam Fund for Educational Purposes should be applied for the benefit of the two foundlings, known as Isosceles and Helminthia Hopkins.

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Master Bytes Gridley was greatly exercised about the two “preposterous names,” as he called them, which in a moment of eccentric impulse he had given to these children of nature. He ventured to hint as much to Mrs. Hopkins. The good dame was vastly surprised. She thought they was about as pooty names as anybody had had given ’em in the village. And they was so handy, spoke short, Sossy and Minthy,—she never should know how to call ’em anything else.

“But my dear Mrs. Hopkins,” Master Gridley urged, “if you knew the meaning they have to the ears of scholars, you would see that I did very wrong to apply such absurd names to my little fellow-creatures, and that I am bound to rectify my error. More than that, my dear madam, I mean to consult you as to the new names; and if we can fix upon proper and pleasing ones, it is my intention to leave a pretty legacy in my will to these interesting children.”

“Mr. Gridley,” said Mrs. Hopkins, “you’re the best man I ever see, or ever shall see, . . . except my poor dear Ammi . . . I ’ll do jest as you say about that, or about anything else in all this livin’ world.”

“Well, then, Mrs. Hopkins, what shall be the boy’s name?”

“Byles Gridley Hopkins!” she answered instantly.

“Good Lord!” said Mr. Gridley, “think a minute, my dear madam. I will not say one word,—only think a minute, and mention some name that will not suggest quite so many winks and whispers.”

She did think something less than a minute, and then said aloud, “Abraham Lincoln Hopkins.”

“Fifteen thousand children have been so christened during the past year, on a moderate computation.”

“Do think of some name yourself, Mr. Gridley; I shall like anything that you like. To think of those dear babes having a fund—if that’s the right name—on purpose for ’em, and a promise of a legacy, I hope they won’t get that till they’re a hundred year old!”

“What if we change Isosceles to Theodore, Mrs. Hopkins? That means the gift of God, and the child has been a gift from Heaven, rather than a burden.”

Mrs. Hopkins seized her apron, and held it to her eyes. She was weeping. “Theodore!” she said, “Theodore! My little brother’s name, that I buried when I was only eleven year old. Drowned. The dearest little child that ever you see. I have got his little mug with Theodore on it now. Kep’ o’ purpose. Our little Sossy shall have it. Theodore P. Hopkins,—sha’n’t it be, Mr. Gridley?”

“Well, if you say so; but why that P., Mrs. Hopkins? Theodore Parker, is it?”

“Doesn’t P. stand for Pemberton, and isn’t Father Pemberton the best man in the world—next to you, Mr. Gridley?”

“Well, well, Mrs. Hopkins, let it be so, if you are suited, I am. Now about Helminthia; there can’t be any doubt about what we ought to call her,—surely the friend of orphans should be remembered in naming one of the objects of her charity.”

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“Cynthia Badlam Fund Hopkins,” said the good woman triumphantly,—“is that what you mean?”

“Suppose we leave out one of the names,—four are too many. I think the general opinion will be that Hehninthia should unite the names of her two benefactresses,—Cynthia Badlam Hopkins.”

“Why, law! Mr. Gridley, is n’t that nice?—Minthy and Cynthy,—there ain’t but one letter of difference! Poor Cynthy would be pleased if she could know that one of our babes was to be called after her. She was dreadful fond of children.”

On one of the sweetest Sundays that ever made Oxbow Village lovely, the Rev. Dr. Eliphalet Pemberton was summoned to officiate at three most interesting ceremonies,—a wedding and two christenings, one of the latter a double one.

The first was celebrated at the house of the Rev. Mr. Stoker, between the Rev. Cyprian Eveleth and Bathsheba, daughter of the first-named clergyman. He could not be present on account of his great infirmity, but the door of his chamber was left open that he might hear the marriage service performed. The old, white-haired minister, assisted, as the papers said, by the bridegroom’s father, conducted the ceremony according to the Episcopal form. When he came to those solemn words in which the husband promises fidelity to the wife so long as they both shall live, the nurse, who was watching, near the poor father, saw him bury his face in his pillow, and heard him murmur the words, “God be merciful to me a sinner!”

The christenings were both to take place at the same service, in the old meeting-house. Colonel Clement Lindsay and Myrtle his wife came in, and stout Nurse Byloe bore their sturdy infant in her arms. A slip of paper was handed to the Reverend Doctor on which these words were written:—“The name is Charles Hazard.”

The solemn and touching rite was then performed; and Nurse Byloe disappeared with the child, its forehead glistening with the dew of its consecration.

Then, hand in hand, like the babes in the wood, marched up the broad aisle—marshalled by Mrs. Hopkins in front, and Mrs. Gifted Hopkins bringing up the rear—the two children hitherto known as Isosceles and Helminthia. They had been well schooled, and, as the mysterious and to them incomprehensible ceremony was enacted, maintained the most stoical aspect of tranquillity. In Mrs. Hopkins’s words, “They looked like picters, and behaved like angels.”

That evening, Sunday evening as it was, there was a quiet meeting of some few friends at The Poplars. It was such a great occasion that the Sabbatical rules, never strict about Sunday evening,—which was, strictly speaking, secular time,—were relaxed. Father Pemberton was there, and Master Byles Gridley, of course, and the Rev.



Ambrose Eveleth, with his son and his daughter-in-law, Bathsheba, and her mother, now in comfortable health, aunt Silence and her husband, Doctor Hurlbut and his wife (Olive Eveleth that was), Jacob Penhallow, Esq., Mrs. Hopkins, her son and his wife (Susan Posey that was), the senior deacon of the old church (the admirer of the great Scott), the Editor-in-chief of the "Banner and Oracle," and in the background Nurse Byloe and the privileged servant, Mistress Kitty Fagan, with a few others whose names we need not mention.

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The evening was made pleasant with sacred music, and the fatigues of two long services repaired by such simple refectations as would not turn the holy day into a day of labor. A large paper copy of the new edition of Byles Gridley's remarkable work was lying on the table. He never looked so happy,—could anything fill his cup fuller? In the course of the evening Clement spoke of the many trials through which they had passed in common with vast numbers of their countrymen, and some of those peculiar dangers which Myrtle had had to encounter in the course of a life more eventful, and attended with more risks, perhaps, than most of them imagined. But Myrtle, he said, had always been specially cared for. He wished them to look upon the semblance of that protecting spirit who had been faithful to her in her gravest hours of trial and danger. If they would follow him into one of the lesser apartments up stairs they would have an opportunity to do so.

Myrtle wondered a little, but followed with the rest. They all ascended to the little projecting chamber, through the window of which her scarlet jacket caught the eyes of the boys paddling about on the river in those early days when Cyprian Eveleth gave it the name of the Fire-hang-bird's Nest.

The light fell softly but clearly on the dim and faded canvas from which looked the saintly features of the martyred woman, whose continued presence with her descendants was the old family legend. But underneath it Myrtle was surprised to see a small table with some closely covered object upon it. It was a mysterious arrangement, made without any knowledge on her part.

"Now, then, Kitty!" Mr. Lindsay said.

Kitty Fagan, who had evidently been taught her part, stepped forward, and removed the cloth which concealed the unknown object. It was a lifelike marble bust of Master Byles Gridley.

"And this is what you have been working at so long,—is it, Clement?" Myrtle said.

"Which is the image of your protector, Myrtle?", he answered, smiling.

Myrtle Hazard Lindsay walked up to the bust and kissed its marble forehead, saying, "This is the face of my Guardian Angel." forehead, saying, "This is the face of my Guardian Angel."

A MORTAL ANTIPATHY

By Oliver Wendell Holmes

PREFACE.

“A mortal antipathy” was a truly hazardous experiment. A very wise and very distinguished physician who is as much at home in literature as he is in science and the practice of medicine, wrote to me in referring to this story: “I should have been afraid of my subject.” He did not explain himself, but I can easily understand that he felt the improbability of the, physiological or pathological occurrence on which the story is founded to be so great that the narrative could hardly be rendered plausible. I felt the difficulty for myself as well as for my readers, and it was only by recalling for our consideration a series of extraordinary but well-authenticated facts of somewhat similar character that I could hope to gain any serious attention to so strange a narrative.

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I need not recur to these wonderful stories. There is, however, one, not to be found on record elsewhere, to which I would especially call the reader's attention. It is that of the middle-aged man, who assured me that he could never pass a tall hall clock without an indefinable terror. While an infant in arms the heavy weight of one of these tall clocks had fallen with aloud crash and produced an impression on his nervous system which he had never got over.

The lasting effect of a shock received by the sense of sight or that of hearing is conceivable enough.

But there is another sense, the nerves of which are in close relation with the higher organs of consciousness. The strength of the associations connected with the function of the first pair of nerves, the olfactory, is familiar to most persons in their own experience and as related by others. Now we know that every human being, as well as every other living organism, carries its own distinguishing atmosphere. If a man's friend does not know it, his dog does, and can track him anywhere by it. This personal peculiarity varies with the age and conditions of the individual. It may be agreeable or otherwise, a source of attraction or repulsion, but its influence is not less real, though far less obvious and less dominant, than in the lower animals. It was an atmospheric impression of this nature which associated itself with a terrible shock experienced by the infant which became the subject of this story. The impression could not be outgrown, but it might possibly be broken up by some sudden change in the nervous system effected by a cause as potent as the one which had produced the disordered condition.

This is the best key that I can furnish to a story which must have puzzled some, repelled others, and failed to interest many who did not suspect the true cause of the mysterious antipathy.

Beverly farms, mass., August, 1891.
O. W. H.

A MORTAL ANTIPATHY.

First opening of the new portfolio.

INTRODUCTION.

"And why the New Portfolio, I would ask?"

Pray, do you remember, when there was an accession to the nursery in which you have a special interest, whether the new-comer was commonly spoken of as a baby? Was it not, on the contrary, invariably, under all conditions, in all companies, by the whole household, spoken of as the baby? And was the small receptacle provided for it

commonly spoken of as a cradle; or was it not always called the cradle, as if there were no other in existence?

Now this New Portfolio is the cradle in which I am to rock my new-born thoughts, and from which I am to lift them carefully and show them to callers, namely, to the whole family of readers belonging to my list of intimates, and such other friends as may drop in by accident. And so it shall have the definite article, and not be lost in the mob of its fellows as a portfolio.

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There are a few personal and incidental matters of which I wish to say something before reaching the contents of the Portfolio, whatever these may be. I have had other portfolios before this,—two, more especially, and the first thing I beg leave to introduce relates to these.

Do not throw this volume down, or turn to another page, when I tell you that the earliest of them, that of which I now am about to speak, was opened more than fifty years ago. This is a very dangerous confession, for fifty years make everything hopelessly old-fashioned, without giving it the charm of real antiquity. If I could say a hundred years, now, my readers would accept all I had to tell them with a curious interest; but fifty years ago,—there are too many talkative old people who know all about that time, and at best half a century is a half-baked bit of ware. A coin-fancier would say that your fifty-year-old facts have just enough of antiquity to spot them with rust, and not enough to give them—the delicate and durable patina which is time's exquisite enamel.

When the first Portfolio was opened the coin of the realm bore for its legend,—or might have borne if the more devout hero-worshippers could have had their way,—Andreas Jackson, Populi Gratia, Imp. Caesar. Aug. Div., Max., *etc.*, *etc.* I never happened to see any gold or silver with that legend, but the truth is I was not very familiarly acquainted with the precious metals at that period of my career, and, there might have been a good deal of such coin in circulation without my handling it, or knowing much about it.

Permit me to indulge in a few reminiscences of that far-off time.

In those days the Athenaeum Picture Gallery was a principal centre of attraction to young Boston people and their visitors. Many of us got our first ideas of art, to say nothing of our first lessons in the comparatively innocent flirtations of our city's primitive period, in that agreeable resort of amateurs and artists.

How the pictures on those walls in Pearl Street do keep their places in the mind's gallery! Trumbull's *Sortie of Gibraltar*, with red enough in it for one of our sunset after-glows; and Neagle's full-length portrait of the blacksmith in his shirt-sleeves; and Copley's long-waistcoated gentlemen and satin-clad ladies,—they looked like gentlemen and ladies, too; and Stuart's florid merchants and high-waisted matrons; and Allston's lovely Italian scenery and dreamy, unimpassioned women, not forgetting *Florimel* in full flight on her interminable rocking-horse,—you may still see her at the Art Museum; and the rival landscapes of Doughty and Fisher, much talked of and largely praised in those days; and the *Murillo*,—not from Marshal Soup's collection; and the portrait of Annibale Caracci by himself, which cost the Athenaeum a hundred dollars; and Cole's allegorical pictures, and his immense and dreary canvas, in which the prostrate shepherds and the angel in Joseph's coat of

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many colors look as if they must have been thrown in for nothing; and West's brawny Lear tearing his clothes to pieces. But why go on with the catalogue, when most of these pictures can be seen either at the Athenaeum building in Beacon Street or at the Art Gallery, and admired or criticised perhaps more justly, certainly not more generously, than in those earlier years when we looked at them through the japanned fish-horns?

If one happened to pass through Atkinson Street on his way to the Athenaeum, he would notice a large, square, painted, brick house, in which lived a leading representative of old-fashioned coleopterous Calvinism, and from which emerged one of the liveliest of literary butterflies. The father was editor of the "Boston Recorder," a very respectable, but very far from amusing paper, most largely patronized by that class of the community which spoke habitually of the first day of the week as "the Sahbuth." The son was the editor of several different periodicals in succession, none of them over severe or serious, and of many pleasant books, filled with lively descriptions of society, which he studied on the outside with a quick eye for form and color, and with a certain amount of sentiment, not very deep, but real, though somewhat frothed over by his worldly experiences.

Nathaniel Parker Willis was in full bloom when I opened my first Portfolio. He had made himself known by his religious poetry, published in his father's paper, I think, and signed "Roy." He had started the "American Magazine," afterwards merged in the "New York Mirror." He had then left off writing scripture pieces, and taken to lighter forms of verse. He had just written

"I'm twenty-two, I'm twenty-two,
They idly give me joy,
As if I should be glad to know
That I was less a boy."

He was young, therefore, and already famous. He came very near being very handsome. He was tall; his hair, of light brown color, waved in luxuriant abundance; his cheek was as rosy as if it had been painted to show behind the footlights; he dressed with artistic elegance. He was something between a remembrance of Count D'Orsay and an anticipation of Oscar Wilde. There used to be in the gallery of the Luxembourg a picture of Hippolytus and Phxdra, in which the beautiful young man, who had kindled a passion in the heart of his wicked step-mother, always reminded me of Willis, in spite of the shortcomings of the living face as compared with the ideal. The painted youth is still blooming on the canvas, but the fresh-cheeked, jaunty young author of the year 1830 has long faded out of human sight. I took the leaves which lie before me at this moment, as I write, from his coffin, as it lay just outside the door of Saint Paul's Church, on a sad, overclouded winter's day, in the year 1867. At that earlier time, Willis was by

far the most prominent young American author. Cooper, Irving, Bryant, Dana, Halleck, Drake, had all done their best work.

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Longfellow was not yet conspicuous. Lowell was a school-boy. Emerson was unheard of. Whittier was beginning to make his way against the writers with better educational advantages whom he was destined to outdo and to outlive. Not one of the great histories, which have done honor to our literature, had appeared. Our school-books depended, so far as American authors were concerned, on extracts from the orations and speeches of Webster and Everett; on Bryant's *Thanatopsis*, his lines *To a Waterfowl*, and the *Death of the Flowers*, Halleck's *Marco Bozzaris*, *Red Jacket*, and *Burns*; on Drake's *American Flag*, and Percival's *Coral Grove*, and his *Genius Sleeping* and *Genius Waking*,—and not getting very wide awake, either. These could be depended upon. A few other copies of verses might be found, but Dwight's "*Columbia, Columbia*," and Pierpont's *Airs of Palestine*, were already effaced, as many of the favorites of our own day and generation must soon be, by the great wave which the near future will pour over the sands in which they still are legible.

About this time, in the year 1832, came out a small volume entitled "*Truth, a Gift for Scribblers*," which made some talk for a while, and is now chiefly valuable as a kind of literary tombstone on which may be read the names of many whose renown has been buried with their bones. The "*London Athenaeum*" spoke of it as having been described as a "tomahawk sort of satire." As the author had been a trapper in Missouri, he was familiarly acquainted with that weapon and the warfare of its owners. Born in Boston, in 1804, the son of an army officer, educated at West Point, he came back to his native city about the year 1830. He wrote an article on Bryant's *Poems* for the "*North American Review*," and another on the famous Indian chief, *Black Hawk*. In this last-mentioned article he tells this story as the great warrior told it himself. It was an incident of a fight with the Osages.

"Standing by my father's side, I saw him kill his antagonist and tear the scalp from his head. Fired with valor and ambition, I rushed furiously upon another, smote him to the earth with my tomahawk, ran my lance through his body, took off his scalp, and returned in triumph to my father. He said nothing, but looked pleased."

This little red story describes very well Spelling's style of literary warfare. His handling of his most conspicuous victim, Willis, was very much like *Black Hawk's* way of dealing with the Osage. He tomahawked him in heroics, ran him through in prose, and scalped him in barbarous epigrams. Bryant and Halleck were abundantly praised; hardly any one else escaped.

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If the reader wishes to see the bubbles of reputation that were floating, some of them gay with prismatic colors, half a century ago, he will find in the pages of "Truth" a long catalogue of celebrities he never heard of. I recognize only three names, of all which are mentioned in the little book, as belonging to persons still living; but as I have not read the obituaries of all the others, some of them may be still flourishing in spite of Mr. Spelling's exterminating onslaught. Time dealt as hardly with poor Spelling, who was not without talent and instruction, as he had dealt with our authors. I think he found shelter at last under a roof which held numerous inmates, some of whom had seen better and many of whom had known worse days than those which they were passing within its friendly and not exclusive precincts. Such, at least, was the story I heard after he disappeared from general observation.

That was the day of Souvenirs, Tokens, Forget-me-nots, Bijous, and all that class of showy annuals. Short stories, slender poems, steel engravings, on a level with the common fashion-plates of advertising establishments, gilt edges, resplendent binding, —to manifestations of this sort our lighter literature had very largely run for some years. The "Scarlet Letter" was an unhinted possibility. The "Voices of the Night" had not stirred the brooding silence; the Concord seer was still in the lonely desert; most of the contributors to those yearly volumes, which took up such pretentious positions on the centre table, have shrunk into entire oblivion, or, at best, hold their place in literature by a scrap or two in some omnivorous collection.

What dreadful work Spelling made among those slight reputations, floating in swollen tenuity on the surface of the stream, and mirroring each other in reciprocal reflections! Violent, abusive as he was, unjust to any against whom he happened to have a prejudice, his castigation of the small litterateurs of that day was not harmful, but rather of use. His attack on Willis very probably did him good; he needed a little discipline, and though he got it too unsparingly, some cautions came with it which were worth the stripes he had to smart under. One noble writer Spelling treated with rudeness, probably from some accidental pique, or equally insignificant reason. I myself, one of the three survivors before referred to, escaped with a love-pat, as the youngest son of the Muse. Longfellow gets a brief nod of acknowledgment. Bailey, an American writer, "who made long since a happy snatch at fame," which must have been snatched away from him by envious time, for I cannot identify him; Thatcher, who died early, leaving one poem, *The Last Request*, not wholly unremembered; Miss Hannah F. Gould, a very bright and agreeable writer of light verse,—all these are commended to the keeping of that venerable public carrier, who finds his scythe and hour-glass such a load that he generally drops the burdens committed to his charge, after making a show of paying every possible attention to them so long as he is kept in sight.

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It was a good time to open a portfolio. But my old one had boyhood written on every page. A single passionate outcry when the old warship I had read about in the broadsides that were a part of our kitchen literature, and in the "Naval Monument," was threatened with demolition; a few verses suggested by the sight of old Major Melville in his cocked hat and breeches, were the best scraps that came out of that first Portfolio, which was soon closed that it should not interfere with the duties of a profession authorized to claim all the time and thought which would have been otherwise expended in filling it.

During a quarter of a century the first Portfolio remained closed for the greater part of the time. Only now and then it would be taken up and opened, and something drawn from it for a special occasion, more particularly for the annual reunions of a certain class of which I was a member.

In the year 1857, towards its close, the "Atlantic Monthly," which I had the honor of naming, was started by the enterprising firm of Phillips & Sampson, under the editorship of Mr. James Russell Lowell. He thought that I might bring something out of my old Portfolio which would be not unacceptable in the new magazine. I looked at the poor old receptacle, which, partly from use and partly from neglect, had lost its freshness, and seemed hardly presentable to the new company expected to welcome the new-comer in the literary world of Boston, the least provincial of American centres of learning and letters. The gilded covering where the emblems of hope and aspiration had looked so bright had faded; not wholly, perhaps, but how was the gold become dim!—how was the most fine gold changed! Long devotion to other pursuits had left little time for literature, and the waifs and strays gathered from the old Portfolio had done little more than keep alive the memory that such a source of supply was still in existence. I looked at the old Portfolio, and said to myself, "Too late! too late. This tarnished gold will never brighten, these battered covers will stand no more wear and tear; close them, and leave them to the spider and the book-worm."

In the mean time the nebula of the first quarter of the century had condensed into the constellation of the middle of the same period. When, a little while after the establishment of the new magazine, the "Saturday Club" gathered about the long table at "Parker's," such a representation of all that was best in American literature had never been collected within so small a compass. Most of the Americans whom educated foreigners cared to see—leaving out of consideration official dignitaries, whose temporary importance makes them objects of curiosity—were seated at that board. But the club did not yet exist, and the "Atlantic Monthly" was an experiment. There had already been several monthly periodicals, more or less successful and permanent, among which "Putnam's Magazine" was conspicuous, owing its success largely to the

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contributions of that very accomplished and delightful writer, Mr. George William Curtis. That magazine, after a somewhat prolonged and very honorable existence, had gone where all periodicals go when they die, into the archives of the deaf, dumb, and blind recording angel whose name is Oblivion. It had so well deserved to live that its death was a surprise and a source of regret. Could another monthly take its place and keep it when that, with all its attractions and excellences, had died out, and left a blank in our periodical literature which it would be very hard to fill as well as that had filled it?

This was the experiment which the enterprising publishers ventured upon, and I, who felt myself outside of the charmed circle drawn around the scholars and poets of Cambridge and Concord, having given myself to other studies and duties, wondered somewhat when Mr. Lowell insisted upon my becoming a contributor. And so, yielding to a pressure which I could not understand, and yet found myself unable to resist, I promised to take a part in the new venture, as an occasional writer in the columns of the new magazine.

That was the way in which the second Portfolio found its way to my table, and was there opened in the autumn of the year 1857. I was already at least

'Nel mezzo del cammin di mia, vita,'

when I risked myself, with many misgivings, in little-tried paths of what looked at first like a wilderness, a selva oscura, where, if I did not meet the lion or the wolf, I should be sure to find the critic, the most dangerous of the carnivores, waiting to welcome me after his own fashion.

The second Portfolio is closed and laid away. Perhaps it was hardly worth while to provide and open a new one; but here it lies before me, and I hope I may find something between its covers which will justify me in coming once more before my old friends. But before I open it I want to claim a little further indulgence.

There is a subject of profound interest to almost every writer, I might say to almost every human being. No matter what his culture or ignorance, no matter what his pursuit, no matter what his character, the subject I refer to is one of which he rarely ceases to think, and, if opportunity is offered, to talk. On this he is eloquent, if on nothing else. The slow of speech becomes fluent; the torpid listener becomes electric with vivacity, and alive all over with interest.

The sagacious reader knows well what is coming after this prelude. He is accustomed to the phrases with which the plausible visitor, who has a subscription book in his pocket, prepares his victim for the depressing disclosure of his real errand. He is not unacquainted with the conversational amenities of the cordial and interesting stranger,



who, having had the misfortune of leaving his carpet-bag in the cars, or of having his pocket picked at the station, finds himself without the means of reaching that distant home where affluence waits for him with its luxurious welcome, but to whom for the moment the loan of some five and twenty dollars would be a convenience and a favor for which his heart would ache with gratitude during the brief interval between the loan and its repayment.

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I wish to say a few words in my own person relating to some passages in my own history, and more especially to some of the recent experiences through which I have been passing.

What can justify one in addressing himself to the general public as if it were his private correspondent? There are at least three sufficient reasons: first, if he has a story to tell that everybody wants to hear,—if he has been shipwrecked, or has been in a battle, or has witnessed any interesting event, and can tell anything new about it; secondly, if he can put in fitting words any common experiences not already well told, so that readers will say, “Why, yes! I have had that sensation, thought, emotion, a hundred times, but I never heard it spoken of before, and I never saw any mention of it in print;” and thirdly, anything one likes, provided he can so tell it as to make it interesting.

I have no story to tell in this Introduction which can of itself claim any general attention. My first pages relate the effect of a certain literary experience upon myself,—a series of partial metempsychoses of which I have been the subject. Next follows a brief tribute to the memory of a very dear and renowned friend from whom I have recently been parted. The rest of the Introduction will be consecrated to the memory of my birthplace.

I have just finished a Memoir, which will appear soon after this page is written, and will have been the subject of criticism long before it is in the reader’s hands. The experience of thinking another man’s thoughts continuously for a long time; of living one’s self into another man’s life for a month, or a year, or more, is a very curious one. No matter how much superior to the biographer his subject may be, the man who writes the life feels himself, in a certain sense, on the level of the person whose life he is writing. One cannot fight over the battles of Marengo or Austerlitz with Napoleon without feeling as if he himself had a fractional claim to the victory, so real seems the transfer of his personality into that of the conqueror while he reads. Still more must this identification of “subject” and “object” take place when one is writing of a person whose studies or occupations are not unlike his own.

Here are some of my metempsychoses: Ten years ago I wrote what I called A Memorial Outline of a remarkable student of nature. He was a born observer, and such are far from common. He was also a man of great enthusiasm and unwearying industry. His quick eye detected what others passed by without notice: the Indian relic, where another would see only pebbles and fragments; the rare mollusk, or reptile, which his companion would poke with his cane, never suspecting that there was a prize at the end of it. Getting his single facts together with marvellous sagacity and long-breathed patience, he arranged them, classified them, described them, studied them in their relations, and before those around him

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were aware of it the collector was an accomplished naturalist. When—he died his collections remained, and they still remain, as his record in the hieratic language of science. In writing this memoir the spirit of his quiet pursuits, the even temper they bred in him, gained possession of my own mind, so that I seemed to look at nature through his gold-bowed spectacles, and to move about his beautifully ordered museum as if I had myself prepared and arranged its specimens. I felt wise with his wisdom, fair-minded with his calm impartiality; it seemed as if for the time his placid, observant, inquiring, keen-sighted nature “slid into my soul,” and if I had looked at myself in the glass I should almost have expected to see the image of the Hersey professor whose life and character I was sketching.

A few years later I lived over the life of another friend in writing a Memoir of which he was the subject. I saw him, the beautiful, bright-eyed boy, with dark, waving hair; the youthful scholar, first at Harvard, then at Gottingen and Berlin, the friend and companion of Bismarck; the young author, making a dash for renown as a novelist, and showing the elements which made his failures the promise of success in a larger field of literary labor; the delving historian, burying his fresh young manhood in the dusty alcoves of silent libraries, to come forth in the face of Europe and America as one of the leading historians of the time; the diplomatist, accomplished, of captivating presence and manners, an ardent American, and in the time of trial an impassioned and eloquent advocate of the cause of freedom; reaching at last the summit of his ambition as minister at the Court of Saint James. All this I seemed to share with him as I tracked his career from his birthplace in Dorchester, and the house in Walnut Street where he passed his boyhood, to the palaces of Vienna and London. And then the cruel blow which struck him from the place he adorned; the great sorrow that darkened his later years; the invasion of illness, a threat that warned of danger, and after a period of invalidism, during a part of which I shared his most intimate daily life, the sudden, hardly unwelcome, final summons. Did not my own consciousness migrate, or seem, at least, to transfer itself into this brilliant life history, as I traced its glowing record? I, too, seemed to feel the delight of carrying with me, as if they were my own, the charms of a presence which made its own welcome everywhere. I shared his heroic toils, I partook of his literary and social triumphs, I was honored by the marks of distinction which gathered about him, I was wronged by the indignity from which he suffered, mourned with him in his sorrow, and thus, after I had been living for months with his memory, I felt as if I should carry a part of his being with me so long as my self-consciousness might remain imprisoned in the ponderable elements.



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The years passed away, and the influences derived from the companionships I have spoken of had blended intimately with my own current of being. Then there came to me a new experience in my relations with an eminent member of the medical profession, whom I met habitually for a long period, and to whose memory I consecrated a few pages as a prelude to a work of his own, written under very peculiar circumstances. He was the subject of a slow, torturing, malignant, and almost necessarily fatal disease. Knowing well that the mind would feed upon itself if it were not supplied with food from without, he determined to write a treatise on a subject which had greatly interested him, and which would oblige him to bestow much of his time and thought upon it, if indeed he could hold out to finish the work. During the period while he was engaged in writing it, his wife, who had seemed in perfect health, died suddenly of pneumonia. Physical suffering, mental distress, the prospect of death at a near, if uncertain, time always before him, it was hard to conceive a more terrible strain than that which he had to endure. When, in the hour of his greatest need, his faithful companion, the wife of many years of happy union, whose hand had smoothed his pillow, whose voice had consoled and cheered him, was torn from him after a few days of illness, I felt that my friend's trial was such that the cry of the man of many afflictions and temptations might well have escaped from his lips: "I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder; he hath also taken me by my neck and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark. His archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground."

I had dreaded meeting him for the first time after this crushing blow. What a lesson he gave me of patience under sufferings which the fearful description of the Eastern poet does not picture too vividly! We have been taught to admire the calm philosophy of Haller, watching his faltering pulse as he lay dying; we have heard the words of pious resignation said to have been uttered with his last breath by Addison: but here was a trial, not of hours, or days, or weeks, but of months, even years, of cruel pain, and in the midst of its thick darkness the light of love, which had burned steadily at his bedside, was suddenly extinguished.

There were times in which the thought would force itself upon my consciousness, How long is the universe to look upon this dreadful experiment of a malarious planet, with its unmeasurable freight of suffering, its poisonous atmosphere, so sweet to breathe, so sure to kill in a few scores of years at farthest, and its heart-breaking woes which make even that brief space of time an eternity? There can be but one answer that will meet this terrible question, which must arise in every thinking nature that would fain "justify the ways of God to men." So must it be until that

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“one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves”

has become a reality, and the anthem in which there is no discordant note shall be joined by a voice from every life made “perfect through sufferings.”

Such was the lesson into which I lived in those sad yet placid years of companionship with my suffering and sorrowing friend, in retracing which I seemed to find another existence mingled with my own.

And now for many months I have been living in daily relations of intimacy with one who seems nearer to me since he has left us than while he was here in living form and feature. I did not know how difficult a task I had undertaken in venturing upon a memoir of a man whom all, or almost all, agree upon as one of the great lights of the New World, and whom very many regard as an unpredicted Messiah. Never before was I so forcibly reminded of Carlyle’s description of the work of a newspaper editor,—that threshing of straw already thrice beaten by the flails of other laborers in the same field. What could be said that had not been said of “transcendentalism” and of him who was regarded as its prophet; of the poet whom some admired without understanding, a few understood, or thought they did, without admiring, and many both understood and admired,—among these there being not a small number who went far beyond admiration, and lost themselves in devout worship? While one exalted him as “the greatest man that ever lived,” another, a friend, famous in the world of letters, wrote expressly to caution me against the danger of overrating a writer whom he is content to recognize as an American Montaigne, and nothing more.

After finishing this Memoir, which has but just left my hands, I would gladly have let my brain rest for a while. The wide range of thought which belonged to the subject of the Memoir, the occasional mysticism and the frequent tendency toward it, the sweep of imagination and the sparkle of wit which kept his reader’s mind on the stretch, the union of prevailing good sense with exceptional extravagances, the modest audacity of a nature that showed itself in its naked truthfulness and was not ashamed, the feeling that I was in the company of a sibylline intelligence which was discounting the promises of the remote future long before they were due,—all this made the task a grave one. But when I found myself amidst the vortices of uncounted, various, bewildering judgments, Catholic and Protestant, orthodox and liberal, scholarly from under the tree of knowledge and instinctive from over the potato-hill; the passionate enthusiasm of young adorers and the cool, if not cynical, estimate of hardened critics, all intersecting each other as they whirled, each around its own centre, I felt that it was indeed very difficult to keep the faculties clear and the judgment unbiassed.

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It is a great privilege to have lived so long in the society of such a man. "He nothing common" said, "or mean." He was always the same pure and high-souled companion. After being with him virtue seemed as natural to man as its opposite did according to the old theologies. But how to let one's self down from the high level of such a character to one's own poor standard? I trust that the influence of this long intellectual and spiritual companionship never absolutely leaves one who has lived in it. It may come to him in the form of self-reproach that he falls so far short of the superior being who has been so long the object of his contemplation. But it also carries him at times into the other's personality, so that he finds himself thinking thoughts that are not his own, using phrases which he has unconsciously borrowed, writing, it may be, as nearly like his long-studied original as Julio Romano's painting was like Raphael's; and all this with the unquestioning conviction that he is talking from his own consciousness in his own natural way. So far as tones and expressions and habits which belonged to the idiosyncrasy of the original are borrowed by the student of his life, it is a misfortune for the borrower. But to share the inmost consciousness of a noble thinker, to scan one's self in the white light of a pure and radiant soul,—this is indeed the highest form of teaching and discipline.

I have written these few memoirs, and I am grateful for all that they have taught me. But let me write no more. There are but two biographers who can tell the story of a man's or a woman's life. One is the person himself or herself; the other is the Recording Angel. The autobiographer cannot be trusted to tell the whole truth, though he may tell nothing but the truth, and the Recording Angel never lets his book go out of his own hands. As for myself, I would say to my friends, in the Oriental phrase, "Live forever!" Yes, live forever, and I, at least, shall not have to wrong your memories by my imperfect record and unsatisfying commentary.

In connection with these biographies, or memoirs, more properly, in which I have written of my departed friends, I hope my readers will indulge me in another personal reminiscence. I have just lost my dear and honored contemporary of the last century. A hundred years ago this day, December 13, 1784, died the admirable and ever to be remembered Dr. Samuel Johnson. The year 1709 was made ponderous and illustrious in English biography by his birth. My own humble advent to the world of protoplasm was in the year 1809 of the present century. Summer was just ending when those four letters, "son b." were written under the date of my birth, August 29th. Autumn had just begun when my great pre-contemporary entered this un-Christian universe and was made a member of the Christian church on the same day, for he was born and baptized on the 18th of September.

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Thus there was established a close bond of relationship between the great English scholar and writer and myself. Year by year, and almost month by month, my life has kept pace in this century with his life in the last century. I had only to open my Boswell at any time, and I knew just what Johnson at my age, twenty or fifty or seventy, was thinking and doing; what were his feelings about life; what changes the years had wrought in his body, his mind, his feelings, his companionships, his reputation. It was for me a kind of unison between two instruments, both playing that old familiar air, "Life,"—one a bassoon, if you will, and the other an oaten pipe, if you care to find an image for it, but still keeping pace with each other until the players both grew old and gray. At last the thinner thread of sound is heard by itself, and its deep accompaniment rolls out its thunder no more.

I feel lonely now that my great companion and friend of so many years has left me. I felt more intimately acquainted with him than I do with many of my living friends. I can hardly remember when I did not know him. I can see him in his bushy wig, exactly like that of the Reverend Dr. Samuel Cooper (who died in December, 1783) as Copley painted him,—he hangs there on my wall, over the revolving bookcase. His ample coat, too, I see, with its broad flaps and many buttons and generous cuffs, and beneath it the long, still more copiously buttoned waistcoat, arching in front of the fine crescentic, almost semi-lunar Falstaffian prominence, involving no less than a dozen of the above-mentioned buttons, and the strong legs with their sturdy calves, fitting columns of support to the massive body and solid, capacious brain enthroned over it. I can hear him with his heavy tread as he comes in to the Club, and a gap is widened to make room for his portly figure. "A fine day," says Sir Joshua. "Sir," he answers, "it seems propitious, but the atmosphere is humid and the skies are nebulous," at which the great painter smiles, shifts his trumpet, and takes a pinch of snuff.

Dear old massive, deep-voiced dogmatist and hypochondriac of the eighteenth century, how one would like to sit at some ghastly Club, between you and the bony, "mighty-mouthed," harsh-toned termagant and dyspeptic of the nineteenth! The growl of the English mastiff and the snarl of the Scotch terrier would make a duet which would enliven the shores of Lethe. I wish I could find our "spiritualist's" paper in the Portfolio, in which the two are brought together, but I hardly know what I shall find when it is opened.

Yes, my life is a little less precious to me since I have lost that dear old friend; and when the funeral train moves to Westminster Abbey next Saturday, for I feel as if this were 1784, and not 1884,—I seem to find myself following the hearse, one of the silent mourners.

Among the events which have rendered the past year memorable to me has been the demolition of that venerable and interesting old dwelling-house, precious for its intimate association with the earliest stages of the war of the Revolution, and sacred to me as my birthplace and the home of my boyhood.

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The “Old Gambrel-roofed House” exists no longer. I remember saying something, in one of a series of papers published long ago, about the experience of dying out of a house,—of leaving it forever, as the soul dies out of the body. We may die out of many houses, but the house itself can die but once; and so real is the life of a house to one who has dwelt in it, more especially the life of the house which held him in dreamy infancy, in restless boyhood, in passionate youth,—so real, I say, is its life, that it seems as if something like a soul of it must outlast its perishing frame.

The slaughter of the Old Gambrel-roofed House was, I am ready to admit, a case of justifiable domicile. Not the less was it to be deplored by all who love the memories of the past. With its destruction are obliterated some of the footprints of the heroes and martyrs who took the first steps in the long and bloody march which led us through the wilderness to the promised land of independent nationality. Personally, I have a right to mourn for it as a part of my life gone from me. My private grief for its loss would be a matter for my solitary digestion, were it not that the experience through which I have just passed is one so familiar to my fellow-countrymen that, in telling my own reflections and feelings, I am repeating those of great numbers of men and women who have had the misfortune to outlive their birthplace.

It is a great blessing to be born surrounded by a natural horizon. The Old Gambrel-roofed House could not boast an unbroken ring of natural objects encircling it. Northerly it looked upon its own outbuildings and some unpretending two-story houses which had been its neighbors for a century and more. To the south of it the square brick dormitories and the bellfied hall of the university helped to shut out the distant view. But the west windows gave a broad outlook across the common, beyond which the historical “Washington elm” and two companions in line with it, spread their leaves in summer and their networks in winter. And far away rose the hills that bounded the view, with the glimmer here and there of the white walls or the illuminated casements of some embowered, half-hidden villa. Eastwardly also, the prospect was, in my earlier remembrance, widely open, and I have frequently seen the sunlit sails gliding along as if through the level fields, for no water was visible. So there were broad expanses on two sides at least, for my imagination to wander over.

I cannot help thinking that we carry our childhood's horizon with us all our days. Among these western wooded hills my day-dreams built their fairy palaces, and even now, as I look at them from my library window, across the estuary of the Charles, I find myself in the familiar home of my early visions. The “clouds of glory” which we trail with us in after life need not be traced to a pre-natal state. There is enough to account for them in that unconsciously

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remembered period of existence before we have learned the hard limitations of real life. Those earliest months in which we lived in sensations without words, and ideas not fettered in sentences, have all the freshness of proofs of an engraving “before the letter.” I am very thankful that the first part of my life was not passed shut in between high walls and treading the unimpressible and unsympathetic pavement.

Our university town was very much like the real country, in those days of which I am thinking. There were plenty of huckleberries and blueberries within half a mile of the house. Blackberries ripened in the fields, acorns and shagbarks dropped from the trees, squirrels ran among the branches, and not rarely the hen-hawk might be seen circling over the barnyard. Still another rural element was not wanting, in the form of that far-diffused, infragrant effluvium, which, diluted by a good half mile of pure atmosphere, is no longer odious, nay is positively agreeable, to many who have long known it, though its source and centre has an unenviable reputation. I need not name the animal whose Parthian warfare terrifies and puts to flight the mightiest hunter that ever roused the tiger from his jungle or faced the lion of the desert. Strange as it may seem, an aerial hint of his personality in the far distance always awakens in my mind pleasant remembrances and tender reflections. A whole neighborhood rises up before me: the barn, with its haymow, where the hens laid their eggs to hatch, and we boys hid our apples to ripen, both occasionally illustrating the *sic vos non vobis*; the shed, where the annual Tragedy of the Pig was acted with a realism that made Salvini's Othello seem but a pale counterfeit; the rickety old outhouse, with the “corn-chamber” which the mice knew so well; the paved yard, with its open gutter,—these and how much else come up at the hint of my far-off friend, who is my very near enemy. Nothing is more familiar than the power of smell in reviving old memories. There was that quite different fragrance of the wood-house, the smell of fresh sawdust. It comes back to me now, and with it the hiss of the saw; the tumble of the divorced logs which God put together and man has just put asunder; the coming down of the axe and the hah! that helped it,—the straight-grained stick opening at the first appeal of the implement as if it were a pleasure, and the stick with a knot in the middle of it that mocked the blows and the hahs! until the beetle and wedge made it listen to reason,—there are just such straight-grained and just such knotty men and women. All this passes through my mind while Biddy, whose parlor-name is Angela, contents herself with exclaiming “egh!*****!”

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How different distances were in those young days of which I am thinking! From the old house to the old yellow meeting-house, where the head of the family preached and the limbs of the family listened, was not much more than two or three times the width of Commonwealth Avenue. But of a hot summer's afternoon, after having already heard one sermon, which could not in the nature of things have the charm of novelty of presentation to the members of the home circle, and the theology of which was not too clear to tender apprehensions; with three hymns more or less lugubrious, rendered by a village-choir, got into voice by many preliminary snuffles and other expiratory efforts, and accompanied by the snort of a huge bass-viol which wallowed through the tune like a hippopotamus, with other exercises of the customary character,—after all this in the forenoon, the afternoon walk to the meeting-house in the hot sun counted for as much, in my childish dead-reckoning, as from old Israel Porter's in Cambridge to the Exchange Coffeehouse in Boston did in after years. It takes a good while to measure the radius of the circle that is about us, for the moon seems at first as near as the watchface. Who knows but that, after a certain number of ages, the planet we live on may seem to us no bigger than our neighbor Venus appeared when she passed before the sun a few months ago, looking as if we could take her between our thumb and finger, like a bullet or a marble? And time, too; how long was it from the serious sunrise to the joyous "sundown" of an old-fashioned, puritanical, judaical first day of the week, which a pious fraud christened "the Sabbath"? Was it a fortnight, as we now reckon duration, or only a week? Curious entities, or non-entities, space and time? When you see a metaphysician trying to wash his hands of them and get rid of these accidents, so as to lay his dry, clean palm on the absolute, does it not remind you of the hopeless task of changing the color of the blackamoor by a similar proceeding? For space is the fluid in which he is washing, and time is the soap which he is using up in the process, and he cannot get free from them until he can wash himself in a mental vacuum.

In my reference to the old house in a former paper, published years ago, I said,

"By and by the stony foot of the great University will plant itself on this whole territory, and the private recollections which clung so tenaciously to the place and its habitations will have died with those who cherished them."

What strides the great University has taken since those words were written! During all my early years our old Harvard Alma Mater sat still and lifeless as the colossi in the Egyptian desert. Then all at once, like the statue in Don Giovanni, she moved from her pedestal. The fall of that "stony foot" has effected a miracle like the harp that Orpheus played, like the teeth which Cadmus sowed. The plain where the moose and the bear were wandering while Shakespeare was writing Hamlet, where a few plain dormitories and other needed buildings were scattered about in my school-boy days, groans under the weight of the massive edifices which have sprung up all around them, crowned by the tower of that noble structure which stands in full view before me as I lift my eyes from the portfolio on the back of which I am now writing.



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For I must be permitted to remind you that I have not yet opened it. I have told you that I have just finished a long memoir, and that it has cost me no little labor to overcome some of its difficulties,—if I have overcome them, which others must decide. And I feel exactly as honest Dobbin feels when his harness is slipped off after a long journey with a good deal of up-hill work. He wants to rest a little, then to feed a little; then, if you will turn him loose in the pasture, he wants to roll. I have left my starry and ethereal companionship,—not for a long time, I hope, for it has lifted me above my common self, but for a while. And now I want, so to speak, to roll in the grass and among the dandelions with the other pachyderms. So I have kept to the outside of the portfolio as yet, and am disporting myself in reminiscences, and fancies, and vagaries, and parentheses.

How well I understand the feeling which led the Pisans to load their vessels with earth from the Holy Land, and fill the area of the Campo Santo with that sacred soil! The old house stood upon about as perverse a little patch of the planet as ever harbored a half-starved earth-worm. It was as sandy as Sahara and as thirsty as Tantalus. The rustic aid-de-camps of the household used to aver that all fertilizing matters “leached” through it. I tried to disprove their assertion by gorging it with the best of terrestrial nourishment, until I became convinced that I was feeding the tea-plants of China, and then I gave over the attempt. And yet I did love, and do love, that arid patch of ground. I wonder if a single flower could not be made to grow in a pot of earth from that Campo Santo of my childhood! One noble product of nature did not refuse to flourish there,—the tall, stately, beautiful, soft-haired, many-jointed, generous maize or Indian corn, which thrives on sand and defies the blaze of our shrivelling summer. What child but loves to wander in its forest-like depths, amidst the rustling leaves and with the lofty tassels tossing their heads high above him! There are two aspects of the cornfield which always impress my imagination: the first when it has reached its full growth, and its ordered ranks look like an army on the march with its plumed and bannered battalions; the second when, after the battle of the harvest, the girdled stacks stand on the field of slaughter like so many ragged Niobes,—say rather like the crazy widows and daughters of the dead soldiery.

Once more let us come back to the old house. It was far along in its second century when the edict went forth that it must stand no longer.

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The natural death of a house is very much like that of one of its human tenants. The roof is the first part to show the distinct signs of age. Slates and tiles loosen and at last slide off, and leave bald the boards that supported them; shingles darken and decay, and soon the garret or the attic lets in the rain and the snow; by and by the beams sag, the floors warp, the walls crack, the paper peels away, the ceilings scale off and fall, the windows are crusted with clinging dust, the doors drop from their rusted hinges, the winds come in without knocking and howl their cruel death-songs through the empty rooms and passages, and at last there comes a crash, a great cloud of dust rises, and the home that had been the shelter of generation after generation finds its grave in its own cellar. Only the chimney remains as its monument. Slowly, little by little, the patient solvents that find nothing too hard for their chemistry pick out the mortar from between the bricks; at last a mighty wind roars around it and rushes against it, and the monumental relic crashes down among the wrecks it has long survived. So dies a human habitation left to natural decay, all that was seen above the surface of the soil sinking gradually below it,

Till naught remains the saddening tale to tell
Save home's last wrecks, the cellar and the well.

But if this sight is saddening, what is it to see a human dwelling fall by the hand of violence! The ripping off of the shelter that has kept out a thousand storms, the tearing off of the once ornamental woodwork, the wrench of the inexorable crowbar, the murderous blows of the axe, the progressive ruin, which ends by rending all the joints asunder and flinging the tenoned and mortised timbers into heaps that will be sawed and split to warm some new habitation as firewood,—what a brutal act of destruction it seems!

Why should I go over the old house again, having already described it more than ten years ago? Alas! how many remember anything they read but once, and so long ago as that? How many would find it out if one should say over in the same words that which he said in the last decade? But there is really no need of telling the story a second time, for it can be found by those who are curious enough to look it up in a volume of which it occupies the opening chapter.

In order, however, to save any inquisitive reader that trouble, let me remind him that the old house was General Ward's headquarters at the breaking out of the Revolution; that the plan for fortifying Bunker's Hill was laid, as commonly believed, in the southeast lower room, the floor of which was covered with dents, made, it was alleged, by the butts of the soldiers' muskets. In that house, too, General Warren probably passed the night before the Bunker Hill battle, and over its threshold must the stately figure of Washington have often cast its shadow.

But the house in which one drew his first breath, and where he one day came into the consciousness that he was a personality, an ego, a little universe with a sky over him all

his own, with a persistent identity, with the terrible responsibility of a separate, independent, inalienable existence,—that house does not ask for any historical associations to make it the centre of the earth for him.

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If there is any person in the world to be envied, it is the one who is born to an ancient estate, with a long line of family traditions and the means in his hands of shaping his mansion and his domain to his own taste, without losing sight of all the characteristic features which surrounded his earliest years. The American is, for the most part, a nomad, who pulls down his house as the Tartar pulls up his tent-poles. If I had an ideal life to plan for him it would be something like this:

His grandfather should be a wise, scholarly, large-brained, large-hearted country minister, from whom he should inherit the temperament that predisposes to cheerfulness and enjoyment, with the finer instincts which direct life to noble aims and make it rich with the gratification of pure and elevated tastes and the carrying out of plans for the good of his neighbors and his fellow-creatures. He should, if possible, have been born, at any rate have passed some of his early years, or a large part of them, under the roof of the good old minister. His father should be, we will say, a business man in one of our great cities,—a generous manipulator of millions, some of which have adhered to his private fortunes, in spite of his liberal use of his means. His heir, our ideally placed American, shall take possession of the old house, the home of his earliest memories, and preserve it sacredly, not exactly like the Santa Casa, but, as nearly as may be, just as he remembers it. He can add as many acres as he will to the narrow house-lot. He can build a grand mansion for himself, if he chooses, in the not distant neighborhood. But the old house, and all immediately round it, shall be as he recollects it when he had to stretch his little arm up to reach the door-handles. Then, having well provided for his own household, himself included, let him become the providence of the village or the town where he finds himself during at least a portion of every year. Its schools, its library, its poor,—and perhaps the new clergyman who has succeeded his grandfather's successor may be one of them,—all its interests, he shall make his own. And from this centre his beneficence shall radiate so far that all who hear of his wealth shall also hear of him as a friend to his race.

Is not this a pleasing programme? Wealth is a steep hill, which the father climbs slowly and the son often tumbles down precipitately; but there is a table-land on a level with it, which may be found by those who do not lose their head in looking down from its sharply cloven summit.—Our dangerously rich men can make themselves hated, held as enemies of the race, or beloved and recognized as its benefactors. The clouds of discontent are threatening, but if the gold-pointed lightning-rods are rightly distributed the destructive element may be drawn off silently and harmlessly. For it cannot be repeated too often that the safety of great wealth with us lies in obedience to the new version of the Old World axiom, RICHES oblige.

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THE NEW PORTFOLIO: FIRST OPENING.

A MORTAL ANTIPATHY. I GETTING READY.

It is impossible to begin a story which must of necessity tax the powers of belief of readers unacquainted with the class of facts to which its central point of interest belongs without some words in the nature of preparation. Readers of Charles Lamb remember that Sarah Battle insisted on a clean-swept hearth before sitting down to her favorite game of whist.

The narrator wishes to sweep the hearth, as it were, in these opening pages, before sitting down to tell his story. He does not intend to frighten the reader away by prolix explanation, but he does mean to warn him against hasty judgments when facts are related which are not within the range of every-day experience. Did he ever see the Siamese twins, or any pair like them? Probably not, yet he feels sure that Chang and Eng really existed; and if he has taken the trouble to inquire, he has satisfied himself that similar cases have been recorded by credible witnesses, though at long intervals and in countries far apart from each other.

This is the first sweep of the brush, to clear the hearth of the skepticism and incredulity which must be got out of the way before we can begin to tell and to listen in peace with ourselves and each other.

One more stroke of the brush is needed before the stage will be ready for the chief characters and the leading circumstances to which the reader's attention is invited. If the principal personages made their entrance at once, the reader would have to create for himself the whole scenery of their surrounding conditions. In point of fact, no matter how a story is begun, many of its readers have already shaped its chief actors out of any hint the author may have dropped, and provided from their own resources a locality and a set of outward conditions to environ these imagined personalities. These are all to be brushed away, and the actual surroundings of the subject of the narrative represented as they were, at the risk of detaining the reader a little while from the events most likely to interest him. The choicest egg that ever was laid was not so big as the nest that held it. If a story were so interesting that a maiden would rather hear it than listen to the praise of her own beauty, or a poet would rather read it than recite his own verses, still it would have to be wrapped in some tissue of circumstance, or it would lose half its effectiveness.

It may not be easy to find the exact locality referred to in this narrative by looking into the first gazetteer that is at hand. Recent experiences have shown that it is unsafe to be too exact in designating places and the people who live in them. There are, it may be added, so many advertisements disguised under the form of stories and other literary productions that one naturally desires to avoid the suspicion of

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being employed by the enterprising proprietors of this or that celebrated resort to use his gifts for their especial benefit. There are no doubt many persons who remember the old sign and the old tavern and its four chief personages presently to be mentioned. It is to be hoped that they will not furnish the public with a key to this narrative, and perhaps bring trouble to the writer of it, as has happened to other authors. If the real names are a little altered, it need not interfere with the important facts relating to those who bear them. It might not be safe to tell a damaging story about John or James Smythe; but if the slight change is made of spelling the name Smith, the Smythes would never think of bringing an action, as if the allusion related to any of them. The same gulf of family distinction separates the Thompsons with a p from the Thomsons without that letter.

There are few pleasanter places in the Northern States for a summer residence than that known from the first period of its settlement by the name of Arrowhead Village. The Indians had found it out, as the relics they left behind them abundantly testified. The commonest of these were those chipped stones which are the medals of barbarism, and from Which the place took its name,—the heads of arrows, of various sizes, material, and patterns: some small enough for killing fish and little birds, some large enough for such game as the moose and the bear, to say nothing of the hostile Indian and the white settler; some of flint, now and then one of white quartz, and others of variously colored jasper. The Indians must have lived here for many generations, and it must have been a kind of factory village of the stone age,—which lasted up to near the present time, if we may judge from the fact that many of these relics are met with close to the surface of the ground.

No wonder they found this a pleasant residence, for it is to-day one of the most attractive of all summer resorts; so inviting, indeed, that those who know it do not like to say too much about it, lest the swarms of tourists should make it unendurable to those who love it for itself, and not as a centre of fashionable display and extramural cockneyism.

There is the lake, in the first place,—Cedar Lake,—about five miles long, and from half a mile to a mile and a half wide, stretching from north to south. Near the northern extremity are the buildings of Stoughton University, a flourishing young college with an ambitious name, but well equipped and promising, the grounds of which reach the water. At the southern end of the lake are the edifices of the Corinna Institute, a favorite school for young ladies, where large numbers of the daughters of America are fitted, so far as education can do it, for all stations in life, from camping out with a husband at the mines in Nevada to acting the part of chief lady of the land in the White House at Washington.

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Midway between the two extremities, on the eastern shore of the lake, is a valley between two hills, which come down to the very edge of the lake, leaving only room enough for a road between their base and the water. This valley, half a mile in width, has been long settled, and here for a century or more has stood the old Anchor Tavern. A famous place it was so long as its sign swung at the side of the road: famous for its landlord, portly, paternal, whose welcome to a guest that looked worthy of the attention was like that of a parent to a returning prodigal, and whose parting words were almost as good as a marriage benediction; famous for its landlady, ample in person, motherly, seeing to the whole household with her own eyes, mistress of all culinary secrets that Northern kitchens are most proud of; famous also for its ancient servant, as city people would call her,—help, as she was called in the tavern and would have called herself,—the unchanging, seemingly immortal Miranda, who cared for the guests as if she were their nursing mother, and pressed the specially favorite delicacies on their attention as a connoisseur calls the wandering eyes of an amateur to the beauties of a picture. Who that has ever been at the old Anchor Tavern forgets Miranda's

“A little of this fricassee?-it is ver-y nice;”

or

“Some of these cakes? You will find them ver-y good.”

Nor would it be just to memory to forget that other notable and noted member of the household,—the unsleeping, unresting, omnipresent Pushee, ready for everybody and everything, everywhere within the limits of the establishment at all hours of the day and night. He fed, nobody could say accurately when or where. There were rumors of a “bunk,” in which he lay down with his clothes on, but he seemed to be always wide awake, and at the service of as many guest, at once as if there had been half a dozen of him.

So much for old reminiscences.

The landlord of the Anchor Tavern had taken down his sign. He had had the house thoroughly renovated and furnished it anew, and kept it open in summer for a few boarders. It happened more than once that the summer boarders were so much pleased with the place that they stayed on through the autumn, and some of them through the winter. The attractions of the village were really remarkable. Boating in summer, and skating in winter; ice-boats, too, which the wild ducks could hardly keep up with; fishing, for which the lake was renowned; varied and beautiful walks through the valley and up the hillsides; houses sheltered from the north and northeasterly winds, and refreshed in the hot summer days by the breeze which came over the water,—all this made the frame for a pleasing picture of rest and happiness. But there was a great deal more than this. There was a fine library in the little village, presented and richly

endowed by a wealthy native of the place. There was a small permanent population of a superior

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character to that of an everyday country town; there was a pretty little Episcopal church, with a good-hearted rector, broad enough for the Bishop of the diocese to be a little afraid of, and hospitable to all outsiders, of whom, in the summer season, there were always some who wanted a place of worship to keep their religion from dying out during the heathen months, while the shepherds of the flocks to which they belonged were away from their empty folds.

What most helped to keep the place alive all through the year was the frequent coming together of the members of a certain literary association. Some time before the tavern took down its sign the landlord had built a hall, where many a ball had been held, to which the young folks of all the country round had resorted. It was still sometimes used for similar occasions, but it was especially notable as being the place of meeting of the famous *Pansophian society*.

This association, the name of which might be invidiously interpreted as signifying that its members knew everything, had no such pretensions, but, as its Constitution said very plainly and modestly, held itself open to accept knowledge on any and all subjects from such as had knowledge to impart. Its President was the rector of the little chapel, a man who, in spite of the Thirty-Nine Articles, could stand fire from the widest-mouthed heretical blunderbuss without flinching or losing his temper. The hall of the old Anchor Tavern was a convenient place of meeting for the students and instructors of the University and the Institute. Sometimes in boat-loads, sometimes in carriage-loads, sometimes in processions of skaters, they came to the meetings in Pansophian Hall, as it was now commonly called.

These meetings had grown to be occasions of great interest. It was customary to have papers written by members of the Society, for the most part, but now and then by friends of the members, sometimes by the students of the College or the Institute, and in rarer instances by anonymous personages, whose papers, having been looked over and discussed by the Committee appointed for that purpose, were thought worth listening to. The variety of topics considered was very great. The young ladies of the village and the Institute had their favorite subjects, the young gentlemen a different set of topics, and the occasional outside contributors their own; so that one who happened to be admitted to a meeting never knew whether he was going to hear an account of recent arctic discoveries, or an essay on the freedom of the will, or a psychological experience, or a story, or even a poem.

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Of late there had been a tendency to discuss the questions relating to the true status and the legitimate social functions of woman. The most conflicting views were held on the subject. Many of the young ladies and some of the University students were strong in defence of all the "woman's rights" doctrines. Some of these young people were extreme in their views. They had read about Semiramis and Boadicea and Queen Elizabeth, until they were ready, if they could get the chance, to vote for a woman as President of the United States or as General of the United States Army. They were even disposed to assert the physical equality of woman to man, on the strength of the rather questionable history of the Amazons, and especially of the story, believed to be authentic, of the female body-guard of the King of Dahomey,—females frightful enough to need no other weapon than their looks to scare off an army of Cossacks.

Miss Lurida Vincent, gold medallist of her year at the Corinna Institute, was the leader of these advocates of virile womanhood. It was rather singular that she should have elected to be the apostle of this extreme doctrine, for she was herself far better equipped with brain than muscles. In fact, she was a large-headed, large-eyed, long-eyelashed, slender-necked, slightly developed young woman; looking almost like a child at an age when many of the girls had reached their full stature and proportions. In her studies she was so far in advance of her different classes that there was always a wide gap between her and the second scholar. So fatal to all rivalry had she proved herself that she passed under the school name of The Terror. She learned so easily that she undervalued her own extraordinary gifts, and felt the deepest admiration for those of her friends endowed with faculties of an entirely different and almost opposite nature. After sitting at her desk until her head was hot and her feet were like ice, she would go and look at the blooming young girls exercising in the gymnasium of the school, and feel as if she would give all her knowledge, all her mathematics and strange tongues and history, all those accomplishments that made her the encyclopaedia of every class she belonged to, if she could go through the series of difficult and graceful exercises in which she saw her schoolmates delighting.

One among them, especially, was the object of her admiration, as she was of all who knew her exceptional powers in the line for which nature had specially organized her. All the physical perfections which Miss Lurida had missed had been united in Miss Euthymia Tower, whose school name was The Wonder. Though of full womanly stature, there were several taller girls of her age. While all her contours and all her movements betrayed a fine muscular development, there was no lack of proportion, and her finely shaped hands and feet showed that her organization was one of those carefully finished masterpieces of nature which sculptors are always in search of, and find it hard to detect among the imperfect products of the living laboratory.

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This girl of eighteen was more famous than she cared to be for her performances in the gymnasium. She commonly contented herself with the same exercises that her companions were accustomed to. Only her dumb-bells, with which she exercised easily and gracefully, were too heavy for most of the girls to do more with than lift them from the floor. She was fond of daring feats on the trapeze, and had to be checked in her indulgence in them. The Professor of gymnastics at the University came over to the Institute now and then, and it was a source of great excitement to watch some of the athletic exercises in which the young lady showed her remarkable muscular strength and skill in managing herself in the accomplishment of feats which looked impossible at first sight. How often The Terror had thought to herself that she would gladly give up all her knowledge of Greek and the differential and integral calculus if she could only perform the least of those feats which were mere play to The Wonder! Miss Euthymia was not behind the rest in her attainments in classical or mathematical knowledge, and she was one of the very best students in the out-door branches,—botany, mineralogy, sketching from nature,—to be found among the scholars of the Institute.

There was an eight-oared boat rowed by a crew of the young ladies, of which Miss Euthymia was the captain and pulled the bow oar. Poor little Lurida could not pull an oar, but on great occasions, when there were many boats out, she was wanted as coxswain, being a mere feather-weight, and quick-witted enough to serve well in the important office where brains are more needed than muscle.

There was also an eight-oared boat belonging to the University, and rowed by a picked crew of stalwart young fellows. The bow oar and captain of the University crew was a powerful young man, who, like the captain of the girls' boat, was a noted gymnast. He had had one or two quiet trials with Miss Euthymia, in which, according to the ultras of the woman's rights party, he had not vindicated the superiority of his sex in the way which might have been expected. Indeed, it was claimed that he let a cannon-ball drop when he ought to have caught it, and it was not disputed that he had been ingloriously knocked over by a sand-bag projected by the strong arms of the young maiden. This was of course a story that was widely told and laughingly listened to, and the captain of the University crew had become a little sensitive on the subject. When there was a talk, therefore, about a race between the champion boats of the two institutions there was immense excitement in both of them, as well as among the members of the Pansophian Society and all the good people of the village.

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There were many objections to be overcome. Some thought it unladylike for the young maidens to take part in a competition which must attract many lookers-on, and which it seemed to them very hoidenish to venture upon. Some said it was a shame to let a crew of girls try their strength against an equal number of powerful young men. These objections were offset by the advocates of the race by the following arguments. They maintained that it was no more hoidenish to row a boat than it was to take a part in the calisthenic exercises, and that the girls had nothing to do with the young men's boat, except to keep as much ahead of it as possible. As to strength, the woman's righters believed that, weight for weight, their crew was as strong as the other, and of course due allowance would be made for the difference of weight and all other accidental hindrances. It was time to test the boasted superiority of masculine muscle. Here was a chance. If the girls beat, the whole country would know it, and after that female suffrage would be only a question of time. Such was the conclusion, from rather insufficient premises, it must be confessed; but if nature does nothing per saltum,—by jumps,—as the old adage has it, youth is very apt to take long leaps from a fact to a possible sequel or consequence. So it had come about that a contest between the two boat-crews was looked forward to with an interest almost equal to that with which the combat between the Horatii and Curiatii was regarded.

The terms had been at last arranged between the two crews, after cautious protocols and many diplomatic discussions. It was so novel in its character that it naturally took a good deal of time to adjust it in such a way as to be fair to both parties. The course must not be too long for the lighter and weaker crew, for the staying power of the young persons who made it up could not be safely reckoned upon. A certain advantage must be allowed them at the start, and this was a delicate matter to settle. The weather was another important consideration. June would be early enough, in all probability, and if the lake should be tolerably smooth the grand affair might come off some time in that month. Any roughness of the water would be unfavorable to the weaker crew. The rowing-course was on the eastern side of the lake, the starting-point being opposite the Anchor Tavern; from that three quarters of a mile to the south, where the turning-stake was fixed, so that the whole course of one mile and a half would bring the boats back to their starting-point.

The race was to be between the Algonquin, eight-oared boat with outriggers, rowed by young men, students of Stoughton University, and the Atalanta, also eight-oared and outrigger boat, by young ladies from the Corinna Institute. Their boat was three inches wider than the other, for various sufficient reasons, one of which was to make it a little less likely to go over and throw its crew into the water, which was a sound precaution, though all the girls could swim, and one at least, the bow oar, was a famous swimmer, who had pulled a drowning man out of the water after a hard struggle to keep him from carrying her down with him.

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Though the coming trial had not been advertised in the papers, so as to draw together a rabble of betting men and ill-conditioned lookers-on, there was a considerable gathering, made up chiefly of the villagers and the students of the two institutions. Among them were a few who were disposed to add to their interest in the trial by small wagers. The bets were rather in favor of the "Quins," as the University boat was commonly called, except where the natural sympathy of the young ladies or the gallantry of some of the young men led them to risk their gloves or cigars, or whatever it might be, on the Atalantas. The elements of judgment were these: average weight of the Algonquins one hundred and sixty-five pounds; average weight of the Atalantas, one hundred and forty-eight pounds; skill in practice about equal; advantage of the narrow boat equal to three lengths; whole distance allowed the Atalantas eight lengths,—a long stretch to be made up in a mile and a half.

And so both crews began practising for the grand trial.

II

The boat-race.

The 10th of June was a delicious summer day, rather warm, but still and bright. The water was smooth, and the crews were in the best possible condition. All was expectation, and for some time nothing but expectation. No boat-race or regatta ever began at the time appointed for the start. Somebody breaks an oar, or somebody fails to appear in season, or something is the matter with a seat or an outrigger; or if there is no such excuse, the crew of one or both or all the boats to take part in the race must paddle about to get themselves ready for work, to the infinite weariness of all the spectators, who naturally ask why all this getting ready is not attended to beforehand. The Algonquins wore plain gray flannel suits and white caps. The young ladies were all in dark blue dresses, touched up with a red ribbon here and there, and wore light straw hats. The little coxswain of the Atalanta was the last to step on board. As she took her place she carefully deposited at her feet a white handkerchief wrapped about something or other, perhaps a sponge, in case the boat should take in water.

At last the Algonquin shot out from the little nook where she lay, —long, narrow, shining, swift as a pickerel when he darts from the reedy shore. It was a beautiful sight to see the eight young fellows in their close-fitting suits, their brown muscular arms bare, bending their backs for the stroke and recovering, as if they were parts of a single machine.

"The gals can't stan' it agin them fellers," said the old blacksmith from the village.

"You wait till the gals get a-goin'," said the carpenter, who had often worked in the gymnasium of the Corinna Institute, and knew something of their muscular



accomplishments. "Y' ought to see 'em climb ropes, and swing dumb-bells, and pull in them rowin'-machines. Ask Jake there whether they can't row a mild in double-quick time,—he knows all abaout it."

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Jake was by profession a fisherman, and a freshwater fisherman in a country village is inspector-general of all that goes on out-of-doors, being a lazy, wandering sort of fellow, whose study of the habits and habitats of fishes gives him a kind of shrewdness of observation, just as dealing in horses is an education of certain faculties, and breeds a race of men peculiarly cunning, suspicious, wary, and wide awake, with a rhetoric of appreciation and depreciation all its own.

Jake made his usual preliminary signal, and delivered himself to the following effect:

“Wahl, I don’ know jest what to say. I’ve seed ’em both often enough when they was practisin’, an’ I tell ye the’ wa’n’t no slouch abaout neither on ’em. But them bats is all-fired long, ’n’ eight on ’em stretched in a straight line eendways makes a consid’able piece aout ’f a mile ’n’ a haaf. I’d bate on them gals if it wa’n’t that them fellers is naterally longer winded, as the gals ’ll find aout by the time they git raound the stake ’n’ over agin the big ellum. I’ll go ye a quarter on the pahnts agin the petticoats.”

The fresh-water fisherman had expressed the prevailing belief that the young ladies were overmatched. Still there were not wanting those who thought the advantage allowed the “Lantas,” as they called the Corinna boatcrew, was too great, and that it would be impossible for the “Quins” to make it up and go by them.

The Algonquins rowed up and down a few times before the spectators. They appeared in perfect training, neither too fat nor too fine, mettlesome as colts, steady as draught-horses, deep-breathed as oxen, disciplined to work together as symmetrically as a single sculler pulls his pair of oars. The fisherman offered to make his quarter fifty cents. No takers.

Five minutes passed, and all eyes were strained to the south, looking for the Atalanta. A clump of trees hid the edge of the lake along which the Corinna’s boat was stealing towards the starting-point. Presently the long shell swept into view, with its blooming rowers, who, with their ample dresses, seemed to fill it almost as full as Raphael fills his skiff on the edge of the Lake of Galilee. But how steadily the Atalanta came on!—no rocking, no splashing, no apparent strain; the bow oar turning to look ahead every now and then, and watching her course, which seemed to be straight as an arrow, the beat of the strokes as true and regular as the pulse of the healthiest rower among them all. And if the sight of the other boat and its crew was beautiful, how lovely was the look of this! Eight young girls,—young ladies, for those who prefer that more dignified and less attractive expression,—all in the flush of youth, all in vigorous health; every muscle taught its duty; each rower alert, not to be a tenth of a second out of time, or let her oar dally with the water so as to lose an ounce of its propelling virtue; every eye kindling with the hope of victory. Each of the boats was cheered as it came in sight, but the cheers for the Atalanta were naturally the loudest, as the gallantry of one sex and the clear, high voices of the other gave it life and vigor.

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"Take your places!" shouted the umpire, five minutes before the half hour. The two boats felt their way slowly and cautiously to their positions, which had been determined by careful measurement. After a little backing and filling they got into line, at the proper distance from each other, and sat motionless, their bodies bent forward, their arms outstretched, their oars in the water, waiting for the word.

"Go!" shouted the umpire.

Away sprang the Atalanta, and far behind her leaped the Algonquin, her oars bending like so many long Indian bows as their blades flashed through the water.

"A stern chase is a long chase," especially when one craft is a great distance behind the other. It looked as if it would be impossible for the rear boat to overcome the odds against it. Of course the Algonquin kept gaining, but could it possibly gain enough? That was the question. As the boats got farther and farther away, it became more and more difficult to determine what change there was in the interval between them. But when they came to rounding the stake it was easier to guess at the amount of space which had been gained. It was clear that something like half the distance, four lengths, as nearly as could be estimated, had been made up in rowing the first three quarters of a mile. Could the Algonquins do a little better than this in the second half of the race-course, they would be sure of winning.

The boats had turned the stake, and were coming in rapidly. Every minute the University boat was getting nearer the other.

"Go it, Quins!" shouted the students.

"Pull away, Lantas!" screamed the girls, who were crowding down to the edge of the water.

Nearer,—nearer,—the rear boat is pressing the other more and more closely,—a few more strokes, and they will be even, for there is but one length between them, and thirty rods will carry them to the line. It looks desperate for the Atalantas. The bow oar of the Algonquin turns his head. He sees the little coxswain leaning forward at every stroke, as if her trivial weight were of such mighty consequence,—but a few ounces might turn the scale of victory. As he turned he got a glimpse of the stroke oar of the Atalanta. What a flash of loveliness it was! Her face was like the reddest of June roses, with the heat and the strain and the passion of expected triumph. The upper button of her close-fitting flannel suit had strangled her as her bosom heaved with exertion, and it had given way before the fierce clutch she made at it. The bow oar was a staunch and steady rower, but he was human. The blade of his oar lingered in the water; a little more and he would have caught a crab, and perhaps lost the race by his momentary bewilderment.



The boat, which seemed as if it had all the life and nervousness of a Derby three-year-old, felt the slight check, and all her men bent more vigorously to their oars. The Atalantas saw the movement, and made a spurt to keep their lead and gain upon it if they could. It was of no use. The strong arms of the young men were too much for the young maidens; only a few lengths remained to be rowed, and they would certainly pass the Atalanta before she could reach the line.

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The little coxswain saw that it was all up with the girls' crew if she could not save them by some strategic device.

"Dolus an virtus quis in hoste requirat?"

she whispered to herself,—for The Terror remembered her Virgil as she did everything else she ever studied. As she stooped, she lifted the handkerchief at her feet, and took from it a flaming bouquet. "Look!" she cried, and flung it just forward of the track of the Algonquin. The captain of the University boat turned his head, and there was the lovely vision which had a moment before bewitched him. The owner of all that loveliness must, he thought, have flung the bouquet. It was a challenge: how could he be such a coward as to decline accepting it.

He was sure he could win the race now, and he would sweep past the line in triumph with the great bunch of flowers at the stem of his boat, proud as Van Tromp in the British channel with the broom at his mast-head.

He turned the boat's head a little by backing water. He came up with the floating flowers, and near enough to reach them. He stooped and snatched them up, with the loss perhaps of a second in all,—no more. He felt sure of his victory.

How can one tell the story of the finish in cold-blooded preterites? Are we not there ourselves? Are not our muscles straining with those of these sixteen young creatures, full of hot, fresh blood, their nerves all tingling like so many tight-strained harp-strings, all their life concentrating itself in this passionate moment of supreme effort? No! We are seeing, not telling about what somebody else once saw!

—The bow of the Algonquin passes the stern of the Atalanta!

—The bow of the Algonquin is on a level with the middle of the Atalanta!

—Three more lengths' rowing and the college crew will pass the girls!

—"Hurrah for the Quins!" The Algonquin ranges up alongside of the Atalanta!

"Through with her!" shouts the captain of the Algonquin.

"Now, girls!" shrieks the captain of the Atalanta.

They near the line, every rower straining desperately, almost madly.

—Crack goes the oar of the Atalanta's captain, and up flash its splintered fragments, as the stem of her boat springs past the line, eighteen inches at least ahead of the Algonquin.

Hooraw for the Lantas! Hooraw for the Girls! Hooraw for the Institoot! shout a hundred voices.

“Hurrah for woman’s rights and female suffrage!” pipes the small voice of The Terror, and there is loud laughing and cheering all round.

She had not studied her classical dictionary and her mythology for nothing. “I have paid off one old score,” she said. “Set down my damask roses against the golden apples of Hippomenes!”

It was that one second lost in snatching up the bouquet which gave the race to the Atalantas.

III



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The white canoe.

While the two boats were racing, other boats with lookers-on in them were rowing or sailing in the neighborhood of the race-course. The scene on the water was a gay one, for the young people in the boats were, many of them, acquainted with each other. There was a good deal of lively talk until the race became too exciting. Then many fell silent, until, as the boats neared the line, and still more as they crossed it, the shouts burst forth which showed how a cramp of attention finds its natural relief in a fit of convulsive exclamation.

But far away, on the other side of the lake, a birchbark canoe was to be seen, in which sat a young man, who paddled it skillfully and swiftly. It was evident enough that he was watching the race intently, but the spectators could see little more than that. One of them, however, who sat upon the stand, had a powerful spy-glass, and could distinguish his motions very minutely and exactly. It was seen by this curious observer that the young man had an opera-glass with him, which he used a good deal at intervals. The spectator thought he kept it directed to the girls' boat, chiefly, if not exclusively. He thought also that the opera-glass was more particularly pointed towards the bow of the boat, and came to the natural conclusion that the bow oar, Miss Euthymia Tower, captain of the *Atalantas*, "The Wonder" of the Corinna Institute, was the attraction which determined the direction of the instrument.

"Who is that in the canoe over there?" asked the owner of the spy-glass.

"That's just what we should like to know," answered the old landlord's wife. "He and his man boarded with us when they first came, but we could never find out anything about him only just his name and his ways of living. His name is Kirkwood, Maurice Kirkwood, Esq., it used to come on his letters. As for his ways of living, he was the solitariest human being that I ever came across. His man carried his meals up to him. He used to stay in his room pretty much all day, but at night he would be off, walking, or riding on horseback, or paddling about in the lake, sometimes till nigh morning. There's something very strange about that Mr. Kirkwood. But there don't seem to be any harm in him. Only nobody can guess what his business is. They got up a story about him at one time. What do you think? They said he was a counterfeiter! And so they went one night to his room, when he was out, and that man of his was away too, and they carried keys, and opened pretty much everything; and they found—well, they found just nothing at all except writings and letters,—letters from places in America and in England, and some with Italian postmarks: that was all. Since that time the sheriff and his folks have let him alone and minded their own business. He was a gentleman,—anybody ought to have known that; and anybody that knew about his nice ways of living and behaving, and knew the kind of wear he had for his underclothing, might have known it. I could have told those officers that they had better not bother him. I know the ways of real gentlemen and real ladies, and I know those fellows in store clothes that look a little too fine,—outside. Wait till washing-day comes!"

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The good lady had her own standards for testing humanity, and they were not wholly unworthy of consideration; they were quite as much to be relied on as the judgments of the travelling phrenologist, who sent his accomplice on before him to study out the principal personages in the village, and in the light of these revelations interpreted the bumps, with very little regard to Gall and Spurzheim, or any other authorities.

Even with the small amount of information obtained by the search among his papers and effects, the gossips of the village had constructed several distinct histories for the mysterious stranger. He was an agent of a great publishing house; a leading contributor to several important periodicals; the author of that anonymously published novel which had made so much talk; the poet of a large clothing establishment; a spy of the Italian, some said the Russian, some said the British, Government; a proscribed refugee from some country where he had been plotting; a school-master without a school, a minister without a pulpit, an actor without an engagement; in short, there was no end to the perfectly senseless stories that were told about him, from that which made him out an escaped convict to the whispered suggestion that he was the eccentric heir to a great English title and estate.

The one unquestionable fact was that of his extraordinary seclusion. Nobody in the village, no student in the University, knew his history. No young lady in the Corinna Institute had ever had a word from him. Sometimes, as the boats of the University or the Institute were returning at dusk, their rowers would see the canoe stealing into the shadows as they drew near it. Sometimes on a moonlight night, when a party of the young ladies were out upon the lake, they would see the white canoe gliding ghost-like in the distance. And it had happened more than once that when a boat's crew had been out with singers among them, while they were in the midst of a song, the white canoe would suddenly appear and rest upon the water,—not very near them, but within hearing distance,—and so remain until the singing was over, when it would steal away and be lost sight of in some inlet or behind some jutting rock.

Naturally enough, there was intense curiosity about this young man. The landlady had told her story, which explained nothing. There was nobody to be questioned about him except his servant, an Italian, whose name was Paolo, but who to the village was known as Mr. Paul.

Mr. Paul would have seemed the easiest person in the world to worm a secret out of. He was good-natured, child-like as a Heathen Chineese, talked freely with everybody in such English as he had at command, knew all the little people of the village, and was followed round by them partly from his personal attraction for them, and partly because he was apt to have a stick of candy or a handful of peanuts or other desirable luxury in his pocket for any of his little friends

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he met with. He had that wholesome, happy look, so uncommon in our arid countrymen,—a look hardly to be found except where figs and oranges ripen in the open air. A kindly climate to grow up in, a religion which takes your money and gives you a stamped ticket good at Saint Peter's box office, a roomy chest and a good pair of lungs in it, an honest digestive apparatus, a lively temperament, a cheerful acceptance of the place in life assigned to one by nature and circumstance,—these are conditions under which life may be quite comfortable to endure, and certainly is very pleasant to contemplate. All these conditions were united in Paolo. He was the easiest; pleasantest creature to talk with that one could ask for a companion. His southern vivacity, his amusing English, his simplicity and openness, made him friends everywhere.

It seemed as if it would be a very simple matter to get the history of his master out of this guileless and unsophisticated being. He had been tried by all the village experts. The rector had put a number of well-studied careless questions, which failed of their purpose. The old librarian of the town library had taken note of all the books he carried to his master, and asked about his studies and pursuits. Paolo found it hard to understand his English, apparently, and answered in the most irrelevant way. The leading gossip of the village tried her skill in pumping him for information. It was all in vain.

His master's way of life was peculiar,—in fact, eccentric. He had hired rooms in an old-fashioned three-story house. He had two rooms in the second and third stories of this old wooden building: his study in the second, his sleeping-room in the one above it. Paolo lived in the basement, where he had all the conveniences for cooking, and played the part of chef for his master and himself. This was only a part of his duty, for he was a man-of-all-work, purveyor, steward, chambermaid,—as universal in his services for one man as Pushee at the Anchor Tavern used to be for everybody.

It so happened that Paolo took a severe cold one winter's day, and had such threatening symptoms that he asked the baker, when he called, to send the village physician to see him. In the course of his visit the doctor naturally inquired about the health of Paolo's master.

"Signor Kirkwood well,—molto bene," said Paolo. "Why does he keep out of sight as he does?" asked the doctor.

"He always so," replied Paolo. "Una antipatia."

Whether Paolo was off his guard with the doctor, whether he revealed it to him as to a father confessor, or whether he thought it time that the reason of his master's seclusion should be known, the doctor did not feel sure. At any rate, Paolo was not disposed to



make any further revelations. Una antipatia,—an antipathy,—that was all the doctor learned. He thought the matter over, and the more he reflected the more he was puzzled. What could an antipathy be that made a young man a recluse! Was it a dread of blue sky and open air, of the smell of flowers, or some electrical impression to which he was unnaturally sensitive?

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Dr. Butts carried these questions home with him. His wife was a sensible, discreet woman, whom he could trust with many professional secrets. He told her of Paolo's revelation, and talked it over with her in the light of his experience and her own; for she had known some curious cases of constitutional likes and aversions.

Mrs. Butts buried the information in the grave of her memory, where it lay for nearly a week. At the end of that time it emerged in a confidential whisper to her favorite sister-in-law, a perfectly safe person. Twenty-four hours later the story was all over the village that Maurice Kirkwood was the subject of a strange, mysterious, unheard-of antipathy to something, nobody knew what; and the whole neighborhood naturally resolved itself into an unorganized committee of investigation.

IV

What is a country village without its mysterious personage? Few are now living who can remember the advent of the handsome young man who was the mystery of our great university town "sixty years since,"—long enough ago for a romance to grow out of a narrative, as *Waverley* may remind us. The writer of this narrative remembers him well, and is not sure that he has not told the strange story in some form or other to the last generation, or to the one before the last. No matter: if he has told it they have forgotten it,—that is, if they have ever read it; and whether they have or have not, the story is singular enough to justify running the risk of repetition.

This young man, with a curious name of Scandinavian origin, appeared unheralded in the town, as it was then, of Cantabridge. He wanted employment, and soon found it in the shape of manual labor, which he undertook and performed cheerfully. But his whole appearance showed plainly enough that he was bred to occupations of a very different nature, if, in deed, he had been accustomed to any kind of toil for his living. His aspect was that of one of gentle birth. His hands were not those of a laborer, and his features were delicate and refined, as well as of remarkable beauty. Who he was, where he came from, why he had come to Cantabridge, was never clearly explained. He was alone, without friends, except among the acquaintances he had made in his new residence. If he had any correspondents, they were not known to the neighborhood where he was living. But if he had neither friends nor correspondents, there was some reason for believing that he had enemies. Strange circumstances occurred which connected themselves with him in an ominous and unaccountable way. A threatening letter was slipped under the door of a house where he was visiting. He had a sudden attack of illness, which was thought to look very much like the effect of poison. At one time he disappeared, and was found wandering, bewildered, in a town many miles from that where he was residing. When questioned how he came there; he told a coherent story that he had been got, under some pretext, or in some not incredible way, into a boat, from which, at a certain landing-place, he had escaped and fled for his life, which he believed was in danger from his kidnappers.

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Whoever his enemies may have been,—if they really existed,—he did not fall a victim to their plots, so far as known to or remembered by this witness.

Various interpretations were put upon his story. Conjectures were as abundant as they were in the case of Kaspar Hauser. That he was of good family seemed probable; that he was of distinguished birth, not impossible; that he was the dangerous rival of a candidate for a greatly coveted position in one of the northern states of Europe was a favorite speculation of some of the more romantic young persons. There was no dramatic ending to this story,—at least none is remembered by the present writer.

“He left a name,” like the royal Swede, of whose lineage he may have been for aught that the village people knew, but not a name at which anybody “grew pale;” for he had swindled no one, and broken no woman’s heart with false vows. Possibly some withered cheeks may flush faintly as they recall the handsome young man who came before the Cantabridge maidens fully equipped for a hero of romance when the century was in its first quarter.

The writer has been reminded of the handsome Swede by the incidents attending the advent of the unknown and interesting stranger who had made his appearance at Arrowhead Village.

It was a very insufficient and unsatisfactory reason to assign for the young man’s solitary habits that he was the subject of an antipathy. For what do we understand by that word? When a young lady screams at the sight of a spider, we accept her explanation that she has a natural antipathy to the creature. When a person expresses a repugnance to some wholesome article of food, agreeable to most people, we are satisfied if he gives the same reason. And so of various odors, which are pleasing to some persons and repulsive to others. We do not pretend to go behind the fact. It is an individual, and it may be a family, peculiarity. Even between different personalities there is an instinctive elective dislike as well as an elective affinity. We are not bound to give a reason why Dr. Fell is odious to us any more than the prisoner who peremptorily challenges a juryman is bound to say why he does it; it is enough that he “does not like his looks.”

There was nothing strange, then, that Maurice Kirkwood should have his special antipathy; a great many other people have odd likes and dislikes. But it was a very curious thing that this antipathy should be alleged as the reason for his singular mode of life. All sorts of explanations were suggested, not one of them in the least satisfactory, but serving to keep the curiosity of inquirers active until they were superseded by a new theory. One story was that Maurice had a great fear of dogs. It grew at last to a connected narrative, in which a fright in childhood from a rabid mongrel was said to have given him such a sensitiveness to the near presence of dogs that he was liable to convulsions if one came close to him.

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This hypothesis had some plausibility. No other creature would be so likely to trouble a person who had an antipathy to it. Dogs are very apt to make the acquaintance of strangers, in a free and easy way. They are met with everywhere,—in one's daily walk, at the thresholds of the doors one enters, in the gentleman's library, on the rug of my lady's sitting-room and on the cushion of her carriage. It is true that there are few persons who have an instinctive repugnance to this "friend of man." But what if this so-called antipathy were only a fear, a terror, which borrowed the less unmanly name? It was a fair question, if, indeed, the curiosity of the public had a right to ask any questions at all about a harmless individual who gave no offence, and seemed entitled to the right of choosing his way of living to suit himself, without being submitted to espionage.

There was no positive evidence bearing on the point as yet. But one of the village people had a large Newfoundland dog, of a very sociable disposition, with which he determined to test the question. He watched for the time when Maurice should leave his house for the woods or the lake, and started with his dog to meet him. The animal walked up to the stranger in a very sociable fashion, and began making his acquaintance, after the usual manner of well-bred dogs; that is, with the courtesies and blandishments by which the canine Chesterfield is distinguished from the ill-conditioned cur. Maurice patted him in a friendly way, and spoke to him as one who was used to the fellowship of such companions. That idle question and foolish story were disposed of, therefore, and some other solution must be found, if possible.

A much more common antipathy is that which is entertained with regard to cats. This has never been explained. It is not mere aversion to the look of the creature, or to any sensible quality known to the common observer. The cat is pleasing in aspect, graceful in movement, nice in personal habits, and of amiable disposition. No cause of offence is obvious, and yet there are many persons who cannot abide the presence of the most innocent little kitten. They can tell, in some mysterious way, that there is a cat in the room when they can neither see nor hear the creature. Whether it is an electrical or quasi-magnetic phenomenon, or whatever it may be, of the fact of this strange influence there are too many well-authenticated instances to allow its being questioned. But suppose Maurice Kirkwood to be the subject of this antipathy in its extremest degree, it would in no manner account for the isolation to which he had condemned himself. He might shun the firesides of the old women whose tabbies were purring by their footstools, but these worthy dames do not make up the whole population.

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These two antipathies having been disposed of, a new suggestion was started, and was talked over with a curious sort of half belief, very much as ghost stories are told in a circle of moderately instructed and inquiring persons. This was that Maurice was endowed with the unenviable gift of the evil eye. He was in frequent communication with Italy, as his letters showed, and had recently been residing in that country, as was learned from Paolo. Now everybody knows that the evil eye is not rarely met with in Italy. Everybody who has ever read Mr. Story's "Roba di Roma" knows what a terrible power it is which the owner of the evil eye exercises. It can blight and destroy whatever it falls upon. No person's life or limb is safe if the jettatura, the withering glance of the deadly organ, falls upon him. It must be observed that this malign effect may follow a look from the holiest personages, that is, if we may assume that a monk is such a matter of course. Certainly we have a right to take it for granted that the late Pope, Pius Ninth, was an eminently holy man, and yet he had the name of dispensing the mystic and dreaded jettatura as well as his blessing. If Maurice Kirkwood carried that destructive influence, so that his clear blue eyes were more to be feared than the fascinations of the deadliest serpent, it could easily be understood why he kept his look away from all around him whom he feared he might harm.

No sensible person in Arrowhead Village really believed in the evil eye, but it served the purpose of a temporary hypothesis, as do many suppositions which we take as a nucleus for our observations without putting any real confidence in them. It was just suited to the romantic notions of the more flighty persons in the village, who had meddled more or less with Spiritualism, and were ready for any new fancy, if it were only wild enough.

The riddle of the young stranger's peculiarity did not seem likely to find any very speedy solution. Every new suggestion furnished talk for the gossips of the village and the babble of the many tongues in the two educational institutions. Naturally, the discussion was liveliest among the young ladies. Here is an extract from a letter of one of these young ladies, who, having received at her birth the ever-pleasing name of Mary, saw fit to have herself called Mollie in the catalogue and in her letters. The old postmaster of the town to which her letter was directed took it up to stamp, and read on the envelope the direction to "Miss Lulu Pinrow." He brought the stamp down with a vicious emphasis, coming very near blotting out the nursery name, instead of cancelling the postage-stamp. "Lulu!" he exclaimed. "I should like to know if that great strapping girl isn't out of her cradle yet! I suppose Miss Louisa will think that belongs to her, but I saw her christened and I heard the name the minister gave her, and it was n't 'Lulu,' or any such baby nonsense." And so saying, he gave it a fling to the box marked P, as if it burned his fingers. Why a grown-up young woman allowed herself to be cheapened in the way so many of them do by the use of names which become them as well as the frock of a ten-year-old schoolgirl would become a graduate of the Corinna Institute, the old postmaster could not guess. He was a queer old man.

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The letter thus scornfully treated runs over with a young girl's written loquacity:

"Oh, Lulu, there is such a sensation as you never saw or heard of 'in all your born days,' as mamma used to say. He has been at the village for some time, but lately we have had—oh, the weirdest stories about him! 'The Mysterious Stranger is the name some give him, but we girls call him the Sachem, because he paddles about in an Indian canoe. If I should tell you all the things that are said about him I should use up all my paper ten times over. He has never made a visit to the Institute, and none of the girls have ever spoken to him, but the people at the village say he is very, very handsome. We are dying to get a look at him, of course—though there is a horrid story about him—that he has the evil eye did you ever hear about the evil eye? If a person who is born with it looks at you, you die, or something happens—awful—is n't it?

"The rector says he never goes to church, but then you know a good many of the people that pass the summer at the village never do—they think their religion must have vacations—that's what I've heard they say—vacations, just like other hard work—it ought not to be hard work, I'm sure, but I suppose they feel so about it. Should you feel afraid to have him look at you? Some of the girls say they would n't have him for the whole world, but I shouldn't mind it—especially if I had on my eyeglasses. Do you suppose if there is anything in the evil eye it would go through glass? I don't believe it. Do you think blue eye-glasses would be better than common ones? Don't laugh at me—they tell such weird stories! The Terror—Lurida Vincent, you know-makes fun of all they say about it, but then she 'knows everything and doesn't believe anything,' the girls say—Well, I should be awfully scared, I know, if anybody that had the evil eye should look at me—but—oh, I don't know—but if it was a young man—and if he was very—very good-looking—I think—perhaps I would run the risk—but don't tell anybody I said any such horrid thing—and burn this letter right up—there 's a dear good girl."

It is to be hoped that no reader will doubt the genuineness of this letter. There are not quite so many "awfuls" and "awfullys" as one expects to find in young ladies' letters, but there are two "weirds," which may be considered a fair allowance. How it happened that "jolly" did not show itself can hardly be accounted for; no doubt it turns up two or three times at least in the postscript.

Here is an extract from another letter. This was from one of the students of Stoughton University to a friend whose name as it was written on the envelope was Mr. Frank Mayfield. The old postmaster who found fault with Miss "Lulu's" designation would probably have quarrelled with this address, if it had come under his eye. "Frank" is a very pretty, pleasant-sounding name, and it is not strange that many persons use it in common conversation

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all their days when speaking of a friend. Were they really christened by that name, any of these numerous Franks? Perhaps they were, and if so there is nothing to be said. But if not, was the baptismal name Francis or Franklin? The mind is apt to fasten in a very perverse and unpleasant way upon this question, which too often there is no possible way of settling. One might hope, if he outlived the bearer of the appellation, to get at the fact; but since even gravestones have learned to use the names belonging to childhood and infancy in their solemn record, the generation which docks its Christian names in such an un-Christian way will bequeath whole churchyards full of riddles to posterity. How it will puzzle and distress the historians and antiquarians of a coming generation to settle what was the real name of Dan and Bert and Billy, which last is legible on a white marble slab, raised in memory of a grown person, in a certain burial-ground in a town in Essex County, Massachusetts!

But in the mean time we are forgetting the letter directed to Mr. Frank Mayfield.

"Dear frank,—Hooray! Hurrah! Rah!

"I have made the acquaintance of 'The Mysterious Stranger'! It happened by a queer sort of accident, which came pretty near relieving you of the duty of replying to this letter. I was out in my little boat, which carries a sail too big for her, as I know and ought to have remembered. One of those fitful flaws of wind to which the lake is so liable struck the sail suddenly, and over went my boat. My feet got tangled in the sheet somehow, and I could not get free. I had hard work to keep my head above water, and I struggled desperately to escape from my toils; for if the boat were to go down I should be dragged down with her. I thought of a good many things in the course of some four or five minutes, I can tell you, and I got a lesson about time better than anything Kant and all the rest of them have to say of it. After I had been there about an ordinary lifetime, I saw a white canoe making toward me, and I knew that our shy young gentleman was coming to help me, and that we should become acquainted without an introduction. So it was, sure enough. He saw what the trouble was, managed to disentangle my feet without drowning me in the process or upsetting his little flimsy craft, and, as I was somewhat tired with my struggle, took me in tow and carried me to the landing where he kept his canoe. I can't say that there is anything odd about his manners or his way of talk. I judge him to be a native of one of our Northern States,—perhaps a New Englander. He has lived abroad during some parts of his life. He is not an artist, as it was at one time thought he might be. He is a good-looking fellow, well developed, manly in appearance, with nothing to excite special remark unless it be a certain look of anxiety or apprehension which comes over him from time to time. You remember our old friend

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Squire B., whose companion was killed by lightning when he was standing close to him. You know the look he had whenever anything like a thundercloud came up in the sky. Well, I should say there was a look like that came over this Maurice Kirkwood's face every now and then. I noticed that he looked round once or twice as if to see whether some object or other was in sight. There was a little rustling in the grass as if of footsteps, and this look came over his features. A rabbit ran by us, and I watched to see if he showed any sign of that antipathy we have heard so much of, but he seemed to be pleased watching the creature.

"If you ask me what my opinion is about this Maurice Kirkwood, I think he is eccentric in his habit of life, but not what they call a 'crank' exactly. He talked well enough about such matters as we spoke of,—the lake, the scenery in general, the climate. I asked him to come over and take a look at the college. He did n't promise, but I should not be surprised if I should get him over there some day. I asked him why he did n't go to the Pansophian meetings. He did n't give any reason, but he shook his head in a very peculiar way, as much as to say that it was impossible.

"On the whole, I think it is nothing more than the same feeling of dread of human society, or dislike for it, which under the name of religion used to drive men into caves and deserts. What a pity that Protestantism does not make special provision for all the freaks of individual character! If we had a little more faith and a few more caverns, or convenient places for making them, we should have hermits in these holes as thick as woodchucks or prairie dogs. I should like to know if you never had the feeling,

"Oh, that the desert were my dwelling-place!"

"I know what your answer will be, of course. You will say, 'Certainly,

"With one fair spirit for my minister;"

"but I mean alone,—all alone. Don't you ever feel as if you should like to have been a pillar-saint in the days when faith was as strong as lye (spelt with a y), instead of being as weak as dish-water? (Jerry is looking over my shoulder, and says this pun is too bad to send, and a disgrace to the University—but never mind.) I often feel as if I should like to roost on a pillar a hundred feet high,—yes, and have it soaped from top to bottom. Wouldn't it be fun to look down at the bores and the duns? Let us get up a pillar-roosters' association. (Jerry—still looking over says there is an absurd contradiction in the idea.)

"What a matter-of-fact idiot Jerry is!

"How do you like looking over, Mr. Inspector general?"



The reader will not get much information out of this lively young fellow's letter, but he may get a little. It is something to know that the mysterious resident of Arrowhead Village did not look nor talk like a crazy person; that he was of agreeable aspect and address, helpful when occasion offered, and had nothing about him, so far as yet appeared, to prevent his being an acceptable member of society.

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Of course the people in the village could never be contented without learning everything there was to be learned about their visitor. All the city papers were examined for advertisements. If a cashier had absconded, if a broker had disappeared, if a railroad president was missing, some of the old stories would wake up and get a fresh currency, until some new circumstance gave rise to a new hypothesis. Unconscious of all these inquiries and fictions, Maurice Kirkwood lived on in his inoffensive and unexplained solitude, and seemed likely to remain an unsolved enigma. The "Sachem" of the boating girls became the "Sphinx" of the village ramblers, and it was agreed on all hands that Egypt did not hold any hieroglyphics harder to make out than the meaning of this young man's odd way of living.

V

The enigma studied.

It was a curious, if it was not a suspicious, circumstance that a young man, seemingly in good health, of comely aspect, looking as if made for companionship, should keep himself apart from all the world around him in a place where there was a general feeling of good neighborhood and a pleasant social atmosphere. The Public Library was a central point which brought people together. The Pansophian Society did a great deal to make them acquainted with each other for many of the meetings were open to outside visitors, and the subjects discussed in the meetings furnished the material for conversation in their intervals. A card of invitation had been sent by the Secretary to Maurice, in answer to which Paolo carried back a polite note of regret. The paper had a narrow rim of black, implying apparently some loss of relative or friend, but not any very recent and crushing bereavement. This refusal to come to the meetings of the society was only what was expected. It was proper to ask him, but his declining the invitation showed that he did not wish for attentions or courtesies. There was nothing further to be done to bring him out of his shell, and seemingly nothing more to be learned about him at present.

In this state of things it was natural that all which had been previously gathered by the few who had seen or known anything of him should be worked over again. When there is no new ore to be dug, the old refuse heaps are looked over for what may still be found in them. The landlord of the Anchor Tavern, now the head of the boarding-house, talked about Maurice, as everybody in the village did at one time or another. He had not much to say, but he added a fact or two.

The young gentleman was good pay,—so they all said. Sometimes he paid in gold; sometimes in fresh bills, just out of the bank. He trusted his man, Mr. Paul, with the money to pay his bills. He knew something about horses; he showed that by the way he handled that colt,—the one that threw the hostler and broke his collar-bone. "Mr. Paul come down to the stable. 'Let me see

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that cult you all 'fraid of,' says he. 'My master, he ride any hoss,' says Paul. 'You saddle him,' says be; and so they did, and Paul, he led that colt—the kickinest and ugliest young beast you ever see in your life—up to the place where his master, as he calls him, and he lives. What does that Kirkwood do but clap on a couple of long spurs and jump on to that colt's back, and off the beast goes, tail up, heels flying, standing up on end, trying all sorts of capers, and at last going it full run for a couple of miles, till he'd got about enough of it. That colt went off as ferce as a wild-cat, and come back as quiet as a cosset lamb. A man that pays his bills reg'lar, in good money, and knows how to handle a hoss is three quarters of a gentleman, if he is n't a whole one,—and most likely he is a whole one."

So spake the patriarch of the Anchor Tavern. His wife had already given her favorable opinion of her former guest. She now added something to her description as a sequel to her husband's remarks.

"I call him," she said, "about as likely a young gentleman as ever I clapped my eyes on. He is rather slighter than I like to see a young man of his age; if he was my sun, I should like to see him a little more fleshy. I don't believe he weighs more than a hundred and thirty or forty pounds. Did y' ever look at those eyes of his, M'randy? Just as blue as succory flowers. I do like those light-complected young fellows, with their fresh cheeks and their curly hair; somehow, curly hair doos set off anybody's face. He is n't any foreigner, for all that he talks Italian with that Mr. Paul that's his help. He looks just like our kind of folks, the college kind, that's brought up among books, and is handling 'em, and reading of 'em, and making of 'em, as like as not, all their lives. All that you say about his riding the mad colt is just what I should think he was up to, for he's as spry as a squirrel; you ought to see him go over that fence, as I did once. I don't believe there's any harm in that young gentleman,—I don't care what people say. I suppose he likes this place just as other people like it, and cares more for walking in the woods and paddling about in the water than he doos for company; and if he doos, whose business is it, I should like to know?"

The third of the speakers was Miranda, who had her own way of judging people.

"I never see him but two or three times," Miranda said. "I should like to have waited on him, and got a chance to look stiddy at him when he was eatin' his vittles. That 's the time to watch folks, when their jaws get a-goin' and their eyes are on what's afore 'em. Do you remember that chap the sheriff come and took away when we kep' tahvern? Eleven year ago it was, come nex' Thanksgivin' time. A mighty grand gentleman from the City he set up for. I watched him, and I watched him. Says I, I don't believe you're no gentleman, says I. He eat with his knife, and that ain't the way city folks

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eats. Every time I handed him anything I looked closer and closer. Them whiskers never grooved on them cheeks, says I to myself. Them 's paper collars, says I. That dimun in your shirt-front hain't got no life to it, says I. I don't believe it's nothiri' more 'n a bit o' winderglass. So says I to Pushee, 'You jes' step out and get the sheriff to come in and take a look at that chap.' I knowed he was after a fellah. He come right in, an' he goes up to the chap. 'Why, Bill,' says he, 'I'm mighty glad to see yer. We've had the hole in the wall you got out of mended, and I want your company to come and look at the old place,' says he, and he pulls out a couple of handcuffs and has 'em on his wrists in less than no time, an' off they goes together! I know one thing about that young gentleman, anyhow,—there ain't no better judge of what's good eatin' than he is. I cooked him some macaroni myself one day, and he sends word to me by that Mr. Paul, 'Tell Miss Miranda,' says he, I that the Pope o' Rome don't have no better cooked macaroni than what she sent up to me yesterday,' says he. I don' know much about the Pope o' Rome except that he's a Roman Catholic, and I don' know who cooks for him, whether it's a man or a woman; but when it comes to a dish o' macaroni, I ain't afeard of their shefs, as they call 'em,—them he-cooks that can't serve up a cold potater without callin' it by some name nobody can say after 'em. But this gentleman knows good cookin', and that's as good a sign of a gentleman as I want to tell 'em by."

VI

Still at fault.

The house in which Maurice Kirkwood had taken up his abode was not a very inviting one. It was old, and had been left in a somewhat dilapidated and disorderly condition by the tenants who had lived in the part which Maurice now occupied. They had piled their packing-boxes in the cellar, with broken chairs, broken china, and other household wrecks. A cracked mirror lay on an old straw mattress, the contents of which were airing themselves through wide rips and rents. A lame clothes-horse was saddled with an old rug fringed with a ragged border, out of which all the colors had been completely trodden. No woman would have gone into a house in such a condition. But the young man did not trouble himself much about such matters, and was satisfied when the rooms which were to be occupied by himself and his servant were made decent and tolerably comfortable. During the fine season all this was not of much consequence, and if Maurice made up his mind to stay through the winter he would have his choice among many more eligible places.

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The summer vacation of the Corinna Institute had now arrived, and the young ladies had scattered to their homes. Among the graduates of the year were Miss Euthymia Tower and Miss Lurida Vincent, who had now returned to their homes in Arrowhead Village. They were both glad to rest after the long final examinations and the exercises of the closing day, in which each of them had borne a conspicuous part. It was a pleasant life they led in the village, which was lively enough at this season. Walking, riding, driving, boating, visits to the Library, meetings of the Pansophian Society, hops, and picnics made the time pass very cheerfully, and soon showed their restoring influences. The Terror's large eyes did not wear the dull, glazed look by which they had too often betrayed the after effects of over-excitement of the strong and active brain behind them. The Wonder gained a fresher bloom, and looked full enough of life to radiate vitality into a statue of ice. They had a boat of their own, in which they passed many delightful hours on the lake, rowing, drifting, reading, telling of what had been, dreaming of what might be.

The Library was one of the chief centres of the fixed population, and visited often by strangers. The old Librarian was a peculiar character, as these officials are apt to be. They have a curious kind of knowledge, sometimes immense in its way. They know the backs of books, their title-pages, their popularity or want of it, the class of readers who call for particular works, the value of different editions, and a good deal besides. Their minds catch up hints from all manner of works on all kinds of subjects. They will give a visitor a fact and a reference which they are surprised to find they remember and which the visitor might have hunted for a year. Every good librarian, every private book-owner, who has grown into his library, finds he has a bunch of nerves going to every bookcase, a branch to every shelf, and a twig to every book. These nerves get very sensitive in old librarians, sometimes, and they do not like to have a volume meddled with any more than they would like to have their naked eyes handled. They come to feel at last that the books of a great collection are a part, not merely of their own property, though they are only the agents for their distribution, but that they are, as it were, outlying portions of their own organization. The old Librarian was getting a miserly feeling about his books, as he called them. Fortunately, he had a young lady for his assistant, who was never so happy as when she could find the work any visitor wanted and put it in his hands,—or her hands, for there were more readers among the wives and—daughters, and especially among the aunts, than there were among their male relatives. The old Librarian knew the books, but the books seemed to know the young assistant; so it looked, at least, to the impatient young people who wanted their services.

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Maurice had a good many volumes of his own,—a great many, according to Paolo's account; but Paolo's ideas were limited, and a few well-filled shelves seemed a very large collection to him. His master frequently sent him to the Public Library for books, which somewhat enlarged his notions; still, the Signor was a very learned man, he was certain, and some of his white books (bound in vellum and richly gilt) were more splendid, according to Paolo, than anything in the Library.

There was no little curiosity to know what were the books that Maurice was in the habit of taking out, and the Librarian's record was carefully searched by some of the more inquisitive investigators. The list proved to be a long and varied one. It would imply a considerable knowledge of modern languages and of the classics; a liking for mathematics and physics, especially all that related to electricity and magnetism; a fancy for the occult sciences, if there is any propriety in coupling these words; and a whim for odd and obsolete literature, like the *Parthenologia* of Fortunius Licetus, the quaint treatise '*De Sternutatione*,' books about alchemy, and witchcraft, apparitions, and modern works relating to Spiritualism. With these were the titles of novels and now and then of books of poems; but it may be taken for granted that his own shelves held the works he was most frequently in the habit of reading or consulting. Not much was to be made out of this beyond the fact of wide scholarship,—more or less deep it might be, but at any rate implying no small mental activity; for he appeared to read very rapidly, at any rate exchanged the books he had taken out for new ones very frequently. To judge by his reading, he was a man of letters. But so wide-reading a man of letters must have an object, a literary purpose in all probability. Why should not he be writing a novel? Not a novel of society, assuredly, for a hermit is not the person to report the talk and manners of a world which he has nothing to do with. Novelists and lawyers understand the art of "cramming" better than any other persons in the world. Why should not this young man be working up the picturesque in this romantic region to serve as a background for some story with magic, perhaps, and mysticism, and hints borrowed from science, and all sorts of out-of-the-way knowledge which his odd and miscellaneous selection of books furnished him? That might be, or possibly he was only reading for amusement. Who could say?

The funds of the Public Library of Arrowhead Village allowed the managers to purchase many books out of the common range of reading. The two learned people of the village were the rector and the doctor. These two worthies kept up the old controversy between the professions, which grows out of the fact that one studies nature from below upwards, and the other from above downwards. The rector maintained that physicians contracted a squint which turns their eyes inwardly, while the muscles which roll their eyes

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upward become palsied. The doctor retorted that theological students developed a third eyelid,—the nictitating membrane, which is so well known in birds, and which serves to shut out, not all light, but all the light they do not want. Their little skirmishes did not prevent their being very good friends, who had a common interest in many things and many persons. Both were on the committee which had the care of the Library and attended to the purchase of books. Each was scholar enough to know the wants of scholars, and disposed to trust the judgment of the other as to what books should be purchased. Consequently, the clergyman secured the addition to the Library of a good many old theological works which the physician would have called brimstone divinity, and held to be just the thing to kindle fires with,—good books still for those who know how to use them, oftentimes as awful examples of the extreme of disorganization the whole moral system may undergo when a barbarous belief has strangled the natural human instincts. The physician, in the mean time, acquired for the collection some of those medical works where one may find recorded various rare and almost incredible cases, which may not have their like for a whole century, and then repeat themselves, so as to give a new lease of credibility to stories which had come to be looked upon as fables.

Both the clergyman and the physician took a very natural interest in the young man who had come to reside in their neighborhood for the present, perhaps for a long period. The rector would have been glad to see him at church. He would have liked more especially to have had him hear his sermon on the Duties of Young Men to Society. The doctor, meanwhile, was meditating on the duties of society to young men, and wishing that he could gain the young man's confidence, so as to help him out of any false habit of mind or any delusion to which he might be subject, if he had the power of being useful to him.

Dr. Butts was the leading medical practitioner, not only of Arrowhead Village, but of all the surrounding region. He was an excellent specimen of the country doctor, self-reliant, self-sacrificing, working a great deal harder for his living than most of those who call themselves the laboring classes,—as if none but those whose hands were hardened by the use of farming or mechanical implements had any work to do. He had that sagacity without which learning is a mere incumbrance, and he had also a fair share of that learning without which sagacity is like a traveller with a good horse, but who cannot read the directions on the guideboards. He was not a man to be taken in by names. He well knew that oftentimes very innocent-sounding words mean very grave disorders; that all, degrees of disease and disorder are frequently confounded under the same term; that “run down” may stand for a fatigue of mind or body from which a week or a month of rest will completely restore the over-worked patient, or an advanced stage of a

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mortal illness; that “seedy” may signify the morning’s state of feeling, after an evening’s over-indulgence, which calls for a glass of soda-water and a cup of coffee, or a dangerous malady which will pack off the subject of it, at the shortest notice, to the south of France. He knew too well that what is spoken lightly of as a “nervous disturbance” may imply that the whole machinery of life is in a deranged condition, and that every individual organ would groan aloud if it had any other language than the terrible inarticulate one of pain by which to communicate with the consciousness.

When, therefore, Dr. Butts heard the word antipatia he did not smile, and say to himself that this was an idle whim, a foolish fancy, which the young man had got into his head. Neither was he satisfied to set down everything to the account of insanity, plausible as that supposition might seem. He was prepared to believe in some exceptional, perhaps anomalous, form of exaggerated sensibility, relating to what class of objects he could not at present conjecture, but which was as vital to the subject of it as the insulating arrangement to a piece of electrical machinery. With this feeling he began to look into the history of antipathies as recorded in all the books and journals on which he could lay his hands.

The holder of the Portfolio asks leave to close it for a brief interval. He wishes to say a few words to his readers, before offering them some verses which have no connection with the narrative now in progress.

If one could have before him a set of photographs taken annually, representing the same person as he or she appeared for thirty or forty or fifty years, it would be interesting to watch the gradual changes of aspect from the age of twenty, or even of thirty or forty, to that of threescore and ten. The face might be an uninteresting one; still, as sharing the inevitable changes wrought by time, it would be worth looking at as it passed through the curve of life,—the vital parabola, which betrays itself in the symbolic changes of the features. An inscription is the same thing, whether we read it on slate-stone, or granite, or marble. To watch the lights and shades, the reliefs and hollows, of a countenance through a lifetime, or a large part of it, by the aid of a continuous series of photographs would not only be curious; it would teach us much more about the laws of physiognomy than we could get from casual and unconnected observations.

The same kind of interest, without any assumption of merit to be found in them, I would claim for a series of annual poems, beginning in middle life and continued to what many of my correspondents are pleased to remind me—as if I required to have the fact brought to my knowledge—is no longer youth. Here is the latest of a series of annual



poems read during the last thirty-four years. There seems to have been one interruption, but there may have been other poems not recorded or remembered. This, the latest poem of the series, was listened to by the scanty remnant of what was a large and brilliant circle of classmates and friends when the first of the long series was read before them, then in the flush of ardent manhood:—

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The old song.

The minstrel of the classic lay
Of love and wine who sings
Still found the fingers run astray
That touched the rebel strings.

Of Cadmus he would fair have sung,
Of Atreus and his line;
But all the jocund echoes rung
With songs of love and wine.

Ah, brothers! I would fair have caught
Some fresher fancy's gleam;
My truant accents find, unsought,
The old familiar theme.

Love, Love! but not the sportive child
With shaft and twanging bow,
Whose random arrows drove us wild
Some threescore years ago;

Not Eros, with his joyous laugh,
The urchin blind and bare,
But Love, with spectacles and staff,
And scanty, silvered hair.

Our heads with frosted locks are white,
Our roofs are thatched with snow,
But red, in chilling winter's spite,
Our hearts and hearthstones glow.

Our old acquaintance, Time, drops in,
And while the running sands
Their golden thread unheeded spin,
He warms his frozen hands.

Stay, winged hours, too swift, too sweet,
And waft this message o'er
To all we miss, from all we meet
On life's fast-crumbling shore:

Say that to old affection true
We hug the narrowing chain

That binds our hearts,—alas, how few
The links that yet remain!

The fatal touch awaits them all
That turns the rocks to dust;
From year to year they break and fall,
They break, but never rust.

Say if one note of happier strain
This worn-out harp afford,
—One throb that trembles, not in vain,
Their memory lent its chord.

Say that when Fancy closed her wings
And Passion quenched his fire,
Love, Love, still echoed from the strings
As from Anacreon's lyre!

January 8, 1885.

VII

A RECORD OF ANTIPATHIES

In thinking the whole matter over, Dr. Butts felt convinced that, with care and patience and watching his opportunity, he should get at the secret, which so far had yielded nothing but a single word. It might be asked why he was so anxious to learn what, from all appearances, the young stranger was unwilling to explain. He may have been to some extent infected by the general curiosity of the persons around him, in which good Mrs. Butts shared, and which she had helped to intensify by revealing the word dropped by Paolo. But this was not really his chief motive. He could not look upon this young man, living a life of unwholesome solitude, without a natural desire to do all that his science and his knowledge of human nature could help him to do towards bringing him into healthy relations with the world about him. Still,

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he would not intrude upon him in any way. He would only make certain general investigations, which might prove serviceable in case circumstances should give him the right to counsel the young man as to his course of life. The first thing to be done was to study systematically the whole subject of antipathies. Then, if any further occasion offered itself, he would be ready to take advantage of it. The resources of the Public Library of the place and his own private collection were put in requisition to furnish him the singular and widely scattered facts of which he was in search.

It is not every reader who will care to follow Dr. Butts in his study of the natural history of antipathies. The stories told about them are, however, very curious; and if some of them may be questioned, there is no doubt that many of the strangest are true, and consequently take away from the improbability of others which we are disposed to doubt.

But in the first place, what do we mean by an antipathy? It is an aversion to some object, which may vary in degree from mere dislike to mortal horror. What the cause of this aversion is we cannot say. It acts sometimes through the senses, sometimes through the imagination, sometimes through an unknown channel. The relations which exist between the human being and all that surrounds him vary in consequence of some adjustment peculiar to each individual. The brute fact is expressed in the phrase "One man's meat is another man's poison."

In studying the history of antipathies the doctor began with those referable to the sense of taste, which are among the most common. In any collection of a hundred persons there will be found those who cannot make use of certain articles of food generally acceptable. This may be from the disgust they occasion or the effects they have been found to produce. Every one knows individuals who cannot venture on honey, or cheese, or veal, with impunity. Carlyle, for example, complains of having veal set before him,—a meat he could not endure. There is a whole family connection in New England, and that a very famous one, to many of whose members, in different generations, all the products of the dairy are the subjects of a congenital antipathy. Montaigne says there are persons who dread the smell of apples more than they would dread being exposed to a fire of musketry. The readers of the charming story "A Week in a French Country-House" will remember poor Monsieur Jacques's piteous cry in the night: "Ursula, art thou asleep? Oh, Ursula, thou sleepest, but I cannot close my eyes. Dearest Ursula, there is such a dreadful smell! Oh, Ursula, it is such a smell! I do so wish thou couldst smell it! Good-night, my angel!—Dearest! I have found them! They are apples!" The smell of roses, of peonies, of lilies, has been known to cause faintness. The sight of various objects has had singular effects on some persons. A boar's head was a favorite dish at the table of great people

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in Marshal d'Albret's time; yet he used to faint at the sight of one. It is not uncommon to meet with persons who faint at the sight of blood. One of the most inveterately pugnacious of Dr. Butts's college-mates confessed that he had this infirmity. Stranger and far more awkward than this is the case mentioned in an ancient collection, where the subject of the antipathy fainted at the sight of any object of a red color. There are sounds, also, which have strange effects on some individuals. Among the obnoxious noises are the crumpling of silk stuffs, the sound of sweeping, the croaking of frogs. The effects in different cases have been spasms, a sense of strangling, profuse sweating,—all showing a profound disturbance of the nervous system.

All these effects were produced by impressions on the organs of sense, seemingly by direct agency on certain nerve centres. But there is another series of cases in which the imagination plays a larger part in the phenomena. Two notable examples are afforded in the lives of two very distinguished personages.

Peter the Great was frightened, when an infant, by falling from a bridge into the water. Long afterward, when he had reached manhood, this hardy and resolute man was so affected by the sound of wheels rattling over a bridge that he had to discipline himself by listening to the sound, in spite of his dread of it, in order to overcome his antipathy. The story told by Abbe Boileau of Pascal is very similar to that related of Peter. As he was driving in his coach and four over the bridge at Neuilly, his horses took fright and ran away, and the leaders broke from their harness and sprang into the river, leaving the wheel-horses and the carriage on the bridge. Ever after this fright it is said that Pascal had the terrifying sense that he was just on the edge of an abyss, ready to fall over.

What strange early impression was it which led a certain lady always to shriek aloud if she ventured to enter a church, as it is recorded? The old and simple way of accounting for it would be the scriptural one, that it was an unclean spirit who dwelt in her, and who, when she entered the holy place and brought her spiritual tenant into the presence of the sacred symbols, "cried with a loud voice, and came out of" her. A very singular case, the doctor himself had recorded, and which the reader may accept as authentic, is the following: At the head of the doctor's front stairs stood, and still stands, a tall clock, of early date and stately presence. A middle-aged visitor, noticing it as he entered the front door, remarked that he should feel a great unwillingness to pass that clock. He could not go near one of those tall timepieces without a profound agitation, which he dreaded to undergo. This very singular idiosyncrasy he attributed to a fright when he was an infant in the arms of his nurse.

She was standing near one of those tall clocks, when the cord which supported one of its heavy leaden weights broke, and the weight came crashing down to the bottom of the case. Some effect must have been produced upon the pulpy nerve centres from which they never recovered. Why should not this happen, when we know that a sudden

mental shock may be the cause of insanity? The doctor remembered the verse of “The Ancient Mariner:”

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"I moved my lips; the pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy hermit raised his eyes
And prayed where he did sit.
I took the oars; the pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro."

This is only poetry, it is true, but the poet borrowed the description from nature, and the records of our asylums could furnish many cases where insanity was caused by a sudden fright.

More than this, hardly a year passes that we do not read of some person, a child commonly, killed outright by terror,—scared to death, literally. Sad cases they often are, in which, nothing but a surprise being intended, the shock has instantly arrested the movements on which life depends. If a mere instantaneous impression can produce effects like these, such an impression might of course be followed by consequences less fatal or formidable, but yet serious in their nature. If here and there a person is killed, as if by lightning, by a sudden startling sight or sound, there must be more numerous cases in which a terrible shock is produced by similar apparently insignificant causes,—a shock which falls short of overthrowing the reason and does not destroy life, yet leaves a lasting effect upon the subject of it.

This point, then, was settled in the mind of Dr. Butts, namely, that, as a violent emotion caused by a sudden shock can kill or craze a human being, there is no perversion of the faculties, no prejudice, no change of taste or temper, no eccentricity, no antipathy, which such a cause may not rationally account for. He would not be surprised, he said to himself, to find that some early alarm, like that which was experienced by Peter the Great or that which happened to Pascal, had broken some spring in this young man's nature, or so changed its mode of action as to account for the exceptional remoteness of his way of life. But how could any conceivable antipathy be so comprehensive as to keep a young man aloof from all the world, and make a hermit of him? He did not hate the human race; that was clear enough. He treated Paolo with great kindness, and the Italian was evidently much attached to him. He had talked naturally and pleasantly with the young man he had helped out of his dangerous situation when his boat was upset. Dr. Butts heard that he had once made a short visit to this young man, at his rooms in the University. It was not misanthropy, therefore, which kept him solitary. What could be broad enough to cover the facts of the case? Nothing that the doctor could think of, unless it were some color, the sight of which acted on him as it did on the individual before mentioned, who could not look at anything red without fainting. Suppose this were a case of the same antipathy. How very careful it would make the subject of it as to where he went and with whom he consorted! Time and patience would be pretty sure

to bring out new developments, and physicians, of all men in the world, know how to wait as well as how to labor.

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Such were some of the crude facts as Dr. Butts found them in books or gathered them from his own experience. He soon discovered that the story had got about the village that Maurice Kirkwood was the victim of an "antipathy," whatever that word might mean in the vocabulary of the people of the place. If he suspected the channel through which it had reached the little community, and, spreading from that centre, the country round, he did not see fit to make out of his suspicions a domestic casus belli. Paolo might have mentioned it to others as well as to himself. Maurice might have told some friend, who had divulged it. But to accuse Mrs. Butts, good Mrs. Butts, of petit treason in telling one of her husband's professional secrets was too serious a matter to be thought of. He would be a little more careful, he promised himself, the next time, at any rate; for he had to concede, in spite of every wish to be charitable in his judgment, that it was among the possibilities that the worthy lady had forgotten the rule that a doctor's patients must put their tongues out, and a doctor's wife must keep her tongue in.

VIII

The Pansophian society.

The Secretary of this association was getting somewhat tired of the office, and the office was getting somewhat tired of him. It occurred to the members of the Society that a little fresh blood infused into it might stir up the general vitality of the organization. The woman suffragists saw no reason why the place of Secretary need as a matter of course be filled by a person of the male sex. They agitated, they made domiciliary visits, they wrote notes to influential citizens, and finally announced as their candidate the young lady who had won and worn the school name of "The Terror," who was elected. She was just the person for the place: wide awake, with all her wits about her, full of every kind of knowledge, and, above all, strong on points of order and details of management, so that she could prompt the presiding officer, to do which is often the most essential duty of a Secretary. The President, the worthy rector, was good at plain sailing in the track of the common moralities and proprieties, but was liable to get muddled if anything came up requiring swift decision and off-hand speech. The Terror had schooled herself in the debating societies of the Institute, and would set up the President, when he was floored by an awkward question, as easily as if he were a ninepin which had been bowled over.

It has been already mentioned that the Pansophian Society received communications from time to time from writers outside of its own organization. Of late these had been becoming more frequent. Many of them were sent in anonymously, and as there were numerous visitors to the village, and two institutions not far removed from it, both full of ambitious and intelligent young persons, it was often impossible to trace the papers to their authors. The new Secretary was alive with curiosity, and as sagacious a little body as one might find if in want of a detective. She could make a pretty shrewd guess

whether a paper was written by a young or old person, by one of her own sex or the other, by an experienced hand or a novice.

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Among the anonymous papers she received was one which exercised her curiosity to an extraordinary degree. She felt a strong suspicion that “the Sachem,” as the boat-crews used to call him, “the Recluse,” “the Night-Hawk,” “the Sphinx,” as others named him, must be the author of it. It appeared to her the production of a young person of a reflective, poetical turn of mind. It was not a woman’s way of writing; at least, so thought the Secretary. The writer had travelled much; had resided in Italy, among other places. But so had many of the summer visitors and residents of Arrowhead Village. The handwriting was not decisive; it had some points of resemblance with the pencilled orders for books which Maurice sent to the Library, but there were certain differences, intentional or accidental, which weakened this evidence. There was an undertone in the essay which was in keeping with the mode of life of the solitary stranger. It might be disappointment, melancholy, or only the dreamy sadness of a young person who sees the future he is to climb, not as a smooth ascent, but as overhanging him like a cliff, ready to crush him, with all his hopes and prospects. This interpretation may have been too imaginative, but here is the paper, and the reader can form his own opinion:

Mythree companions.

“I have been from my youth upwards a wanderer. I do not mean constantly flitting from one place to another, for my residence has often been fixed for considerable periods. From time to time I have put down in a notebook the impressions made upon me by the scenes through which I have passed. I have long hesitated whether to let any of my notes appear before the public. My fear has been that they were too subjective, to use the metaphysician’s term,—that I have seen myself reflected in Nature, and not the true aspects of Nature as she was meant to be understood. One who should visit the Harz Mountains would see—might see, rather his own colossal image shape itself on the morning mist. But if in every mist that rises from the meadows, in every cloud that hangs upon the mountain, he always finds his own reflection, we cannot accept him as an interpreter of the landscape.

“There must be many persons present at the meetings of the Society to which this paper is offered who have had experiences like that of its author. They have visited the same localities, they have had many of the same thoughts and feelings. Many, I have no doubt. Not all,—no, not all. Others have sought the companionship of Nature; I have been driven to it. Much of my life has been passed in that communion. These pages record some of the intimacies I have formed with her under some of her various manifestations.

“I have lived on the shore of the great ocean, where its waves broke wildest and its voice rose loudest.

“I have passed whole seasons on the banks of mighty and famous rivers.

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"I have dwelt on the margin of a tranquil lake, and floated through many a long, long summer day on its clear waters.

"I have learned the 'various language' of Nature, of which poetry has spoken,—at least, I have learned some words and phrases of it. I will translate some of these as I best may into common speech.

"The *ocean* says to the dweller on its shores:—

"You are neither welcome nor unwelcome. I do not trouble myself with the living tribes that come down to my waters. I have my own people, of an older race than yours, that grow to mightier dimensions than your mastodons and elephants; more numerous than all the swarms that fill the air or move over the thin crust of the earth. Who are you that build your palaces on my margin? I see your white faces as I saw the dark faces of the tribes that came before you, as I shall look upon the unknown family of mankind that will come after you. And what is your whole human family but a parenthesis in a single page of my history? The raindrops stereotyped themselves on my beaches before a living creature left his footprints there. This horseshoe-crab I fling at your feet is of older lineage than your Adam,—perhaps, indeed, you count your Adam as one of his descendants. What feeling have I for you? Not scorn, not hatred,—not love,—not loathing. No!—indifference,—blank indifference to you and your affairs that is my feeling, say rather absence of feeling, as regards you.—Oh yes, I will lap your feet, I will cool you in the hot summer days, I will bear you up in my strong arms, I will rock you on my rolling undulations, like a babe in his cradle. Am I not gentle? Am I not kind? Am I not harmless? But hark! The wind is rising, and the wind and I are rough playmates! What do you say to my voice now? Do you see my foaming lips? Do you feel the rocks tremble as my huge billows crash against them? Is not my anger terrible as I dash your argosy, your thunder-bearing frigate, into fragments, as you would crack an eggshell?—No, not anger; deaf, blind, unheeding indifference,—that is all. Out of me all things arose; sooner or later, into me all things subside. All changes around me; I change not. I look not at you, vain man, and your frail transitory concerns, save in momentary glimpses: I look on the white face of my dead mistress, whom I follow as the bridegroom follows the bier of her who has changed her nuptial raiment for the shroud.

"Ye whose thoughts are of eternity, come dwell at my side. Continents and islands grow old, and waste and disappear. The hardest rock crumbles; vegetable and animal kingdoms come into being, wax great, decline, and perish, to give way to others, even as human dynasties and nations and races come and go. Look on me! "Time writes no wrinkle" on my forehead. Listen to me! All tongues are spoken on my shores, but I have only one language: the winds taught me their vowels the crags and the sands schooled me in my rough or

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smooth consonants. Few words are mine but I have whispered them and sung them and shouted them to men of all tribes from the time when the first wild wanderer strayed into my awful presence. Have you a grief that gnaws at your heart-strings? Come with it to my shore, as of old the priest of far-darting Apollo carried his rage and anguish to the margin of the loud-roaring sea. There, if anywhere you will forget your private and short-lived woe, for my voice speaks to the infinite and the eternal in your consciousness.

“To him who loves the pages of human history, who listens to the voices of the world about him, who frequents the market and the thoroughfare, who lives in the study of time and its accidents rather than in the deeper emotions, in abstract speculation and spiritual contemplation, the *river* addresses itself as his natural companion.

“Come live with me. I am active, cheerful, communicative, a natural talker and story-teller. I am not noisy, like the ocean, except occasionally when I am rudely interrupted, or when I stumble and get a fall. When I am silent you can still have pleasure in watching my changing features. My idlest babble, when I am toying with the trifles that fall in my way, if not very full of meaning, is at least musical. I am not a dangerous friend, like the ocean; no highway is absolutely safe, but my nature is harmless, and the storms that strew the beaches with wrecks cast no ruins upon my flowery borders. Abide with me, and you shall not die of thirst, like the forlorn wretches left to the mercies of the pitiless salt waves. Trust yourself to me, and I will carry you far on your journey, if we are travelling to the same point of the compass. If I sometimes run riot and overflow your meadows, I leave fertility behind me when I withdraw to my natural channel. Walk by my side toward the place of my destination. I will keep pace with you, and you shall feel my presence with you as that of a self-conscious being like yourself. You will find it hard to be miserable in my company; I drain you of ill-conditioned thoughts as I carry away the refuse of your dwelling and its grounds.”

But to him whom the ocean chills and crushes with its sullen indifference, and the river disturbs with its never-pausing and never-ending story, the silent *lake* shall be a refuge and a place of rest for his soul.

“‘Vex not yourself with thoughts too vast for your limited faculties,’ it says; ‘yield not yourself to the babble of the running stream. Leave the ocean, which cares nothing for you or any living thing that walks the solid earth; leave the river, too busy with its own errand, too talkative about its own affairs, and find peace with me, whose smile will cheer you, whose whisper will soothe you. Come to me when the morning sun blazes across my bosom like a golden baldric; come to me in the still midnight, when I hold the inverted firmament like a cup brimming with jewels, nor spill one star of all the constellations

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that float in my ebon goblet. Do you know the charm of melancholy? Where will you find a sympathy like mine in your hours of sadness? Does the ocean share your grief? Does the river listen to your sighs? The salt wave, that called to you from under last month's full moon, to-day is dashing on the rocks of Labrador; the stream, that ran by you pure and sparkling, has swallowed the poisonous refuse of a great city, and is creeping to its grave in the wide cemetery that buries all things in its tomb of liquid crystal. It is true that my waters exhale and are renewed from one season to another; but are your features the same, absolutely the same, from year to year? We both change, but we know each other through all changes. Am I not mirrored in those eyes of yours? And does not Nature plant me as an eye to behold her beauties while she is dressed in the glories of leaf and flower, and draw the icy lid over my shining surface when she stands naked and ashamed in the poverty of winter?'

"I have had strange experiences and sad thoughts in the course of a life not very long, but with a record which much longer lives could not match in incident. Oftentimes the temptation has come over me with dangerous urgency to try a change of existence, if such change is a part of human destiny,—to seek rest, if that is what we gain by laying down the burden of life. I have asked who would be the friend to whom I should appeal for the last service I should have need of. Ocean was there, all ready, asking no questions, answering none. What strange voyages, downward through its glaucous depths, upwards to its boiling and frothing surface, wafted by tides, driven by tempests, disparted by rude agencies; one remnant whitening on the sands of a northern beach, one perhaps built into the circle of a coral reef in the Pacific, one settling to the floor of the vast laboratory where continents are built, to emerge in far-off ages! What strange companions for my pall-bearers! Unwieldy sea-monsters, the stories of which are counted fables by the spectacled collectors who think their catalogues have exhausted nature; naked-eyed creatures, staring, glaring, nightmare-like spectres of the ghastly-green abysses; pulpy islands, with life in gelatinous immensity,—what a company of hungry heirs at every ocean funeral! No! No! Ocean claims great multitudes, but does not invite the solitary who would fain be rid of himself.

"Shall I seek a deeper slumber at the bottom of the lake I love than I have ever found when drifting idly over its surface? No, again. I do not want the sweet, clear waters to know me in the disgrace of nature, when life, the faithful body-servant, has ceased caring for me. That must not be. The mirror which has pictured me so often shall never know me as an unwelcome object.

"If I must ask the all-subduing element to be my last friend, and lead me out of my prison, it shall be the busy, whispering, not unfriendly, pleasantly companionable river.

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"But Ocean and River and Lake have certain relations to the periods of human life which they who are choosing their places of abode should consider. Let the child play upon the seashore. The wide horizon gives his imagination room to grow in, untrammelled. That background of mystery, without which life is a poor mechanical arrangement, is shaped and colored, so far as it can have outline, or any hue but shadow, on a vast canvas, the contemplation of which enlarges and enriches the sphere of consciousness. The mighty ocean is not too huge to symbolize the aspirations and ambitions of the yet untried soul of the adolescent.

"The time will come when his indefinite mental horizon has found a solid limit, which shuts his prospect in narrower bounds than he would have thought could content him in the years of undefined possibilities. Then he will find the river a more natural intimate than the ocean. It is individual, which the ocean, with all its gulfs and inlets and multitudinous shores, hardly seems to be. It does not love you very dearly, and will not miss you much when you disappear from its margin; but it means well to you, bids you good-morning with its coming waves, and good-evening with those which are leaving. It will lead your thoughts pleasantly away, upwards to its source, downwards to the stream to which it is tributary, or the wide waters in which it is to lose itself. A river, by choice, to live by in middle age.

"In hours of melancholy reflection, in those last years of life which have little left but tender memories, the still companionship of the lake, embosomed in woods, sheltered, fed by sweet mountain brooks and hidden springs, commends itself to the wearied and saddened spirit. I am not thinking of those great inland seas, which have many of the features and much of the danger that belong to the ocean, but of those 'ponds,' as our countrymen used to call them until they were rechristened by summer visitors; beautiful sheets of water from a hundred to a few thousand acres in extent, scattered like raindrops over the map of our Northern sovereignties. The loneliness of contemplative old age finds its natural home in the near neighborhood of one of these tranquil basins."

Nature does not always plant her poets where they belong, but if we look carefully their affinities betray themselves. The youth will carry his Byron to the rock which overlooks the ocean the poet loved so well. The man of maturer years will remember that the sonorous couplets of Pope which ring in his ears were written on the banks of the Thames. The old man, as he nods over the solemn verse of Wordsworth, will recognize the affinity between the singer and the calm sheet that lay before him as he wrote,—the stainless and sleepy Windermere.

"The dwellers by Cedar Lake may find it an amusement to compare their own feelings with those of one who has lived by the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, by the Nile and the Tiber, by Lake Lemman and by one of the fairest sheets of water that our own North America embosoms in its forests."

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Miss Lurida Vincent, Secretary of the Pansophian Society, read this paper, and pondered long upon it. She was thinking very seriously of studying medicine, and had been for some time in frequent communication with Dr. Butts, under whose direction she had begun reading certain treatises, which added to such knowledge of the laws of life in health and in disease as she had brought with her from the Corinna Institute. Naturally enough, she carried the anonymous paper to the doctor, to get his opinion about it, and compare it with her own. They both agreed that it was probably, they would not say certainly, the work of the solitary visitor. There was room for doubt, for there were visitors who might well have travelled to all the places mentioned, and resided long enough on the shores of the waters the writer spoke of to have had all the experiences mentioned in the paper. The Terror remembered a young lady, a former schoolmate, who belonged to one of those nomadic families common in this generation, the heads of which, especially the female heads, can never be easy where they are, but keep going between America and Europe, like so many pith-balls in the electrical experiment, alternately attracted and repelled, never in contented equilibrium. Every few years they pull their families up by the roots, and by the time they have begun to take hold a little with their radicles in the spots to which they have been successively transplanted up they come again, so that they never get a tap-root anywhere. The Terror suspected the daughter of one of these families of sending certain anonymous articles of not dissimilar character to the one she had just received. But she knew the style of composition common among the young girls, and she could hardly believe that it was one of them who had sent this paper. Could a brother of this young lady have written it? Possibly; she knew nothing more than that the young lady had a brother, then a student at the University. All the chances were that Mr. Maurice Kirkwood was the author. So thought Lurida, and so thought Dr. Butts.

Whatever faults there were in this essay, it interested them both. There was nothing which gave the least reason to suspect insanity on the part of the writer, whoever he or she might be. There were references to suicide, it is true, but they were of a purely speculative nature, and did not look to any practical purpose in that direction. Besides, if the stranger were the author of the paper, he certainly would not choose a sheet of water like Cedar Lake to perform the last offices for him, in case he seriously meditated taking unceremonious leave of life and its accidents. He could find a river easily enough, to say nothing of other methods of effecting his purpose; but he had committed himself as to the impropriety of selecting a lake, so they need not be anxious about the white canoe and its occupant, as they watched it skimming the surface of the deep waters.

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The holder of the Portfolio would never have ventured to come before the public if he had not counted among his resources certain papers belonging to the records of the Pansophian Society, which he can make free use of, either for the illustration of the narrative, or for a diversion during those intervals in which the flow of events is languid, or even ceases for the time to manifest any progress. The reader can hardly have failed to notice that the old Anchor Tavern had become the focal point where a good deal of mental activity converged. There were the village people, including a number of cultivated families; there were the visitors, among them many accomplished and widely travelled persons; there was the University, with its learned teachers and aspiring young men; there was the Corinna Institute, with its eager, ambitious, hungry-souled young women, crowding on, class after class coming forward on the broad stream of liberal culture, and rounding the point which, once passed, the boundless possibilities of womanhood opened before them. All this furnished material enough and to spare for the records and the archives of the society.

The new Secretary infused fresh life into the meetings. It may be remembered that the girls had said of her, when she was The Terror, that "she knew everything and didn't believe anything." That was just the kind of person for a secretary of such an association. Properly interpreted, the saying meant that she knew a great deal, and wanted to know a great deal more, and was consequently always on the lookout for information; that she believed nothing without sufficient proof that it was true, and therefore was perpetually asking for evidence where, others took assertions on trust.

It was astonishing to see what one little creature like The Terror could accomplish in the course of a single season. She found out what each member could do and wanted to do. She wrote to the outside visitors whom she suspected of capacity, and urged them to speak at the meetings, or send written papers to be read. As an official, with the printed title at the head of her notes, *Pansophian society*, she was a privileged personage. She begged the young persons who had travelled to tell something of their experiences. She had contemplated getting up a discussion on the woman's rights question, but being a wary little body, and knowing that the debate would become a dispute and divide the members into two hostile camps, she deferred this project indefinitely. It would be time enough after she had her team well in hand, she said to herself,—had felt their mouths and tried their paces. This expression, as she used it in her thoughts, seems rather foreign to her habits, but there was room in her large brain for a wide range of illustrations and an ample vocabulary. She could not do much with her own muscles, but she had known the passionate delight of being whirled furiously over the road behind four scampering horses, in a rocking stage-coach, and thought of herself in the Secretary's chair as not unlike the driver on his box. A few weeks of rest had allowed her nervous energy to store itself up, and the same powers which had distanced competition in the classes of her school had of necessity to expend themselves in vigorous action in her new office.

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Her appeals had their effect. A number of papers were very soon sent in; some with names, some anonymously. She looked these papers over, and marked those which she thought would be worth reading and listening to at the meetings. One of them has just been presented to the reader. As to the authorship of the following one there were many conjectures. A well-known writer, who had spent some weeks at Arrowhead Village, was generally suspected of being its author. Some, however, questioned whether it was not the work of a new hand, who wrote, not from experience, but from his or her ideas of the condition to which a story-teller, a novelist, must in all probability be sooner or later reduced. The reader must judge for himself whether this first paper is the work of an old hand or a novice.

Some experiences of A novelist.

"I have written a frightful number of stories, forty or more, I think. Let me see. For twelve years two novels a year regularly: that makes twenty-four. In three different years I have written three stories annually: that makes thirty-three. In five years one a year,—thirty-eight. That is all, is n't it? Yes. Thirty-eight, not forty. I wish I could make them all into one composite story, as Mr. Galton does his faces.

"Hero—heroine—mamma—papa—uncle—sister, and so on. Love —obstacles—misery—tears—despair—glimmer of hope—unexpected solution of difficulties—happy finale.

"Landscape for background according to season. Plants of each month got up from botanical calendars.

"I should like much to see the composite novel. Why not apply Mr. Galton's process, and get thirty-eight stories all in one? All the Yankees would resolve into one Yankee, all the P——West Britons into one Patrick, *etc.*, what a saving of time it would be!

"I got along pretty well with my first few stories. I had some characters around me which, a little disguised, answered well enough. There was the minister of the parish, and there was an old schoolmaster either of them served very satisfactorily for grandfathers and old uncles. All I had to do was to shift some of their leading peculiarities, keeping the rest. The old minister wore knee-breeches. I clapped them on to the schoolmaster. The schoolmaster carried a tall gold-headed cane. I put this in the minister's hands. So with other things,—I shifted them round, and got a set of characters who, taken together, reproduced the chief persons of the village where I lived, but did not copy any individual exactly. Thus it went on for a while; but by and by my stock company began to be rather too familiarly known, in spite of their change of costume, and at last some altogether too sagacious person published what he called a 'key' to several of my earlier stories, in which I found the names of a number of neighbors attached to aliases of my own invention. All the 'types,' as he called them, represented

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by these personages of my story had come to be recognized, each as standing for one and the same individual of my acquaintance. It had been of no use to change the costume. Even changing the sex did no good. I had a famous old gossip in one of my tales,—a much-babbling Widow Sertingly. 'Sho!' they all said, that 's old Deacon Spinner, the same he told about in that other story of his,—only the deacon's got on a petticoat and a mob-cap,—but it's the same old sixpence.' So I said to myself, I must have some new characters. I had no trouble with young characters; they are all pretty much alike,—dark-haired or light-haired, with the outfits belonging to their complexion, respectively. I had an old great-aunt, who was a tip-top eccentric. I had never seen anything just like her in books. So I said, I will have you, old lady, in one of my stories; and, sure enough, I fitted her out with a first-rate odd-sounding name, which I got from the directory, and sent her forth to the world, disguised, as I supposed, beyond the possibility of recognition. The book sold well, and the eccentric personage was voted a novelty. A few weeks after it was published a lawyer called upon me, as the agent of the person in the directory, whose family name I had used, as he maintained, to his and all his relatives' great damage, wrong, loss, grief, shame, and irreparable injury, for which the sum of blank thousand dollars would be a modest compensation. The story made the book sell, but not enough to pay blank thousand dollars. In the mean time a cousin of mine had sniffed out the resemblance between the character in my book and our great-aunt. We were rivals in her good graces. 'Cousin Pansie' spoke to her of my book and the trouble it was bringing on me,—she was so sorry about it! She liked my story,—only those personalities, you know. 'What personalities?' says old granny-aunt. 'Why, auntie, dear, they do say that he has brought in everybody we know,—did n't anybody tell you about—well,—I suppose you ought to know it,—did n't anybody tell you you were made fun of in that novel?' Somebody—no matter who—happened to hear all this, and told me. She said granny-aunt's withered old face had two red spots come to it, as if she had been painting her cheeks from a pink saucer. No, she said, not a pink saucer, but as if they were two coals of fire. She sent out and got the book, and made her (the somebody that I was speaking of) read it to her. When she had heard as much as she could stand,—for 'Cousin Pansie' explained passages to her,—explained, you know,—she sent for her lawyer, and that same somebody had to be a witness to a new will she had drawn up. It was not to my advantage. 'Cousin Pansie' got the corner lot where the grocery is, and pretty much everything else. The old woman left me a legacy. What do you think it was? An old set of my own books, that looked as if it had been bought out of a bankrupt circulating library.

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"After that I grew more careful. I studied my disguises much more diligently. But after all, what could I do? Here I was, writing stories for my living and my reputation. I made a pretty sum enough, and worked hard enough to earn it. No tale, no money. Then every story that went from my workshop had to come up to the standard of my reputation, and there was a set of critics,—there is a set of critics now and everywhere,—that watch as narrowly for the decline of a man's reputation as ever a village half drowned out by an inundation watched for the falling of the waters. The fame I had won, such as it was, seemed to attend me,—not going before me in the shape of a woman with a trumpet, but rather following me like one of Actaeon's hounds, his throat open, ready to pull me down and tear me. What a fierce enemy is that which bays behind us in the voice of our proudest bygone achievement!

"But, as I said above, what could I do? I must write novels, and I must have characters. 'Then why not invent them?' asks some novice. Oh, yes! Invent them! You can invent a human being that in certain aspects of humanity will answer every purpose for which your invention was intended. A basket of straw, an old coat and pair of breeches, a hat which has been soaked, sat upon, stuffed a broken window, and had a brood of chickens raised in it,—these elements, duly adjusted to each other, will represent humanity so truthfully that the crows will avoid the cornfield when your scarecrow displays his personality. Do you think you can make your heroes and heroines,—nay, even your scrappy supernumeraries,—out of refuse material, as you made your scarecrow? You can't do it. You must study living people and reproduce them. And whom do you know so well as your friends? You will show up your friends, then, one after another. When your friends give out, who is left for you? Why, nobody but your own family, of course. When you have used up your family, there is nothing left for you but to write your autobiography.

"After my experience with my grand-aunt, I became more cautious, very naturally. I kept traits of character, but I mixed ages as well as sexes. In this way I continued to use up a large amount of material, which looked as if it were as dangerous as dynamite to meddle with. Who would have expected to meet my maternal uncle in the guise of a schoolboy? Yet I managed to decant his characteristics as nicely as the old gentleman would have decanted a bottle of Juno Madeira through that long siphon which he always used when the most sacred vintages were summoned from their crypts to render an account of themselves on his hospitable board. It was a nice business, I confess, but I did it, and I drink cheerfully to that good uncle's memory in a glass of wine from his own cellar, which, with many other more important tokens of his good will, I call my own since his lamented demise.

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"I succeeded so well with my uncle that I thought I would try a course of cousins. I had enough of them to furnish out a whole gallery of portraits. There was cousin 'Creeshy,' as we called her; Lucretia, more correctly. She was a cripple. Her left lower limb had had something happen to it, and she walked with a crutch. Her patience under her trial was very pathetic and picturesque, so to speak,—I mean adapted to the tender parts of a story; nothing could work up better in a melting paragraph. But I could not, of course, describe her particular infirmity; that would point her out at once. I thought of shifting the lameness to the right lower limb, but even that would be seen through. So I gave the young woman that stood for her in my story a lame elbow, and put her arm in a sling, and made her such a model of uncomplaining endurance that my grandmother cried over her as if her poor old heart would break. She cried very easily, my grandmother; in fact, she had such a gift for tears that I availed myself of it, and if you remember old Judy, in my novel "Honi Soit" (Honey Sweet, the booksellers called it),—old Judy, the black-nurse,—that was my grandmother. She had various other peculiarities, which I brought out one by one, and saddled on to different characters. You see she was a perfect mine of singularities and idiosyncrasies. After I had used her up pretty well, I came down upon my poor relations. They were perfectly fair game; what better use could I put them to? I studied them up very carefully, and as there were a good many of them I helped myself freely. They lasted me, with occasional intermissions, I should say, three or four years. I had to be very careful with my poor relations,—they were as touchy as they could be; and as I felt bound to send a copy of my novel, whatever it might be, to each one of them,—there were as many as a dozen,—I took care to mix their characteristic features, so that, though each might suspect I meant the other, no one should think I meant him or her. I got through all my relations at last except my father and mother. I had treated my brothers and sisters pretty fairly, all except Elisha and Joanna. The truth is they both had lots of odd ways,—family traits, I suppose, but were just different enough from each other to figure separately in two different stories. These two novels made me some little trouble; for Elisha said he felt sure that I meant Joanna in one of them, and quarrelled with me about it; and Joanna vowed and declared that Elnathan, in the other, stood for brother 'Lisha, and that it was a real mean thing to make fun of folks' own flesh and blood, and treated me to one of her cries. She was n't handsome when she cried, poor, dear Joanna; in fact, that was one of the personal traits I had made use of in the story that Elisha found fault with.

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“So as there was nobody left but my father and mother, you see for yourself I had no choice. There was one great advantage in dealing with them,—I knew them so thoroughly. One naturally feels a certain delicacy in handling from a purely artistic point of view persons who have been so near to him. One’s mother, for instance: suppose some of her little ways were so peculiar that the accurate delineation of them would furnish amusement to great numbers of readers; it would not be without hesitation that a writer of delicate sensibility would draw her portrait, with all its whimsicalities, so plainly that it should be generally recognized. One’s father is commonly of tougher fibre than one’s mother, and one would not feel the same scruples, perhaps, in using him professionally as material in a novel; still, while you are employing him as bait,—you see I am honest and plain-spoken, for your characters are baits to catch readers with,—I would follow kind Izaak Walton’s humane counsel about the frog you are fastening to your fish-hook: fix him artistically, as he directs, but in so doing I use him as though you loved him.’

“I have at length shown up, in one form and another, all my townsmen who have anything effective in their bodily or mental make-up, all my friends, all my relatives; that is, all my blood relatives. It has occurred to me that I might open a new field in the family connection of my father-in-law and mother-in-law. We have been thinking of paying them a visit, and I shall have an admirable opportunity of studying them and their relatives and visitors. I have long wanted a good chance for getting acquainted with the social sphere several grades below that to which I am accustomed, and I have no doubt that I shall find matter for half a dozen new stories among those connections of mine. Besides, they live in a Western city, and one doesn’t mind much how he cuts up the people of places he does n’t himself live in. I suppose there is not really so much difference in people’s feelings, whether they live in Bangor or Omaha, but one’s nerves can’t be expected to stretch across the continent. It is all a matter of greater or less distance. I read this morning that a Chinese fleet was sunk, but I did n’t think half so much about it as I did about losing my sleeve button, confound it! People have accused me of want of feeling; they misunderstand the artist-nature, —that is all. I obey that implicitly; I am sorry if people don’t like my descriptions, but I have done my best. I have pulled to pieces all the persons I am acquainted with, and put them together again in my characters. The quills I write with come from live geese, I would have you know. I expect to get some first-rate pluckings from those people I was speaking of, and I mean to begin my thirty-ninth novel as soon as I have got through my visit.”

IX

The society and its new secretary.

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There is no use in trying to hurry the natural course of events, in a narrative like this. June passed away, and July, and August had come, and as yet the enigma which had completely puzzled Arrowhead Village and its visitors remained unsolved. The white canoe still wandered over the lake, alone, ghostly, always avoiding the near approach of the boats which seemed to be coming in its direction. Now and then a circumstance would happen which helped to keep inquiry alive. Good horsemanship was not so common among the young men of the place and its neighborhood that Maurice's accomplishment in that way could be overlooked. If there was a wicked horse or a wild colt whose owner was afraid of him, he would be commended to Maurice's attention. Paolo would lead him to his master with all due precaution,—for he had no idea of risking his neck on the back of any ill-conditioned beast,—and Maurice would fasten on his long spurs, spring into the saddle, and very speedily teach the creature good behavior. There soon got about a story that he was what the fresh-water fisherman called “one o' them whisperers.” It is a common legend enough, coming from the Old World, but known in American horse-talking circles, that some persons will whisper certain words in a horse's ear which will tame him if he is as wild and furious as ever Cruiser was. All this added to the mystery which surrounded the young man. A single improbable or absurd story amounts to very little, but when half a dozen such stories are told about the same individual or the same event, they begin to produce the effect of credible evidence. If the year had been 1692 and the place had been Salem Village, Maurice Kirkwood would have run the risk of being treated like the Reverend George Burroughs.

Miss Lurida Vincent's curiosity had been intensely excited with reference to the young man of whom so many stories were told. She had pretty nearly convinced herself that he was the author of the paper on Ocean, Lake, and River, which had been read at one of the meetings of the Pansophian Society. She was very desirous of meeting him, if it were possible. It seemed as if she might, as Secretary of the Society, request the cooperation of any of the visitors, without impropriety. So, after much deliberation, she wrote a careful note, of which the following is an exact copy. Her hand was bold, almost masculine, a curious contrast to that of Euthymia, which was delicately feminine.

Pansophian society.

Arrowhead village, August 3, 18-
Maurice Kirkwood, Esq.

Dear sir,—You have received, I trust, a card of invitation to the meetings of our Society, but I think we have not yet had the pleasure of seeing you at any of them. We have supposed that we might be indebted to you for a paper read at the last meeting, and listened to with much interest. As it was anonymous, we do not wish to be inquisitive respecting its authorship; but we desire to say that any papers kindly sent us by the temporary residents of our village will be welcome, and if adapted to the wants of our Association will be read at one of its meetings or printed in its records, or perhaps both

read and printed. May we not hope for your presence at the meeting, which is to take place next Wednesday evening? Respectfully yours,

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Lurida Vincent, Secretary of the Pansophian Society.

To this note the Secretary received the following reply:
Miss Lurida Vincent,

Arrowhead village, August 4, 18-.

Secretary of the Pansophian Society:

Dear miss Vincent,—I have received the ticket you refer to, and desire to express my acknowledgments for the polite attention. I regret that I have not been and I fear shall not be able to attend the meetings of the Society; but if any subject occurs to me on which I feel an inclination to write, it will give me pleasure to send a paper, to be disposed of as the Society may see fit.

Very respectfully yours,
Maurice Kirkwood.

“He says nothing about the authorship of the paper that was read the other evening,” the Secretary said to herself. “No matter,—he wrote it,—there is no mistaking his handwriting. We know something about him, now, at any rate. But why doesn’t he come to our meetings? What has his antipathy to do with his staying away? I must find out what his secret is, and I will. I don’t believe it’s harder than it was to solve that prize problem which puzzled so many teachers, or than beating Crakowitz, the great chess-player.”

To this enigma, then, The Terror determined to bend all the faculties which had excited the admiration and sometimes the amazement of those who knew her in her school-days. It was a very delicate piece of business; for though Lurida was an intrepid woman’s rights advocate, and believed she was entitled to do almost everything that men dared to, she knew very well there were certain limits which a young woman like herself must not pass.

In the mean time Maurice had received a visit from the young student at the University,—the same whom he had rescued from his dangerous predicament in the lake. With him had called one of the teachers,—an instructor in modern languages, a native of Italy. Maurice and the instructor exchanged a few words in Italian. The young man spoke it with the ease which implied long familiarity with its use.

After they left, the instructor asked many curious questions about him,—who he was, how long he had been in the village, whether anything was known of his history,—all these inquiries with an eagerness which implied some special and peculiar reason for the interest they evinced.



"I feel satisfied," the instructor said, "that I have met that young man in my own country. It was a number of years ago, and of course he has altered in appearance a good deal; but there is a look about him of—what shall I call it?—apprehension,—as if he were fearing the approach of something or somebody. I think it is the way a man would look that was haunted; you know what I mean,—followed by a spirit or ghost. He does not suggest the idea of a murderer,—very far from it; but if he did, I should think he was every minute in fear of seeing the murdered man's spirit."

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The student was curious, in his turn, to know all the instructor could recall. He had seen him in Rome, he thought, at the Fountain of Trevi, where so many strangers go before leaving the city. The youth was in the company of a man who looked like a priest. He could not mistake the peculiar expression of his countenance, but that was all he now remembered about his appearance. His attention had been called to this young man by seeing that some of the bystanders were pointing at him, and noticing that they were whispering with each other as if with reference to him. He should say that the youth was at that time fifteen or sixteen years old, and the time was about ten years ago.

After all, this evidence was of little or no value. Suppose the youth were Maurice; what then? We know that he had been in Italy, and had been there a good while,—or at least we infer so much from his familiarity with the language, and are confirmed in the belief by his having an Italian servant, whom he probably brought from Italy when he returned. If he wrote the paper which was read the other evening, that settles it, for the writer says he had lived by the Tiber. We must put this scrap of evidence furnished by the Professor with the other scraps; it may turn out of some consequence, sooner or later. It is like a piece of a dissected map; it means almost nothing by itself, but when we find the pieces it joins with we may discover a very important meaning in it.

In a small, concentrated community like that which centred in and immediately around Arrowhead Village, every day must have its local gossip as well as its general news. The newspaper tells the small community what is going on in the great world, and the busy tongues of male and female, especially the latter, fill in with the occurrences and comments of the ever-stirring microcosm. The fact that the Italian teacher had, or thought he had, seen Maurice ten years before was circulated and made the most of,—turned over and over like a cake, until it was thoroughly done on both sides and all through. It was a very small cake, but better than nothing. Miss Vincent heard this story, as others did, and talked about it with her friend, Miss Tower. Here was one more fact to help along.

The two young ladies who had recently graduated at the Corinna Institute remained, as they had always been, intimate friends. They were the natural complements of each other. Euthymia represented a complete, symmetrical womanhood. Her outward presence was only an index of a large, wholesome, affluent life. She could not help being courageous, with such a firm organization. She could not help being generous, cheerful, active. She had been told often enough that she was fair to look upon. She knew that she was called The Wonder by the schoolmates who were dazzled by her singular accomplishments, but she did not overvalue them. She rather tended to depreciate her own gifts, in comparison with those of her friend, Miss Lurida Vincent. The two agreed all the better for differing as they did. The octave makes a perfect chord, when shorter intervals jar more or less on the ear. Each admired the other with a heartiness which if they had been less unlike, would have been impossible.

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It was a pleasant thing to observe their dependence on each other. The Terror of the schoolroom was the oracle in her relations with her friend. All the freedom of movement which The Wonder showed in her bodily exercises The Terror manifested in the world of thought. She would fling open a book, and decide in a swift glance whether it had any message for her. Her teachers had compared her way of reading to the taking of an instantaneous photograph. When she took up the first book on Physiology which Dr. Butts handed her, it seemed to him that if she only opened at any place, and gave one look, her mind drank its meaning up, as a moist sponge absorbs water. "What can I do with such a creature as this?" he said to himself. "There is only one way to deal with her, treat her as one treats a silkworm: give it its mulberry leaf, and it will spin its own cocoon. Give her the books, and she will spin her own web of knowledge."

"Do you really think of studying medicine?" said Dr. Butts to her.

"I have n't made up my mind about that," she answered, "but I want to know a little more about this terrible machinery of life and death we are all tangled in. I know something about it, but not enough. I find some very strange beliefs among the women I meet with, and I want to be able to silence them when they attempt to proselyte me to their whims and fancies. Besides, I want to know everything."

"They tell me you do, already," said Dr. Butts.

"I am the most ignorant little wretch that draws the breath of life!" exclaimed The Terror.

The doctor smiled. He knew what it meant. She had reached that stage of education in which the vast domain of the unknown opens its illimitable expanse before the eyes of the student. We never know the extent of darkness until it is partially illuminated.

"You did not leave the Institute with the reputation of being the most ignorant young lady that ever graduated there," said the doctor. "They tell me you got the highest marks of any pupil on their record since the school was founded."

"What a grand thing it was to be the biggest fish in our small aquarium, to be sure!" answered The Terror. "He was six inches long, the monster,—a little too big for bait to catch a pickerel with! What did you hand me that schoolbook for? Did you think I did n't know anything about the human body?"

"You said you were such an ignorant creature I thought I would try you with an easy book, by way of introduction."

The Terror was not confused by her apparent self-contradiction.

"I meant what I said, and I mean what I say. When I talk about my ignorance, I don't measure myself with schoolgirls, doctor. I don't measure myself with my teachers,

either. You must talk to me as if I were a man, a grown man, if you mean to teach me anything. Where is your hat, doctor? Let me try it on."

The doctor handed her his wide-awake. The Terror's hair was not naturally abundant, like Euthymia's, and she kept it cut rather short. Her head used to get very hot when she studied hard. She tried to put the hat on.

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"Do you see that?" she said. "I could n't wear it—it would squeeze my eyes out of my head. The books told me that women's brains were smaller than men's: perhaps they are,—most of them,—I never measured a great many. But when they try to settle what women are good for, by phrenology, I like to have them put their tape round my head. I don't believe in their nonsense, for all that. You might as well tell me that if one horse weighs more than another horse he is worth more,—a cart-horse that weighs twelve or fourteen hundred pounds better than Eclipse, that may have weighed a thousand. Give me a list of the best books you can think of, and turn me loose in your library. I can find what I want, if you have it; and what I don't find there I will get at the Public Library. I shall want to ask you a question now and then."

The doctor looked at her with a kind of admiration, but thoughtfully, as if he feared she was thinking of a task too formidable for her slight constitutional resource.

She returned, instinctively, to the apparent contradiction in her statements about herself.

"I am not a fool, if I am ignorant. Yes, doctor, I sail on a wide sea of ignorance, but I have taken soundings of some of its shallows and some of its depths. Your profession deals with the facts of life that interest me most just now, and I want to know something of it. Perhaps I may find it a calling such as would suit me."

"Do you seriously think of becoming a practitioner of medicine?" said the doctor.

"Certainly, I seriously think of it as a possibility, but I want to know something more about it first. Perhaps I sha'n't believe in medicine enough to practise it. Perhaps I sha'n't like it well enough. No matter about that. I wish to study some of your best books on some of the subjects that most interest me. I know about bones and muscles and all that, and about digestion and respiration and such things. I want to study up the nervous system, and learn all about it. I am of the nervous temperament myself, and perhaps that is the reason. I want to read about insanity and all that relates to it."

A curious expression flitted across the doctor's features as The Terror said this.

"Nervous system. Insanity. She has headaches, I know,—all those large-headed, hard-thinking girls do, as a matter of course; but what has set her off about insanity and the nervous system? I wonder if any of her more remote relatives are subject to mental disorder. Bright people very often have crazy relations. Perhaps some of her friends are in that way. I wonder whether"—the doctor did not speak any of these thoughts, and in fact hardly shaped his "whether," for The Terror interrupted his train of reflection, or rather struck into it in a way which startled him.

"Where is the first volume of this Medical Cyclopaedia?" she asked, looking at its empty place on the shelf.

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"On my table," the doctor answered. "I have been consulting it."

Lurida flung it open, in her eager way, and turned the pages rapidly until she came to the one she wanted. The doctor cast his eye on the beading of the page, and saw the large letters A N T.

"I thought so," he said to himself. "We shall know everything there is in the books about antipathies now, if we never did before. She has a special object in studying the nervous system, just as I suspected. I think she does not care to mention it at this time; but if she finds out anything of interest she will tell me, if she does anybody. Perhaps she does not mean to tell anybody. It is a rather delicate business,—a young girl studying the natural history of a young man. Not quite so safe as botany or palaeontology!"

Lurida, lately The Terror, now Miss Vincent, had her own plans, and chose to keep them to herself, for the present, at least. Her hands were full enough, it might seem, without undertaking the solution of the great Arrowhead Village enigma. But she was in the most perfect training, so far as her intelligence was concerned; and the summer rest had restored her bodily vigor, so that her brain was like an overcharged battery which will find conductors somewhere to carry off its crowded energy.

At this time Arrowhead Village was enjoying the most successful season it had ever known. The Pansophian Society flourished to an extraordinary degree under the fostering care of the new Secretary. The rector was a good figure-head as President, but the Secretary was the life of the Society. Communications came in abundantly: some from the village and its neighborhood, some from the University and the Institute, some from distant and unknown sources. The new Secretary was very busy with the work of examining these papers. After a forenoon so employed, the carpet of her room looked like a barn floor after a husking-match. A glance at the manuscripts strewed about, or lying in heaps, would have frightened any young writer away from the thought of authorship as a business. If the candidate for that fearful calling had seen the process of selection and elimination, he would have felt still more desperately. A paper of twenty pages would come in, with an underscored request to please read through, carefully. That request alone is commonly sufficient to condemn any paper, and prevent its having any chance of a hearing; but the Secretary was not hardened enough yet for that kind of martial law in dealing with manuscripts. The looker-on might have seen her take up the paper, cast one flashing glance at its title, read the first sentence and the last, dip at a venture into two or three pages, and decide as swiftly as the lightning calculator would add up a column of figures what was to be its destination. If rejected, it went into the heap on the left; if approved, it was laid apart, to be submitted to the Committee for their judgment.

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The foolish writers who insist on one's reading through their manuscript poems and stories ought to know how fatal the request is to their prospects. It provokes the reader, to begin with. The reading of manuscript is frightful work, at the best; the reading of worthless manuscript—and most of that which one is requested to read through is worthless—would add to the terrors of Tartarus, if any infernal deity were ingenious enough to suggest it as a punishment.

If a paper was rejected by the Secretary, it did not come before the Committee, but was returned to the author, if he sent for it, which he commonly did. Its natural course was to try for admission into some one of the popular magazines: into "The Sifter," the most fastidious of them all; if that declined it, into "The Second Best;" and if that returned it, into "The Omnivorous." If it was refused admittance at the doors of all the magazines, it might at length find shelter in the corner of a newspaper, where a good deal of very readable verse is to be met with nowadays, some of which has been, no doubt, presented to the Pansophian Society, but was not considered up to its standard.

X

A new arrival.

There was a recent accession to the transient population of the village which gave rise to some speculation. The new-comer was a young fellow, rather careless in his exterior, but apparently as much at home as if he owned Arrowhead Village and everything in it. He commonly had a cigar in his mouth, carried a pocket pistol, of the non-explosive sort, and a stick with a bulldog's bead for its knob; wore a soft hat, a coarse check suit, a little baggy, and gaiterboots which had been half-soled,—a Bohemian-looking personage, altogether.

This individual began making explorations in every direction. He was very curious about the place and all the people in it. He was especially interested in the Pansophian Society, concerning which he made all sorts of inquiries. This led him to form a summer acquaintance with the Secretary, who was pleased to give him whatever information he asked for; being proud of the Society, as she had a right to be, and knowing more about it than anybody else.

The visitor could not have been long in the village without hearing something of Maurice Kirkwood, and the stories, true and false, connected with his name. He questioned everybody who could tell him anything about Maurice, and set down the answers in a little note-book he always had with him.



All this naturally excited the curiosity of the village about this new visitor. Among the rest, Miss Vincent, not wanting in an attribute thought to belong more especially to her sex, became somewhat interested to know more exactly who this inquiring, note-taking personage, who seemed to be everywhere and to know everybody, might himself be. Meeting him at the Public Library at a fortunate moment, when there was nobody but the old Librarian, who was hard of hearing, to interfere with their conversation, the little Secretary had a chance to try to find out something about him.

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"This is a very remarkable library for a small village to possess," he remarked to Miss Lurida.

"It is, indeed," she said. "Have you found it well furnished with the books you most want?"

"Oh, yes,—books enough. I don't care so much for the books as I do for the Newspapers. I like a Review well enough,—it tells you all there is in a book; but a good abstract of the Review in a Newspaper saves a fellow the trouble of reading it."

"You find the papers you want, here, I hope," said the young lady.

"Oh, I get along pretty well. It's my off-time, and I don't do much reading or writing. Who is the city correspondent of this place?"

"I don't think we have any one who writes regularly. Now and then, there is a letter, with the gossip of the place in it, or an account of some of the doings at our Society. The city papers are always glad to get the reports of our meetings, and to know what is going on in the village."

"I suppose you write about the Society to the papers, as you are the Secretary."

This was a point-blank shot. She meant to question the young man about his business, and here she was on the witness-stand. She ducked her head, and let the question go over her.

"Oh, there are plenty of members who are willing enough to write, —especially to give an account of their own papers. I think they like to have me put in the applause, when they get any. I do that sometimes." (How much more, she did not say.)

"I have seen some very well written articles, which, from what they tell me of the Secretary, I should have thought she might have written herself."

He looked her straight in the eyes.

"I have transmitted some good papers," she said, without winking, or swallowing, or changing color, precious little color she had to change; her brain wanted all the blood it could borrow or steal, and more too. "You spoke of Newspapers," she said, without any change of tone or manner: "do you not frequently write for them yourself?"

"I should think I did," answered the young man. "I am a regular correspondent of 'The People's Perennial and Household Inquisitor.'"

"The regular correspondent from where?"

“Where! Oh, anywhere,—the place does not make much difference. I have been writing chiefly from Naples and St. Petersburg, and now and then from Constantinople.”

“How long since your return to this country, may I ask?”

“My return? I have never been out of this country. I travel with a gazetteer and some guide-books. It is the cheapest way, and you can get the facts much better from them than by trusting your own observation. I have made the tour of Europe by the help of them and the newspapers. But of late I have taken to interviewing. I find that a very pleasant specialty. It is about as good sport as trout-tickling, and much the same kind of business. I should like to send the Society an account of one of my interviews. Don’t you think they would like to hear it?”

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"I have no doubt they would. Send it to me, and I will look it over; and if the Committee approve it, we will have it at the next meeting. You know everything has to be examined and voted on by the Committee," said the cautious Secretary.

"Very well,—I will risk it. After it is read, if it is read, please send it back to me, as I want to sell it to 'The Sifter,' or 'The Second Best,' or some of the paying magazines."

This is the paper, which was read at the next meeting of the Pansophian Society.

"I was ordered by the editor of the newspaper to which I am attached, 'The People's Perennial and Household Inquisitor,' to make a visit to a certain well-known writer, and obtain all the particulars I could concerning him and all that related to him. I have interviewed a good many politicians, who I thought rather liked the process; but I had never tried any of these literary people, and I was not quite sure how this one would feel about it. I said as much to the chief, but he pooh-poohed my scruples. 'It is n't our business whether they like it or not,' said he; 'the public wants it, and what the public wants it's bound to have, and we are bound to furnish it. Don't be afraid of your man; he 's used to it,—he's been pumped often enough to take it easy, and what you've got to do is to pump him dry. You need n't be modest,—ask him what you like; he is n't bound to answer, you know.'

"As he lived in a rather nice quarter of the town, I smarted myself up a little, put on a fresh collar and cuffs, and got a five-cent shine on my best high-lows. I said to myself, as I was walking towards the house where he lived, that I would keep very shady for a while and pass for a visitor from a distance; one of those 'admiring strangers' who call in to pay their respects, to get an autograph, and go home and say that they have met the distinguished So and So, which gives them a certain distinction in the village circle to which they belong.

"My man, the celebrated writer, received me in what was evidently his reception-room. I observed that he managed to get the light full on my face, while his own was in the shade. I had meant to have his face in the light, but he knew the localities, and had arranged things so as to give him that advantage. It was like two frigates manoeuvring,—each trying to get to windward of the other. I never take out my note-book until I and my man have got engaged in artless and earnest conversation,—always about himself and his works, of course, if he is an author.

"I began by saying that he must receive a good many callers. Those who had read his books were naturally curious to see the writer of them.

"He assented, emphatically, to this statement. He had, he said, a great many callers.

"I remarked that there was a quality in his books which made his readers feel as if they knew him personally, and caused them to cherish a certain attachment to him.

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"He smiled, as if pleased. He was himself disposed to think so, he said. In fact, a great many persons, strangers writing to him, had told him so.

"My dear sir, I said, there is nothing wonderful in the fact you mention. You reach a responsive chord in many human breasts.

'One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin.'

"Everybody feels as if he, and especially she (his eyes sparkled), were your blood relation. Do they not name their children after you very frequently?

"He blushed perceptibly. 'Sometimes,' he answered. 'I hope they will all turn out well.'

"I am afraid I am taking up too much of your time, I said.

"No, not at all,' he replied. 'Come up into my library; it is warmer and pleasanter there.'

"I felt confident that I had him by the right handle then; for an author's library, which is commonly his working-room, is, like a lady's boudoir, a sacred apartment.

"So we went upstairs, and again he got me with the daylight on my face, when I wanted it on his.

"You have a fine library, I remarked. There were books all round the room, and one of those whirling square book-cases. I saw in front a Bible and a Concordance, Shakespeare and Mrs. Cowden Clarke's book, and other classical works and books of grave aspect. I contrived to give it a turn, and on the side next the wall I got a glimpse of Barnum's Rhyming Dictionary, and several Dictionaries of Quotations and cheap compends of knowledge. Always twirl one of those revolving book-cases when you visit a scholar's library. That is the way to find out what books he does n't want you to see, which of course are the ones you particularly wish to see.

"Some may call all this impertinent and inquisitive. What do you suppose is an interviewer's business? Did you ever see an oyster opened? Yes? Well, an interviewer's business is the same thing. His man is his oyster, which he, not with sword, but with pencil and note-book, must open. Mark how the oysterman's thin blade insinuates itself,—how gently at first, how strenuously when once fairly between the shells!

"And here, I said, you write your books,—those books which have carried your name to all parts of the world, and will convey it down to posterity! Is this the desk at which you write? And is this the pen you write with?

"'It is the desk and the very pen,' he replied.



“He was pleased with my questions and my way of putting them. I took up the pen as reverentially as if it had been made of the feather which the angel I used to read about in Young’s “Night Thoughts” ought to have dropped, and did n’t.

“Would you kindly write your autograph in my note-book, with that pen? I asked him. Yes, he would, with great pleasure.

“So I got out my note-book.

“It was a spick and span new one, bought on purpose for this interview. I admire your bookcases, said I. Can you tell me just how high they are?



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"They are about eight feet, with the cornice."

"I should like to have some like those, if I ever get rich enough, said I. Eight feet,—eight feet, with the cornice. I must put that down."

"So I got out my pencil."

"I sat there with my pencil and note-book in my hand, all ready, but not using them as yet."

"I have heard it said, I observed, that you began writing poems at a very early age. Is it taking too great a liberty to ask how early you began to write in verse?"

"He was getting interested, as people are apt to be when they are themselves the subjects of conversation."

"Very early,—I hardly know how early. I can say truly, as Louise Colet said,

"Je fis mes premiers vers sans savoir les écrire."

"I am not a very good French scholar, said I; perhaps you will be kind enough to translate that line for me."

"Certainly. With pleasure. I made my first verses without knowing how to write them."

"How interesting! But I never heard of Louise Colet. Who was she?"

"My man was pleased to give me a piece of literary information."

"Louise the lioness! Never heard of her? You have heard of Alphonse Karr?"

"Why,—yes,—more or less. To tell the truth, I am not very well up in French literature. What had he to do with your lioness?"

"A good deal. He satirized her, and she waited at his door with a case-knife in her hand, intending to stick him with it. By and by he came down, smoking a cigarette, and was met by this woman flourishing her case-knife. He took it from her, after getting a cut in his dressing-gown, put it in his pocket, and went on with his cigarette. He keeps it with an inscription:

"Donne a Alphonse Karr
Par Madame Louise Colet....
Dans le dos."

"Lively little female!"



"I could n't help thinking that I should n't have cared to interview the lively little female. He was evidently tickled with the interest I appeared to take in the story he told me. That made him feel amiably disposed toward me.

"I began with very general questions, but by degrees I got at everything about his family history and the small events of his boyhood. Some of the points touched upon were delicate, but I put a good bold face on my most audacious questions, and so I wormed out a great deal that was new concerning my subject. He had been written about considerably, and the public wouldn't have been satisfied without some new facts; and these I meant to have, and I got. No matter about many of them now, but here are some questions and answers that may be thought worth reading or listening to:

"How do you enjoy being what they call 'a celebrity,' or a celebrated man?

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“So far as one’s vanity is concerned it is well enough. But self-love is a cup without any bottom, and you might pour the Great Lakes all through it, and never fill it up. It breeds an appetite for more of the same kind. It tends to make the celebrity a mere lump of egotism. It generates a craving for high-seasoned personalities which is in danger of becoming slavery, like that following the abuse of alcohol, or opium, or tobacco. Think of a man’s having every day, by every post, letters that tell him he is this and that and the other, with epithets and endearments, one tenth part of which would have made him blush red hot before he began to be what you call a celebrity!”

“Are there not some special inconveniences connected with what is called celebrity?”

“I should think so! Suppose you were obliged every day of your life to stand and shake hands, as the President of the United States has to after his inauguration: how do you think your hand would feel after a few months’ practice of that exercise? Suppose you had given you thirty-five millions of money a year, in hundred-dollar coupons, on condition that you cut them all off yourself in the usual manner: how do you think you should like the look of a pair of scissors at the end of a year, in which you had worked ten hours a day every day but Sunday, cutting off a hundred coupons an hour, and found you had not finished your task, after all? You have addressed me as what you are pleased to call “a literary celebrity.” I won’t dispute with you as to whether or not I deserve that title. I will take it for granted I am what you call me, and give you some few hints on my experience.

“You know there was formed a while ago an Association of Authors for Self-Protection. It meant well, and it was hoped that something would come of it in the way of relieving that oppressed class, but I am sorry to say that it has not effected its purpose.”

“I suspected he had a hand in drawing up the Constitution and Laws of that Association. Yes, I said, an admirable Association it was, and as much needed as the one for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. I am sorry to hear that it has not proved effectual in putting a stop to the abuse of a deserving class of men. It ought to have done it; it was well conceived, and its public manifesto was a masterpiece. (I saw by his expression that he was its author.)

“‘I see I can trust you,’ he said. ‘I will unbosom myself freely of some of the grievances attaching to the position of the individual to whom you have applied the term “Literary Celebrity.”’

“‘He is supposed to be a millionaire, in virtue of the immense sales of his books, all the money from which, it is taken for granted, goes into his pocket. Consequently, all subscription papers are handed to him for his signature, and every needy stranger who has heard his name comes to him for assistance.

“He is expected to subscribe for all periodicals, and is goaded by receiving blank formulae, which, with their promises to pay, he is expected to fill up.

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“He receives two or three books daily, with requests to read and give his opinion about each of them, which opinion, if it has a word which can be used as an advertisement, he will find quoted in all the newspapers.

“He receives thick masses of manuscript, prose and verse, which he is called upon to examine and pronounce on their merits; these manuscripts having almost invariably been rejected by the editors to whom they have been sent, and having as a rule no literary value whatever.

“He is expected to sign petitions, to contribute to journals, to write for fairs, to attend celebrations, to make after-dinner speeches, to send money for objects he does not believe in to places he never heard of.

“He is called on to keep up correspondences with unknown admirers, who begin by saying they have no claim upon his time, and then appropriate it by writing page after page, if of the male sex; and sheet after sheet, if of the other.

“If a poet, it is taken for granted that he can sit down at any moment and spin off any number of verses on any subject which may be suggested to him; such as congratulations to the writer’s great-grandmother on her reaching her hundredth year, an elegy on an infant aged six weeks, an ode for the Fourth of July in a Western township not to be found in Lippincott’s last edition, perhaps a valentine for some bucolic lover who believes that wooing in rhyme is the way to win the object of his affections.’

“Is n’t it so? I asked the Celebrity.

“I would bet on the prose lover. She will show the verses to him, and they will both have a good laugh over them.’

“I have only reported a small part of the conversation I had with the Literary Celebrity. He was so much taken up with his pleasing self-contemplation, while I made him air his opinions and feelings and spread his characteristics as his laundress spreads and airs his linen on the clothes-line, that I don’t believe it ever occurred to him that he had been in the hands of an interviewer until he found himself exposed to the wind and sunshine in full dimensions in the columns of The People’s Perennial and Household Inquisitor.”

After the reading of this paper, much curiosity was shown as to who the person spoken of as the “Literary Celebrity” might be. Among the various suppositions the startling idea was suggested that he was neither more nor less than the unexplained personage known in the village as Maurice Kirkwood. Why should that be his real name? Why should not he be the Celebrity, who had taken this name and fled to this retreat to escape from the persecutions of kind friends, who were pricking him and stabbing him nigh to death with their daggers of sugar candy?

The Secretary of the Pansophian Society determined to question the Interviewer the next time she met him at the Library, which happened soon after the meeting when his paper was read.

“I do not know,” she said, in the course of a conversation in which she had spoken warmly of his contribution to the literary entertainment of the Society, “that you mentioned the name of the Literary Celebrity whom you interviewed so successfully.”

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"I did not mention him, Miss Vincent," he answered, "nor do I think it worth while to name him. He might not care to have the whole story told of how he was handled so as to make him communicative. Besides, if I did, it would bring him a new batch of sympathetic letters, regretting that he was bothered by those horrid correspondents, full of indignation at the bores who presumed to intrude upon him with their pages of trash, all the writers of which would expect answers to their letters of condolence."

The Secretary asked the Interviewer if he knew the young gentleman who called himself Maurice Kirkwood.

"What," he answered, "the man that paddles a birch canoe, and rides all the wild horses of the neighborhood? No, I don't know him, but I have met him once or twice, out walking. A mighty shy fellow, they tell me. Do you know anything particular about him?"

"Not much. None of us do, but we should like to. The story is that he has a queer antipathy to something or to somebody, nobody knows what or whom."

"To newspaper correspondents, perhaps," said the interviewer. "What made you ask me about him? You did n't think he was my 'Literary Celebrity,' did you?"

"I did not know. I thought he might be. Why don't you interview this mysterious personage? He would make a good sensation for your paper, I should think."

"Why, what is there to be interviewed in him? Is there any story of crime, or anything else to spice a column or so, or even a few paragraphs, with? If there is, I am willing to handle him professionally."

"I told you he has what they call an antipathy. I don't know how much wiser you are for that piece of information."

"An antipathy! Why, so have I an antipathy. I hate a spider, and as for a naked caterpillar,—I believe I should go into a fit if I had to touch one. I know I turn pale at the sight of some of those great green caterpillars that come down from the elm-trees in August and early autumn."

"Afraid of them?" asked the young lady.

"Afraid? What should I be afraid of? They can't bite or sting. I can't give any reason. All I know is that when I come across one of these creatures in my path I jump to one side, and cry out,—sometimes using very improper words. The fact is, they make me crazy for the moment."

"I understand what you mean," said Miss Vincent. "I used to have the same feeling about spiders, but I was ashamed of it, and kept a little menagerie of spiders until I had

got over the feeling; that is, pretty much got over it, for I don't love the creatures very dearly, though I don't scream when I see one."

"What did you tell me, Miss Vincent, was this fellow's particular antipathy?"

That is just the question. I told you that we don't know and we can't guess what it is. The people here are tired out with trying to discover some good reason for the young man's keeping out of the way of everybody, as he does. They say he is odd or crazy, and they don't seem to be able to tell which. It would make the old ladies of the village sleep a great deal sounder,—yes, and some of the young ladies, too,—if they could find out what this Mr. Kirkwood has got into his head, that he never comes near any of the people here."

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"I think I can find out," said the Interviewer, whose professional ambition was beginning to be excited. "I never came across anybody yet that I could n't get something out of. I am going to stay here a week or two, and before I go I will find out the secret, if there is any, of this Mr. Maurice Kirkwood."

We must leave the Interviewer to his contrivances until they present us with some kind of result, either in the shape of success or failure.

XI

The interviewer attacks the Sphinx.

When Miss Euthymia Tower sent her oar off in flashing splinters, as she pulled her last stroke in the boat-race, she did not know what a strain she was putting upon it. She did know that she was doing her best, but how great the force of her best was she was not aware until she saw its effects. Unconsciousness belonged to her robust nature, in all its manifestations. She did not pride herself on her knowledge, nor reproach herself for her ignorance. In every way she formed a striking contrast to her friend, Miss Vincent. Every word they spoke betrayed the difference between them: the sharp tones of Lurida's head-voice, penetrative, aggressive, sometimes irritating, revealed the corresponding traits of mental and moral character; the quiet, conversational contralto of Euthymia was the index of a nature restful and sympathetic.

The friendships of young girls prefigure the closer relations which will one day come in and dissolve their earlier intimacies. The dependence of two young friends may be mutual, but one will always lean more heavily than the other; the masculine and feminine elements will be as sure to assert themselves as if the friends were of different sexes.

On all common occasions Euthymia looked up to her friend as her superior. She fully appreciated all her varied gifts and knowledge, and deferred to her opinion in every-day matters, not exactly as an oracle, but as wiser than herself or any of her other companions. It was a different thing, however, when the graver questions of life came up. Lurida was full of suggestions, plans, projects, which were too liable to run into whims before she knew where they were tending. She would lay out her ideas before Euthymia so fluently and eloquently that she could not help believing them herself, and feeling as if her friend must accept them with an enthusiasm like her own. Then Euthymia would take them up with her sweet, deliberate accents, and bring her calmer judgment to bear on them.

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Lurida was in an excited condition, in the midst of all her new interests and occupations. She was constantly on the lookout for papers to be read at the meetings of her Society,—for she made it her own in great measure, by her zeal and enthusiasm,—and in the mean time she was reading in various books which Dr. Butts selected for her, all bearing on the profession to which, at least as a possibility, she was looking forward. Privately and in a very still way, she was occupying herself with the problem of the young stranger, the subject of some delusion, or disease, or obliquity of unknown nature, to which the vague name of antipathy had been attached. Euthymia kept an eye upon her, partly in the fear that over-excitement would produce some mental injury, and partly from anxiety lest she should compromise her womanly dignity in her desire to get at the truth of a very puzzling question.

“How do you like the books I see you reading?” said Euthymia to Lurida, one day, as they met at the Library.

“Better than all the novels I ever read,” she answered. “I have been reading about the nervous system, and it seems to me I have come nearer the springs of life than ever before in all my studies. I feel just as if I were a telegraph operator. I was sure that I had a battery in my head, for I know my brain works like one; but I did not know how many centres of energy there are, and how they are played upon by all sorts of influences, external and internal. Do you know, I believe I could solve the riddle of the ‘Arrowhead Village Sphinx,’ as the paper called him, if he would only stay here long enough?”

“What paper has had anything about it, Lurida? I have not seen or heard of its being mentioned in any of the papers.”

“You know that rather queer-looking young man who has been about here for some time,—the same one who gave the account of his interview with a celebrated author? Well, he has handed me a copy of a paper in which he writes, ‘The People’s Perennial and Household Inquisitor.’ He talks about this village in a very free and easy way. He says there is a Sphinx here, who has mystified us all.”

“And you have been chatting with that fellow! Don’t you know that he’ll have you and all of us in his paper? Don’t you know that nothing is safe where one of those fellows gets in with his note-book and pencil? Oh, Lurida, Lurida, do be careful!” What with this mysterious young man and this very questionable newspaper-paragraph writer, you will be talked about, if you don’t mind, before you know it. You had better let the riddle of the Sphinx alone. If you must deal with such dangerous people, the safest way is to set one of them to find out the other.—I wonder if we can’t get this new man to interview the visitor you have so much curiosity about. That might be managed easily enough without your having anything to do with it. Let me alone, and I will arrange it. But mind, now, you must not meddle; if you do, you will spoil everything, and get your name in the ‘Household Inquisitor’ in a way you won’t like.”

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“Don’t be frightened about me, Euthymia. I don’t mean to give him a chance to work me into his paper, if I can help it. But if you can get him to try his skill upon this interesting personage and his antipathy, so much the better. I am very curious about it, and therefore about him. I want to know what has produced this strange state of feeling in a young man who ought to have all the common instincts of a social being. I believe there are unexplained facts in the region of sympathies and antipathies which will repay study with a deeper insight into the mysteries of life than we have dreamed of hitherto. I often wonder whether there are not heart-waves and soul-waves as well as ‘brain-waves,’ which some have already recognized.”

Euthymia wondered, as well she might, to hear this young woman talking the language of science like an adept. The truth is, Lurida was one of those persons who never are young, and who, by way of compensation, will never be old. They are found in both sexes. Two well-known graduates of one of our great universities are living examples of this precocious but enduring intellectual development. If the readers of this narrative cannot pick them out, they need not expect the writer of it to help them. If they guess rightly who they are, they will recognize the fact that just such exceptional individuals as the young woman we are dealing with are met with from time to time in families where intelligence has been cumulative for two or three generations.

Euthymia was very willing that the questioning and questionable visitor should learn all that was known in the village about the nebulous individual whose misty environment all the eyes in the village were trying to penetrate, but that he should learn it from some other informant than Lurida.

The next morning, as the Interviewer took his seat on a bench outside his door, to smoke his after-breakfast cigar, a bright-looking and handsome youth, whose features recalled those of Euthymia so strikingly that one might feel pretty sure he was her brother, took a seat by his side. Presently the two were engaged in conversation. The Interviewer asked all sorts of questions about everybody in the village. When he came to inquire about Maurice, the youth showed a remarkable interest regarding him. The greatest curiosity, he said, existed with reference to this personage. Everybody was trying to find out what his story was,—for a story, and a strange one, he must surely have,—and nobody had succeeded.

The Interviewer began to be unusually attentive. The young man told him the various antipathy stories, about the evil-eye hypothesis, about his horse-taming exploits, his rescuing the student whose boat was overturned, and every occurrence he could recall which would help out the effect of his narrative.

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The Interviewer was becoming excited. "Can't find out anything about him, you said, did n-'t you? How do you know there's anything to find? Do you want to know what I think he is? I'll tell you. I think he is an actor,—a fellow from one of the city theatres. Those fellows go off in their summer vacation, and like to puzzle the country folks. They are the very same chaps, like as not, the visitors have seen in plays at the city theatres; but of course they don't know 'em in plain clothes. Kings and Emperors look pretty shabby off the stage sometimes, I can tell you."

The young man followed the Interviewer's lead. "I shouldn't wonder if you were right," he said. "I remember seeing a young fellow in Romeo that looked a good deal like this one. But I never met the Sphinx, as they call him, face to face. He is as shy as a woodchuck. I believe there are people here that would give a hundred dollars to find out who he is, and where he came from, and what he is here for, and why he does n't act like other folks. I wonder why some of those newspaper men don't come up here and get hold of this story. It would be just the thing for a sensational writer."

To all this the Interviewer listened with true professional interest. Always on the lookout for something to make up a paragraph or a column about; driven oftentimes to the stalest of repetitions,—to the biggest pumpkin story, the tall cornstalk, the fat ox, the live frog from the human stomach story, the third set of teeth and reading without spectacles at ninety story, and the rest of the marvellous commonplaces which are kept in type with e o y or e 6 m (every other year or every six months) at the foot; always in want of a fresh incident, a new story, an undescribed character, an unexplained mystery, it is no wonder that the Interviewer fastened eagerly upon this most tempting subject for an inventive and emotional correspondent.

He had seen Paolo several times, and knew that he was Maurice's confidential servant, but had never spoken to him. So he said to himself that he must make Paolo's acquaintance, to begin with. In the summer season many kinds of small traffic were always carried on in Arrowhead Village. Among the rest, the sellers of fruits—oranges, bananas, and others, according to the seasons—did an active business. The Interviewer watched one of these fruit-sellers, and saw that his hand-cart stopped opposite the house where, as he knew, Maurice Kirkwood was living. Presently Paolo came out of the door, and began examining the contents of the hand-cart. The Interviewer saw his opportunity. Here was an introduction to the man, and the man must introduce him to the master.

He knew very well how to ingratiate himself with the man,—there was no difficulty about that. He had learned his name, and that he was an Italian whom Maurice had brought to this country with him.

"Good morning, Mr. Paul," he said. "How do you like the look of these oranges?"

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"They pretty fair," said Paolo: "no so good as them las' week; no sweet as them was."

"Why, how do you know without tasting them?" said the Interviewer.

"I know by his look,—I know by his smell,—he no good yaller,—he no smell ripe,—I know orange ever since my head no bigger than he is," and Paolo laughed at his own comparison.

The Interviewer laughed louder than Paolo.

"Good!" said he,—"first-rate! Of course you know all about 'em. Why can't you pick me out a couple of what you think are the best of 'em? I shall be greatly obliged to you. I have a sick friend, and I want to get two nice sweet ones for him."

Paolo was pleased. His skill and judgment were recognized. He felt grateful to the stranger, who had given him, an opportunity of conferring a favor. He selected two, after careful examination and grave deliberation. The Interviewer had sense and tact enough not to offer him an orange, and so shift the balance of obligation.

"How is Mr. Kirkwood, to-day?" he asked.

"Signor? He very well. He always well. Why you ask? Anybody tell you he sick?"

"No, nobody said he was sick. I have n't seen him going about for a day or two, and I thought he might have something the matter with him. Is he in the house now?"

"No: he off riding. He take long, long rides, sometime gone all day. Sometime he go on lake, paddle, paddle in the morning, very, very early,—in night when the moon shine; sometime stay in house, and read, and study, and write,—he great scholar, Misser Kirkwood."

"A good many books, has n't he?"

"He got whole shelves full of books. Great books, little books, old books, new books, all sorts of books. He great scholar, I tell you."

"Has n't he some curiosities,—old figures, old jewelry, old coins, or things of that sort?"

Paolo looked at the young man cautiously, almost suspiciously. "He don't keep no jewels nor no money in his chamber. He got some old things,—old jugs, old brass figgers, old money, such as they used to have in old times: she don't pass now." Paolo's genders were apt to be somewhat indiscriminately distributed.

A lucky thought struck the Interviewer. "I wonder if he would examine some old coins of mine?" said he, in a modestly tentative manner.

"I think he like to see anything curious. When he come home I ask him. Who will I tell him wants to ask him about old coin?"

"Tell him a gentleman visiting Arrowhead Village would like to call and show him some old pieces of money, said to be Roman ones."

The Interviewer had just remembered that he had two or three old battered bits of copper which he had picked up at a tollman's, where they had been passed off for cents. He had bought them as curiosities. One had the name of Gallienus upon it, tolerably distinct,—a common little Roman penny; but it would serve his purpose of asking a question, as would two or three others with less legible legends. Paolo told him that if he came the next morning he would stand a fair chance of seeing Mr. Kirkwood. At any rate, he would speak to his master.

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The Interviewer presented himself the next morning, after finishing his breakfast and his cigar, feeling reasonably sure of finding Mr. Kirkwood at home, as he proved to be. He had told Paolo to show the stranger up to his library,—or study, as he modestly called it.

It was a pleasant room enough, with a lookout on the lake in one direction, and the wooded hill in another. The tenant had fitted it up in scholarly fashion. The books Paolo spoke of were conspicuous, many of them, by their white vellum binding and tasteful gilding, showing that probably they had been bound in Rome, or some other Italian city. With these were older volumes in their dark original leather, and recent ones in cloth or paper. As the Interviewer ran his eye over them, he found that he could make very little out of what their backs taught him. Some of the paper-covered books, some of the cloth-covered ones, had names which he knew; but those on the backs of many of the others were strange to his eyes. The classics of Greek and Latin and Italian literature were there; and he saw enough to feel convinced that he had better not attempt to display his erudition in the company of this young scholar.

The first thing the Interviewer had to do was to account for his visiting a person who had not asked to make his acquaintance, and who was living as a recluse. He took out his battered coppers, and showed them to Maurice.

"I understood that you were very skilful in antiquities, and had a good many yourself. So I took the liberty of calling upon you, hoping that you could tell me something about some ancient coins I have had for a good while." So saying, he pointed to the copper with the name of Gallienus.

"Is this very rare and valuable? I have heard that great prices have been paid for some of these ancient coins,—ever so many guineas, sometimes. I suppose this is as much as a thousand years old."

"More than a thousand years old," said Maurice.

"And worth a great deal of money?" asked the Interviewer.

"No, not a great deal of money," answered Maurice.

"How much, should you say?" said the Interviewer.

Maurice smiled. "A little more than the value of its weight in copper,—I am afraid not much more. There are a good many of these coins of Gallienus knocking about. The peddlers and the shopkeepers take such pieces occasionally, and sell them, sometimes for five or ten cents, to young collectors. No, it is not very precious in money value, but as a relic any piece of money that was passed from hand to hand a thousand or fifteen hundred years ago is interesting. The value of such relics is a good deal a matter of imagination."

“And what do you say to these others?” asked the Interviewer. Poor old worn-out things they were, with a letter or two only, and some faint trace of a figure on one or two of them.

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"Very interesting, always, if they carry your imagination back to the times when you may suppose they were current. Perhaps Horace tossed one of them to a beggar. Perhaps one of these was the coin that was brought when One said to those about Him, 'Bring me a penny, that I may see it.' But the market price is a different matter. That depends on the beauty and preservation, and above all the rarity, of the specimen. Here is a coin, now,"—he opened a small cabinet, and took one from it. "Here is a Syracusan decadrachm with the head of Persephone, which is at once rare, well preserved, and beautiful. I am afraid to tell what I paid for it."

The Interviewer was not an expert in numismatics. He cared very little more for an old coin than he did for an old button, but he had thought his purchase at the tollman's might prove a good speculation. No matter about the battered old pieces: he had found out, at any rate, that Maurice must have money and could be extravagant, or what he himself considered so; also that he was familiar with ancient coins. That would do for a beginning.

"May I ask where you picked up the coin you are showing me?" he said

"That is a question which provokes a negative answer. One does not 'pick up' first-class coins or paintings, very often, in these times. I bought this of a great dealer in Rome."

"Lived in Rome once?" said the Interviewer.

"For some years. Perhaps you have been there yourself?"

The Interviewer said he had never been there yet, but he hoped he should go there, one of these years, "suppose you studied art and antiquities while you were there?" he continued.

"Everybody who goes to Rome must learn something of art and antiquities. Before you go there I advise you to review Roman history and the classic authors. You had better make a study of ancient and modern art, and not have everything to learn while you are going about among ruins, and churches, and galleries. You know your Horace and Virgil well, I take it for granted?"

The Interviewer hesitated. The names sounded as if he had heard them. "Not so well as I mean to before going to Rome," he answered. "May I ask how long you lived in Rome?"

"Long enough to know something of what is to be seen in it. No one should go there without careful preparation beforehand. You are familiar with Vasari, of course?"

The Interviewer felt a slight moisture on his forehead. He took out his handkerchief. "It is a warm day," he said. "I have not had time to read all—the works I mean to. I have



had too much writing to do, myself, to find all the time for reading and study I could have wished."

"In what literary occupation have you been engaged, if you will pardon my inquiry? said Maurice.

"I am connected with the press. I understood that you were a man of letters, and I hoped I might have the privilege of hearing from your own lips some account of your literary experiences."

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"Perhaps that might be interesting, but I think I shall reserve it for my autobiography. You said you were connected with the press. Do I understand that you are an author?"

By this time the Interviewer had come to the conclusion that it was a very warm day. He did not seem to be getting hold of his pitcher by the right handle, somehow. But he could not help answering Maurice's very simple question.

"If writing for a newspaper gives one a right to be called an author, I may call myself one. I write for the "People's Perennial and Household Inquisitor."

"Are you the literary critic of that well-known journal, or do you manage the political column?"

"I am a correspondent from different places and on various matters of interest."

"Places you have been to, and people you have known?"

"Well, yes,-generally, that is. Sometimes I have to compile my articles."

"Did you write the letter from Rome, published a few weeks ago?"

The Interviewer was in what he would call a tight place. However, he had found that his man was too much for him, and saw that the best thing he could do was to submit to be interviewed himself. He thought that he should be able to pick up something or other which he could work into his report of his visit.

"Well, I—prepared that article for our columns. You know one does not have to see everything he describes. You found it accurate, I hope, in its descriptions?"

"Yes, Murray is generally accurate. Sometimes he makes mistakes, but I can't say how far you have copied them. You got the Ponte Molle—the old Milvian bridge—a good deal too far down the stream, if I remember. I happened to notice that, but I did not read the article carefully. May I ask whether you propose to do me the honor of reporting this visit and the conversation we have had, for the columns of the newspaper with which you are connected?"

The Interviewer thought he saw an opening. "If you have no objections," he said, "I should like very much to ask a few questions." He was recovering his professional audacity.

"You can ask as many questions as you consider proper and discreet, —after you have answered one or two of mine: Who commissioned you to submit me to examination?"

"The curiosity of the public wishes to be gratified, and I am the humble agent of its investigations."



“What has the public to do with my private affairs?”

“I suppose it is a question of majority and minority. That settles everything in this country. You are a minority of one opposed to a large number of curious people that form a majority against you. That is the way I’ve heard the chief put it.”

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Maurice could not help smiling at the quiet assumption of the American citizen. The Interviewer smiled, too, and thought he had his man, sure, at last. Maurice calmly answered, "There is nothing left for minorities, then, but the right of rebellion. I don't care about being made the subject of an article for your paper. I am here for my pleasure, minding my own business, and content with that occupation. I rebel against your system of forced publicity. Whenever I am ready I shall tell the public all it has any right to know about me. In the mean time I shall request to be spared reading my biography while I am living. I wish you a good-morning."

The Interviewer had not taken out his note-book and pencil. In his next communication from Arrowhead Village he contented himself with a brief mention of the distinguished and accomplished gentleman now visiting the place, whose library and cabinet of coins he had had the privilege of examining, and whose courtesy was equalled only by the modesty that shunned the public notoriety which the organs of popular intelligence would otherwise confer upon him.

The Interviewer had attempted the riddle of the Sphinx, and had failed to get the first hint of its solution.

The many tongues of the village and its visitors could not remain idle. The whole subject of antipathies had been talked over, and the various cases recorded had become more or less familiar to the conversational circles which met every evening in the different centres of social life. The prevalent hypothesis for the moment was that Maurice had a congenital aversion to some color, the effects of which upon him were so painful or disagreeable that he habitually avoided exposure to it. It was known, and it has already been mentioned, that such cases were on record. There had been a great deal of discussion, of late, with reference to a fact long known to a few individuals, but only recently made a matter of careful scientific observation and brought to the notice of the public. This was the now well-known phenomenon of color-blindness. It did not seem very strange that if one person in every score or two could not tell red from green there might be other curious individual peculiarities relating to color. A case has already been referred to where the subject of observation fainted at the sight of any red object. What if this were the trouble with Maurice Kirkwood? It will be seen at once how such a congenital antipathy would tend to isolate the person who was its unfortunate victim. It was an hypothesis not difficult to test, but it was a rather delicate business to be experimenting on an inoffensive stranger. Miss Vincent was thinking it over, but said nothing, even to Euthymia, of any projects she might entertain.

XII

Miss Vincent as A medical student.



The young lady whom we have known as The Terror, as Lurida, as Miss Vincent, Secretary of the Pansophian Society, had been reading various works selected for her by Dr. Butts,—works chiefly relating to the nervous system and its different affections. She thought it was about time to talk over the general subject of the medical profession with her new teacher,—if such a self-directing person as Lurida could be said to recognize anybody as teacher.

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She began at the beginning. "What is the first book you would put in a student's hands, doctor?" she said to him one day. They were in his study, and Lurida had just brought back a thick volume on Insanity, one of Bucknill and Puke's, which she had devoured as if it had been a pamphlet.

"Not that book, certainly," he said. "I am afraid it will put all sorts of notions into your head. Who or what set you to reading that, I should like to know?"

"I found it on one of your shelves, and as I thought I might perhaps be crazy some time or other, I felt as if I should like to know what kind of a condition insanity is. I don't believe they were ever very bright, those insane people, most of them. I hope I am not stupid enough ever to lose my wits."

"There is no telling, my dear, what may happen if you overwork that busy brain of yours. But did n't it make you nervous, reading about so many people possessed with such strange notions?"

"Nervous? Not a bit. I could n't help thinking, though, how many people I had known that had a little touch of craziness about them. Take that poor woman that says she is Her Majesty's Person,—not Her Majesty, but Her Majesty's Person,—a very important distinction, according to her: how she does remind me of more than one girl I have known! She would let her skirts down so as to make a kind of train, and pile things on her head like a sort of crown, fold her arms and throw her head back, and feel as grand as a queen. I have seen more than one girl act very much in that way. Are not most of us a little crazy, doctor,—just a little? I think so. It seems to me I never saw but one girl who was free from every hint of craziness."

"And who was that, pray?"

"Why, Euthymia,—nobody else, of course. She never loses her head,—I don't believe she would in an earthquake. Whenever we were at work with our microscopes at the Institute I always told her that her mind was the only achromatic one I ever looked into,—I did n't say looked through.—But I did n't come to talk about that. I read in one of your books that when Sydenham was asked by a student what books he should read, the great physician said, 'Read "Don Quixote."' I want you to explain that to me; and then I want you to tell me what is the first book, according to your idea, that a student ought to read."

"What do you say to my taking your question as the subject of a paper to be read before the Society? I think there may be other young ladies at the meeting, besides yourself, who are thinking of pursuing the study of medicine. At any rate, there are a good many who are interested in the subject; in fact, most people listen readily to anything doctors tell them about their calling."



“I wish you would, doctor. I want Euthymia to hear it, and I don’t doubt there will be others who will be glad to hear everything you have to say about it. But oh, doctor, if you could only persuade Eutbymia to become a physician! What a doctor she would make! So strong, so calm, so full of wisdom! I believe she could take the wheel of a steamboat in a storm, or the hose of a fire-engine in a conflagration, and handle it as well as the captain of the boat or of the fire-company.”

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"Have you ever talked with her about studying medicine?"

"Indeed I have. Oh, if she would only begin with me! What good times we would have studying together!"

"I don't doubt it. Medicine is a very pleasant study. But how do you think practice would be? How would you like being called up to ride ten miles in a midnight snow-storm, just when one of your raging headaches was racking you?"

"Oh, but we could go into partnership, and Euthymia is n't afraid of storms or anything else. If she would only study medicine with me!"

"Well, what does she say to it?"

"She does n't like the thought of it. She does n't believe in women doctors. She thinks that now and then a woman may be fitted for it by nature, but she does n't think there are many who are. She gives me a good many reasons against their practising medicine, you know what most of them are, doctor,—and ends by saying that the same woman who would be a poor sort of doctor would make a first-rate nurse; and that, she thinks, is a woman's business, if her instinct carries her to the hospital or sick-chamber. I can't argue her ideas out of her."

"Neither can I argue you out of your feeling about the matter; but I am disposed to agree with your friend, that you will often spoil a good nurse to make a poor doctor. Doctors and side-saddles don't seem to me to go together. Riding habits would be awkward things for practitioners. But come, we won't have a controversy just now. I am for giving women every chance for a good education, and if they think medicine is one of their proper callings let them try it. I think they will find that they had better at least limit themselves to certain specialties, and always have an expert of the other sex to fall back upon. The trouble is that they are so impressible and imaginative that they are at the mercy of all sorts of fancy systems. You have only to see what kinds of instruction they very commonly flock to in order to guess whether they would be likely to prove sensible practitioners. Charlatanism always hobbles on two crutches, the tattle of women, and the certificates of clergymen, and I am afraid that half the women doctors will be too much under both those influences."

Lurida believed in Dr. Butts, who, to use the common language of the village, had "carried her through" a fever, brought on by over-excitement and exhausting study. She took no offence at his reference to nursery gossip, which she had learned to hold cheap. Nobody so despises the weaknesses of women as the champion of woman's rights. She accepted the doctor's concession of a fair field and open trial of the fitness of her sex for medical practice, and did not trouble herself about his suggested limitations. As to the imaginative tendencies of women, she knew too well the truth of the doctor's remark relating to them to wish to contradict it.

“Be sure you let me have your paper in season for the next meeting, doctor,” she said; and in due season it came, and was of course approved for reading.

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XIII

Dr. Butts reads A paper.

"Next to the interest we take in all that relates to our immortal souls is that which we feel for our mortal bodies. I am afraid my very first statement may be open to criticism. The care of the body is the first thought with a great many,—in fact, with the larger part of the world. They send for the physician first, and not until he gives them up do they commonly call in the clergyman. Even the minister himself is not so very different from other people. We must not blame him if he is not always impatient to exchange a world of multiplied interests and ever-changing sources of excitement for that which tradition has delivered to us as one eminently deficient in the stimulus of variety. Besides, these bodily frames, even when worn and disfigured by long years of service, hang about our consciousness like old garments. They are used to us, and we are used to them. And all the accidents of our lives,—the house we dwell in, the living people round us, the landscape we look over, all, up to the sky that covers us like a bell glass,—all these are but looser outside garments which we have worn until they seem a part of us, and we do not like the thought of changing them for a new suit which we have never yet tried on. How well I remember that dear ancient lady, who lived well into the last decade of her century, as she repeated the verse which, if I had but one to choose, I would select from that string of pearls, Gray's 'Elegy'!

"For who to dumb forgetfulness a prey
This pleasing, anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?"

"Plotinus was ashamed of his body, we are told. Better so, it may be, than to live solely for it, as so many do. But it may be well doubted if there is any disciple of Plotinus in this Society. On the contrary, there are many who think a great deal of their bodies, many who have come here to regain the health they have lost in the wear and tear of city life, and very few who have not at some time or other of their lives had occasion to call in the services of a physician.

"There is, therefore, no impropriety in my offering to the members some remarks upon the peculiar difficulties which beset the medical practitioner in the discharge of his laborious and important duties.

"A young friend of mine, who has taken an interest in medical studies, happened to meet with a very familiar story about one of the greatest and most celebrated of all English physicians, Thomas Sydenham. The story is that, when a student asked him what books he should read, the great doctor told him to read 'Don Quixote.'

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“This piece of advice has been used to throw contempt upon the study of books, and furnishes a convenient shield for ignorant pretenders. But Sydenham left many writings in which he has recorded his medical experience, and he surely would not have published them if he had not thought they would be better reading for the medical student than the story of Cervantes. His own works are esteemed to this day, and he certainly could not have supposed that they contained all the wisdom of all the past. No remedy is good, it was said of old, unless applied at the right time in the right way. So we may say of all anecdotes, like this which I have told you about Sydenham and the young man. It is very likely that he carried him to the bedside of some patients, and talked to him about the cases he showed him, instead of putting a Latin volume in his hand. I would as soon begin in that way as any other, with a student who had already mastered the preliminary branches,—who knew enough about the structure and functions of the body in health.

“But if you ask me what reading I would commend to the medical student of a philosophical habit of mind, you may be surprised to hear me say it would be certain passages in ‘Rasselas.’ They are the ones where the astronomer gives an account to Imlac of his management of the elements, the control of which, as he had persuaded himself, had been committed to him. Let me read you a few sentences from this story, which is commonly bound up with the ‘Vicar of Wakefield,’ like a woollen lining to a silken mantle, but is full of stately wisdom in processions of paragraphs which sound as if they ought to have a grammatical drum-major to march before their tramping platoons.

“The astronomer has taken Imlac into his confidence, and reveals to him the secret of his wonderful powers:—

“‘Hear, Imlac, what thou wilt not without difficulty credit. I have possessed for five years the regulation of the weather and the distribution of the seasons the sun has listened to my dictates, and passed from tropic to tropic by my direction; the clouds, at my call, have poured their waters, and the Nile has overflowed at my command; I have restrained the rage of the dog-star, and mitigated the fervors of the crab. The winds alone, of all the elemental powers, have hitherto eluded my authority, and multitudes have perished by equinoctial tempests, which I found myself unable to prohibit or restrain.’

“The reader naturally wishes to know how the astronomer, a sincere, devoted, and most benevolent man, for forty years a student of the heavens, came to the strange belief that he possessed these miraculous powers. This is his account:

“‘One day, as I was looking on the fields withering with heat, I felt in my mind a sudden wish that I could send rain on the southern mountains, and raise the Nile to an inundation. In the hurry of my imagination I commanded rain to fall, and by comparing the time of my command with that of the inundation I found that the clouds had listened to my lips.’

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“‘Might not some other cause,’ said I, ‘produce this concurrence? The Nile does not always rise on the same day.’

“‘Do not believe,’ said he, with impatience, I that such objections could escape me: I reasoned long against my own conviction, and labored against truth with the utmost obstinacy. I sometimes suspected myself of madness, and should not have dared to impart this secret but to a man like you, capable of distinguishing the wonderful from the impossible and the incredible from the false.’

“The good old astronomer gives his parting directions to Imlac, whom he has adopted as his successor in the government of the elements and the seasons, in these impressive words:

“Do not, in the administration of the year, indulge thy pride by innovation; do not please thyself with thinking that thou canst make thyself renowned to all future ages by disordering the seasons. The memory of mischief is no desirable fame. Much less will it become thee to let kindness or interest prevail. Never rob other countries of rain to pour it on thine own. For us the Nile is sufficient.’

“Do you wonder, my friends, why I have chosen these passages, in which the delusions of an insane astronomer are related with all the pomp of the Johnsonian vocabulary, as the first lesson for the young person about to enter on the study of the science and art of healing? Listen to me while I show you the parallel of the story of the astronomer in the history of medicine.

“This history is luminous with intelligence, radiant with benevolence, but all its wisdom and all its virtue have had to struggle with the ever-rising mists of delusion. The agencies which waste and destroy the race of mankind are vast and resistless as the elemental forces of nature; nay, they are themselves elemental forces. They may be to some extent avoided, to some extent diverted from their aim, to some extent resisted. So may the changes of the seasons, from cold that freezes to heats that strike with sudden death, be guarded against. So may the tides be in some small measure restrained in their inroads. So may the storms be breasted by walls they cannot shake from their foundations. But the seasons and the tides and the tempests work their will on the great scale upon whatever stands in their way; they feed or starve the tillers of the soil; they spare or drown the dwellers by the shore; they waft the seaman to his harbor or bury him in the angry billows.

“The art of the physician can do much to remove its subjects from deadly and dangerous influences, and something to control or arrest the effects of these influences. But look at the records of the life-insurance offices, and see how uniform is the action of nature’s destroying agencies. Look at the annual reports of the deaths in any of our great cities, and see how their regularity approaches the uniformity of the tides, and their variations keep pace with those of the seasons. The inundations of the

Nile are not more certainly to be predicted than the vast wave of infantile disease which flows in upon all our great cities with the growing heats of July,—than the fevers and dysenteries which visit our rural districts in the months of the falling leaf.

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"The physician watches these changes as the astronomer watched the rise of the great river. He longs to rescue individuals, to protect communities from the inroads of these destroying agencies. He uses all the means which experience has approved, tries every rational method which ingenuity can suggest. Some fortunate recovery leads him to believe he has hit upon a preventive or a cure for a malady which had resisted all known remedies. His rescued patient sounds his praises, and a wide circle of his patient's friends joins in a chorus of eulogies. Self-love applauds him for his sagacity. Self-interest congratulates him on his having found the road to fortune; the sense of having proved a benefactor of his race smooths the pillow on which he lays his head to dream of the brilliant future opening before him. If a single coincidence may lead a person of sanguine disposition to believe that he has mastered a disease which had baffled all who were before his time, and on which his contemporaries looked in hopeless impotence, what must be the effect of a series of such coincidences even on a mind of calmer temper! Such series of coincidences will happen, and they may well deceive the very elect. Think of Dr. Rush,—you know what a famous man he was, the very head and front of American medical science in his day, —and remember how he spoke about yellow fever, which he thought he had mastered!

"Thus the physician is entangled in the meshes of a wide conspiracy, in which he and his patient and their friends, and-Nature herself, are involved. What wonder that the history of Medicine should be to so great an extent a record of self-delusion!

"If this seems a dangerous concession to the enemies of the true science and art of healing, I will remind you that it is all implied in the first aphorism of Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine. Do not draw a wrong inference from the frank statement of the difficulties which beset the medical practitioner. Think rather, if truth is so hard of attainment, how precious are the results which the consent of the wisest and most experienced among the healers of men agrees in accepting. Think what folly it is to cast them aside in favor of palpable impositions stolen from the records of forgotten charlatanism, or of fantastic speculations spun from the squinting brains of theorists as wild as the Egyptian astronomer.

"Begin your medical studies, then, by reading the fortieth and the following four chapters of 'Rasselas.' Your first lesson will teach you modesty and caution in the pursuit of the most deceptive of all practical branches of knowledge. Faith will come later, when you learn how much medical science and art have actually achieved for the relief of mankind, and how great are the promises it holds out of still larger triumphs over the enemies of human health and happiness."

After the reading of this paper there was a lively discussion, which we have no room to report here, and the Society adjourned.

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XIV

Miss Vincent's startling discovery.

The sober-minded, sensible, well-instructed Dr. Butts was not a little exercised in mind by the demands made upon his knowledge by his young friend, and for the time being his pupil, Miss Lurida Vincent.

"I don't wonder they called her The Terror," he said to himself. "She is enough to frighten anybody. She has taken down old books from my shelves that I had almost forgotten the backs of, and as to the medical journals, I believe the girl could index them from memory. She is in pursuit of some special point of knowledge, I feel sure, and I cannot doubt what direction she is working in, but her wonderful way of dealing with books amazes me."

What marvels those "first scholars" in the classes of our great universities and colleges are, to be sure! They are not, as a rule, the most distinguished of their class in the long struggle of life. The chances are that "the field" will beat "the favorite" over the long race-course. Others will develop a longer stride and more staying power. But what fine gifts those "first scholars" have received from nature! How dull we writers, famous or obscure, are in the acquisition of knowledge as compared with them! To lead their classmates they must have quick apprehension, fine memories, thorough control of their mental faculties, strong will, power of concentration, facility of expression,—a wonderful equipment of mental faculties. I always want to take my hat off to the first scholar of his year.

Dr. Butts felt somewhat in the same way as he contemplated The Terror. She surprised him so often with her knowledge that he was ready to receive her without astonishment when she burst in upon him one allay with a cry of triumph, "Eureka! Eureka!"

"And what have you found, my dear?" said the doctor.

Lurida was flushed and panting with the excitement of her new discovery.

"I do believe that I have found the secret of our strange visitor's dread of all human intercourse!"

The seasoned practitioner was not easily thrown off his balance.

"Wait a minute and get your breath," said the doctor. "Are you not a little overstating his peculiarity? It is not quite so bad as that. He keeps a man to serve him, he was civil with the people at the Old Tavern, he was affable enough, I understand, with the young fellow he pulled out of the water, or rescued somehow,—I don't believe he avoids the whole human race. He does not look as if he hated them, so far as I have remarked his



expression. I passed a few words with him when his man was ailing, and found him polite enough. No, I don't believe it is much more than an extreme case of shyness, connected, perhaps, with some congenital or other personal repugnance to which has been given the name of an antipathy."

Lurida could hardly keep still while the doctor was speaking. When he finished, she began the account of her discovery:

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"I do certainly believe I have found an account of his case in an Italian medical journal of about fourteen years ago. I met with a reference which led me to look over a file of the *Giornale degli Ospitali* lying among the old pamphlets in the medical section of the Library. I have made a translation of it, which you must read and then tell me if you do not agree with me in my conclusion."

"Tell me what your conclusion is, and I will read your paper and see for myself whether I think the evidence justifies the conviction you seem to have reached."

Lurida's large eyes showed their whole rounds like the two halves of a map of the world, as she said,

"I believe that Maurice Kirkwood is suffering from the effects of the bite of a *tarantula*!"

The doctor drew a long breath. He remembered in a vague sort of way the stories which used to be told of the terrible Apulian spider, but he had consigned them to the limbo of medical fable where so many fictions have clothed themselves with a local habitation and a name. He looked into the round eyes and wide pupils a little anxiously, as if he feared that she was in a state of undue excitement, but, true to his professional training, he waited for another symptom, if indeed her mind was in any measure off its balance.

"I know what you are thinking," Lurida said, "but it is not so. 'I am not mad, most noble Festus.' You shall see the evidence and judge for yourself. Read the whole case,—you can read my hand almost as if it were print, and tell me if you do not agree with me that this young man is in all probability the same person as the boy described in the Italian journal,

"One thing you might say is against the supposition. The young patient is spoken of as Signorino M . . . Ch. . . . But you must remember that ch is pronounced hard in Italian, like k, which letter is wanting in the Italian alphabet; and it is natural enough that the initial of the second name should have got changed in the record to its Italian equivalent."

Before inviting the reader to follow the details of this extraordinary case as found in a medical journal, the narrator wishes to be indulged in a few words of explanation, in order that he may not have to apologize for allowing the introduction of a subject which may be thought to belong to the professional student rather than to the readers of this record. There is a great deal in medical books which it is very unbecoming to bring before the general public,—a great deal to repel, to disgust, to alarm, to excite unwholesome curiosity. It is not the men whose duties have made them familiar with this class of subjects who are most likely to offend by scenes and descriptions which belong to the physician's private library, and not to the shelves devoted to polite

literature. Goldsmith and even Smollett, both having studied and practised medicine, could not by any possibility have outraged all the natural feelings of delicacy and

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decency as Swift and Zola have outraged them. But without handling doubtful subjects, there are many curious medical experiences which have interest for every one as extreme illustrations of ordinary conditions with which all are acquainted. No one can study the now familiar history of clairvoyance profitably who has not learned something of the vagaries of hysteria. No one can read understandingly the life of Cowper and that of Carlyle without having some idea of the influence of hypochondriasis and of dyspepsia upon the disposition and intellect of the subjects of these maladies. I need not apologize, therefore, for giving publicity to that part of this narrative which deals with one of the most singular maladies to be found in the records of bodily and mental infirmities.

The following is the account of the case as translated by Miss Vincent. For obvious reasons the whole name was not given in the original paper, and for similar reasons the date of the event and the birthplace of the patient are not precisely indicated here.

[Giornale degli Ospitali, Luglio 21, 18-.] *Remarkable case of tarantism.*

"The great interest attaching to the very singular and exceptional instance of this rare affection induces us to give a full account of the extraordinary example of its occurrence in a patient who was the subject of a recent medical consultation in this city.

"Signorino M . . . Ch . . . is the only son of a gentleman travelling in Italy at this time. He is eleven years of age, of sanguine-nervous temperament, light hair, blue eyes, intelligent countenance, well grown, but rather slight in form, to all appearance in good health, but subject to certain peculiar and anomalous nervous symptoms, of which his father gives this history.

"Nine years ago, the father informs us, he was travelling in Italy with his wife, this child, and a nurse. They were passing a few days in a country village near the city of Bari, capital of the province of the same name in the division (compartamento) of Apulia. The child was in perfect health and had never been affected by any serious illness. On the 10th of July he was playing out in the field near the house where the family was staying when he was heard to scream suddenly and violently. The nurse rushing to him found him in great pain, saying that something had bitten him in one of his feet. A laborer, one Tommaso, ran up at the moment and perceived in the grass, near where the boy was standing, an enormous spider, which he at once recognized as a tarantula. He managed to catch the creature in a large leaf, from which he was afterwards transferred to a wide-mouthed bottle, where he lived without any food for a month or more. The creature was covered with short hairs, and had a pair of nipper-like jaws, with which he could inflict an ugly wound. His body measured about an inch in length, and from the extremity of one of the longest limbs to the other was between two and three inches.

Such was the account given by the physician to whom the peasant carried the great spider.

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"The boy who had been bitten continued screaming violently while his stocking was being removed and the foot examined. The place of the bite was easily found and the two marks of the claw-like jaws already showed the effects of the poison, a small livid circle extending around them, with some puffy swelling. The distinguished Dr. Amadei was immediately sent for, and applied cups over the wounds in the hope of drawing forth the poison. In vain all his skill and efforts! Soon, ataxic (irregular) nervous symptoms declared themselves, and it became plain that the system had been infected by the poison.

"The symptoms were very much like those of malignant fever, such as distress about the region of the heart, difficulty of breathing, collapse of all the vital powers, threatening immediate death. From these first symptoms the child rallied, but his entire organism had been profoundly affected by the venom circulating through it. His constitution has never thrown off the malady resulting from this toxic (poisonous) agent. The phenomena which have been observed in this young patient correspond so nearly with those enumerated in the elaborate essay of the celebrated Baglivi that one might think they had been transcribed from his pages.

"He is very fond of solitude,—of wandering about in churchyards and other lonely places. He was once found hiding in an empty tomb, which had been left open. His aversion to certain colors is remarkable. Generally speaking, he prefers bright tints to darker ones, but his likes and dislikes are capricious, and with regard to some colors his antipathy amounts to positive horror. Some shades have such an effect upon him that he cannot remain in the room with them, and if he meets any one whose dress has any of that particular color he will turn away or retreat so as to avoid passing that person. Among these, purple and dark green are the least endurable. He cannot explain the sensations which these obnoxious colors produce except by saying that it is like the deadly feeling from a blow on the epigastrium (pit of the stomach).

"About the same season of the year at which the tarantular poisoning took place he is liable to certain nervous seizures, not exactly like fainting or epilepsy, but reminding the physician of those affections. All the other symptoms are aggravated at this time.

"In other respects than those mentioned the boy is in good health. He is fond of riding, and has a pony on which he takes a great deal of exercise, which seems to do him more good than any other remedy.

"The influence of music, to which so much has been attributed by popular belief and even by the distinguished Professor to whom we shall again refer, has not as yet furnished any satisfactory results. If the graver symptoms recur while the patient is under our observation, we propose to make use of an agency discredited by modern skepticism, but deserving of a fair trial as an exceptional remedy for an exceptional disease.

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"The following extracts from the work of the celebrated Italian physician of the last century are given by the writer of the paper in the Giornale in the original Latin, with a translation into Italian, subjoined. Here are the extracts, or rather here is a selection from them, with a translation of them into English.

"After mentioning the singular aversion to certain colors shown by the subject of Tarantism, Baglivi writes as follows: "Et si astantes incedant vestibus eo colore difusis, qui Tarantatis ingrates est, necesse est ut ab illorum aspectu recedant; nam ad intuitum molesti coloris angore cordis, et symptomatum recrudescentia stanting corripuntur.' (G. Baglivi, Op. Omnia, page 614. Lugduni, 1745.)

"That is, 'if the persons about the patient wear dresses of the color which is offensive to him, he must get away from the sight of them, for on seeing the obnoxious color he is at once seized with distress in the region of the heart, and a renewal of his symptoms.'

"As to the recurrence of the malady, Baglivi says: "Dam calor solis ardentius exurere incipit at, quod contingit circa initia Julii et Augusti, Tarantati lente venientem recrudescentiam veneni percipiunt.' (Ibid., page 619.)

"Which I render, 'When the heat of the sun begins to burn more fiercely, which happens about the beginning of July and August, the subjects of Tarantism perceive the gradually approaching recrudescence (returning symptoms) of the poisoning. Among the remedies most valued by this illustrious physician is that mentioned in the following sentence:

"Laudo magnopere equitationes in aere rusticano factas singulis diebus, hord potissimum matutina, quibus equitationibus morbos chronicos pene incurabiles protanus eliminavi.'

"Or in translation, 'I commend especially riding on horseback in country air, every day, by preference in the morning hours, by the aid of which horseback riding I have driven off chronic diseases which were almost incurable.'"

Miss Vincent read this paper aloud to Dr. Butts, and handed it to him to examine and consider. He listened with a grave countenance and devout attention.

As she finished reading her account, she exclaimed in the passionate tones of the deepest conviction,

"There, doctor! Have n't I found the true story of this strange visitor? Have n't I solved the riddle of the Sphinx? Who can this man be but the boy of that story? Look at the date of the journal when he was eleven years old, it would make him twenty-five now, and that is just about the age the people here think he must be of. What could account so entirely for his ways and actions as that strange poisoning which produces the state



they call Tarantism? I am just as sure it must be that as I am that I am alive. Oh, doctor, doctor, I must be right,—this Signprino M . . . Ch . . . was the boy Maurice Kirkwood, and the story accounts for everything,—his solitary habits, his dread of people,—it must be because they wear the colors he can't bear. His morning rides on horseback, his coming here just as the season was approaching which would aggravate all his symptoms, does n't all this prove that I must be right in my conjecture,—no, my conviction?"

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The doctor knew too much to interrupt the young enthusiast, and so he let her run on until she ran down. He was more used to the rules of evidence than she was, and could not accept her positive conclusion so readily as she would have liked to have him. He knew that beginners are very apt to make what they think are discoveries. But he had been an angler and knew the meaning of a yielding rod and an easy-running reel. He said quietly,

“You are a most sagacious young lady, and a very pretty *prima facie* case it is that you make out. I can see no proof that Mr. Kirkwood is not the same person as the M . . . Ch . . . of the medical journal,—that is, if I accept your explanation of the difference in the initials of these two names. Even if there were a difference, that would not disprove their identity, for the initials of patients whose cases are reported by their physicians are often altered for the purpose of concealment. I do not know, however, that Mr. Kirkwood has shown any special aversion to any particular color. It might be interesting to inquire whether it is so, but it is a delicate matter. I don’t exactly see whose business it is to investigate Mr. Maurice Kirkwood’s idiosyncrasies and constitutional history. If he should have occasion to send for me at any time, he might tell me all about himself, in confidence, you know. These old accounts from Baglivi are curious and interesting, but I am cautious about receiving any stories a hundred years old, if they involve an improbability, as his stories about the cure of the tarantula bite by music certainly do. I am disposed to wait for future developments, bearing in mind, of course, the very singular case you have unearthed. It wouldn’t be very strange if our young gentleman had to send for me before the season is over. He is out a good deal before the dew is off the grass, which is rather risky in this neighborhood as autumn comes on. I am somewhat curious, I confess, about the young man, but I do not meddle where I am not asked for or wanted, and I have found that eggs hatch just as well if you let them alone in the nest as if you take them out and shake them every day. This is a wonderfully interesting supposition of yours, and may prove to be strictly in accordance with the facts. But I do not think we have all the facts in this young man’s case. If it were proved that he had an aversion to any color, it would greatly strengthen your case. His ‘*antipatia*,’ as his man called it, must be one which covers a wide ground, to account for his self-isolation,—and the color hypothesis seems as plausible as any. But, my dear Miss Vincent, I think you had better leave your singular and striking hypothesis in my keeping for a while, rather than let it get abroad in a community like this, where so many tongues are in active exercise. I will carefully study this paper, if you will leave it with me, and we will talk the whole matter over. It is a fair subject for speculation, only we must keep quiet about it.”

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This long speech gave Lurida's perfervid brain time to cool off a little. She left the paper with the doctor, telling him she would come for it the next day, and went off to tell the result of this visit to her bosom friend, Miss Euthymia Tower.

XV

Dr. Butts calls on Euthymia.

The doctor was troubled in thinking over his interview with the young lady. She was fully possessed with the idea that she had discovered the secret which had defied the most sagacious heads of the village. It was of no use to oppose her while her mind was in an excited state. But he felt it his duty to guard her against any possible results of indiscretion into which her eagerness and her theory of the equality, almost the identity, of the sexes might betray her. Too much of the woman in a daughter of our race leads her to forget danger. Too little of the woman prompts her to defy it. Fortunately for this last class of women, they are not quite so likely to be perilously seductive as their more emphatically feminine sisters.

Dr. Butts had known Lurida and her friend from the days of their infancy. He had watched the development of Lurida's intelligence from its precocious nursery-life to the full vigor of its trained faculties. He had looked with admiration on the childish beauty of Euthymia, and had seen her grow up to womanhood, every year making her more attractive. He knew that if anything was to be done with his self-willed young scholar and friend, it would be more easily effected through the medium of Euthymia than by direct advice to the young lady herself. So the thoughtful doctor made up his mind to have a good talk with Euthymia, and put her on her guard, if Lurida showed any tendency to forget the conventionalities in her eager pursuit of knowledge.

For the doctor's horse and chaise to stop at the door of Miss Euthymia Tower's parental home was an event strange enough to set all the tongues in the village going. This was one of those families where illness was hardly looked for among the possibilities of life. There were other families where a call from the doctor was hardly more thought of than a call from the baker. But here he was a stranger, at least on his professional rounds, and when he asked for Miss Euthymia the servant, who knew his face well, stared as if he had held in his hand a warrant for her apprehension.

Euthymia did not keep the doctor waiting very long while she made ready to meet him. One look at her glass to make sure that a lock had not run astray, or a ribbon got out of place, and her toilet for a morning call was finished. Perhaps if Mr. Maurice Kirkwood had been announced, she might have taken a second look, but with the good middle-aged, married doctor one was enough for a young lady who had the gift of making all the dresses she wore look well, and had no occasion to treat her chamber like the laboratory where an actress compounds herself.

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Euthymia welcomed the doctor very heartily. She could not help suspecting his errand, and she was very glad to have a chance to talk over her friend's schemes and fancies with him.

The doctor began without any roundabout prelude.

"I want to confer with you about our friend Lurida. Does she tell you all her plans and projects?"

"Why, as to that, doctor, I can hardly say, positively, but I do not believe she keeps back anything of importance from me. I know what she has been busy with lately, and the queer idea she has got into her head. What do you think of the Tarantula business? She has shown you the paper, she has written, I suppose."

"Indeed she has. It is a very curious case she has got hold of, and I do not wonder at all that she should have felt convinced that she had come at the true solution of the village riddle. It may be that this young man is the same person as the boy mentioned in the Italian medical journal. But it is very far from clear that he is so. You know all her reasons, of course, as you have read the story. The times seem to agree well enough. It is easy to conceive that Ch might be substituted for K in the report. The singular solitary habits of this young man entirely coincide with the story. If we could only find out whether he has any of those feelings with reference to certain colors, we might guess with more chance of guessing right than we have at present. But I don't see exactly how we are going to submit him to examination on this point. If he were only a chemical compound, we could analyze him. If he were only a bird or a quadruped, we could find out his likes and dislikes. But being, as he is, a young man, with ways of his own, and a will of his own, which he may not choose to have interfered with, the problem becomes more complicated. I hear that a newspaper correspondent has visited him so as to make a report to his paper,—do you know what he found out?"

"Certainly I do, very well. My brother has heard his own story, which was this: He found out he had got hold of the wrong person to interview. The young gentleman, he says, interviewed him, so that he did not learn much about the Sphinx. But the newspaper man told Willy about the Sphinx's library and a cabinet of coins he had; and said he should make an article out of him, anyhow. I wish the man would take himself off. I am afraid Lurida's love of knowledge will get her into trouble!"

"Which of the men do you wish would take himself off?"

"I was thinking of the newspaper man."

She blushed a little as she said, "I can't help feeling a strange sort of interest about the other, Mr. Kirkwood. Do you know that I met him this morning, and had a good look at him, full in the face?"

“Well, to be sure! That was an interesting experience. And how did you like his looks?”

“I thought his face a very remarkable one. But he looked very pale as he passed me, and I noticed that he put his hand to his left side as if he had a twinge of pain, or something of that sort,—spasm or neuralgia,—I don’t know what. I wondered whether he had what you call angina pectoris. It was the same kind of look and movement, I remember, as you trust, too, in my uncle who died with that complaint.”

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The doctor was silent for a moment. Then he asked, "Were you dressed as you are now?"

"Yes, I was, except that I had a thin mantle over my shoulders. I was out early, and I have always remembered your caution."

"What color was your mantle?"

"It was black. I have been over all this with Lucinda. A black mantle on a white dress. A straw hat with an old faded ribbon. There can't be much in those colors to trouble him, I should think, for his man wears a black coat and white linen,—more or less white, as you must have noticed, and he must have seen ribbons of all colors often enough. But Lurida believes it was the ribbon, or something in the combination of colors. Her head is full of Tarantulas and Tarantism. I fear that she will never be easy until the question is settled by actual trial. And will you believe it? the girl is determined in some way to test her supposition!"

"Believe it, Euthymia? I can believe almost anything of Lurida. She is the most irrepressible creature I ever knew. You know as well as I do what a complete possession any ruling idea takes of her whole nature. I have had some fears lest her zeal might run away with her discretion. It is a great deal easier to get into a false position than to get out of it."

"I know it well enough. I want you to tell me what you think about the whole business. I don't like the look of it at all, and yet I can do nothing with the girl except let her follow her fancy, until I can show her plainly that she will get herself into trouble in some way or other. But she is ingenious,—full of all sorts of devices, innocent enough in themselves, but liable to be misconstrued. You remember how she won us the boat-race?"

"To be sure I do. It was rather sharp practice, but she felt she was paying off an old score. The classical story of Atalanta, told, like that of Eve, as illustrating the weakness of woman, provoked her to make trial of the powers of resistance in the other sex. But it was audacious. I hope her audacity will not go too far. You must watch her. Keep an eye on her correspondence."

The doctor had great confidence in the good sense of Lurida's friend. He felt sure that she would not let Lurida commit herself by writing foolish letters to the subject of her speculations, or similar indiscreet performances. The boldness of young girls, who think no evil, in opening correspondence with idealized personages is something quite astonishing to those who have had an opportunity of knowing the facts. Lurida had passed the most dangerous age, but her theory of the equality of the sexes made her indifferent to the by-laws of social usage. She required watching, and her two guardians were ready to check her, in case of need.

XVI

Miss Vincent writes A letter.

Euthymia noticed that her friend had been very much preoccupied for two or three days. She found her more than once busy at her desk, with a manuscript before her, which she turned over and placed inside the desk, as Euthymia entered.

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This desire of concealment was not what either of the friends expected to see in the other. It showed that some project was under way, which, at least in its present stage, the Machiavellian young lady did not wish to disclose. It had cost her a good deal of thought and care, apparently, for her waste-basket was full of scraps of paper, which looked as if they were the remains of a manuscript like that at which she was at work. "Copying and recopying, probably," thought Euthymia, but she was willing to wait to learn what Lurida was busy about, though she had a suspicion that it was something in which she might feel called upon to interest herself.

"Do you know what I think?" said Euthymia to the doctor, meeting him as he left his door. "I believe Lurida is writing to this man, and I don't like the thought of her doing such a thing. Of course she is not like other girls in many respects, but other people will judge her by the common rules of life."

"I am glad that you spoke of it," answered the doctor; "she would write to him just as quickly as to any woman of his age. Besides, under the cover of her office, she has got into the way of writing to anybody. I think she has already written to Mr. Kirkwood, asking him to contribute a paper for the Society. She can find a pretext easily enough if she has made up her mind to write. In fact, I doubt if she would trouble herself for any pretext at all if she decided to write. Watch her well. Don't let any letter go without seeing it, if you can help it."

Young women are much given to writing letters to persons whom they only know indirectly, for the most part through their books, and especially to romancers and poets. Nothing can be more innocent and simple-hearted than most of these letters. They are the spontaneous outflow of young hearts easily excited to gratitude for the pleasure which some story or poem has given them, and recognizing their own thoughts, their own feelings, in those expressed by the author, as if on purpose for them to read. Undoubtedly they give great relief to solitary young persons, who must have some ideal reflection of themselves, and know not where to look since Protestantism has taken away the crucifix and the Madonna. The recipient of these letters sometimes wonders, after reading through one of them, how it is that his young correspondent has managed to fill so much space with her simple message of admiration or of sympathy.

Lurida did not belong to this particular class of correspondents, but she could not resist the law of her sex, whose thoughts naturally surround themselves with superabundant drapery of language, as their persons float in a wide superfluity of woven tissues. Was she indeed writing to this unknown gentleman? Euthymia questioned her point-blank.

"Are you going to open a correspondence with Mr. Maurice Kirkwood, Lurida? You seem to be so busy writing, I can think of nothing else. Or are you going to write a novel, or a paper for the Society,—do tell me what you are so much taken up with."

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"I will tell you, Euthymia, if you will promise not to find fault with me for carrying out my plan as I have made up my mind to do. You may read this letter before I seal it, and if you find anything in it you don't like you can suggest any change that you think will improve it. I hope you will see that it explains itself. I don't believe that you will find anything to frighten you in it."

This is the letter, as submitted to Miss Tower by her friend. The bold handwriting made it look like a man's letter, and gave it consequently a less dangerous expression than that which belongs to the tinted and often fragrant sheet with its delicate thready characters, which slant across the page like an April shower with a south wind chasing it.

Arrowhead village, August—, 18—.

My dear sir,—You will doubtless be surprised at the sight of a letter like this from one whom you only know as the Secretary of the Pansophian Society. There is a very common feeling that it is unbecoming in one of my sex to address one of your own with whom she is unacquainted, unless she has some special claim upon his attention. I am by no means disposed to concede to the vulgar prejudice on this point. If one human being has anything to communicate to another,—anything which deserves being communicated,—I see no occasion for bringing in the question of sex. I do not think the homo sum of Terence can be claimed for the male sex as its private property on general any more than on grammatical grounds,

I have sometimes thought of devoting myself to the noble art of healing. If I did so, it would be with the fixed purpose of giving my whole powers to the service of humanity. And if I should carry out that idea, should I refuse my care and skill to a suffering fellow-mortal because that mortal happened to be a brother, and not a sister? My whole nature protests against such one-sided humanity! No! I am blind to all distinctions when my eyes are opened to any form of suffering, to any spectacle of want.

You may ask me why I address you, whom I know little or nothing of, and to whom such an advance may seem presumptuous and intrusive. It is because I was deeply impressed by the paper which I attributed to you,—that on Ocean, River, and Lake, which was read at one of our meetings. I say that I was deeply impressed, but I do not mean this as a compliment to that paper. I am not bandying compliments now, but thinking of better things than praises or phrases. I was interested in the paper, partly because I recognized some of the feelings expressed in it as my own,—partly because there was an undertone of sadness in all the voices of nature as you echoed them which made me sad to hear, and which I could not help longing to cheer and enliven. I said to myself, I should like to hold communion with the writer of that paper. I have had my lonely hours and days, as he has had. I have had some of his experiences in my intercourse with nature. And oh! if I could draw him into those better human relations

which await us all, if we come with the right dispositions, I should blush if I stopped to inquire whether I violated any conventional rule or not.

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You will understand me, I feel sure. You believe, do you not? in the insignificance of the barrier which divides the sisterhood from the brotherhood of mankind. You believe, do you not? that they should be educated side by side, that they should share the same pursuits, due regard being had to the fitness of the particular individual for hard or light work, as it must always be, whether we are dealing with the “stronger” or the “weaker” sex. I mark these words because, notwithstanding their common use, they involve so much that is not true. Stronger! Yes, to lift a barrel of flour, or a barrel of cider,—though there have been women who could do that, and though when John Wesley was mobbed in Staffordshire a woman knocked down three or four men, one after another, until she was at last overpowered and nearly murdered. Talk about the weaker sex! Go and see Miss Euthymia Tower at the gymnasium! But no matter about which sex has the strongest muscles. Which has most to suffer, and which has most endurance and vitality? We go through many ordeals which you are spared, but we outlast you in mind and body. I have been led away into one of my accustomed trains of thought, but not so far away from it as you might at first suppose.

My brother! Are you not ready to recognize in me a friend, an equal, a sister, who can speak to you as if she had been reared under the same roof? And is not the sky that covers us one roof, which makes us all one family? You are lonely, you must be longing for some human fellowship. Take me into your confidence. What is there that you can tell me to which I cannot respond with sympathy? What saddest note in your spiritual dirges which will not find its chord in mine?

I long to know what influence has cast its shadow over your existence. I myself have known what it is to carry a brain that never rests in a body that is always tired. I have defied its infirmities, and forced it to do my bidding. You have no such hindrance, if we may judge by your aspect and habits. You deal with horses like a Homeric hero. No wild Indian could handle his bark canoe more dexterously or more vigorously than we have seen you handling yours. There must be some reason for your seclusion which curiosity has not reached, and into which it is not the province of curiosity to inquire. But in the irresistible desire which I have to bring you into kindly relations with those around you, I must run the risk of giving offence that I may know in what direction to look for those restorative influences which the sympathy of a friend and sister can offer to a brother in need of some kindly impulse to change the course of a life which is not, which cannot be, in accordance with his true nature.

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I have thought that there may be something in the conditions with which you are here surrounded which is repugnant to your feelings,—something which can be avoided only by keeping yourself apart from the people whose acquaintance you would naturally have formed. There can hardly be anything in the place itself, or you would not have voluntarily sought it as a residence, even for a single season there might be individuals here whom you would not care to meet, there must be such, but you cannot have a personal aversion to everybody. I have heard of cases in which certain sights and sounds, which have no particular significance for most persons, produced feelings of distress or aversion that made, them unbearable to the subjects of the constitutional dislike. It has occurred to me that possibly you might have some such natural aversion to the sounds of the street, or such as are heard in most houses, especially where a piano is kept, as it is in fact in almost all of those in the village. Or it might be, I imagined, that some color in the dresses of women or the furniture of our rooms affected you unpleasantly. I know that instances of such antipathy have been recorded, and they would account for the seclusion of those who are subject to it.

If there is any removable condition which interferes with your free entrance into and enjoyment of the social life around you, tell me, I beg of you, tell me what it is, and it shall be eliminated. Think it not strange, O my brother, that I thus venture to introduce myself into the hidden chambers of your life. I will never suffer myself to be frightened from the carrying out of any thought which promises to be of use to a fellow-mortal by a fear lest it should be considered “unfeminine.” I can bear to be considered unfeminine, but I cannot endure to think of myself as inhuman. Can I help you, my brother’?

Believe me your most sincere well-wisher,
Lurida Vincent.

Euthymia had carried off this letter and read it by herself. As she finished it, her feelings found expression in an old phrase of her grandmother’s, which came up of itself, as such survivals of early days are apt to do, on great occasions.

“Well, I never!”

Then she loosened some button or string that was too tight, and went to the window for a breath of outdoor air. Then she began at the beginning and read the whole letter all over again.

What should she do about it? She could not let this young girl send a letter like that to a stranger of whose character little was known except by inference,—to a young man, who would consider it a most extraordinary advance on the part of the sender. She would have liked to tear it into a thousand pieces, but she had no right to treat it in that way. Lurida meant to send it the next morning, and in the mean time Euthymia had the night to think over what she should do about it.



There is nothing like the pillow for an oracle. There is no voice like that which breaks the silence—of the stagnant hours of the night with its sudden suggestions and luminous counsels. When Euthymia awoke in the morning, her course of action was as clear before her as if it had been dictated by her guardian angel. She went straight over to the home of Lurida, who was just dressed for breakfast.



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She was naturally a little surprised at this early visit. She was struck with the excited look of Euthymia, being herself quite calm, and contemplating her project with entire complacency.

Euthymia began, in tones that expressed deep anxiety.

"I have read your letter, my dear, and admired its spirit and force. It is a fine letter, and does you great credit as an expression of the truest human feeling. But it must not be sent to Mr. Kirkwood. If you were sixty years old, perhaps if you were fifty, it might be admissible to send it. But if you were forty, I should question its propriety; if you were thirty, I should veto it, and you are but a little more than twenty. How do you know that this stranger will not show your letter to anybody or everybody? How do you know that he will not send it to one of the gossiping journals like the 'Household Inquisitor'? But supposing he keeps it to himself, which is more than you have a right to expect, what opinion is he likely to form of a young lady who invades his privacy with such freedom? Ten to one he will think curiosity is at the bottom of it,—and,—come, don't be angry at me for suggesting it,—may there not be a little of that same motive mingled with the others? No, don't interrupt me quite yet; you do want to know whether your hypothesis is correct. You are full of the best and kindest feelings in the world, but your desire for knowledge is the ferment under them just now, perhaps more than you know."

Lurida's pale cheeks flushed and whitened more than once while her friend was speaking. She loved her too sincerely and respected her intelligence too much to take offence at her advice, but she could not give up her humane and sisterly intentions merely from the fear of some awkward consequences to herself. She had persuaded herself that she was playing the part of a Protestant sister of charity, and that the fact of her not wearing the costume of these ministering angels made no difference in her relations to those who needed her aid.

"I cannot see your objections in the light in which they appear to you," she said gravely. "It seems to me that I give up everything when I hesitate to help a fellow-creature because I am a woman. I am not afraid to send this letter and take all the consequences."

"Will you go with me to the doctor's, and let him read it in our presence? And will you agree to abide by his opinion, if it coincides with mine?"

Lurida winced a little at this proposal. "I don't quite like," she said, "showing this letter to—to" she hesitated, but it had to come out—"to a man, that is, to another man than the one for whom it was intended."

The neuter gender business had got a pretty damaging side-hit.



“Well, never mind about letting him read the letter. Will you go over to his house with me at noon, when he comes back after his morning visits, and have a talk over the whole matter with him? You know I have sometimes had to say must to you, Lurida, and now I say you must go to the doctor’s with me and carry that letter.”

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There was no resisting the potent monosyllable as the sweet but firm voice delivered it. At noon the two maidens rang at the doctor's door. The servant said he had been at the house after his morning visits, but found a hasty summons to Mr. Kirkwood, who had been taken suddenly ill and wished to see him at once. Was the illness dangerous? The servant-maid did n't know, but thought it was pretty bad, for Mr. Paul came in as white as a sheet, and talked all sorts of languages which she couldn't understand, and took on as if he thought Mr. Kirkwood was going to die right off.

And so the hazardous question about sending the letter was disposed of, at least for the present.

XVII

Dr. Butts's patient.

The physician found Maurice just regaining his heat after a chill of a somewhat severe character. He knew too well what this meant, and the probable series of symptoms of which it was the prelude. His patient was not the only one in the neighborhood who was attacked in this way. The autumnal fevers to which our country towns are subject, in the place of those "agues," or intermittents, so largely prevalent in the South and West, were already beginning, and Maurice, who had exposed himself in the early and late hours of the dangerous season, must be expected to go through the regular stages of this always serious and not rarely fatal disease.

Paolo, his faithful servant, would fain have taken the sole charge of his master during his illness. But the doctor insisted that he must have a nurse to help him in his task, which was likely to be long and exhausting.

At the mention of the word "nurse" Paolo turned white, and exclaimed in an agitated and thoroughly frightened way,

"No! no nuss! no woman! She kill him! I stay by him day and night, but don' let no woman come near him,—if you do, he die!"

The doctor explained that he intended to send a man who was used to taking care of sick people, and with no little effort at last succeeded in convincing Paolo that, as he could not be awake day and night for a fortnight or three weeks, it was absolutely necessary to call in some assistance from without. And so Mr. Maurice Kirkwood was to play the leading part in that drama of nature's composing called a typhoid fever, with its regular bedchamber scenery, its properties of phials and pill-boxes, its little company of stock actors, its gradual evolution of a very simple plot, its familiar incidents, its emotional alternations, and its denouement, sometimes tragic, oftener happy.



It is needless to say that the sympathies of all the good people of the village, residents and strangers, were actively awakened for the young man about whom they knew so little and conjectured so much. Tokens of their kindness came to him daily: flowers from the woods and from the gardens; choice fruit grown in the open air or under glass, for there were some fine houses surrounded by well-kept grounds, and greenhouses and graperies were not unknown in the small but favored settlement.

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On all these luxuries Maurice looked with dull and languid eyes. A faint smile of gratitude sometimes struggled through the stillness of his features, or a murmured word of thanks found its way through his parched lips, and he would relapse into the partial stupor or the fitful sleep in which, with intervals of slight wandering, the slow hours dragged along the sluggish days one after another. With no violent symptoms, but with steady persistency, the disease moved on in its accustomed course. It was at no time immediately threatening, but the experienced physician knew its uncertainties only too well. He had known fever patients suddenly seized with violent internal inflammation, and carried off with frightful rapidity. He remembered the case of a convalescent, a young woman who had been attacked while in apparently vigorous general health, who, on being lifted too suddenly to a sitting position, while still confined to her bed, fainted, and in a few moments ceased to breathe. It may well be supposed that he took every possible precaution to avert the accidents which tend to throw from its track a disease the regular course of which is arranged by nature as carefully as the route of a railroad from one city to another. The most natural interpretation which the common observer would put upon the manifestations of one of these autumnal maladies would be that some noxious combustible element had found its way into the system which must be burned to ashes before the heat which pervades the whole body can subside. Sometimes the fire may smoulder and seem as if it were going out, or were quite extinguished, and again it will find some new material to seize upon, and flame up as fiercely as ever. Its coming on most frequently at the season when the brush fires which are consuming the dead branches, and withered leaves, and all the refuse of vegetation are sending up their smoke is suggestive. Sometimes it seems as if the body, relieved of its effete materials, renewed its youth after one of these quiet, expurgating, internal fractional cremations. Lean, pallid students have found themselves plump and blooming, and it has happened that one whose hair was straight as gnat of an Indian has been startled to behold himself in his mirror with a fringe of hyacinthine curls about his rejuvenated countenance.

There was nothing of what medical men call malignity in the case of Maurice Kirkwood. The most alarming symptom was a profound prostration, which at last reached such a point that he lay utterly helpless, as unable to move without aid as the feeblest of paralytics. In this state he lay for many days, not suffering pain, but with the sense of great weariness, and the feeling that he should never rise from his bed again. For the most part his intellect was unclouded when his attention was aroused. He spoke only in whispers, a few words at a time. The doctor felt sure, by the expression which passed over his features from time to time, that something was worrying and oppressing



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him; something which he wished to communicate, and had not the force, or the tenacity of purpose, to make perfectly clear. His eyes often wandered to a certain desk, and once he had found strength to lift his emaciated arm and point to it. The doctor went towards it as if to fetch it to him, but he slowly shook his head. He had not the power to say at that time what he wished. The next day he felt a little less prostrated; and succeeded in explaining to the doctor what he wanted. His words, so far as the physician could make them out, were these which follow. Dr. Butts looked upon them as possibly expressing wishes which would be his last, and noted them down carefully immediately after leaving his chamber.

"I commit the secret of my life to your charge. My whole story is told in a paper locked in that desk. The key is—put your hand under my pillow. If I die, let the story be known. It will show that I was—human—and save my memory from reproach."

He was silent for a little time. A single tear stole down his hollow cheek. The doctor turned his head away, for his own eyes were full. But he said to himself, "It is a good sign; I begin to feel strong hopes that he will recover."

Maurice spoke once more. "Doctor, I put full trust in you. You are wise and kind. Do what you will with this paper, but open it at once and read. I want you to know the story of my life before it is finished—if the end is at hand. Take it with you and read it before you sleep." He was exhausted and presently his eyes closed, but the doctor saw a tranquil look on his features which added encouragement to his hopes.

XVIII

Maurice Kirkwood's story of his life.

I am an American by birth, but a large part of my life has been passed in foreign lands. My father was a man of education, possessed of an ample fortune; my mother was considered, a very accomplished and amiable woman. I was their first and only child. She died while I was yet an infant. If I remember her at all it is as a vision, more like a glimpse of a pre-natal existence than as a part of my earthly life. At the death of my mother I was left in the charge of the old nurse who had enjoyed her perfect confidence. She was devoted to me, and I became absolutely dependent on her, who had for me all the love and all the care of a mother. I was naturally the object of the attentions and caresses of the family relatives. I have been told that I was a pleasant, smiling infant, with nothing to indicate any peculiar nervous susceptibility; not afraid of strangers, but on the contrary ready to make their acquaintance. My father was devoted to me and did all in his power to promote my health and comfort.

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I was still a babe, often carried in arms, when the event happened which changed my whole future and destined me to a strange and lonely existence. I cannot relate it even now without a sense of terror. I must force myself to recall the circumstances as told me and vaguely remembered, for I am not willing that my doomed and wholly exceptional life should pass away unrecorded, unexplained, unvindicated. My nature is, I feel sure, a kind and social one, but I have lived apart, as if my heart were filled with hatred of my fellow-creatures. If there are any readers who look without pity, without sympathy, upon those who shun the fellowship of their fellow men and women, who show by their downcast or averted eyes that they dread companionship and long for solitude, I pray them, if this paper ever reaches them, to stop at this point. Follow me no further, for you will not believe my story, nor enter into the feelings which I am about to reveal. But if there are any to whom all that is human is of interest, who have felt in their own consciousness some stirrings of invincible attraction to one individual and equally invincible repugnance to another, who know by their own experience that elective affinities have as their necessary counterpart, and, as it were, their polar opposites, currents not less strong of elective repulsions, let them read with unquestioning faith the story of a blighted life I am about to relate, much of it, of course, received from the lips of others.

My cousin Laura, a girl of seventeen, lately returned from Europe, was considered eminently beautiful. It was in my second summer that she visited my father's house, where he was living with his servants and my old nurse, my mother having but recently left him a widower. Laura was full of vivacity, impulsive, quick in her movements, thoughtless occasionally, as it is not strange that a young girl of her age should be. It was a beautiful summer day when she saw me for the first time. My nurse had me in her arms, walking back and forward on a balcony with a low railing, upon which opened the windows of the second story of my father's house. While the nurse was thus carrying me, Laura came suddenly upon the balcony. She no sooner saw me than with all the delighted eagerness of her youthful nature she rushed toward me, and, catching me from the nurse's arms, began tossing me after the fashion of young girls who have been so lately playing with dolls that they feel as if babies were very much of the same nature. The abrupt seizure frightened me; I sprang from her arms in my terror, and fell over the railing of the balcony. I should probably enough have been killed on the spot but for the fact that a low thorn-bush grew just beneath the balcony, into which I fell and thus had the violence of the shock broken. But the thorns tore my tender flesh, and I bear to this day marks of the deep wounds they inflicted.

That dreadful experience is burned deep into my memory. The sudden apparition of the girl; the sense of being torn away from the protecting arms around me; the frantic effort to escape; the shriek that accompanied my fall through what must have seemed unmeasurable space; the cruel lacerations of the piercing and rending thorns,—all these fearful impressions blended in one paralyzing terror.



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When I was taken up I was thought to be dead. I was perfectly white, and the physician who first saw me said that no pulse was perceptible. But after a time consciousness returned; the wounds, though painful, were none of them dangerous, and the most alarming effects of the accident passed away. My old nurse cared for me tenderly day and night, and my father, who had been almost distracted in the first hours which followed the injury, hoped and believed that no permanent evil results would be found to result from it. My cousin Laura was of course deeply distressed to feel that her thoughtlessness had been the cause of so grave an accident. As soon as I had somewhat recovered she came to see me, very penitent, very anxious to make me forget the alarm she had caused me, with all its consequences. I was in the nursery sitting up in my bed, bandaged, but not in any pain, as it seemed, for I was quiet and to all appearance in a perfectly natural state of feeling. As Laura came near me I shrieked and instantly changed color. I put my hand upon my heart as if I had been stabbed, and fell over, unconscious. It was very much the same state as that in which I was found immediately after my fall.

The cause of this violent and appalling seizure was but too obvious. The approach of the young girl and the dread that she was about to lay her hand upon me had called up the same train of effects which the moment of terror and pain had already occasioned. The old nurse saw this in a moment. "Go! go!" she cried to Laura, "go, or the child will die!" Her command did not have to be repeated. After Laura had gone I lay senseless, white and cold as marble, for some time. The doctor soon came, and by the use of smart rubbing and stimulants the color came back slowly to my cheeks and the arrested circulation was again set in motion.

It was hard to believe that this was anything more than a temporary effect of the accident. There could be little doubt, it was thought by the doctor and by my father, that after a few days I should recover from this morbid sensibility and receive my cousin as other infants receive pleasant-looking young persons. The old nurse shook her head. "The girl will be the death of the child," she said, "if she touches him or comes near him. His heart stopped beating just as when the girl snatched him out of my arms, and he fell over the balcony railing." Once more the experiment was tried, cautiously, almost insidiously. The same alarming consequences followed. It was too evident that a chain of nervous disturbances had been set up in my system which repeated itself whenever the original impression gave the first impulse. I never saw my cousin Laura after this last trial. Its result had so distressed her that she never ventured again to show herself to me.

If the effect of the nervous shock had stopped there, it would have been a misfortune for my cousin and myself, but hardly a calamity. The world is wide, and a cousin or two more or less can hardly be considered an essential of existence. I often heard Laura's name mentioned, but never by any one who was acquainted with all the circumstances, for it was noticed that I changed color and caught at my breast as if I wanted to grasp my heart in my hand whenever that fatal name was mentioned.

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Alas! this was not all. While I was suffering from the effects of my fall among the thorns I was attended by my old nurse, assisted by another old woman, by a physician, and my father, who would take his share in caring for me. It was thought best to keep—me perfectly quiet, and strangers and friends were alike excluded from my nursery, with one exception, that my old grandmother came in now and then. With her it seems that I was somewhat timid and shy, following her with rather anxious eyes, as if not quite certain whether or not she was dangerous. But one day, when I was far advanced towards recovery, my father brought in a young lady, a relative of his, who had expressed a great desire to see me. She was, as I have been told, a very handsome girl, of about the same age as my cousin Laura, but bearing no personal resemblance to her in form, features, or complexion. She had no sooner entered the room than the same sudden changes which had followed my cousin's visit began to show themselves, and before she had reached my bedside I was in a state of deadly collapse, as on the occasions already mentioned.

Some time passed before any recurrence of these terrifying seizures. A little girl of five or six years old was allowed to come into the nursery one day and bring me some flowers. I took them from her hand, but turned away and shut my eyes. There was no seizure, but there was a certain dread and aversion, nothing more than a feeling which it might be hoped that time would overcome. Those around me were gradually finding out the circumstances which brought on the deadly attack to which I was subject.

The daughter of one of our near neighbors was considered the prettiest girl of the village where we were passing the summer. She was very anxious to see me, and as I was now nearly well it was determined that she should be permitted to pay me a short visit. I had always delighted in seeing her and being caressed by her. I was sleeping when she entered the nursery and came and took a seat at my side in perfect silence. Presently I became restless, and a moment later I opened my eyes and saw her stooping over me. My hand went to my left breast,—the color faded from my cheeks,—I was again the cold marble image so like death that it had well-nigh been mistaken for it.

Could it be possible that the fright which had chilled my blood had left me with an unconquerable fear of woman at the period when she is most attractive not only to adolescents, but to children of tender age, who feel the fascination of her flowing locks, her bright eyes, her blooming cheeks, and that mysterious magnetism of sex which draws all life into its warm and potentially vitalized atmosphere? So it did indeed seem. The dangerous experiment could not be repeated indefinitely. It was not intentionally tried again, but accident brought about more than one renewal of it during the following years, until it became fully recognized that I was the unhappy subject of a mortal

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dread of woman,—not absolutely of the human female, for I had no fear of my old nurse or of my grandmother, or of any old wrinkled face, and I had become accustomed to the occasional meeting of a little girl or two, whom I nevertheless regarded with a certain ill-defined feeling that there was danger in their presence. I was sent to a boys' school very early, and during the first ten or twelve years of my life I had rarely any occasion to be reminded of my strange idiosyncrasy.

As I grew out of boyhood into youth, a change came over the feelings which had so long held complete possession of me. This was what my father and his advisers had always anticipated, and was the ground of their confident hope in my return to natural conditions before I should have grown to mature manhood.

How shall I describe the conflicts of those dreamy, bewildering, dreadful years? Visions of loveliness haunted me sleeping and waking. Sometimes a graceful girlish figure would so draw my eyes towards it that I lost sight of all else, and was ready to forget all my fears and find myself at her side, like other youths by the side of young maidens,—happy in their cheerful companionship, while I,—I, under the curse of one blighting moment, looked on, hopeless. Sometimes the glimpse of a fair face or the tone of a sweet voice stirred within me all the instincts that make the morning of life beautiful to adolescence. I reasoned with myself:

Why should I not have outgrown that idle apprehension which had been the nightmare of my earlier years? Why should not the rising tide of life have drowned out the feeble growths that infested the shallows of childhood? How many children there are who tremble at being left alone in the dark, but who, a few years later, will smile at their foolish terrors and brave all the ghosts of a haunted chamber! Why should I any longer be the slave of a foolish fancy that has grown into a half insane habit of mind? I was familiarly acquainted with all the stories of the strange antipathies and invincible repugnances to which others, some of them famous men, had been subject. I said to myself, Why should not I overcome this dread of woman as Peter the Great fought down his dread of wheels rolling over a bridge? Was I, alone of all mankind, to be doomed to perpetual exclusion from the society which, as it seemed to me, was all that rendered existence worth the trouble and fatigue of slavery to the vulgar need of supplying the waste of the system and working at the task of respiration like the daughters of Danaus,—toiling day and night as the worn-out sailor labors at the pump of his sinking vessel?

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Why did I not brave the risk of meeting squarely, and without regard to any possible danger, some one of those fair maidens whose far-off smile, whose graceful movements, at once attracted and agitated me? I can only answer this question to the satisfaction of any really inquiring reader by giving him the true interpretation of the singular phenomenon of which I was the subject. For this I shall have to refer to a paper of which I have made a copy, and which will be found included with this manuscript. It is enough to say here, without entering into the explanation of the fact, which will be found simple enough as seen by the light of modern physiological science, that the "nervous disturbance" which the presence of a woman in the flower of her age produced in my system was a sense of impending death, sudden, overwhelming, unconquerable, appalling. It was a reversed action of the nervous centres,—the opposite of that which flushes the young lover's cheek and hurries his bounding pulses as he comes into the presence of the object of his passion. No one who has ever felt the sensation can have failed to recognize it as an imperative summons, which commands instant and terrified submission.

It was at this period of my life that my father determined to try the effect of travel and residence in different localities upon my bodily and mental condition. I say bodily as well as mental, for I was too slender for my height and subject to some nervous symptoms which were a cause of anxiety. That the mind was largely concerned in these there was no doubt, but the mutual interactions of mind and body are often too complex to admit of satisfactory analysis. Each is in part cause and each also in part effect.

We passed some years in Italy, chiefly in Rome, where I was placed in a school conducted by priests, and where of course I met only those of my own sex. There I had the opportunity of seeing the influences under which certain young Catholics, destined for the priesthood, are led to separate themselves from all communion with the sex associated in their minds with the most subtle dangers to which the human soul can be exposed. I became in some degree reconciled to the thought of exclusion from the society of women by seeing around me so many who were self-devoted to celibacy. The thought sometimes occurred to me whether I should not find the best and the only natural solution of the problem of existence, as submitted to myself, in taking upon me the vows which settle the whole question and raise an impassable barrier between the devotee and the object of his dangerous attraction.

How often I talked this whole matter over with the young priest who was at once my special instructor and my favorite companion! But accustomed as I had become to the forms of the Roman Church, and impressed as I was with the purity and excellence of many of its young members with whom I was acquainted, my early training rendered it impossible for me to accept the credentials which it offered me as authoritative. My friend and instructor had to set me down as a case of "invincible ignorance." This was the loop-hole through which he crept out of the prison-house of his creed, and was

enabled to look upon me without the feeling of absolute despair with which his sterner brethren would, I fear, have regarded me.

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I have said that accident exposed me at times to the influence which I had such reasons for dreading. Here is one example of such an occurrence, which I relate as simply as possible, vividly as it is impressed upon my memory. A young friend whose acquaintance I had made in Rome asked me one day to come to his rooms and look at a cabinet of gems and medals which he had collected. I had been but a short time in his library when a vague sense of uneasiness came over me. My heart became restless,—I could feel it stirring irregularly, as if it were some frightened creature caged in my breast. There was nothing that I could see to account for it. A door was partly open, but not so that I could see into the next room. The feeling grew upon me of some influence which was paralyzing my circulation. I begged my friend to open a window. As he did so, the door swung in the draught, and I saw a blooming young woman,—it was my friend's sister, who had been sitting with a book in her hand, and who rose at the opening of the door. Something had warned me of the presence of a woman, that occult and potent aura of individuality, call it personal magnetism, spiritual effluence, or reduce it to a simpler expression if you will; whatever it was, it had warned me of the nearness of the dread attraction which allured at a distance and revealed itself with all the terrors of the Lorelei if approached too recklessly. A sign from her brother caused her to withdraw at once, but not before I had felt the impression which betrayed itself in my change of color, anxiety about the region of the heart, and sudden failure as if about to fall in a deadly fainting-fit.

Does all this seem strange and incredible to the reader of my manuscript? Nothing in the history of life is so strange or exceptional as it seems to those who have not made a long study of its mysteries. I have never known just such a case as my own, and yet there must have been such, and if the whole history of mankind were unfolded I cannot doubt that there have been many like it. Let my reader suspend his judgment until he has read the paper I have referred to, which was drawn up by a Committee of the Royal Academy of the Biological Sciences. In this paper the mechanism of the series of nervous derangements to which I have been subject since the fatal shock experienced in my infancy is explained in language not hard to understand. It will be seen that such a change of polarity in the nervous centres is only a permanent form and an extreme degree of an emotional disturbance, which as a temporary and comparatively unimportant personal accident is far from being uncommon,—is so frequent, in fact, that every one must have known instances of it, and not a few must have had more or less serious experiences of it in their own private history.

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It must not be supposed that my imagination dealt with me as I am now dealing with the reader. I was full of strange fancies and wild superstitions. One of my Catholic friends gave me a silver medal which had been blessed by the Pope, and which I was to wear next my body. I was told that this would turn black after a time, in virtue of a power which it possessed of drawing out original sin, or certain portions of it, together with the evil and morbid tendencies which had been engrafted on the corrupt nature. I wore the medal faithfully, as directed, and watched it carefully. It became tarnished and after a time darkened, but it wrought no change in my unnatural condition.

There was an old gypsy who had the reputation of knowing more of futurity than she had any right to know. The story was that she had foretold the assassination of Count Rossi and the death of Cavour.

However that may have been, I was persuaded to let her try her black art upon my future. I shall never forget the strange, wild look of the wrinkled hag as she took my hand and studied its lines and fixed her wicked old eyes on my young countenance. After this examination she shook her head and muttered some words, which as nearly as I could get them would be in English like these:

Fair lady cast a spell on thee,
Fair lady's hand shall set thee free.

Strange as it may seem, these words of a withered old creature, whose palm had to be crossed with silver to bring forth her oracular response, have always clung to my memory as if they were destined to fulfilment. The extraordinary nature of the affliction to which I was subject disposed me to believe the incredible with reference to all that relates to it. I have never ceased to have the feeling that, sooner or later, I should find myself freed from the blight laid upon me in my infancy. It seems as if it would naturally come through the influence of some young and fair woman, to whom that merciful errand should be assigned by the Providence that governs our destiny. With strange hopes, with trembling fears, with mingled belief and doubt, wherever I have found myself I have sought with longing yet half-averted eyes for the "elect lady," as I have learned to call her, who was to lift the curse from my ruined life.

Three times I have been led to the hope, if not the belief, that I had found the object of my superstitious belief.—Singularly enough it was always on the water that the phantom of my hope appeared before my bewildered vision. Once it was an English girl who was a fellow passenger with me in one of my ocean voyages. I need not say that she was beautiful, for she was my dream realized. I heard her singing, I saw her walking the deck on some of the fair days when sea-sickness was forgotten. The passengers were a social company enough, but I had kept myself apart, as was my wont. At last the attraction became too strong to resist any longer.

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"I will venture into the charmed circle if it kills me," I said to my father. I did venture, and it did not kill me, or I should not be telling this story. But there was a repetition of the old experiences. I need not relate the series of alarming consequences of my venture. The English girl was very lovely, and I have no doubt has made some one supremely happy before this, but she was not the "elect lady" of the prophecy and of my dreams.

A second time I thought myself for a moment in the presence of the destined deliverer who was to restore me to my natural place among my fellow men and women. It was on the Tiber that I met the young maiden who drew me once more into that inner circle which surrounded young womanhood with deadly peril for me, if I dared to pass its limits. I was floating with the stream in the little boat in which I passed many long hours of reverie when I saw another small boat with a boy and a young girl in it. The boy had been rowing, and one of his oars had slipped from his grasp. He did not know how to paddle with a single oar, and was hopelessly rowing round and round, his oar all the time floating farther away from him. I could not refuse my assistance. I picked up the oar and brought my skiff alongside of the boat. When I handed the oar to the boy the young girl lifted her veil and thanked me in the exquisite music of the language which

'Sounds as if it should be writ on satin.'

She was a type of Italian beauty,—a nocturne in flesh and blood, if I may borrow a term certain artists are fond of; but it was her voice which captivated me and for a moment made me believe that I was no longer shut off from all relations with the social life of my race. An hour later I was found lying insensible on the floor of my boat, white, cold, almost pulseless. It cost much patient labor to bring me back to consciousness. Had not such extreme efforts been made, it seems probable that I should never have waked from a slumber which was hardly distinguishable from that of death.

Why should I provoke a catastrophe which appears inevitable if I invite it by exposing myself to its too well ascertained cause? The habit of these deadly seizures has become a second nature. The strongest and the ablest men have found it impossible to resist the impression produced by the most insignificant object, by the most harmless sight or sound to which they had a congenital or acquired antipathy. What prospect have I of ever being rid of this long and deep-seated infirmity? I may well ask myself these questions, but my answer is that I will never give up the hope that time will yet bring its remedy. It may be that the wild prediction which so haunts me shall find itself fulfilled. I have had of late strange premonitions, to which if I were superstitious I could not help giving heed. But I have seen too much of the faith that deals in miracles to accept the supernatural in any shape,—assuredly when it comes from an old witch-like creature who takes pay for her revelations of the future. Be it so: though I am not superstitious, I have a right to be imaginative, and my imagination will hold to those

words of the old zingara with an irresistible feeling that, sooner or later, they will prove true.

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Can it be possible that her prediction is not far from its realization? I have had both waking and sleeping visions within these last months and weeks which have taken possession of me and filled my life with new thoughts, new hopes, new resolves.

Sometimes on the bosom of the lake by which I am dreaming away this season of bloom and fragrance, sometimes in the fields or woods in a distant glimpse, once in a nearer glance, which left me pale and tremulous, yet was followed by a swift reaction, so that my cheeks flushed and my pulse bounded, I have seen her who—how do I dare to tell it so that my own eyes can read it?—I cannot help believing is to be my deliverer, my saviour.

I have been warned in the most solemn and impressive language by the experts most deeply read in the laws of life and the history of its disturbing and destroying influences, that it would be at the imminent risk of my existence if I should expose myself to the repetition of my former experiences. I was reminded that unexplained sudden deaths were of constant, of daily occurrence; that any emotion is liable to arrest the movements of life: terror, joy, good news or bad news,—anything that reaches the deeper nervous centres. I had already died once, as Sir Charles Napier said of himself; yes, more than once, died and been resuscitated. The next time, I might very probably fail to get my return ticket after my visit to Hades. It was a rather grim stroke of humor, but I understood its meaning full well, and felt the force of its menace.

After all, what had I to live for if the great primal instinct which strives to make whole the half life of lonely manhood is defeated, suppressed, crushed out of existence? Why not as well die in the attempt to break up a wretched servitude to a perverted nervous movement as in any other way? I am alone in the world,—alone save for my faithful servant, through whom I seem to hold to the human race as it were by a single filament. My father, who was my instructor, my companion, my dearest and best friend through all my later youth and my earlier manhood, died three years ago and left me my own master, with the means of living as might best please my fancy. This season shall decide my fate. One more experiment, and I shall find myself restored to my place among my fellow-beings, or, as I devoutly hope, in a sphere where all our mortal infirmities are past and forgotten.

I have told the story of a blighted life without reserve, so that there shall not remain any mystery or any dark suspicion connected with my memory if I should be taken away unexpectedly. It has cost me an effort to do it, but now that my life is on record I feel more reconciled to my lot, with all its possibilities, and among these possibilities is a gleam of a better future. I have been told by my advisers, some of them wise, deeply instructed, and kind-hearted men, that such a life-destiny should be related by the subject of it for the instruction of others, and especially for the light it throws on certain peculiarities of human character often wrongly interpreted as due to moral perversion, when they are in reality the results of misdirected or reversed actions in some of the closely connected nervous centres.

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For myself I can truly say that I have very little morbid sensibility left with reference to the destiny which has been allotted to me. I have passed through different stages of feeling with reference to it, as I have developed from infancy to manhood. At first it was mere blind instinct about which I had no thought, living like other infants the life of impressions without language to connect them in series. In my boyhood I began to be deeply conscious of the infirmity which separated me from those around me. In youth began that conflict of emotions and impulses with the antagonistic influence of which I have already spoken, a conflict which has never ceased, but to which I have necessarily become to a certain degree accustomed; and against the dangers of which I have learned to guard myself habitually. That is the meaning of my isolation. You, young man,—if at any time your eyes shall look upon my melancholy record,—you at least will understand me. Does not your heart throb, in the presence of budding or blooming womanhood, sometimes as if it “were ready to crack” with its own excess of strain? What if instead of throbbing it should falter, flutter, and stop as if never to beat again? You, young woman, who with ready belief and tender sympathy will look upon these pages, if they are ever spread before you, know what it is when your breast heaves with uncontrollable emotion and the grip of the bodice seems unendurable as the embrace of the iron virgin of the Inquisition. Think what it would be if the grasp were tightened so that no breath of air could enter your panting chest!

Does your heart beat in the same way, young man, when your honored friend, a venerable matron of seventy years, greets you with her kindly smile as it does in the presence of youthful loveliness? When a pretty child brings you her doll and looks into your eyes with artless grace and trustful simplicity, does your pulse quicken, do you tremble, does life palpitate through your whole being, as when the maiden of seventeen meets your enamored sight in the glow of her rosebud beauty? Wonder not, then, if the period of mystic attraction for you should be that of agitation, terror, danger, to one in whom the natural current of the instincts has had its course changed as that of a stream is changed by a convulsion of nature, so that the impression which is new life to you is death to him.

I am now twenty-five years old. I have reached the time of life which I have dreamed, nay even ventured to hope, might be the limit of the sentence which was pronounced upon me in my infancy. I can assign no good reason for this anticipation. But in writing this paper I feel as if I were preparing to begin a renewed existence. There is nothing for me to be ashamed of in the story I have told. There is no man living who would not have yielded to the sense of instantly impending death which seized upon me under the conditions I have mentioned. Martyrs have gone singing to their flaming shrouds, but never a man could hold his breath long enough to kill himself; he must have rope or water, or some mechanical help, or nature will make him draw in a breath of air, and would make him do so though he knew the salvation of the human race would be forfeited by that one gasp.



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This paper may never reach the eye of any one afflicted in the same way that I have been. It probably never will; but for all that, there are many shy natures which will recognize tendencies in themselves in the direction of my unhappy susceptibility. Others, to whom such weakness seems inconceivable, will find their scepticism shaken, if not removed, by the calm, judicial statement of the Report drawn up for the Royal Academy. It will make little difference to me whether my story is accepted unhesitatingly or looked upon as largely a product of the imagination. I am but a bird of passage that lights on the boughs of different nationalities. I belong to no flock; my home may be among the palms of Syria, the olives of Italy, the oaks of England, the elms that shadow the Hudson or the Connecticut; I build no nest; to-day I am here, to-morrow on the wing.

If I quit my native land before the trees have dropped their leaves I shall place this manuscript in the safe hands of one whom I feel sure that I can trust; to do with it as he shall see fit. If it is only curious and has no bearing on human welfare, he may think it well to let it remain unread until I shall have passed away. If in his judgment it throws any light on one of the deeper mysteries of our nature,—the repulsions which play such a formidable part in social life, and which must be recognized as the correlatives of the affinities that distribute the individuals governed by them in the face of impediments which seem to be impossibilities,—then it may be freely given to the world.

But if I am here when the leaves are all fallen, the programme of my life will have changed, and this story of the dead past will be illuminated by the light of a living present which will irradiate all its saddening features. Who would not pray that my last gleam of light and hope may be that of dawn and not of departing day?

The reader who finds it hard to accept the reality of a story so far from the common range of experience is once more requested to suspend his judgment until he has read the paper which will next be offered for his consideration.

XIX.

The report of the biological committee.

Perhaps it is too much to expect a reader who wishes to be entertained, excited, amused, and does not want to work his passage through pages which he cannot understand without some effort of his own, to read the paper which follows and Dr. Butts's reflections upon it. If he has no curiosity in the direction of these chapters, he can afford to leave them to such as relish a slight flavor of science. But if he does so leave them he will very probably remain sceptical as to the truth of the story to which they are meant to furnish him with a key.

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Of course the case of Maurice Kirkwood is a remarkable and exceptional one, and it is hardly probable that any reader's experience will furnish him with its parallel. But let him look back over all his acquaintances, if he has reached middle life, and see if he cannot recall more than one who, for some reason or other, shunned the society of young women, as if they had a deadly fear of their company. If he remembers any such, he can understand the simple statements and natural reflections which are laid before him.

One of the most singular facts connected with the history of Maurice Kirkwood was the philosophical equanimity with which he submitted to the fate which had fallen upon him. He did not choose to be pumped by the Interviewer, who would show him up in the sensational columns of his prying newspaper. He lived chiefly by himself, as the easiest mode of avoiding those meetings to which he would be exposed in almost every society into which he might venture. But he had learned to look upon himself very much as he would upon an intimate not himself,—upon a different personality. A young man will naturally enough be ashamed of his shyness. It is something which others believe, and perhaps he himself thinks, he might overcome. But in the case of Maurice Kirkwood there was no room for doubt as to the reality and gravity of the long enduring effects of his first convulsive terror. He had accepted the fact as he would have accepted the calamity of losing his sight or his hearing. When he was questioned by the experts to whom his case was submitted, he told them all that he knew about it almost without a sign of emotion. Nature was so peremptory with him,—saying in language that had no double meaning: "If you violate the condition on which you hold my gift of existence I slay you on the spot,"—that he became as decisive in his obedience as she was in her command, and accepted his fate without repining.

Yet it must not be thought for a moment,—it cannot be supposed,—that he was insensible because he looked upon himself with the coolness of an enforced philosophy. He bore his burden manfully, hard as it was to live under it, for he lived, as we have seen, in hope. The thought of throwing it off with his life, as too grievous to be borne, was familiar to his lonely hours, but he rejected it as unworthy of his manhood. How he had speculated and dreamed about it is plain enough from the paper the reader may remember on Ocean, River, and Lake.

With these preliminary hints the paper promised is submitted to such as may find any interest in them.

Account of A case of Gynophobia.

With remarks.

Being the Substance of a Report to the Royal Academy of the Biological Sciences by a Committee of that Institution.

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"The singular nature of the case we are about to narrate and comment upon will, we feel confident, arrest the attention of those who have learned the great fact that Nature often throws the strongest light upon her laws by the apparent exceptions and anomalies which from time to time are observed. We have done with the *lusus naturae* of earlier generations. We pay little attention to the stories of 'miracles,' except so far as we receive them ready-made at the hands of the churches which still hold to them. Not the less do we meet with strange and surprising facts, which a century or two ago would have been handled by the clergy and the courts, but today are calmly recorded and judged by the best light our knowledge of the laws of life can throw upon them. It must be owned that there are stories which we can hardly dispute, so clear and full is the evidence in their support, which do, notwithstanding, tax our faith and sometimes leave us sceptical in spite of all the testimony which supports them.

"In this category many will be disposed to place the case we commend to the candid attention of the Academy. If one were told that a young man, a gentleman by birth and training, well formed, in apparently perfect health, of agreeable physiognomy and manners, could not endure the presence of the most attractive young woman, but was seized with deadly terror and sudden collapse of all the powers of life, if he came into her immediate presence; if it were added that this same young man did not shrink from the presence of an old withered crone; that he had a certain timid liking for little maidens who had not yet outgrown the company of their dolls, the listener would be apt to smile, if he did not laugh, at the absurdity of the fable. Surely, he would say, this must be the fiction of some fanciful brain, the whim of some romancer, the trick of some playwright. It would make a capital farce, this idea, carried out. A young man slighting the lovely heroine of the little comedy and making love to her grandmother! This would, of course, be overstating the truth of the story, but to such a misinterpretation the plain facts lend themselves too easily. We will relate the leading circumstances of the case, as they were told us with perfect simplicity and frankness by the subject of an affection which, if classified, would come under the general head of Antipathy, but to which, if we give it a name, we shall have to apply the term Gynophobia, or Fear of Woman."

Here follows the account furnished to the writer of the paper, which is in all essentials identical with that already laid before the reader.

"Such is the case offered to our consideration. Assuming its truthfulness in all its particulars, it remains to see in the first place whether or not it is as entirely exceptional and anomalous as it seems at first sight, or whether it is only the last term of a series of cases which in their less formidable aspect are well known to us in literature, in the records of science, and even in our common experience.

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"To most of those among us the explanations we are now about to give are entirely superfluous. But there are some whose chief studies have been in different directions, and who will not complain if certain facts are mentioned which to the expert will seem rudimentary, and which hardly require recapitulation to those who are familiarly acquainted with the common text-books.

"The heart is the centre of every living movement in the higher animals, and in man, furnishing in varying amount, or withholding to a greater or less extent, the needful supplies to all parts of the system. If its action is diminished to a certain degree, faintness is the immediate consequence; if it is arrested, loss of consciousness; if its action is not soon restored, death, of which fainting plants the white flag, remains in possession of the system.

"How closely the heart is under the influence of the emotions we need not go to science to learn, for all human experience and all literature are overflowing with evidence that shows the extent of this relation. Scripture is full of it; the heart in Hebrew poetry represents the entire life, we might almost say. Not less forcible is the language of Shakespeare, as for instance, in 'Measure for Measure:'

"Why does my blood thus muster to my heart,
Making it both unable for itself
And dispossessing all my other parts
Of necessary fitness?"

"More especially is the heart associated in every literature with the passion of love. A famous old story is that of Galen, who was called to the case of a young lady long ailing, and wasting away from some cause the physicians who had already seen her were unable to make out. The shrewd old practitioner suspected that love was at the bottom of the young lady's malady. Many relatives and friends of both sexes, all of them ready with their sympathy, came to see her. The physician sat by her bedside during one of these visits, and in an easy, natural way took her hand and placed a finger on her pulse. It beat quietly enough until a certain comely young gentleman entered the apartment, when it suddenly rose infrequency, and at the same moment her hurried breathing, her changing color, pale and flushed by turns, betrayed the profound agitation his presence excited. This was enough for the sagacious Greek; love was the disease, the cure of which by its like may be claimed as an anticipation of homoeopathy. In the frontispiece to the fine old 'Junta' edition of the works of Galen, you may find among the wood-cuts a representation of the interesting scene, with the title *Amantas Dignotio*,—the diagnosis, or recognition, of the lover.

"Love has many languages, but the heart talks through all of them. The pallid or burning cheek tells of the failing or leaping fountain which gives it color. The lovers at the 'Brookside' could hear each other's hearts beating. When Genevieve, in Coleridge's poem, forgot herself, and was beforehand with her suitor in her sudden embrace,

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"'T was partly love and partly fear,
And partly 't was a bashful art,
That I might rather feel than see
The swelling of her heart'

"Always the heart, whether its hurried action is seen, or heard, or felt. But it is not always in this way that the 'deceitful' organ treats the lover.

"'Faint heart never won fair lady.'

"This saying was not meant, perhaps, to be taken literally, but it has its literal truth. Many a lover has found his heart sink within him,—lose all its force, and leave him weak as a child in his emotion at the sight of the object of his affections. When Porphyro looked upon Madeline at her prayers in the chapel, it was too much for him:

"'She seemed a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven:—Porphyro grew faint,
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from earthly taint.'

"And in Balzac's novel, 'Cesar Birotteau,' the hero of the story 'fainted away for-joy at the moment when, under a linden-tree, at Sceaux, Constance-Barbe-Josephine accepted him as her future husband.'

"One who faints is dead if he does not I come to,' and nothing is more likely than that too susceptible lovers have actually gone off in this way. Everything depends on how the heart behaves itself in these and similar trying moments. The mechanism of its actions becomes an interesting subject, therefore, to lovers of both sexes, and to all who are capable of intense emotions.

"The heart is a great reservoir, which distributes food, drink, air, and heat to every part of the system, in exchange for its waste material. It knocks at the gate of every organ seventy or eighty times in a minute, calling upon it to receive its supplies and unload its refuse. Between it and the brain there is the closest relation. The emotions, which act upon it as we have seen, govern it by a mechanism only of late years thoroughly understood. This mechanism can be made plain enough to the reader who is not afraid to believe that he can understand it.

"The brain, as all know, is the seat of ideas, emotions, volition. It is the great central telegraphic station with which many lesser centres are in close relation, from which they receive, and to which they transmit, their messages. The heart has its own little brains, so to speak,—small collections of nervous substance which govern its rhythmical motions under ordinary conditions. But these lesser nervous centres are to a large extent dominated by influences transmitted from certain groups of nerve-cells in the brain and its immediate dependencies.



“There are two among the special groups of nerve-cells which produce directly opposite effects. One of these has the power of accelerating the action of the heart, while the other has the power of retarding or arresting this action. One acts as the spur, the other as the bridle. According as one or the other predominates, the action of the heart will be stimulated or restrained. Among the great modern discoveries in physiology is that of the existence of a distinct centre of inhibition, as the restraining influence over the heart is called.

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"The centre of inhibition plays a terrible part in the history of cowardice and of unsuccessful love. No man can be brave without blood to sustain his courage, any more than he can think, as the German materialist says, not absurdly, without phosphorus. The fainting lover must recover his circulation, or his lady will lend him her smelling-salts and take a gallant with blood in his cheeks. Porphyro got over his faintness before he ran away with Madeline, and Cesar Birotteau was an accepted lover when he swooned with happiness: but many an officer has been cashiered, and many a suitor has been rejected, because the centre of inhibition has got the upper hand of the centre of stimulation.

"In the well-known cases of deadly antipathy which have been recorded, the most frequent cause has been the disturbed and depressing influence of the centre of inhibition. Fainting at the sight of blood is one of the commonest examples of this influence. A single impression, in a very early period of atmospheric existence,—perhaps, indirectly, before that period, as was said to have happened in the case of James the First of England,—may establish a communication between this centre and the heart which will remain open ever afterwards. How does a footpath across a field establish itself? Its curves are arbitrary, and what we call accidental, but one after another follows it as if he were guided by a chart on which it was laid down. So it is with this dangerous transit between the centre of inhibition and the great organ of life. If once the path is opened by the track of some profound impression, that same impression, if repeated, or a similar one, is likely to find the old footmarks and follow them. Habit only makes the path easier to traverse, and thus the unreasoning terror of a child, of an infant, may perpetuate itself in a timidity which shames the manhood of its subject.

"The case before us is an exceptional and most remarkable example of the effect of inhibition on the heart.

"We will not say that we believe it to be unique in the history of the human race; on the contrary, we do not doubt that there have been similar cases, and that in some rare instances sudden death has been the consequence of seizures like that of the subject of this Report. The case most like it is that of Colone Townsend, which is too well known to require any lengthened description in this paper. It is enough to recall the main facts. He could by a voluntary effort suspend the action of his heart for a considerable period, during which he lay like one dead, pulseless, and without motion. After a time the circulation returned, and he does not seem to have been the worse for his dangerous, or seemingly dangerous, experiment. But in his case it was by an act of the will that the heart's action was suspended. In the case before us it is an involuntary impulse transmitted from the brain to the inhibiting centre, which arrests the cardiac movements.

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“What is like to be the further history of the case?

“The subject of this anomalous affliction is now more than twenty years old. The chain of nervous actions has become firmly established. It might have been hoped that the changes of adolescence would have effected a transformation of the perverted instinct. On the contrary, the whole force of this instinct throws itself on the centre of inhibition, instead of quickening the heart-beats, and sending the rush of youthful blood with fresh life through the entire system to the throbbing finger-tips.

“Is it probable that time and circumstances will alter a habit of nervous interactions so long established? We are disposed to think that there is a chance of its being broken up. And we are not afraid to say that we suspect the old gypsy woman, whose prophecy took such hold of the patient's imagination, has hit upon the way in which the ‘spell,’ as she called it, is to be dissolved. She must, in all probability, have had a hint of the ‘antipatia’ to which the youth before her was a victim, and its cause, and if so, her guess as to the probable mode in which the young man would obtain relief from his unfortunate condition was the one which would naturally suggest itself.

“If once the nervous impression which falls on the centre of inhibition can be made to change its course, so as to follow its natural channel, it will probably keep to that channel ever afterwards. And this will, it is most likely, be effected by some sudden, unexpected impression. If he were drowning, and a young woman should rescue him, it is by no means impossible that the change in the nervous current we have referred to might be brought about as rapidly, as easily, as the reversal of the poles in a magnet, which is effected in an instant. But he cannot be expected to throw himself into the water just at the right moment when the ‘fair lady’ of the gitana's prophecy is passing on the shore. Accident may effect the cure which art seems incompetent to perform. It would not be strange if in some future seizure he should never come back to consciousness. But it is quite conceivable, on the other hand, that a happier event may occur, that in a single moment the nervous polarity may be reversed, the whole course of his life changed, and his past terrible experiences be to him like a scarce-remembered dream.

“This is one, of those cases in which it is very hard to determine the wisest course to be pursued. The question is not unlike that which arises in certain cases of dislocation of the bones of the neck. Shall the unfortunate sufferer go all his days with his face turned far round to the right or the left, or shall an attempt be made to replace the dislocated bones? an attempt which may succeed, or may cause instant death. The patient must be consulted as to whether he will take the chance. The practitioner may be unwilling to risk it, if the patient consents. Each case must be judged on its own special grounds.

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We cannot think that this young man is doomed to perpetual separation from the society of womanhood during the period of its bloom and attraction. But to provoke another seizure after his past experiences would be too much like committing suicide. We fear that we must trust to the chapter of accidents. The strange malady—for such it is—has become a second nature, and may require as energetic a shock to displace it as it did to bring it into existence. Time alone can solve this question, on which depends the well-being and, it may be, the existence of a young man every way fitted to be happy, and to give happiness, if restored to his true nature.”

XX.

Dr. Butts reflects.

Dr. Butts sat up late at night reading these papers and reflecting upon them. He was profoundly impressed and tenderly affected by the entire frankness, the absence of all attempt at concealment, which Maurice showed in placing these papers at his disposal. He believed that his patient would recover from this illness for which he had been taking care of him. He thought deeply and earnestly of what he could do for him after he should have regained his health and strength.

There were references, in Maurice’s own account of himself, which the doctor called to mind with great interest after reading his brief autobiography. Some one person—some young woman, it must be—had produced a singular impression upon him since those earlier perilous experiences through which he had passed. The doctor could not help thinking of that meeting with Euthymia of which she had spoken to him. Maurice, as she said, turned pale,—he clapped his hand to his breast. He might have done so if he had met her chambermaid, or any straggling damsel of the village. But Euthymia was not a young woman to be looked upon with indifference. She held herself like a queen, and walked like one, not a stage queen, but one born and bred to self-reliance, and command of herself as well as others. One could not pass her without being struck with her noble bearing and spirited features. If she had known how Maurice trembled as he looked upon her, in that conflict of attraction and uncontrollable dread,—if she had known it! But what, even then, could she have done? Nothing but get away from him as fast as she could. As it was, it was a long time before his agitation subsided, and his heart beat with its common force and frequency.

Dr. Butts was not a male gossip nor a matchmaking go-between. But he could not help thinking what a pity it was that these two young persons could not come together as other young people do in the pairing season, and find out whether they cared for and were fitted for each other. He did not pretend to settle this question in his own mind, but

the thought was a natural one. And here was a gulf between them as deep and wide as that between Lazarus and

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Dives. Would it ever be bridged over? This thought took possession of the doctor's mind, and he imagined all sorts of ways of effecting some experimental approximation between Maurice and Euthymia. From this delicate subject he glanced off to certain general considerations suggested by the extraordinary history he had been reading. He began by speculating as to the possibility of the personal presence of an individual making itself perceived by some channel other than any of the five senses. The study of the natural sciences teaches those who are devoted to them that the most insignificant facts may lead the way to the discovery of the most important, all-pervading laws of the universe. From the kick of a frog's hind leg to the amazing triumphs which began with that seemingly trivial incident is a long, a very long stride if Madam Galvani had not been in delicate health, which was the occasion of her having some frog-broth prepared for her, the world of to-day might not be in possession of the electric telegraph and the light which blazes like the sun at high noon. A common-looking occurrence, one seemingly unimportant, which had hitherto passed unnoticed with the ordinary course of things, was the means of introducing us to a new and vast realm of closely related phenomena. It was like a key that we might have picked up, looking so simple that it could hardly fit any lock but one of like simplicity, but which should all at once throw back the bolts of the one lock which had defied the most ingenious of our complex implements and open our way into a hitherto unexplored territory.

It certainly was not through the eye alone that Maurice felt the paralyzing influence. He could contemplate Euthymia from a distance, as he did on the day of the boat-race, without any nervous disturbance. A certain proximity was necessary for the influence to be felt, as in the case of magnetism and electricity. An atmosphere of danger surrounded every woman he approached during the period when her sex exercises its most powerful attractions. How far did that atmosphere extend, and through what channel did it act?

The key to the phenomena of this case, he believed, was to be found in a fact as humble as that which gave birth to the science of galvanism and its practical applications. The circumstances connected with the very common antipathy to cats were as remarkable in many points of view as the similar circumstances in the case of Maurice Kirkwood. The subjects of that antipathy could not tell what it was which disturbed their nervous system. All they knew was that a sense of uneasiness, restlessness, oppression, came over them in the presence of one of these animals. He remembered the fact already mentioned, that persons sensitive to this impression can tell by their feelings if a cat is concealed in the apartment in which they may happen to be. It may be through some emanation. It may be through the medium of some electrical disturbance.

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What if the nerve-thrills passing through the whole system of the animal propagate themselves to a certain distance without any more regard to intervening solids than is shown by magnetism? A sieve lets sand pass through it; a filter arrests sand, but lets fluids pass, glass holds fluids, but lets light through; wood shuts out light, but magnetic attraction goes through it as sand went through the sieve. No good reasons can be given why the presence of a cat should not betray itself to certain organizations, at a distance, through the walls of a box in which the animal is shut up. We need not disbelieve the stories which allege such an occurrence as a fact and a not very infrequent one.

If the presence of a cat can produce its effects under these circumstances, why should not that of a human being under similar conditions, acting on certain constitutions, exercise its specific influence? The doctor recalled a story told him by one of his friends, a story which the friend himself heard from the lips of the distinguished actor, the late Mr. Fechter. The actor maintained that Rachel had no genius as an actress. It was all Samson's training and study, according to him, which explained the secret of her wonderful effectiveness on the stage. But magnetism, he said,—magnetism, she was full of. He declared that he was made aware of her presence on the stage, when he could not see her or know of her presence otherwise, by this magnetic emanation. The doctor took the story for what it was worth. There might very probably be exaggeration, perhaps high imaginative coloring about it, but it was not a whit more unlikely than the cat-stories, accepted as authentic. He continued this train of thought into further developments. Into this series of reflections we will try to follow him.

What is the meaning of the halo with which artists have surrounded the heads of their pictured saints, of the aureoles which wraps them like a luminous cloud? Is it not a recognition of the fact that these holy personages diffuse their personality in the form of a visible emanation, which reminds us of Milton's definition of light:

“Bright effluence of bright essence increate”?

The common use of the term influence would seem to imply the existence of its correlative, effluence. There is no good reason that I can see, the doctor said to himself, why among the forces which work upon the nervous centres there should not be one which acts at various distances from its source. It may not be visible like the “glory” of the painters, it may not be appreciable by any one of the five senses, and yet it may be felt by the person reached by it as much as if it were a palpable presence,—more powerfully, perhaps, from the mystery which belongs to its mode of action.

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Why should not Maurice have been rendered restless and anxious by the unseen nearness of a young woman who was in the next room to him, just as the persons who have the dread of cats are made conscious of their presence through some unknown channel? Is it anything strange that the larger and more powerful organism should diffuse a consciousness of its presence to some distance as well as the slighter and feebler one? Is it strange that this mysterious influence or effluence should belong especially or exclusively to the period of complete womanhood in distinction from that of immaturity or decadence? On the contrary, it seems to be in accordance with all the analogies of nature,—analogies too often cruel in the sentence they pass upon the human female.

Among the many curious thoughts which came up in the doctor's mind was this, which made him smile as if it were a jest, but which he felt very strongly had its serious side, and was involved with the happiness or suffering of multitudes of youthful persons who die without telling their secret:

How many young men have a mortal fear of woman, as woman, which they never overcome, and in consequence of which the attraction which draws man towards her, as strong in them as in others,—oftentimes, in virtue of their peculiarly sensitive organizations, more potent in them than in others of like age and conditions,—in consequence of which fear, this attraction is completely neutralized, and all the possibilities of doubled and indefinitely extended life depending upon it are left unrealized! Think what numbers of young men in Catholic countries devote themselves to lives of celibacy. Think how many young men lose all their confidence in the presence of the young woman to whom they are most attracted, and at last steal away from a companionship which it is rapture to dream of and torture to endure, so does the presence of the beloved object paralyze all the powers of expression. Sorcerers have in all time and countries played on the hopes and terrors of lovers. Once let loose a strong impulse on the centre of inhibition, and the warrior who had faced bayonets and batteries becomes a coward whom the well-dressed hero of the ball-room and leader of the German will put to ignominious flight in five minutes of easy, audacious familiarity with his lady-love.

Yes, the doctor went on with his reflections, I do not know that I have seen the term Gynophobia before I opened this manuscript, but I have seen the malady many times. Only one word has stood between many a pair of young people and their lifelong happiness, and that word has got as far as the lips, but the lips trembled and would not, could not, shape that little word. All young women are not like Coleridge's Genevieve, who knew how to help her lover out of his difficulty, and said yes before he had asked for an answer. So the wave which was to have wafted them on to the shore of Elysium has just failed of landing them, and back they have been drawn into the desolate ocean to meet no more on earth.

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Love is the master-key, he went on thinking, love is the master-key that opens the gates of happiness, of hatred, of jealousy, and, most easily of all, the gate of fear. How terrible is the one fact of beauty!—not only the historic wonder of beauty, that “burnt the topless towers of Ilium” for the smile of Helen, and fired the palaces of Babylon by the hand of Thais, but the beauty which springs up in all times and places, and carries a torch and wears a serpent for a wreath as truly as any of the Eumenides. Paint Beauty with her foot upon a skull and a dragon coiled around her.

The doctor smiled at his own imposing classical allusions and pictorial imagery. Drifting along from thought to thought, he reflected on the probable consequences of the general knowledge of Maurice Kirkwood’s story, if it came before the public.

What a piece of work it would make among the lively youths of the village, to be sure! What scoffing, what ridicule, what embellishments, what fables, would follow in the trail of the story! If the Interviewer got hold of it, how “The People’s Perennial and Household Inquisitor” would blaze with capitals in its next issue! The young fellows’ of the place would be disposed to make fun of the whole matter. The young girls—the doctor hardly dared to think what would happen when the story got about among them. “The Sachem” of the solitary canoe, the bold horseman, the handsome hermit,—handsome so far as the glimpses they had got of him went,—must needs be an object of tender interest among them, now that he was ailing, suffering, in danger of his life, away from friends,—poor fellow! Little tokens of their regard had reached his sick-chamber; bunches of flowers with dainty little notes, some of them pinkish, some three-cornered, some of them with brief messages, others “criss-crossed,” were growing more frequent as it was understood that the patient was likely to be convalescent before many days had passed. If it should come to be understood that there was a deadly obstacle to their coming into any personal relations with him, the doctor had his doubts whether there were not those who would subject him to the risk; for there were coquettes in the village,—strangers, visitors, let us hope,—who would sacrifice anything or anybody to their vanity and love of conquest.

XXI

An intimate conversation.

The illness from which Maurice had suffered left him in a state of profound prostration. The doctor, who remembered the extreme danger of any overexertion in such cases, hardly allowed him to lift his head from the pillow. But his mind was gradually recovering its balance, and he was able to hold some conversation with those about him. His faithful Paolo had grown so thin in waiting upon him and watching with him that the village children had to take a second look at his face when they passed him to make sure that it was indeed their old friend and no other. But as his master advanced towards convalescence and the doctor assured him that he was going in all probability

to get well, Paolo's face began to recover something of its old look and expression, and once more his pockets filled themselves with comfits for his little circle of worshipping three and four year old followers.

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"How is Mr. Kirkwood?" was the question with which he was always greeted. In the worst periods of the fever he rarely left his master. When he did, and the question was put to him, he would shake his head sadly, sometimes without a word, sometimes with tears and sobs and faltering words,—more like a brokenhearted child than a stalwart man as he was, such a man as soldiers are made of in the great Continental armies.

"He very bad,—he no eat nothing,—he—no say nothing,—he never be no better," and all his Southern nature betrayed itself in a passionate burst of lamentation. But now that he began to feel easy about his master, his ready optimism declared itself no less transparently.

"He better every day now. He get well in few weeks, sure. You see him on hoss in little while." The kind-hearted creature's life was bound up in that of his "master," as he loved to call him, in sovereign disregard of the comments of the natives, who held themselves too high for any such recognition of another as their better. They could not understand how he, so much their superior in bodily presence, in air and manner, could speak of the man who employed him in any other way than as "Kirkwood," without even demeaning himself so far as to prefix a "Mr." to it. But "my master" Maurice remained for Paolo in spite of the fact that all men are born free and equal. And never was a servant more devoted to a master than was Paolo to Maurice during the days of doubt and danger. Since his improvement Maurice insisted upon his leaving his chamber and getting out of the house, so as to breathe the fresh air of which he was in so much need. It worried him to see his servant returning after too short an absence. The attendant who had helped him in the care of the patient was within call, and Paolo was almost driven out of the house by the urgency of his master's command that he should take plenty of exercise in the open air.

Notwithstanding the fact of Maurice's improved condition, although the force of the disease had spent itself, the state of weakness to which he had been reduced was a cause of some anxiety, and required great precautions to be taken. He lay in bed, wasted, enfeebled to such a degree that he had to be cared for very much as a child is tended. Gradually his voice was coming back to him, so that he could hold some conversation, as was before mentioned, with those about him. The doctor waited for the right moment to make mention of the manuscript which Maurice had submitted to him. Up to this time, although it had been alluded to and the doctor had told him of the intense interest with which he had read it, he had never ventured to make it the subject of any long talk, such as would be liable to fatigue his patient. But now he thought the time had come.

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"I have been thinking," the doctor said, "of the singular seizures to which you are liable, and as it is my business not merely to think about such cases, but to do what I can to help any who may be capable of receiving aid from my art, I wish to have some additional facts about your history. And in the first place, will you allow me to ask what led you to this particular place? It is so much less known to the public at large than many other resorts that we naturally ask, What brings this or that new visitor among us? We have no ill-tasting, natural spring of bad water to be analyzed by the state chemist and proclaimed as a specific. We have no great gambling-houses, no racecourse (except that fox boats on the lake); we have no coaching-club, no great balls, few lions of any kind, so we ask, What brings this or that stranger here? And I think I may venture to ask you whether any, special motive brought you among us, or whether it was accident that determined your coming to this place."

"Certainly, doctor," Maurice answered, "I will tell you with great pleasure. Last year I passed on the border of a great river. The year before I lived in a lonely cottage at the side of the ocean. I wanted this year to be by a lake. You heard the paper read at the meeting of your society, or at least you heard of it,—for such matters are always talked over in a village like this. You can judge by that paper, or could, if it were before you, of the frame of mind in which I came here. I was tired of the sullen indifference of the ocean and the babbling egotism of the river, always hurrying along on its own private business. I wanted the dreamy stillness of a large, tranquil sheet of water that had nothing in particular to do, and would leave me to myself and my thoughts. I had read somewhere about the place, and the old Anchor Tavern, with its paternal landlord and motherly landlady and old-fashioned household, and that, though it was no longer open as a tavern, I could find a resting-place there early in the season, at least for a few days, while I looked about me for a quiet place in which I might pass my summer. I have found this a pleasant residence. By being up early and out late I have kept myself mainly in the solitude which has become my enforced habit of life. The season has gone by too swiftly for me since my dream has become a vision."

The doctor was sitting with his hand round Maurice's wrist, three fingers on his pulse. As he spoke these last words he noticed that the pulse fluttered a little,—beat irregularly a few times; intermitted; became feeble and thready; while his cheek grew whiter than the pallid bloodlessness of his long illness had left it.

"No more talk, now," he said. "You are too tired to be using your voice. I will hear all the rest another time."

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The doctor had interrupted Maurice at an interesting point. What did he mean by saying that his dream had become a vision? This is what the doctor was naturally curious, and professionally anxious, to know. But his hand was still on his patient's pulse, which told him unmistakably that the heart had taken the alarm and was losing its energy under the depressing nervous influence. Presently, however, it recovered its natural force and rhythm, and a faint flush came back to the pale cheek. The doctor remembered the story of Galen, and the young maiden whose complaint had puzzled the physicians.

The next day his patient was well enough to enter once more into conversation.

"You said something about a dream of yours which had become a vision," said the doctor, with his fingers on his patient's wrist, as before. He felt the artery leap, under his pressure, falter a little, stop, then begin again, growing fuller in its beat. The heart had felt the pull of the bridle, but the spur had roused it to swift reaction.

"You know the story of my past life, doctor," Maurice answered; "and, I will tell you what is the vision which has taken the place of my dreams. You remember the boat-race? I watched it from a distance, but I held a powerful opera-glass in my hand, which brought the whole crew of the young ladies' boat so close to me that I could see the features, the figures, the movements, of every one of the rowers. I saw the little coxswain fling her bouquet in the track of the other boat,—you remember how the race was lost and won,—but I saw one face among those young girls which drew me away from all the rest. It was that of the young lady who pulled the bow oar, the captain of the boat's crew. I have since learned her name, you know it well,—I need not name her. Since that day I have had many distant glimpses of her; and once I met her so squarely that the deadly sensation came over me, and I felt that in another moment I should fall senseless at her feet. But she passed on her way and I on mine, and the spasm which had clutched my heart gradually left it, and I was as well as before. You know that young lady, doctor?"

"I do; and she is a very noble creature. You are not the first young man who has been fascinated, almost at a glance, by Miss Euthymia Tower. And she is well worth knowing more intimately."

The doctor gave him a full account of the young lady, of her early days, her character, her accomplishments. To all this he listened devoutly, and when the doctor left him he said to himself, "I will see her and speak with her, if it costs me my life."

XXII

Euthymia.

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"The Wonder" of the Corinna Institute had never willingly made a show of her gymnastic accomplishments. Her feats, which were so much admired, were only her natural exercise. Gradually the dumb-bells others used became too light for her, the ropes she climbed too short, the clubs she exercised with seemed as if they were made of cork instead of being heavy wood, and all the tests and meters of strength and agility had been strained beyond the standards which the records of the school had marked as their historic maxima. It was not her fault that she broke a dynamometer one day; she apologized for it, but the teacher said he wished he could have a dozen broken every year in the same way. The consciousness of her bodily strength had made her very careful in her movements. The pressure of her hand was never too hard for the tenderest little maiden whose palm was against her own. So far from priding herself on her special gifts, she was disposed to be ashamed of them. There were times and places in which she could give full play to her muscles without fear or reproach. She had her special costume for the boat and for the woods. She would climb the rugged old hemlocks now and then for the sake of a wide outlook, or to peep into the large nest where a hawk, or it may be an eagle, was raising her little brood of air-pirates.

There were those who spoke of her wanderings in lonely places as an unsafe exposure. One sometimes met doubtful characters about the neighborhood, and stories were—told of occurrences which might well frighten a young girl, and make her cautious of trusting herself alone in the wild solitudes which surrounded the little village.. Those who knew Euthymia thought her quite equal to taking care of herself. Her very look was enough to ensure the respect of any vagabond who might cross her path, and if matters came to the worst she would prove as dangerous as a panther.

But it was a pity to associate this class of thoughts with a noble specimen of true womanhood. Health, beauty, strength, were fine qualities, and in all these she was rich. She enjoyed all her natural gifts, and thought little about them. Unwillingly, but over-persuaded by some of her friends, she had allowed her arm and hand to be modelled. The artists who saw the cast wondered if it would be possible to get the bust of the maiden from whom it was taken. Nobody would have dared to suggest such an idea to her except Lurida. For Lurida sex was a trifling accident, to be disregarded not only in the interests of humanity, but for the sake of art.

"It is a shame," she said to Euthymia, "that you will not let your exquisitely moulded form be perpetuated in marble. You have no right to withhold such a model from the contemplation of your fellow-creatures. Think how rare it is to see a woman who truly represents the divine idea! You belong to your race, and not to yourself,—at least, your beauty is a gift not to be considered as a piece of private property. Look at the so-called Venus of Milo. Do you suppose the noble woman who was the original of that divinely chaste statue felt any scruple about allowing the sculptor to reproduce her pure, unblemished perfections?"

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Euthymia was always patient with her imaginative friend. She listened to her eloquent discourse, but she could not help blushing, used as she was to Lurida's audacities. "The Terror's" brain had run away with a large share of the blood which ought to have gone to the nourishment of her general system. She could not help admiring, almost worshipping, a companion whose being was rich in the womanly developments with which nature had so economically endowed herself. An impoverished organization carries with it certain neutral qualities which make its subject appear, in the presence of complete manhood and womanhood, like a deaf-mute among speaking persons. The deep blush which crimsoned Euthymia's cheek at Lurida's suggestion was in a strange contrast to her own undisturbed expression. There was a range of sensibilities of which Lurida knew far less than she did of those many and difficult studies which had absorbed her vital forces. She was startled to see what an effect her proposal had produced, for Euthymia was not only blushing, but there was a flame in her eyes which she had hardly ever seen before.

"Is this only your own suggestion?" Euthymia said, "or has some one been putting the idea into your head?" The truth was that she had happened to meet the Interviewer at the Library, one day, and she was offended by the long, searching stare with which that individual had honored her. It occurred to her that he, or some such visitor to the place, might have spoken of her to Lurida, or to some other person who had repeated what was said to Lurida, as a good subject for the art of the sculptor, and she felt all her maiden sensibilities offended by the proposition. Lurida could not understand her excitement, but she was startled by it. Natures which are complementary of each other are liable to these accidental collisions of feeling. They get along very well together, none the worse for their differences, until all at once the tender spot of one or the other is carelessly handled in utter unconsciousness on the part of the aggressor, and the exclamation, the outcry, or the explosion explains the situation altogether too emphatically. Such scenes did not frequently occur between the two friends, and this little flurry was soon over; but it served to warn Lurida that Miss Euthymia Tower was not of that class of self-conscious beauties who would be ready to dispute the empire of the Venus of Milo on her own ground, in defences as scanty and insufficient as those of the marble divinity.

Euthymia had had admirers enough, at a distance, while at school, and in the long vacations, near enough to find out that she was anything but easy to make love to. She fairly frightened more than one rash youth who was disposed to be too sentimental in her company. They overdid flattery, which she was used to and tolerated, but which cheapened the admirer in her estimation, and now and then betrayed her into an expression which made him aware of the fact, and

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was a discouragement to aggressive amiability. The real difficulty was that not one of her adorers had ever greatly interested her. It could not be that nature had made her insensible. It must have been because the man who was made for her had never yet shown himself. She was not easy to please, that was certain; and she was one of those young women who will not accept as a lover one who but half pleases them. She could not pick up the first stick that fell in her way and take it to shape her ideal out of. Many of the good people of the village doubted whether Euthymia would ever be married.

"There 's nothing good enough for her in this village," said the old landlord of what had been the Anchor Tavern.

"She must wait till a prince comes along," the old landlady said in reply. "She'd make as pretty a queen as any of them that's born to it. Wouldn't she be splendid with a gold crown on her head, and di'monds a glitterin' all over her! D' you remember how handsome she looked in the tableau, when the fair was held for the Dorcas Society? She had on an old dress of her grandma's,—they don't make anything half so handsome nowadays,—and she was just as pretty as a pictur'. But what's the use of good looks if they scare away folks? The young fellows think that such a handsome girl as that would cost ten times as much to keep as a plain one. She must be dressed up like an empress,—so they seem to think. It ain't so with Euthymy: she'd look like a great lady dressed anyhow, and she has n't got any more notions than the homeliest girl that ever stood before a glass to look at herself."

In the humbler walks of Arrowhead Village society, similar opinions were entertained of Miss Euthymia. The fresh-water fisherman represented pretty well the average estimate of the class to which he belonged. "I tell ye," said he to another gentleman of leisure, whose chief occupation was to watch the coming and going of the visitors to Arrowhead Village,—“I tell ye that girl ain't a gon to put up with any o' them slab-sided fellahs that you see hangin' raound to look at her every Sunday when she comes aout o' meetin'. It's one o' them big gents from Boston or New York that'll step up an' kerry her off."

In the mean time nothing could be further from the thoughts of Euthymia than the prospect of an ambitious worldly alliance. The ideals of young women cost them many and great disappointments, but they save them very often from those lifelong companionships which accident is constantly trying to force upon them, in spite of their obvious unfitness. The higher the ideal, the less likely is the commonplace neighbor who has the great advantage of easy access, or the boarding-house acquaintance who can profit by those vacant hours when the least interesting of visitors is better than absolute loneliness,—the less likely are these undesirable personages to be endured, pitied, and, if not embraced, accepted, for



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want of something better. Euthymia found so much pleasure in the intellectual companionship of Lurida, and felt her own prudence and reserve so necessary to that independent young lady, that she had been contented, so far, with friendship, and thought of love only in an abstract sort of way. Beneath her abstractions there was a capacity of loving which might have been inferred from the expression of her features, the light that shone in her eyes, the tones of her voice, all of which were full of the language which belongs to susceptible natures. How many women never say to themselves that they were born to love, until all at once the discovery opens upon them, as the sense that he was born a painter is said to have dawned suddenly upon Correggio!

Like all the rest of the village and its visitors, she could not help thinking a good deal about the young man lying ill amongst strangers. She was not one of those who had sent him the three-cornered notes or even a bunch of flowers. She knew that he was receiving abounding tokens of kindness and sympathy from different quarters, and a certain inward feeling restrained her from joining in these demonstrations. If he had been suffering from some deadly and contagious malady she would have risked her life to help him, without a thought that there was any wonderful heroism in such self-devotion. Her friend Lurida might have been capable of the same sacrifice, but it would be after reasoning with herself as to the obligations which her sense of human rights and duties laid upon her, and fortifying her courage with the memory of noble deeds recorded of women in ancient and modern history. With Euthymia the primary human instincts took precedence of all reasoning or reflection about them. All her sympathies were excited by the thought of this forlorn stranger in his solitude, but she felt the impossibility of giving any complete expression to them. She thought of Mungo Park in the African desert, and she envied the poor negress who not only pitied him, but had the blessed opportunity of helping and consoling him. How near were these two human creatures, each needing the other! How near in bodily presence, how far apart in their lives, with a barrier seemingly impassable between them!

XXIII

The meeting of Maurice and Euthymia.

These autumnal fevers, which carry off a large number of our young people every year, are treacherous and deceptive diseases. Not only are they liable, as has been mentioned, to various accidental complications which may prove suddenly fatal, but too often, after convalescence seems to be established, relapses occur which are more serious than the disease had appeared to be in its previous course. One morning Dr. Butts found Maurice worse instead of better, as he had hoped and expected to find him. Weak as he was, there was every reason to fear the issue of this return of his

threatening symptoms. There was not much to do besides keeping up the little strength which still remained. It was all needed.

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Does the reader of these pages ever think of the work a sick man as much as a well one has to perform while he is lying on his back and taking what we call his “rest”? More than a thousand times an hour, between a hundred and fifty and two hundred thousand times a week, he has to lift the bars of the cage in which his breathing organs are confined, to save himself from asphyxia. Rest! There is no rest until the last long sigh tells those who look upon the dying that the ceaseless daily task, to rest from which is death, is at last finished. We are all galley-slaves, pulling at the levers of respiration, —which, rising and falling like so many oars, drive us across an unfathomable ocean from one unknown shore to another. No! Never was a galley-slave so chained as we are to these four and twenty oars, at which we must tug day and night all our life long.

The doctor could not find any accidental cause to account for this relapse. It presently occurred to him that there might be some local source of infection which had brought on the complaint, and was still keeping up the symptoms which were the ground of alarm. He determined to remove Maurice to his own house, where he could be sure of pure air, and where he himself could give more constant attention to his patient during this critical period of his disease. It was a risk to take, but he could be carried on a litter by careful men, and remain wholly passive during the removal. Maurice signified his assent, as he could hardly help doing,—for the doctor’s suggestion took pretty nearly the form of a command. He thought it a matter of life and death, and was gently urgent for his patient’s immediate change of residence. The doctor insisted on having Maurice’s books and other movable articles carried to his own house, so that he should be surrounded by familiar sights, and not worry himself about what might happen to objects which he valued, if they were left behind him.

All these dispositions were quickly and quietly made, and everything was ready for the transfer of the patient to the house of the hospitable physician. Paolo was at the doctor’s, superintending the arrangement of Maurice’s effects and making all ready for his master. The nurse in attendance, a trustworthy man enough in the main, finding his patient in a tranquil sleep, left his bedside for a little fresh air. While he was at the door he heard a shouting which excited his curiosity, and he followed the sound until he found himself at the border of the lake. It was nothing very wonderful which had caused the shouting. A Newfoundland dog had been showing off his accomplishments, and some of the idlers were betting as to the time it would take him to bring back to his master the various floating objects which had been thrown as far from the shore as possible. He watched the dog a few minutes, when his attention was drawn to a light wherry, pulled by one young lady and steered by another. It was making for the shore, which it would soon reach. The attendant remembered all at once, that he had left his charge, and just before the boat came to land he turned and hurried back to the patient. Exactly how long he had been absent he could not have said,—perhaps a quarter of an hour, perhaps longer; the time appeared short to him, wearied with long sitting and watching.



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It had seemed, when he stole away from Maurice's bedside, that he was not in the least needed. The patient was lying perfectly quiet, and to all appearance wanted nothing more than letting alone. It was such a comfort to look at something besides the worn features of a sick man, to hear something besides his labored breathing and faint, half-whispered words, that the temptation to indulge in these luxuries for a few minutes had proved irresistible.

Unfortunately, Maurice's slumbers did not remain tranquil during the absence of the nurse. He very soon fell into a dream, which began quietly enough, but in the course of the sudden transitions which dreams are in the habit of undergoing became successively anxious, distressing, terrifying. His earlier and later experiences came up before him, fragmentary, incoherent, chaotic even, but vivid as reality. He was at the bottom of a coal-mine in one of those long, narrow galleries, or rather worm-holes, in which human beings pass a large part of their lives, like so many larvae boring their way into the beams and rafters of some old building. How close the air was in the stifling passage through which he was crawling! The scene changed, and he was climbing a slippery sheet of ice with desperate effort, his foot on the floor of a shallow niche, his hold an icicle ready to snap in an instant, an abyss below him waiting for his foot to slip or the icicle to break. How thin the air seemed, how desperately hard to breathe! He was thinking of Mont Blanc, it may be, and the fearfully rarefied atmosphere which he remembered well as one of the great trials in his mountain ascents. No, it was not Mont Blanc,—it was not any one of the frozen Alpine summits; it was Hecla that he was climbing.

The smoke of the burning mountain was wrapping itself around him; he was choking with its dense fumes; he heard the flames roaring around him, he felt the hot lava beneath his feet, he uttered a faint cry, and awoke.

The room was full of smoke. He was gasping for breath, strangling in the smothering oven which his chamber had become.

The house was on fire!

He tried to call for help, but his voice failed him, and died away in a whisper. He made a desperate effort, and rose so as to sit up in the bed for an instant, but the effort was too much for him, and he sank back upon his pillow, helpless. He felt that his hour had come, for he could not live in this dreadful atmosphere, and he was left alone. He could hear the crackle of fire as the flame crept along from one partition to another. It was a cruel fate to be left to perish in that way,—the fate that many a martyr had had to face,—to be first strangled and then burned. Death had not the terror for him that it has for most young persons. He was accustomed to thinking of it calmly, sometimes wistfully, even to such a degree that the thought of self-destruction had come upon him as a temptation. But here was death in an unexpected

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and appalling shape. He did not know before how much he cared to live. All his old recollections came before him as it were in one long, vivid flash. The closed vista of memory opened to its far horizon-line, and past and present were pictured in a single instant of clear vision. The dread moment which had blighted his life returned in all its terror. He felt the convulsive spring in the form of a faint, impotent spasm,—the rush of air,—the thorns of the stinging and lacerating cradle into which he was precipitated. One after another those paralyzing seizures which had been like deadening blows on the naked heart seemed to repeat themselves, as real as at the moment of their occurrence. The pictures passed in succession with such rapidity that they appeared almost as if simultaneous. The vision of the “inward eye” was so intensified in this moment of peril that an instant was like an hour of common existence. Those who have been very near drowning know well what this description means. The development of a photograph may not explain it, but it illustrates the curious and familiar fact of the revived recollections of the drowning man’s experience. The sensitive plate has taken one look at a scene, and remembers it all,

Every little circumstance is there,—the hoof in air, the wing in flight, the leaf as it falls, the wave as it breaks. All there, but invisible; potentially present, but impalpable, inappreciable, as if not existing at all. A wash is poured over it, and the whole scene comes out in all its perfection of detail. In those supreme moments when death stares a man suddenly in the face the rush of unwonted emotion floods the undeveloped pictures of vanished years, stored away in the memory, the vast panorama of a lifetime, and in one swift instant the past comes out as vividly as if it were again the present. So it was at this moment with the sick man, as he lay helpless and felt that he was left to die. For he saw no hope of relief: the smoke was drifting in clouds into the room; the flames were very near; if he was not reached and rescued immediately it was all over with him.

His past life had flashed before him. Then all at once rose the thought of his future,—of all its possibilities, of the vague hopes which he had cherished of late that his mysterious doom would be lifted from him. There was something, then, to be lived for, something! There was a new life, it might be, in store for him, and such a new life! He thought of all he was losing. Oh, could he but have lived to know the meaning of love! And the passionate desire of life came over him,—not the dread of death, but the longing for what the future might yet have of happiness for him.

All this took place in the course of a very few moments. Dreams and visions have little to do with measured time, and ten minutes, possibly fifteen or twenty, were all that had passed since the beginning of those nightmare terrors which were evidently suggested by the suffocating air he was breathing.

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What had happened? In the confusion of moving books and other articles to the doctor's house, doors and windows had been forgotten. Among the rest a window opening into the cellar, where some old furniture had been left by a former occupant, had been left unclosed. One of the lazy natives, who had lounged by the house smoking a bad cigar, had thrown the burning stump in at this open window. He had no particular intention of doing mischief, but he had that indifference to consequences which is the next step above the inclination to crime. The burning stump happened to fall among the straw of an old mattress which had been ripped open. The smoker went his way without looking behind him, and it so chanced that no other person passed the house for some time. Presently the straw was in a blaze, and from this the fire extended to the furniture, to the stairway leading up from the cellar, and was working its way along the entry under the stairs leading up to the apartment where Maurice was lying.

The blaze was fierce and swift, as it could not help being with such a mass of combustibles,—loose straw from the mattress, dry old furniture, and old warped floors which had been parching and shrinking for a score or two of years. The whole house was, in the common language of the newspaper reports, “a perfect tinder-box,” and would probably be a heap of ashes in half an hour. And there was this unfortunate deserted sick man lying between life and death, beyond all help unless some unexpected assistance should come to his rescue.

As the attendant drew near the house where Maurice was lying, he was horror-struck to see dense volumes of smoke pouring out of the lower windows. It was beginning to make its way through the upper windows, also, and presently a tongue of fire shot out and streamed upward along the side of the house. The man shrieked Fire! Fire! with all his might, and rushed to the door of the building to make his way to Maurice's room and save him. He penetrated but a short distance when, blinded and choking with the smoke, he rushed headlong down the stairs with a cry of despair that roused every man, woman, and child within reach of a human voice. Out they came from their houses in every quarter of the village. The shout of Fire! Fire! was the chief aid lent by many of the young and old. Some caught up pails and buckets: the more thoughtful ones filling them; the hastier snatching them up empty, trusting to find water nearer the burning building.

Is the sick man moved?

This was the awful question first asked,—for in the little village all knew that Maurice was about being transferred to the doctor's house. The attendant, white as death, pointed to the chamber where he had left him, and gasped out,

“He is there!”



A ladder! A ladder! was the general cry, and men and boys rushed off in search of one. But a single minute was an age now, and there was no ladder to be had without a delay of many minutes. The sick man was going to be swallowed up in the flames before it could possibly arrive. Some were going for a blanket or a coverlet, in the hope that the young man might have strength enough to leap from the window and be safely caught in it. The attendant shook his head, and said faintly,

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"He cannot move from his bed."

One of the visitors at the village,—a millionaire, it was said,—a kind-hearted man, spoke in hoarse, broken tones:

"A thousand dollars to the man that will bring him from his chamber!"

The fresh-water fisherman muttered, "I should like to save the man and to see the money, but it ain't a thaousan' dollars, nor ten thaousan' dollars, that'll pay a fellah for burnin' to death,—or even chokin' to death, anyhaow."

The carpenter, who knew the framework of every house in the village, recent or old, shook his head.

"The stairs have been shored up," he said, "and when the fists that holds 'em up goes, down they'll come. It ain't safe for no man to go over them stairs. Hurry along your ladder,—that's your only chance."

All was wild confusion around the burning house. The ladder they had gone for was missing from its case,—a neighbor had carried it off for the workmen who were shingling his roof. It would never get there in time. There was a fire-engine, but it was nearly half a mile from the lakeside settlement. Some were throwing on water in an aimless, useless way; one was sending a thin stream through a garden syringe: it seemed like doing something, at least. But all hope of saving Maurice was fast giving way, so rapid was the progress of the flames, so thick the cloud of smoke that filled the house and poured from the windows. Nothing was heard but confused cries, shrieks of women, all sorts of orders to do this and that, no one knowing what was to be done. The ladder! The ladder! Five minutes more and it will be too late!

In the mean time the alarm of fire had reached Paolo, and he had stopped his work of arranging Maurice's books in the same way as that in which they had stood in his apartment, and followed in the direction of the sound, little thinking that his master was lying helpless in the burning house. "Some chimney afire," he said to himself; but he would go and take a look, at any rate.

Before Paolo had reached the scene of destruction and impending death, two young women, in boating dresses of decidedly Bloomerish aspect, had suddenly joined the throng. "The Wonder" and "The Terror" of their school-days—Miss Euthymia rower and Miss Lurida Vincent had just come from the shore, where they had left their wherry. A few hurried words told them the fearful story. Maurice Kirkwood was lying in the chamber to which every eye was turned, unable to move, doomed to a dreadful death. All that could be hoped was that he would perish by suffocation rather than by the flames, which would soon be upon him. The man who had attended him had just tried to reach his chamber, but had reeled back out of the door, almost strangled by the

smoke. A thousand dollars had been offered to any one who would rescue the sick man, but no one had dared to make the attempt; for the stairs might fall at any moment, if the smoke did not blind and smother the man who passed them before they fell.

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The two young women looked each other in the face for one swift moment.

“How can he be reached?” asked Lurida. “Is there nobody that will venture his life to save a brother like that?”

“I will venture mine,” said Euthymia.

“No! no!” shrieked Lurida,—“not you! not you! It is a man’s work, not yours! You shall not go!” Poor Lurida had forgotten all her theories in this supreme moment. But Euthymia was not to be held back. Taking a handkerchief from her neck, she dipped it in a pail of water and bound it about her head. Then she took several deep breaths of air, and filled her lungs as full as they would hold. She knew she must not take a single breath in the choking atmosphere if she could possibly help it, and Euthymia was noted for her power of staying under water so long that more than once those who saw her dive thought she would never come up again. So rapid were her movements that they paralyzed the bystanders, who would forcibly have prevented her from carrying out her purpose. Her imperious determination was not to be resisted. And so Euthymia, a willing martyr, if martyr she was to be, and not saviour, passed within the veil that hid the sufferer.

Lurida turned deadly pale, and sank fainting to the ground. She was the first, but not the only one, of her sex that fainted as Euthymia disappeared in the smoke of the burning building. Even the rector grew very white in the face,—so white that one of his vestry-men begged him to sit down at once, and sprinkled a few drops of water on his forehead, to his great disgust and manifest advantage. The old landlady was crying and moaning, and her husband was wiping his eyes and shaking his head sadly.

“She will never come out alive,” he said solemnly.

“Nor dead, neither,” added the carpenter. “There won’t be nothing left of neither of ’em but ashes.” And the carpenter hid his face in his hands.

The fresh-water fisherman had pulled out a rag which he called a “handkercher,”—it had served to carry bait that morning,—and was making use of its best corner to dry the tears which were running down his cheeks. The whole village was proud of Euthymia, and with these more quiet signs of grief were mingled loud lamentations, coming alike from old and young.

All this was not so much like a succession of events as it was like a tableau. The lookers-on were stunned with its suddenness, and before they had time to recover their bewildered senses all was lost, or seemed lost. They felt that they should never look again on either of those young faces.

The rector, not unfeeling by nature, but inveterately professional by habit, had already recovered enough to be thinking of a text for the funeral sermon. The first that occurred to him was this,—vaguely, of course, in the background of consciousness:

“Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego came forth of the midst of the fire.”

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The village undertaker was of naturally sober aspect and reflective disposition. He had always been opposed to cremation, and here was a funeral pile blazing before his eyes. He, too, had his human sympathies, but in the distance his imagination pictured the final ceremony, and how he himself should figure in a spectacle where the usual centre piece of attraction would be wanting,—perhaps his own services uncalled for.

Blame him not, you whose garden-patch is not watered with the tears of mourners. The string of self-interest answers with its chord to every sound; it vibrates with the funeral-bell, it finds itself trembling to the wail of the *De Profundis*. Not always,—not always; let us not be cynical in our judgments, but common human nature, we may safely say, is subject to those secondary vibrations under the most solemn and soul-subduing influences.

It seems as if we were doing great wrong to the scene we are contemplating in delaying it by the description of little circumstances and individual thoughts and feelings. But linger as we may, we cannot compress into a chapter—we could not crowd into a volume—all that passed through the minds and stirred the emotions of the awe-struck company which was gathered about the scene of danger and of terror. We are dealing with an impossibility: consciousness is a surface; narrative is a line.

Maurice had given himself up for lost. His breathing was becoming every moment more difficult, and he felt that his strength could hold out but a few minutes longer.

“Robert!” he called in faint accents. But the attendant was not there to answer.

“Paolo! Paolo!” But the faithful servant, who would have given his life for his master, had not yet reached the place where the crowd was gathered.

“Oh, for a breath of air! Oh, for an arm to lift me from this bed! Too late! Too late!” he gasped, with what might have seemed his dying expiration.

“Not too late!” The soft voice reached his obscured consciousness as if it had come down to him from heaven.

In a single instant he found himself rolled in a blanket and in the arms of—a woman!

Out of the stifling chamber,—over the burning stairs,—close by the tongues of fire that were lapping up all they could reach,—out into the open air, he was borne swiftly and safely,—carried as easily as if he had been a babe, in the strong arms of “The Wonder” of the gymnasium, the captain of the *Atalanta*, who had little dreamed of the use she was to make of her natural gifts and her school-girl accomplishments.

Such a cry as arose from the crowd of on-lookers! It was a sound that none of them had ever heard before or could expect ever to hear again, unless he should be one of the last boat-load rescued from a sinking vessel. Then, those who had resisted the



overflow of their emotion, who had stood in white despair as they thought of these two young lives soon to be wrapped in their burning shroud,—those stern men—the old sea-captain, the hard-faced, moneymaking, cast-iron tradesmen of the city counting-room—sobbed like hysteric women; it was like a convulsion that overcame natures unused to those deeper emotions which many who are capable of experiencing die without ever knowing.

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This was the scene upon which the doctor and Paolo suddenly appeared at the same moment.

As the fresh breeze passed over the face of the rescued patient, his eyes opened wide, and his consciousness returned in almost supernatural lucidity. Euthymia had sat down upon a bank, and was still supporting him. His head was resting on her bosom. Through his awakening senses stole the murmurs of the living cradle which rocked him with the wavelike movements of respiration, the soft susurrus of the air that entered with every breath, the double beat of the heart which throbbed close to his ear. And every sense, and every instinct, and every reviving pulse told him in language like a revelation from another world that a woman's arms were around him, and that it was life, and not death, which her embrace had brought him.

She would have disengaged him from her protecting hold, but the doctor made her a peremptory sign, which he followed by a sharp command:—

“Do not move him a hair's breadth,” he said. “Wait until the litter comes. Any sudden movement might be dangerous. Has anybody a brandy flask about him?”

One or two members of the local temperance society looked rather awkward, but did not come forward.

The fresh-water fisherman was the first who spoke.

“I han't got no brandy,” he said, “but there's a drop or two of old Medford rum in this here that you're welcome to, if it'll be of any help. I alliz kerry a little on 't in case o' gettin' wet 'n' chilled.”

So saying he held forth a flat bottle with the word Sarsaparilla stamped on the green glass, but which contained half a pint or more of the specific on which he relied in those very frequent exposures which happen to persons of his calling.

The doctor motioned back Paolo, who would have rushed at once to the aid of Maurice, and who was not wanted at that moment. So poor Paolo, in an agony of fear for his master, was kept as quiet as possible, and had to content himself with asking all sorts of questions and repeating all the prayers he could think of to Our Lady and to his holy namesake the Apostle.

The doctor wiped the mouth of the fisherman's bottle very carefully. “Take a few drops of this cordial,” he said, as he held it to his patient's lips. “Hold him just so, Euthymia, without stirring. I will watch him, and say when he is ready to be moved. The litter is near by, waiting.” Dr. Butts watched Maurice's pulse and color. The “Old Medford” knew its business. It had knocked over its tens of thousands; it had its redeeming virtue, and helped to set up a poor fellow now and then. It did this for Maurice very

effectively. When he seemed somewhat restored, the doctor had the litter brought to his side, and Euthymia softly resigned her helpless burden, which Paolo and the attendant Robert lifted with the aid of the doctor, who walked by the patient as he was borne to the home where Mrs. Butts had made all ready for his reception.



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As for poor Lurida, who had thought herself equal to the sanguinary duties of the surgeon, she was left lying on the grass with an old woman over her, working hard with fan and smelling-salts to bring her back from her long fainting fit.

XXIV

The inevitable.

Why should not human nature be the same in Arrowhead Village as elsewhere? It could not seem strange to the good people of that place and their visitors that these two young persons, brought together under circumstances that stirred up the deepest emotions of which the human soul is capable, should become attached to each other. But the bond between them was stronger than any knew, except the good doctor, who had learned the great secret of Maurice's life. For the first time since his infancy he had fully felt the charm which the immediate presence of youthful womanhood carries with it. He could hardly believe the fact when he found himself no longer the subject of the terrifying seizures of which he had had many and threatening experiences.

It was the doctor's business to save his patient's life, if he could possibly do it. Maurice had been reduced to the most perilous state of debility by the relapse which had interrupted his convalescence. Only by what seemed almost a miracle had he survived the exposure to suffocation and the mental anguish through which he had passed. It was perfectly clear to Dr. Butts that if Maurice could see the young woman to whom he owed his life, and, as the doctor felt assured, the revolution in his nervous system which would be the beginning of a new existence, it would be of far more value as a restorative agency than any or all of the drugs in the pharmacopoeia. He told this to Euthymia, and explained the matter to her parents and friends. She must go with him on some of his visits. Her mother should go with her, or her sister; but this was a case of life and death, and no maidenly scruples must keep her from doing her duty.

The first of her visits to the sick, perhaps dying, man presented a scene not unlike the picture before spoken of on the title-page of the old edition of Galen. The doctor was perhaps the most agitated of the little group. He went before the others, took his seat by the bedside, and held the patient's wrist with his finger on the pulse. As Euthymia entered it gave a single bound, fluttered for an instant as if with a faint memory of its old habit, then throbbed full and strong, comparatively, as if under the spur of some powerful stimulus. Euthymia's task was a delicate one, but she knew how to disguise its difficulty.

"Here is a flower I have brought you, Mr. Kirkwood," she said, and handed him a white chrysanthemum. He took it from her hand, and before she knew it he took her hand into his own, and held it with a gentle constraint. What could she do? Here was the young

man whose life she had saved, at least for the moment, and who was yet in danger from the disease which had almost worn out his powers of resistance.

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"Sit down by Mr. Kirkwood's side," said the doctor. "He wants to thank you, if he has strength to do it, for saving him from the death which seemed inevitable."

Not many words could Maurice command. He was weak enough for womanly tears, but their fountains no longer flowed; it was with him as with the dying, whose eyes may light up, but rarely shed a tear.

The river which has found a new channel widens and deepens—it; it lets the old water-course fill up, and never returns to its forsaken bed. The tyrannous habit was broken. The prophecy of the gitana had verified itself, and the ill a fair woman had wrought a fairer woman had conquered and abolished.

The history of Maurice Kirkwood loses its exceptional character from the time of his restoration to his natural conditions. His convalescence was very slow and gradual, but no further accident interrupted its even progress. The season was over, the summer visitors had left Arrowhead Village; the chrysanthemums were going out of flower, the frosts had come, and Maurice was still beneath the roof of the kind physician. The relation between him and his preserver was so entirely apart from all common acquaintances and friendships that no ordinary rules could apply to it. Euthymia visited him often during the period of his extreme prostration.

"You must come every day," the doctor said. "He gains with every visit you make him; he pines if you miss him for a single day." So she came and sat by him, the doctor or good Mrs. Butts keeping her company in his presence. He grew stronger,—began to sit up in bed; and at last Euthymia found him dressed as in health, and beginning to walk about the room. She was startled. She had thought of herself as a kind of nurse, but the young gentleman could hardly be said to need a nurse any longer. She had scruples about making any further visits. She asked Lurida what she thought about it.

"Think about it?" said Lurida. "Why should n't you go to see a brother as well as a sister, I should like to know? If you are afraid to go to see Maurice Kirkwood, I am not afraid, at any rate. If you would rather have me go than go yourself, I will do it, and let people talk just as much as they want to. Shall I go instead of you?"

Euthymia was not quite sure that this would be the best thing for the patient. The doctor had told her he thought there were special reasons for her own course in coming daily to see him. "I am afraid," she said, "you are too bright to be safe for him in his weak state. Your mind is such a stimulating one, you know. A dull sort of person like myself is better for him just now. I will continue visiting him as long as the doctor says it is important that I should; but you must defend me, Lurida,—I know you can explain it all so that people will not blame me."

Euthymia knew full well what the effect of Lurida's penetrating head-voice would be in a convalescent's chamber. She knew how that active mind of hers would set the young

man's thoughts at work, when what he wanted was rest of every faculty. Were not these good and sufficient reasons for her decision? What others could there be?

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So Euthymia kept on with her visits, until she blushed to see that she was continuing her charitable office for one who was beginning to look too well to be called an invalid. It was a dangerous condition of affairs, and the busy tongues of the village gossips were free in their comments. Free, but kindly, for the story of the rescue had melted every heart; and what could be more natural than that these two young people whom God had brought together in the dread moment of peril should find it hard to tear themselves asunder after the hour of danger was past? When gratitude is a bankrupt, love only can pay his debts; and if Maurice gave his heart to Euthymia, would not she receive it as payment in full?

The change which had taken place in the vital currents of Maurice Kirkwood's system was as simple and solid a fact as the change in a magnetic needle when the boreal becomes the austral pole, and the austral the boreal. It was well, perhaps, that this change took place while he was enfeebled by the wasting effects of long illness. For all the long-defeated, disturbed, perverted instincts had found their natural channel from the centre of consciousness to the organ which throbs in response to every profound emotion. As his health gradually returned, Euthymia could not help perceiving a flush in his cheek, a glitter in his eyes, a something in the tone of his voice, which altogether were a warning to the young maiden that the highway of friendly intercourse was fast narrowing to a lane, at the head of which her woman's eye could read plainly enough, "Dangerous passing."

"You look so much better to-day, Mr. Kirkwood," she said, "that I think I had better not play Sister of Charity any longer. The next time we meet I hope you will be strong enough to call on me."

She was frightened to see how pale he turned,—he was weaker than she thought. There was a silence so profound and so long that Mrs. Butts looked up from the stocking she was knitting. They had forgotten the good woman's presence.

Presently Maurice spoke,—very faintly, but Mrs. Butts dropped a stitch at the first word, and her knitting fell into her lap as she listened to what followed.

"No! you must not leave me. You must never leave me. You saved my life. But you have done more than that,—more than you know or can ever know. To you I owe it that I am living; with you I live henceforth, if I am to live at all. All I am, all I hope,—will you take this poor offering from one who owes you everything, whose lips never touched those of woman or breathed a word of love before you?"

What could Euthymia reply to this question, uttered with all the depth of a passion which had never before found expression.

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Not one syllable of answer did listening Mrs. Butts overhear. But she told her husband afterwards that there was nothing in the tableaux they had had in September to compare with what she then saw. It was indeed a pleasing picture which those two young heads presented as Euthymia gave her inarticulate but infinitely expressive answer to the question of Maurice Kirkwood. The good-hearted woman thought it time to leave the young people. Down went the stocking with the needles in it; out of her lap tumbled the ball of worsted, rolling along the floor with its yarn trailing after it, like some village matron who goes about circulating from hearth to hearth, leaving all along her track the story of the new engagement or of the arrival of the last "little stranger."

Not many suns had set before it was told all through Arrowhead Village that Maurice Kirkwood was the accepted lover of Euthymia Tower.

POSTSCRIPT: AFTER-GLIMPSES.

Miss Lurida Vincent to Mrs. Euthymia Kirkwood. Arrowhead village, May 18.

My dearest Euthymia,—Who would have thought, when you broke your oar as the Atalanta flashed by the Algonquin, last June, that before the roses came again you would find yourself the wife of a fine scholar and grand gentleman, and the head of a household such as that of which you are the mistress? You must not forget your old Arrowhead Village friends. What am I saying?—you forget them! No, dearest, I know your heart too well for that! You are not one of those who lay aside their old friendships as they do last years bonnet when they get a new one. You have told me all about yourself and your happiness, and now you want me to tell you about myself and what is going on in our little place.

And first about myself. I have given up the idea of becoming a doctor. I have studied mathematics so much that I have grown fond of certainties, of demonstrations, and medicine deals chiefly in probabilities. The practice of the art is so mixed up with the deepest human interests that it is hard to pursue it with that even poise of the intellect which is demanded by science. I want knowledge pure and simple,—I do not fancy having it mixed. Neither do I like the thought of passing my life in going from one scene of suffering to another; I am not saintly enough for such a daily martyrdom, nor callous enough to make it an easy occupation. I fainted at the first operation I saw, and I have never wanted to see another. I don't say that I wouldn't marry a physician, if the right one asked me, but the young doctor is not forthcoming at present. Yes, I think I might make a pretty good doctor's wife. I could teach him a good deal about headaches and backaches and all sorts of nervous revolutions, as the doctor says the French women call their tantrums. I don't know but I should be willing to let him try his new

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medicines on me. If he were a homeopath, I know I should; for if a billionth of a grain of sugar won't begin to sweeten my tea or coffee, I don't feel afraid that a billionth of a grain of anything would poison me,—no, not if it were snake-venom; and if it were not disgusting, I would swallow a handful of his lachesis globules, to please my husband. But if I ever become a doctor's wife, my husband will not be one of that kind of practitioners, you may be sure of that, nor an "eclectic," nor a "faith-cure man." On the whole, I don't think I want to be married at all. I don't like the male animal very well (except such noble specimens as your husband). They are all tyrants,—almost all,—so far as our sex is concerned, and I often think we could get on better without them.

However, the creatures are useful in the Society. They send us papers, some of them well worth reading. You have told me so often that you would like to know how the Society is getting on, and to read some of the papers sent to it if they happened to be interesting, that I have laid aside one or two manuscripts expressly for your perusal. You will get them by and by.

I am delighted to know that you keep Paolo with you. Arrowhead Village misses him dreadfully, I can tell you. That is the reason people become so attached to these servants with Southern sunlight in their natures? I suppose life is not long enough to cool their blood down to our Northern standard. Then they are so child-like, whereas the native of these latitudes is never young after he is ten or twelve years old. Mother says,—you know mother's old-fashioned notions, and how shrewd and sensible she is in spite of them,—mother says that when she was a girl families used to import young men and young women from the country towns, who called themselves "helps," not servants,—no, that was Scriptural; "but they did n't know everything down in Judee," and it is not good American language. She says that these people would live in the same household until they were married, and the women often remain in the same service until they died or were old and worn out, and then, what with the money they had saved and the care and assistance they got from their former employers, would pass a decent and comfortable old age, and be buried in the family lot. Mother has made up her mind to the change, but grandmother is bitter about it. She says there never was a country yet where the population was made up of "ladies" and "gentlemen," and she does n't believe there can be; nor that putting a spread eagle on a copper makes a gold dollar of it. She is a pessimist after her own fashion. She thinks all sentiment is dying out of our people. No loyalty for the sovereign, the king-post of the political edifice, she says; no deep attachment between employer and employed; no reverence of the humbler members of a household for its heads; and to make sure of continued corruption and misery, what she calls "universal

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suffrage" emptying all the sewers into the great aqueduct we all must drink from. "Universal suffrage!" I suppose we women don't belong to the universe! Wait until we get a chance at the ballot-box, I tell grandma, and see if we don't wash out the sewers before they reach the aqueduct! But my pen has run away with men I was thinking of Paolo, and what a pleasant thing it is to have one of those child-like, warm-hearted, attachable, cheerful, contented, humble, faithful, companionable, but never presuming grownup children of the South waiting on one, as if everything he could do for one was a pleasure, and carrying a look of content in his face which makes every one who meets him happier for a glimpse of his features.

It does seem a shame that the charming relation of master and servant, intelligent authority and cheerful obedience, mutual interest in each other's welfare, thankful recognition of all the advantages which belong to domestic service in the better class of families, should be almost wholly confined to aliens and their immediate descendants. Why should Hannah think herself so much better than Bridget? When they meet at the polls together, as they will before long, they will begin to feel more of an equality than is recognized at present. The native female turns her nose up at the idea of "living out;" does she think herself so much superior to the women of other nationalities? Our women will have to come to it,—so grandmother says,—in another generation or two, and in a hundred years, according to her prophecy, there will be a new set of old "Miss Pollys" and "Miss Betseys" who have lived half a century in the same families, respectful and respected, cherished, cared for in time of need (citizens as well as servants, holding a ballot as well as a broom, I tell her), and bringing back to us the lowly, underfoot virtues of contentment and humility, which we do so need to carpet the barren and hungry thoroughfare of our unstratified existence.

There, I have got a-going, and am forgetting all the news I have to tell you. There is an engagement you will want to know all about. It came to pass through our famous boat-race, which you and I remember, and shall never forget as long as we live. It seems that the young fellow who pulled the bow oar of that men's college boat which we had the pleasure of beating got some glimpses of Georgina, our handsome stroke oar. I believe he took it into his head that it was she who threw the bouquet that won the race for us. He was, as you know, greatly mistaken, and ought to have made love to me, only he did n't. Well, it seems he came posting down to the Institute just before the vacation was over, and there got a sight of Georgina. I wonder whether she told him she didn't fling the bouquet! Anyhow, the acquaintance began in that way, and now it seems that this young fellow, good-looking and a bright scholar, but with a good many months more to pass in college, is her captive. It was too bad. Just think of my bouquet's going to another girl's credit! No matter, the old Atalanta story was paid off, at any rate.

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You want to know all about dear Dr. Butts. They say he has just been offered a Professorship in one of the great medical colleges. I asked him about it, and he did not say that he had or had not. "But," said he, "suppose that I had been offered such a place; do you think I ought to accept it and leave Arrowhead Village? Let us talk it over," said he, "just as if I had had such an offer." I told him he ought to stay. There are plenty of men that can get into a Professor's chair, I said, and talk like Solomons to a class of wondering pupils: but once get a really good doctor in a place, a man who knows all about everybody, whether they have this or that tendency, whether when they are sick they have a way of dying or a way of getting well, what medicines agree with them and what drugs they cannot take, whether they are of the sort that think nothing is the matter with them until they are dead as smoked herring, or of the sort that send for the minister if they get a stomach-ache from eating too many cucumbers,—who knows all about all the people within half a dozen miles (all the sensible ones, that is, who employ a regular practitioner),—such a man as that, I say, is not to be replaced like a missing piece out of a Springfield musket or a Waltham watch. Don't go! said I. Stay here and save our precious lives, if you can, or at least put us through in the proper way, so that we needn't be ashamed of ourselves for dying, if we must die. Well, Dr. Butts is not going to leave us. I hope you will have no unwelcome occasion for his services,—you are never ill, you know,—but, anyhow, he is going to be here, and no matter what happens he will be on hand.

The village news is not of a very exciting character. Item 1. A new house is put up over the ashes of the one in which your husband lived while he was here. It was planned by one of the autochthonous inhabitants with the most ingenious combination of inconveniences that the natural man could educe from his original perversity of intellect. To get at any one room you must pass through every other. It is blind, or nearly so, on the only side which has a good prospect, and commands a fine view of the barn and pigsty through numerous windows. Item 2. We have a small fire-engine near the new house which can be worked by a man or two, and would be equal to the emergency of putting out a bunch of fire-crackers. Item 3. We have a new ladder, in a bog, close to the new fire-engine, so if the new house catches fire, like its predecessor, and there should happen to, be a sick man on an upper floor, he can be got out without running the risk of going up and down a burning staircase. What a blessed thing it was that there was no fire-engine near by and no ladder at hand on the day of the great rescue! If there had been, what a change in your programme of life! You remember that "cup of tea spilt on Mrs. Masham's apron," which we used to read of in one of Everett's Orations, and all its

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wide-reaching consequences in the affairs of Europe. I hunted up that cup of tea as diligently as ever a Boston matron sought for the last leaves in her old caddy after the tea-chests had been flung overboard at Griffin's wharf,—but no matter about that, now. That is the way things come about in this world. I must write a lecture on lucky mishaps, or, more elegantly, fortunate calamities. It will be just the converse of that odd essay of Swift's we read together, the awkward and stupid things done with the best intentions. Perhaps I shall deliver the lecture in your city: you will come and hear it, and bring him, won't you, dearest? Always, your loving

Lurida.

MISS LURIDA VINCENT TO MRS. EUTHYMIA KIRKWOOD.

It seems forever since you left us, dearest Euthymia! And are you, and is your husband, and Paolo,—good Paolo,—are you all as well and happy as you have been and as you ought to be? I suppose our small village seems a very quiet sort of place to pass the winter in, now that you have become accustomed to the noise and gayety of a great city. For all that, it is a pretty busy place this winter, I can tell you. We have sleighing parties,—I never go to them, myself, because I can't keep warm, and my mind freezes up when my blood cools down below 95 or 96 deg. Fahrenheit. I had a great deal rather sit by a good fire and read about Arctic discoveries. But I like very well to hear the bells' jingling and to see the young people trying to have a good time as hard as they do at a picnic. It may be that they do, but to me a picnic is purgatory and a sleigh-ride that other place, where, as my favorite Milton says, "frost performs the effect of fire." I believe I have quoted him correctly; I ought to, for I could repeat half his poems from memory once, if I cannot now.

You must have plenty of excitement in your city life. I suppose you recognized yourself in one of the society columns of the "Household Inquisitor:" "Mrs. E. K., very beautiful, in an elegant," *etc.*, *etc.*, "with pearls," *etc.*, *etc.*,—as if you were not the ornament of all that you wear, no matter what it is!

I am so glad that you have married a scholar! Why should not Maurice—you both tell me to call him so—take the diplomatic office which has been offered him? It seems to me that he would find himself in exactly the right place. He can talk in two or three languages, has good manners, and a wife who—well, what shall I say of Mrs. Kirkwood but that "she would be good company for a queen," as our old friend the quondam landlady of the Anchor Tavern used to say? I should so like to see you presented at Court! It seems to me that I should be willing to hold your train for the sake of seeing you in your court feathers and things.

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As for myself, I have been thinking of late that I would become either a professional lecturer or head mistress of a great school or college for girls. I have tried the first business a little. Last month I delivered a lecture on Quaternions. I got three for my audience; two came over from the Institute, and one from that men's college which they try to make out to be a university, and where no female is admitted unless she belongs among the quadrupeds. I enjoyed lecturing, but the subject is a difficult one, and I don't think any one of them had any very clear notion of what I was talking about, except Rhodora,—and I know she did n't. To tell the truth, I was lecturing to instruct myself. I mean to try something easier next time. I have thought of the Basque language and literature. What do you say to that?

The Society goes on famously. We have had a paper presented and read lately which has greatly amused some of us and provoked a few of the weaker sort. The writer is that crabbed old Professor of Belles-Lettres at that men's college over there. He is dreadfully hard on the poor "poets," as they call themselves. It seems that a great many young persons, and more especially a great many young girls, of whom the Institute has furnished a considerable proportion, have taken to sending him their rhymed productions to be criticised,—expecting to be praised, no doubt, every one of them. I must give you one of the sauciest extracts from his paper in his own words:

"It takes half my time to read the 'poems' sent me by young people of both sexes. They would be more shy of doing it if they knew that I recognize a tendency to rhyming as a common form of mental weakness, and the publication of a thin volume of verse as prima facie evidence of ambitious mediocrity, if not inferiority. Of course there are exceptions to this rule of judgment, but I maintain that the presumption is always against the rhymester as compared with the less pretentious persons about him or her, busy with some useful calling,—too busy to be tagging rhymed commonplaces together. Just now there seems to be an epidemic of rhyming as bad as the dancing mania, or the sweating sickness. After reading a certain amount of manuscript verse one is disposed to anathematize the inventor of homophonous syllabification. [This phrase made a great laugh when it was read.] This, that is rhyming, must have been found out very early,

"'Where are you, Adam?'

"'Here am I, Madam;'

"but it can never have been habitually practised until after the Fall. The intrusion of tintinnabulating terminations into the conversational intercourse of men and angels would have spoiled Paradise itself. Milton would not have them even in Paradise Lost, you remember. For my own part, I wish certain rhymes could be declared contraband of written or printed language. Nothing should be allowed to be hurled at the world or whirled with it, or furred

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upon it or curled over it; all eyes should be kept away from the skies, in spite of os homini sublime dedit; youth should be coupled with all the virtues except truth; earth should never be reminded of her birth; death should never be allowed to stop a mortal's breath, nor the bell to sound his knell, nor flowers from blossoming bowers to wave over his grave or show their bloom upon his tomb. We have rhyming dictionaries,—let us have one from which all rhymes are rigorously excluded. The sight of a poor creature grubbing for rhymes to fill up his sonnet, or to cram one of those voracious, rhyme-swallowing rigmaroles which some of our drudging poetical operatives have been exhausting themselves of late to satiate with jingles, makes my head ache and my stomach rebel. Work, work of some kind, is the business of men and women, not the making of jingles! No,—no,—no! I want to see the young people in our schools and academies and colleges, and the graduates of these institutions, lifted up out of the little Dismal Swamp of self-contemplating and self-indulging and self-commiserating emotionalism which is surfeiting the land with those literary sandwiches,—thin slices of tinkling sentimentality between two covers looking like hard-baked gilt gingerbread. But what faces these young folks make up at my good advice! They get tipsy on their rhymes. Nothing intoxicates one like his—or her—own verses, and they hold on to their metre-ballad-mongering as the fellows that inhale nitrous oxide hold on to the gas-bag.”

We laughed over this essay of the old Professor; though it hit us pretty hard. The best part of the joke is that the old man himself published a thin volume of poems when he was young, which there is good reason to think he is not very proud of, as they say he buys up all the copies he can find in the shops. No matter what they say, I can't help agreeing with him about this great flood of “poetry,” as it calls itself, and looking at the rhyming mania much as he does.

How I do love real poetry! That is the reason hate rhymes which have not a particle of it in them. The foolish scribblers that deal in them are like bad workmen in a carpenter's shop. They not only turn out bad jobs of work, but they spoil the tools for better workmen. There is hardly a pair of rhymes in the English language that is not so dulled and hacked and gapped by these 'prentice hands that a master of the craft hates to touch them, and yet he cannot very well do without them. I have not been besieged as the old Professor has been with such multitudes of would-be-poetical aspirants that he could not even read their manuscripts, but I have had a good many letters containing verses, and I have warned the writers of the delusion under which they were laboring.

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You may like to know that I have just been translating some extracts from the Greek Anthology. I send you a few specimens of my work, with a Dedication to the Shade of Sappho. I hope you will find something of the Greek rhythm in my versions, and that I have caught a spark of inspiration from the impassioned Lesbian. I have found great delight in this work, at any rate, and am never so happy as when I read from my manuscript or repeat from memory the lines into which I have transferred the thought of the men and women of two thousand years ago, or given rhythmical expression to my own rapturous feelings with regard to them. I must read you my Dedication to the Shade of Sappho. I cannot help thinking that you will like it better than either of my last two, *The Song of the Roses*, or *The Wail of the Weeds*.

How I do miss you, dearest! I want you: I want you to listen to what I have written; I want you to hear all about my plans for the future; I want to look at you, and think how grand it must be to feel one's self to be such a noble and beautiful-creature; I want to wander in the woods with you, to float on the lake, to share your life and talk over every day's doings with you. Alas! I feel that we have parted as two friends part at a port of embarkation: they embrace, they kiss each other's cheeks, they cover their faces and weep, they try to speak good-by to each other, they watch from the pier and from the deck; the two forms grow less and less, fainter and fainter in the distance, two white handkerchiefs flutter once and again, and yet once more, and the last visible link of the chain which binds them has parted. Dear, dear, dearest Euthymia, my eyes are running over with tears when I think that we may never, never meet again.

Don't you want some more items of village news? We are threatened with an influx of stylish people: "Buttons" to answer the door-bell, in place of the chamber-maid; "butler," in place of the "hired man;" footman in top-boots and breeches, cockade on hat, arms folded a la Napoleon; tandems, "drags," dogcarts, and go-carts of all sorts. It is rather amusing to look at their ambitious displays, but it takes away the good old country flavor of the place.

I don't believe you mean to try to astonish us when you come back to spend your summers here. I suppose you must have a large house, and I am sure you will have a beautiful one. I suppose you will have some fine horses, and who would n't be glad to? But I do not believe you will try to make your old Arrowhead Village friends stare their eyes out of their heads with a display meant to outshine everybody else that comes here. You can have a yacht on the lake, if you like, but I hope you will pull a pair of oars in our old boat once in a while, with me to steer you. I know you will be just the same dear-Euthymia you always were and always must be. How happy you must make such a man as Maurice Kirkwood! And how happy you ought to

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be with him!—a man who knows what is in books, and who has seen for himself, what is in men. If he has not seen so much of women, where could he study all that is best in womanhood as he can in his own wife? Only one thing that dear Euthymia lacks. She is not quite pronounced enough in her views as to the rights and the wrongs of the sex. When I visit you, as you say I shall, I mean to indoctrinate Maurice with sound views on that subject. I have written an essay for the Society, which I hope will go a good way towards answering all the objections to female suffrage. I mean to read it to your husband, if you will let me, as I know you will, and perhaps you would like to hear it,—only you know my thoughts on the subject pretty well already.

With all sorts of kind messages to your dear husband, and love to your precious self, I am ever your *Lurida*.

DR. BUTTS TO MRS. EUTHYMIA KIRKWOOD.

My dear Euthymia,—My pen refuses to call you by any other name. Sweet-souled you are, and your Latinized Greek name is—the one which truly designates you. I cannot tell you how we have followed you, with what interest and delight through your travels, as you have told their story in your letters to your mother. She has let us have the privilege of reading them, and we have been with you in steamer, yacht, felucca, gondola, Nile-boat; in all sorts of places, from crowded capitals to “deserts where no men abide,”—everywhere keeping company with you in your natural and pleasant descriptions of your experiences. And now that you have returned to your home in the great city I must write you a few lines of welcome, if nothing more.

You will find Arrowhead Village a good deal changed since you left it. We are discovered by some of those over-rich people who make the little place upon which they swarm a kind of rural city. When this happens the consequences are striking,—some of them desirable and some far otherwise. The effect of well-built, well-furnished, well-kept houses and of handsome grounds always maintained in good order about them shows itself in a large circuit around the fashionable centre. Houses get on a new coat of paint, fences are kept in better order, little plots of flowers show themselves where only ragged weeds had rioted, the inhabitants present themselves in more comely attire and drive in handsomer vehicles with more carefully groomed horses. On the other hand, there is a natural jealousy on the part of the natives of the region suddenly become fashionable. They have seen the land they sold at farm prices by the acre coming to be valued by the foot, like the corner lots in a city. Their simple and humble modes of life look almost poverty-stricken in the glare of wealth and luxury which so outshines their plain way of living. It is true that many of them have found them selves richer than in former days, when the neighborhood lived on its own resources.

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They know how to avail themselves of their altered position, and soon learn to charge city prices for country products; but nothing can make people feel rich who see themselves surrounded by men whose yearly income is many times their own whole capital. I think it would be better if our rich men scattered themselves more than they do,—buying large country estates, building houses and stables which will make it easy to entertain their friends, and depending for society on chosen guests rather than on the mob of millionaires who come together for social rivalry. But I do not fret myself about it. Society will stratify itself according to the laws of social gravitation. It will take a generation or two more, perhaps, to arrange the strata by precipitation and settlement, but we can always depend on one principle to govern the arrangement of the layers. People interested in the same things will naturally come together. The youthful heirs of fortunes who keep splendid yachts have little to talk about with the oarsman who pulls about on the lake or the river. What does young Dives, who drives his four-in-hand and keeps a stable full of horses, care about Lazarus, who feels rich in the possession of a horse-railroad ticket? You know how we live at our house, plainly, but with a certain degree of cultivated propriety. We make no pretensions to what is called “style.” We are still in that social stratum where the article called “a napkin-ring” is recognized as admissible at the dinner-table. That fact sufficiently defines our modest pretensions. The napkin-ring is the boundary mark between certain classes. But one evening Mrs. Butts and I went out to a party given by the lady of a worthy family, where the napkin itself was a newly introduced luxury. The conversation of the hostess and her guests turned upon details of the kitchen and the laundry; upon the best mode of raising bread, whether with “emptins” (emptyings, yeast) or baking powder; about “bluing” and starching and crimping, and similar matters. Poor Mrs. Butts! She knew nothing more about such things than her hostess did about Shakespeare and the musical glasses. What was the use of trying to enforce social intercourse under such conditions? Incompatibility of temper has been considered ground for a divorce; incompatibility of interests is a sufficient warrant for social separation. The multimillionaires have so much that is common among themselves, and so little that they share with us of moderate means, that they will naturally form a specialized class, and in virtue of their palaces, their picture-galleries, their equipages, their yachts, their large hospitality, constitute a kind of exclusive aristocracy. Religion, which ought to be the great leveller, cannot reduce these elements to the same grade. You may read in the parable, “Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?” The modern version would be, “How came you at Mrs. Billion’s ball not having a dress on your back which came from Paris?”

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The little church has got a new stained window, a saint who reminds me of Hamlet's uncle,—a thing “of shreds and patches,” but rather pretty to look at, with an inscription under it which is supposed to be the name of the person in whose honor the window was placed in the church. Smith was a worthy man and a faithful churchwarden, and I hope posterity will be able to spell out his name on his monumental window; but that old English lettering would puzzle Mephistopheles himself, if he found himself before this memorial tribute, on the inside,—you know he goes to church sometimes, if you remember your Faust.

The rector has come out, in a quiet way, as an evolutionist. He has always been rather “broad” in his views, but cautious in their expression. You can tell the three branches of the mother-island church by the way they carry their heads. The low-church clergy look down, as if they felt themselves to be worms of the dust; the high-church priest drops his head on one side, after the pattern of the mediaeval saints; the broad-church preacher looks forward and round about him, as if he felt himself the heir of creation. Our rector carries his head in the broad-church aspect, which I suppose is the least open to the charge of affectation,—in fact, is the natural and manly way of carrying it.

The Society has justified its name of Pansophian of late as never before. Lurida has stirred up our little community and its neighbors, so that we get essays on all sorts of subjects, poems and stories in large numbers. I know all about it, for she often consults me as to the merits of a particular contribution.

What is to be the fate of Lurida? I often think, with no little interest and some degree of anxiety, about her future. Her body is so frail and her mind so excessively and constantly active that I am afraid one or the other will give way. I do not suppose she thinks seriously of ever being married. She grows more and more zealous in behalf of her own sex, and sterner in her judgment of the other. She declares that she never would marry any man who was not an advocate of female suffrage, and as these gentlemen are not very common hereabouts the chance is against her capturing any one of the hostile sex.

What do you think? I happened, just as I was writing the last sentence, to look out of my window, and whom should I see but Lurida, with a young man in tow, listening very eagerly to her conversation, according to all appearance! I think he must be a friend of the rector, as I have seen a young man like this one in his company. Who knows?

Affectionately yours, *etc.*

DR. BUTTS TO MRS. BUTTS.

My beloved wife,—This letter will tell you more news than you would have thought could have been got together in this little village during the short time you have been staying away from it.

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Lurida Vincent is engaged! He is a clergyman with a mathematical turn. The story is that he put a difficult problem into one of the mathematical journals, and that Lurida presented such a neat solution that the young man fell in love with her on the strength of it. I don't think the story is literally true, nor do I believe that other report that he offered himself to her in the form of an equation chalked on the blackboard; but that it was an intellectual rather than a sentimental courtship I do not doubt. Lurida has given up the idea of becoming a professional lecturer,—so she tells me,—thinking that her future husband's parish will find her work enough to do. A certain amount of daily domestic drudgery and unexciting intercourse with simple-minded people will be the best thing in the world for that brain of hers, always simmering with some new project in its least fervid condition.

All our summer visitors have arrived. Euthymia Mrs. Maurice Kirkwood and her husband and little Maurice are here in their beautiful house looking out on the lake. They gave a grand party the other evening. You ought to have been there, but I suppose you could not very well have left your sister in the middle of your visit: All the grand folks were there, of course. Lurida and her young man—Gabriel is what she calls him—were naturally the objects of special attention. Paolo acted as major-domo, and looked as if he ought to be a major-general. Nothing could be pleasanter than the way in which Mr. and Mrs. Kirkwood received their plain country neighbors; that is, just as they did the others of more pretensions, as if they were really glad to see them, as I am sure they were. The old landlord and his wife had two arm-chairs to themselves, and I saw Miranda with the servants of the household looking in at the dancers and out at the little groups in the garden, and evidently enjoying it as much as her old employers. It was a most charming and successful party. We had two sensations in the course of the evening. One was pleasant and somewhat exciting, the other was thrilling and of strange and startling interest.

You remember how emaciated poor Maurice Kirkwood was left after his fever, in that first season when he was among us. He was out in a boat one day, when a ring slipped off his thin finger and sunk in a place where the water was rather shallow. "Jake"—you know Jake,—everybody knows Jake—was rowing him. He promised to come to the spot and fish up the ring if he could possibly find it. He was seen poking about with fish-hooks at the end of a pole, but nothing was ever heard from him about the ring. It was an antique intaglio stone in an Etruscan setting,—a wild goose flying over the Campagna. Mr. Kirkwood valued it highly, and regretted its loss very much.

While we were in the garden, who should appear at the gate but Jake, with a great basket, inquiring for Mr. Kirkwood. "Come," said Maurice to me, "let us see what our old friend the fisherman has brought us. What have you got there, Jake?"

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"What I 've got? Wall, I 'll tell y' what I've got: I 've got the biggest pickerel that's been ketched in this pond for these ten year. An' I 've got somethin' else besides the pickerel. When I come to cut him open, what do you think I faound in his insides but this here ring o' yourn,"—and he showed the one Maurice had lost so long before.

There it was, as good as new, after having tried Jonah's style of housekeeping for all that time. There are those who discredit Jake's story about finding the ring in the fish; anyhow, there was the ring and there was the pickerel. I need not say that Jake went off well paid for his pickerel and the precious contents of its stomach. Now comes the chief event of the evening. I went early by special invitation. Maurice took me into his library, and we sat down together.

"I have something of great importance," he said, "to say to you. I learned within a few days that my cousin Laura is staying with a friend in the next town to this. You know, doctor, that we have never met since the last, almost fatal, experience of my early years. I have determined to defy the strength of that deadly chain of associations connected with her presence, and I have begged her to come this evening with the friends with whom she is staying. Several letters passed between us, for it was hard to persuade her that there was no longer any risk in my meeting her. Her imagination was almost as deeply impressed as mine had been at those alarming interviews, and I had to explain to her fully that I had become quite indifferent to the disturbing impressions of former years. So, as the result of our correspondence, Laura is coming this evening, and I wish you to be present at our meeting. There is another reason why I wish you to be here. My little boy is not far from the—age at which I received my terrifying, almost disorganizing shock. I mean to have little Maurice brought into the presence of Laura, who is said to be still a very handsome woman, and see if he betrays any hint of that peculiar sensitiveness which showed itself in my threatening seizure. It seemed to me not impossible that he might inherit some tendency of that nature, and I wanted you to be at hand if any sign of danger should declare itself. For myself I have no fear. Some radical change has taken place in my nervous system. I have been born again, as it were, in my susceptibilities, and am in certain respects a new man. But I must know how it is with my little Maurice."

Imagine with what interest I looked forward to this experiment; for experiment it was, and not without its sources of anxiety, as it seemed to me. The evening wore along; friends and neighbors came in, but no Laura as yet. At last I heard the sound of wheels, and a carriage stopped at the door. Two ladies and a gentleman got out, and soon entered the drawing room.

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"My cousin Laura!" whispered Maurice to me, and went forward to meet her. A very handsome woman, who might well have been in the thirties,—one of those women so thoroughly constituted that they cannot help being handsome at every period of life. I watched them both as they approached each other. Both looked pale at first, but Maurice soon recovered his usual color, and Laura's natural, rich bloom came back by degrees. Their emotion at meeting was not to be wondered at, but there was no trace in it of the paralyzing influence on the great centres of life which had once acted upon its fated victim like the fabled head which turned the looker-on into a stone.

"Is the boy still awake?" said Maurice to Paolo, who, as they used to say of Pushee at the old Anchor Tavern, was everywhere at once on that gay and busy evening.

"What! Mahser Maurice asleep an' all this racket going on? I hear him crowing like young cockerel when he fus' smell daylight."

"Tell the nurse to bring him down quietly to the little room that leads out of the library."

The child was brought down in his night-clothes, wide awake, wondering apparently at the noise he heard, which he seemed to think was for his special amusement.

"See if he will go to that lady," said his father. Both of us held our breath as Laura stretched her arms towards little Maurice.

The child looked for an instant searchingly, but fearlessly, at her glowing cheeks, her bright eyes, her welcoming smile, and met her embrace as she clasped him to her bosom as if he had known her all his days.

The mortal antipathy had died out of the soul and the blood of Maurice Kirkwood at that supreme moment when he found himself snatched from the grasp of death and cradled in the arms of Euthymia.

In closing the New Portfolio I remember that it began with a prefix which the reader may by this time have forgotten, namely, the First Opening. It was perhaps presumptuous to thus imply the probability of a second opening.

I am reminded from time to time by the correspondents who ask a certain small favor of me that, as I can only expect to be with my surviving contemporaries a very little while longer, they would be much obliged if I would hurry up my answer before it is too late. They are right, these delicious unknown friends of mine, in reminding me of a fact which I cannot gainsay and might suffer to pass from my recollection. I thank them for

recalling my attention to a truth which I shall be wiser, if not more hilarious, for remembering.

No, I had no right to say the First Opening. How do I know that I shall have a chance to open it again? How do I know that anybody will want it to be opened a second time? How do I know that I shall feel like opening it? It is safest neither to promise to open the New Portfolio once more, nor yet to pledge myself to keep it closed hereafter. There are many papers potentially existent in it, some of which might interest a reader here and there. The Records of the Pansophian Society contain a considerable number of essays, poems, stories, and hints capable of being expanded into presentable dimensions. In the mean time I will say with Prospero, addressing my old readers, and my new ones, if such I have,

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"If you be pleased, retire into my cell
And there repose: a turn or two I'll walk,
To still my beating mind."

When it has got quiet I may take up the New Portfolio again, and consider whether it is worth while to open it consider whether it is worth while to open it.

PAGES FROM AN OLD VOLUME OF LIFE

A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS

By Oliver Wendell Holmes

Contents:

Bread and the newspaper
my hunt after "The captain"
The inevitable trial
cinders from ashes
the pulpit and the pew

BREAD AND THE NEWSPAPER.

(September, 1861.)

This is the new version of the Panem et Circenses of the Roman populace. It is our ultimatum, as that was theirs. They must have something to eat, and the circus-shows to look at. We must have something to eat, and the papers to read.

Everything else we can give up. If we are rich, we can lay down our carriages, stay away from Newport or Saratoga, and adjourn the trip to Europe sine die. If we live in a small way, there are at least new dresses and bonnets and every-day luxuries which we can dispense with. If the young Zouave of the family looks smart in his new uniform, its respectable head is content, though he himself grow seedy as a caraway-umbel late in the season. He will cheerfully calm the perturbed nap of his old beaver by patient brushing in place of buying a new one, if only the Lieutenant's jaunty cap is what it should be. We all take a pride in sharing the epidemic economy of the time. Only bread and the newspaper we must have, whatever else we do without.

How this war is simplifying our mode of being! We live on our emotions, as the sick man is said in the common speech to be nourished by his fever. Our ordinary mental food has become distasteful, and what would have been intellectual luxuries at other times, are now absolutely repulsive.

All this change in our manner of existence implies that we have experienced some very profound impression, which will sooner or later betray itself in permanent effects on the minds and bodies of many among us. We cannot forget Corvisart's observation of the frequency with which diseases of the heart were noticed as the consequence of the terrible emotions produced by the scenes of the great French Revolution. Laennec tells the story of a convent, of which he was the medical director, where all the nuns were subjected to the severest penances and schooled in the most painful doctrines. They all became consumptive soon after their entrance, so that, in the course of his ten years' attendance, all the inmates died out two or three times, and were replaced by new ones. He does not hesitate to attribute the disease from which they suffered to those depressing moral influences to which they were subjected.

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So far we have noticed little more than disturbances of the nervous system as a consequence of the war excitement in non-combatants. Take the first trifling example which comes to our recollection. A sad disaster to the Federal army was told the other day in the presence of two gentlemen and a lady. Both the gentlemen complained of a sudden feeling at the epigastrium, or, less learnedly, the pit of the stomach, changed color, and confessed to a slight tremor about the knees. The lady had a “grande revolution,” as French patients say,—went home, and kept her bed for the rest of the day. Perhaps the reader may smile at the mention of such trivial indispositions, but in more sensitive natures death itself follows in some cases from no more serious cause. An old, gentleman fell senseless in fatal apoplexy, on hearing of Napoleon’s return from Elba. One of our early friends, who recently died of the same complaint, was thought to have had his attack mainly in consequence of the excitements of the time.

We all know what the war fever is in our young men,—what a devouring passion it becomes in those whom it assails. Patriotism is the fire of it, no doubt, but this is fed with fuel of all sorts. The love of adventure, the contagion of example, the fear of losing the chance of participating in the great events of the time, the desire of personal distinction, all help to produce those singular transformations which we often witness, turning the most peaceful of our youth into the most ardent of our soldiers. But something of the same fever in a different form reaches a good many non-combatants, who have no thought of losing a drop of precious blood belonging to themselves or their families. Some of the symptoms we shall mention are almost universal; they are as plain in the people we meet everywhere as the marks of an influenza, when that is prevailing.

The first is a nervous restlessness of a very peculiar character. Men cannot think, or write, or attend to their ordinary business. They stroll up and down the streets, or saunter out upon the public places. We confessed to an illustrious author that we laid down the volume of his work which we were reading when the war broke out. It was as interesting as a romance, but the romance of the past grew pale before the red light of the terrible present. Meeting the same author not long afterwards, he confessed that he had laid down his pen at the same time that we had closed his book. He could not write about the sixteenth century any more than we could read about it, while the nineteenth was in the very agony and bloody sweat of its great sacrifice.

Another most eminent scholar told us in all simplicity that he had fallen into such a state that he would read the same telegraphic dispatches over and over again in different papers, as if they were new, until he felt as if he were an idiot. Who did not do just the same thing, and does not often do it still, now that the first flush of the fever is over? Another person always goes through the side streets on his way for the noon extra,—he is so afraid somebody will meet him and tell the news he wishes to read, first on the bulletin-board, and then in the great capitals and leaded type of the newspaper.

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When any startling piece of war-news comes, it keeps repeating itself in our minds in spite of all we can do. The same trains of thought go tramping round in circle through the brain, like the supernumeraries that make up the grand army of a stage-show. Now, if a thought goes round through the brain a thousand times in a day, it will have worn as deep a track as one which has passed through it once a week for twenty years. This accounts for the ages we seem to have lived since the twelfth of April last, and, to state it more generally, for that ex post facto operation of a great calamity, or any very powerful impression, which we once illustrated by the image of a stain spreading backwards from the leaf of life open before as through all those which we have already turned.

Blessed are those who can sleep quietly in times like these! Yet, not wholly blessed, either; for what is more painful than the awaking from peaceful unconsciousness to a sense that there is something wrong, we cannot at first think what,—and then groping our way about through the twilight of our thoughts until we come full upon the misery, which, like some evil bird, seemed to have flown away, but which sits waiting for us on its perch by our pillow in the gray of the morning?

The converse of this is perhaps still more painful. Many have the feeling in their waking hours that the trouble they are aching with is, after all, only a dream,—if they will rub their eyes briskly enough and shake themselves, they will awake out of it, and find all their supposed grief is unreal. This attempt to cajole ourselves out of an ugly fact always reminds us of those unhappy flies who have been indulging in the dangerous sweets of the paper prepared for their especial use.

Watch one of them. He does not feel quite well,—at least, he suspects himself of indisposition. Nothing serious,—let us just rub our fore-feet together, as the enormous creature who provides for us rubs his hands, and all will be right. He rubs them with that peculiar twisting movement of his, and pauses for the effect. No! all is not quite right yet. Ah! it is our head that is not set on just as it ought to be. Let us settle that where it should be, and then we shall certainly be in good trim again. So he pulls his head about as an old lady adjusts her cap, and passes his fore-paw over it like a kitten washing herself. Poor fellow! It is not a fancy, but a fact, that he has to deal with. If he could read the letters at the head of the sheet, he would see they were Fly-Paper.—So with us, when, in our waking misery, we try to think we dream! Perhaps very young persons may not understand this; as we grow older, our waking and dreaming life run more and more into each other.

Another symptom of our excited condition is seen in the breaking up of old habits. The newspaper is as imperious as a Russian Ukase; it will be had, and it will be read. To this all else must give place. If we must go out at unusual hours to get it, we shall go, in spite of after-dinner nap or evening somnolence. If it finds us in company, it will not stand on ceremony, but cuts short the compliment and the story by the divine right of its telegraphic dispatches.

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War is a very old story, but it is a new one to this generation of Americans. Our own nearest relation in the ascending line remembers the Revolution well. How should she forget it? Did she not lose her doll, which was left behind, when she was carried out of Boston, about that time growing uncomfortable by reason of cannon-balls dropping in from the neighboring heights at all hours,—in token of which see the tower of Brattle Street Church at this very day? War in her memory means '76. As for the brush of 1812, "we did not think much about that"; and everybody knows that the Mexican business did not concern us much, except in its political relations. No! war is a new thing to all of us who are not in the last quarter of their century. We are learning many strange matters from our fresh experience. And besides, there are new conditions of existence which make war as it is with us very different from war as it has been.

The first and obvious difference consists in the fact that the whole nation is now penetrated by the ramifications of a network of iron nerves which flash sensation and volition backward and forward to and from towns and provinces as if they were organs and limbs of a single living body. The second is the vast system of iron muscles which, as it were, move the limbs of the mighty organism one upon another. What was the railroad-force which put the Sixth Regiment in Baltimore on the 19th of April but a contraction and extension of the arm of Massachusetts with a clenched fist full of bayonets at the end of it?

This perpetual intercommunication, joined to the power of instantaneous action, keeps us always alive with excitement. It is not a breathless courier who comes back with the report from an army we have lost sight of for a month, nor a single bulletin which tells us all we are to know for a week of some great engagement, but almost hourly paragraphs, laden with truth or falsehood as the case may be, making us restless always for the last fact or rumor they are telling. And so of the movements of our armies. To-night the stout lumbermen of Maine are encamped under their own fragrant pines. In a score or two of hours they are among the tobacco-fields and the slave-pens of Virginia. The war passion burned like scattered coals of fire in the households of Revolutionary times; now it rushes all through the land like a flame over the prairie. And this instant diffusion of every fact and feeling produces another singular effect in the equalizing and steadying of public opinion. We may not be able to see a month ahead of us; but as to what has passed a week afterwards it is as thoroughly talked out and judged as it would have been in a whole season before our national nervous system was organized.

"As the wild tempest wakes the slumbering sea,
Thou only teachest all that man can be!"

We indulged in the above apostrophe to War in a Phi Beta Kappa poem of long ago, which we liked better before we read Mr. Cutler's beautiful prolonged lyric delivered at the recent anniversary of that Society.

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Oftentimes, in paroxysms of peace and good-will towards all mankind, we have felt twinges of conscience about the passage,—especially when one of our orators showed us that a ship of war costs as much to build and keep as a college, and that every port-hole we could stop would give us a new professor. Now we begin to think that there was some meaning in our poor couplet. War has taught us, as nothing else could, what we can be and are. It has exalted our manhood and our womanhood, and driven us all back upon our substantial human qualities, for a long time more or less kept out of sight by the spirit of commerce, the love of art, science, or literature, or other qualities not belonging to all of us as men and women.

It is at this very moment doing more to melt away the petty social distinctions which keep generous souls apart from each other, than the preaching of the Beloved Disciple himself would do. We are finding out that not only “patriotism is eloquence,” but that heroism is gentility. All ranks are wonderfully equalized under the fire of a masked battery. The plain artisan or the rough fireman, who faces the lead and iron like a man, is the truest representative we can show of the heroes of Crecy and Agincourt. And if one of our fine gentlemen puts off his straw-colored kids and stands by the other, shoulder to shoulder, or leads him on to the attack, he is as honorable in our eyes and in theirs as if he were ill-dressed and his hands were soiled with labor.

Even our poor “Brahmins,”—whom a critic in ground-glass spectacles (the same who grasps his statistics by the blade and strikes at his supposed antagonist with the handle) oddly confounds with the, “bloated aristocracy;” whereas they are very commonly pallid, undervitalized, shy, sensitive creatures, whose only birthright is an aptitude for learning,—even these poor New England Brahmins of ours, subvirates of an organizable base as they often are, count as full men, if their courage is big enough for the uniform which hangs so loosely about their slender figures.

A young man was drowned not very long ago in the river running under our windows. A few days afterwards a field piece was dragged to the water’s edge, and fired many times over the river. We asked a bystander, who looked like a fisherman, what that was for. It was to “break the gall,” he said, and so bring the drowned person to the surface. A strange physiological fancy and a very odd non sequitur; but that is not our present point. A good many extraordinary objects do really come to the surface when the great guns of war shake the waters, as when they roared over Charleston harbor.

Treason came up, hideous, fit only to be huddled into its dishonorable grave. But the wrecks of precious virtues, which had been covered with the waves of prosperity, came up also. And all sorts of unexpected and unheard-of things, which had lain unseen during our national life of fourscore years, came up and are coming up daily, shaken from their bed by the concussions of the artillery bellowing around us.

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It is a shame to own it, but there were persons otherwise respectable not unwilling to say that they believed the old valor of Revolutionary times had died out from among us. They talked about our own Northern people as the English in the last centuries used to talk about the French,—Goldsmith's old soldier, it may be remembered, called one Englishman good for five of them. As Napoleon spoke of the English, again, as a nation of shopkeepers, so these persons affected to consider the multitude of their countrymen as unwarlike artisans,—forgetting that Paul Revere taught himself the value of liberty in working upon gold, and Nathaniel Greene fitted himself to shape armies in the labor of forging iron. These persons have learned better now. The bravery of our free working-people was overlaid, but not smothered; sunken, but not drowned. The hands which had been busy conquering the elements had only to change their weapons and their adversaries, and they were as ready to conquer the masses of living force opposed to them as they had been to build towns, to dam rivers, to hunt whales, to harvest ice, to hammer brute matter into every shape civilization can ask for.

Another great fact came to the surface, and is coming up every day in new shapes,—that we are one people. It is easy to say that a man is a man in Maine or Minnesota, but not so easy to feel it, all through our bones and marrow. The camp is deprovincializing us very fast. Brave Winthrop, marching with the city elegants, seems to have been a little startled to find how wonderfully human were the hard-handed men of the Eighth Massachusetts. It takes all the nonsense out of everybody, or ought to do it, to see how fairly the real manhood of a country is distributed over its surface. And then, just as we are beginning to think our own soil has a monopoly of heroes as well as of cotton, up turns a regiment of gallant Irishmen, like the Sixty-ninth, to show us that continental provincialism is as bad as that of Coos County, New Hampshire, or of Broadway, New York.

Here, too, side by side in the same great camp, are half a dozen chaplains, representing half a dozen modes of religious belief. When the masked battery opens, does the "Baptist" Lieutenant believe in his heart that God takes better care of him than of his "Congregationalist" Colonel? Does any man really suppose, that, of a score of noble young fellows who have just laid down their lives for their country, the Homooousians are received to the mansions of bliss, and the Homooousians translated from the battle-field to the abodes of everlasting woe? War not only teaches what man can be, but it teaches also what he must not be. He must not be a bigot and a fool in the presence of that day of judgment proclaimed by the trumpet which calls to battle, and where a man should have but two thoughts: to do his duty, and trust his Maker. Let our brave dead come back from the fields where they have



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fallen for law and liberty, and if you will follow them to their graves, you will find out what the Broad Church means; the narrow church is sparing of its exclusive formulae over the coffins wrapped in the flag which the fallen heroes had defended! Very little comparatively do we hear at such times of the dogmas on which men differ; very much of the faith and trust in which all sincere Christians can agree. It is a noble lesson, and nothing less noisy than the voice of cannon can teach it so that it shall be heard over all the angry cries of theological disputants.

Now, too, we have a chance to test the sagacity of our friends, and to get at their principles of judgment. Perhaps most, of us, will agree that our faith in domestic prophets has been diminished by the experience of the last six months. We had the notable predictions attributed to the Secretary of State, which so unpleasantly refused to fulfil themselves. We were infested at one time with a set of ominous-looking seers, who shook their heads and muttered obscurely about some mighty preparations that were making to substitute the rule of the minority for that of the majority. Organizations were darkly hinted at; some thought our armories would be seized; and there are not wanting ancient women in the neighboring University town who consider that the country was saved by the intrepid band of students who stood guard, night after night, over the G. R. cannon and the pile of balls in the Cambridge Arsenal.

As a general rule, it is safe to say that the best prophecies are those which the sages remember after the event prophesied of has come to pass, and remind us that they have made long ago. Those who, are rash enough to predict publicly beforehand commonly give us what they hope, or what they fear, or some conclusion from an abstraction of their own, or some guess founded on private information not half so good as what everybody gets who reads the papers,—never by any possibility a word that we can depend on, simply because there are cobwebs of contingency between every to-day and to-morrow that no field-glass can penetrate when fifty of them lie woven one over another. Prophecy as much as you like, but always hedge. Say that you think the rebels are weaker than is commonly supposed, but, on the other hand, that they may prove to be even stronger than is anticipated. Say what you like,—only don't be too peremptory and dogmatic; we know that wiser men than you have been notoriously deceived in their predictions in this very matter.

Ibis et redibis nunquam in bello peribis.

Let that be your model; and remember, on peril of your reputation as a prophet, not to put a stop before or after the nunquam.

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There are two or three facts connected with time, besides that already referred to, which strike us very forcibly in their relation to the great events passing around us. We spoke of the long period seeming to have elapsed since this war began. The buds were then swelling which held the leaves that are still green. It seems as old as Time himself. We cannot fail to observe how the mind brings together the scenes of to-day and those of the old Revolution. We shut up eighty years into each other like the joints of a pocket-telescope. When the young men from Middlesex dropped in Baltimore the other day, it seemed to bring Lexington and the other Nineteenth of April close to us. War has always been the mint in which the world's history has been coined, and now every day or week or month has a new medal for us. It was Warren that the first impression bore in the last great coinage; if it is Ellsworth now, the new face hardly seems fresher than the old. All battle-fields are alike in their main features. The young fellows who fell in our earlier struggle seemed like old men to us until within these few months; now we remember they were like these fiery youth we are cheering as they go to the fight; it seems as if the grass of our bloody hillside was crimsoned but yesterday, and the cannon-ball imbedded in the church-tower would feel warm, if we laid our hand upon it.

Nay, in this our quickened life we feel that all the battles from earliest time to our own day, where Right and Wrong have grappled, are but one great battle, varied with brief pauses or hasty bivouacs upon the field of conflict. The issues seem to vary, but it is always a right against a claim, and, however the struggle of the hour may go, a movement onward of the campaign, which uses defeat as well as victory to serve its mighty ends. The very implements of our warfare change less than we think. Our bullets and cannonballs have lengthened into bolts like those which whistled out of old arbalests. Our soldiers fight with weapons, such as are pictured on the walls of Theban tombs, wearing a newly invented head-gear as old as the days of the Pyramids.

Whatever miseries this war brings upon us, it is making us wiser, and, we trust, better. Wiser, for we are learning our weakness, our narrowness, our selfishness, our ignorance, in lessons of sorrow and shame. Better, because all that is noble in men and women is demanded by the time, and our people are rising to the standard the time calls for. For this is the question the hour is putting to each of us: Are you ready, if need be, to sacrifice all that you have and hope for in this world, that the generations to follow you may inherit a whole country whose natural condition shall be peace, and not a broken province which must live under the perpetual threat, if not in the constant presence, of war and all that war brings with it? If we are all ready for this sacrifice, battles may be lost, but the campaign and its grand object must be won.



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Heaven is very kind in its way of putting questions to mortals. We are not abruptly asked to give up all that we most care for, in view of the momentous issues before us. Perhaps we shall never be asked to give up all, but we have already been called upon to part with much that is dear to us, and should be ready to yield the rest as it is called for. The time may come when even the cheap public print shall be a burden our means cannot support, and we can only listen in the square that was once the marketplace to the voices of those who proclaim defeat or victory. Then there will be only our daily food left. When we have nothing to read and nothing to eat, it will be a favorable moment to offer a compromise. At present we have all that nature absolutely demands,—we can live on bread and the newspaper.

MY HUNT AFTER “THE CAPTAIN.”

In the dead of the night which closed upon the bloody field of Antietam, my household was startled from its slumbers by the loud summons of a telegraphic messenger. The air had been heavy all day with rumors of battle, and thousands and tens of thousands had walked the streets with throbbing hearts, in dread anticipation of the tidings any hour might bring.

We rose hastily, and presently the messenger was admitted. I took the envelope from his hand, opened it, and read:

Hagerstown 17th

To _____ H _____

Capt H _____ wounded shot through the neck thought not mortal at
Keedysville
William G. Leduc

Through the neck,—no bullet left in wound. Windpipe, food-pipe, carotid, jugular, half a dozen smaller, but still formidable vessels, a great braid of nerves, each as big as a lamp-wick, spinal cord,—ought to kill at once, if at all. Thought not mortal, or not thought mortal,—which was it? The first; that is better than the second would be.—“Keedysville, a post-office, Washington Co., Maryland.” Leduc? Leduc? Don’t remember that name. The boy is waiting for his money. A dollar and thirteen cents. Has nobody got thirteen cents? Don’t keep that boy waiting,—how do we know what messages he has got to carry?

The boy had another message to carry. It was to the father of Lieutenant-Colonel Wilder Dwight, informing him that his son was grievously wounded in the same battle, and was lying at Boonsborough, a town a few miles this side of Keedysville. This I

learned the next morning from the civil and attentive officials at the Central Telegraph Office.

Calling upon this gentleman, I found that he meant to leave in the quarter past two o'clock train, taking with him Dr. George H. Gay, an accomplished and energetic surgeon, equal to any difficult question or pressing emergency. I agreed to accompany them, and we met in the cars. I felt myself peculiarly fortunate in having companions whose society would be a pleasure, whose feelings would harmonize with my own, and whose assistance I might, in case of need, be glad to claim.

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It is of the journey which we began together, and which I finished apart, that I mean to give my "Atlantic" readers an account. They must let me tell my story in my own way, speaking of many little matters that interested or amused me, and which a certain leisurely class of elderly persons, who sit at their firesides and never travel, will, I hope, follow with a kind of interest. For, besides the main object of my excursion, I could not help being excited by the incidental sights and occurrences of a trip which to a commercial traveller or a newspaper-reporter would seem quite commonplace and undeserving of record. There are periods in which all places and people seem to be in a conspiracy to impress us with their individuality, in which every ordinary locality seems to assume a special significance and to claim a particular notice, in which every person we meet is either an old acquaintance or a character; days in which the strangest coincidences are continually happening, so that they get to be the rule, and not the exception. Some might naturally think that anxiety and the weariness of a prolonged search after a near relative would have prevented my taking any interest in or paying any regard to the little matters around me. Perhaps it had just the contrary effect, and acted like a diffused stimulus upon the attention. When all the faculties are wide-awake in pursuit of a single object, or fixed in the spasm of an absorbing emotion, they are oftentimes clairvoyant in a marvellous degree in respect to many collateral things, as Wordsworth has so forcibly illustrated in his sonnet on the Boy of Windermere, and as Hawthorne has developed with such metaphysical accuracy in that chapter of his wondrous story where Hester walks forth to meet her punishment.

Be that as it may,—though I set out with a full and heavy heart, though many times my blood chilled with what were perhaps needless and unwise fears, though I broke through all my habits without thinking about them, which is almost as hard in certain circumstances as for one of our young fellows to leave his sweetheart and go into a Peninsular campaign, though I did not always know when I was hungry nor discover that I was thirsting, though I had a worrying ache and inward tremor underlying all the outward play of the senses and the mind, yet it is the simple truth that I did look out of the car-windows with an eye for all that passed, that I did take cognizance of strange sights and singular people, that I did act much as persons act from the ordinary promptings of curiosity, and from time to time even laugh very much as others do who are attacked with a convulsive sense of the ridiculous, the epilepsy of the diaphragm.

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By a mutual compact, we talked little in the cars. A communicative friend is the greatest nuisance to have at one's side during a railroad journey, especially if his conversation is stimulating and in itself agreeable. "A fast train and a 'slow' neighbor," is my motto. Many times, when I have got upon the cars, expecting to be magnetized into an hour or two of blissful reverie, my thoughts shaken up by the vibrations into all sorts of new and pleasing patterns, arranging themselves in curves and nodal points, like the grains of sand in Chladni's famous experiment,—fresh ideas coming up to the surface, as the kernels do when a measure of corn is jolted in a farmer's wagon,—all this without volition, the mechanical impulse alone keeping the thoughts in motion, as the mere act of carrying certain watches in the pocket keeps them wound up,—many times, I say, just as my brain was beginning to creep and hum with this delicious locomotive intoxication, some dear detestable friend, cordial, intelligent, social, radiant, has come up and sat down by me and opened a conversation which has broken my day-dream, unharnessed the flying horses that were whirling along my fancies and hitched on the old weary omnibus-team of every-day associations, fatigued my hearing and attention, exhausted my voice, and milked the breasts of my thought dry during the hour when they should have been filling themselves full of fresh juices. My friends spared me this trial.

So, then, I sat by the window and enjoyed the slight tipsiness produced by short, limited, rapid oscillations, which I take to be the exhilarating stage of that condition which reaches hopeless inebriety in what we know as sea-sickness. Where the horizon opened widely, it pleased me to watch the curious effect of the rapid movement of near objects contrasted with the slow motion of distant ones. Looking from a right-hand window, for instance, the fences close by glide swiftly backward, or to the right, while the distant hills not only do not appear to move backward, but look by contrast with the fences near at hand as if they were moving forward, or to the left; and thus the whole landscape becomes a mighty wheel revolving about an imaginary axis somewhere in the middle-distance.

My companions proposed to stay at one of the best-known and longest-established of the New-York caravansaries, and I accompanied them. We were particularly well lodged, and not uncivilly treated. The traveller who supposes that he is to repeat the melancholy experience of Shenstone, and have to sigh over the reflection that he has found "his warmest welcome at an inn," has something to learn at the offices of the great city hotels. The unheralded guest who is honored by mere indifference may think himself blessed with singular good-fortune. If the despot of the Patent-Annunciator is only mildly contemptuous in his manner, let the victim look upon it as a personal favor. The coldest welcome that a threadbare

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curate ever got at the door of a bishop's palace, the most icy reception that a country cousin ever received at the city mansion of a mushroom millionaire, is agreeably tepid, compared to that which the Rhadamanthus who dooms you to the more or less elevated circle of his inverted Inferno vouchsafes, as you step up to enter your name on his dog's-eared register. I have less hesitation in unburdening myself of this uncomfortable statement, as on this particular trip I met with more than one exception to the rule. Officials become brutalized, I suppose, as a matter of course. One cannot expect an office clerk to embrace tenderly every stranger who comes in with a carpet-bag, or a telegraph operator to burst into tears over every unpleasant message he receives for transmission. Still, humanity is not always totally extinguished in these persons. I discovered a youth in a telegraph office of the Continental Hotel, in Philadelphia, who was as pleasant in conversation, and as graciously responsive to inoffensive questions, as if I had been his childless opulent uncle and my will not made.

On the road again the next morning, over the ferry, into the cars with sliding panels and fixed windows, so that in summer the whole side of the car maybe made transparent. New Jersey is, to the apprehension of a traveller, a double-headed suburb rather than a State. Its dull red dust looks like the dried and powdered mud of a battle-field. Peach-trees are common, and champagne-orchards. Canal-boats, drawn by mules, swim by, feeling their way along like blind men led by dogs. I had a mighty passion come over me to be the captain of one,—to glide back and forward upon a sea never roughened by storms,—to float where I could not sink,—to navigate where there is no shipwreck,—to lie languidly on the deck and govern the huge craft by a word or the movement of a finger: there was something of railroad intoxication in the fancy: but who has not often envied a cobbler in his stall?

The boys cry the "N'-York Heddle," instead of "Herald"; I remember that years ago in Philadelphia; we must be getting near the farther end of the dumb-bell suburb. A bridge has been swept away by a rise of the waters, so we must approach Philadelphia by the river. Her physiognomy is not distinguished; nez camus, as a Frenchman would say; no illustrious steeple, no imposing tower; the water-edge of the town looking bedraggled, like the flounce of a vulgar rich woman's dress that trails on the sidewalk. The New Ironsides lies at one of the wharves, elephantine in bulk and color, her sides narrowing as they rise, like the walls of a hock-glass.

I went straight to the house in Walnut Street where the Captain would be heard of, if anywhere in this region. His lieutenant-colonel was there, gravely wounded; his college-friend and comrade in arms, a son of the house, was there, injured in a similar way; another soldier, brother of the last, was there, prostrate with fever. A fourth bed was waiting ready for the Captain, but not one word had been heard of him, though inquiries had been made in the towns from and through which the father had brought his

two sons and the lieutenant-colonel. And so my search is, like a “Ledger” story, to be continued.

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I rejoined my companions in time to take the noon-train for Baltimore. Our company was gaining in number as it moved onwards. We had found upon the train from New York a lovely, lonely lady, the wife of one of our most spirited Massachusetts officers, the brave Colonel of the ___th Regiment, going to seek her wounded husband at Middletown, a place lying directly in our track. She was the light of our party while we were together on our pilgrimage, a fair, gracious woman, gentle, but courageous,

—“ful plesant and amiable of port,
—estatelich of manere,
And to ben holden digne of reverence.”

On the road from Philadelphia, I found in the same car with our party Dr. William Hunt of Philadelphia, who had most kindly and faithfully attended the Captain, then the Lieutenant, after a wound received at Ball's Bluff, which came very near being mortal. He was going upon an errand of mercy to the wounded, and found he had in his memorandum-book the name of our lady's husband, the Colonel, who had been commended to his particular attention.

Not long after leaving Philadelphia, we passed a solitary sentry keeping guard over a short railroad bridge. It was the first evidence that we were approaching the perilous borders, the marches where the North and the South mingle their angry hosts, where the extremes of our so-called civilization meet in conflict, and the fierce slave-driver of the Lower Mississippi stares into the stern eyes of the forest-feller from the banks of the Aroostook. All the way along, the bridges were guarded more or less strongly. In a vast country like ours, communications play a far more complex part than in Europe, where the whole territory available for strategic purposes is so comparatively limited. Belgium, for instance, has long been the bowling-alley where kings roll cannon-balls at each other's armies; but here we are playing the game of live ninepins without any alley.

We were obliged to stay in Baltimore over night, as we were too late for the train to Frederick. At the Eutaw House, where we found both comfort and courtesy, we met a number of friends, who beguiled the evening hours for us in the most agreeable manner. We devoted some time to procuring surgical and other articles, such as might be useful to our friends, or to others, if our friends should not need them. In the morning, I found myself seated at the breakfast-table next to General Wool. It did not surprise me to find the General very far from expansive. With Fort McHenry on his shoulders and Baltimore in his breeches-pocket, and the weight of a military department loading down his social safety-valves, I thought it a great deal for an officer in his trying position to select so very obliging and affable an aid as the gentleman who relieved him of the burden of attending to strangers.

We left the Eutaw House, to take the cars for Frederick. As we stood waiting on the platform, a telegraphic message was handed in silence to my companion. Sad news: the lifeless body of the son he was hastening to see was even now on its way to him in

Baltimore. It was no time for empty words of consolation: I knew what he had lost, and that now was not the time to intrude upon a grief borne as men bear it, felt as women feel it.

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Colonel Wilder Dwight was first made known to me as the friend of a beloved relative of my own, who was with him during a severe illness in Switzerland; and for whom while living, and for whose memory when dead, he retained the warmest affection. Since that the story of his noble deeds of daring, of his capture and escape, and a brief visit home before he was able to rejoin his regiment, had made his name familiar to many among us, myself among the number. His memory has been honored by those who had the largest opportunity of knowing his rare promise, as a man of talents and energy of nature. His abounding vitality must have produced its impression on all who met him; there was a still fire about him which any one could see would blaze up to melt all difficulties and recast obstacles into implements in the mould of an heroic will. These elements of his character many had the chance of knowing; but I shall always associate him with the memory of that pure and noble friendship which made me feel that I knew him before I looked upon his face, and added a personal tenderness to the sense of loss which I share with the whole community.

Here, then, I parted, sorrowfully, from the companions with whom I set out on my journey.

In one of the cars, at the same station, we met General Shriver of Frederick, a most loyal Unionist, whose name is synonymous with a hearty welcome to all whom he can aid by his counsel and his hospitality. He took great pains to give us all the information we needed, and expressed the hope, which was afterwards fulfilled, to the great gratification of some of us, that we should meet again when he should return to his home.

There was nothing worthy of special note in the trip to Frederick, except our passing a squad of Rebel prisoners, whom I missed seeing, as they flashed by, but who were said to be a most forlorn-looking crowd of scarecrows. Arrived at the Monocacy River, about three miles this side of Frederick, we came to a halt, for the railroad bridge had been blown up by the Rebels, and its iron pillars and arches were lying in the bed of the river. The unfortunate wretch who fired the train was killed by the explosion, and lay buried hard by, his hands sticking out of the shallow grave into which he had been huddled. This was the story they told us, but whether true or not I must leave to the correspondents of "Notes and Queries" to settle.

There was a great confusion of carriages and wagons at the stopping-place of the train, so that it was a long time before I could get anything that would carry us. At last I was lucky enough to light on a sturdy wagon, drawn by a pair of serviceable bays, and driven by James Grayden, with whom I was destined to have a somewhat continued acquaintance. We took up a little girl who had been in Baltimore during the late Rebel inroad. It made me think of the time when my own mother, at that time six years old, was hurried off from Boston, then occupied by

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the British soldiers, to Newburyport, and heard the people saying that “the redcoats were coming, killing and murdering everybody as they went along.” Frederick looked cheerful for a place that had so recently been in an enemy’s hands. Here and there a house or shop was shut up, but the national colors were waving in all directions, and the general aspect was peaceful and contented. I saw no bullet-marks or other sign of the fighting which had gone on in the streets. The Colonel’s lady was taken in charge by a daughter of that hospitable family to which we had been commended by its head, and I proceeded to inquire for wounded officers at the various temporary hospitals.

At the United States Hotel, where many were lying, I heard mention of an officer in an upper chamber, and, going there, found Lieutenant Abbott, of the Twentieth Massachusetts Volunteers, lying ill with what looked like typhoid fever. While there, who should come in but the almost ubiquitous Lieutenant Wilkins, of the same Twentieth, whom I had met repeatedly before on errands of kindness or duty, and who was just from the battle-ground. He was going to Boston in charge of the body of the lamented Dr. Revere, the Assistant Surgeon of the regiment, killed on the field. From his lips I learned something of the mishaps of the regiment. My Captain’s wound he spoke of as less grave than at first thought; but he mentioned incidentally having heard a story recently that he was killed,—a fiction, doubtless,—a mistake,—a palpable absurdity,—not to be remembered or made any account of. Oh no! but what dull ache is this in that obscurely sensitive region, somewhere below the heart, where the nervous centre called the semilunar ganglion lies unconscious of itself until a great grief or a mastering anxiety reaches it through all the non-conductors which isolate it from ordinary impressions? I talked awhile with Lieutenant Abbott, who lay prostrate, feeble, but soldier-like and uncomplaining, carefully waited upon by a most excellent lady, a captain’s wife, New England born, loyal as the Liberty on a golden ten-dollar piece, and of lofty bearing enough to have sat for that goddess’s portrait. She had stayed in Frederick through the Rebel inroad, and kept the star-spangled banner where it would be safe, to unroll it as the last Rebel hoofs clattered off from the pavement of the town.

Near by Lieutenant Abbott was an unhappy gentleman, occupying a small chamber, and filling it with his troubles. When he gets well and plump, I know he will forgive me if I confess that I could not help smiling in the midst of my sympathy for him. He had been a well-favored man, he said, sweeping his hand in a semicircle, which implied that his acute-angled countenance had once filled the goodly curve he described. He was now a perfect Don Quixote to look upon. Weakness had made him querulous, as it does all of us, and he piped his grievances to me in a thin voice,

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with that finish of detail which chronic invalidism alone can command. He was starving,—he could not get what he wanted to eat. He was in need of stimulants, and he held up a pitiful two-ounce phial containing three thimblefuls—of brandy,—his whole stock of that encouraging article. Him I consoled to the best of my ability, and afterwards, in some slight measure, supplied his wants. Feed this poor gentleman up, as these good people soon will, and I should not know him, nor he himself. We are all egotists in sickness and debility. An animal has been defined as “a stomach ministered to by organs;” and the greatest man comes very near this simple formula after a month or two of fever and starvation.

James Grayden and his team pleased me well enough, and so I made a bargain with him to take us, the lady and myself, on our further journey as far as Middletown. As we were about starting from the front of the United States Hotel, two gentlemen presented themselves and expressed a wish to be allowed to share our conveyance. I looked at them and convinced myself that they were neither Rebels in disguise, nor deserters, nor camp-followers, nor miscreants, but plain, honest men on a proper errand. The first of them I will pass over briefly. He was a young man of mild and modest demeanor, chaplain to a Pennsylvania regiment, which he was going to rejoin. He belonged to the Moravian Church, of which I had the misfortune to know little more than what I had learned from Southey’s “Life of Wesley.” and from the exquisite hymns we have borrowed from its rhapsodists. The other stranger was a New Englander of respectable appearance, with a grave, hard, honest, hay-bearded face, who had come to serve the sick and wounded on the battle-field and in its immediate neighborhood. There is no reason why I should not mention his name, but I shall content myself with calling him the Philanthropist.

So we set forth, the sturdy wagon, the serviceable bays, with James Grayden their driver, the gentle lady, whose serene patience bore up through all delays and discomforts, the Chaplain, the Philanthropist, and myself, the teller of this story.

And now, as we emerged from Frederick, we struck at once upon the trail from the great battle-field. The road was filled with straggling and wounded soldiers. All who could travel on foot,—multitudes with slight wounds of the upper limbs, the head, or face,—were told to take up their beds,—alight burden or none at all,—and walk. Just as the battle-field sucks everything into its red vortex for the conflict, so does it drive everything off in long, diverging rays after the fierce centripetal forces have met and neutralized each other. For more than a week there had been sharp fighting all along this road. Through the streets of Frederick, through Crampton’s Gap, over South Mountain, sweeping at last the hills and the woods that skirt the windings of the Antietam, the long battle had

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travelled, like one of those tornadoes which tear their path through our fields and villages. The slain of higher condition, “embalmed” and iron-cased, were sliding off on the railways to their far homes; the dead of the rank and file were being gathered up and committed hastily to the earth; the gravely wounded were cared for hard by the scene of conflict, or pushed a little way along to the neighboring villages; while those who could walk were meeting us, as I have said, at every step in the road. It was a pitiable sight, truly pitiable, yet so vast, so far beyond the possibility of relief, that many single sorrows of small dimensions have wrought upon my feelings more than the sight of this great caravan of maimed pilgrims. The companionship of so many seemed to make a joint-stock of their suffering; it was next to impossible to individualize it, and so bring it home, as one can do with a single broken limb or aching wound. Then they were all of the male sex, and in the freshness or the prime of their strength. Though they tramped so wearily along, yet there was rest and kind nursing in store for them. These wounds they bore would be the medals they would show their children and grandchildren by and by. Who would not rather wear his decorations beneath his uniform than on it?

Yet among them were figures which arrested our attention and sympathy. Delicate boys, with more spirit than strength, flushed with fever or pale with exhaustion or haggard with suffering, dragged their weary limbs along as if each step would exhaust their slender store of strength. At the roadside sat or lay others, quite spent with their journey. Here and there was a house at which the wayfarers would stop, in the hope, I fear often vain, of getting refreshment; and in one place was a clear, cool spring, where the little bands of the long procession halted for a few moments, as the trains that traverse the desert rest by its fountains. My companions had brought a few peaches along with them, which the Philanthropist bestowed upon the tired and thirsty soldiers with a satisfaction which we all shared. I had with me a small flask of strong waters, to be used as a medicine in case of inward grief. From this, also, he dispensed relief, without hesitation, to a poor fellow who looked as if he needed it. I rather admired the simplicity with which he applied my limited means of solace to the first-comer who wanted it more than I; a genuine benevolent impulse does not stand on ceremony, and had I perished of colic for want of a stimulus that night, I should not have reproached my friend the Philanthropist, any more than I grudged my other ardent friend the two dollars and more which it cost me to send the charitable message he left in my hands.

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It was a lovely country through which we were riding. The hillsides rolled away into the distance, slanting up fair and broad to the sun, as one sees them in the open parts of the Berkshire Valley, at Lanesborough, for instance, or in the many-hued mountain chalice at the bottom of which the Shaker houses of Lebanon have shaped themselves like a sediment of cubical crystals. The wheat was all garnered, and the land ploughed for a new crop. There was Indian corn standing, but I saw no pumpkins warming their yellow carapaces in the sunshine like so many turtles; only in a single instance did I notice some wretched little miniature specimens in form and hue not unlike those colossal oranges of our cornfields. The rail fences were somewhat disturbed, and the cinders of extinguished fires showed the use to which they had been applied. The houses along the road were not for the most part neatly kept; the garden fences were poorly built of laths or long slats, and very rarely of trim aspect. The men of this region seemed to ride in the saddle very generally, rather than drive. They looked sober and stern, less curious and lively than Yankees, and I fancied that a type of features familiar to us in the countenance of the late John Tyler, our accidental President, was frequently met with. The women were still more distinguishable from our New England pattern. Soft, sallow, succulent, delicately finished about the mouth and firmly shaped about the chin, dark-eyed, full-throated, they looked as if they had been grown in a land of olives. There was a little toss in their movement, full of muliebrity. I fancied there was something more of the duck and less of the chicken about them, as compared with the daughters of our leaner soil; but these are mere impressions caught from stray glances, and if there is any offence in them, my fair readers may consider them all retracted.

At intervals, a dead horse lay by the roadside, or in the fields, unburied, not grateful to gods or men. I saw no bird of prey, no ill-omened fowl, on my way to the carnival of death, or at the place where it had been held. The vulture of story, the crow of Talavera, the "twa corbies" of the ghastly ballad, are all from Nature, doubtless; but no black wing was spread over these animal ruins, and no call to the banquet pierced through the heavy-laden and sickening air.

Full in the middle of the road, caring little for whom or what they met, came long strings of army wagons, returning empty from the front after supplies. James Grayden stated it as his conviction that they had a little rather run into a fellow than not. I liked the looks of these equipages and their drivers; they meant business. Drawn by mules mostly, six, I think, to a wagon, powdered well with dust, wagon, beast, and driver, they came jogging along the road, turning neither to right nor left,—some driven by bearded, solemn white men, some by careless, saucy-looking negroes, of a blackness like that of anthracite or obsidian. There seemed to be nothing about them, dead or alive, that was not serviceable. Sometimes a mule would give out on the road; then he was left where he lay, until by and by he would think better of it, and get up, when the first public wagon that came along would hitch him on, and restore him to the sphere of duty.

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It was evening when we got to Middletown. The gentle lady who had graced our homely conveyance with her company here left us. She found her husband, the gallant Colonel, in very comfortable quarters, well cared for, very weak from the effects of the fearful operation he had been compelled to undergo, but showing calm courage to endure as he had shown manly energy to act. It was a meeting full of heroism and tenderness, of which I heard more than there is need to tell. Health to the brave soldier, and peace to the household over which so fair a spirit presides!

Dr. Thompson, the very active and intelligent surgical director of the hospitals of the place, took me in charge. He carried me to the house of a worthy and benevolent clergyman of the German Reformed Church, where I was to take tea and pass the night. What became of the Moravian chaplain I did not know; but my friend the Philanthropist had evidently made up his mind to adhere to my fortunes. He followed me, therefore, to the house of the "Dominie," as a newspaper correspondent calls my kind host, and partook of the fare there furnished me. He withdrew with me to the apartment assigned for my slumbers, and slept sweetly on the same pillow where I waked and tossed. Nay, I do affirm that he did, unconsciously, I believe, encroach on that moiety of the couch which I had flattered myself was to be my own through the watches of the night, and that I was in serious doubt at one time whether I should not be gradually, but irresistibly, expelled from the bed which I had supposed destined for my sole possession. As Ruth clave unto Naomi, so my friend the Philanthropist clave unto me. "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge." A really kind, good man, full of zeal, determined to help somebody, and absorbed in his one thought, he doubted nobody's willingness to serve him, going, as he was, on a purely benevolent errand. When he reads this, as I hope he will, let him be assured of my esteem and respect; and if he gained any accommodation from being in my company, let me tell him that I learned a lesson from his active benevolence. I could, however, have wished to hear him laugh once before we parted, perhaps forever. He did not, to the best of my recollection, even smile during the whole period that we were in company. I am afraid that a lightsome disposition and a relish for humor are not so common in those whose benevolence takes an active turn as in people of sentiment, who are always ready with their tears and abounding in passionate expressions of sympathy. Working philanthropy is a practical specialty, requiring not a mere impulse, but a talent, with its peculiar sagacity for finding its objects, a tact for selecting its agencies, an organizing and art ranging faculty, a steady set of nerves, and a constitution such as Sallust describes in Catiline, patient of cold, of hunger, and of watching. Philanthropists are commonly grave, occasionally

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grim, and not very rarely morose. Their expansive social force is imprisoned as a working power, to show itself only through its legitimate pistons and cranks. The tighter the boiler, the less it whistles and sings at its work. When Dr. Waterhouse, in 1780, travelled with Howard, on his tour among the Dutch prisons and hospitals, he found his temper and manners very different from what would have been expected.

My benevolent companion having already made a preliminary exploration of the hospitals of the place, before sharing my bed with him, as above mentioned, I joined him in a second tour through them. The authorities of Middletown are evidently leagued with the surgeons of that place, for such a break-neck succession of pitfalls and chasms I have never seen in the streets of a civilized town. It was getting late in the evening when we began our rounds. The principal collections of the wounded were in the churches. Boards were laid over the tops of the pews, on these some straw was spread, and on this the wounded lay, with little or no covering other than such scanty clothes as they had on. There were wounds of all degrees of severity, but I heard no groans or murmurs. Most of the sufferers were hurt in the limbs, some had undergone amputation, and all had, I presume, received such attention as was required. Still, it was but a rough and dreary kind of comfort that the extemporized hospitals suggested. I could not help thinking the patients must be cold; but they were used to camp life, and did not complain. The men who watched were not of the soft-handed variety of the race. One of them was smoking his pipe as he went from bed to bed. I saw one poor fellow who had been shot through the breast; his breathing was labored, and he was tossing, anxious and restless. The men were debating about the opiate he was to take, and I was thankful that I happened there at the right moment to see that he was well narcotized for the night. Was it possible that my Captain could be lying on the straw in one of these places? Certainly possible, but not probable; but as the lantern was held over each bed, it was with a kind of thrill that I looked upon the features it illuminated. Many times as I went from hospital to hospital in my wanderings, I started as some faint resemblance,—the shade of a young man's hair, the outline of his half-turned face,—recalled the presence I was in search of. The face would turn towards me, and the momentary illusion would pass away, but still the fancy clung to me. There was no figure huddled up on its rude couch, none stretched at the roadside, none toiling languidly along the dusty pike, none passing in car or in ambulance, that I did not scrutinize, as if it might be that for which I was making my pilgrimage to the battlefield.

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"There are two wounded Secesh," said my companion. I walked to the bedside of the first, who was an officer, a lieutenant, if I remember right, from North Carolina. He was of good family, son of a judge in one of the higher courts of his State, educated, pleasant, gentle, intelligent. One moment's intercourse with such an enemy, lying helpless and wounded among strangers, takes away all personal bitterness towards those with whom we or our children have been but a few hours before in deadly strife. The basest lie which the murderous contrivers of this Rebellion have told is that which tries to make out a difference of race in the men of the North and South. It would be worth a year of battles to abolish this delusion, though the great sponge of war that wiped it out were moistened with the best blood of the land. My Rebel was of slight, scholastic habit, and spoke as one accustomed to tread carefully among the parts of speech. It made my heart ache to see him, a man finished in the humanities and Christian culture, whom the sin of his forefathers and the crime of his rulers had set in barbarous conflict against others of like training with his own,—a man who, but for the curse which our generation is called on to expiate, would have taken his part in the beneficent task of shaping the intelligence and lifting the moral standard of a peaceful and united people.

On Sunday morning, the twenty-first, having engaged James Grayden and his team, I set out with the Chaplain and the Philanthropist for Keedysville. Our track lay through the South Mountain Gap, and led us first to the town of Boonsborough, where, it will be remembered, Colonel Dwight had been brought after the battle. We saw the positions occupied in the battle of South Mountain, and many traces of the conflict. In one situation a group of young trees was marked with shot, hardly one having escaped. As we walked by the side of the wagon, the Philanthropist left us for a while and climbed a hill, where, along the line of a fence, he found traces of the most desperate fighting. A ride of some three hours brought us to Boonsborough, where I roused the unfortunate army surgeon who had charge of the hospitals, and who was trying to get a little sleep after his fatigues and watchings. He bore this cross very creditably, and helped me to explore all places where my soldier might be lying among the crowds of wounded. After the useless search, I resumed my journey, fortified with a note of introduction to Dr. Letterman; also with a bale of oakum which I was to carry to that gentleman, this substance being employed as a substitute for lint. We were obliged also to procure a pass to Keedysville from the Provost Marshal of Boonsborough. As we came near the place, we learned that General McClellan's head quarters had been removed from this village some miles farther to the front.

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On entering the small settlement of Keedysville, a familiar face and figure blocked the way, like one of Bunyan's giants. The tall form and benevolent countenance, set off by long, flowing hair, belonged to the excellent Mayor Frank B. Fay of Chelsea, who, like my Philanthropist, only still more promptly, had come to succor the wounded of the great battle. It was wonderful to see how his single personality pervaded this torpid little village; he seemed to be the centre of all its activities. All my questions he answered clearly and decisively, as one who knew everything that was going on in the place. But the one question I had come five hundred miles to ask,—Where is Captain H.?—he could not answer. There were some thousands of wounded in the place, he told me, scattered about everywhere. It would be a long job to hunt up my Captain; the only way would be to go to every house and ask for him. Just then a medical officer came up.

"Do you know anything of Captain H. of the Massachusetts Twentieth?"

"Oh yes; he is staying in that house. I saw him there, doing very well."

A chorus of hallelujahs arose in my soul, but I kept them to myself. Now, then, for our twice-wounded volunteer, our young centurion whose double-barred shoulder-straps we have never yet looked upon. Let us observe the proprieties, however; no swelling upward of the mother,—no hysterica passio, we do not like scenes. A calm salutation, —then swallow and hold hard. That is about the programme.

A cottage of squared logs, filled in with plaster, and whitewashed. A little yard before it, with a gate swinging. The door of the cottage ajar,—no one visible as yet. I push open the door and enter. An old woman, Margaret Kitzmuller her name proves to be, is the first person I see.

"Captain H. here?"

"Oh no, sir,—left yesterday morning for Hagerstown,—in a milk-cart."

The Kitzmuller is a beady-eyed, cheery-looking ancient woman, answers questions with a rising inflection, and gives a good account of the Captain, who got into the vehicle without assistance, and was in excellent spirits. Of course he had struck for Hagerstown as the terminus of the Cumberland Valley Railroad, and was on his way to Philadelphia, via Chambersburg and Harrisburg, if he were not already in the hospitable home of Walnut Street, where his friends were expecting him.

I might follow on his track or return upon my own; the distance was the same to Philadelphia through Harrisburg as through Baltimore. But it was very difficult, Mr. Fay told me, to procure any kind of conveyance to Hagerstown; and, on the other hand, I had James Grayden and his wagon to carry me back to Frederick. It was not likely that I should overtake the object of my pursuit with nearly thirty-six hours start, even if I could procure a conveyance that day. In the mean time James was getting impatient to

be on his return, according to the direction of his employers. So I decided to go back with him.

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But there was the great battle-field only about three miles from Keedysville, and it was impossible to go without seeing that. James Grayden's directions were peremptory, but it was a case for the higher law. I must make a good offer for an extra couple of hours, such as would satisfy the owners of the wagon, and enforce it by a personal motive. I did this handsomely, and succeeded without difficulty. To add brilliancy to my enterprise, I invited the Chaplain and the Philanthropist to take a free passage with me.

We followed the road through the village for a space, then turned off to the right, and wandered somewhat vaguely, for want of precise directions, over the hills. Inquiring as we went, we forded a wide creek in which soldiers were washing their clothes, the name of which we did not then know, but which must have been the Antietam. At one point we met a party, women among them, bringing off various trophies they had picked up on the battlefield. Still wandering along, we were at last pointed to a hill in the distance, a part of the summit of which was covered with Indian corn. There, we were told, some of the fiercest fighting of the day had been done. The fences were taken down so as to make a passage across the fields, and the tracks worn within the last few days looked like old roads. We passed a fresh grave under a tree near the road. A board was nailed to the tree, bearing the name, as well as I could make it out, of Gardiner, of a New Hampshire regiment.

On coming near the brow of the hill, we met a party carrying picks and spades. "How many?" "Only one." The dead were nearly all buried, then, in this region of the field of strife. We stopped the wagon, and, getting out, began to look around us. Hard by was a large pile of muskets, scores, if not hundreds, which had been picked up, and were guarded for the Government. A long ridge of fresh gravel rose before us. A board stuck up in front of it bore this inscription, the first part of which was, I believe, not correct: "The Rebel General Anderson and 80 Rebels are buried in this hole." Other smaller ridges were marked with the number of dead lying under them. The whole ground was strewn with fragments of clothing, haversacks, canteens, cap-boxes, bullets, cartridge-boxes, cartridges, scraps of paper, portions of bread and meat. I saw two soldiers' caps that looked as though their owners had been shot through the head. In several places I noticed dark red patches where a pool of blood had curdled and caked, as some poor fellow poured his life out on the sod. I then wandered about in the cornfield. It surprised me to notice, that, though there was every mark of hard fighting having taken place here, the Indian corn was not generally trodden down. One of our cornfields is a kind of forest, and even when fighting, men avoid the tall stalks as if they were trees. At the edge of this cornfield lay a gray horse, said

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to have belonged to a Rebel colonel, who was killed near the same place. Not far off were two dead artillery horses in their harness. Another had been attended to by a burying-party, who had thrown some earth over him but his last bed-clothes were too short, and his legs stuck out stark and stiff from beneath the gravel coverlet. It was a great pity that we had no intelligent guide to explain to us the position of that portion of the two armies which fought over this ground. There was a shallow trench before we came to the cornfield, too narrow for a road, as I should think, too elevated for a water-course, and which seemed to have been used as a rifle-pit. At any rate, there had been hard fighting in and about it. This and the cornfield may serve to identify the part of the ground we visited, if any who fought there should ever look over this paper. The opposing tides of battle must have blended their waves at this point, for portions of gray uniform were mingled with the "garments rolled in blood" torn from our own dead and wounded soldiers. I picked up a Rebel canteen, and one of our own,—but there was something repulsive about the trodden and stained relics of the stale battle-field. It was like the table of some hideous orgy left uncleared, and one turned away disgusted from its broken fragments and muddy heeltaps. A bullet or two, a button, a brass plate from a soldier's belt, served well enough for mementos of my visit, with a letter which I picked up, directed to Richmond, Virginia, its seal unbroken. "N. C. Cleveland County. E. Wright to J. Wright." On the other side, "A few lines from W. L. Vaughn." who has just been writing for the wife to her husband, and continues on his own account. The postscript, "tell John that nancy's folks are all well and has a verry good Little Crop of corn a growing." I wonder, if, by one of those strange chances of which I have seen so many, this number or leaf of the "Atlantic" will not sooner or later find its way to Cleveland County, North Carolina, and E. Wright, widow of James Wright, and Nancy's folks, get from these sentences the last glimpse of husband and friend as he threw up his arms and fell in the bloody cornfield of Antietam? I will keep this stained letter for them until peace comes back, if it comes in my time, and my pleasant North Carolina Rebel of the Middletown Hospital will, perhaps look these poor people up, and tell them where to send for it.

On the battle-field I parted with my two companions, the Chaplain and the Philanthropist. They were going to the front, the one to find his regiment, the other to look for those who needed his assistance. We exchanged cards and farewells, I mounted the wagon, the horses' heads were turned homewards, my two companions went their way, and I saw them no more. On my way back, I fell into talk with James Grayden. Born in England, Lancashire; in this country since he was four years old. Had nothing to care for

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but an old mother; didn't know what he should do if he lost her. Though so long in this country, he had all the simplicity and childlike lightheartedness which belong to the Old World's people. He laughed at the smallest pleasantry, and showed his great white English teeth; he took a joke without retorting by an impertinence; he had a very limited curiosity about all that was going on; he had small store of information; he lived chiefly in his horses, it seemed to me. His quiet animal nature acted as a pleasing anodyne to my recurring fits of anxiety, and I liked his frequent "'Deed I don't know, sir.'" better than I have sometimes relished the large discourse of professors and other very wise men.

I have not much to say of the road which we were travelling for the second time. Reaching Middletown, my first call was on the wounded Colonel and his lady. She gave me a most touching account of all the suffering he had gone through with his shattered limb before he succeeded in finding a shelter; showing the terrible want of proper means of transportation of the wounded after the battle. It occurred to me, while at this house, that I was more or less famished, and for the first time in my life I begged for a meal, which the kind family with whom the Colonel was staying most graciously furnished me.

After tea, there came in a stout army surgeon, a Highlander by birth, educated in Edinburgh, with whom I had pleasant, not unstimulating talk. He had been brought very close to that immane and nefandous Burke-and-Hare business which made the blood of civilization run cold in the year 1828, and told me, in a very calm way, with an occasional pinch from the mull, to refresh his memory, some of the details of those frightful murders, never rivalled in horror until the wretch Dumollard, who kept a private cemetery for his victims, was dragged into the light of day. He had a good deal to say, too, about the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, and the famous preparations, mercurial and the rest, which I remember well having seen there,—the "sudabit multum." and others,—also of our New York Professor Carnochan's handiwork, a specimen of which I once admired at the New York College. But the doctor was not in a happy frame of mind, and seemed willing to forget the present in the past: things went wrong, somehow, and the time was out of joint with him.

Dr. Thompson, kind, cheerful, companionable, offered me half his own wide bed, in the house of Dr. Baer, for my second night in Middletown. Here I lay awake again another night. Close to the house stood an ambulance in which was a wounded Rebel officer, attended by one of their own surgeons. He was calling out in a loud voice, all night long, as it seemed to me, "Doctor! Doctor! Driver! Water!" in loud, complaining tones, I have no doubt of real suffering, but in strange contrast with the silent patience which was the almost universal rule.

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The courteous Dr. Thompson will let me tell here an odd coincidence, trivial, but having its interest as one of a series. The Doctor and myself lay in the bed, and a lieutenant, a friend of his, slept on the sofa, At night, I placed my match-box, a Scotch one, of the Macpherson-plaid pattern, which I bought years ago, on the bureau, just where I could put my hand upon it. I was the last of the three to rise in the morning, and on looking for my pretty match-box, I found it was gone. This was rather awkward,—not on account of the loss, but of the unavoidable fact that one of my fellow-lodgers must have taken it. I must try to find out what it meant.

“By the way, Doctor, have you seen anything of a little plaid-pattern match-box?”

The Doctor put his hand to his pocket, and, to his own huge surprise and my great gratification, pulled out two match-boxes exactly alike, both printed with the Macpherson plaid. One was his, the other mine, which he had seen lying round, and naturally took for his own, thrusting it into his pocket, where it found its twin-brother from the same workshop. In memory of which event, we exchanged boxes, like two Homeric heroes.

This curious coincidence illustrates well enough some supposed cases of plagiarism of which I will mention one where my name figured. When a little poem called “The Two Streams” was first printed, a writer in the New York “Evening Post” virtually accused the author of it of borrowing the thought from a baccalaureate sermon of President Hopkins of Williamstown, and printed a quotation from that discourse, which, as I thought, a thief or catch-poll might well consider as establishing a fair presumption that it was so borrowed. I was at the same time wholly unconscious of ever having met with the discourse or the sentence which the verses were most like, nor do I believe I ever had seen or heard either. Some time after this, happening to meet my eloquent cousin, Wendell Phillips, I mentioned the fact to him, and he told me that he had once used the special image said to be borrowed, in a discourse delivered at Williamstown. On relating this to my friend Mr. Buchanan Read, he informed me that he too, had used the image,—perhaps referring to his poem called “The Twins.” He thought Tennyson had used it also. The parting of the streams on the Alps is poetically elaborated in a passage attributed to “M. Loisne,” printed in the “Boston Evening Transcript” for October 23, 1859. Captain, afterwards Sir Francis Head, speaks of the showers parting on the Cordilleras, one portion going to the Atlantic, one to the Pacific. I found the image running loose in my mind, without a halter. It suggested itself as an illustration of the will, and I worked the poem out by the aid of Mitchell’s School Atlas.—The spores of a great many ideas are floating about in the atmosphere. We no more know where all the growths of our mind came from, than where the lichens which eat the names off from the gravestones borrowed the germs that gave them birth. The two match-boxes were just alike, but neither was a plagiarism.

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In the morning I took to the same wagon once more, but, instead of James Grayden, I was to have for my driver a young man who spelt his name "Phillip Ottenheimer" and whose features at once showed him to be an Israelite. I found him agreeable enough, and disposed to talk. So I asked him many questions about his religion, and got some answers that sound strangely in Christian ears. He was from Wittenberg, and had been educated in strict Jewish fashion. From his childhood he had read Hebrew, but was not much of a scholar otherwise. A young person of his race lost caste utterly by marrying a Christian. The Founder of our religion was considered by the Israelites to have been "a right smart man and a great doctor." But the horror with which the reading of the New Testament by any young person of their faith would be regarded was as great, I judged by his language, as that of one of our straitest sectaries would be, if he found his son or daughter perusing the "Age of Reason."

In approaching Frederick, the singular beauty of its clustered spires struck me very much, so that I was not surprised to find "Fair-View" laid down about this point on a railroad map. I wish some wandering photographer would take a picture of the place, a stereoscopic one, if possible, to show how gracefully, how charmingly, its group of steeples nestles among the Maryland hills. The town had a poetical look from a distance, as if seers and dreamers might dwell there. The first sign I read, on entering its long street, might perhaps be considered as confirming my remote impression. It bore these words: "Miss Ogle, Past, Present, and Future." On arriving, I visited Lieutenant Abbott, and the attenuated unhappy gentleman, his neighbor, sharing between them as my parting gift what I had left of the balsam known to the Pharmacopoeia as Spiritus Vini Gallici. I took advantage of General Shriver's always open door to write a letter home, but had not time to partake of his offered hospitality. The railroad bridge over the Monocacy had been rebuilt since I passed through Frederick, and we trundled along over the track toward Baltimore.

It was a disappointment, on reaching the Eutaw House, where I had ordered all communications to be addressed, to find no telegraphic message from Philadelphia or Boston, stating that Captain H. had arrived at the former place, "wound doing well in good spirits expects to leave soon for Boston." After all, it was no great matter; the Captain was, no doubt, snugly lodged before this in the house called Beautiful, at * * * * Walnut Street, where that "grave and beautiful damsel named Discretion" had already welcomed him, smiling, though "the water stood in her eyes," and had "called out Prudence, Piety, and Charity, who, after a little more discourse with him, had him into the family."

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The friends I had met at the Eutaw House had all gone but one, the lady of an officer from Boston, who was most amiable and agreeable, and whose benevolence, as I afterwards learned, soon reached the invalids I had left suffering at Frederick. General Wool still walked the corridors, inexpansive, with Fort McHenry on his shoulders, and Baltimore in his breeches-pocket, and his courteous aid again pressed upon me his kind offices. About the doors of the hotel the news-boys cried the papers in plaintive, wailing tones, as different from the sharp accents of their Boston counterparts as a sigh from the southwest is from a northeastern breeze. To understand what they said was, of course, impossible to any but an educated ear, and if I made out “Starr” and “Clipp’rr,” it was because I knew beforehand what must be the burden of their advertising coranach.

I set out for Philadelphia on the morrow, Tuesday the twenty-third, there beyond question to meet my Captain, once more united to his brave wounded companions under that roof which covers a household of as noble hearts as ever throbbed with human sympathies. Back River, Bush River, Gunpowder Creek,—lives there the man with soul so dead that his memory has cerements to wrap up these senseless names in the same envelopes with their meaningless localities? But the Susquehanna,—the broad, the beautiful, the historical, the poetical Susquehanna,—the river of Wyoming and of Gertrude, dividing the shores where

“Aye those sunny mountains half-way down
Would echo flageolet from some romantic town,”—

did not my heart renew its allegiance to the poet who has made it lovely to the imagination as well as to the eye, and so identified his fame with the noble stream that it “rolls mingling with his fame forever?” The prosaic traveller perhaps remembers it better from the fact that a great sea-monster, in the shape of a steamboat, takes him, sitting in the car, on its back, and swims across with him like Arion’s dolphin,—also that mercenary men on board offer him canvas-backs in the season, and ducks of lower degree at other periods.

At Philadelphia again at last! Drive fast, O colored man and brother, to the house called Beautiful, where my Captain lies sore wounded, waiting for the sound of the chariot wheels which bring to his bedside the face and the voice nearer than any save one to his heart in this his hour of pain and weakness! Up a long street with white shutters and white steps to all the houses. Off at right angles into another long street with white shutters and white steps to all the houses. Off again at another right angle into still another long street with white shutters and white steps to all the houses. The natives of this city pretend to know one street from another by some individual differences of aspect; but the best way for a stranger to distinguish the streets he has been in from others is to make a cross or other mark on the white shutters.

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This corner-house is the one. Ring softly,—for the Lieutenant-Colonel lies there with a dreadfully wounded arm, and two sons of the family, one wounded like the Colonel, one fighting with death in the fog of a typhoid fever, will start with fresh pangs at the least sound you can make. I entered the house, but no cheerful smile met me. The sufferers were each of them thought to be in a critical condition. The fourth bed, waiting its tenant day after day, was still empty. Not a word from my Captain.

Then, foolish, fond body that I was, my heart sank within me. Had he been taken ill on the road, perhaps been attacked with those formidable symptoms which sometimes come on suddenly after wounds that seemed to be doing well enough, and was his life ebbing away in some lonely cottage, nay, in some cold barn or shed, or at the wayside, unknown, uncared for? Somewhere between Philadelphia and Hagerstown, if not at the latter town, he must be, at any rate. I must sweep the hundred and eighty miles between these places as one would sweep a chamber where a precious pearl had been dropped. I must have a companion in my search, partly to help me look about, and partly because I was getting nervous and felt lonely. Charley said he would go with me,—Charley, my Captain's beloved friend, gentle, but full of spirit and liveliness, cultivated, social, affectionate, a good talker, a most agreeable letter-writer, observing, with large relish of life, and keen sense of humor. He was not well enough to go, some of the timid ones said; but he answered by packing his carpet-bag, and in an hour or two we were on the Pennsylvania Central Railroad in full blast for Harrisburg.

I should have been a forlorn creature but for the presence of my companion. In his delightful company I half forgot my anxieties, which, exaggerated as they may seem now, were not unnatural after what I had seen of the confusion and distress that had followed the great battle, nay, which seem almost justified by the recent statement that "high officers" were buried after that battle whose names were never ascertained. I noticed little matters, as usual. The road was filled in between the rails with cracked stones, such as are used for macadamizing streets. They keep the dust down, I suppose, for I could not think of any other use for them. By and by the glorious valley which stretches along through Chester and Lancaster Counties opened upon us. Much as I had heard of the fertile regions of Pennsylvania, the vast scale and the uniform luxuriance of this region astonished me. The grazing pastures were so green, the fields were under such perfect culture, the cattle looked so sleek, the houses were so comfortable, the barns so ample, the fences so well kept, that I did not wonder, when I was told that this region was called the England of Pennsylvania. The people whom we saw were, like the cattle, well nourished; the young women looked round and wholesome.

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"Grass makes girls." I said to my companion, and left him to work out my Orphic saying, thinking to myself, that as guano makes grass, it was a legitimate conclusion that Ichaboe must be a nursery of female loveliness.

As the train stopped at the different stations, I inquired at each if they had any wounded officers. None as yet; the red rays of the battle-field had not streamed off so far as this. Evening found us in the cars; they lighted candles in spring-candle-sticks; odd enough I thought it in the land of oil-wells and unmeasured floods of kerosene. Some fellows turned up the back of a seat so as to make it horizontal, and began gambling, or pretending to gamble; it looked as if they were trying to pluck a young countryman; but appearances are deceptive, and no deeper stake than "drinks for the crowd" seemed at last to be involved. But remembering that murder has tried of late years to establish itself as an institution in the cars, I was less tolerant of the doings of these "sportsmen" who tried to turn our public conveyance into a travelling Frascati. They acted as if they were used to it, and nobody seemed to pay much attention to their manoeuvres.

We arrived at Harrisburg in the course of the evening, and attempted to find our way to the Jones House, to which we had been commended. By some mistake, intentional on the part of somebody, as it may have been, or purely accidental, we went to the Herr House instead. I entered my name in the book, with that of my companion. A plain, middle-aged man stepped up, read it to himself in low tones, and coupled to it a literary title by which I have been sometimes known. He proved to be a graduate of Brown University, and had heard a certain Phi Beta Kappa poem delivered there a good many years ago. I remembered it, too; Professor Goddard, whose sudden and singular death left such lasting regret, was the Orator. I recollect that while I was speaking a drum went by the church, and how I was disgusted to see all the heads near the windows thrust out of them, as if the building were on fire. Cedat armis toga. The clerk in the office, a mild, pensive, unassuming young man, was very polite in his manners, and did all he could to make us comfortable. He was of a literary turn, and knew one of his guests in his character of author. At tea, a mild old gentleman, with white hair and beard, sat next us. He, too, had come hunting after his son, a lieutenant in a Pennsylvania regiment. Of these, father and son, more presently.

After tea we went to look up Dr. Wilson, chief medical officer of the hospitals in the place, who was staying at the Brady House. A magnificent old toddy-mixer, Bardolphian in hue, and stern of aspect, as all grog-dispensers must be, accustomed as they are to dive through the features of men to the bottom of their souls and pockets to see whether they are solvent to the amount of sixpence, answered my question by a wave of one hand, the other

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being engaged in carrying a dram to his lips. His superb indifference gratified my artistic feeling more than it wounded my personal sensibilities. Anything really superior in its line claims my homage, and this man was the ideal bartender, above all vulgar passions, untouched by commonplace sympathies, himself a lover of the liquid happiness he dispenses, and filled with a fine scorn of all those lesser felicities conferred by love or fame or wealth or any of the roundabout agencies for which his fiery elixir is the cheap, all-powerful substitute.

Dr. Wilson was in bed, though it was early in the evening, not having slept for I don't know how many nights.

"Take my card up to him, if you please." "This way, sir."

A man who has not slept for a fortnight or so is not expected to be as affable, when attacked in his bed, as a French Princess of old time at her morning receptions. Dr. Wilson turned toward me, as I entered, without effusion, but without rudeness. His thick, dark moustache was chopped off square at the lower edge of the upper lip, which implied a decisive, if not a peremptory, style of character.

I am Dr. So-and-So of Hubtown, looking after my wounded son. (I gave my name and said Boston, of course, in reality.)

Dr. Wilson leaned on his elbow and looked up in my face, his features growing cordial. Then he put out his hand, and good-humoredly excused his reception of me. The day before, as he told me, he had dismissed from the service a medical man hailing from *****, Pennsylvania, bearing my last name, preceded by the same two initials; and he supposed, when my card came up, it was this individual who was disturbing his slumbers. The coincidence was so unlikely a priori, unless some forlorn parent without antecedents had named, a child after me, that I could not help cross-questioning the Doctor, who assured me deliberately that the fact was just as he had said, even to the somewhat unusual initials. Dr. Wilson very kindly furnished me all the information in his power, gave me directions for telegraphing to Chambersburg, and showed every disposition to serve me.

On returning to the Herr House, we found the mild, white-haired old gentleman in a very happy state. He had just discovered his son, in a comfortable condition, at the United States Hotel. He thought that he could probably give us some information which would prove interesting. To the United States Hotel we repaired, then, in company with our kind-hearted old friend, who evidently wanted to see me as happy as himself. He went up-stairs to his son's chamber, and presently came down to conduct us there.



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Lieutenant P_____, of the Pennsylvania ___th, was a very fresh, bright-looking young man, lying in bed from the effects of a recent injury received in action. A grape-shot, after passing through a post and a board, had struck him in the hip, bruising, but not penetrating or breaking. He had good news for me.

That very afternoon, a party of wounded officers had passed through Harrisburg, going East. He had conversed in the bar-room of this hotel with one of them, who was wounded about the shoulder (it might be the lower part of the neck), and had his arm in a sling. He belonged to the Twentieth Massachusetts; the Lieutenant saw that he was a Captain, by the two bars on his shoulder-strap. His name was my family-name; he was tall and youthful, like my Captain. At four o'clock he left in the train for Philadelphia. Closely questioned, the Lieutenant's evidence was as round, complete, and lucid as a Japanese sphere of rock-crystal.

Te Deum LAUDAMUS! The Lord's name be praised! The dead pain in the semilunar ganglion (which I must remind my reader is a kind of stupid, unreasoning brain, beneath the pit of the stomach, common to man and beast, which aches in the supreme moments of life, as when the dam loses her young ones, or the wild horse is lassoed) stopped short. There was a feeling as if I had slipped off a tight boot, or cut a strangling garter,—only it was all over my system. What more could I ask to assure me of the Captain's safety? As soon as the telegraph office opens tomorrow morning we will send a message to our friends in Philadelphia, and get a reply, doubtless, which will settle the whole matter.

The hopeful morrow dawned at last, and the message was sent accordingly. In due time, the following reply was received: "Phil Sept 24 I think the report you have heard that W [the Captain] has gone East must be an error we have not seen or heard of him here M L H"

De profundis CLAMAVI! He could not have passed through Philadelphia without visiting the house called Beautiful, where he had been so tenderly cared for after his wound at Ball's Bluff, and where those whom he loved were lying in grave peril of life or limb. Yet he did pass through Harrisburg, going East, going to Philadelphia, on his way home. Ah, this is it! He must have taken the late night-train from Philadelphia for New York, in his impatience to reach home. There is such a train, not down in the guide-book, but we were assured of the fact at the Harrisburg depot. By and by came the reply from Dr. Wilson's telegraphic message: nothing had been heard of the Captain at Chambersburg. Still later, another message came from our Philadelphia friend, saying that he was seen on Friday last at the house of Mrs. K_____, a well-known Union lady in Hagerstown. Now this could not be true, for he did not leave Keedysville until Saturday; but the name of the lady furnished a clew by which we could

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probably track him. A telegram was at once sent to Mrs. K_____, asking information. It was transmitted immediately, but when the answer would be received was uncertain, as the Government almost monopolized the line. I was, on the whole, so well satisfied that the Captain had gone East, that, unless something were heard to the contrary, I proposed following him in the late train leaving a little after midnight for Philadelphia.

This same morning we visited several of the temporary hospitals, churches and school-houses, where the wounded were lying. In one of these, after looking round as usual, I asked aloud, "Any Massachusetts men here?" Two bright faces lifted themselves from their pillows and welcomed me by name. The one nearest me was private John B. Noyes of Company B, Massachusetts Thirteenth, son of my old college class-tutor, now the reverend and learned Professor of Hebrew, *etc.*, in Harvard University. His neighbor was Corporal Armstrong of the same Company. Both were slightly wounded, doing well. I learned then and since from Mr. Noyes that they and their comrades were completely overwhelmed by the attentions of the good people of Harrisburg,—that the ladies brought them fruits and flowers, and smiles, better than either,—and that the little boys of the place were almost fighting for the privilege of doing their errands. I am afraid there will be a good many hearts pierced in this war that will have no bulletmark to show.

There were some heavy hours to get rid of, and we thought a visit to Camp Curtin might lighten some of them. A rickety wagon carried us to the camp, in company with a young woman from Troy, who had a basket of good things with her for a sick brother. "Poor boy! he will be sure to die," she said. The rustic sentries uncrossed their muskets and let us in. The camp was on a fair plain, girdled with hills, spacious, well kept apparently, but did not present any peculiar attraction for us. The visit would have been a dull one, had we not happened to get sight of a singular-looking set of human beings in the distance. They were clad in stuff of different hues, gray and brown being the leading shades, but both subdued by a neutral tint, such as is wont to harmonize the variegated apparel of travel-stained vagabonds. They looked slouchy, listless, torpid,—an ill-conditioned crew, at first sight, made up of such fellows as an old woman would drive away from her hen-roost with a broomstick. Yet these were estrays from the fiery army which has given our generals so much trouble,—*"Secesh prisoners,"* as a bystander told us. A talk with them might be profitable and entertaining. But they were tabooed to the common visitor, and it was necessary to get inside of the line which separated us from them.

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A solid, square captain was standing near by, to whom we were referred. Look a man calmly through the very centre of his pupils and ask him for anything with a tone implying entire conviction that he will grant it, and he will very commonly consent to the thing asked, were it to commit hari-kari. The Captain acceded to my postulate, and accepted my friend as a corollary. As one string of my own ancestors was of Batavian origin, I may be permitted to say that my new friend was of the Dutch type, like the Amsterdam galiots, broad in the beam, capacious in the hold, and calculated to carry a heavy cargo rather than to make fast time. He must have been in politics at some time or other, for he made orations to all the "Secesh," in which he explained to them that the United States considered and treated them like children, and enforced upon them the ridiculous impossibility of the Rebels attempting to do anything against such a power as that of the National Government.

Much as his discourse edified them and enlightened me, it interfered somewhat with my little plans of entering into frank and friendly talk with some of these poor fellows, for whom I could not help feeling a kind of human sympathy, though I am as venomous a hater of the Rebellion as one is like to find under the stars and stripes. It is fair to take a man prisoner. It is fair to make speeches to a man. But to take a man prisoner and then make speeches to him while in durance is not fair.

I began a few pleasant conversations, which would have come to something but for the reason assigned.

One old fellow had a long beard, a drooping eyelid, and a black clay pipe in his mouth. He was a Scotchman from Ayr, dour enough, and little disposed to be communicative, though I tried him with the "Twa Briggs," and, like all Scotchmen, he was a reader of "Burns." He professed to feel no interest in the cause for which he was fighting, and was in the army, I judged, only from compulsion. There was a wild-haired, unsoaped boy, with pretty, foolish features enough, who looked as if he might be about seventeen, as he said he was. I give my questions and his answers literally.

"What State do you come from?"

"Georgy."

"What part of Georgia?"

"Midway."

—[How odd that is! My father was settled for seven years as pastor over the church at Midway, Georgia, and this youth is very probably a grandson or great grandson of one of his parishioners.]

"Where did you go to church when you were at home?"

“Never went inside ‘f a church b’t once in m’ life.”

“What did you do before you became a soldier?”

“Nothin’.”

“What do you mean to do when you get back?”

“Nothin’.”

Who could have any other feeling than pity for this poor human weed, this dwarfed and etiolated soul, doomed by neglect to an existence but one degree above that of the idiot?

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With the group was a lieutenant, buttoned close in his gray coat,—one button gone, perhaps to make a breastpin for some fair traitorous bosom. A short, stocky man, undistinguishable from one of the “subject race” by any obvious meanderings of the sangre azul on his exposed surfaces. He did not say much, possibly because he was convinced by the statements and arguments of the Dutch captain. He had on strong, iron-heeled shoes, of English make, which he said cost him seventeen dollars in Richmond.

I put the question, in a quiet, friendly way, to several of the prisoners, what they were fighting for. One answered, “For our homes.” Two or three others said they did not know, and manifested great indifference to the whole matter, at which another of their number, a sturdy fellow, took offence, and muttered opinions strongly derogatory to those who would not stand up for the cause they had been fighting for. A feeble; attenuated old man, who wore the Rebel uniform, if such it could be called, stood by without showing any sign of intelligence. It was cutting very close to the bone to carve such a shred of humanity from the body politic to make a soldier of.

We were just leaving, when a face attracted me, and I stopped the party. “That is the true Southern type,” I said to my companion. A young fellow, a little over twenty, rather tall, slight, with a perfectly smooth, boyish cheek, delicate, somewhat high features, and a fine, almost feminine mouth, stood at the opening of his tent, and as we turned towards him fidgeted a little nervously with one hand at the loose canvas, while he seemed at the same time not unwilling to talk. He was from Mississippi, he said, had been at Georgetown College, and was so far imbued with letters that even the name of the literary humility before him was not new to his ears. Of course I found it easy to come into magnetic relation with him, and to ask him without incivility what he was fighting for. “Because I like the excitement of it,” he answered. I know those fighters with women’s mouths and boys’ cheeks. One such from the circle of my own friends, sixteen years old, slipped away from his nursery, and dashed in under, an assumed name among the red-legged Zouaves, in whose company he got an ornamental bullet-mark in one of the earliest conflicts of the war.

“Did you ever see a genuine Yankee?” said my Philadelphia friend to the young Mississippian.

“I have shot at a good many of them,” he replied, modestly, his woman’s mouth stirring a little, with a pleasant, dangerous smile.

The Dutch captain here put his foot into the conversation, as his ancestors used to put theirs into the scale, when they were buying furs of the Indians by weight,—so much for the weight of a hand, so much for the weight of a foot. It deranged the balance of our intercourse; there was no use in throwing a fly where a paving-stone had just splashed into the water, and I nodded a good-by to the boy-fighter, thinking how much pleasanter it was for my friend the Captain to address him with unanswerable arguments and

crushing statements in his own tent than it would be to meet him upon some remote picket station and offer his fair proportions to the quick eye of a youngster who would draw a bead on him before he had time to say dunder and blixum.

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We drove back to the town. No message. After dinner still no message. Dr. Cuyler, Chief Army Hospital Inspector, is in town, they say. Let us hunt him up,—perhaps he can help us.

We found him at the Jones House. A gentleman of large proportions, but of lively temperament, his frame knit in the North, I think, but ripened in Georgia, incisive, prompt but good-humored, wearing his broad-brimmed, steeple-crowned felt hat with the least possible tilt on one side,—a sure sign of exuberant vitality in a mature and dignified person like him, business-like in his ways, and not to be interrupted while occupied with another, but giving himself up heartily to the claimant who held him for the time. He was so genial, so cordial, so encouraging, that it seemed as if the clouds, which had been thick all the morning, broke away as we came into his presence, and the sunshine of his large nature filled the air all around us. He took the matter in hand at once, as if it were his own private affair. In ten minutes he had a second telegraphic message on its way to Mrs. K at Hagerstown, sent through the Government channel from the State Capitol,—one so direct and urgent that I should be sure of an answer to it, whatever became of the one I had sent in the morning.

While this was going on, we hired a dilapidated barouche, driven by an odd young native, neither boy nor man, “as a codling when ’t is almost an apple,” who said wery for very, simple and sincere, who smiled faintly at our pleasantries, always with a certain reserve of suspicion, and a gleam of the shrewdness that all men get who live in the atmosphere of horses. He drove us round by the Capitol grounds, white with tents, which were disgraced in my eyes by unsoldierly scrawls in huge letters, thus: *The seven Bloomsbury brothers*, *devil’s hole*, and similar inscriptions. Then to the Beacon Street of Harrisburg, which looks upon the Susquehanna instead of the Common, and shows a long front of handsome houses with fair gardens. The river is pretty nearly a mile across here, but very shallow now. The codling told us that a Rebel spy had been caught trying its fords a little while ago, and was now at Camp Curtin with a heavy ball chained to his leg,—a popular story, but a lie, Dr. Wilson said. A little farther along we came to the barkless stump of the tree to which Mr. Harris, the Cecrops of the city named after him, was tied by the Indians for some unpleasant operation of scalping or roasting, when he was rescued by friendly savages, who paddled across the stream to save him. Our youngling pointed out a very respectable-looking stone house as having been “built by the Indians” about those times. Guides have queer notions occasionally.

I was at Niagara just when Dr. Rae arrived there with his companions and dogs and things from his Arctic search after the lost navigator.

“Who are those?” I said to my conductor.

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"Them?" he answered. "Them's the men that's been out West, out to Michig'n, aft' Sir Ben Franklin."

Of the other sights of Harrisburg the Brant House or Hotel, or whatever it is called, seems most worth notice. Its facade is imposing, with a row of stately columns, high above which a broad sign impends, like a crag over the brow of a lofty precipice. The lower floor only appeared to be open to the public. Its tessellated pavement and ample courts suggested the idea of a temple where great multitudes might kneel uncrowded at their devotions; but from appearances about the place where the altar should be, I judged, that, if one asked the officiating priest for the cup which cheers and likewise inebriates, his prayer would not be unanswered. The edifice recalled to me a similar phenomenon I had once looked upon,—the famous Caffè Pedrocchi at Padua. It was the same thing in Italy and America: a rich man builds himself a mausoleum, and calls it a place of entertainment. The fragrance of innumerable libations and the smoke of incense-breathing cigars and pipes shall ascend day and night through the arches of his funereal monument. What are the poor dips which flare and flicker on the crowns of spikes that stand at the corners of St. Genevieve's filigree-cased sarcophagus to this perpetual offering of sacrifice?

Ten o'clock in the evening was approaching. The telegraph office would presently close, and as yet there were no tidings from Hagerstown. Let us step over and see for ourselves. A message! A message!

"Captain H. still here leaves seven to-morrow for Harrisburg Penna Is doing well Mrs HK —."

A note from Dr. Cuyler to the same effect came soon afterwards to the hotel.

We shall sleep well to-night; but let us sit awhile with nubiferous, or, if we may coin a word, nepheligenous accompaniment, such as shall gently narcotize the over-wearied brain and fold its convolutions for slumber like the leaves of a lily at nightfall. For now the over-tense nerves are all unstraining themselves, and a buzz, like that which comes over one who stops after being long jolted upon an uneasy pavement, makes the whole frame alive with a luxurious languid sense of all its inmost fibres. Our cheerfulness ran over, and the mild, pensive clerk was so magnetized by it that he came and sat down with us. He presently confided to me, with infinite naivete and ingenuousness, that, judging from my personal appearance, he should not have thought me the writer that he in his generosity reckoned me to be. His conception, so far as I could reach it, involved a huge, uplifted forehead, embossed with protuberant organs of the intellectual faculties, such as all writers are supposed to possess in abounding measure. While I fell short of his ideal in this respect, he was pleased to say that he found me by no means the remote and inaccessible personage he had imagined, and that I had nothing of the dandy about me, which last compliment I had a modest consciousness of most abundantly deserving.

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Sweet slumbers brought us to the morning of Thursday. The train from Hagerstown was due at 11.15 A. M: We took another ride behind the codling, who showed us the sights of yesterday over again. Being in a gracious mood of mind, I enlarged on the varying aspects of the town-pumps and other striking objects which we had once inspected, as seen by the different lights of evening and morning. After this, we visited the school-house hospital. A fine young fellow, whose arm had been shattered, was just falling into the spasms of lock-jaw. The beads of sweat stood large and round on his flushed and contracted features. He was under the effect of opiates,—why not (if his case was desperate, as it seemed to be considered) stop his sufferings with chloroform? It was suggested that it might shorten life. “What then?” I said. “Are a dozen additional spasms worth living for?”

The time approached for the train to arrive from Hagerstown, and we went to the station. I was struck, while waiting there, with what seemed to me a great want of care for the safety of the people standing round. Just after my companion and myself had stepped off the track, I noticed a car coming quietly along at a walk, as one may say, without engine, without visible conductor, without any person heralding its approach, so silently, so insidiously, that I could not help thinking how very near it came to flattening out me and my match-box worse than the Ravel pantomimist and his snuff-box were flattened out in the play. The train was late,—fifteen minutes, half an hour late, and I began to get nervous, lest something had happened. While I was looking for it, out started a freight-train, as if on purpose to meet the cars I was expecting, for a grand smash-up. I shivered at the thought, and asked an employee of the road, with whom I had formed an acquaintance a few minutes old, why there should not be a collision of the expected train with this which was just going out. He smiled an official smile, and answered that they arranged to prevent that, or words to that effect.

Twenty-four hours had not passed from that moment when a collision did occur, just out of the city, where I feared it, by which at least eleven persons were killed, and from forty to sixty more were maimed and crippled!

To-day there was the delay spoken of, but nothing worse. The expected train came in so quietly that I was almost startled to see it on the track. Let us walk calmly through the cars, and look around us.

In the first car, on the fourth seat to the right, I saw my Captain; there saw I him, even my first-born, whom I had sought through many cities.

“How are you, Boy?”

“How are you, Dad?”

Such are the proprieties of life, as they are observed among us Anglo-Saxons of the nineteenth century, decently disguising those natural impulses that made Joseph, the



Prime Minister of Egypt, weep aloud so that the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard, nay, which had once overcome his shaggy old uncle Esau so entirely that he fell on his brother's neck and cried like a baby in the presence of all the women. But the hidden cisterns of the soul may be filling fast with sweet tears, while the windows through which it looks are undimmed by a drop or a film of moisture.

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These are times in which we cannot live solely for selfish joys or griefs. I had not let fall the hand I held, when a sad, calm voice addressed me by name. I fear that at the moment I was too much absorbed in my own feelings; for certainly at any other time. I should have yielded myself without stint to the sympathy which this meeting might well call forth.

"You remember my son, Cortland Saunders, whom I brought to see you once in Boston?"

"I do remember him well."

"He was killed on Monday, at Shepherdstown. I am carrying his body back with me on this train. He was my only child. If you could come to my house,—I can hardly call it my home now,—it would be a pleasure to me."

This young man, belonging in Philadelphia, was the author of a "New System of Latin Paradigms," a work showing extraordinary scholarship and capacity. It was this book which first made me acquainted with him, and I kept him in my memory, for there was genius in the youth. Some time afterwards he came to me with a modest request to be introduced to President Felton, and one or two others, who would aid him in a course of independent study he was proposing to himself. I was most happy to smooth the way for him, and he came repeatedly after this to see me and express his satisfaction in the opportunities for study he enjoyed at Cambridge. He was a dark, still, slender person, always with a trance-like remoteness, a mystic dreaminess of manner, such as I never saw in any other youth. Whether he heard with difficulty, or whether his mind reacted slowly on an alien thought, I could not say; but his answer would often be behind time, and then a vague, sweet smile, or a few words spoken under his breath, as if he had been trained in sick men's chambers. For such a young man, seemingly destined for the inner life of contemplation, to be a soldier seemed almost unnatural. Yet he spoke to me of his intention to offer himself to his country, and his blood must now be reckoned among the precious sacrifices which will make her soil sacred forever. Had he lived, I doubt not that he would have redeemed the rare promise of his earlier years. He has done better, for he has died that unborn generations may attain the hopes held out to our nation and to mankind.

So, then, I had been within ten miles of the place where my wounded soldier was lying, and then calmly turned my back upon him to come once more round by a journey of three or four hundred miles to the same region I had left! No mysterious attraction warned me that the heart warm with the same blood as mine was throbbing so near my own. I thought of that lovely, tender passage where Gabriel glides unconsciously by Evangeline upon the great river. Ah, me! if that railroad crash had been a few hours earlier, we two should never have met again, after coming so close to each other!

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The source of my repeated disappointments was soon made clear enough. The Captain had gone to Hagerstown, intending to take the cars at once for Philadelphia, as his three friends actually did, and as I took it for granted he certainly would. But as he walked languidly along, some ladies saw him across the street, and seeing, were moved with pity, and pitying, spoke such soft words that he was tempted to accept their invitation and rest awhile beneath their hospitable roof. The mansion was old, as the dwellings of gentlefolks should be; the ladies were some of them young, and all were full of kindness; there were gentle cares, and unasked luxuries, and pleasant talk, and music-sprinklings from the piano, with a sweet voice to keep them company,—and all this after the swamps of the Chickahominy, the mud and flies of Harrison's Landing, the dragging marches, the desperate battles, the fretting wound, the jolting ambulance, the log-house, and the rickety milk—cart! Thanks, uncounted thanks to the angelic ladies whose charming attentions detained him from Saturday to Thursday, to his great advantage and my infinite bewilderment! As for his wound, how could it do otherwise than well under such hands? The bullet had gone smoothly through, dodging everything but a few nervous branches, which would come right in time and leave him as well as ever.

At ten that evening we were in Philadelphia, the Captain at the house of the friends so often referred to, and I the guest of Charley, my kind companion. The Quaker element gives an irresistible attraction to these benignant Philadelphia households. Many things reminded me that I was no longer in the land of the Pilgrims. On the table were Kool Slaa and Schmeer Kase, but the good grandmother who dispensed with such quiet, simple grace these and more familiar delicacies was literally ignorant of Baked Beans, and asked if it was the Lima bean which was employed in that marvellous dish of animalized leguminous farina!

Charley was pleased with my comparing the face of the small Ethiop known to his household as "Tines" to a huckleberry with features. He also approved my parallel between a certain German blonde young maiden whom we passed in the street and the "Morris White" peach. But he was so good-humored at times, that, if one scratched a lucifer, he accepted it as an illumination.

A day in Philadelphia left a very agreeable impression of the outside of that great city, which has endeared itself so much of late to all the country by its most noble and generous care of our soldiers. Measured by its sovereign hotel, the Continental, it would stand at the head of our economic civilization. It provides for the comforts and conveniences, and many of the elegances of life, more satisfactorily than any American city, perhaps than any other city anywhere. Many of its characteristics are accounted for to some extent by its geographical position. It is the great neutral centre of the Continent,

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where the fiery enthusiasms of the South and the keen fanaticisms of the North meet at their outer limits, and result in a compound which neither turns litmus red nor turmeric brown. It lives largely on its traditions, of which, leaving out Franklin and Independence Hall, the most imposing must be considered its famous water-works. In my younger days I visited Fairmount, and it was with a pious reverence that I renewed my pilgrimage to that perennial fountain. Its watery ventricles were throbbing with the same systole and diastole as when, the blood of twenty years bounding in my own heart, I looked upon their giant mechanism. But in the place of "Pratt's Garden" was an open park, and the old house where Robert Morris held his court in a former generation was changing to a public restaurant. A suspension bridge cobwebbed itself across the Schuylkill where that audacious arch used to leap the river at a single bound,—an arch of greater span, as they loved to tell us, than was ever before constructed. The Upper Ferry Bridge was to the Schuylkill what the Colossus was to the harbor of Rhodes. It had an air of dash about it which went far towards redeeming the dead level of respectable average which flattens the physiognomy of the rectangular city. Philadelphia will never be herself again until another Robert Mills and another Lewis Wernwag have shaped her a new palladium. She must leap the Schuylkill again, or old men will sadly shake their heads, like the Jews at the sight of the second temple, remembering the glories of that which it replaced.

There are times when Ethiopian minstrelsy can amuse, if it does not charm, a weary soul, and such a vacant hour there was on this same Friday evening. The "opera-house" was spacious and admirably ventilated. As I was listening to the merriment of the sooty buffoons, I happened to cast my eyes up to the ceiling, and through an open semicircular window a bright solitary star looked me calmly in the eyes. It was a strange intrusion of the vast eternities beckoning from the infinite spaces. I called the attention of one of my neighbors to it, but "Bones" was irresistibly droll, and Arcturus, or Aldebaran, or whatever the blazing luminary may have been, with all his revolving worlds, sailed uncared-for down the firmament.

On Saturday morning we took up our line of march for New York. Mr. Felton, President of the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad, had already called upon me, with a benevolent and sagacious look on his face which implied that he knew how to do me a service and meant to do it. Sure enough, when we got to the depot, we found a couch spread for the Captain, and both of us were passed on to New York with no visits, but those of civility, from the conductor. The best thing I saw on the route was a rustic fence, near Elizabethtown, I think, but I am not quite sure. There was more genius in it than in any structure of the kind I have ever seen,—each length being of a special pattern, ramified, reticulated, contorted, as the limbs of the trees had grown. I trust some friend will photograph or stereograph this fence for me, to go with the view of the spires of Frederick, already referred to, as mementos of my journey.

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I had come to feeling that I knew most of the respectably dressed people whom I met in the cars, and had been in contact with them at some time or other. Three or four ladies and gentlemen were near us, forming a group by themselves. Presently one addressed me by name, and, on inquiry, I found him to be the gentleman who was with me in the pulpit as Orator on the occasion of another Phi Beta Kappa poem, one delivered at New Haven. The party were very courteous and friendly, and contributed in various ways to our comfort.

It sometimes seems to me as if there were only about a thousand people in the world, who keep going round and round behind the scenes and then before them, like the "army" in a beggarly stage-show. Suppose that I should really wish; some time or other, to get away from this everlasting circle of revolving supernumeraries, where should I buy a ticket the like of which was not in some of their pockets, or find a seat to which some one of them was not a neighbor.

A little less than a year before, after the Ball's Bluff accident, the Captain, then the Lieutenant, and myself had reposed for a night on our homeward journey at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, where we were lodged on the ground-floor, and fared sumptuously. We were not so peculiarly fortunate this time, the house being really very full. Farther from the flowers and nearer to the stars,—to reach the neighborhood of which last the per ardua of three or four flights of stairs was formidable for any mortal, wounded or well.

The "vertical railway" settled that for us, however. It is a giant corkscrew forever pulling a mammoth cork, which, by some divine judgment, is no sooner drawn than it is replaced in its position. This ascending and descending stopper is hollow, carpeted, with cushioned seats, and is watched over by two condemned souls, called conductors, one of whom is said to be named Igion, and the other Sisyphus.

I love New York, because, as in Paris, everybody that lives in it feels that it is his property,—at least, as much as it is anybody's. My Broadway, in particular, I love almost as I used to love my Boulevards. I went, therefore, with peculiar interest, on the day that we rested at our grand hotel, to visit some new pleasure-grounds the citizens had been arranging for us, and which I had not yet seen. The Central Park is an expanse of wild country, well crumpled so as to form ridges which will give views and hollows that will hold water. The hips and elbows and other bones of Nature stick out here and there in the shape of rocks which give character to the scenery, and an unchangeable, unpurchasable look to a landscape that without them would have been in danger of being fattened by art and money out of all its native features. The roads were fine, the sheets of water beautiful, the bridges handsome, the swans elegant in their deportment, the grass green and as short as a fast horse's winter coat. I could not learn whether it was kept so by clipping or singeing. I was delighted with my new property,—but it cost me four dollars to get there, so far was it beyond the Pillars of Hercules of the fashionable quarter. What it will be by and by depends on circumstances; but at present it is as much central to New York as Brookline is central to Boston.

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The question is not between Mr. Olmsted's admirably arranged, but remote pleasure-ground and our Common, with its batrachian pool, but between his Excentric Park and our finest suburban scenery, between its artificial reservoirs and the broad natural sheet of Jamaica Pond. I say this not invidiously, but in justice to the beauties which surround our own metropolis. To compare the situations of any dwellings in either of the great cities with those which look upon the Common, the Public Garden, the waters of the Back Bay, would be to take an unfair advantage of Fifth Avenue and Walnut Street. St. Botolph's daughter dresses in plainer clothes than her more stately sisters, but she wears an emerald on her right hand and a diamond on her left that Cybele herself need not be ashamed of.

On Monday morning, the twenty-ninth of September, we took the cars for home. Vacant lots, with Irish and pigs; vegetable-gardens; straggling houses; the high bridge; villages, not enchanting; then Stamford: then *Norwalk*. Here, on the sixth of May, 1853, I passed close on the heels of the great disaster. But that my lids were heavy on that morning, my readers would probably have had no further trouble with me. Two of my friends saw the car in which they rode break in the middle and leave them hanging over the abyss. From Norwalk to Boston, that day's journey of two hundred miles was a long funeral procession.

Bridgeport, waiting for Iranistan to rise from its ashes with all its phoenix-egg domes,—bubbles of wealth that broke, ready to be blown again; iridescent as ever, which is pleasant, for the world likes cheerful Mr. Barnum's success; New Haven, girt with flat marshes that look like monstrous billiard-tables, with hay-cocks lying about for balls,—romantic with West Rock and its legends,—cursed with a detestable depot, whose niggardly arrangements crowd the track so murderously close to the wall that the peine forte et dure must be the frequent penalty of an innocent walk on its platform,—with its neat carriages, metropolitan hotels, precious old college-dormitories, its vistas of elms and its dishevelled weeping-willows; Hartford, substantial, well-bridged, many—steeped city,—every conical spire an extinguisher of some nineteenth-century heresy; so onward, by and across the broad, shallow Connecticut,—dull red road and dark river woven in like warp and woof by the shuttle of the darting engine; then Springfield, the wide-meadowed, well-feeding, horse-loving, hot-summered, giant-treed town,—city among villages, village among cities; Worcester, with its Daedalian labyrinth of crossing railroad-bars, where the snorting Minotaurs, breathing fire and smoke and hot vapors, are stabled in their dens; Framingham, fair cup-bearer, leaf-cinctured Hebe of the deep-bosomed Queen sitting by the seaside on the throne of the Six Nations. And now I begin to know the road, not by towns, but by single dwellings; not by miles, but by rods. The poles

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of the great magnet that draws in all the iron tracks through the grooves of all the mountains must be near at hand, for here are crossings, and sudden stops, and screams of alarmed engines heard all around. The tall granite obelisk comes into view far away on the left, its bevelled cap-stone sharp against the sky; the lofty chimneys of Charlestown and East Cambridge flaunt their smoky banners up in the thin air; and now one fair bosom of the three-pilled city, with its dome-crowned summit, reveals itself, as when many-breasted Ephesian Artemis appeared with half-open chlamys before her worshippers.

Fling open the window-blinds of the chamber that looks out on the waters and towards the western sun! Let the joyous light shine in upon the pictures that hang upon its walls and the shelves thick-set with the names of poets and philosophers and sacred teachers, in whose pages our boys learn that life is noble only when it is held cheap by the side of honor and of duty. Lay him in his own bed, and let him sleep off his aches and weariness. So comes down another night over this household, unbroken by any messenger of evil tidings,—a night of peaceful rest and grateful thoughts; for this our son and brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.

THE INEVITABLE TRIAL

[An Oration delivered before the City Authorities of Boston, on the 4th of July, 1863.]

It is our first impulse, upon this returning day of our nation's birth, to recall whatever is happiest and noblest in our past history, and to join our voices in celebrating the statesmen and the heroes, the men of thought and the men of action, to whom that history owes its existence. In other years this pleasing office may have been all that was required of the holiday speaker. But to-day, when the very life of the nation is threatened, when clouds are thick about us, and men's hearts are throbbing with passion, or failing with fear, it is the living question of the hour, and not the dead story of the past, which forces itself into all minds, and will find unrebuked debate in all assemblies.

In periods of disturbance like the present, many persons who sincerely love their country and mean to do their duty to her disappoint the hopes and expectations of those who are actively working in her cause. They seem to have lost whatever moral force they may have once possessed, and to go drifting about from one profitless discontent to another, at a time when every citizen is called upon for cheerful, ready service. It is because their minds are bewildered, and they are no longer truly themselves. Show them the path of duty, inspire them with hope for the future, lead them upwards from the turbid stream of events to the bright, translucent springs of eternal principles, strengthen

their trust in humanity and their faith in God, and you may yet restore them to their manhood and their country.

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At all times, and especially on this anniversary of glorious recollections and kindly enthusiasms, we should try to judge the weak and wavering souls of our brothers fairly and generously. The conditions in which our vast community of peace-loving citizens find themselves are new and unprovided for. Our quiet burghers and farmers are in the position of river-boats blown from their moorings out upon a vast ocean, where such a typhoon is raging as no mariner who sails its waters ever before looked upon. If their beliefs change with the veering of the blast, if their trust in their fellow-men, and in the course of Divine Providence, seems well-nigh shipwrecked, we must remember that they were taken unawares, and without the preparation which could fit them to struggle with these tempestuous elements. In times like these the faith is the man; and they to whom it is given in larger measure owe a special duty to those who for want of it are faint at heart, uncertain in speech, feeble in effort, and purposeless in aim.

Assuming without argument a few simple propositions,—that self-government is the natural condition of an adult society, as distinguished from the immature state, in which the temporary arrangements of monarchy and oligarchy are tolerated as conveniences; that the end of all social compacts is, or ought to be, to give every child born into the world the fairest chance to make the most and the best of itself that laws can give it; that Liberty, the one of the two claimants who swears that her babe shall not be split in halves and divided between them, is the true mother of this blessed Union; that the contest in which we are engaged is one of principles overlaid by circumstances; that the longer we fight, and the more we study the movements of events and ideas, the more clearly we find the moral nature of the cause at issue emerging in the field and in the study; that all honest persons with average natural sensibility, with respectable understanding, educated in the school of northern teaching, will have eventually to range themselves in the armed or unarmed host which fights or pleads for freedom, as against every form of tyranny; if not in the front rank now, then in the rear rank by and by;—assuming these propositions, as many, perhaps most of us, are ready to do, and believing that the more they are debated before the public the more they will gain converts, we owe it to the timid and the doubting to keep the great questions of the time in unceasing and untiring agitation. They must be discussed, in all ways consistent with the public welfare, by different classes of thinkers; by priests and laymen; by statesmen and simple voters; by moralists and lawyers; by men of science and uneducated hand-laborers; by men of facts and figures, and by men of theories and aspirations; in the abstract and in the concrete; discussed and rediscussed every month, every week, every day, and almost every hour, as the telegraph tells us of some new upheaval or subsidence of the rocky base of our political order.

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Such discussions may not be necessary to strengthen the convictions of the great body of loyal citizens. They may do nothing toward changing the views of those, if such there be, as some profess to believe, who follow politics as a trade. They may have no hold upon that class of persons who are defective in moral sensibility, just as other persons are wanting in an ear for music. But for the honest, vacillating minds, the tender consciences supported by the tremulous knees of an infirm intelligence, the timid compromisers who are always trying to curve the straight lines and round the sharp angles of eternal law, the continual debate of these living questions is the one offered means of grace and hope of earthly redemption. And thus a true, unhesitating patriot may be willing to listen with patience to arguments which he does not need, to appeals which have no special significance for him, in the hope that some less clear in mind or less courageous in temper may profit by them.

As we look at the condition in which we find ourselves on this fourth day of July, 1863, at the beginning of the Eighty-eighth Year of American Independence, we may well ask ourselves what right we have to indulge in public rejoicings. If the war in which we are engaged is an accidental one, which might have been avoided but for our fault; if it is for any ambitious or unworthy purpose on our part; if it is hopeless, and we are madly persisting in it; if it is our duty and in our power to make a safe and honorable peace, and we refuse to do it; if our free institutions are in danger of becoming subverted, and giving place to an irresponsible tyranny; if we are moving in the narrow circles which are to engulf us in national ruin,—then we had better sing a dirge, and leave this idle assemblage, and hush the noisy cannon which are reverberating through the air, and tear down the scaffolds which are soon to blaze with fiery symbols; for it is mourning and not joy that should cover the land; there should be silence, and not the echo of noisy gladness, in our streets; and the emblems with which we tell our nation's story and prefigure its future should be traced, not in fire, but in ashes.

If, on the other hand, this war is no accident, but an inevitable result of long incubating causes; inevitable as the cataclysms that swept away the monstrous births of primeval nature; if it is for no mean, unworthy end, but for national life, for liberty everywhere, for humanity, for the kingdom of God on earth; if it is not hopeless, but only growing to such dimensions that the world shall remember the final triumph of right throughout all time; if there is no safe and honorable peace for us but a peace proclaimed from the capital of every revolted province in the name of the sacred, inviolable Union; if the fear of tyranny is a phantasm, conjured up by the imagination of the weak, acted on by the craft of the cunning; if so far from circling inward to the gulf of our perdition,

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the movement of past years is reversed, and every revolution carries us farther and farther from the centre of the vortex, until, by God's blessing, we shall soon find ourselves freed from the outermost coil of the accursed spiral; if all these things are true; if we may hope to make them seem true, or even probable, to the doubting soul, in an hour's discourse, then we may join without madness in the day's exultant festivities; the bells may ring, the cannon may roar, the incense of our harmless saltpetre fill the air, and the children who are to inherit the fruit of these toiling, agonizing years, go about unblamed, making day and night vocal with their jubilant patriotism.

The struggle in which we are engaged was inevitable; it might have come a little sooner, or a little later, but it must have come. The disease of the nation was organic, and not functional, and the rough chirurgery of war was its only remedy.

In opposition to this view, there are many languid thinkers who lapse into a forlorn belief that if this or that man had never lived, or if this or that other man had not ceased to live, the country might have gone on in peace and prosperity, until its felicity merged in the glories of the millennium. If Mr. Calhoun had never proclaimed his heresies; if Mr. Garrison had never published his paper; if Mr. Phillips, the Cassandra in masculine shape of our long prosperous Ilium, had never uttered his melodious prophecies; if the silver tones of Mr. Clay had still sounded in the senate-chamber to smooth the billows of contention; if the Olympian brow of Daniel Webster had been lifted from the dust to fix its awful frown on the darkening scowl of rebellion,—we might have been spared this dread season of convulsion. All this is but simple Martha's faith, without the reason she could have given: "If Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."

They little know the tidal movements of national thought and feeling, who believe that they depend for existence on a few swimmers who ride their waves. It is not Leviathan that leads the ocean from continent to continent, but the ocean which bears his mighty bulk as it wafts its own bubbles. If this is true of all the narrower manifestations of human progress, how much more must it be true of those broad movements in the intellectual and spiritual domain which interest all mankind? But in the more limited ranges referred to, no fact is more familiar than that there is a simultaneous impulse acting on many individual minds at once, so that genius comes in clusters, and shines rarely as a single star. You may trace a common motive and force in the pyramid-builders of the earliest recorded antiquity, in the evolution of Greek architecture, and in the sudden springing up of those wondrous cathedrals of the twelfth and following centuries, growing out of the soil with stem and bud and blossom, like flowers of stone whose seeds might well have been the flaming aerolites cast over

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the battlements of heaven. You may see the same law showing itself in the brief periods of glory which make the names of Pericles and Augustus illustrious with reflected splendors; in the painters, the sculptors, the scholars of "Leo's golden days"; in the authors of the Elizabethan time; in the poets of the first part of this century following that dreary period, suffering alike from the silence of Cowper and the song of Hayley. You may accept the fact as natural, that Zwingli and Luther, without knowing each other, preached the same reformed gospel; that Newton, and Hooke, and Halley, and Wren arrived independently of each other at the great law of the diminution of gravity with the square of the distance; that Leverrier and Adams felt their hands meeting, as it were, as they stretched them into the outer darkness beyond the orbit of Uranus, in search of the dim, unseen Planet; that Fulton and Bell, that Wheatstone and Morse, that Daguerre and Niepce, were moving almost simultaneously in parallel paths to the same end. You see why Patrick Henry, in Richmond, and Samuel Adams, in Boston, were startling the crown officials with the same accents of liberty, and why the Mecklenburg Resolutions had the very ring of the Protest of the Province of Massachusetts. This law of simultaneous intellectual movement, recognized by all thinkers, expatiated upon by Lord Macaulay and by Mr. Herbert Spencer among recent writers, is eminently applicable to that change of thought and feeling which necessarily led to the present conflict.

The antagonism of the two sections of the Union was not the work of this or that enthusiast or fanatic. It was the consequence of a movement in mass of two different forms of civilization in different directions, and the men to whom it was attributed were only those who represented it most completely, or who talked longest and loudest about it. Long before the accents of those famous statesmen referred to ever resounded in the halls of the Capitol, long before the "Liberator" opened its batteries, the controversy now working itself out by trial of battle was foreseen and predicted. Washington warned his countrymen of the danger of sectional divisions, well knowing the line of cleavage that ran through the seemingly solid fabric. Jefferson foreshadowed the judgment to fall upon the land for its sins against a just God. Andrew Jackson announced a quarter of a century beforehand that the next pretext of revolution would be slavery. De Tocqueville recognized with that penetrating insight which analyzed our institutions and conditions so keenly, that the Union was to be endangered by slavery, not through its interests, but through the change of character it was bringing about in the people of the two sections, the same fatal change which George Mason, more than half a century before, had declared to be the most pernicious effect of the system, adding the solemn warning, now fearfully justifying itself in the sight of his descendants, that "by an inevitable chain of causes and effects, Providence punishes national sins by national calamities." The Virginian romancer pictured the far-off scenes of the conflict which he saw approaching as the prophets of Israel painted the coming woes of Jerusalem, and the strong iconoclast of Boston announced the very year when the curtain should rise on the yet unopened drama.

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The wise men of the past, and the shrewd men of our own time, who warned us of the calamities in store for our nation, never doubted what was the cause which was to produce first alienation and finally rupture. The descendants of the men “daily exercised in tyranny,” the “petty tyrants” as their own leading statesmen called them long ago, came at length to love the institution which their fathers had condemned while they tolerated. It is the fearful realization of that vision of the poet where the lost angels snuff up with eager nostrils the sulphurous emanations of the bottomless abyss,—so have their natures become changed by long breathing the atmosphere of the realm of darkness.

At last, in the fulness of time, the fruits of sin ripened in a sudden harvest of crime. Violence stalked into the senate-chamber, theft and perjury wound their way into the cabinet, and, finally, openly organized conspiracy, with force and arms, made burglarious entrance into a chief stronghold of the Union. That the principle which underlay these acts of fraud and violence should be irrevocably recorded with every needed sanction, it pleased God to select a chief ruler of the false government to be its Messiah to the listening world. As with Pharaoh, the Lord hardened his heart, while he opened his mouth, as of old he opened that of the unwise animal ridden by cursing Balaam. Then spake Mr. “Vice-President” Stephens those memorable words which fixed forever the theory of the new social order. He first lifted a degraded barbarism to the dignity of a philosophic system. He first proclaimed the gospel of eternal tyranny as the new revelation which Providence had reserved for the western Palestine. Hear, O heavens! and give ear, O earth! The corner-stone of the new-born dispensation is the recognized inequality of races; not that the strong may protect the weak, as men protect women and children, but that the strong may claim the authority of Nature and of God to buy, to sell, to scourge, to hunt, to cheat out of the reward of his labor, to keep in perpetual ignorance, to blast with hereditary curses throughout all time, the bronzed foundling of the New World, upon whose darkness has dawned the star of the occidental Bethlehem!

After two years of war have consolidated the opinion of the Slave States, we read in the “Richmond Examiner”: “The establishment of the Confederacy is verily a distinct reaction against the whole course of the mistaken civilization of the age. For ‘Liberty, Equality, Fraternity,’ we have deliberately substituted Slavery, Subordination, and Government.”

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A simple diagram, within the reach of all, shows how idle it is to look for any other cause than slavery as having any material agency in dividing the country. Match the two broken pieces of the Union, and you will find the fissure that separates them zigzagging itself half across the continent like an isothermal line, shooting its splintery projections, and opening its reentering angles, not merely according to the limitations of particular States, but as a county or other limited section of ground belongs to freedom or to slavery. Add to this the official statement made in 1862, that "there is not one regiment or battalion, or even company of men, which was organized in or derived from the Free States or Territories, anywhere, against the Union"; throw in gratuitously Mr. Stephens's explicit declaration in the speech referred to, and we will consider the evidence closed for the present on this count of the indictment.

In the face of these predictions, these declarations, this line of fracture, this precise statement, testimony from so many sources, extending through several generations, as to the necessary effect of slavery, a priori, and its actual influence as shown by the facts, few will suppose that anything we could have done would have stayed its course or prevented it from working out its legitimate effects on the white subjects of its corrupting dominion. Northern acquiescence or even sympathy may have sometimes helped to make it sit more easily on the consciences of its supporters. Many profess to think that Northern fanaticism, as they call it, acted like a mordant in fixing the black dye of slavery in regions which would but for that have washed themselves free of its stain in tears of penitence. It is a delusion and a snare to trust in any such false and flimsy reasons where there is enough and more than enough in the institution itself to account for its growth. Slavery gratifies at once the love of power, the love of money, and the love of ease; it finds a victim for anger who cannot smite back his oppressor; and it offers to all, without measure, the seductive privileges which the Mormon gospel reserves for the true believers on earth, and the Bible of Mahomet only dares promise to the saints in heaven.

Still it is common, common even to vulgarity, to hear the remark that the same gallows-tree ought to bear as its fruit the arch-traitor and the leading champion of aggressive liberty. The mob of Jerusalem was not satisfied with its two crucified thieves; it must have a cross also for the reforming Galilean, who interfered so rudely with its conservative traditions! It is asserted that the fault was quite as much on our side as on the other; that our agitators and abolishers kindled the flame for which the combustibles were all ready on the other side of the border. If these men could have been silenced, our brothers had not died.

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Who are the persons that use this argument? They are the very ones who are at the present moment most zealous in maintaining the right of free discussion. At a time when every power the nation can summon is needed to ward off the blows aimed at its life, and turn their force upon its foes,—when a false traitor at home may lose us a battle by a word, and a lying newspaper may demoralize an army by its daily or weekly stillicidium of poison, they insist with loud acclaim upon the liberty of speech and of the press; liberty, nay license, to deal with government, with leaders, with every measure, however urgent, in any terms they choose, to traduce the officer before his own soldiers, and assail the only men who have any claim at all to rule over the country, as the very ones who are least worthy to be obeyed. If these opposition members of society are to have their way now, they cannot find fault with those persons who spoke their minds freely in the past on that great question which, as we have agreed, underlies all our present dissensions.

It is easy to understand the bitterness which is often shown towards reformers. They are never general favorites. They are apt to interfere with vested rights and time-hallowed interests. They often wear an unlovely, forbidding aspect. Their office corresponds to that of Nature's sanitary commission for the removal of material nuisances. It is not the butterfly, but the beetle, which she employs for this duty. It is not the bird of paradise and the nightingale, but the fowl of dark plumage and unmelodious voice, to which is entrusted the sacred duty of eliminating the substances that infect the air. And the force of obvious analogy teaches us not to expect all the qualities which please the general taste in those whose instincts lead them to attack the moral nuisances which poison the atmosphere of society. But whether they please us in all their aspects or not, is not the question. Like them or not, they must and will perform their office, and we cannot stop them. They may be unwise, violent, abusive, extravagant, impracticable, but they are alive, at any rate, and it is their business to remove abuses as soon as they are dead, and often to help them to die. To quarrel with them because they are beetles, and not butterflies, is natural, but far from profitable. They grow none the less vigorously for being trodden upon, like those tough weeds that love to nestle between the stones of court-yard pavements. If you strike at one of their heads with the bludgeon of the law, or of violence, it flies open like the seedcapsule of a snap-weed, and fills the whole region with seminal thoughts which will spring up in a crop just like the original martyr. They chased one of these enthusiasts, who attacked slavery, from St. Louis, and shot him at Alton in 1837; and on the 23d of June just passed, the Governor of Missouri, chairman of the Committee on Emancipation, introduced to the Convention an Ordinance for the final extinction of Slavery! They hunted another through the streets of a great Northern city in 1835; and within a few weeks a regiment of colored soldiers, many of them bearing the marks of the slave-driver's whip on their backs, marched out before a vast multitude tremulous with newly-stirred sympathies, through the streets of the same city, to fight our battles in the name of God and Liberty!

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The same persons who abuse the reformers, and lay all our troubles at their door, are apt to be severe also on what they contemptuously emphasize as “sentiments” considered as motives of action. It is charitable to believe that they do not seriously contemplate or truly understand the meaning of the words they use, but rather play with them, as certain so-called “learned” quadrupeds play with the printed characters set before them. In all questions involving duty, we act from sentiments. Religion springs from them, the family order rests upon them, and in every community each act involving a relation between any two of its members implies the recognition or the denial of a sentiment. It is true that men often forget them or act against their bidding in the keen competition of business and politics. But God has not left the hard intellect of man to work out its devices without the constant presence of beings with gentler and purer instincts. The breast of woman is the ever-rocking cradle of the pure and holy sentiments which will sooner or later steal their way into the mind of her sterner companion; which will by and by emerge in the thoughts of the world’s teachers, and at last thunder forth in the edicts of its law-givers and masters. Woman herself borrows half her tenderness from the sweet influences of maternity; and childhood, that weeps at the story of suffering, that shudders at the picture of wrong, brings down its inspiration “from God, who is our home.” To quarrel, then, with the class of minds that instinctively attack abuses, is not only profitless but senseless; to sneer at the sentiments which are the springs of all just and virtuous actions, is merely a display of unthinking levity, or of want of the natural sensibilities.

With the hereditary character of the Southern people moving in one direction, and the awakened conscience of the North stirring in the other, the open conflict of opinion was inevitable, and equally inevitable its appearance in the field of national politics. For what is meant by self-government is, that a man shall make his convictions of what is right and expedient regulate the community so far as his fractional share of the government extends. If one has come to the conclusion, be it right or wrong, that any particular institution or statute is a violation of the sovereign law of God, it is to be expected that he will choose to be represented by those who share his belief, and who will in their wider sphere do all they legitimately can to get rid of the wrong in which they find themselves and their constituents involved. To prevent opinion from organizing itself under political forms may be very desirable, but it is not according to the theory or practice of self-government. And if at last organized opinions become arrayed in hostile shape against each other, we shall find that a just war is only the last inevitable link in a chain of closely connected impulses of which the original source is

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in Him who gave to tender and humble and uncorrupted souls the sense of right and wrong, which, after passing through various forms, has found its final expression in the use of material force. Behind the bayonet is the law-giver's statute, behind the statute the thinker's argument, behind the argument is the tender conscientiousness of woman, woman, the wife, the mother,—who looks upon the face of God himself reflected in the unsullied soul of infancy. "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies."

The simplest course for the malcontent is to find fault with the order of Nature and the Being who established it. Unless the law of moral progress were changed, or the Governor of the Universe were dethroned, it would be impossible to prevent a great uprising of the human conscience against a system, the legislation relating to which, in the words of so calm an observer as De Tocqueville, the Montesquieu of our laws, presents "such unparalleled atrocities as to show that the laws of humanity have been totally perverted." Until the infinite selfishness of the powers that hate and fear the principles of free government swallowed up their convenient virtues, that system was hissed at by all the old-world civilization. While in one section of our land the attempt has been going on to lift it out of the category of tolerated wrongs into the sphere of the world's beneficent agencies, it was to be expected that the protest of Northern manhood and womanhood would grow louder and stronger until the conflict of principles led to the conflict of forces. The moral uprising of the North came with the logical precision of destiny; the rage of the "petty tyrants" was inevitable; the plot to erect a slave empire followed with fated certainty; and the only question left for us of the North was, whether we should suffer the cause of the Nation to go by default, or maintain its existence by the argument of cannon and musket, of bayonet and sabre.

The war in which we are engaged is for no meanly ambitious or unworthy purpose. It was primarily, and is to this moment, for the preservation of our national existence. The first direct movement towards it was a civil request on the part of certain Southern persons, that the Nation would commit suicide, without making any unnecessary trouble about it. It was answered, with sentiments of the highest consideration, that there were constitutional and other objections to the Nation's laying violent hands upon itself. It was then requested, in a somewhat peremptory tone, that the Nation would be so obliging as to abstain from food until the natural consequences of that proceeding should manifest themselves. All this was done as between a single State and an isolated fortress; but it was not South Carolina and Fort Sumter that were talking; it was a vast conspiracy uttering its menace to a mighty nation; the whole menagerie of treason was pacing its cages, ready to spring as soon as the doors were opened; and all that the tigers of rebellion wanted to kindle their wild natures to frenzy, was the sight of flowing blood.

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As if to show how coldly and calmly all this had been calculated beforehand by the conspirators, to make sure that no absence of malice aforethought should degrade the grand malignity of settled purpose into the trivial effervescence of transient passion, the torch which was literally to launch the first missile, figuratively, to “fire the southern heart” and light the flame of civil war, was given into the trembling hand of an old white-headed man, the wretched incendiary whom history will handcuff in eternal infamy with the temple-burner of ancient Ephesus. The first gun that spat its iron insult at Fort Sumter, smote every loyal American full in the face. As when the foul witch used to torture her miniature image, the person it represented suffered all that she inflicted on his waxen counterpart, so every buffet that fell on the smoking fortress was felt by the sovereign nation of which that was the representative. Robbery could go no farther, for every loyal man of the North was despoiled in that single act as much as if a footpad had laid hands upon him to take from him his father’s staff and his mother’s Bible. Insult could go no farther, for over those battered walls waved the precious symbol of all we most value in the past and most hope for in the future,—the banner under which we became a nation, and which, next to the cross of the Redeemer, is the dearest object of love and honor to all who toil or march or sail beneath its waving folds of glory.

Let us pause for a moment to consider what might have been the course of events if under the influence of fear, or of what some would name humanity, or of conscientious scruples to enter upon what a few please themselves and their rebel friends by calling a “wicked war”; if under any or all these influences we had taken the insult and the violence of South Carolina without accepting it as the first blow of a mortal combat, in which we must either die or give the last and finishing stroke.

By the same title which South Carolina asserted to Fort Sumter, Florida would have challenged as her own the Gibraltar of the Gulf, and Virginia the Ehrenbreitstein of the Chesapeake. Half our navy would have anchored under the guns of these suddenly alienated fortresses, with the flag of the rebellion flying at their peaks. “Old Ironsides” herself would have perhaps sailed out of Annapolis harbor to have a wooden Jefferson Davis shaped for her figure-head at Norfolk,—for Andrew Jackson was a hater of secession, and his was no fitting effigy for the battle-ship of the red-handed conspiracy. With all the great fortresses, with half the ships and warlike material, in addition to all that was already stolen, in the traitors’ hands, what chance would the loyal men in the Border States have stood against the rush of the desperate fanatics of the now triumphant faction? Where would Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee,—saved, or looking to be saved, even as it is, as by fire,—have

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been in the day of trial? Into whose hands would the Capital, the archives, the glory, the name, the very life of the nation as a nation, have fallen, endangered as all of them were, in spite of the volcanic outburst of the startled North which answered the roar of the first gun at Sumter? Worse than all, are we permitted to doubt that in the very bosom of the North itself there was a serpent, coiled but not sleeping, which only listened for the first word that made it safe to strike, to bury its fangs in the heart of Freedom, and blend its golden scales in close embrace with the deadly reptile of the cotton-fields. Who would not wish that he were wrong in such a suspicion? yet who can forget the mysterious warnings that the allies of the rebels were to be found far north of the fatal boundary line; and that it was in their own streets, against their own brothers, that the champions of liberty were to defend her sacred heritage?

Not to have fought, then, after the supreme indignity and outrage we had suffered, would have been to provoke every further wrong, and to furnish the means for its commission. It would have been to placard ourselves on the walls of the shattered fort, as the spiritless race the proud labor-thieves called us. It would have been to die as a nation of freemen, and to have given all we had left of our rights into the hands of alien tyrants in league with home-bred traitors.

Not to have fought would have been to be false to liberty everywhere, and to humanity. You have only to see who are our friends and who are our enemies in this struggle, to decide for what principles we are combating. We know too well that the British aristocracy is not with us. We know what the West End of London wishes may be result of this controversy. The two halves of this Union are the two blades of the shears, threatening as those of Atropos herself, which will sooner or later cut into shreds the old charters of tyranny. How they would exult if they could but break the rivet that makes of the two blades one resistless weapon! The man who of all living Americans had the best opportunity of knowing how the fact stood, wrote these words in March, 1862: "That Great Britain did, in the most terrible moment of our domestic trial in struggling with a monstrous social evil she had earnestly professed to abhor, coldly and at once assume our inability to master it, and then become the only foreign nation steadily contributing in every indirect way possible to verify its pre-judgment, will probably be the verdict made up against her by posterity, on a calm comparison of the evidence."

So speaks the wise, tranquil statesman who represents the nation at the Court of St. James, in the midst of embarrassments perhaps not less than those which vexed his illustrious grandfather, when he occupied the same position as the Envoy of the hated, newborn Republic.

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"It cannot be denied,"—says another observer, placed on one of our national watch-towers in a foreign capital,—“it cannot be denied that the tendency of European public opinion, as delivered from high places, is more and more unfriendly to our cause”; “but the people,” he adds, “everywhere sympathize with us, for they know that our cause is that of free institutions,—that our struggle is that of the people against an oligarchy.”

These are the words of the Minister to Austria, whose generous sympathies with popular liberty no homage paid to his genius by the class whose admiring welcome is most seductive to scholars has ever spoiled; our fellow-citizen, the historian of a great Republic which infused a portion of its life into our own,—John Lothrop Motley.

It is a bitter commentary on the effects of European, and especially of British institutions, that such men should have to speak in such terms of the manner in which our struggle has been regarded. We had, no doubt, very generally reckoned on the sympathy of England, at least, in a strife which, whatever pretexts were alleged as its cause, arrayed upon one side the supporters of an institution she was supposed to hate in earnest, and on the other its assailants. We had forgotten what her own poet, one of the truest and purest of her children, had said of his countrymen, in words which might well have been spoken by the British Premier to the American Ambassador asking for some evidence of kind feeling on the part of his government:

“Alas I expect it not. We found no bait
To tempt us in thy country. Doing good,
Disinterested good, is not our trade.”

We know full well by this time what truth there is in these honest lines. We have found out, too, who our European enemies are, and why they are our enemies. Three bending statues bear up that gilded seat, which, in spite of the time-hallowed usurpations and consecrated wrongs so long associated with its history, is still venerated as the throne. One of these supports is the pensioned church; the second is the purchased army; the third is the long-suffering people. Whenever the third caryatid comes to life and walks from beneath its burden, the capitals of Europe will be filled with the broken furniture of palaces. No wonder that our ministers find the privileged orders willing to see the ominous republic split into two antagonistic forces, each paralyzing the other, and standing in their mighty impotence a spectacle to courts and kings; to be pointed at as helots who drank themselves blind and giddy out of that broken chalice which held the poisonous draught of liberty!

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We know our enemies, and they are the enemies of popular rights. We know our friends, and they are the foremost champions of political and social progress. The eloquent voice and the busy pen of John Bright have both been ours, heartily, nobly, from the first; the man of the people has been true to the cause of the people. That deep and generous thinker, who, more than any of her philosophical writers, represents the higher thought of England, John Stuart Mill, has spoken for us in tones to which none but her sordid hucksters and her selfish land-graspers can refuse to listen. Count Gasparin and Laboulaye have sent us back the echo from liberal France; France, the country of ideas, whose earlier inspirations embodied themselves for us in the person of the youthful Lafayette. Italy,—would you know on which side the rights of the people and the hopes of the future are to be found in this momentous conflict, what surer test, what ampler demonstration can you ask—than the eager sympathy of the Italian patriot whose name is the hope of the toiling many, and the dread of their oppressors, wherever it is spoken, the heroic Garibaldi?

But even when it is granted that the war was inevitable; when it is granted that it is for no base end, but first for the life of the nation, and more and more, as the quarrel deepens, for the welfare of mankind, for knowledge as against enforced ignorance, for justice as against oppression, for that kingdom of God on earth which neither the unrighteous man nor the extortioner can hope to inherit, it may still be that the strife is hopeless, and must therefore be abandoned. Is it too much to say that whether the war is hopeless or not for the North depends chiefly on the answer to the question, whether the North has virtue and manhood enough to persevere in the contest so long as its resources hold out? But how much virtue and manhood it has can never be told until they are tried, and those who are first to doubt the prevailing existence of these qualities are not commonly themselves patterns of either. We have a right to trust that this people is virtuous and brave enough not to give up a just and necessary contest before its end is attained, or shown to be unattainable for want of material agencies. What was the end to be attained by accepting the gage of battle? It was to get the better of our assailants, and, having done so, to take exactly those steps which we should then consider necessary to our present and future safety. The more obstinate the resistance, the more completely must it be subdued. It may not even have been desirable, as Mr. Mill suggested long since, that the victory over the rebellion should have been easily and speedily won, and so have failed to develop the true meaning of the conflict, to bring out the full strength of the revolted section, and to exhaust the means which would have served it for a still more desperate future effort. We cannot complain that our task

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has proved too easy. We give our Southern army,—for we must remember that it is our army, after all, only in a state of mutiny,—we give our Southern army credit for excellent spirit and perseverance in the face of many disadvantages. But we have a few plain facts which show the probable course of events; the gradual but sure operation of the blockade; the steady pushing back of the boundary of rebellion, in spite of resistance at many points, or even of such aggressive inroads as that which our armies are now meeting with their long lines of bayonets,—may God grant them victory!—the progress of our arms down the Mississippi; the relative value of gold and currency at Richmond and Washington. If the index-hands of force and credit continue to move in the ratio of the past two years, where will the Confederacy be in twice or thrice that time?

Either all our statements of the relative numbers, power, and wealth of the two sections of the country signify nothing, or the resources of our opponents in men and means must be much nearer exhaustion than our own. The running sand of the hour-glass gives no warning, but runs as freely as ever when its last grains are about to fall. The merchant wears as bold a face the day before he is proclaimed a bankrupt, as he wore at the height of his fortunes. If Colonel Grierson found the Confederacy “a mere shell,” so far as his equestrian excursion carried him, how can we say how soon the shell will collapse? It seems impossible that our own dissensions can produce anything more than local disturbances, like the Morristown revolt, which Washington put down at once by the aid of his faithful Massachusetts soldiers. But in a rebellious state dissension is ruin, and the violence of an explosion in a strict ratio to the pressure on every inch of the containing surface. Now we know the tremendous force which has compelled the “unanimity” of the Southern people. There are men in the ranks of the Southern army, if we can trust the evidence which reaches us, who have been recruited with packs of blood-hounds, and drilled, as it were, with halters around their necks. We know what is the bitterness of those who have escaped this bloody harvest of the remorseless conspirators; and from that we can judge of the elements of destruction incorporated with many of the seemingly solid portions of the fabric of the rebellion. The facts are necessarily few, but we can reason from the laws of human nature as to what must be the feelings of the people of the South to their Northern neighbors. It is impossible that the love of the life which they have had in common, their glorious recollections, their blended histories, their sympathies as Americans, their mingled blood, their birthright as born under the same flag and protected by it the world over, their worship of the same God, under the same outward form, at least, and in the folds of the same ecclesiastical organizations, should all be forgotten, and leave nothing

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but hatred and eternal alienation. Men do not change in this way, and we may be quite sure that the pretended unanimity of the South will some day or other prove to have been a part of the machinery of deception which the plotters have managed with such consummate skill. It is hardly to be doubted that in every part of the South, as in New Orleans, in Charleston, in Richmond, there are multitudes who wait for the day of deliverance, and for whom the coming of "our good friends, the enemies," as Beranger has it, will be like the advent of the angels to the prison-cells of Paul and Silas. But there is no need of depending on the aid of our white Southern friends, be they many or be they few; there is material power enough in the North, if there be the will to use it, to overrun and by degrees to recolonize the South, and it is far from impossible that some such process may be a part of the mechanism of its new birth, spreading from various centres of organization, on the plan which Nature follows when she would fill a half-finished tissue with blood-vessels or change a temporary cartilage into bone.

Suppose, however, that the prospects of the war were, we need not say absolutely hopeless,—because that is the unfounded hypothesis of those whose wish is father to their thought,—but full of discouragement. Can we make a safe and honorable peace as the quarrel now stands? As honor comes before safety, let us look at that first. We have undertaken to resent a supreme insult, and have had to bear new insults and aggressions, even to the direct menace of our national capital. The blood which our best and bravest have shed will never sink into the ground until our wrongs are righted, or the power to right them is shown to be insufficient. If we stop now, all the loss of life has been butchery; if we carry out the intention with which we first resented the outrage, the earth drinks up the blood of our martyrs, and the rose of honor blooms forever where it was shed. To accept less than indemnity for the past, so far as the wretched kingdom of the conspirators can afford it, and security for the future, would discredit us in our own eyes and in the eyes of those who hate and long to be able to despise us. But to reward the insults and the robberies we have suffered, by the surrender of our fortresses along the coast, in the national gulf, and on the banks of the national river,—and this and much more would surely be demanded of us,—would place the United Fraction of America on a level with the Peruvian guano-islands, whose ignoble but coveted soil is open to be plundered by all comers!

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If we could make a peace without dishonor, could we make one that would be safe and lasting? We could have an armistice, no doubt, long enough for the flesh of our wounded men to heal and their broken bones to knit together. But could we expect a solid, substantial, enduring peace, in which the grass would have time to grow in the war-paths, and the bruised arms to rust, as the old G. R. cannon rusted in our State arsenal, sleeping with their tompions in their mouths, like so many sucking lambs? It is not the question whether the same set of soldiers would be again summoned to the field. Let us take it for granted that we have seen enough of the miseries of warfare to last us for a while, and keep us contented with militia musters and sham-fights. The question is whether we could leave our children and our children's children with any secure trust that they would not have to go through the very trials we are enduring, probably on a more extended scale and in a more aggravated form.

It may be well to look at the prospects before us, if a peace is established on the basis of Southern independence, the only peace possible, unless we choose to add ourselves to the four millions who already call the Southern whites their masters. We know what the prevailing—we do not mean universal—spirit and temper of those people have been for generations, and what they are like to be after a long and bitter warfare. We know what their tone is to the people of the North; if we do not, De Bow and Governor Hammond are schoolmasters who will teach us to our heart's content. We see how easily their social organization adapts itself to a state of warfare. They breed a superior order of men for leaders, an ignorant commonalty ready to follow them as the vassals of feudal times followed their lords; and a race of bondsmen, who, unless this war changes them from chattels to human beings, will continue to add vastly to their military strength in raising their food, in building their fortifications, in all the mechanical work of war, in fact, except, it may be, the handling of weapons. The institution proclaimed as the corner-stone of their government does violence not merely to the precepts of religion, but to many of the best human instincts, yet their fanaticism for it is as sincere as any tribe of the desert ever manifested for the faith of the Prophet of Allah. They call themselves by the same name as the Christians of the North, yet there is as much difference between their Christianity and that of Wesley or of Channing, as between creeds that in past times have vowed mutual extermination. Still we must not call them barbarians because they cherish an institution hostile to civilization. Their highest culture stands out all the more brilliantly from the dark background of ignorance against which it is seen; but it would be injustice to deny that they have always shone in political science, or that their military capacity makes them most formidable antagonists, and that, however inferior they may be to their Northern fellow-countrymen in most branches of literature and science, the social elegances and personal graces lend their outward show to the best circles among their dominant class.

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Whom have we then for our neighbors, in case of separation,—our neighbors along a splintered line of fracture extending for thousands of miles,—but the Saracens of the Nineteenth Century; a fierce, intolerant, fanatical people, the males of which will be a perpetual standing army; hating us worse than the Southern Hamilcar taught his swarthy boy to hate the Romans; a people whose existence as a hostile nation on our frontier is incompatible with our peaceful development? Their wealth, the proceeds of enforced labor, multiplied by the breaking up of new cottonfields, and in due time by the reopening of the slave-trade, will go to purchase arms, to construct fortresses, to fit out navies. The old Saracens, fanatics for a religion which professed to grow by conquest, were a nation of predatory and migrating warriors. The Southern people, fanatics for a system essentially aggressive, conquering, wasting, which cannot remain stationary, but must grow by alternate appropriations of labor and of land, will come to resemble their earlier prototypes. Already, even, the insolence of their language to the people of the North is a close imitation of the style which those proud and arrogant Asiatics affected toward all the nations of Europe. What the “Christian dogs” were to the followers of Mahomet, the “accursed Yankees,” the “Northern mud-sills” are to the followers of the Southern Moloch. The accomplishments which we find in their choicer circles were prefigured in the court of the chivalric Saladin, and the long train of Painim knights who rode forth to conquest under the Crescent. In all branches of culture, their heathen predecessors went far beyond them. The schools of mediaeval learning were filled with Arabian teachers. The heavens declare the glory of the Oriental astronomers, as Algorab and Aldebaran repeat their Arabic names to the students of the starry firmament. The sumptuous edifice erected by the Art of the nineteenth century, to hold the treasures of its Industry, could show nothing fairer than the court which copies the Moorish palace that crowns the summit of Granada. Yet this was the power which Charles the Hammer, striking for Christianity and civilization, had to break like a potter’s vessel; these were the people whom Spain had to utterly extirpate from the land where they had ruled for centuries.

Prepare, then, if you unseal the vase which holds this dangerous Afrit of Southern nationality, for a power on your borders that will be to you what the Saracens were to Europe before the son of Pepin shattered their armies, and flung the shards and shivers of their broken strength upon the refuse heap of extinguished barbarisms. Prepare for the possible fate of Christian Spain; for a slave-market in Philadelphia; for the Alhambra of a Southern caliph on the grounds consecrated by the domestic virtues of a long line of Presidents and their exemplary families. Remember the ages of border warfare between England and Scotland,

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closed at last by the union of the two kingdoms. Recollect the hunting of the deer on the Cheviot hills, and all that it led to; then think of the game which the dogs will follow open-mouthed across our Southern border, and all that is like to follow which the child may rue that is unborn; think of these possibilities, or probabilities, if you will, and say whether you are ready to make a peace which will give you such a neighbor; which may betray your civilization as that of half the Peninsula was given up to the Moors; which may leave your fair border provinces to be crushed under the heel of a tyrant, as Holland was left to be trodden down by the Duke of Alva!

No! no! fellow-citizens! We must fight in this quarrel until one side or the other is exhausted. Rather than suffer all that we have poured out of our blood, all that we have lavished of our substance, to have been expended in vain, and to bequeath an unsettled question, an unfinished conflict, an unavenged insult, an unrighted wrong, a stained escutcheon, a tarnished shield, a dishonored flag, an unheroic memory to the descendants of those who have always claimed that their fathers were heroes; rather than do all this, it were hardly an American exaggeration to say, better that the last man and the last dollar should be followed by the last woman and the last dime, the last child and the last copper!

There are those who profess to fear that our government is becoming a mere irresponsible tyranny. If there are any who really believe that our present Chief Magistrate means to found a dynasty for himself and family, that a coup d'etat is in preparation by which he is to become *Abraham, Dei gratia Rex*,—they cannot have duly pondered his letter of June 12th, in which he unbosoms himself with the simplicity of a rustic lover called upon by an anxious parent to explain his intentions. The force of his argument is not at all injured by the homeliness of his illustrations. The American people are not much afraid that their liberties will be usurped. An army of legislators is not very likely to throw away its political privileges, and the idea of a despotism resting on an open ballot-box, is like that of Bunker Hill Monument built on the waves of Boston Harbor. We know pretty well how much of sincerity there is in the fears so clamorously expressed, and how far they are found in company with uncompromising hostility to the armed enemies of the nation. We have learned to put a true value on the services of the watch-dog who bays the moon, but does not bite the thief!

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The men who are so busy holy-stoning the quarterdeck, while all hands are wanted to keep the ship afloat, can no doubt show spots upon it that would be very unsightly in fair weather. No thoroughly loyal man, however, need suffer from any arbitrary exercise of power, such as emergencies always give rise to. If any half-loyal man forgets his code of half-decencies and half-duties so far as to become obnoxious to the peremptory justice which takes the place of slower forms in all centres of conflagration, there is no sympathy for him among the soldiers who are risking their lives for us; perhaps there is even more satisfaction than when an avowed traitor is caught and punished. For of all men who are loathed by generous natures, such as fill the ranks of the armies of the Union, none are so thoroughly loathed as the men who contrive to keep just within the limits of the law, while their whole conduct provokes others to break it; whose patriotism consists in stopping an inch short of treason, and whose political morality has for its safeguard a just respect for the jailer and the hangman! The simple preventive against all possible injustice a citizen is like to suffer at the hands of a government which in its need and haste must of course commit many errors, is to take care to do nothing that will directly or indirectly help the enemy, or hinder the government in carrying on the war. When the clamor against usurpation and tyranny comes from citizens who can claim this negative merit, it may be listened to. When it comes from those who have done what they could to serve their country, it will receive the attention it deserves. Doubtless there may prove to be wrongs which demand righting, but the pretence of any plan for changing the essential principle of our self-governing system is a figment which its contrivers laugh over among themselves. Do the citizens of Harrisburg or of Philadelphia quarrel to-day about the strict legality of an executive act meant in good faith for their protection against the invader? We are all citizens of Harrisburg, all citizens of Philadelphia, in this hour of their peril, and with the enemy at work in our own harbors, we begin to understand the difference between a good and bad citizen; the man that helps and the man that hinders; the man who, while the pirate is in sight, complains that our anchor is dragging in his mud, and the man who violates the proprieties, like our brave Portland brothers, when they jumped on board the first steamer they could reach, cut her cable, and bore down on the corsair, with a habeas corpus act that lodged twenty buccaneers in Fort Preble before sunset!

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We cannot, then, we cannot be circling inward to be swallowed up in the whirlpool of national destruction. If our borders are invaded, it is only as the spur that is driven into the courser's flank to rouse his slumbering mettle. If our property is taxed, it is only to teach us that liberty is worth paying for as well as fighting for. We are pouring out the most generous blood of our youth and manhood; alas! this is always the price that must be paid for the redemption of a people. What have we to complain of, whose granaries are choking with plenty, whose streets are gay with shining robes and glittering equipages, whose industry is abundant enough to reap all its overflowing harvest, yet sure of employment and of its just reward, the soil of whose mighty valleys is an inexhaustible mine of fertility, whose mountains cover up such stores of heat and power, imprisoned in their coal measures, as would warm all the inhabitants and work all the machinery of our planet for unnumbered ages, whose rocks pour out rivers of oil, whose streams run yellow over beds of golden sand,—what have we to complain of?

Have we degenerated from our English fathers, so that we cannot do and bear for our national salvation what they have done and borne over and over again for their form of government? Could England, in her wars with Napoleon, bear an income-tax of ten per cent., and must we faint under the burden of an income-tax of three per cent.? Was she content to negotiate a loan at fifty-three for the hundred, and that paid in depreciated paper, and can we talk about financial ruin with our national stocks ranging from one to eight or nine above par, and the “five-twenty” war loan eagerly taken by our own people to the amount of nearly two hundred millions, without any check to the flow of the current pressing inwards against the doors of the Treasury? Except in those portions of the country which are the immediate seat of war, or liable to be made so, and which, having the greatest interest not to become the border states of hostile nations, can best afford to suffer now, the state of prosperity and comfort is such as to astonish those who visit us from other countries. What are war taxes to a nation which, as we are assured on good authority, has more men worth a million now than it had worth ten thousand dollars at the close of the Revolution,—whose whole property is a hundred times, and whose commerce, inland and foreign, is five hundred times, what it was then? But we need not study Mr. Still's pamphlet and “Thompson's Bank-Note Reporter” to show us what we know well enough, that, so far from having occasion to tremble in fear of our impending ruin, we must rather blush for our material prosperity. For the multitudes who are unfortunate enough to be taxed for a million or more, of course we must feel deeply, at the same time suggesting that the more largely they report their incomes to the tax-gatherer, the more consolation

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they will find in the feeling that they have served their country. But,—let us say it plainly,—it will not hurt our people to be taught that there are other things to be cared for besides money-making and money-spending; that the time has come when manhood must assert itself by brave deeds and noble thoughts; when womanhood must assume its most sacred office, “to warn, to comfort,” and, if need be, “to command,” those whose services their country calls for. This Northern section of the land has become a great variety shop, of which the Atlantic cities are the long-extended counter. We have grown rich for what? To put gilt bands on coachmen’s hats? To sweep the foul sidewalks with the heaviest silks which the toiling artisans of France can send us? To look through plate-glass windows, and pity the brown soldiers,—or sneer at the black ones? to reduce the speed of trotting horses a second or two below its old minimum? to color meerschaums? to flaunt in laces, and sparkle in diamonds? to dredge our maidens’ hair with gold-dust? to float through life, the passive shuttlecocks of fashion, from the avenues to the beaches, and back again from the beaches to the avenues? Was it for this that the broad domain of the Western hemisphere was kept so long unvisited by civilization?—for this, that Time, the father of empires, unbound the virgin zone of this youngest of his daughters, and gave her, beautiful in the long veil of her forests, to the rude embrace of the adventurous Colonist? All this is what we see around us, now, now while we are actually fighting this great battle, and supporting this great load of indebtedness. Wait till the diamonds go back to the Jews of Amsterdam; till the plate-glass window bears the fatal announcement, For Sale or to Let; till the voice of our Miriam is obeyed, as she sings,

“Weave no more silks, ye Lyons looms!”

till the gold-dust is combed from the golden locks, and hoarded to buy bread; till the fast-driving youth smokes his clay-pipe on the platform of the horse-cars; till the music-grinders cease because none will pay them; till there are no peaches in the windows at twenty-four dollars a dozen, and no heaps of bananas and pine-apples selling at the street-corners; till the ten-flounced dress has but three flounces, and it is felony to drink champagne; wait till these changes show themselves, the signs of deeper wants, the preludes of exhaustion and bankruptcy; then let us talk of the Maelstrom;—but till then, let us not be cowards with our purses, while brave men are emptying their hearts upon the earth for us; let us not whine over our imaginary ruin, while the reversed current of circling events is carrying us farther and farther, every hour, out of the influence of the great failing which was born of our wealth, and of the deadly sin which was our fatal inheritance!

Let us take a brief general glance at the wide field of discussion we are just leaving.

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On Friday, the twelfth day of the month of April, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and sixty-one, at half-past four of the clock in the morning, a cannon was aimed and fired by the authority of South Carolina at the wall of a fortress belonging to the United States. Its ball carried with it the hatreds, the rages of thirty years, shaped and cooled in the mould of malignant deliberation. Its wad was the charter of our national existence. Its muzzle was pointed at the stone which bore the symbol of our national sovereignty. As the echoes of its thunder died away, the telegraph clicked one word through every office of the land. That word was *war*!

War is a child that devours its nurses one after another, until it is claimed by its true parents. This war has eaten its way backward through all the technicalities of lawyers learned in the infinitesimals of ordinances and statutes; through all the casuistries of divines, experts in the differential calculus of conscience and duty; until it stands revealed to all men as the natural and inevitable conflict of two incompatible forms of civilization, one or the other of which must dominate the central zone of the continent, and eventually claim the hemisphere for its development.

We have reached the region of those broad principles and large axioms which the wise Romans, the world's lawgivers, always recognized as above all special enactments. We have come to that solid substratum acknowledged by Grotius in his great Treatise: "Necessity itself which reduces things to the mere right of Nature." The old rules which were enough for our guidance in quiet times, have become as meaningless "as moonlight on the dial of the day." We have followed precedents as long as they could guide us; now we must make precedents for the ages which are to succeed us.

If we are frightened from our object by the money we have spent, the current prices of United States stocks show that we value our nationality at only a small fraction of our wealth. If we feel that we are paying too dearly for it in the blood of our people, let us recall those grand words of Samuel Adams:

"I should advise persisting in our struggle for liberty, though it were revealed from heaven that nine hundred and ninety-nine were to perish, and only one of a thousand were to survive and retain his liberty!"

What we want now is a strong purpose; the purpose of Luther, when he said, in repeating his Pater Noster, *fiat voluntas mea*,—let my will be done; though he considerably added, *quia Tua*,—because my will is Thine. We want the virile energy of determination which made the oath of Andrew Jackson sound so like the devotion of an ardent saint that the recording angel might have entered it unquestioned among the prayers of the faithful.

War is a grim business. Two years ago our women's fingers were busy making "Havelocks." It seemed to us then as if the Havelock made half the soldier; and now we smile to think of those days of inexperience and illusion. We know now what War

means, and we cannot look its dull, dead ghastliness in the face unless we feel that there is some great and noble principle behind it. It makes little difference what we thought we were fighting for at first; we know what we are fighting for now, and what we are fighting against.

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We are fighting for our existence. We say to those who would take back their several contributions to that undivided unity which we call the Nation; the bronze is cast; the statue is on its pedestal; you cannot reclaim the brass you flung into the crucible! There are rights, possessions, privileges, policies, relations, duties, acquired, retained, called into existence in virtue of the principle of absolute solidarity,—belonging to the United States as an organic whole, which cannot be divided, which none of its constituent parties can claim as its own, which perish out of its living frame when the wild forces of rebellion tear it limb from limb, and which it must defend, or confess self-government itself a failure.

We are fighting for that Constitution upon which our national existence reposes, now subjected by those who fired the scroll on which it was written from the cannon at Fort Sumter, to all those chances which the necessities of war entail upon every human arrangement, but still the venerable charter of our wide Republic.

We cannot fight for these objects without attacking the one mother cause of all the progeny of lesser antagonisms. Whether we know it or not, whether we mean it or not, we cannot help fighting against the system that has proved the source of all those miseries which the author of the Declaration of Independence trembled to anticipate. And this ought to make us willing to do and to suffer cheerfully. There were Holy Wars of old, in which it was glory enough to die, wars in which the one aim was to rescue the sepulchre of Christ from the hands of infidels. The sepulchre of Christ is not in Palestine! He rose from that burial-place more than eighteen hundred years ago. He is crucified wherever his brothers are slain without cause; he lies buried wherever man, made in his Maker's image, is entombed in ignorance lest he should learn the rights which his Divine Master gave him! This is our Holy War, and we must fight it against that great General who will bring to it all the powers with which he fought against the Almighty before he was cast down from heaven. He has retained many a cunning advocate to recruit for him; he has bribed many a smooth-tongued preacher to be his chaplain; he has engaged the sordid by their avarice, the timid by their fears, the profligate by their love of adventure, and thousands of nobler natures by motives which we can all understand; whose delusion we pity as we ought always to pity the error of those who know not what they do. Against him or for him we are all called upon to declare ourselves. There is no neutrality for any single true-born American. If any seek such a position, the stony finger of Dante's awful muse points them to their place in the antechamber of the Halls of Despair,—

“—With that ill band

Of angels mixed, who nor rebellious proved,
Nor yet were true to God, but for themselves
Were only.”

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“—Fame of them the world hath none
Nor suffers; mercy and justice scorn them both.
Speak not of them, but look, and pass them by.”

We must use all the means which God has put into our hands to serve him against the enemies of civilization. We must make and keep the great river free, whatever it costs us; it is strapping up the forefoot of the wild, untamable rebellion. We must not be too nice in the choice of our agents. Non eget Mauri jaculis,—no African bayonets wanted,—was well enough while we did not yet know the might of that desperate giant we had to deal with; but Tros, Tyriusve,—white or black,—is the safer motto now; for a good soldier, like a good horse, cannot be of a bad color. The iron-skins, as well as the iron-clads, have already done us noble service, and many a mother will clasp the returning boy, many a wife will welcome back the war-worn husband, whose smile would never again have gladdened his home, but that, cold in the shallow trench of the battle-field, lies the half-buried form of the unchained bondsman whose dusky bosom sheathes the bullet which would else have claimed that darling as his country's sacrifice.

We shall have success if we truly will success, not otherwise. It may be long in coming,—Heaven only knows through what trials and humblings we may have to pass before the full strength of the nation is duly arrayed and led to victory. We must be patient, as our fathers were patient; even in our worst calamities, we must remember that defeat itself may be a gain where it costs our enemy more in relation to his strength than it costs ourselves. But if, in the inscrutable providence of the Almighty, this generation is disappointed in its lofty aspirations for the race, if we have not virtue enough to ennoble our whole people, and make it a nation of sovereigns, we shall at least hold in undying honor those who vindicated the insulted majesty of the Republic, and struck at her assailants so long as a drum-beat summoned them to the field of duty.

Citizens of Boston, sons and daughters of New England, men and women of the North, brothers and sisters in the bond of the American Union, you have among you the scarred and wasted soldiers who have shed their blood for your temporal salvation. They bore your nation's emblems bravely through the fire and smoke of the battle-field; nay, their own bodies are starred with bullet-wounds and striped with sabre-cuts, as if to mark them as belonging to their country until their dust becomes a portion of the soil which they defended. In every Northern graveyard slumber the victims of this destroying struggle. Many whom you remember playing as children amidst the clover-blossoms of our Northern fields, sleep under nameless mounds with strange Southern wild-flowers blooming over them. By those wounds of living heroes, by those graves of fallen martyrs, by the hopes of your children, and the claims of your children's children yet unborn,

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in the name of outraged honor, in the interest of violated sovereignty, for the life of an imperilled nation, for the sake of men everywhere and of our common humanity, for the glory of God and the advancement of his kingdom on earth, your country calls upon you to stand by her through good report and through evil report, in triumph and in defeat, until she emerges from the great war of Western civilization, Queen of the broad continent, Arbitress in the councils of earth's emancipated peoples; until the flag that fell from the wall of Fort Sumter floats again inviolate, supreme, over all her ancient inheritance, every fortress, every capital, every ship, and this warring land is once more a, United Nation!

CINDERS FROM THE ASHES.

The personal revelations contained in my report of certain breakfast-table conversations were so charitably listened to and so good-naturedly interpreted, that I may be in danger of becoming over-communicative. Still, I should never have ventured to tell the trivial experiences here thrown together, were it not that my brief story is illuminated here and there by a glimpse of some shining figure that trod the same path with me for a time, or crossed it, leaving a momentary or lasting brightness in its track. I remember that, in furnishing a chamber some years ago, I was struck with its dull aspect as I looked round on the black-walnut chairs and bedstead and bureau. "Make me a large and handsomely wrought gilded handle to the key of that dark chest of drawers," I said to the furnisher. It was done, and that one luminous point redeemed the sombre apartment as the evening star glorifies the dusky firmament. So, my loving reader,—and to none other can such table-talk as this be addressed, —I hope there will be lustre enough in one or other of the names with which I shall gild my page to redeem the dulness of all that is merely personal in my recollections.

After leaving the school of Dame Prentiss, best remembered by infantine loves, those pretty preludes of more serious passions; by the great forfeit-basket, filled with its miscellaneous waifs and deodads, and by the long willow stick by the aid of which the good old body, now stricken in years and unwieldy in person could stimulate the sluggish faculties or check the mischievous sallies of the child most distant from his ample chair,—a school where I think my most noted schoolmate was the present Bishop of Delaware, became the pupil of Master William Biglow. This generation is not familiar with his title to renown, although he fills three columns and a half in Mr. Duyckinck's "Cyclopaedia of American Literature." He was a humorist hardly robust enough for more than a brief local immortality. I am afraid we were an undistinguished set, for I do not remember anybody near a bishop in dignity graduating from our benches.

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At about ten years of age I began going to what we always called the "Port School," because it was kept at Cambridgeport, a mile from the College. This suburb was at that time thinly inhabited, and, being much of it marshy and imperfectly reclaimed, had a dreary look as compared with the thriving College settlement. The tenants of the many beautiful mansions that have sprung up along Main Street, Harvard Street, and Broadway can hardly recall the time when, except the "Dana House" and the "Opposition House" and the "Clark House," these roads were almost all the way bordered by pastures until we reached the "stores" of Main Street, or were abreast of that forlorn "First Row" of Harvard Street. We called the boys of that locality "Port-chucks." They called us "Cambridge-chucks," but we got along very well together in the main.

Among my schoolmates at the Port School was a young girl of singular loveliness. I once before referred to her as "the golden blonde," but did not trust myself to describe her charms. The day of her appearance in the school was almost as much a revelation to us boys as the appearance of Miranda was to Caliban. Her abounding natural curls were so full of sunshine, her skin was so delicately white, her smile and her voice were so all-subduing, that half our heads were turned. Her fascinations were everywhere confessed a few years afterwards; and when I last met her, though she said she was a grandmother, I questioned her statement, for her winning looks and ways would still have made her admired in any company.

Not far from the golden blonde were two small boys, one of them very small, perhaps the youngest boy in school, both ruddy, sturdy, quiet, reserved, sticking loyally by each other, the oldest, however, beginning to enter into social relations with us of somewhat maturer years. One of these two boys was destined to be widely known, first in literature, as author of one of the most popular books of its time and which is freighted for a long voyage; then as an eminent lawyer; a man who, if his countrymen are wise, will yet be prominent in the national councils. Richard Henry Dana, Junior, is the name he bore and bears; he found it famous, and will bequeath it a fresh renown.

Sitting on the girls' benches, conspicuous among the school-girls of unlettered origin by that look which rarely fails to betray hereditary and congenital culture, was a young person very nearly of my own age. She came with the reputation of being "smart," as we should have called it, clever as we say nowadays. This was Margaret Fuller, the only one among us who, like "Jean Paul," like "The Duke," like "Bettina," has slipped the cable of the more distinctive name to which she was anchored, and floats on the waves of speech as "Margaret." Her air to her schoolmates was marked by a certain stateliness and distance, as if she had other thoughts than theirs and was not of them. She was a great student and a great reader of what she used to call

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“naw-vels.” I remember her so well as she appeared at school and later, that I regret that she had not been faithfully given to canvas or marble in the day of her best looks. None know her aspect who have not seen her living. Margaret, as I remember her at school and afterwards, was tall, fair complexioned, with a watery, aqua-marine lustre in her light eyes, which she used to make small, as one does who looks at the sunshine. A remarkable point about her was that long, flexile neck, arching and undulating in strange sinuous movements, which one who loved her would compare to those of a swan, and one who loved her not to those of the ophidian who tempted our common mother. Her talk was affluent, magisterial, *de haut en bas*, some would say euphuistic, but surpassing the talk of women in breadth and audacity. Her face kindled and reddened and dilated in every feature as she spoke, and, as I once saw her in a fine storm of indignation at the supposed ill-treatment of a relative, showed itself capable of something resembling what Milton calls the viraginian aspect.

Little incidents bear telling when they recall anything of such a celebrity as Margaret. I remember being greatly awed once, in our school-days, with the maturity of one of her expressions. Some themes were brought home from the school for examination by my father, among them one of hers. I took it up with a certain emulous interest (for I fancied at that day that I too had drawn a prize, say a five-dollar one, at least, in the great intellectual life-lottery) and read the first words.

“It is a trite remark,” she began.

I stopped. Alas! I did not know what trite meant. How could I ever judge Margaret fairly after such a crushing discovery of her superiority? I doubt if I ever did; yet oh, how pleasant it would have been, at about the age, say, of threescore and ten, to rake over these ashes for cinders with her,—she in a snowy cap, and I in a decent peruke!

After being five years at the Port School, the time drew near when I was to enter college. It seemed advisable to give me a year of higher training, and for that end some public school was thought to offer advantages. Phillips Academy at Andover was well known to us. We had been up there, my father and myself, at anniversaries. Some Boston boys of well-known and distinguished parentage had been scholars there very lately, Master Edmund Quincy, Master Samuel Hurd Walley, Master Nathaniel Parker Willis,—all promising youth, who fulfilled their promise.

I do not believe there was any thought of getting a little respite of quiet by my temporary absence, but I have wondered that there was not. Exceptional boys of fourteen or fifteen make home a heaven, it is true; but I have suspected, late in life, that I was not one of the exceptional kind. I had tendencies in the direction of flageolets and octave flutes. I had a pistol and a gun, and popped at everything that stirred, pretty nearly, except the house-cat. Worse than this, I would buy a cigar and smoke it by instalments,

putting it meantime in the barrel of my pistol, by a stroke of ingenuity which it gives me a grim pleasure to recall; for no maternal or other female eyes would explore the cavity of that dread implement in search of contraband commodities.

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It was settled, then, that I should go to Phillips Academy, and preparations were made that I might join the school at the beginning of the autumn.

In due time I took my departure in the old carriage, a little modernized from the pattern of my Lady Bountiful's, and we jogged soberly along,—kind parents and slightly nostalgic boy,—towards the seat of learning, some twenty miles away. Up the old West Cambridge road, now North Avenue; past Davenport's tavern, with its sheltering tree and swinging sign; past the old powder-house, looking like a colossal conical ball set on end; past the old Tidd House, one of the finest of the ante-Revolutionary mansions; past Miss Swan's great square boarding-school, where the music of girlish laughter was ringing through the windy corridors; so on to Stoneham, town of the bright lake, then darkened with the recent memory of the barbarous murder done by its lonely shore; through pleasant Reading, with its oddly named village centres, "Trapelo," "Read'nwoodeend," as rustic speech had it, and the rest; through Wilmington, then renowned for its hops; so at last into the hallowed borders of the academic town.

It was a shallow, two-story white house before which we stopped, just at the entrance of the central village, the residence of a very worthy professor in the theological seminary,—learned, amiable, exemplary, but thought by certain experts to be a little questionable in the matter of homoousianism, or some such doctrine. There was a great rock that showed its round back in the narrow front yard. It looked cold and hard; but it hinted firmness and indifference to the sentiments fast struggling to get uppermost in my youthful bosom; for I was not too old for home-sickness,—who is: The carriage and my fond companions had to leave me at last. I saw it go down the declivity that sloped southward, then climb the next ascent, then sink gradually until the window in the back of it disappeared like an eye that shuts, and leaves the world dark to some widowed heart.

Sea-sickness and home-sickness are hard to deal with by any remedy but time. Mine was not a bad case, but it excited sympathy. There was an ancient, faded old lady in the house, very kindly, but very deaf, rustling about in dark autumnal foliage of silk or other murmurous fabric, somewhat given to snuff, but a very worthy gentlewoman of the poor-relation variety. She comforted me, I well remember, but not with apples, and stayed me, but not with flagons. She went in her benevolence, and, taking a blue and white soda-powder, mingled the same in water, and encouraged me to drink the result. It might be a specific for seasickness, but it was not for home-sickness. The fiz was a mockery, and the saline refrigerant struck a colder chill to my despondent heart. I did not disgrace myself, however, and a few days cured me, as a week on the water often cures seasickness.

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There was a sober-faced boy of minute dimensions in the house, who began to make some advances to me, and who, in spite of all the conditions surrounding him, turned out, on better acquaintance, to be one of the most amusing, free-spoken, mocking little imps I ever met in my life. My room-mate came later. He was the son of a clergyman in a neighboring town,—in fact I may remark that I knew a good many clergymen's sons at Andover. He and I went in harness together as well as most boys do, I suspect; and I have no grudge against him, except that once, when I was slightly indisposed, he administered to me,—with the best intentions, no doubt,—a dose of Indian pills, which effectually knocked me out of time, as Mr. Morrissey would say,—not quite into eternity, but so near it that I perfectly remember one of the good ladies told me (after I had come to my senses a little, and was just ready for a sip of cordial and a word of encouragement), with that delightful plainness of speech which so brings realities home to the imagination, that “I never should look any whiter when I was laid out as a corpse.” After my room-mate and I had been separated twenty-five years, fate made us fellow-townsmen and acquaintances once more in Berkshire, and now again we are close literary neighbors; for I have just read a very pleasant article, signed by him, in the last number of the “Galaxy.” Does it not sometimes seem as if we were all marching round and round in a circle, like the supernumeraries who constitute the “army” of a theatre, and that each of us meets and is met by the same and only the same people, or their doubles, twice, thrice, or a little oftener, before the curtain drops and the “army” puts off its borrowed clothes?

The old Academy building had a dreary look, with its flat face, bare and uninteresting as our own “University Building” at Cambridge, since the piazza which relieved its monotony was taken away, and, to balance the ugliness thus produced, the hideous projection was added to “Harvard Hall.” Two masters sat at the end of the great room,—the principal and his assistant. Two others presided in separate rooms, one of them the late Rev. Samuel Horatio Stearns, an excellent and lovable man, who looked kindly on me, and for whom I always cherished a sincere regard, a clergyman's son, too, which privilege I did not always find the warrant of signal virtues; but no matter about that here, and I have promised myself to be amiable.

On the side of the long room was a large clock-dial, bearing these words:

Youthis the seed-time of life.

I had indulged in a prejudice, up to that hour, that youth was the budding time of life, and this clock-dial, perpetually twitting me with its seedy moral, always had a forbidding look to my vernal apprehension.

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I was put into a seat with an older and much bigger boy, or youth, with a fuliginous complexion, a dilating and whitening nostril, and a singularly malignant scowl. Many years afterwards he committed an act of murderous violence, and ended by going to finish his days in a madhouse. His delight was to kick my shins with all his might, under the desk, not at all as an act of hostility, but as a gratifying and harmless pastime. Finding this, so far as I was concerned, equally devoid of pleasure and profit, I managed to get a seat by another boy, the son of a very distinguished divine. He was bright enough, and more select in his choice of recreations, at least during school hours, than my late homicidal neighbor. But the principal called me up presently, and cautioned me against him as a dangerous companion. Could it be so? If the son of that boy's father could not be trusted, what boy in Christendom could? It seemed like the story of the youth doomed to be slain by a lion before reaching a certain age, and whose fate found him out in the heart of the tower where his father had shut him up for safety. Here was I, in the very dove's nest of Puritan faith, and out of one of its eggs a serpent had been hatched and was trying to nestle in my bosom! I parted from him, however, none the worse for his companionship so far as I can remember.

Of the boys who were at school with me at Andover one has acquired great distinction among the scholars of the land. One day I observed a new boy in a seat not very far from my own. He was a little fellow, as I recollect him, with black hair and very bright black eyes, when at length I got a chance to look at them. Of all the new-comers during my whole year he was the only one whom the first glance fixed in my memory, but there he is now, at this moment, just as he caught my eye on the morning of his entrance. His head was between his hands (I wonder if he does not sometimes study in that same posture nowadays!) and his eyes were fastened to his book as if he had been reading a will that made him heir to a million. I feel sure that Professor Horatio Balch Hackett will not find fault with me for writing his name under this inoffensive portrait. Thousands of faces and forms that I have known more or less familiarly have faded from my remembrance, but this presentment of the youthful student, sitting there entranced over the page of his text-book,—the child-father of the distinguished scholar that was to be,—is not a picture framed and hung up in my mind's gallery, but a fresco on its walls, there to remain so long as they hold together.

My especial intimate was a fine, rosy-faced boy, not quite so free of speech as myself, perhaps, but with qualities that promised a noble manhood, and ripened into it in due season. His name was Phinehas Barnes, and, if he is inquired after in Portland or anywhere in the State of Maine, something will be heard to his advantage from any honest and intelligent citizen of that Commonwealth who answers the question. This was one of two or three friendships that lasted. There were other friends and classmates, one of them a natural humorist of the liveliest sort, who would have been quarantined in any Puritan port, his laugh was so potently contagious.

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Of the noted men of Andover the one whom I remember best was Professor Moses Stuart. His house was nearly opposite the one in which I resided and I often met him and listened to him in the chapel of the Seminary. I have seen few more striking figures in my life than his, as I remember it. Tall, lean, with strong, bold features, a keen, scholarly, accipitrine nose, thin, expressive lips, great solemnity and impressiveness of voice and manner, he was my early model of a classic orator. His air was Roman, his neck long and bare like Cicero's, and his toga,—that is his broadcloth cloak,—was carried on his arm, whatever might have been the weather, with such a statue-like rigid grace that he might have been turned into marble as he stood, and looked noble by the side of the antiques of the Vatican.

Dr. Porter was an invalid, with the prophetic handkerchief bundling his throat, and his face “festooned”—as I heard Hillard say once, speaking of one of our College professors—in folds and wrinkles. Ill health gives a certain common character to all faces, as Nature has a fixed course which she follows in dismantling a human countenance: the noblest and the fairest is but a death's-head decently covered over for the transient ceremony of life, and the drapery often falls half off before the procession has passed.

Dr. Woods looked his creed more decidedly, perhaps, than any of the Professors. He had the firm fibre of a theological athlete, and lived to be old without ever mellowing, I think, into a kind of half-heterodoxy, as old ministers of stern creed are said to do now and then,—just as old doctors grow to be sparing of the more exasperating drugs in their later days. He had manipulated the mysteries of the Infinite so long and so exhaustively, that he would have seemed more at home among the mediaeval schoolmen than amidst the working clergy of our own time.

All schools have their great men, for whose advent into life the world is waiting in dumb expectancy. In due time the world seizes upon these wondrous youth, opens the shell of their possibilities like the valves of an oyster, swallows them at a gulp, and they are for the most part heard of no more. We had two great men, grown up both of them. Which was the more awful intellectual power to be launched upon society, we debated. Time cut the knot in his rude fashion by taking one away early, and padding the other with prosperity so that his course was comparatively noiseless and ineffective. We had our societies, too; one in particular, “The Social Fraternity,” the dread secrets of which I am under a lifelong obligation never to reveal. The fate of William Morgan, which the community learned not long after this time, reminds me of the danger of the ground upon which I am treading.

There were various distractions to make the time not passed in study a season of relief. One good lady, I was told, was in the habit of asking students to her house on Saturday afternoons and praying with and for them. Bodily exercise was not, however, entirely superseded by spiritual exercises, and a rudimentary form of base-ball and the heroic sport of football were followed with some spirit.

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A slight immature boy finds his materials of thought and enjoyment in very shallow and simple sources. Yet a kind of romance gilds for me the sober tableland of that cold New England hill where I came in contact with a world so strange to me, and destined to leave such mingled and lasting impressions. I looked across the valley to the hillside where Methuen hung suspended, and dreamed of its wooded seclusion as a village paradise. I tripped lightly down the long northern slope with *facilis descensus* on my lips, and toiled up again, repeating *sed revocare gradum*. I wandered in the autumnal woods that crown the "Indian Ridge," much wondering at that vast embankment, which we young philosophers believed with the vulgar to be of aboriginal workmanship, not less curious, perhaps, since we call it an *escar*, and refer it to alluvial agencies. The little Shawshine was our swimming-school, and the great Merrimack, the right arm of four toiling cities, was within reach of a morning stroll. At home we had the small imp to make us laugh at his enormities, for he spared nothing in his talk, and was the drollest little living protest against the prevailing solemnities of the locality. It did not take much to please us, I suspect, and it is a blessing that this is apt to be so with young people. What else could have made us think it great sport to leave our warm beds in the middle of winter and "camp out,"—on the floor of our room,—with blankets disposed tent-wise, except the fact that to a boy a new discomfort in place of an old comfort is often a luxury.

More exciting occupation than any of these was to watch one of the preceptors to see if he would not drop dead while he was praying. He had a dream one night that he should, and looked upon it as a warning, and told it round very seriously, and asked the boys to come and visit him in turn, as one whom they were soon to lose. More than one boy kept his eye on him during his public devotions, possessed by the same feeling the man had who followed Van Amburgh about with the expectation, let us not say the hope, of seeing the lion bite his head off sooner or later.

Let me not forget to recall the interesting visit to Haverhill with my room-mate, and how he led me to the mighty bridge over the Merrimack which defied the ice-rafts of the river; and to the old meetinghouse, where, in its porch, I saw the door of the ancient parsonage, with the bullet-hole in it through which Benjamin Rolfe, the minister, was shot by the Indians on the 29th of August, 1708. What a vision it was when I awoke in the morning to see the fog on the river seeming as if it wrapped the towers and spires of a great city!—for such was my fancy, and whether it was a mirage of youth or a fantastic natural effect I hate to inquire too nicely.

My literary performances at Andover, if any reader who may have survived so far cares to know, included a translation from Virgil, out of which I remember this couplet, which had the inevitable cockney rhyme of beginners:

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“Thus by the power of Jove’s imperial arm
The boiling ocean trembled into calm.”

Also a discussion with Master Phinehas Barnes on the case of Mary, Queen of Scots, which he treated argumentatively and I rhetorically and sentimentally. My sentences were praised and his conclusions adopted. Also an Essay, spoken at the great final exhibition, held in the large hall up-stairs, which hangs oddly enough from the roof, suspended by iron rods. Subject, Fancy. Treatment, brief but comprehensive, illustrating the magic power of that brilliant faculty in charming life into forgetfulness of all the ills that flesh is heir to,—the gift of Heaven to every condition and every clime, from the captive in his dungeon to the monarch on his throne; from the burning sands of the desert to the frozen icebergs of the poles, from—but I forget myself.

This was the last of my coruscations at Andover. I went from the Academy to Harvard College, and did not visit the sacred hill again for a long time.

On the last day of August, 1867, not having been at Andover, for many years, I took the cars at noon, and in an hour or a little more found myself at the station,—just at the foot of the hill. My first pilgrimage was to the old elm, which I remembered so well as standing by the tavern, and of which they used to tell the story that it held, buried in it by growth, the iron rings put round it in the old time to keep the Indians from chopping it with their tomahawks. I then began the once familiar toil of ascending the long declivity. Academic villages seem to change very slowly. Once in a hundred years the library burns down with all its books. A new edifice or two may be put up, and a new library begun in the course of the same century; but these places are poor, for the most part, and cannot afford to pull down their old barracks.

These sentimental journeys to old haunts must be made alone. The story of them must be told succinctly. It is like the opium-smoker’s showing you the pipe from which he has just inhaled elysian bliss, empty of the precious extract which has given him his dream.

I did not care much for the new Academy building on my right, nor for the new library building on my left. But for these it was surprising to see how little the scene I remembered in my boyhood had changed. The Professors’ houses looked just as they used to, and the stage-coach landed its passengers at the Mansion House as of old. The pale brick seminary buildings were behind me on the left, looking as if “Hollis” and “Stoughton” had been transplanted from Cambridge,—carried there in the night by orthodox angels, perhaps, like the Santa Casa. Away to my left again, but abreast of me, was the bleak, bare old Academy building; and in front of me stood unchanged the shallow oblong white house where I lived a year in the days of James Monroe and of John Quincy Adams.

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The ghost of a boy was at my side as I wandered among the places he knew so well. I went to the front of the house. There was the great rock showing its broad back in the front yard. I used to crack nuts on that, whispered the small ghost. I looked in at the upper window in the farther part of the house. I looked out of that on four long changing seasons, said the ghost. I should have liked to explore farther, but, while I was looking, one came into the small garden, or what used to be the garden, in front of the house, and I desisted from my investigation and went on my way. The apparition that put me and my little ghost to flight had a dressing-gown on its person and a gun in its hand. I think it was the dressing-gown, and not the gun, which drove me off.

And now here is the shop, or store, that used to be Shipman's, after passing what I think used to be Jonathan Leavitt's bookbindery, and here is the back road that will lead me round by the old Academy building.

Could I believe my senses when I found that it was turned into a gymnasium, and heard the low thunder of ninepin balls, and the crash of tumbling pins from those precincts? The little ghost said, Never! It cannot be. But it was. "Have they a billiard-room in the upper story?" I asked myself. "Do the theological professors take a hand at all-fours or poker on weekdays, now and then, and read the secular columns of the 'Boston Recorder' on Sundays?" I was demoralized for the moment, it is plain; but now that I have recovered from the shock, I must say that the fact mentioned seems to show a great advance in common sense from the notions prevailing in my time.

I sauntered,—we, rather, my ghost and I,—until we came to a broken field where there was quarrying and digging going on,—our old base-ball ground, hard by the burial-place. There I paused; and if any thoughtful boy who loves to tread in the footsteps that another has sown with memories of the time when he was young shall follow my footsteps, I need not ask him to rest here awhile, for he will be enchained by the noble view before him. Far to the north and west the mountains of New Hampshire lifted their summits in along encircling ridge of pale blue waves. The day was clear, and every mound and peak traced its outline with perfect definition against the sky. This was a sight which had more virtue and refreshment in it than any aspect of nature that I had looked upon, I am afraid I must say for years. I have been by the seaside now and then, but the sea is constantly busy with its own affairs, running here and there, listening to what the winds have to say and getting angry with them, always indifferent, often insolent, and ready to do a mischief to those who seek its companionship. But these still, serene, unchanging mountains,—Monadnock, Kearsarge,—what memories that name recalls!—and the others, the dateless Pyramids of New England, the eternal monuments of her ancient race, around which

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cluster the homes of so many of her bravest and hardest children,—I can never look at them without feeling that, vast and remote and awful as they are, there is a kind of inward heat and muffled throb in their stony cores, that brings them into a vague sort of sympathy with human hearts. It is more than a year since I have looked on those blue mountains, and they “are to me as a feeling” now, and have been ever since.

I had only to pass a wall and I was in the burial-ground. It was thinly tenanted as I remember it, but now populous with the silent immigrants of more than a whole generation. There lay the dead I had left, the two or three students of the Seminary; the son of the worthy pair in whose house I lived, for whom in those days hearts were still aching, and by whose memory the house still seemed haunted. A few upright stones were all that I recollect. But now, around them were the monuments of many of the dead whom I remembered as living. I doubt if there has been a more faithful reader of these graven stones than myself for many a long day. I listened to more than one brief sermon from preachers whom I had often heard as they thundered their doctrines down upon me from the throne-like desk. Now they spoke humbly out of the dust, from a narrower pulpit, from an older text than any they ever found in Cruden’s Concordance, but there was an eloquence in their voices the listening chapel had never known. There were stately monuments and studied inscriptions, but none so beautiful, none so touching, as that which hallows the resting-place of one of the children of the very learned Professor Robinson: “Is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well.”

While I was musing amidst these scenes in the mood of Hamlet, two old men, as my little ghost called them, appeared on the scene to answer to the gravedigger and his companion. They christened a mountain or two for me, “Kearnsarge” among the rest, and revived some old recollections, of which the most curious was “Basil’s Cave.” The story was recent, when I was there, of one Basil, or Bezill, or Buzzell, or whatever his name might have been, a member of the Academy, fabulously rich, Orientally extravagant, and of more or less lawless habits. He had commanded a cave to be secretly dug, and furnished it sumptuously, and there with his companions indulged in revelries such as the daylight of that consecrated locality had never looked upon. How much truth there was in it all I will not pretend to say, but I seem to remember stamping over every rock that sounded hollow, to question if it were not the roof of what was once Basil’s Cave.

The sun was getting far past the meridian, and I sought a shelter under which to partake of the hermit fare I had brought with me. Following the slope of the hill northward behind the cemetery, I found a pleasant clump of trees grouped about some rocks, disposed so as to give a seat, a table, and a shade. I left my benediction on this pretty little natural caravansera, and a brief record on one of its white birches, hoping to visit it again on some sweet summer or autumn day.

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Two scenes remained to look upon,—the Shawshine River and the Indian Ridge. The streamlet proved to have about the width with which it flowed through my memory. The young men and the boys were bathing in its shallow current, or dressing and undressing upon its banks as in the days of old; the same river, only the water changed; “The same boys, only the names and the accidents of local memory different,” I whispered to my little ghost.

The Indian Ridge more than equalled what I expected of it. It is well worth a long ride to visit. The lofty wooded bank is a mile and a half in extent, with other ridges in its neighborhood, in general running nearly parallel with it, one of them still longer. These singular formations are supposed to have been built up by the eddies of conflicting currents scattering sand and gravel and stones as they swept over the continent. But I think they pleased me better when I was taught that the Indians built them; and while I thank Professor Hitchcock, I sometimes feel as if I should like to found a chair to teach the ignorance of what people do not want to know.

“Two tickets to Boston.” I said to the man at the station.

But the little ghost whispered, “When you leave this place you leave me behind you.”

“One ticket to Boston, if you please. Good by, little ghost.”

I believe the boy-shadow still lingers around the well-remembered scenes I traversed on that day, and that, whenever I revisit them, I shall find him again as my companion.

THE PULPIT AND THE PEW.

The priest is dead for the Protestant world. Luther’s inkstand did not kill the devil, but it killed the priest, at least for us: He is a loss in many respects to be regretted. He kept alive the spirit of reverence. He was looked up to as possessing qualities superhuman in their nature, and so was competent to be the stay of the weak and their defence against the strong. If one end of religion is to make men happier in this world as well as in the next, mankind lost a great source of happiness when the priest was reduced to the common level of humanity, and became only a minister. Priest, which was presbyter, corresponded to senator, and was a title to respect and honor. Minister is but the diminutive of magister, and implies an obligation to render service.

It was promised to the first preachers that in proof of their divine mission they should have the power of casting out devils and talking in strange tongues; that they should handle serpents and drink poisons with impunity; that they should lay hands on the sick and they should recover. The Roman Church claims some of these powers for its clergy and its sacred objects to this day. Miracles, it is professed, are wrought by them, or through them, as in the days of the apostles. Protestantism proclaims that the age of

such occurrences as the apostles witnessed is past. What does it know about miracles? It knows a great many records of miracles, but this is a different kind of knowledge.

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The minister may be revered for his character, followed for his eloquence, admired for his learning, loved for his amiable qualities, but he can never be what the priest was in past ages, and is still, in the Roman Church. Dr. Arnold's definition may be found fault with, but it has a very real meaning. "The essential point in the notion of a priest is this: that he is a person made necessary to our intercourse with God, without being necessary or beneficial to us morally,—an unreasonable, immoral, spiritual necessity." He did not mean, of course, that the priest might not have all the qualities which would recommend him as a teacher or as a man, but that he had a special power, quite independent of his personal character, which could act, as it were, mechanically; that out of him went a virtue, as from the hem of his Master's raiment, to those with whom his sacred office brought him in contact.

It was a great comfort to poor helpless human beings to have a tangible personality of like nature with themselves as a mediator between them and the heavenly powers. Sympathy can do much for the sorrowing, the suffering, the dying, but to hear God himself speaking directly through human lips, to feel the touch of a hand which is the channel of communication with the unseen Omnipotent, this was and is the privilege of those who looked and those who still look up to a priesthood. It has been said, and many who have walked the hospitals or served in the dispensaries can bear witness to the truth of the assertion, that the Roman Catholics know how to die. The same thing is less confidently to be said of Protestants. How frequently is the story told of the most exemplary Protestant Christians, nay, how common is it to read in the lives of the most exemplary Protestant ministers, that they were beset with doubts and terrors in their last days! The blessing of the viaticum is unknown to them. Man is essentially an idolater, —that is, in bondage to his imagination,—for there is no more harm in the Greek word *eidolon* than in the Latin word *imago*. He wants a visible image to fix his thought, a scarabee or a *crux ansata*, or the modern symbols which are to our own time what these were to the ancient Egyptians. He wants a vicegerent of the Almighty to take his dying hand and bid him godspeed on his last journey. Who but such an immediate representative of the Divinity would have dared to say to the monarch just laying his head on the block, "*Fils de Saint Louis, monte au ciel*"?

It has been a long and gradual process to thoroughly republicanize the American Protestant descendant of the ancient priesthood. The history of the Congregationalists in New England would show us how this change has gone on, until we have seen the church become a hall open to all sorts of purposes, the pulpit come down to the level of the rostrum, and the clergyman take on the character of a popular lecturer who deals with every kind of subject, including religion.

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Whatever fault we may find with many of their beliefs, we have a right to be proud of our Pilgrim and Puritan fathers among the clergy. They were ready to do and to suffer anything for their faith, and a faith which breeds heroes is better than an unbelief which leaves nothing worth being a hero for. Only let us be fair, and not defend the creed of Mohammed because it nurtured brave men and enlightened scholars, or refrain from condemning polygamy in our admiration of the indomitable spirit and perseverance of the Pilgrim Fathers of Mormonism, or justify an inhuman belief, or a cruel or foolish superstition, because it was once held or acquiesced in by men whose nobility of character we heartily recognize. The New England clergy can look back to a noble record, but the pulpit has sometimes required a homily from the pew, and may sometimes find it worth its while to listen to one even in our own days.

From the settlement of the country to the present time, the ministers have furnished the highest type of character to the people among whom they have lived. They have lost to a considerable extent the position of leaders, but if they are in our times rather to be looked upon as representatives of their congregations, they represent what is best among those of whom they are the speaking organs. We have a right to expect them to be models as well as teachers of all that makes the best citizens for this world and the next, and they have not been, and are not in these later days unworthy of their high calling. They have worked hard for small earthly compensation. They have been the most learned men the country had to show, when learning was a scarce commodity. Called by their consciences to self-denying labors, living simply, often half-supported by the toil of their own hands, they have let the light, such light as shone for them, into the minds of our communities as the settler's axe let the sunshine into their log-huts and farm-houses.

Their work has not been confined to their professional duties, as a few instances will illustrate. Often, as was just said, they toiled like day-laborers, teasing lean harvests out of their small inclosures of land, for the New England soil is not one that "laughs when tickled with a hoe," but rather one that sulks when appealed to with that persuasive implement. The father of the eminent Boston physician whose recent loss is so deeply regretted, the Reverend Pitt Clarke, forty-two years pastor of the small fold in the town of Norton, Massachusetts, was a typical example of this union of the two callings, and it would be hard to find a story of a more wholesome and useful life, within a limited and isolated circle, than that which the pious care of one of his children commemorated. Sometimes the New England minister, like worthy Mr. Ward of Stratford-on-Avon, in old England, joined the practice of medicine to the offices of his holy profession. Michael Wigglesworth, the poet of

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“The Day of Doom,” and Charles Chauncy, the second president of Harvard College, were instances of this twofold service. In politics their influence has always been felt, and in many cases their drums ecclesiastic have beaten the reveille as vigorously, and to as good purpose, as it ever sounded in the slumbering camp. Samuel Cooper sat in council with the leaders of the Revolution in Boston. The three Northampton-born brothers Allen, Thomas, Moses, and Solomon, lifted their voices, and, when needed, their armed hands, in the cause of liberty. In later days, Elijah Parish and David Osgood carried politics into their pulpits as boldly as their antislavery successors have done in times still more recent.

The learning, the personal character, the sacredness of their office, tended, to give the New England clergy of past generations a kind of aristocratic dignity, a personal grandeur, much more felt in the days when class distinctions were recognized less unwillingly than at present. Their costume added to the effect of their bodily presence, as the old portraits illustrate for us, as those of us who remember the last of the “fair, white, curly” wigs, as it graced the imposing figure of the Reverend Dr. Marsh of Wethersfield, Connecticut, can testify. They were not only learned in the history of the past, but they were the interpreters of the prophecy, and announced coming events with a confidence equal to that with which the weather-bureau warns us of a coming storm. The numbers of the book of Daniel and the visions of the Revelation were not too hard for them. In the commonplace book of the Reverend Joel Benedict is to be found the following record, made, as it appears, about the year 1773: “Conversing with Dr. Bellamy upon the downfall of Antichrist, after many things had been said upon the subject, the Doctor began to warm, and uttered himself after this manner: ‘Tell your children to tell their children that in the year 1866 something notable will happen in the church; tell them the old man says so.’”

The “old man” came pretty near hitting the mark, as we shall see if we consider what took place in the decade from 1860 to 1870. In 1864 the Pope issued the “Syllabus of Errors,” which “must be considered by Romanists—as an infallible official document, and which arrays the papacy in open war against modern civilization and civil and religious freedom.” The Vatican Council in 1870 declared the Pope to be the bishop of bishops, and immediately after this began the decisive movement of the party known as the “Old Catholics.” In the exact year looked forward to by the New England prophet, 1866, the evacuation of Rome by the French and the publication of “Ecce Homo” appear to be the most remarkable events having special relation to the religious world. Perhaps the National Council of the Congregationalists, held at Boston in 1865, may be reckoned as one of the occurrences which the oracle just missed.

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The confidence, if not the spirit of prophecy, lasted down to a later period. "In half a century," said the venerable Dr. Porter of Conway, New Hampshire, in 1822, "there will be no Pagans, Jews, Mohammedans, Unitarians, or Methodists." The half-century has more than elapsed, and the prediction seems to stand in need of an extension, like many other prophetic utterances.

The story is told of David Osgood, the shaggy-browed old minister of Medford, that he had expressed his belief that not more than one soul in two thousand would be saved. Seeing a knot of his parishioners in debate, he asked them what they were discussing, and was told that they were questioning which of the Medford people was the elected one, the population being just two thousand, and that opinion was divided whether it would be the minister or one of his deacons. The story may or may not be literally true, but it illustrates the popular belief of those days, that the clergyman saw a good deal farther into the councils of the Almighty than his successors could claim the power of doing.

The objects about me, as I am writing, call to mind the varied accomplishments of some of the New England clergy. The face of the Revolutionary preacher, Samuel Cooper, as Copley painted it, looks upon me with the pleasantest of smiles and a liveliness of expression which makes him seem a contemporary after a hundred years' experience of eternity. The Plato on this lower shelf bears the inscription: "Ezroe Stiles, 1766. Olim e libris Rev. Jaredis Eliot de Killingworth." Both were noted scholars and philosophers. The hand-lens before me was imported, with other philosophical instruments, by the Reverend John Prince of Salem, an earlier student of science in the town since distinguished by the labors of the Essex Institute. Jeremy Belknap holds an honored place in that unpretending row of local historians. And in the pages of his "History of New Hampshire" may be found a chapter contributed in part by the most remarkable man, in many respects, among all the older clergymen preacher, lawyer, physician, astronomer, botanist, entomologist, explorer, colonist, legislator in state and national governments, and only not seated on the bench of the Supreme Court of a Territory because he declined the office when Washington offered it to him. This manifold individual was the minister of Hamilton, a pleasant little town in Essex County, Massachusetts,—the Reverend Manasseh Cutler. These reminiscences from surrounding objects came up unexpectedly, of themselves: and have a right here, as showing how wide is the range of intelligence in the clerical body thus accidentally represented in a single library making no special pretensions.

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It is not so exalted a claim to make for them, but it may be added that they were often the wits and humorists of their localities. Mather Byles's facetie are among the colonial classic reminiscences. But these were, for the most part, verbal quips and quibbles. True humor is an outgrowth of character. It is never found in greater perfection than in old clergymen and old college professors. Dr. Sprague's "Annals of the American Pulpit" tells many stories of our old ministers as good as Dean Ramsay's "Scottish Reminiscences." He has not recorded the following, which is to be found in Miss Larned's excellent and most interesting History of Windham County, Connecticut. The Reverend Josiah Dwight was the minister of Woodstock, Connecticut, about the year 1700. He was not old, it is true, but he must have caught the ways of the old ministers. The "sensational" pulpit of our own time could hardly surpass him in the drollery of its expressions. A specimen or two may dispose the reader to turn over the pages which follow in a good-natured frame of mind. "If unconverted men ever got to heaven," he said, "they would feel as uneasy as a shad up the crotch of a white-oak." Some of his ministerial associates took offence at his eccentricities, and called on a visit of admonition to the offending clergyman. "Mr. Dwight received their reproofs with great meekness, frankly acknowledged his faults, and promised amendment, but, in prayer at parting, after returning thanks for the brotherly visit and admonition, 'hoped that they might so hitch their horses on earth that they should never kick in the stables of everlasting salvation.'"

It is a good thing to have some of the blood of one of these old ministers in one's veins. An English bishop proclaimed the fact before an assembly of physicians the other day that he was not ashamed to say that he had a son who was a doctor. Very kind that was in the bishop, and very proud his medical audience must have felt. Perhaps he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Luke, "the beloved physician," or even of the teachings which came from the lips of one who was a carpenter, and the son of a carpenter. So a New-Englander, even if he were a bishop, need not be ashamed to say that he consented to have an ancestor who was a minister. On the contrary, he has a right to be grateful for a probable inheritance of good instincts, a good name, and a bringing up in a library where he bumped about among books from the time when he was hardly taller than one of his father's or grandfather's folios. What are the names of ministers' sons which most readily occur to our memory as illustrating these advantages? Edward Everett, Joseph Stevens Buckminster, Ralph Waldo Emerson, George Bancroft, Richard Hildreth, James Russell Lowell, Francis Parkman, Charles Eliot Norton, were all ministers' boys. John Lothrop Motley was the grandson of the clergyman after whom he was named. George Ticknor was next door to such a descent, for his father was a deacon. This is a group which it did not take a long or a wide search to bring together.

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Men such as the ministers who have been described could not fail to exercise a good deal of authority in the communities to which they belonged. The effect of the Revolution must have been to create a tendency to rebel against spiritual dictation. Republicanism levels in religion as in everything. It might have been expected, therefore, that soon after civil liberty had been established there would be conflicts between the traditional, authority of the minister and the claims of the now free and independent congregation. So it was, in fact, as for instance in the case which follows, for which the reader is indebted to Miss Lamed's book, before cited.

The ministerial veto allowed by the Saybrook Platform gave rise, in the year 1792, to a fierce conflict in the town of Pomfret, Connecticut. Zephaniah Swift, a lawyer of Windham, came out in the Windham "Herald," in all the vehemence of partisan phraseology, with all the emphasis of italics and small capitals. Was it not time, he said, for people to look about them and see whether "such despotism was founded in Scripture, in reason, in policy, or on the rights of man! A minister, by his vote, by his single voice, may negative the unanimous vote of the church! Are ministers composed of finer clay than the rest of mankind, that entitles them to this preeminence? Does a license to preach transform a man into a higher order of beings and endow him with a natural quality to govern? Are the laity an inferior order of beings, fit only to be slaves and to be governed? Is it good policy for mankind to subject themselves to such degrading vassalage and abject submission? Reason, common sense, and the Bible, with united voice, proclaim to all mankind that they are all born free and equal; that every member of a church or Christian congregation must be on the same footing in respect of church government, and that the *constitution*, which delegates to one the power to negative the vote of all the rest, is *subversive of the natural right of mankind and repugnant to the word of god.*"

The Reverend Mr. Welch replied to the lawyer's attack, pronouncing him to be "destitute of delicacy, decency, good manners, sound judgment, honesty, manhood, and humanity; a poltroon, a cat's-paw, the infamous tool of a party, a partisan, a political weathercock, and a ragamuffin."

No Fourth-of-July orator would in our day rant like the lawyer, and no clergyman would use such language as that of the Reverend Moses Welch. The clergy have been pretty well republicanized within that last two or three generations, and are not likely to provoke quarrels by assertion of their special dignities or privileges. The public is better bred than to carry on an ecclesiastical controversy in terms which political brawlers would hardly think admissible. The minister of religion is generally treated with

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something more than respect; he is allowed to say undisputed what would be sharply controverted in anybody else. Bishop Gilbert Haven, of happy memory, had been discussing a religious subject with a friend who was not convinced by his arguments. "Wait till you hear me from the pulpit," he said; "there you cannot answer me." The preacher—if I may use an image which would hardly have suggested itself to him—has his hearer's head in chancery, and can administer punishment *ad libitum*. False facts, false reasoning, bad rhetoric, bad grammar, stale images, borrowed passages, if not borrowed sermons, are listened to without a word of comment or a look of disapprobation.

One of the ablest and most conscientiously laborious of our clergymen has lately ventured to question whether all his professional brethren invariably give utterance to their sincerest beliefs, and has been sharply criticised for so doing. The layman, who sits silent in his pew, has his rights when out of it, and among them is the right of questioning that which has been addressed to him from the privileged eminence of the pulpit, or in any way sanctioned by his religious teacher. It is nearly two hundred years since a Boston layman wrote these words: "I am not ignorant that the pious frauds of the ancient, and the inbred fire (I do not call it pride) of many of our modern divines, have precipitated them to propagate and maintain truth as well as falsehoods, in such an unfair manner as has given advantage to the enemy to suspect the whole doctrine these men have profest to be nothing but a mere trick."

So wrote Robert Calef, the Boston merchant, whose book the Reverend Increase Mather, president of Harvard College, burned publicly in the college yard. But the pity of it is that the layman had not cried out earlier and louder, and saved the community from the horror of those judicial murders for witchcraft, the blame of which was so largely attributable to the clergy.

Perhaps no, laymen have given the clergy more trouble than the doctors. The old reproach against physicians, that where there were three of them together there were two atheists, had a real significance, but not that which was intended by the sharp-tongued ecclesiastic who first uttered it. Undoubtedly there is a strong tendency in the pursuits of the medical profession to produce disbelief in that figment of tradition and diseased human imagination which has been installed in the seat of divinity by the priesthood of cruel and ignorant ages. It is impossible, or at least very difficult, for a physician who has seen the perpetual efforts of Nature—whose diary is the book he reads oftenest—to heal wounds, to expel poisons, to do the best that can be done under the given conditions,—it is very difficult for him to believe in a world where wounds cannot heal, where opiates cannot give a respite from pain, where sleep never comes with its sweet oblivion of suffering, where the art of torture is the only science cultivated, and the capacity for being tormented is the only faculty which remains to the children of that same Father who cares for the falling sparrow. The Deity has often

been pictured as Moloch, and the physician has, no doubt, frequently repudiated him as a monstrosity.

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On the other hand, the physician has often been renowned for piety as well as for his peculiarly professional virtue of charity,—led upward by what he sees to the source of all the daily marvels wrought before his own eyes. So it was that Galen gave utterance to that psalm of praise which the sweet singer of Israel need not have been ashamed of; and if this “heathen” could be lifted into such a strain of devotion, we need not be surprised to find so many devout Christian worshippers among the crowd of medical “atheists.”

No two professions should come into such intimate and cordial relations as those to which belong the healers of the body and the headers of the mind. There can be no more fatal mistake than that which brings them into hostile attitudes with reference to each other, both having in view the welfare of their fellow-creatures. But there is a territory always liable to be differed about between them. There are patients who never tell their physician the grief which lies at the bottom of their ailments. He goes through his accustomed routine with them, and thinks he has all the elements needed for his diagnosis. But he has seen no deeper into the breast than the tongue, and got no nearer the heart than the wrist. A wise and experienced clergyman, coming to the patient’s bedside,—not with the professional look on his face which suggests the undertaker and the sexton, but with a serene countenance and a sympathetic voice, with tact, with patience, waiting for the right moment,—will surprise the shy spirit into a confession of the doubt, the sorrow, the shame, the remorse, the terror which underlies all the bodily symptoms, and the unburdening of which into a loving and pitying soul is a more potent anodyne than all the drowsy sirups of the world. And, on the other hand, there are many nervous and over-sensitive natures which have been wrought up by self-torturing spiritual exercises until their best confessor would be a sagacious and wholesome-minded physician.

Suppose a person to have become so excited by religious stimulants that he is subject to what are known to the records of insanity as hallucinations: that he hears voices whispering blasphemy in his ears, and sees devils coming to meet him, and thinks he is going to be torn in pieces, or trodden into the mire. Suppose that his mental conflicts, after plunging him into the depths of despondency, at last reduce him to a state of despair, so that he now contemplates taking his own life, and debates with himself whether it shall be by knife, halter, or poison, and after much questioning is apparently making up his mind to commit suicide. Is not this a manifest case of insanity, in the form known as melancholia? Would not any prudent physician keep such a person under the eye of constant watchers, as in a dangerous state of, at least, partial mental alienation? Yet this is an exact transcript of the mental condition of Christian in “Pilgrim’s Progress,”

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and its counterpart has been found in thousands of wretched lives terminated by the act of self-destruction, which came so near taking place in the hero of the allegory. Now the wonderful book from which this example is taken is, next to the Bible and the Treatise of "De Imitatione Christi," the best-known religious work of Christendom. If Bunyan and his contemporary, Sydenham, had met in consultation over the case of Christian at the time when he was meditating self-murder, it is very possible that there might have been a difference of judgment. The physician would have one advantage in such a consultation. He would pretty certainly have received a Christian education, while the clergyman would probably know next to nothing of the laws or manifestations of mental or bodily disease. It does not seem as if any theological student was really prepared for his practical duties until he had learned something of the effects of bodily derangements, and, above all, had become familiar with the gamut of mental discord in the wards of an insane asylum.

It is a very thoughtless thing to say that the physician stands to the divine in the same light as the divine stands to the physician, so far as each may attempt to handle subjects belonging especially to the other's profession. Many physicians know a great deal more about religious matters than they do about medicine. They have read the Bible ten times as much as they ever read any medical author. They have heard scores of sermons for one medical lecture to which they have listened. They often hear much better preaching than the average minister, for he hears himself chiefly, and they hear abler men and a variety of them. They have now and then been distinguished in theology as well as in their own profession. The name of Servetus might call up unpleasant recollections, but that of another medical practitioner may be safely mentioned. "It was not till the middle of the last century that the question as to the authorship of the Pentateuch was handled with anything like a discerning criticism. The first attempt was made by a layman, whose studies we might have supposed would scarcely have led him to such an investigation." This layman was "Astruc, doctor and professor of medicine in the Royal College at Paris, and court physician to Louis XIV." The quotation is from the article "Pentateuch" in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," which, of course, lies on the table of the least instructed clergyman. The sacred profession has, it is true, returned the favor by giving the practitioner of medicine Bishop Berkeley's "Treatise on Tar-water," and the invaluable prescription of that "aged clergyman whose sands of life"—but let us be fair, if not generous, and remember that Cotton Mather shares with Zabdiel Boylston the credit of introducing the practice of inoculation into America. The professions should be cordial allies, but the church-going, Bible-reading physician ought to know

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a great deal more of the subjects included under the general name of theology than the clergyman can be expected to know of medicine. To say, as has been said not long since, that a young divinity student is as competent to deal with the latter as an old physician is to meddle with the former, suggests the idea that wisdom is not an heirloom in the family of the one who says it. What a set of idiots our clerical teachers must have been and be, if, after a quarter or half a century of their instruction, a person of fair intelligence is utterly incompetent to form any opinion about the subjects which they have been teaching, or trying to teach him, so long!

A minister must find it very hard work to preach to hearers who do not believe, or only half believe, what he preaches. But pews without heads in them are a still more depressing spectacle. He may convince the doubter and reform the profligate. But he cannot produce any change on pine and mahogany by his discourses, and the more wood he sees as he looks along his floor and galleries, the less his chance of being useful. It is natural that in times like the present changes of faith and of place of worship should be far from infrequent. It is not less natural that there should be regrets on one side and gratification on the other, when such changes occur. It even happens occasionally that the regrets become aggravated into reproaches, rarely from the side which receives the new accessions, less rarely from the one which is left. It is quite conceivable that the Roman Church, which considers itself the only true one, should look on those who leave its communion as guilty of a great offence. It is equally natural that a church which considers Pope and Pagan a pair of murderous giants, sitting at the mouths of their caves, alike in their hatred to true Christians, should regard any of its members who go over to Romanism as lost in fatal error. But within the Protestant fold there are many compartments, and it would seem that it is not a deadly defection to pass from one to another.

So far from such exchanges between sects being wrong, they ought to happen a great deal oftener than they do. All the larger bodies of Christians should be constantly exchanging members. All men are born with conservative or aggressive tendencies: they belong naturally with the idol-worshippers or the idol-breakers. Some wear their fathers' old clothes, and some will have a new suit. One class of men must have their faith hammered in like a nail, by authority; another class must have it worked in like a screw, by argument. Members of one of these classes often find themselves fixed by circumstances in the other. The late Orestes A. Brownson used to preach at one time to a little handful of persons, in a small upper room, where some of them got from him their first lesson about the substitution of reverence for idolatry, in dealing with the books they hold sacred. But after a

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time Mr. Brownson found he had mistaken his church, and went over to the Roman Catholic establishment, of which he became and remained to his dying day one of the most stalwart champions. Nature is prolific and ambidextrous. While this strong convert was trying to carry us back to the ancient faith, another of her sturdy children, Theodore Parker, was trying just as hard to provide a new church for the future. One was driving the sheep into the ancient fold, while the other was taking down the bars that kept them out of the new pasture. Neither of these powerful men could do the other's work, and each had to find the task for which he was destined.

The "old gospel ship," as the Methodist song calls it, carries many who would steer by the wake of their vessel. But there are many others who do not trouble themselves to look over the stern, having their eyes fixed on the light-house in the distance before them. In less figurative language, there are multitudes of persons who are perfectly contented with the old formulæ of the church with which they and their fathers before them have been and are connected, for the simple reason that they fit, like old shoes, because they have been worn so long, and mingled with these, in the most conservative religious body, are here and there those who are restless in the fetters of a confession of faith to which they have pledged themselves without believing in it. This has been true of the Athanasian creed, in the Anglican Church, for two centuries more or less, unless the Archbishop of Canterbury, Tillotson, stood alone in wishing the church were well rid of it. In fact, it has happened to the present writer to hear the Thirty-nine Articles summarily disposed of by one of the most zealous members of the American branch of that communion, in a verb of one syllable, more familiar to the ears of the forecastle than to those of the vestry.

But on the other hand, it is far from uncommon to meet with persons among the so-called "liberal" denominations who are uneasy for want of a more definite ritual and a more formal organization than they find in their own body. Now, the rector or the minister must be well aware that there are such cases, and each of them must be aware that there are individuals under his guidance whom he cannot satisfy by argument, and who really belong by all their instincts to another communion. It seems as if a thoroughly honest, straight-collared clergyman would say frankly to his restless parishioner: "You do not believe the central doctrines of the church which you are in the habit of attending. You belong properly to Brother A.'s or Brother B.'s fold, and it will be more manly and probably more profitable for you to go there than to stay with us." And, again, the rolling-collared clergyman might be expected to say to this or that uneasy listener: "You are longing for a church which will settle your beliefs for you, and relieve you to a great extent from the task, to which you seem to be unequal, of working out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Go over the way to Brother C.'s or Brother D.'s; your spine is weak, and they will furnish you a back-board which will keep you straight and make you comfortable." Patients are not the property of their physicians, nor parishioners of their ministers.

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As for the children of clergymen, the presumption is that they will adhere to the general belief professed by their fathers. But they do not lose their birthright or their individuality, and have the world all before them to choose their creed from, like other persons. They are sometimes called to account for attacking the dogmas they are supposed to have heard preached from their childhood. They cannot defend themselves, for various good reasons. If they did, one would have to say he got more preaching than was good for him, and came at last to feel about sermons and their doctrines as confectioners' children do about candy. Another would have to own that he got his religious belief, not from his father, but from his mother. That would account for a great deal, for the milk in a woman's veins sweetens, or at least, dilutes an acrid doctrine, as the blood of the motherly cow softens the virulence of small-pox, so that its mark survives only as the seal of immunity. Another would plead atavism, and say he got his religious instincts from his great-grandfather, as some do their complexion or their temper. Others would be compelled to confess that the belief of a wife or a sister had displaced that which they naturally inherited. No man can be expected to go thus into the details of his family history, and, therefore, it is an ill-bred and indecent thing to fling a man's father's creed in his face, as if he had broken the fifth commandment in thinking for himself in the light of a new generation. Common delicacy would prevent him from saying that he did not get his faith from his father, but from somebody else, perhaps from his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice, like the young man whom the Apostle cautioned against total abstinence.

It is always the right, and may sometimes be the duty, of the layman to call the attention of the clergy to the short-comings and errors, not only of their own time, but also of the preceding generations, of which they are the intellectual and moral product. This is especially true when the authority of great names is fallen back upon as a defence of opinions not in themselves deserving to be upheld. It may be very important to show that the champions of this or that set of dogmas, some of which are extinct or obsolete as beliefs, while others retain their vitality, held certain general notions which vitiated their conclusions. And in proportion to the eminence of such champions, and the frequency with which their names are appealed to as a bulwark of any particular creed or set of doctrines, is it urgent to show into what obliquities or extravagances or contradictions of thought they have been betrayed.

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In summing up the religious history of New England, it would be just and proper to show the agency of the Mathers, father and son, in the witchcraft delusion. It would be quite fair to plead in their behalf the common beliefs of their time. It would be an extenuation of their acts that, not many years before, the great and good magistrate, Sir Matthew Hale, had sanctioned the conviction of prisoners accused of witchcraft. To fall back on the errors of the time is very proper when we are trying our predecessors in foro conscientiae: The houses they dwelt in may have had some weak or decayed beams and rafters, but they served for their shelter, at any rate. It is quite another matter when those rotten timbers are used in holding up the roofs over our own heads. Still more, if one of our ancestors built on an unsafe or an unwholesome foundation, the best thing we can do is to leave it and persuade others to leave it if we can. And if we refer to him as a precedent, it must be as a warning and not as a guide.

Such was the reason of the present writer's taking up the writings of Jonathan Edwards for examination in a recent essay. The "Edwardsian" theology is still recognized as a power in and beyond the denomination to which he belonged. One or more churches bear his name, and it is thrown into the scale of theological belief as if it added great strength to the party which claims him. That he was a man of extraordinary endowments and deep spiritual nature was not questioned, nor that he was a most acute reasoner, who could unfold a proposition into its consequences as patiently, as convincingly, as a palaeontologist extorts its confession from a fossil fragment. But it was maintained that so many dehumanizing ideas were mixed up with his conceptions of man, and so many diabolizing attributes embodied in his imagination of the Deity, that his system of beliefs was tainted throughout by them, and that the fact of his being so remarkable a logician recoiled on the premises which pointed his inexorable syllogisms to such revolting conclusions. When he presents us a God, in whose sight children, with certain not too frequent exceptions, "are young vipers, and are infinitely more hateful than vipers;" when he gives the most frightful detailed description of infinite and endless tortures which it drives men and women mad to think of prepared for "the bulk of mankind;" when he cruelly pictures a future in which parents are to sing hallelujahs of praise as they see their children driven into the furnace, where they are to lie "roasting" forever,—we have a right to say that the man who held such beliefs and indulged in such imaginations and expressions is a burden and not a support in reference to the creed with which his name is associated. What heathenism has ever approached the horrors of this conception of human destiny? It is not an abuse of language to apply to such a system of beliefs the name of Christian pessimism.

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If these and similar doctrines are so generally discredited as some appear to think, we might expect to see the change showing itself in catechisms and confessions of faith, to hear the joyful news of relief from its horrors in all our churches, and no longer to read in the newspapers of ministers rejected or put on trial for heresy because they could not accept the most dreadful of these doctrines. Whether this be so or not, it must be owned that the name of Jonathan Edwards does at this day carry a certain authority with it for many persons, so that anything he believed gains for them some degree of probability from that circumstance. It would, therefore, be of much interest to know whether he was trustworthy in his theological speculations, and whether he ever changed his belief with reference to any of the great questions above alluded to.

Some of our readers may remember a story which got abroad many years ago that a certain M. Babinet, a scientific Frenchman of note, had predicted a serious accident soon to occur to the planet on which we live by the collision with it of a great comet then approaching us, or some such occurrence. There is no doubt that this prediction produced anxiety and alarm in many timid persons. It became a very interesting question with them who this M. Babinet might be. Was he a sound observer, who had made other observations and predictions which had proved accurate? Or was he one of those men who are always making blunders for other people to correct? Is he known to have changed his opinion as to the approaching disastrous event?

So long as there were any persons made anxious by this prediction, so long as there was even one who believed that he, and his family, and his nation, and his race, and the home of mankind, with all its monuments, were very soon to be smitten in mid-heaven and instantly shivered into fragments, it was very desirable to find any evidence that this prophet of evil was a man who held many extravagant and even monstrous opinions. Still more satisfactory would it be if it could be shown that he had reconsidered his predictions, and declared that he could not abide by his former alarming conclusions. And we should think very ill of any astronomer who would not rejoice for the sake of his fellow-creatures, if not for his own, to find the threatening presage invalidated in either or both of the ways just mentioned, even though he had committed himself to M. Babinet's dire belief.

But what is the trivial, temporal accident of the wiping out of a planet and its inhabitants to the infinite catastrophe which shall establish a mighty world of eternal despair? And which is it most desirable for mankind to have disproved or weakened, the grounds of the threat of M. Babinet, or those of the other infinitely more terrible comminations, so far as they rest on the authority of Jonathan Edwards?

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The writer of this paper had been long engaged in the study of the writings of Edwards, with reference to the essay he had in contemplation, when, on speaking of the subject to a very distinguished orthodox divine, this gentleman mentioned the existence of a manuscript of Edwards which had been held back from the public on account of some opinions or tendencies it contained, or was suspected of containing "High Arianism" was the exact expression he used with reference to it. On relating this fact to an illustrious man of science, whose name is best known to botanists, but is justly held in great honor by the orthodox body to which he belongs, it appeared that he, too, had heard of such a manuscript, and the questionable doctrine associated with it in his memory was Sabellianism. It was of course proper in the writer of an essay on Jonathan Edwards to mention the alleged existence of such a manuscript, with reference to which the same caution seemed to have been exercised as that which led, the editor of his collected works to suppress the language Edwards had used about children.

This mention led to a friendly correspondence between the writer and one of the professors in the theological school at Andover, and finally to the publication of a brief essay, which, for some reason, had been withheld from publication for more than a century. Its title is "Observations concerning the Scripture OEconomy of the Trinity and Covenant of Redemption. By Jonathan Edwards." It contains thirty-six pages and a half, each small page having about two hundred words. The pages before the reader will be found to average about three hundred and twenty-five words. An introduction and an appendix by the editor, Professor Egbert C. Smyth, swell the contents to nearly a hundred pages, but these additions, and the circumstance that it is bound in boards, must not lead us to overlook the fact that the little volume is nothing more than a pamphlet in book's clothing.

A most extraordinary performance it certainly is, dealing with the arrangements entered into by the three persons of the Trinity, in as bald and matter-of-fact language and as commercial a spirit as if the author had been handling the adjustment of a limited partnership between three retail tradesmen. But, lest a layman's judgment might be considered insufficient, the treatise was submitted by the writer to one of the most learned of our theological experts,—the same who once informed a church dignitary, who had been attempting to define his theological position, that he was a Eutychian,—a fact which he seems to have been no more aware of than M. Jourdain was conscious that he had been speaking prose all his life. The treatise appeared to this professor anti-trinitarian, not in the direction of Unitarianism, however, but of Tritheism. Its anthropomorphism affected him like blasphemy, and the paper produced in him the sense of "great disgust," which its whole character might well excite in the unlearned reader.

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All this is, however, of little importance, for this is not the work of Edwards referred to by the present writer in his previous essay. The tract recently printed as a volume may be the one referred to by Dr. Bushnell, in 1851, but of this reference by him the writer never heard until after his own essay was already printed. The manuscript of the "Observations" was received by Professor Smyth, as he tells us in his introduction, about fifteen years ago, from the late Reverend William T. Dwight, D. D., to whom it was bequeathed by his brother, the Reverend Dr. Sereno E. Dwight.

But the reference of the present writer was to another production of the great logician, thus spoken of in a quotation from "the accomplished editor of the Hartford 'Courant,'" to be found in Professor Smyth's introduction:

"It has long been a matter of private information that Professor Edwards A. Park, of Andover, had in his possession an unpublished manuscript of Edwards of considerable extent, perhaps two thirds as long as his treatise on the will. As few have ever seen the manuscript, its contents are only known by vague reports.... It is said that it contains a departure from his published views on the Trinity and a modification of the view of original sin. One account of it says that the manuscript leans toward Sabellianism, and that it even approaches Pelagianism."

It was to this "suppressed" manuscript the present writer referred, and not to the slender brochure recently given to the public. He is bound, therefore, to say plainly that to satisfy inquirers who may be still in doubt with reference to Edwards's theological views, it would be necessary to submit this manuscript, and all manuscripts of his which have been kept private, to their inspection, in print, if possible, so that all could form their own opinion about it or them.

The whole matter may be briefly stated thus: Edwards believed in an eternity of unimaginable horrors for "the bulk of mankind." His authority counts with many in favor of that belief, which affects great numbers as the idea of ghosts affected Madame de Stall: "Je n'y crois pas, mais je les crains." This belief is one which it is infinitely desirable to the human race should be shown to be possibly, probably, or certainly erroneous. It is, therefore, desirable in the interest of humanity that any force the argument in its favor may derive from Edwards's authority should be weakened by showing that he was capable of writing most unwisely, and if it should be proved that he changed his opinions, or ran into any "heretical" vagaries, by using these facts against the validity of his judgment. That he was capable of writing most unwisely has been sufficiently shown by the recent publication of his "Observations." Whether he, anywhere contradicted what were generally accepted as his theological opinions, or how far he may have lapsed into heresies, the public will never rest satisfied until it sees

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and interprets for itself everything that is open to question which may be contained in his yet unpublished manuscripts. All this is not in the least a personal affair with the writer, who, in the course of his studies of Edwards's works, accidentally heard, from the unimpeachable sources sufficiently indicated, the reports, which it seems must have been familiar to many, that there was unpublished matter bearing on the opinions of the author through whose voluminous works he had been toiling. And if he rejoiced even to hope that so wise a man as Edwards has been considered, so good a man as he is recognized to have been, had, possibly in his changes of opinion, ceased to think of children as vipers, and of parents as shouting hallelujahs while their lost darlings were being driven into the flames, where is the theologian who would not rejoice to hope so with him or who would be willing to tell his wife or his daughter that he did not?

The real, vital division of the religious part of our Protestant communities is into Christian optimists and Christian pessimists. The Christian optimist in his fullest development is characterized by a cheerful countenance, a voice in the major key, an undisguised enjoyment of earthly comforts, and a short confession of faith. His theory of the universe is progress; his idea of God is that he is a Father with all the true paternal attributes, of man that he is destined to come into harmony with the key-note of divine order, of this earth that it is a training school for a better sphere of existence. The Christian pessimist in his most typical manifestation is apt to wear a solemn aspect, to speak, especially from the pulpit, in the minor key, to undervalue the lesser enjoyments of life, to insist on a more extended list of articles of belief. His theory of the universe recognizes this corner of it as a moral ruin; his idea of the Creator is that of a ruler whose pardoning power is subject to the veto of what is called "justice;" his notion of man is that he is born a natural hater of God and goodness, and that his natural destiny is eternal misery. The line dividing these two great classes zigzags its way through the religious community, sometimes following denominational layers and cleavages, sometimes going, like a geological fracture, through many different strata. The natural antagonists of the religious pessimists are the men of science, especially the evolutionists, and the poets. It was but a conditioned prophecy, yet we cannot doubt what was in Milton's mind when he sang, in one of the divinest of his strains, that

"Hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day."

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And Nature, always fair if we will allow her time enough, after giving mankind the inspired tinker who painted the Christian's life as that of a hunted animal, "never long at ease," desponding, despairing, on the verge of self-murder,—painted it with an originality, a vividness, a power and a sweetness, too, that rank him with the great authors of all time,—kind Nature, after this gift, sent as his counterpoise the inspired ploughman, whose songs have done more to humanize the hard theology of Scotland than all the rationalistic sermons that were ever preached. Our own Whittier has done and is doing the same thing, in a far holier spirit than Burns, for the inherited beliefs of New England and the country to which New England belongs. Let me sweeten these closing paragraphs of an essay not meaning to hold a word of bitterness with a passage or two from the lay-preacher who is listened to by a larger congregation than any man who speaks from the pulpit. Who will not hear his words with comfort and rejoicing when he speaks of "that larger hope which, secretly cherished from the times of Origen and Duns Scotus to those of Foster and Maurice, has found its fitting utterance in the noblest poem of the age?"

It is Tennyson's "In Memoriam" to which he refers, and from which he quotes four verses, of which this is the last:

"Behold! we know not anything
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last,—far off,—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring."

If some are disposed to think that the progress of civilization and the rapidly growing change of opinion renders unnecessary any further effort to humanize "the Gospel of dread tidings;" if any believe the doctrines of the Longer and Shorter Catechism of the Westminster divines are so far obsolete as to require no further handling; if there are any who think these subjects have lost their interest for living souls ever since they themselves have learned to stay at home on Sundays, with their cakes and ale instead of going to meeting,—not such is Mr. Whittier's opinion, as we may infer from his recent beautiful poem, "The Minister's Daughter." It is not science alone that the old Christian pessimism has got to struggle with, but the instincts of childhood, the affections of maternity, the intuitions of poets, the contagious humanity of the philanthropist,—in short, human nature and the advance of civilization. The pulpit has long helped the world, and is still one of the chief defences against the dangers that threaten society, and it is worthy now, as it always has been in its best representation, of all love and honor. But many of its professed creeds imperatively demand revision, and the pews which call for it must be listened to, or the preacher will by and by find himself speaking to a congregation of bodiless echoes by and by find himself speaking to a congregation of bodiless echoes.

MEDICAL ESSAYS

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By Oliver Wendell Holmes

1842-1882

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PREFACE.

The character of the opposition which some of these papers have met with suggests the inference that they contain really important, but unwelcome truths. Negatives multiplied into each other change their sign and become positives. Hostile criticisms meeting together are often equivalent to praise, and the square of fault-finding turns out to be the same thing as eulogy.

But a writer has rarely so many enemies as it pleases him to believe. Self-love leads us to overrate the numbers of our negative constituency. The larger portion of my limited circle of readers must be quite indifferent to, if not ignorant of, the adverse opinions which have been expressed or recorded concerning any of these Addresses or Essays now submitted to their own judgment. It is proper, however, to inform them, that some of the positions maintained in these pages have been unsparingly attacked, with various

degrees of ability, scholarship, and good-breeding. The tone of criticism naturally changes with local conditions in different parts of a country extended like our own, so that it is one of the most convenient gauges of the partial movements in the direction of civilization. It is satisfactory to add, that the views assailed have also been unflinchingly defended by unsought champions, among the ablest of whom it is pleasant to mention, at this moment of political alienation, the Editor of the Charleston Medical Journal.

“Currents and Counter-Currents” was written and delivered as an Oration, a florid rhetorical composition, expressly intended to secure the attention of an audience not easy to hold as listeners. It succeeded in doing this, and also in being as curiously misunderstood and misrepresented as if it had been a political harangue. This gave it more local notoriety than it might otherwise have attained, so that, as I learn, one ingenious person made use of its title as an advertisement to a production of his own.

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The commonest mode of misrepresentation was this: qualified propositions, the whole meaning of which depended on the qualifications, were stripped of these and taken as absolute. Thus, the attempt to establish a presumption against giving poisons to sick persons was considered as equivalent to condemning the use of these substances. The only important inference the writer has been able to draw from the greater number of the refutations of his opinions which have been kindly sent him, is that the preliminary education of the Medical Profession is not always what it ought to be.

One concession he is willing to make, whatever sacrifice of pride it may involve. The story of Massasoit, which has furnished a coral, as it were, for some teething critics, when subjected to a powerful logical analysis, though correct in its essentials, proves to have been told with exceptionable breadth of statement, and therefore (to resume the metaphor) has been slightly rounded off at its edges, so as to be smoother for any who may wish to bite upon it hereafter. In other respects the Discourse has hardly been touched. It is only an individual's expression, in his own way, of opinions entertained by hundreds of the Medical Profession in every civilized country, and has nothing in it which on revision the writer sees cause to retract or modify. The superstitions it attacks lie at the very foundation of Homoeopathy, and of almost every form of medical charlatanism. Still the mere routinists and unthinking artisans in most callings dislike whatever shakes the dust out of their traditions, and it may be unreasonable to expect that Medicine will always prove an exception to the rule. One half the opposition which the numerical system of Louis has met with, as applied to the results of treatment, has been owing to the fact that it showed the movements of disease to be far more independent of the kind of practice pursued than was agreeable to the pride of those whose self-confidence it abated.

The statement, that medicines are more sparingly used in physicians' families than in most others, admits of a very natural explanation, without putting a harsh construction upon it, which it was not intended to admit. Outside pressure is less felt in the physician's own household; that is all. If this does not sometimes influence him to give medicine, or what seems to be medicine, when among those who have more confidence in drugging than his own family commonly has, the learned Professor Dunglison is hereby requested to apologize for his definition of the word Placebo, or to expunge it from his Medical Dictionary.

One thing is certain. A loud outcry on a slight touch reveals the weak spot in a profession, as well as in a patient. It is a doubtful policy to oppose the freest speech in those of our own number who are trying to show us where they honestly believe our weakness lies. Vast as are the advances of our Science and Art, may it not possibly prove on examination that we retain other old barbarisms beside the use of the astrological sign of Jupiter, with which we endeavor to insure good luck to our prescriptions? Is it the act of a friend or a foe to try to point them out to our brethren when asked to address them, and is the speaker to subdue the constitutional habit of his style to a given standard, under penalty of giving offence to a grave assembly?

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“Homoeopathy and its Kindred Delusions” was published nearly twenty years ago, and has been long out of print, so that the author tried in vain to procure a copy until the kindness of a friend supplied him with the only one he has had for years. A foolish story reached his ears that he was attempting to buy up stray copies for the sake of suppressing it. This edition was in the press at that very time.

Many of the arguments contained in the Lectures have lost whatever novelty they may have possessed. All its predictions have been submitted to the formidable test of time. They appear to have stood it, so far, about as well as most uninspired prophecies; indeed, some of them require much less accommodation than certain grave commentators employ in their readings of the ancient Prophets.

If some statistics recently published are correct, Homoeopathy has made very slow progress in Europe.

In all England, as it appears, there are hardly a fifth more Homoeopathic practitioners than there are students attending Lectures at the Massachusetts Medical College at the present time. In America it has undoubtedly proved more popular and lucrative, yet how loose a hold it has on the public confidence is shown by the fact that, when a specially valued life, which has been played with by one of its agents, is seriously threatened, the first thing we expect to hear is that a regular practitioner is by the patient's bed, and the Homoeopathic counsellor overruled or discarded. Again, how many of the ardent and capricious persons who embraced Homoeopathy have run the whole round of pretentious novelties;—have been boarded at water-cure establishments, closeted with uterine and other specialists, and finally wandered over seas to put themselves in charge of foreign celebrities, who dosed them as lustily as they were ever dosed before they took to globules! It will surprise many to learn to what a shadow of a shade Homoeopathy has dwindled in the hands of many of its noted practitioners. The itch-doctrine is treated with contempt. Infinitesimal doses are replaced by full ones whenever the fancy-practitioner chooses. Good Homoeopathic reasons can be found for employing anything that anybody wants to employ. Homoeopathy is now merely a name, an unproved theory, and a box of pellets pretending to be specifics, which, as all of us know, fail ignominiously in those cases where we would thankfully sacrifice all our prejudices and give the world to have them true to their promises.

Homoeopathy has not died out so rapidly as Tractoration. Perhaps it was well that it should not, for it has taught us a lesson of the healing faculty of Nature which was needed, and for which many of us have made proper acknowledgments. But it probably does more harm than good to medical science at the present time, by keeping up the delusion of treating everything by specifics,—the old barbarous notion that sick people should feed on poisons [Lachesis, arrow-poison, obtained from a serpent (Pulte). *Crotalus horridus*, rattlesnake's venom (Neidhard). The less dangerous *Pediculus capitis* is the favorite remedy of Dr. Mure, the English “Apostle of Homoeopathy.” These

are examples of the retrograde current setting towards barbarism] against which a part of the Discourse at the beginning of this volume is directed.

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The infinitesimal globules have not become a curiosity as yet, like Perkins's Tractors. But time is a very elastic element in Geology and Prophecy. If Daniel's seventy weeks mean four hundred and ninety years, as the learned Prideaux and others have settled it that they do, the "not many years" of my prediction may be stretched out a generation or two beyond our time, if necessary, when the prophecy will no doubt prove true.

It might be fitting to add a few words with regard to the Essay on the Contagiousness of Puerperal Fever. But the whole question I consider to be now transferred from the domain of medical inquiry to the consideration of Life Insurance agencies and Grand Juries. For the justification of this somewhat sharply accented language I must refer the reader to the paper itself for details which I regret to have been forced to place on permanent record.

Boston, January, 1861.

A SECOND PREFACE.

These Lectures and Essays are arranged in the order corresponding to the date of their delivery or publication. They must, of course, be read with a constant reference to these dates, by such as care to read them. I have not attempted to modernize their aspect or character in presenting them, in this somewhat altered connection, to the public. Several of them were contained in a former volume which received its name from the Address called "Currents and Counter-Currents." Some of those contained in the former volume have been replaced by others. The Essay called "Mechanism of Vital Actions" has been transferred to a distinct collection of Miscellaneous essays, forming a separate volume.

I had some intention of including with these papers an Essay on Intermittent Fever in New England, which received one of the Boylston prizes in 1837, and was published in the following year. But as this was upon a subject of local interest, chiefly, and would have taken up a good deal of room, I thought it best to leave it out, trusting that the stray copies to be met with in musty book-shops would sufficiently supply the not very extensive or urgent demand for a paper almost half a century old.

Some of these papers created a little stir when they first fell from the press into the pool of public consciousness. They will slide in very quietly now in this new edition, and find out for themselves whether the waters are those of Lethe, or whether they are to live for a time as not wholly unvalued reminiscences.

March 21, 1883.

PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION.

These Essays are old enough now to go alone without staff or crutch in the shape of Prefaces. A very few words may be a convenience to the reader who takes up the book and wishes to know what he is likely to find in it.

Homoeopathy and its kindred delusions.

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Homoeopathy has proved lucrative, and so long as it continues to be so will surely exist, —as surely as astrology, palmistry, and other methods of getting a living out of the weakness and credulity of mankind and womankind. Though it has no pretensions to be considered as belonging among the sciences, it may be looked upon by a scientific man as a curious object of study among the vagaries of the human mind. Its influence for good or the contrary may be made a matter of calm investigation. I have studied it in the Essay before the reader, under the aspect of an extravagant and purely imaginative creation of its founder. Since that first essay was written, nearly half a century ago, we have all had a chance to witness its practical working. Two opposite inferences may be drawn from its doctrines and practice. The first is that which is accepted by its disciples. This is that all diseases are “cured” by drugs. The opposite conclusion is drawn by a much larger number of persons. As they see that patients are very commonly getting well under treatment by infinitesimal drugging, which they consider equivalent to no medication at all, they come to disbelieve in every form of drugging and put their whole trust in “nature.” Thus experience,

“From seeming evil still educing good,”

has shown that the dealers in this preposterous system of pseudo-therapeutics have cooperated with the wiser class of practitioners in breaking up the system of overdosing and over-drugging which has been one of the standing reproaches of medical practice. While keeping up the miserable delusion that diseases were all to be “cured” by drugging, Homoeopathy has been unintentionally showing that they would very generally get well without any drugging at all. In the mean time the newer doctrines of the “mind cure,” the “faith cure,” and the rest are encroaching on the territory so long monopolized by that most ingenious of the pseudo-sciences. It would not be surprising if its whole ground should be taken possession of by these new claimants with their flattering appeals to the imaginative class of persons open to such attacks. Similia similibus may prove fatally true for once, if Homoeopathy is killed out by its new-born rivals.

It takes a very moderate amount of erudition to unearth a charlatan like the supposed father of the infinitesimal dosing system. The real inventor of that specious trickery was an Irishman by the name of Butler. The whole story is to be found in the “Ortus Medicinæ” of Van Helmont. I have given some account of his chapter “Butler” in different articles, but I would refer the students of our Homoeopathic educational institutions to the original, which they will find very interesting and curious.

Currents and counter-currents

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My attack on over-drugging brought out some hostile comments and treatment. Thirty years ago I expressed myself with more vivacity than I should show if I were writing on the same subjects today. Some of my more lively remarks called out very sharp animadversion. Thus my illustration of prevention as often better than treatment in the mother's words to her child which had got a poisonous berry in its mouth,—“Spit it out!” gave mortal offence to a well-known New York practitioner and writer, who advised the Massachusetts Medical Society to spit out the offending speaker. Worse than this was my statement of my belief that if a ship-load of miscellaneous drugs, with certain very important exceptions,—drugs, many of which were then often given needlessly and in excess, as then used “could be sunk to the bottom of the sea, it would be all the better for mankind and all the worse for the fishes.” This was too bad. The sentence was misquoted, quoted without its qualifying conditions, and frightened some of my worthy professional brethren as much as if I had told them to throw all physic to the dogs. But for the epigrammatic sting the sentiment would have been unnoticed as a harmless overstatement at the very worst.

Since this lecture was delivered a great and, as I think, beneficial change has taken place in the practice of medicine. The habit of the English “general practitioner” of making his profit out of the pills and potions he administered was ruinous to professional advancement and the dignity of the physician. When a half-starving medical man felt that he must give his patient draught and boluses for which he could charge him, he was in a pitiable position and too likely to persuade himself that his drugs were useful to his patient because they were profitable to him. This practice has prevailed a good deal in America, and was doubtless the source in some measure of the errors I combated.

The contagiousness of puerperal fever.

This Essay was read before a small Association called “The Society for Medical Improvement,” and published in a Medical Journal which lasted but a single year. It naturally attracted less attention than it would have done if published in such a periodical as the “American Journal of Medical Sciences.” Still it had its effect, as I have every reason to believe. I cannot doubt that it has saved the lives of many young mothers by calling attention to the existence and propagation of “Puerperal Fever as a Private Pestilence,” and laying down rules for taking the necessary precautions against it. The case has long been decided in favor of the views I advocated, but, at the time when I wrote two of the most celebrated professors of Obstetrics in this country opposed my conclusions with all the weight of their experience and position.

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This paper was written in a great heat and with passionate indignation. If I touched it at all I might trim its rhetorical exuberance, but I prefer to leave it all its original strength of expression. I could not, if I had tried, have disguised the feelings with which I regarded the attempt to put out of sight the frightful facts which I brought forward and the necessary conclusions to which they led. Of course the whole matter has been looked at in a new point of view since the microbe as a vehicle of contagion has been brought into light, and explained the mechanism of that which was plain enough as a fact to all who were not blind or who did not shut their eyes.

O. W. H.

Beverly Farms, Mass., August 3, 1891

HOMOEOPATHY AND ITS KINDRED DELUSIONS

[Two lectures delivered before the Boston Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. 1842.]

[When a physician attempts to convince a person, who has fallen into the Homoeopathic delusion, of the emptiness of its pretensions, he is often answered by a statement of cases in which its practitioners are thought to have effected wonderful cures. The main object of the first of these Lectures is to show, by abundant facts, that such statements, made by persons unacquainted with the fluctuations of disease and the fallacies of observation, are to be considered in general as of little or no value in establishing the truth of a medical doctrine or the utility of a method of practice.

Those kind friends who suggest to a person suffering from a tedious complaint, that he "Had better try Homoeopathy," are apt to enforce their suggestion by adding, that "at any rate it can do no harm." This may or may not be true as regards the individual. But it always does very great harm to the community to encourage ignorance, error, or deception in a profession which deals with the life and health of our fellow-creatures. Whether or not those who countenance Homoeopathy are guilty of this injustice towards others, the second of these Lectures may afford them some means of determining.

To deny that good effects may happen from the observance of diet and regimen when prescribed by Homoeopaths as well as by others, would be very unfair to them. But to suppose that men with minds so constituted as to accept such statements and embrace such doctrines as make up the so-called science of Homoeopathy are more competent than others to regulate the circumstances which influence the human body in health and disease, would be judging very harshly the average capacity of ordinary practitioners.



To deny that some patients may have been actually benefited through the influence exerted upon their imaginations, would be to refuse to Homoeopathy what all are willing to concede to every one of those numerous modes of practice known to all intelligent persons by an opprobrious title.

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So long as the body is affected through the mind, no audacious device, even of the most manifestly dishonest character, can fail of producing occasional good to those who yield it an implicit or even a partial faith. The argument founded on this occasional good would be as applicable in justifying the counterfeiter and giving circulation to his base coin, on the ground that a spurious dollar had often relieved a poor man's necessities.

Homoeopathy has come before our public at a period when the growing spirit of eclecticism has prepared many ingenious and honest minds to listen to all new doctrines with a candor liable to degenerate into weakness. It is not impossible that the pretended evolution of great and mysterious virtues from infinitely attenuated atoms may have enticed a few over-refining philosophers, who have slid into a vague belief that matter subdivided grows less material, and approaches nearer to a spiritual nature as it requires a more powerful microscope for its detection.

However this may be, some persons seem disposed to take the ground of Menzel that the Laity must pass formal judgment between the Physician and the Homoeopathist, as it once did between Luther and the Romanists. The practitioner and the scholar must not, therefore, smile at the amount of time and labor expended in these Lectures upon this shadowy system; which, in the calm and serious judgment of many of the wisest members of the medical profession, is not entitled by anything it has ever said or done to the notoriety of a public rebuke, still less to the honors of critical martyrdom.]

I

I have selected four topics for this lecture, the first three of which I shall touch but slightly, the last more fully. They are

1. The Royal cure of the King's Evil, or Scrofula.
2. The Weapon Ointment, and its twin absurdity, the Sympathetic Powder.
3. The Tar-water mania of Bishop Berkeley.
4. The History of the Metallic Tractors, or Perkinism.

The first two illustrate the ease with which numerous facts are accumulated to prove the most fanciful and senseless extravagances.

The third exhibits the entire insufficiency of exalted wisdom, immaculate honesty, and vast general acquirements to make a good physician of a great bishop.

The fourth shows us the intimate machinery of an extinct delusion, which flourished only forty years ago; drawn in all its details, as being a rich and comparatively recent illustration of the pretensions, the arguments, the patronage, by means of which windy

errors have long been, and will long continue to be, swollen into transient consequence. All display in superfluous abundance the boundless credulity and excitability of mankind upon subjects connected with medicine.

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“From the time of Edward the Confessor to Queen Anne, the monarchs of England were in the habit of touching those who were brought to them suffering with the scrofula, for the cure of that distemper. William the Third had good sense enough to discontinue the practice, but Anne resumed it, and, among her other patients, performed the royal operation upon a child, who, in spite of his, disease, grew up at last into Samuel Johnson. After laying his hand upon the sufferers, it was customary for the monarch to hang a gold piece around the neck of each patient. Very strict precautions were adopted to prevent those who thought more of the golden angel hung round the neck by a white ribbon, than of relief of their bodily infirmities, from making too many calls, as they sometimes attempted to do. According to the statement of the advocates and contemporaries of this remedy, none ever failed of receiving benefit unless their little faith and credulity starved their merits. Some are said to have been cured immediately on the very touch, others did not so easily get rid of their swellings, until they were touched a second time. Several cases are related, of persons who had been blind for several weeks, and months, and obliged even to be led to Whitehall, yet recovered their sight immediately upon being touched, so as to walk away without any guide.” So widely, at one period, was the belief diffused, that, in the course of twelve years, nearly a hundred thousand persons were touched by Charles the Second. Catholic divines; in disputes upon the orthodoxy of their church, did not deny that the power had descended to protestant princes;—Dr. Harpsfield, in his “Ecclesiastical History of England,” admitted it, and in Wiseman’s words, “when Bishop Tooker would make use of this Argument to prove the Truth of our Church, Smitheus doth not thereupon go about to deny the Matter of fact; nay, both he and Cope acknowledge it.” “I myself,” says Wiseman, the best English surgical writer of his day,[*Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal*, vol. iii. p. 103.]—“I my self have been a frequent Eye-witness of many hundred of Cures performed by his Majesties Touch alone, without any assistance of Chirurgery; and those, many of them such as had tired out the endeavours of able Chirurgeons before they came hither. It were endless to recite what I myself have seen, and what I have received acknowledgments of by Letter, not only from the severall parts of this Nation, but also from Ireland, Scotland, Jersey, Garnsey. It is needless also to remember what Miracles of this nature were performed by the very Bloud of his late Majesty of Blessed memory, after whose decollation by the inhuman Barbarity of the Regicides, the reliques of that were gathered on Chips and in Handkerchieffs by the pious Devotes, who could not but think so great a suffering in so honourable and pious a Cause, would be attended by an extraordinary assistance of God, and some more then ordinary a miracle: nor did their Faith deceive them in this there point, being so many hundred that found the benefit of it.” [*Severall Chirurgicall Treatises*. London.1676. p. 246.]

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Obstinate and incredulous men, as he tells us, accounted for these cures in three ways: by the journey and change of air the patients obtained in coming to London; by the influence of imagination; and the wearing of gold.

To these objections he answers, 1st. That many of those cured were inhabitants of the city. 2d. That the subjects of treatment were frequently infants. 3d. That sometimes silver was given, and sometimes nothing, yet the patients were cured.

A superstition resembling this probably exists at the present time in some ignorant districts of England and this country. A writer in a Medical Journal in the year 1807, speaks of a farmer in Devonshire, who, being a ninth son of a ninth son, is thought endowed with healing powers like those of ancient royalty, and who is accustomed one day in every week to strike for the evil.

I remember that one of my schoolmates told me, when a boy, of a seventh son of a seventh son, somewhere in Essex County, who touched for the scrofula, and who used to hang a silver fourpence halfpenny about the neck of those who came to him, which fourpence halfpenny it was solemnly affirmed became of a remarkably black color after having been some time worn, and that his own brother had been subjected to this extraordinary treatment; but I must add that my schoolmate drew a bow of remarkable length, strength, and toughness for his tender years.

One of the most curious examples of the fallacy of popular belief and the uncertainty of asserted facts in medical experience is to be found in the history of the *Unguentum Armarium*, or *weapon ointment*.

Fabricius Hildanus, whose name is familiar to every surgical scholar, and Lord Bacon, who frequently dipped a little into medicine, are my principal authorities for the few circumstances I shall mention regarding it. The Weapon Ointment was a preparation used for the healing of wounds, but instead of its being applied to them, the injured part was washed and bandaged, and the weapon with which the wound was inflicted was carefully anointed with the unguent. Empirics, ignorant barbers, and men of that sort, are said to have especially employed it. Still there were not wanting some among the more respectable members of the medical profession who supported its claims. The composition of this ointment was complicated, in the different formulae given by different authorities; but some substances addressed to the imagination, rather than the wound or weapon, entered into all. Such were portions of mummy, of human blood, and of moss from the skull of a thief hung in chains.

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Hildanus was a wise and learned man, one of the best surgeons of his time. He was fully aware that a part of the real secret of the Unguentum Armarium consisted in the washing and bandaging the wound and then letting it alone. But he could not resist the solemn assertions respecting its efficacy; he gave way before the outcry of facts, and therefore, instead of denying all their pretensions, he admitted and tried to account for them upon supernatural grounds. As the virtue of those applications, he says, which are made to the weapon cannot reach the wound, and as they can produce no effect without contact, it follows, of necessity, that the Devil must have a hand in the business; and as he is by far the most long headed and experienced of practitioners, he cannot find this a matter of any great difficulty. Hildanus himself reports, in detail, the case of a lady who had received a moderate wound, for which the Unguentum Armarium was employed without the slightest use. Yet instead of receiving this flat case of failure as any evidence against the remedy, he accounts for its not succeeding by the devout character of the lady, and her freedom from that superstitious and over-imaginative tendency which the Devil requires in those who are to be benefited by his devices.

Lord Bacon speaks of the Weapon Ointment, in his Natural History, as having in its favor the testimony of men of credit, though, in his own language, he himself "as yet is not fully inclined to believe it." His remarks upon the asserted facts respecting it show a mixture of wise suspicion and partial belief. He does not like the precise directions given as to the circumstances under which the animals from which some of the materials were obtained were to be killed; for he thought it looked like a provision for an excuse in case of failure, by laying the fault to the omission of some of these circumstances. But he likes well that "they do not observe the confecting of the Ointment under any certain constellation; which is commonly the excuse of magical medicines, when they fail, that they were not made under a fit figure of heaven." [This was a mistake, however, since the two recipes given by Hildanus are both very explicit as to the aspect of the heavens required for different stages of the process.] "It was pretended that if the offending weapon could not be had, it would serve the purpose to anoint a wooden one made like it." "This," says Bacon, "I should doubt to be a device to keep this strange form of cure in request and use; because many times you cannot come by the weapon itself." And in closing his remarks on the statements of the advocates of the ointment, he says, "Lastly, it will cure a beast as well as a man, which I like best of all the rest, because it subjecteth the matter to an easy trial." It is worth remembering, that more than two hundred years ago, when an absurd and fantastic remedy was asserted to possess wonderful power, and when sensible persons ascribed its pretended influence

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to imagination, it was boldly answered that the cure took place when the wounded party did not know of the application made to the weapon, and even when a brute animal was the subject of the experiment, and that this assertion, as we all know it was, came in such a shape as to shake the incredulity of the keenest thinker of his time. The very same assertion has been since repeated in favor of Perkinism, and, since that, of Homoeopathy.

The same essential idea as that of the Weapon Ointment reproduced itself in the still more famous *sympathetic powder*. This Powder was said to have the faculty, if applied to the blood-stained garments of a wounded person, to cure his injuries, even though he were at a great distance at the time. A friar, returning from the East, brought the recipe to Europe somewhat before the middle of the seventeenth century. The Grand Duke of Florence, in which city the friar was residing, heard of his cures, and tried, but without success, to obtain his secret. Sir Kenehn Digby, an Englishman well known to fame, was fortunate enough to do him a favor, which wrought upon his feelings and induced him to impart to his benefactor the composition of his extraordinary Powder. This English knight was at different periods of his life an admiral, a theologian, a critic, a metaphysician, a politician, and a disciple of Alchemy. As is not unfrequent with versatile and inflammable people, he caught fire at the first spark of a new medical discovery, and no sooner got home to England than he began to spread the conflagration.

An opportunity soon offered itself to try the powers of the famous powder. Mr. J. Howell, having been wounded in endeavoring to part two of his friends who were fighting a duel, submitted himself to a trial of the Sympathetic Powder. Four days after he received his wounds, Sir Kenehn dipped one of Mr. Howell's gaiters in a solution of the Powder, and immediately, it is said, the wounds, which were very painful, grew easy, although the patient, who was conversing in a corner of the chamber, had not, the least idea of what was doing with his garter. He then returned home, leaving his garter in the hands of Sir Kenelm, who had hung it up to dry, when Mr. Howell sent his servant in a great hurry to tell him that his wounds were paining him horribly; the garter was therefore replaced in the solution of the Powder, "and the patient got well after five or six days of its continued immersion."

King James First, his son Charles the First, the Duke of Buckingham, then prime minister, and all the principal personages of the time, were cognizant of this fact; and James himself, being curious to know the secret of this remedy, asked it of Sir Kenelm, who revealed it to him, and his Majesty had the opportunity of making several trials of its efficacy, "which all succeeded in a surprising manner." [Dict. des Sciences Medieales.]

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The king's physician, Dr. Mayerne, was made master of the secret, which he carried to France and communicated to the Duke of Mayenne, who performed many cures by means of it, and taught it to his surgeon, who, after the Duke's death, sold it to many distinguished persons, by whose agency it soon ceased to be a secret. What was this wonderful substance which so astonished kings, princes, dukes, knights, and doctors? Nothing but powdered blue vitriol. But it was made to undergo several processes that conferred on it extraordinary virtues. Twice or thrice it was to be dissolved, filtered, and crystallized. The crystals were to be laid in the sun during the months of June, July, and August, taking care to turn them carefully that all should be exposed. Then they were to be powdered, triturated, and again exposed to the sun, again reduced to a very fine powder, and secured in a vessel, while hot, from the sunshine. If there seem anything remarkable in the fact of such astonishing properties being developed by this process, it must be from our short-sightedness, for common salt and charcoal develop powers quite as marvellous after a certain number of thumps, stirs, and shakes, from the hands of modern workers of miracles. In fact the Unguentum Armarium and Sympathetic Powder resemble some more recent prescriptions; the latter consisting in an infinite dilution of the common dose in which remedies are given, and the two former in an infinite dilution of the common distance at which they are applied.

Whether philosophers, and more especially metaphysicians, have any peculiar tendency to dabble in drugs and dose themselves with physic, is a question which might suggest itself to the reader of their biographies.

When Bishop Berkeley visited the illustrious Malebranche at Paris, he found him in his cell, cooking in a small pipkin a medicine for an inflammation of the lungs, from which he was suffering; and the disease, being unfortunately aggravated by the vehemence of their discussion, or the contents of the pipkin, carried him off in the course of a few days. Berkeley himself afforded a remarkable illustration of a truth which has long been known to the members of one of the learned professions, namely, that no amount of talent, or of acquirements in other departments, can rescue from lamentable folly those who, without something of the requisite preparation, undertake to experiment with nostrums upon themselves and their neighbors. The exalted character of Berkeley is thus drawn by Sir James Mackintosh: Ancient learning, exact science, polished society, modern literature, and the fine arts, contributed to adorn and enrich the mind of this accomplished man. All his contemporaries agreed with the satirist in ascribing

“‘To Berkeley every virtue under heaven.’

“Even the discerning, fastidious, and turbulent Atterbury said, after an interview with him, ‘So much understanding, so much knowledge, so much innocence, and such humility, I did not think had been the portion of any but angels, till I saw this gentleman.’”

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But among the writings of this great and good man is an Essay of the most curious character, illustrating his weakness upon the point in question, and entitled, "Siris, a Chain of Philosophical Reflections and Inquiries concerning the Virtues of *tar water*, and divers other Subjects,"—an essay which begins with a recipe for his favorite fluid, and slides by gentle gradations into an examination of the sublimest doctrines of Plato. To show how far a man of honesty and benevolence, and with a mind of singular acuteness and depth, may be run away with by a favorite notion on a subject which his habits and education do not fit him to investigate, I shall give a short account of this Essay, merely stating that as all the supposed virtues of Tar Water, made public in successive editions of his treatise by so illustrious an author, have not saved it from neglect and disgrace, it may be fairly assumed that they were mainly imaginary.

The bishop, as is usual in such cases, speaks of himself as indispensably obliged, by the duty he owes to mankind, to make his experience public. Now this was by no means evident, nor does it follow in general, that because a man has formed a favorable opinion of a person or a thing he has not the proper means of thoroughly understanding, he shall be bound to print it, and thus give currency to his impressions, which may be erroneous, and therefore injurious. He would have done much better to have laid his impressions before some experienced physicians and surgeons, such as Dr. Mead and Mr. Cheselden, to have asked them to try his experiment over again, and have been guided by their answers. But the good bishop got excited; he pleased himself with the thought that he had discovered a great panacea; and having once tasted the bewitching cup of self-quackery, like many before and since his time, he was so infatuated with the draught that he would insist on pouring it down the throats of his neighbors and all mankind.

The precious fluid was made by stirring a gallon of water with a quart of tar, leaving it forty-eight hours, and pouring off the clear water. Such was the specific which the great metaphysician recommended for averting and curing all manner of diseases. It was, if he might be believed, a preventive of the small-pox, and of great use in the course of the disease. It was a cure for impurities of the blood, coughs, pleurisy, peripneumony, erysipelas, asthma, indigestion, carchexia, hysterics, dropsy, mortification, scurvy, and hypochondria. It was of great use in gout and fevers, and was an excellent preservative of the teeth and gums; answered all the purpose of Elixir Proprietatis, Stoughton's drops, diet drinks, and mineral waters; was particularly to be recommended to sea-faring persons, ladies, and men of studious and sedentary lives; could never be taken too long, but, on the contrary, produced advantages which sometimes did not begin to show themselves for two or three months.

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"From my representing Tar Water as good for so many things," says Berkeley, "some perhaps may conclude it is good for nothing. But charity obligeth me to say what I know, and what I think, however it may be taken. Men may censure and object as they please, but I appeal to time and experiment. Effects misimputed, cases wrong told, circumstances overlooked, perhaps, too, prejudices and partialities against truth, may for a time prevail and keep her at the bottom of her well, from whence nevertheless she emergeth sooner or later, and strikes the eyes of all who do not keep them shut." I cannot resist the temptation of illustrating the bishop's belief in the wonderful powers of his remedy, by a few sentences from different parts of his essay. "The hardness of stubbed vulgar constitutions renders them insensible of a thousand things that fret and gall those delicate people, who, as if their skin was peeled off, feel to the quick everything that touches them. The tender nerves and low spirits of such poor creatures would be much relieved by the use of Tar Water, which might prolong and cheer their lives." "It [the Tar Water] may be made stronger for brute beasts, as horses, in whose disorders I have found it very useful." "This same water will also give charitable relief to the ladies, who often want it more than the parish poor; being many of them never able to make a good meal, and sitting pale, puny, and forbidden, like ghosts, at their own table, victims of vapors and indigestion." It does not appear among the virtues of Tar Water that "children cried for it," as for some of our modern remedies, but the bishop says, "I have known children take it for above six months together with great benefit, and without any inconvenience; and after long and repeated experience I do esteem it a most excellent diet drink, fitted to all seasons and ages." After mentioning its usefulness in febrile complaints, he says: "I have had all this confirmed by my own experience in the late sickly season of the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-one, having had twenty-five fevers in my own family cured by this medicinal water, drunk copiously." And to finish these extracts with a most important suggestion for the improvement of the British nation: "It is much to be lamented that our Insulars who act and think so much for themselves, should yet, from grossness of air and diet, grow stupid or doat sooner than other people, who, by virtue of elastic air, water-drinking, and light food, preserve their faculties to extreme old age; an advantage which may perhaps be approached, if not equaled, even in these regions, by Tar Water, temperance, and early hours."

Berkeley died at the age of about seventy; he might have lived longer, but his fatal illness was so sudden that there was not time enough to stir up a quart of the panacea. He was an illustrious man, but he held two very odd opinions; that tar water was everything, and that the whole material universe was nothing.

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Most of those present have at some time in their lives heard mention made of the *metallic tractors*, invented by one Dr. Perkins, an American, and formerly enjoying great repute for the cure of various diseases. Many have seen or heard of a satirical poem, written by one of our own countrymen also, about forty years since, and called "Terrible Tractoration." The Metallic Tractors are now so utterly abandoned that I have only by good fortune fallen upon a single one of a pair, to show for the sake of illustration. For more than thirty years this great discovery, which was to banish at least half the evils which afflict humanity, has been sleeping undisturbed in the grave of oblivion. Not a voice has, for this long period, been raised in its favor; its noble and learned patrons, its public institutions, its eloquent advocates, its brilliant promises are all covered with the dust of silent neglect; and of the generation which has sprung up since the period when it flourished, very few know anything of its history, and hardly even the title which in its palmy days it bore of *Perkinism*. Taking it as settled, then, as no one appears to answer for it, that Perkinism is entirely dead and gone, that both in public and private, officially and individually, its former adherents even allow it to be absolutely defunct, I select it for anatomical examination. If this pretended discovery was made public; if it was long kept before the public; if it was addressed to the people of different countries; if it was formally investigated by scientific men, and systematically adopted by benevolent persons, who did everything in their power to diffuse the knowledge and practice of it; if various collateral motives, such as interest and vanity, were embarked in its cause; if, notwithstanding all these things, it gradually sickened and died, then the conclusion seems a fair one, that it did not deserve to live. Contrasting its failure with its high pretensions, it is fair to call it an imposition; whether an expressly fraudulent contrivance or not, some might be ready to question. Everything historically shown to have happened concerning the mode of promulgation, the wide diffusion, the apparent success of this delusion, the respectability and enthusiasm of its advocates, is of great interest in showing to what extent and by what means a considerable part of the community may be led into the belief of that which is to be eventually considered' as an idle folly. If there is any existing folly, fraudulent or innocent in its origin, which appeals to certain arguments for its support; provided that the very same arguments can be shown to have been used for Perkinism with as good reason, they will at once fall to the ground. Still more, if it shall appear that the general course of any existing delusion bears a strong resemblance to that of Perkinism, that the former is most frequently advocated by the same class of persons who were conspicuous

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in behalf of the latter, and treated with contempt or opposed by the same kind of persons who thus treated Perkinism; if the facts in favor of both have a similar aspect; if the motives of their originators and propagators may be presumed to have been similar; then there is every reason to suppose that the existing folly will follow in the footsteps of the past, and after displaying a given amount of cunning and credulity in those deceiving and deceived, will drop from the public view like a fruit which has ripened into spontaneous rottenness, and be succeeded by the fresh bloom of some other delusion required by the same excitable portion of the community.

Dr. Elisha Perkins was born at Norwich, Connecticut, in the year 1740. He had practised his profession with a good local reputation for many years, when he fell upon a course of experiments, as it is related, which led to his great discovery. He conceived the idea that metallic substances might have the effect of removing diseases, if applied in a certain manner; a notion probably suggested by the then recent experiments of Galvani, in which muscular contractions were found to be produced by the contact of two metals with the living fibre. It was in 1796 that his discovery was promulgated in the shape of the Metallic Tractors, two pieces of metal, one apparently iron and the other brass, about three inches long, blunt at one end and pointed at the other. These instruments were applied for the cure of different complaints, such as rheumatism, local pains, inflammations, and even tumors, by drawing them over the affected part very lightly for about twenty minutes. Dr. Perkins took out a patent for his discovery, and travelled about the country to diffuse the new practice. He soon found numerous advocates of his discovery, many of them of high standing and influence. In the year 1798 the tractors had crossed the Atlantic, and were publicly employed in the Royal Hospital at Copenhagen. About the same time the son of the inventor, Mr. Benjamin Douglass Perkins, carried them to London, where they soon attracted attention. The Danish physicians published an account of their cases, containing numerous instances of alleged success, in a respectable octavo volume. In the year 1804 an establishment, honored with the name of the Perkinian Institution, was founded in London. The transactions of this institution were published in pamphlets, the Perkinian Society had public dinners at the Crown and Anchor, and a poet celebrated their medical triumph in strains like these:

“See, pointed metals, blest with power t’ appease
The ruthless rage of merciless disease,
O’er the frail part a subtle fluid pour,
Drenched with invisible Galvanic shower,
Till the arthritic staff and crutch forego,
And leap exulting like the bounding roe!”

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While all these things were going on, Mr. Benjamin Douglass Perkins was calmly pocketing money, so that after some half a dozen years he left the country with more than ten thousand pounds, which had been paid him by the believers in Great Britain. But in spite of all this success, and the number of those interested and committed in its behalf, Perkinism soon began to decline, and in 1811 the Tractors are spoken of by an intelligent writer as being almost forgotten. Such was the origin and duration of this doctrine and practice, into the history of which we will now look a little more narrowly.

Let us see, then, by whose agency this delusion was established and kept up; whether it was principally by those who were accustomed to medical pursuits, or those whose habits and modes of reasoning were different; whether it was with the approbation of those learned bodies usually supposed to take an interest in scientific discoveries, or only of individuals whose claims to distinction were founded upon their position in society, or political station, or literary eminence; whether the judicious or excitable classes entered most deeply into it; whether, in short, the scientific men of that time were deceived, or only intruded upon, and shouted down for the moment by persons who had no particular call to invade their precincts.

Not much, perhaps, was to be expected of the Medical Profession in the way of encouragement. One Dr. Fuller, who wrote in England, himself a Perkinist, thus expressed his opinion: "It must be an extraordinary exertion of virtue and humanity for a medical man, whose livelihood depends either on the sale of drugs, or on receiving a guinea for writing a prescription, which must relate to those drugs, to say to his patient, 'You had better purchase a set of Tractors to keep in your family; they will cure you without the expense of my attendance, or the danger of the common medical practice.' For very obvious reasons medical men must never be expected to recommend the use of Perkinism. The Tractors must trust for their patronage to the enlightened and philanthropic out of the profession, or to medical men retired from practice, and who know of no other interest than the luxury of relieving the distressed. And I do not despair of seeing the day when but very few of this description as well as private families will be without them."

Whether the motives assigned by this medical man to his professional brethren existed or not, it is true that Dr. Perkins did not gain a great deal at their hands. The Connecticut Medical Society expelled him in 1797 for violating their law against the use of nostrums, or secret remedies. The leading English physicians appear to have looked on with singular apathy or contempt at the miracles which it was pretended were enacting in the hands of the apostles of the new practice. In looking over the reviews of the time, I have found little beyond brief occasional notices of their pretensions; the columns of these

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journals being occupied with subjects of more permanent interest. The state of things in London is best learned, however, from the satirical poem to which I have already alluded as having been written at the period referred to. This was entitled, "Terrible Tractoration!! A Poetical Petition against Galvanizing Trumpery and the Perkinistic Institution. Most respectfully addressed to the Royal College of Physicians, by Christopher Caustic, M. D., LL. D., A. S. S., Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, Aberdeen, and Honorary Member of no less than nineteen very learned Societies." Two editions of this work were published in London in the years 1803 and 1804, and one or two have been published in this country.

"Terrible Tractoration" is supposed, by those who never read it, to be a satire upon the follies of Perkins and his followers. It is, on the contrary, a most zealous defence of Perkinism, and a fierce attack upon its opponents, most especially upon such of the medical profession as treated the subject with neglect or ridicule. The Royal College of Physicians was the more peculiar object of the attack, but with this body, the editors of some of the leading periodicals, and several physicians distinguished at that time, and even now remembered for their services to science and humanity, were involved in unsparing denunciations. The work is by no means of the simply humorous character it might be supposed, but is overloaded with notes of the most seriously polemical nature. Much of the history of the subject, indeed, is to be looked for in this volume.

It appears from this work that the principal members of the medical profession, so far from hailing Mr. Benjamin Douglass Perkins as another Harvey or Jenner, looked very coldly upon him and his Tractors; and it is now evident that, though they were much abused for so doing, they knew very well what they had to deal with, and were altogether in the right. The delusion at last attracted such an amount of attention as to induce Dr. Haygarth and some others of respectable standing to institute some experiments which I shall mention in their proper place, the result of which might have seemed sufficient to show the emptiness of the whole contrivance.

The Royal Society, that learned body which for ages has constituted the best tribunal to which Britain can appeal in questions of science, accepted Mr. Perkins's Tractors and the book written about them, passed the customary vote of thanks, and never thought of troubling itself further in the investigation of pretensions of such an aspect. It is not to be denied that a considerable number of physicians did avow themselves advocates of the new practice; but out of the whole catalogue of those who were publicly proclaimed as such, no one has ever been known, so far as I am aware, to the scientific world, except in connection with the short-lived notoriety of Perkinism. Who were the people, then, to whose activity, influence, or standing with the community was owing all the temporary excitement produced by the Metallic Tractors?

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First, those persons who had been induced to purchase a pair of Tractors. These little bits of brass and iron, the intrinsic value of which might, perhaps, amount to ninepence, were sold at five guineas a pair! A man who has paid twenty-five dollars for his whistle is apt to blow it louder and longer than other people. So it appeared that when the "Perkinean Society" applied to the possessors of Tractors in the metropolis to concur in the establishment of a public institution for the use of these instruments upon the poor, "it was found that only five out of above a hundred objected to subscribe, on account of their want of confidence in the efficacy of the practice; and these," the committee observes, "there is reason to believe, never gave them a fair trial, probably never used them in more than one case, and that perhaps a case in which the Tractors had never been recommended as serviceable." "Purchasers of the Tractors," said one of their ardent advocates, "would be among the last to approve of them if they had reason to suppose themselves defrauded of five guineas." He forgot poor Moses, with his "gross of green spectacles, with silver rims and shagreen cases." "Dear mother," cried the boy, "why won't you listen to reason? I had them a dead bargain, or I should not have bought them. The silver rims alone will sell for double the money."

But it is an undeniable fact, that many persons of considerable standing, and in some instances holding the most elevated positions in society, openly patronized the new practice. In a translation of a work entitled "Experiments with the Metallic Tractors," originally published in Danish, thence rendered successively into German and English, Mr. Benjamin Perkins, who edited the English edition, has given a copious enumeration of the distinguished individuals, both in America and Europe, whose patronage he enjoyed. He goes so far as to signify that *royalty* itself was to be included among the number. When the Perkinean Institution was founded, no less a person than Lord Rivers was elected President, and eleven other individuals of distinction, among them Governor Franklin, son of Dr. Franklin, figured as Vice-Presidents. Lord Henniker, a member of the Royal Society, who is spoken of as a man of judgment and talents, condescended to patronize the astonishing discovery, and at different times bought three pairs of Tractors. When the Tractors were introduced into Europe, a large number of testimonials accompanied them from various distinguished characters in America, the list of whom is given in the translation of the Danish work referred to as follows:

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“Those who have individually stated cases, or who have presented their names to the public as men who approved of this remedy, and acknowledged themselves instrumental in circulating the Tractors, are fifty-six in number; thirty-four of whom are physicians and surgeons, and many of them of the first eminence, thirteen clergymen, most of whom are doctors of divinity, and connected with the literary institutions of America; among the remainder are two members of Congress, one professor of natural philosophy in a college, *etc.*, *etc.*” It seemed to be taken rather hardly by Mr. Perkins that the translators of the work which he edited, in citing the names of the advocates of the Metallic Practice, frequently omitted the honorary titles which should have been annexed. The testimonials were obtained by the Danish writer, from a pamphlet published in America, in which these titles were given in full. Thus one of these testimonials is from “John Tyler, Esq., a magistrate in the county of New London, and late Brigadier-General of the militia in that State.” The “omission of the General’s title” is the subject of complaint, as if this title were sufficient evidence of the commanding powers of one of the patrons of tractoration. A similar complaint is made when “Calvin Goddard, Esq., of Plainfield, Attorney at Law, and a member of the Legislature of the State of Connecticut,” is mentioned without his titular honors, and even on account of the omission of the proper official titles belonging to “Nathan Pierce, Esq., Governor and Manager of the Almshouse of Newburyport.” These instances show the great importance to be attached to civil and military dignities, in qualifying their holders to judge of scientific subjects, a truth which has not been overlooked by the legitimate successors of the Perkinists. In Great Britain, the Tractors were not less honored than in America, by the learned and the illustrious. The “Perkinistic Committee” made this statement in their report: “Mr. Perkins has annually laid before the public a large collection of new cases communicated to him for that purpose by disinterested and intelligent characters, from almost every quarter of Great Britain. In regard to the competency of these vouchers, it will be sufficient simply to state that, amongst others whose names have been attached to their communications, are eight professors, in four different universities, twenty-one regular Physicians, nineteen Surgeons, thirty Clergymen, twelve of whom are Doctors of Divinity, and numerous other characters of equal respectability.”

It cannot but excite our notice and surprise that the number of clergymen both in America and Great Britain who thrust forward their evidence on this medical topic was singularly large in proportion to that of the members of the medical profession. Whole pages are contributed by such worthies as the Rev. Dr. Trotter of Hans Place, the Rear. Waring Willett, Chaplain to the Earl of Dunmore, the Rev.

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Dr. Clarke, Chaplain to the Prince of Wales. The style of these theologico-medical communications may be seen in the following from a divine who was also professor in one of the colleges of New England. "I have used the Tractors with success in several other cases in my own family, and although, like Naaman the Syrian, I cannot tell why the waters of Jordan should be better than Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus; yet since experience has proved them so, no reasoning can change the opinion. Indeed, the causes of all common facts are, we think, perfectly well known to us; and it is very probable, fifty or a hundred years hence, we shall as well know why the Metallic Tractors should in a few minutes remove violent pains, as we now know why cantharides and opium will produce opposite effects, namely, we shall know very little about either excepting facts." Fifty or a hundred years hence! if he could have looked forward forty years, he would have seen the descendants of the "Perkinistic" philosophers swallowing infinitesimal globules, and knowing and caring as much about the Tractors as the people at Saratoga Springs do about the waters of Abana and Pharpar.

I trust it will not be thought in any degree disrespectful to a profession which we all honor, that I have mentioned the great zeal of many clergymen in the cause of Perkinism. I hope, too, that I may without offence suggest the causes which have often led them out of their own province into one to which their education has no special reference. The members of that profession ought to be, and commonly are, persons of benevolent character. Their duties carry them into the midst of families, and particularly at times when the members of them are suffering from bodily illness. It is natural enough that a strong desire should be excited to alleviate sufferings which may have defied the efforts of professional skill; as natural that any remedy which recommends itself to the belief or the fancy of the spiritual physician should be applied with the hope of benefit; and perfectly certain that the weakness of human nature, from which no profession is exempt, will lead him to take the most flattering view of its effects upon the patient; his own sagacity and judgment being staked upon the success of the trial. The inventor of the Tractors was aware of these truths. He therefore sent the Tractors gratuitously to many clergymen, accompanied with a formal certificate that the holder had become entitled to their possession by the payment of five guineas. This was practised in our own neighborhood, and I remember finding one of these certificates, so presented, which proved that amongst the risks of infancy I had to encounter Perkins's Tractors. Two clergymen of Boston and the vicinity, both well known to local fame, gave in their testimony to the value of the instruments thus presented to them; an unusually moderate proportion, when it is remembered that to the common motives of which I have spoken was added the seduction of a gift for which the profane public was expected to pay so largely.

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It was remarkable, also, that Perkinism, which had so little success with the medical and scientific part of the community, found great favor in the eyes of its more lovely and less obstinate portion. "The lady of Major Oxholin,"—I quote from Mr. Perkins's volume,— "having been lately in America, had seen and heard much of the great effects of Perkinism. Influenced by a most benevolent disposition, she brought these Tractors and the pamphlet with her to Europe, with a laudable desire of extending their utility to her suffering countrymen." Such was the channel by which the Tractors were conveyed to Denmark, where they soon became the ruling passion. The workmen, says a French writer, could not manufacture them fast enough. Women carried them about their persons, and delighted in bringing them into general use. To what extent the Tractors were favored with the patronage of English and American ladies, it is of course not easy to say, except on general principles, as their names were not brought before the public. But one of Dr. Haygarth's stories may lead us to conjecture that there was a class of female practitioners who went about doing good with the Tractors in England as well as in Denmark. A certain lady had the misfortune to have a spot as big as a silver penny at the corner of her eye, caused by a bruise, or some such injury. Another lady, who was a friend of hers, and a strong believer in Perkinism, was very anxious to try the effects of tractoration upon this unfortunate blemish. The patient consented; the lady "produced the instruments, and, after drawing them four or five times over the spot, declared that it changed to a paler color, and on repeating the use of them a few minutes longer, that it had almost vanished, and was scarcely visible, and departed in high triumph at her success." The lady who underwent the operation assured the narrator "that she looked in the glass immediately after, and that not the least visible alteration had taken place."

It would be a very interesting question, what was the intellectual character of those persons most conspicuous in behalf of the Perkinistic delusion? Such an inquiry might bring to light some principles which we could hereafter apply to the study of other popular errors. But the obscurity into which nearly all these enthusiasts have subsided renders the question easier to ask than to answer. I believe it would have been found that most of these persons were of ardent temperament and of considerable imagination, and that their history would show that Perkinism was not the first nor the last hobby-horse they rode furiously. Many of them may very probably have been persons of more than common talent, of active and ingenious minds, of versatile powers and various acquirements. Such, for instance, was the estimable man to whom I have repeatedly referred as a warm defender of tractoration, and a bitter assailant of its enemies. The story tells itself in the biographical preface to his poem.

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He went to London with the view of introducing a hydraulic machine, which he and his Vermont friends regarded as a very important invention. He found, however, that the machine was already in common use in that metropolis. A brother Yankee, then in London, had started the project of a mill, which was to be carried by the water of the Thames. He was sanguine enough to purchase one fifth of this concern, which also proved a failure. At about the same period he wrote the work which proved the great excitement of his mind upon the subject of the transient folly then before the public. Originally a lawyer, he was in succession a mechanic, a poet, and an editor, meeting with far less success in each of these departments than usually attends men of less varied gifts, but of more tranquil and phlegmatic composition. But who is ignorant that there is a class of minds characterized by qualities like those I have mentioned; minds with many bright and even beautiful traits; but aimless and fickle as the butterfly; that settle upon every gayly-colored illusion as it opens into flower, and flutter away to another when the first has dropped its leaves, and stands naked in the icy air of truth!

Let us now look at the general tenor of the arguments addressed by believers to sceptics and opponents. Foremost of all, emblazoned at the head of every column, loudest shouted by every triumphant disputant, held up as paramount to all other considerations, stretched like an impenetrable shield to protect the weakest advocate of the great cause against the weapons of the adversary, was that omnipotent monosyllable which has been the patrimony of cheats and the currency of dupes from time immemorial,—Facts! Facts! Facts! First came the published cases of the American clergymen, brigadier-generals, almshouse governors, representatives, attorneys, and esquires. Then came the published cases of the surgeons of Copenhagen. Then followed reports of about one hundred and fifty cases published in England, “demonstrating the efficacy of the metallic practice in a variety of complaints both upon the human body and on horses, *etc.*” But the progress of facts in Great Britain did not stop here. Let those who rely upon the numbers of their testimonials, as being alone sufficient to prove the soundness and stability of a medical novelty, digest the following from the report of the Perkinistic Committee. “The cases published [in Great Britain] amounted, in March last, the date of Mr. Perkins’s last publication, to about five thousand. Supposing that not more than one cure in three hundred which the Tractors have performed has been published, and the proportion is probably much greater, it will be seen that the number, to March last, will have exceeded one million five hundred thousand!”

Next in order after the appeal to what were called facts, came a series of arguments, which have been so long bruised and battered round in the cause of every doctrine or pretension, new, monstrous, or deliriously impossible, that each of them is as odiously familiar to the scientific scholar as the faces of so many old acquaintances, among the less reputable classes, to the officers of police.

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No doubt many of my hearers will recognize, in the following passages, arguments they may have heard brought forward with triumphant confidence in behalf of some doctrine not yet extinct. No doubt some may have honestly thought they proved something; may have used them with the purpose of convincing their friends, or of silencing the opponents of their favorite doctrine, whatever that might be. But any train of arguments which was contrived for Perkinism, which was just as applicable to it as to any other new doctrine in the same branch of science, and which was fully employed against its adversaries forty years since, might, in common charity, be suffered to slumber in the grave of Perkinism. Whether or not the following sentences, taken literally from the work of Mr. Perkins, were the originals of some of the idle propositions we hear bandied about from time to time, let those who listen judge.

The following is the test assumed for the new practice: "If diseases are really removed, as those persons who have practised extensively with the Tractors declare, it should seem there would be but little doubt of their being generally adopted; but if the numerous reports of their efficacy which have been published are forgeries, or are unfounded, the practice ought to be crushed." To this I merely add, it has been crushed.

The following sentence applies to that a priori judging and uncandid class of individuals who buy their dinners without tasting all the food there is in the market. "On all discoveries there are persons who, without descending to any inquiry into the truth, pretend to know, as it were by intuition, that newly asserted facts are founded in the grossest errors. These were those who knew that Harvey's report of the circulation of the blood was a preposterous and ridiculous suggestion, and in latter later days there were others who knew that Franklin deserved reproach for declaring that points were preferable to balls for protecting buildings from lightning."

Again: "This unwarrantable mode of offering assertion for proof, so unauthorized and even unprecedented except in the condemnation of a Galileo, the persecution of a Copernicus, and a few other acts of inquisitorial authority, in the times of ignorance and superstition, affords but a lamentable instance of one of his remarks, that this is far from being the Age of Reason."

"The most valuable medicines in the *Materia Medica* act on principles of which we are totally ignorant. None have ever yet been able to explain how opium produces sleep, or how bark cures intermittent fevers; and yet few, it is hoped, will be so absurd as to desist from the use of these important articles because they know nothing of the principle of their operations." Or if the argument is preferred, in the eloquent language of the Perkinistic poet:

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“What though the *causes* may not be explained,
Since these *effects* are duly ascertained,
Let not self-interest, prejudice, or pride,
Induce mankind to set the means aside;
Means which, though simple, are by
Heaven designed to alleviate the woes of human kind.”

This course of argument is so often employed, that it deserves to be expanded a little, so that its length and breadth may be fairly seen. A series of what are called facts is brought forward to prove some very improbable doctrine. It is objected by judicious people, or such as have devoted themselves to analogous subjects, that these assumed facts are in direct opposition to all that is known of the course of nature, that the universal experience of the past affords a powerful presumption against their truth, and that in proportion to the gravity of these objections, should be the number and competence of the witnesses. The answer is a ready one. What do we know of the mysteries of Nature? Do we understand the intricate machinery of the Universe? When to this is added the never-failing quotation,

“There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy,”—

the question is thought to be finally disposed of.

Take the case of astrology as an example. It is in itself strange and incredible that the relations of the heavenly bodies to each other at a given moment of time, perhaps half a century ago, should have anything to do with my success or misfortune in any undertaking of to-day. But what right have I to say it cannot be so? Can I bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? I do not know by what mighty magic the planets roll in their fluid paths, confined to circles as unchanging as if they were rings of steel, nor why the great wave of ocean follows in a sleepless round upon the skirts of moonlight; nor can I say from any certain knowledge that the phases of the heavenly bodies, or even the falling of the leaves of the forest, or the manner in which the sands lie upon the sea-shore, may not be knit up by invisible threads with the web of human destiny. There is a class of minds much more ready to believe that which is at first sight incredible, and because it is incredible, than what is generally thought reasonable. *Credo quia impossibile est*,—“I believe, because it is impossible,”—is an old paradoxical expression which might be literally applied to this tribe of persons. And they always succeed in finding something marvellous, to call out the exercise of their robust faith. The old Cabalistic teachers maintained that there was not a verse, line, word, or even letter in the Bible which had not a special efficacy either to defend the person who rightly employed it, or to injure his enemies; always provided the original Hebrew was made use of. In the hands of modern Cabalists every substance, no matter how inert, acquires wonderful medicinal virtues, provided it be used in a proper state of purity and subdivision.

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I have already mentioned the motives attributed by the Perkinists to the Medical Profession, as preventing its members from receiving the new but unwelcome truths. This accusation is repeated in different forms and places, as, for instance, in the following passage: "Will the medical man who has spent much money and labor in the pursuit of the arcana of Physic, and on the exercise of which depends his support in life, proclaim the inefficacy of his art, and recommend a remedy to his patient which the most unlettered in society can employ as advantageously as himself? and a remedy, too, which, unlike the drops, the pills, the powders, *etc.*, of the *Materia Medica*, is inconsumable, and ever in readiness to be employed in successive diseases?"

As usual with these people, much indignation was expressed at any parallel between their particular doctrine and practice and those of their exploded predecessors. "The motives," says the disinterested Mr. Perkins, "which must have impelled to this attempt at classing the *metallic practice* with the most paltry of empyrical projects, are but too thinly veiled to escape detection."

To all these arguments was added, as a matter of course, an appeal to the feelings of the benevolent in behalf of suffering humanity, in the shape of a notice that the poor would be treated gratis. It is pretty well understood that this gratuitous treatment of the poor does not necessarily imply an excess of benevolence, any more than the gratuitous distribution of a trader's shop-bills is an evidence of remarkable generosity; in short, that it is one of those things which honest men often do from the best motives, but which rogues and impostors never fail to announce as one of their special recommendations. It is astonishing to see how these things brighten up at the touch of Mr. Perkins's poet:

"Ye worthy, honored, philanthropic few,
The muse shall weave her brightest wreaths for you,
Who in Humanity's bland cause unite,
Nor heed the shaft by interest aimed or spite;
Like the great Pattern of Benevolence,
Hygeia's blessings to the poor dispense;
And though opposed by folly's servile brood,
enjoy the luxury of doing good."

Having thus sketched the history of Perkinism in its days of prosperity; having seen how it sprung into being, and by what means it maintained its influence, it only remains to tell the brief story of its discomfiture and final downfall. The vast majority of the sensible part of the medical profession were contented, so far as we can judge, to let it die out of itself. It was in vain that the advocates of this invaluable discovery exclaimed over their perverse and interested obstinacy,—in vain that they called up the injured ghosts of Harvey, Galileo, and Copernicus to shame that unbelieving generation; the Baillies and the Heberdens,—men whose names have

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come down to us as synonymous with honor and wisdom,—bore their reproaches in meek silence, and left them unanswered to their fate. There were some others, however, who, believing the public to labor under a delusion, thought it worth while to see whether the charm would be broken by an open trial of its virtue, as compared with that of some less hallowed formula. It must be remembered that a peculiar value was attached to the Metallic Tractors, as made and patented by Mr. Perkins. Dr. Haygarth, of Bath, performed various experiments upon patients afflicted with different complaints,—the patients supposing that the real five-guinea Tractors were employed. Strange to relate, he obtained equally wonderful effects with Tractors of lead and of wood; with nails, pieces of bone, slate pencil, and tobacco-pipe. Dr. Alderson employed sham Tractors made of wood, and produced such effects upon five patients that they returned solemn thanks in church for their cures. A single specimen of these cases may stand for all of them. Ann Hill had suffered for some months from pain in the right arm and shoulder. The Tractors (wooden ones) were applied, and in the space of five minutes she expressed herself relieved in the following apostrophe: “Bless me! why, who could have thought it, that them little things could pull the pain from one. Well, to be sure, the longer one lives, the more one sees; ah, dear!”

These experiments did not result in the immediate extinction of Perkinism. Doubtless they were a great comfort to many obstinate unbelievers, and helped to settle some sceptical minds; but for the real Perkinistic enthusiasts, it may be questioned whether they would at that time have changed their opinion though one had risen from the dead to assure them that it was an error. It perished without violence, by an easy and natural process. Like the famous toy of Mongolfier, it rose by means of heated air,—the fevered breath of enthusiastic ignorance,—and when this grew cool, as it always does in a little while, it collapsed and fell.

And now, on reviewing the whole subject, how shall we account for the extraordinary prevalence of the belief in Perkinism among a portion of what is supposed to be the thinking part of the community?

Could the cures have been real ones, produced by the principle of *animal magnetism*? To this it may be answered that the Perkinists ridiculed the idea of approximating Mesmer and the founder of their own doctrine, that nothing like the somnambulic condition seems to have followed the use of the Tractors, and that neither the exertion of the will nor the powers of the individual who operated seem to have been considered of any consequence. Besides, the absolute neglect into which the Tractors soon declined is good evidence that they were incapable of affording any considerable and permanent relief in the complaints for the cure of which they were applied.

Of course a large number of apparent cures were due solely to nature; which is true under every form of treatment, orthodox or empirical. Of course many persons

experienced at least temporary relief from the strong impression made upon their minds by this novel and marvellous method of treatment.

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Many, again, influenced by the sanguine hopes of those about them, like dying people, who often say sincerely, from day to day, that they are getting better, cheated themselves into a false and short-lived belief that they were cured; and as happens in such cases, the public never knew more than the first half of the story.

When it was said to the Perkinists, that whatever effects they produced were merely through the imagination, they declared (like the advocates of the *royal touch* and the *Unguentum Armarium*) that this explanation was sufficiently disproved by the fact of numerous and successful cures which had been witnessed in infants and brute animals. Dr. Haygarth replied to this, that "in these cases it is not the Patient, but the Observer, who is deceived by his own imagination," and that such may be the fact, we have seen in the case of the good lady who thought she had conjured away the spot from her friend's countenance, when it remained just as before.

As to the motives of the inventor and vender of the Tractors, the facts must be allowed to speak for themselves. But when two little bits of brass and iron are patented, as an invention, as the result of numerous experiments, when people are led, or even allowed, to infer that they are a peculiar compound, when they are artfully associated with a new and brilliant discovery (which then happened to be Galvanism), when they are sold at many hundred times their value, and the seller prints his opinion that a Hospital will suffer inconvenience, "unless it possesses many sets of the Tractors, and these placed in the hands of the patients to practise on each other," one cannot but suspect that they were contrived in the neighborhood of a wooden nutmeg factory; that legs of ham in that region are not made of the best mahogany; and that such as buy their cucumber seed in that vicinity have to wait for the fruit as long as the Indians for their crop of gunpowder.

The succeeding lecture will be devoted to an examination of the doctrines of Samuel Hahnemann and his disciples; doctrines which some consider new and others old; the common title of which is variously known as Ho-moeopathy, Homoe-op-athy, Homoeo-paith-y, or Hom'pathy, and the claims of which are considered by some as infinitely important, and by many as immeasurably ridiculous.

I wish to state, for the sake of any who may be interested in the subject, that I shall treat it, not by ridicule, but by argument; perhaps with great freedom, but with good temper and in peaceable language; with very little hope of reclaiming converts, with no desire of making enemies, but with a firm belief that its pretensions and assertions cannot stand before a single hour of calm investigation.

II.

It may be thought that a direct attack upon the pretensions of *homoeopathy* is an uncalled-for aggression upon an unoffending doctrine and its peaceful advocates.

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But a little inquiry will show that it has long assumed so hostile a position with respect to the Medical Profession, that any trouble I, or any other member of that profession, may choose to bestow upon it may be considered merely as a matter of self-defence. It began with an attempt to show the insignificance of all existing medical knowledge. It not only laid claim to wonderful powers of its own, but it declared the common practice to be attended with the most positively injurious effects, that by it acute diseases are aggravated, and chronic diseases rendered incurable. It has at various times brought forward collections of figures having the air of statistical documents, pretending to show a great proportional mortality among the patients of the Medical Profession, as compared with those treated according to its own rules. Not contented with choosing a name of classical origin for itself, it invented one for the whole community of innocent physicians, assuring them, to their great surprise, that they were all ALLOPATHISTS, whether they knew it or not, and including all the illustrious masters of the past, from Hippocrates down to Hunter, under the same gratuitous title. The line, then, has been drawn by the champions of the new doctrine; they have lifted the lance, they have sounded the charge, and are responsible for any little skirmishing which may happen.

But, independently of any such grounds of active resistance, the subject involves interests so disproportioned to its intrinsic claims, that it is no more than an act of humanity to give it a public examination. If the new doctrine is not truth, it is a dangerous, a deadly error. If it is a mere illusion, and acquires the same degree of influence that we have often seen obtained by other illusions, there is not one of my audience who may not have occasion to deplore the fatal credulity which listened to its promises.

I shall therefore undertake a sober examination of its principles, its facts, and some points of its history. The limited time at my disposal requires me to condense as much as possible what I have to say, but I shall endeavor to be plain and direct in expressing it. Not one statement shall be made which cannot be supported by unimpeachable reference: not one word shall be uttered which I am not as willing to print as to speak. I have no quibbles to utter, and I shall stoop to answer none; but, with full faith in the sufficiency of a plain statement of facts and reasons, I submit the subject to the discernment of my audience.

The question may be asked in the outset,—Have you submitted the doctrines you are professing to examine to the test of long-repeated and careful experiment; have you tried to see whether they were true or not? To this I answer, that it is abundantly evident, from what has often happened, that it would be of no manner of use for me to allege the results of any experiments I might have instituted. Again and again have

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the most explicit statements been made by the most competent persons of the utter failure of all their trials, and there were the same abundant explanations offered as used to be for the Unguentum Armarium and the Metallic Tractors. I could by no possibility perform any experiments the result of which could not be easily explained away so as to be of no conclusive significance. Besides, as arguments in favor of Homoeopathy are constantly addressed to the public in journals, pamphlets, and even lectures, by inexperienced dilettanti, the same channel must be open to all its opponents.

It is necessary, for the sake of those to whom the whole subject may be new, to give in the smallest possible compass the substance of the Homoeopathic Doctrine. Samuel Hahnemann, its founder, is a German physician, now living in Paris, [Hahnemann died in 1843.] at the age of eighty-seven years. In 1796 he published the first paper containing his peculiar notions; in 1805 his first work on the subject; in 1810 his somewhat famous "Organon of the Healing Art;" the next year what he called the "Pure Materia Medica;" and in 1828 his last work, the "Treatise on Chronic Diseases." He has therefore been writing at intervals on his favorite subject for nearly half a century.

The one great doctrine which constitutes the basis of Homoeopathy as a system is expressed by the Latin aphorism,

"SimiliaSIBILIBUS curantur,"

or like cures like, that is, diseases are cured by agents capable of producing symptoms resembling those found in the disease under treatment. A disease for Hahnemann consists essentially in a group of symptoms. The proper medicine for any disease is the one which is capable of producing a similar group of symptoms when given to a healthy person.

It is of course necessary to know what are the trains of symptoms excited by different substances, when administered to persons in health, if any such can be shown to exist. Hahnemann and his disciples give catalogues of the symptoms which they affirm were produced upon themselves or others by a large number of drugs which they submitted to experiment.

The second great fact which Hahnemann professes to have established is the efficacy of medicinal substances reduced to a wonderful degree of minuteness or dilution. The following account of his mode of preparing his medicines is from his work on Chronic Diseases, which has not, I believe, yet been translated into English. A grain of the substance, if it is solid, a drop if it is liquid, is to be added to about a third part of one hundred grains of sugar of milk in an unglazed porcelain capsule which has had the polish removed from the lower part of its cavity by rubbing it with wet sand; they are to be mingled for an instant with a bone or horn spatula, and then rubbed together for six

minutes; then the mass is to be scraped together from the mortar and pestle, which is to take four

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minutes; then to be again rubbed for six minutes. Four minutes are then to be devoted to scraping the powder into a heap, and the second third of the hundred grains of sugar of milk to be added. Then they are to be stirred an instant and rubbed six minutes,—again to be scraped together four minutes and forcibly rubbed six; once more scraped together for four minutes, when the last third of the hundred grains of sugar of milk is to be added and mingled by stirring with the spatula; six minutes of forcible rubbing, four of scraping together, and six more (positively the last six) of rubbing, finish this part of the process.

Every grain of this powder contains the hundredth of a grain of the medicinal substance mingled with the sugar of milk. If, therefore, a grain of the powder just prepared is mingled with another hundred grains of sugar of milk, and the process just described repeated, we shall have a powder of which every grain contains the hundredth of the hundredth, or the ten thousandth part of a grain of the medicinal substance. Repeat the same process with the same quantity of fresh sugar of milk, and every grain of your powder will contain the millionth of a grain of the medicinal substance. When the powder is of this strength, it is ready to employ in the further solutions and dilutions to be made use of in practice.

A grain of the powder is to be taken, a hundred drops of alcohol are to be poured on it, the vial is to be slowly turned for a few minutes, until the powder is dissolved, and two shakes are to be given to it. On this point I will quote Hahnemann's own words. "A long experience and multiplied observations upon the sick lead me within the last few years to prefer giving only two shakes to medicinal liquids, whereas I formerly used to give ten." The process of dilution is carried on in the same way as the attenuation of the powder was done; each successive dilution with alcohol reducing the medicine to a hundredth part of the quantity of that which preceded it. In this way the dilution of the original millionth of a grain of medicine contained in the grain of powder operated on is carried successively to the billionth, trillionth, quadrillionth, quintillionth, and very often much higher fractional divisions. A dose of any of these medicines is a minute fraction of a drop, obtained by moistening with them one or more little globules of sugar, of which Hahnemann says it takes about two hundred to weigh a grain.

As an instance of the strength of the medicines prescribed by Hahnemann, I will mention carbonate of lime. He does not employ common chalk, but prefers a little portion of the friable part of an oystershell. Of this substance, carried to the sextillionth degree, so much as one or two globules of the size mentioned can convey is a common dose. But for persons of very delicate nerves it is proper that the dilution should be carried to the decillionth degree. That is, an important medicinal effect is to be expected from the two hundredth or hundredth part of the millionth of the millionth of the millionth of the millionth of the millionth of the millionth of a grain of oyster-shell. This is only the tenth degree of

potency, but some of his disciples profess to have obtained palpable effects from “much higher dilutions.”

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The third great doctrine of Hahnemann is the following. Seven eighths at least of all chronic diseases are produced by the existence in the system of that infectious disorder known in the language of science by the appellation of *psora*, but to the less refined portion of the community by the name of *itch*. In the words of Hahnemann's "Organon," "This Psora is the sole true and fundamental cause that produces all the other countless forms of disease, which, under the names of nervous debility, hysteria, hypochondriasis, insanity, melancholy, idiocy, madness, epilepsy, and spasms of all kinds, softening of the bones, or rickets, scoliosis and cyphosis, caries, cancer, fungua haematodes, gout, —yellow jaundice and cyanosis, dropsy,—"

["The degrees of *dilution* must not be confounded with those of *potency*. Their relations may be seen by this table:

1st dilution,—One hundredth of a drop or grain.

2d " One ten thousandth.

3d " One millionth, marked *i*.

4th " One hundred millionth.

5th " One ten thousand millionth.

6th " One million millionth, or one billionth, marked *ii*.

7th " One hundred billionth.

8th " One ten thousand billionth.

9th " One million billionth, or one trillionth, marked *iii*.

10th " One hundred trillionth.

11th " One ten thousand trillionth.

12th " One million trillionth, or one quadrillionth, marked
IV.,—and so on indefinitely.

The large figures denote the degrees of *potency*.]

"gastralgia, epistaxis, haemoptysis,—asthma and suppuration of the lungs,—megrin, deafness, cataract and amaurosis,—paralysis, loss of sense, pains of every kind, *etc.*, appear in our pathology as so many peculiar, distinct, and independent diseases."

For the last three centuries, if the same authority may be trusted, under the influence of the more refined personal habits which have prevailed, and the application of various external remedies which repel the affection from the skin; Psora has revealed itself in these numerous forms of internal disease, instead of appearing, as in former periods, under the aspect of an external malady.

These are the three cardinal doctrines of Hahnemann, as laid down in those standard works of Homoeopathy, the “Organon” and the “Treatise on Chronic Diseases.”

Several other principles may be added, upon all of which he insists with great force, and which are very generally received by his disciples.

1. Very little power is allowed to the curative efforts of nature. Hahnemann goes so far as to say that no one has ever seen the simple efforts of nature effect the durable recovery of a patient from a chronic disease. In general, the Homoeopathist calls every recovery which happens under his treatment a cure.

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2. Every medicinal substance must be administered in a state of the most perfect purity, and uncombined with any other. The union of several remedies in a single prescription destroys its utility, and, according to the “Organon,” frequently adds a new disease.

3. A large number of substances commonly thought to be inert develop great medicinal powers when prepared in the manner already described; and a great proportion of them are ascertained to have specific antidotes in case their excessive effects require to be neutralized.

4. Diseases should be recognized, as far as possible, not by any of the common names imposed upon them, as fever or epilepsy, but as individual collections of symptoms, each of which differs from every other collection.

5. The symptoms of any complaint must be described with the most minute exactness, and so far as possible in the patient’s own words. To illustrate the kind of circumstances the patient is expected to record, I will mention one or two from the 313th page of the “Treatise on Chronic Diseases,”—being the first one at which I opened accidentally.

“After dinner, disposition to sleep; the patient winks.”

“After dinner, prostration and feeling of weakness (nine days after taking the remedy).”

This remedy was that same oyster-shell which is to be prescribed “fractions of the sextillionth or decillionth degree.” According to Hahnemann, the action of a single dose of the size mentioned does not fully display itself in some cases until twenty-four or even thirty days after it is taken, and in such instances has not exhausted its good effects until towards the fortieth or fiftieth day,—before which time it would be absurd and injurious to administer a new remedy.

So much for the doctrines of Hahnemann, which have been stated without comment, or exaggeration of any of their features, very much as any adherent of his opinions might have stated them, if obliged to compress them into so narrow a space.

Does Hahnemann himself represent Homoeopathy as it now exists? He certainly ought to be its best representative, after having created it, and devoted his life to it for half a century. He is spoken of as the great physician of the time, in most, if not all Homoeopathic works. If he is not authority on the subject of his own doctrines, who is? So far as I am aware, not one tangible discovery in the so-called science has ever been ascribed to any other observer; at least, no general principle or law, of consequence enough to claim any prominence in Homoeopathic works, has ever been pretended to have originated with any of his illustrious disciples. He is one of the only two Homoeopathic writers with whom, as I shall mention, the Paris publisher will have anything to do upon his own account. The other is Jahr, whose Manual is little more than a catalogue of symptoms and remedies. If any persons choose to reject

Hahnemann as not in the main representing Homoeopathy, if they strike at his authority, if they wink out of sight his deliberate and formally announced results, it is an act of suicidal rashness; for upon his sagacity and powers of observation, and experience, as embodied in his works, and especially in his *Materia Medica*, repose the foundations of Homoeopathy as a practical system.

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So far as I can learn from the conflicting statements made upon the subject, the following is the present condition of belief.

1. All of any note agree that the law Similia similibus is the only fundamental principle in medicine. Of course if any man does not agree to this the name Homoeopathist can no longer be applied to him with propriety.
2. The belief in and employment of the infinitesimal doses is general, and in some places universal, among the advocates of Homoeopathy; but a distinct movement has been made in Germany to get rid of any restriction to the use of these doses, and to employ medicines with the same license as other practitioners.
3. The doctrine of the origin of most chronic diseases in Psora, notwithstanding Hahnemann says it cost him twelve years of study and research to establish the fact and its practical consequences, has met with great neglect and even opposition from very many of his own disciples.

It is true, notwithstanding, that, throughout most of their writings which I have seen, there runs a prevailing tone of great deference to Hahnemann's opinions, a constant reference to his authority, a general agreement with the minor points of his belief, and a pretence of harmonious union in a common faith. [Those who will take the trouble to look over Hull's Translation of Jahr's Manual may observe how little comparative space is given to remedies resting upon any other authority than that of Hahnemann.]

Many persons, and most physicians and scientific men, would be satisfied with the statement of these doctrines, and examine them no further. They would consider it vastly more probable that any observer in so fallacious and difficult a field of inquiry as medicine had been led into error, or walked into it of his own accord, than that such numerous and extraordinary facts had really just come to light. They would feel a right to exercise the same obduracy towards them as the French Institute is in the habit of displaying when memoirs or models are offered to it relating to the squaring of the circle or perpetual motion; which it is the rule to pass over without notice. They would feel as astronomers and natural philosophers must have felt when, some half a dozen years ago, an unknown man came forward, and asked for an opportunity to demonstrate to Arago and his colleagues that the moon and planets were at a distance of a little more than a hundred miles from the earth. And so they would not even look into Homoeopathy, though all its advocates should exclaim in the words of Mr. Benjamin Douglass Perkins, vender of the Metallic Tractors, that "On all discoveries there are persons who, without descending to any inquiry into the truth, pretend to know, as it were by intuition, that newly asserted facts are founded in the grossest errors." And they would lay their heads upon their pillows with a perfectly clear conscience, although they were assured that they were behaving in the same way that people of old did towards Harvey, Galileo, and Copernicus, the identical great names which were invoked by Mr. Benjamin Douglass Perkins.

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But experience has shown that the character of these assertions is not sufficient to deter many, from examining their claims to belief. I therefore lean but very slightly on the extravagance and extreme apparent singularity of their pretensions. I might have omitted them, but on the whole it seemed more just to the claims of my argument to suggest the vast complication of improbabilities involved in the statements enumerated. Every one must of course judge for himself as to the weight of these objections, which are by no means brought forward as a proof of the extravagance of Homoeopathy, but simply as entitled to a brief consideration before the facts of the case are submitted to our scrutiny.

The three great asserted discoveries of Hahnemann are entirely unconnected with and independent of each other. Were there any natural relation between them it would seem probable enough that the discovery of the first would have led to that of the others. But assuming it to be a fact that diseases are cured by remedies capable of producing symptoms like their own, no manifest relation exists between this fact and the next assertion, namely, the power of the infinitesimal doses. And allowing both these to be true, neither has the remotest affinity to the third new doctrine, that which declares seven eighths of all chronic diseases to be owing to Psora.

This want of any obvious relation between Hahnemann's three cardinal doctrines appears to be self-evident upon inspection. But if, as is often true with his disciples, they prefer the authority of one of their own number, I will refer them to Dr. Trinks's paper on the present state of Homoeopathy in Europe, with which, of course, they are familiar, as his name is mentioned as one of the most prominent champions of their faith, in their American official organ. It would be a fact without a parallel in the history, not merely of medicine, but of science, that three such unconnected and astonishing discoveries, each of them a complete revolution of all that ages of the most varied experience had been taught to believe, should spring full formed from the brain of a single individual.

Let us look a moment at the first of his doctrines. Improbable though it may seem to some, there is no essential absurdity involved in the proposition that diseases yield to remedies capable of producing like symptoms. There are, on the other hand, some analogies which lend a degree of plausibility to the statement. There are well-ascertained facts, known from the earliest periods of medicine, showing that, under certain circumstances, the very medicine which, from its known effects, one would expect to aggravate the disease, may contribute to its relief. I may be permitted to allude, in the most general way, to the case in which the spontaneous efforts of an overtasked stomach are quieted by the agency of a drug which that organ refuses to entertain upon any terms. But that every cure

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ever performed by medicine should have been founded upon this principle, although without the knowledge of a physician; that the Homoeopathic axiom is, as Hahnemann asserts, "the sole law of nature in therapeutics," a law of which nothing more than a transient glimpse ever presented itself to the innumerable host of medical observers, is a dogma of such sweeping extent, and pregnant novelty, that it demands a corresponding breadth and depth of unquestionable facts to cover its vast pretensions.

So much ridicule has been thrown upon the pretended powers of the minute doses that I shall only touch upon this point for the purpose of conveying, by illustrations, some shadow of ideas far transcending the powers of the imagination to realize. It must be remembered that these comparisons are not matters susceptible of dispute, being founded on simple arithmetical computations, level to the capacity of any intelligent schoolboy. A person who once wrote a very small pamphlet made some show of objecting to calculations of thus kind, on the ground that the highest dilutions could easily be made with a few ounces of alcohol. But he should have remembered that at every successive dilution he lays aside or throws away ninety-nine hundredths of the fluid on which he is operating, and that, although he begins with a drop, he only prepares a millionth, billionth, trillionth, and similar fractions of it, all of which, added together, would constitute but a vastly minute portion of the drop with which he began. But now let us suppose we take one single drop of the Tincture of Camomile, and that the whole of this were to be carried through the common series of dilutions.

A calculation nearly like the following was made by Dr. Panvini, and may be readily followed in its essential particulars by any one who chooses.

For the first dilution it would take 100 drops of alcohol.

For the second dilution it would take 10;000 drops, or about a pint.

For the third dilution it would take 100 pints.

For the fourth dilution it would take 10,000 pints, or more than 1,000 gallons, and so on to the ninth dilution, which would take ten billion gallons, which he computed would fill the basin of Lake Agnano, a body of water two miles in circumference. The twelfth dilution would of course fill a million such lakes. By the time the seventeenth degree of dilution should be reached, the alcohol required would equal in quantity the waters of ten thousand Adriatic seas. Trifling errors must be expected, but they are as likely to be on one side as the other, and any little matter like Lake Superior or the Caspian would be but a drop in the bucket.

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Swallowers of globules, one of your little pellets, moistened in the mingled waves of one million lakes of alcohol, each two miles in circumference, with which had been blended that one drop of Tincture of Camomile, would be of precisely the strength recommended for that medicine in your favorite Jahr's Manual, "against the most sudden, frightful, and fatal diseases!" [In the French edition of 1834, the proper doses of the medicines are mentioned, and Camomile is marked IV. Why are the doses omitted in Hull's Translation, except in three instances out of the whole two hundred remedies, notwithstanding the promise in the preface that "some remarks upon the doses used may be found at the head of each medicine"? Possibly because it makes no difference whether they are employed in one Homoeopathic dose or another; but then it is very singular that such precise directions were formerly given in the same work, and that Hahnemann's "experience" should have led him to draw the nice distinctions we have seen in a former part of this Lecture (p. 44).]

And proceeding on the common data, I have just made a calculation which shows that this single drop of Tincture of Camomile, given in the quantity ordered by Jahr's Manual, would have supplied every individual of the whole human family, past and present, with more than five billion doses each, the action of each dose lasting about four days.

Yet this is given only at the quadrillionth, or fourth degree of potency, and various substances are frequently administered at the decillionth or tenth degree, and occasionally at still higher attenuations with professed medicinal results. Is there not in this as great an exception to all the hitherto received laws of nature as in the miracle of the loaves and fishes? Ask this question of a Homoeopathist, and he will answer by referring to the effects produced by a very minute portion of vaccine matter, or the extraordinary diffusion of odors. But the vaccine matter is one of those substances called morbid poisons, of which it is a peculiar character to multiply themselves, when introduced into the system, as a seed does in the soil. Therefore the hundredth part of a grain of the vaccine matter, if no more than this is employed, soon increases in quantity, until, in the course of about a week, it is a grain or more, and can be removed in considerable drops. And what is a very curious illustration of Homoeopathy, it does not produce its most characteristic effects until it is already in sufficient quantity not merely to be visible, but to be collected for further use. The thoughtlessness which can allow an inference to be extended from a product of disease possessing this susceptibility of multiplication when conveyed into the living body, to substances of inorganic origin, such as silex or sulphur, would be capable of arguing that a pebble may produce a mountain, because an acorn can become a forest.

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As to the analogy to be found between the alleged action of the infinitely attenuated doses, and the effects of some odorous substances which possess the extraordinary power of diffusing their imponderable emanations through a very wide space, however it may be abused in argument, and rapidly as it evaporates on examination, it is not like that just mentioned, wholly without meaning. The fact of the vast diffusion of some odors, as that of musk or the rose, for instance, has long been cited as the most remarkable illustration of the divisibility of matter, and the nicety of the senses. And if this were compared with the effects of a very minute dose of morphia on the whole system, or the sudden and fatal impression of a single drop of prussic acid, or, with what comes still nearer, the poisonous influence of an atmosphere impregnated with invisible malaria, we should find in each of these examples an evidence of the degree to which nature, in some few instances, concentrates powerful qualities in minute or subtile forms of matter. But if a man comes to me with a pestle and mortar in his hand, and tells me that he will take a little speck of some substance which nobody ever thought to have any smell at all, as, for instance, a grain of chalk or of charcoal, and that he will, after an hour or two of rubbing and scraping, develop in a portion of it an odor which, if the whole grain were used, would be capable of pervading an apartment, a house, a village, a province, an empire, nay, the entire atmosphere of this broad planet upon which we tread; and that from each of fifty or sixty substances he can in this way develop a distinct and hitherto unknown odor: and if he tries to show that all this is rendered quite reasonable by the analogy of musk and roses, I shall certainly be justified in considering him incapable of reasoning, and beyond the reach of my argument. What if, instead of this, he professes to develop new and wonderful medicinal powers from the same speck of chalk or charcoal, in such proportions as would impregnate every pond, lake, river, sea, and ocean of our globe, and appeals to the same analogy in favor of the probability of his assertion.

All this may be true, notwithstanding these considerations. But so extraordinary would be the fact, that a single atom of substances which a child might swallow without harm by the teaspoonful could, by an easy mechanical process, be made to develop such inconceivable powers, that nothing but the strictest agreement of the most cautious experimenters, secured by every guaranty that they were honest and faithful, appealing to repeated experiments in public, with every precaution to guard against error, and with the most plain and peremptory results, should induce us to lend any credence to such pretensions.

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The third doctrine, that Psora, the other name of which you remember, is the cause of the great majority of chronic diseases, is a startling one, to say the least. That an affection always recognized as a very unpleasant personal companion, but generally regarded as a mere temporary incommodity, readily yielding to treatment in those unfortunate enough to suffer from it, and hardly known among the better classes of society, should be all at once found out by a German physician to be the great scourge of mankind, the cause of their severest bodily and mental calamities, cancer and consumption, idiocy and madness, must excite our unqualified surprise. And when the originator of this singular truth ascribes, as in the page now open before me, the declining health of a disgraced courtier, the chronic malady of a bereaved mother, even the melancholy of the love-sick and slighted maiden, to nothing more nor less than the insignificant, unseemly, and almost unmentionable *itch*, does it not seem as if the very soil upon which we stand were dissolving into chaos, over the earthquake-heaving of discovery?

And when one man claims to have established these three independent truths, which are about as remote from each other as the discovery of the law of gravitation, the invention of printing, and that of the mariner's compass, unless the facts in their favor are overwhelming and unanimous, the question naturally arises, Is not this man deceiving himself, or trying to deceive others?

I proceed to examine the proofs of the leading ideas of Hahnemann and his school.

In order to show the axiom, *similia similibus curantur* (or like is cured by like), to be the basis of the healing art,—“the sole law of nature in therapeutics,”—it is necessary,

1. That the symptoms produced by drugs in healthy persons should be faithfully studied and recorded.
 2. That drugs should be shown to be always capable of curing those diseases most like their own symptoms.
 3. That remedies should be shown not to cure diseases when they do not produce symptoms resembling those presented in these diseases.
1. The effects of drugs upon healthy persons have been studied by Hahnemann and his associates. Their results were made known in his *Materia Medica*, a work in three large volumes in the French translation, published about eight years ago. The mode of experimentation appears to have been, to take the substance on trial, either in common or minute doses, and then to set down every little sensation, every little movement of mind or body, which occurred within many succeeding hours or days, as being produced solely by the substance employed. When I have enumerated some of the symptoms attributed to the power of the drugs taken, you will be able to judge how much value is to be ascribed to the assertions of such observers.

The following list was taken literally from the *Materia Medica* of Hahnemann, by my friend M. Vernois, for whose accuracy I am willing to be responsible. He has given seven pages of these symptoms, not selected, but taken at hazard from the French translation of the work. I shall be very brief in my citations.

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“After stooping some time, sense of painful weight about the head upon resuming the erect posture.”

“An itching, tickling sensation at the outer edge of the palm of the left hand, which obliges the person to scratch.” The medicine was acetate of lime, and as the action of the globule taken is said to last twenty-eight days, you may judge how many such symptoms as the last might be supposed to happen.

Among the symptoms attributed to muriatic acid are these: a catarrh, sighing, pimples; “after having written a long time with the back a little bent over, violent pain in the back and shoulder-blades, as if from a strain,”—“dreams which are not remembered,—disposition to mental dejection,—wakefulness before and after midnight.”

I might extend this catalogue almost indefinitely. I have not cited these specimens with any view to exciting a sense of the ridiculous, which many others of those mentioned would not fail to do, but to show that the common accidents of sensation, the little bodily inconveniences to which all of us are subject, are seriously and systematically ascribed to whatever medicine may have been exhibited, even in the minute doses I have mentioned, whole days or weeks previously.

To these are added all the symptoms ever said by anybody, whether deserving confidence or not, as I shall hereafter illustrate, to be produced by the substance in question.

The effects of sixty-four medicinal substances, ascertained by one or both of these methods, are enumerated in the *Materia Medica* of Hahnemann, which may be considered as the basis of practical Homoeopathy. In the *Manual of Jahr*, which is the common guide, so far as I know, of those who practise Homoeopathy in these regions, two hundred remedies are enumerated, many of which, however, have never been employed in practice. In at least one edition there were no means of distinguishing those which had been tried upon the sick from the others. It is true that marks have been added in the edition employed here, which serve to distinguish them; but what are we to think of a standard practical author on *Materia Medica*, who at one time omits to designate the proper doses of his remedies, and at another to let us have any means of knowing whether a remedy has ever been tried or not, while he is recommending its employment in the most critical and threatening diseases?

I think that, from what I have shown of the character of Hahnemann's experiments, it would be a satisfaction to any candid inquirer to know whether other persons, to whose assertions he could look with confidence, confirm these pretended facts. Now there are many individuals, long and well known to the scientific world, who have tried these experiments upon healthy subjects, and utterly deny that their effects have at all corresponded to Hahnemann's assertions.

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I will take, for instance, the statements of Andral (and I am not referring to his well-known public experiments in his hospital) as to the result of his own trials. This distinguished physician is Professor of Medicine in the School of Paris, and one of the most widely known and valued authors upon practical and theoretical subjects the profession can claim in any country. He is a man of great kindness of character, a most liberal eclectic by nature and habit, of unquestioned integrity, and is called, in the leading article of the first number of the "Homoeopathic Examiner," "an eminent and very enlightened allopathist." Assisted by a number of other persons in good health, he experimented on the effects of cinchona, aconite, sulphur, arnica, and the other most highly extolled remedies. His experiments lasted a year, and he stated publicly to the Academy of Medicine that they never produced the slightest appearance of the symptoms attributed to them. The results of a man like this, so extensively known as one of the most philosophical and candid, as well as brilliant of instructors, and whose admirable abilities and signal liberality are generally conceded, ought to be of great weight in deciding the question.

M. Double, a well-known medical writer and a physician of high standing in Paris, had occasion so long ago as 1801, before he had heard of Homoeopathy, to make experiments upon Cinchona, or Peruvian bark. He and several others took the drug in every kind of dose for four months, and the fever it is pretended by Hahnemann to excite never was produced.

M. Bonnet, President of the Royal Society of Medicine of Bordeaux, had occasion to observe many soldiers during the Peninsular War, who made use of Cinchona as a preservative against different diseases, but he never found it to produce the pretended paroxysms.

If any objection were made to evidence of this kind, I would refer to the express experiments on many of the Homoeopathic substances, which were given to healthy persons with every precaution as to diet and regimen, by M. Louis Fleury, without being followed by the slightest of the pretended consequences. And let me mention as a curious fact, that the same quantity of arsenic given to one animal in the common form of the unprepared powder, and to another after having been rubbed up into six hundred globules, offered no particular difference of activity in the two cases.

This is a strange contradiction to the doctrine of the development of what they call dynamic power, by means of friction and subdivision.

In 1835 a public challenge was offered to the best known Homoeopathic physician in Paris to select any ten substances asserted to produce the most striking effects; to prepare them himself; to choose one by lot without knowing which of them he had taken, and try it upon himself or any intelligent and devoted Homoeopathist, and, waiting his own time, to come forward and tell what substance had been employed.

The challenge was at first accepted, but the acceptance retracted before the time of trial arrived.

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From all this I think it fair to conclude that the catalogues of symptoms attributed in Homoeopathic works to the influence of various drugs upon healthy persons are not entitled to any confidence.

2. It is necessary to show, in the next place, that medicinal substances are always capable of curing diseases most like their own symptoms. For facts relating to this question we must look to two sources; the recorded experience of the medical profession in general, and the results of trials made according to Homoeopathic principles, and capable of testing the truth of the doctrine.

No person, that I am aware of, has ever denied that in some cases there exists a resemblance between the effects of a remedy and the symptoms of diseases in which it is beneficial. This has been recognized, as Hahnemann himself has shown, from the time of Hippocrates. But according to the records of the medical profession, as they have been hitherto interpreted, this is true of only a very small proportion of useful remedies. Nor has it ever been considered as an established truth that the efficacy of even these few remedies was in any definite ratio to their power of producing symptoms more or less like those they cured.

Such was the state of opinion when Hahnemann came forward with the proposition that all the cases of successful treatment found in the works of all preceding medical writers were to be ascribed solely to the operation of the Homoeopathic principle, which had effected the cure, although without the physician's knowledge that this was the real secret. And strange as it may seem, he was enabled to give such a degree of plausibility to this assertion, that any person not acquainted somewhat with medical literature, not quite familiar, I should rather say, with the relative value of medical evidence, according to the sources whence it is derived, would be almost frightened into the belief, at seeing the pages upon pages of Latin names he has summoned as his witnesses.

It has hitherto been customary, when examining the writings of authors of preceding ages, upon subjects as to which they were less enlightened than ourselves, and which they were very liable to misrepresent, to exercise some little discretion; to discriminate, in some measure, between writers deserving confidence and those not entitled to it. But there is not the least appearance of any such delicacy on the part of Hahnemann. A large majority of the names of old authors he cites are wholly unknown to science. With some of them I have been long acquainted, and I know that their accounts of diseases are no more to be trusted than their contemporary Ambroise Pare's stories of mermen, and similar absurdities. But if my judgment is rejected, as being a prejudiced one, I can refer to Cullen, who mentioned three of Hahnemann's authors in one sentence, as being "not necessarily bad authorities; but certainly such when they delivered very improbable events;" and as this was said

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more than half a century ago, it could not have had any reference to Hahnemann. But although not the slightest sign of discrimination is visible in his quotations,—although for him a handful of chaff from Schenck is all the same thing as a measure of wheat from Morgagni,—there is a formidable display of authorities, and an abundant proof of ingenious researches to be found in each of the great works of Hahnemann with which I am familiar. [Some painful surmises might arise as to the erudition of Hahnemann's English Translator, who makes two individuals of "Zacutus, Lucitanus," as well as respecting that of the conductors of an American Homoeopathic periodical, who suffer the name of the world-renowned Cardanus to be spelt Cardamus in at least three places, were not this gross ignorance of course attributable only to the printer.]

It is stated by Dr. Leo-Wolf, that Professor Joerg, of Leipsic, has proved many of Hahnemann's quotations from old authors to be adulterate and false. What particular instances he has pointed out I have no means of learning. And it is probably wholly impossible on this side of the Atlantic, and even in most of the public libraries of Europe, to find anything more than a small fraction of the innumerable obscure publications which the neglect of grocers and trunkmakers has spared to be ransacked by the all-devouring genius of Homoeopathy. I have endeavored to verify such passages as my own library afforded me the means of doing. For some I have looked in vain, for want, as I am willing to believe, of more exact references. But this I am able to affirm, that, out of the very small number which I have been able, to trace back to their original authors, I have found two to be wrongly quoted, one of them being a gross misrepresentation.

The first is from the ancient Roman author, Caelius Aurelianus; the second from the venerable folio of Forestus. Hahnemann uses the following expressions,—if he is not misrepresented in the English Translation of the 'Organon': "Asclepiades on one occasion cured an inflammation of the brain by administering a small quantity of wine." After correcting the erroneous reference of the Translator, I can find no such case alluded to in the chapter. But Caelius Aurelianus mentions two modes of treatment employed by Asclepiades, into both of which the use of wine entered, as being "in the highest degree irrational and dangerous." [Caelius Aurel. De Morb. Acut. et Chron. lib. I. cap. xv. not xvi. Amsterdam. Wetstein, 1755.]

In speaking of the oil of anise-seed, Hahnemann says that Forestus observed violent colic caused by its administration. But, as the author tells the story, a young man took, by the counsel of a surgeon, an acrid and virulent medicine, the name of which is not given, which brought on a most cruel fit of the gripes and colic. After this another surgeon was called, who gave him oil of anise-seed and wine, "which increased his suffering." [Observ. et Curat. Med. lib. XXI obs. xiii. Frankfort, 1614.] Now if this was the Homoeopathic remedy, as Hahnemann pretends, it might be a fair question why the young man was not cured by it. But it is a much graver question why a man who has

shrewdness and learning enough to go so far after his facts, should think it right to treat them with such astonishing negligence or such artful unfairness.

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Even if every word he had pretended to take from his old authorities were to be found in them, even if the authority of every one of these authors were beyond question, the looseness with which they are used to prove whatever Hahnemann chooses is beyond the bounds of credibility. Let me give one instance to illustrate the character of this man's mind. Hahnemann asserts, in a note annexed to the 110th paragraph of the "Organon," that the smell of the rose will cause certain persons to faint. And he says in the text that substances which produce peculiar effects of this nature on particular constitutions cure the same symptoms in people in general. Then in another note to the same paragraph he quotes the following fact from one of the last sources one would have looked to for medical information, the Byzantine Historians.

"It was by these means (i.e. Homoeopathically) that the Princess Eudisia with rose-water restored a person who had fainted!"

Is it possible that a man who is guilty of such pedantic folly as this,—a man who can see a confirmation of his doctrine in such a recovery as this,—a recovery which is happening every day, from a breath of air, a drop or two of water, untying a bonnet-string, loosening a stay-lace, and which can hardly help happening, whatever is done, —is it possible that a man, of whose pages, not here and there one, but hundreds upon hundreds are loaded with such trivialities, is the Newton, the Columbus, the Harvey of the nineteenth century!

The whole process of demonstration he employs is this. An experiment is instituted with some drug upon one or more healthy persons. Everything that happens for a number of days or weeks is, as we have seen, set down as an effect of the medicine. Old volumes are then ransacked promiscuously, and every morbid sensation or change that anybody ever said was produced by the drug in question is added to the list of symptoms. By one or both of these methods, each of the sixty-four substances enumerated by Hahnemann is shown to produce a very large number of symptoms, the lowest in his scale being ninety-seven, and the highest fourteen hundred and ninety-one. And having made out this list respecting any drug, a catalogue which, as you may observe in any Homoeopathic manual, contains various symptoms belonging to every organ of the body, what can be easier than to find alleged cures in every medical author which can at once be attributed to the Homoeopathic principle; still more if the grave of extinguished credulity is called upon to give up its dead bones as living witnesses; and worst of all, if the monuments of the past are to be mutilated in favor of "the sole law of Nature in therapeutics"?

There are a few familiar facts of which great use has been made as an entering wedge for the Homoeopathic doctrine. They have been suffered to pass current so long that it is time they should be nailed to the counter, a little operation which I undertake, with perfect cheerfulness, to perform for them.



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The first is a supposed illustration of the Homoeopathic law found in the precept given for the treatment of parts which have been frozen, by friction with snow or similar means. But we deceive ourselves by names, if we suppose the frozen part to be treated by cold, and not by heat. The snow may even be actually warmer than the part to which it is applied. But even if it were at the same temperature when applied, it never did and never could do the least good to a frozen part, except as a mode of regulating the application of what? of heat. But the heat must be applied gradually, just as food must be given a little at a time to those perishing with hunger. If the patient were brought into a warm room, heat would be applied very rapidly, were not something interposed to prevent this, and allow its gradual admission. Snow or iced water is exactly what is wanted; it is not cold to the part; it is very possibly warm, on the contrary, for these terms are relative, and if it does not melt and let the heat in, or is not taken away, the part will remain frozen up until doomsday. Now the treatment of a frozen limb by heat, in large or small quantities, is not Homoeopathy.

The next supposed illustration of the Homoeopathic law is the alleged successful management of burns, by holding them to the fire. This is a popular mode of treating those burns which are of too little consequence to require any more efficacious remedy, and would inevitably get well of themselves, without any trouble being bestowed upon them. It produces a most acute pain in the part, which is followed by some loss of sensibility, as happens with the eye after exposure to strong light, and the ear after being subjected to very intense sounds. This is all it is capable of doing, and all further notions of its efficacy must be attributed merely to the vulgar love of paradox. If this example affords any comfort to the Homoeopathist, it seems as cruel to deprive him of it as it would be to convince the mistress of the smoke-jack or the flatiron that the fire does not literally "draw the fire out," which is her hypothesis.

But if it were true that frost-bites were cured by cold and burns by heat, it would be subversive, so far as it went, of the great principle of Homoeopathy.

For you will remember that this principle is that Like cures Like, and not that Same cures Same; that there is resemblance and not identity between the symptoms of the disease and those produced by the drug which cures it, and none have been readier to insist upon this distinction than the Homoeopathists themselves. For if Same cures Same, then every poison must be its own antidote,—which is neither a part of their theory nor their so-called experience. They have been asked often enough, why it was that arsenic could not cure the mischief which arsenic had caused, and why the infectious cause of small-pox did not remedy the disease it had produced, and then they were ready enough to see the distinction I have pointed out. O no! it was not the hair of the same dog, but only of one very much like him!

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A third instance in proof of the Homoeopathic law is sought for in the acknowledged efficacy of vaccination. And how does the law apply to this? It is granted by the advocates of Homoeopathy that there is a resemblance between the effects of the vaccine virus on a person in health and the symptoms of small-pox. Therefore, according to the rule, the vaccine virus will cure the small-pox, which, as everybody knows, is entirely untrue. But it prevents small-pox, say the Homoeopaths. Yes, and so does small-pox prevent itself from ever happening again, and we know just as much of the principle involved in the one case as in the other. For this is only one of a series of facts which we are wholly unable to explain. Small-pox, measles, scarlet-fever, hooping-cough, protect those who have them once from future attacks; but nettle-rash and catarrh and lung fever, each of which is just as Homoeopathic to itself as any one of the others, have no such preservative power. We are obliged to accept the fact, unexplained, and we can do no more for vaccination than for the rest.

I come now to the most directly practical point connected with the subject, namely,—

What is the state of the evidence as to the efficacy of the proper Homoeopathic treatment in the cure of diseases.

As the treatment adopted by the Homoeopaths has been almost universally by means of the infinitesimal doses, the question of their efficacy is thrown open, in common with that of the truth of their fundamental axiom, as both are tested in practice.

We must look for facts as to the actual working of Homoeopathy to three sources.

1. The statements of the unprofessional public.
2. The assertions of Homoeopathic practitioners.
3. The results of trials by competent and honest physicians, not pledged to the system.

I think, after what we have seen of medical facts, as they are represented by incompetent persons, we are disposed to attribute little value to all statements of wonderful cures, coming from those who have never been accustomed to watch the caprices of disease, and have not cooled down their young enthusiasm by the habit of tranquil observation. Those who know nothing of the natural progress of a malady, of its ordinary duration, of its various modes of terminating, of its liability to accidental complications, of the signs which mark its insignificance or severity, of what is to be expected of it when left to itself, of how much or how little is to be anticipated from remedies, those who know nothing or next to nothing of all these things, and who are in a great state of excitement from benevolence, sympathy, or zeal for a new medical discovery, can hardly be expected to be sound judges of facts which have misled so many sagacious men, who have spent their lives in the daily study and observation of them. I believe that, after having drawn the portrait of defunct Perkinism, with its

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five thousand printed cures, and its million and a half computed ones, its miracles blazoned about through America, Denmark, and England; after relating that forty years ago women carried the Tractors about in their pockets, and workmen could not make them fast enough for the public demand; and then showing you, as a curiosity, a single one of these instruments, an odd one of a pair, which I obtained only by a lucky accident, so utterly lost is the memory of all their wonderful achievements; I believe, after all this, I need not waste time in showing that medical accuracy is not to be looked for in the florid reports of benevolent associations, the assertions of illustrious patrons, the lax effusions of daily journals, or the effervescent gossip of the tea-table.

Dr. Hering, whose name is somewhat familiar to the champions of Homoeopathy, has said that “the new healing art is not to be judged by its success in isolated cases only, but according to its success in general, its innate truth, and the incontrovertible nature of its innate principles.”

We have seen something of “the incontrovertible nature of its innate principles,” and it seems probable, on the whole, that its success in general must be made up of its success in isolated cases. Some attempts have been made, however, to finish the whole matter by sweeping statistical documents, which are intended to prove its triumphant success over the common practice.

It is well known to those who have had the good fortune to see the “Homoeopathic Examiner,” that this journal led off, in its first number, with a grand display of everything the newly imported doctrine had to show for itself. It is well remarked, on the twenty-third page of this article, that “the comparison of bills of mortality among an equal number of sick, treated by divers methods, is a most poor and lame way to get at conclusions touching principles of the healing art.” In confirmation of which, the author proceeds upon the twenty-fifth page to prove the superiority of the Homoeopathic treatment of cholera, by precisely these very bills of mortality. Now, every intelligent physician is aware that the poison of cholera differed so much in its activity at different times and, places, that it was next to impossible to form any opinion as to the results of treatment, unless every precaution was taken to secure the most perfectly corresponding conditions in the patients treated, and hardly even then. Of course, then, a Russian Admiral, by the name of Mordvinov, backed by a number of so-called physicians practising in Russian villages, is singularly competent to the task of settling the whole question of the utility of this or that kind of treatment; to prove that, if not more than eight and a half per cent. of those attacked with the disease perished, the rest owed their immunity to Hahnemann. I can remember when more than a hundred patients in a public institution were attacked with what, I doubt not, many Homoeopathic

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physicians (to say nothing of Homoeopathic admirals) would have called cholera, and not one of them died, though treated in the common way, and it is my firm belief that, if such a result had followed the administration of the omnipotent globules, it would have been in the mouth of every adept in Europe, from Quin of London to Spohr of Gandersheim. No longer ago than yesterday, in one of the most widely circulated papers of this city, there was published an assertion that the mortality in several Homoeopathic Hospitals was not quite five in a hundred, whereas, in what are called by the writer Allopathic Hospitals, it is said to be eleven in a hundred. An honest man should be ashamed of such an argumentum ad ignorantiam. The mortality of a hospital depends not merely on the treatment of the patients, but on the class of diseases it is in the habit of receiving, on the place where it is, on the season, and many other circumstances. For instance, there are many hospitals in the great cities of Europe that receive few diseases of a nature to endanger life, and, on the other hand, there are others where dangerous diseases are accumulated out of the common proportion. Thus, in the wards of Louis, at the Hospital of La Pitie, a vast number of patients in the last stages of consumption were constantly entering, to swell the mortality of that hospital. It was because he was known to pay particular attention to the diseases of the chest that patients laboring under those fatal affections to an incurable extent were so constantly coming in upon him. It is always a miserable appeal to the thoughtlessness of the vulgar, to allege the naked fact of the less comparative mortality in the practice of one hospital or of one physician than another, as an evidence of the superiority of their treatment. Other things being equal, it must always be expected that those institutions and individuals enjoying to the highest degree the confidence of the community will lose the largest proportion of their patients; for the simple reason that they will naturally be looked to by those suffering from the gravest class of diseases; that many, who know that they are affected with mortal disease, will choose to die under their care or shelter, while the subjects of trifling maladies, and merely troublesome symptoms, amuse themselves to any extent among the fancy practitioners. When, therefore, Dr. Mublenbein, as stated in the "Homoeopathic Examiner," and quoted in yesterday's "Daily Advertiser," asserts that the mortality among his patients is only one per cent. since he has practised Homoeopathy, whereas it was six per cent. when he employed the common mode of practice, I am convinced by this, his own statement, that the citizens of Brunswick, whenever they are seriously sick, take good care not to send for Dr. Muhlenbein!

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It is evidently impossible that I should attempt, within the compass of a single lecture, any detailed examination of the very numerous cases reported in the Homoeopathic Treatises and Journals. Having been in the habit of receiving the French "Archives of Homoeopathic Medicine" until the premature decease of that Journal, I have had the opportunity of becoming acquainted somewhat with the style of these documents, and experiencing whatever degree of conviction they were calculated to produce. Although of course I do not wish any value to be assumed for my opinion, such as it is, I consider that you are entitled to hear it. So far, then, as I am acquainted with the general character of the cases reported by the Homoeopathic physicians, they would for the most part be considered as wholly undeserving a place in any English, French, or American periodical of high standing, if, instead of favoring the doctrine they were intended to support, they were brought forward to prove the efficacy of any common remedy administered by any common practitioner. There are occasional exceptions to this remark; but the general truth of it is rendered probable by the fact that these cases are always, or almost always, written with the single object of showing the efficacy of the medicine used, or the skill of the practitioner, and it is recognized as a general rule that such cases deserve very little confidence. Yet they may sound well enough, one at a time, to those who are not fully aware of the fallacies of medical evidence. Let me state a case in illustration. Nobody doubts that some patients recover under every form of practice. Probably all are willing to allow that a large majority, for instance, ninety in a hundred, of such cases as a physician is called to in daily practice, would recover, sooner or later, with more or less difficulty, provided nothing were done to interfere seriously with the efforts of nature.

Suppose, then, a physician who has a hundred patients prescribes to each of them pills made of some entirely inert substance, as starch, for instance. Ninety of them get well, or if he chooses to use such language, he cures ninety of them. It is evident, according to the doctrine of chances, that there must be a considerable number of coincidences between the relief of the patient and the administration of the remedy. It is altogether probable that there will happen two or three very striking coincidences out of the whole ninety cases, in which it would seem evident that the medicine produced the relief, though it had, as we assumed, nothing to do with it. Now suppose that the physician publishes these cases, will they not have a plausible appearance of proving that which, as we granted at the outset, was entirely false? Suppose that instead of pills of starch he employs microscopic sugarplums, with the five' million billion trillionth part of a suspicion of aconite or pulsatilla, and then publishes his successful cases, through the leaden

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lips of the press, or the living ones of his female acquaintances,—does that make the impression a less erroneous one? But so it is that in Homoeopathic works and journals and gossip one can never, or next to never, find anything but successful cases, which might do very well as a proof of superior skill, did it not prove as much for the swindling advertisers whose certificates disgrace so many of our newspapers. How long will it take mankind to learn that while they listen to “the speaking hundreds and units,” who make the world ring with the pretended triumphs they have witnessed, the “dumb millions” of deluded and injured victims are paying the daily forfeit of their misplaced confidence!

I am sorry to see, also, that a degree of ignorance as to the natural course of diseases is often shown in these published cases, which, although it may not be detected by the unprofessional reader, conveys an unpleasant impression to those who are acquainted with the subject. Thus a young woman affected with jaundice is mentioned in the German “Annals of Clinical Homoeopathy” as having been cured in twenty-nine days by *pulsatilla* and *nux vomica*. Rummel, a well-known writer of the same school, speaks of curing a case of jaundice in thirty-four days by Homoeopathic doses of *pulsatilla*, *aconite*, and *cinchona*. I happened to have a case in my own household, a few weeks since, which lasted about ten days, and this was longer than I have repeatedly seen it in hospital practice, so that it was nothing to boast of.

Dr. Munneche of Lichtenburg in Saxony is called to a patient with sprained ankle who had been a fortnight under the common treatment. The patient gets well by the use of *arnica* in a little more than a month longer, and this extraordinary fact is published in the French “Archives of Homoeopathic Medicine.”

In the same Journal is recorded the case of a patient who with nothing more, so far as any proof goes, than influenza, gets down to her shop upon the sixth day.

And again, the cool way in which everything favorable in a case is set down by these people entirely to their treatment, may be seen in a case of croup reported in the “Homoeopathic Gazette” of Leipsic, in which leeches, blistering, inhalation of hot vapor, and powerful internal medicine had been employed, and yet the merit was all attributed to one drop of some Homoeopathic fluid.

I need not multiply these quotations, which illustrate the grounds of an opinion which the time does not allow me to justify more at length; other such cases are lying open before me; there is no end to them if more were wanted; for nothing is necessary but to look into any of the numerous broken-down Journals of Homoeopathy, the volumes of which may be found on the shelves of those curious in such matters.

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A number of public trials of Homoeopathy have been made in different parts of the world. Six of these are mentioned in the Manifesto of the "Homoeopathic Examiner." Now to suppose that any trial can absolutely silence people, would be to forget the whole experience of the past. Dr. Haygarth and Dr. Alderson could not stop the sale of the five-guinea Tractors, although they proved that they could work the same miracles with pieces of wood and tobacco-pipe. It takes time for truth to operate as well as Homoeopathic globules. Many persons thought the results of these trials were decisive enough of the nullity of the treatment; those who wish to see the kind of special pleading and evasion by which it is attempted to cover results which, stated by the "Homoeopathic Examiner" itself, look exceedingly like a miserable failure, may consult the opening flourish of that Journal. I had not the intention to speak of these public trials at all, having abundant other evidence on the point. But I think it best, on the whole, to mention two of them in a few words,—that instituted at Naples and that of Andral.

There have been few names in the medical profession, for the last half century, so widely known throughout the world of science as that of M. Esquirol, whose life was devoted to the treatment of insanity, and who was without a rival in that department of practical medicine. It is from an analysis communicated by him to the "Gazette Medicale de Paris" that I derive my acquaintance with the account of the trial at Naples by Dr. Panvini, physician to the Hospital della Pace. This account seems to be entirely deserving of credit. Ten patients were set apart, and not allowed to take any medicine at all,—much against the wish of the Homoeopathic physician. All of them got well, and of course all of them would have been claimed as triumphs if they had been submitted to the treatment. Six other slight cases (each of which is specified) got well under the Homoeopathic treatment, none of its asserted specific effects being manifested.

All the rest were cases of grave disease; and so far as the trial, which was interrupted about the fortieth day, extended, the patients grew worse, or received no benefit. A case is reported on the page before me of a soldier affected with acute inflammation in the chest, who took successively aconite, bryonia, nux vomica, and pulsatilla, and after thirty-eight days of treatment remained without any important change in his disease. The Homoeopathic physician who treated these patients was M. de Horatiis, who had the previous year been announcing his wonderful cures. And M. Esquirol asserted to the Academy of Medicine in 1835, that this M. de Horatiis, who is one of the prominent personages in the "Examiner's" Manifesto published in 1840, had subsequently renounced Homoeopathy. I may remark, by the way, that this same periodical, which is so very easy in explaining away the results of these trials, makes a mistake of only six years or a little more as to the time when this at Naples was instituted.

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M. Andral, the “eminent and very enlightened allopathist” of the “Homoeopathic Examiner,” made the following statement in March, 1835, to the Academy of Medicine: “I have submitted this doctrine to experiment; I can reckon at this time from one hundred and thirty to one hundred and forty cases, recorded with perfect fairness, in a great hospital, under the eye of numerous witnesses; to avoid every objection—I obtained my remedies of M. Guibourt, who keeps a Homoeopathic pharmacy, and whose strict exactness is well known; the regimen has been scrupulously observed, and I obtained from the sisters attached to the hospital a special regimen, such as Hahnemann orders. I was told, however, some months since, that I had not been faithful to all the rules of the doctrine. I therefore took the trouble to begin again; I have studied the practice of the Parisian Homoeopaths, as I had studied their books, and I became convinced that they treated their patients as I had treated mine, and I affirm that I have been as rigorously exact in the treatment as any other person.”

And he expressly asserts the entire nullity of the influence of all the Homoeopathic remedies tried by him in modifying, so far as he could observe, the progress or termination of diseases. It deserves notice that he experimented with the most boasted substances,—cinchona, aconite, mercury, bryonia, belladonna. Aconite, for instance, he says he administered in more than forty cases of that collection of feverish symptoms in which it exerts so much power, according to Hahnemann, and in not one of them did it have the slightest influence, the pulse and heat remaining as before.

These statements look pretty honest, and would seem hard to be explained away, but it is calmly said that he “did not know enough of the method to select the remedies with any tolerable precision.” [“Homoeopathic Examiner, vol. i. p. 22.]

“Nothing is left to the caprice of the physician.” (In a word, instead of being dependent upon blind chance, that there is an infallible law, guided by which; the physician *must* select the proper remedies.) [‘Ibid.,’ in a notice of Menzel’s paper.] Who are they that practice Homoeopathy, and say this of a man with the *Materia Medica* of Hahnemann lying before him? Who are they that send these same globules, on which he experimented, accompanied by a little book, into families, whose members are thought competent to employ them, when they deny any such capacity to a man whose life has been passed at the bedside of patients, the most prominent teacher in the first Medical Faculty in the world, the consulting physician of the King of France, and one of the most renowned practical writers, not merely of his nation, but of his age? I leave the quibbles by which such persons would try to creep out from under the crushing weight of these conclusions to the unfortunates who suppose that a reply is equivalent to an answer.

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Dr. Baillie, one of the physicians in the great Hotel Dieu of Paris, invited two Homoeopathic practitioners to experiment in his wards. One of these was Curie, now of London, whose works are on the counters of some of our bookstores, and probably in the hands of some of my audience. This gentleman, whom Dr. Baillie declares to be an enlightened man, and perfectly sincere in his convictions, brought his own medicines from the pharmacy which furnished Hahnemann himself, and employed them for four or five months upon patients in his ward, and with results equally unsatisfactory, as appears from Dr. Baillie's statement at a meeting of the Academy of Medicine. And a similar experiment was permitted by the Clinical Professor of the Hotel Dieu of Lyons, with the same complete failure.

But these are old and prejudiced practitioners. Very well, then take the statement of Dr. Fleury, a most intelligent young physician, who treated homoeopathically more than fifty patients, suffering from diseases which it was not dangerous to treat in this way, taking every kind of precaution as to regimen, removal of disturbing influences, and the state of the atmosphere, insisted upon by the most vigorous partisans of the doctrine, and found not the slightest effect produced by the medicines. And more than this, read nine of these cases, which he has published, as I have just done, and observe the absolute nullity of aconite, belladonna, and bryonia, against the symptoms over which they are pretended to exert such palpable, such obvious, such astonishing influences. In the view of these statements, it is impossible not to realize the entire futility of attempting to silence this asserted science by the flattest and most peremptory results of experiment. Were all the hospital physicians of Europe and America to devote themselves, for the requisite period, to this sole pursuit, and were their results to be unanimous as to the total worthlessness of the whole system in practice, this slippery delusion would slide through their fingers without the slightest discomposure, when, as they supposed, they had crushed every joint in its tortuous and trailing body.

3. I have said, that to show the truth of the Homoeopathic doctrine, as announced by Hahnemann, it would be necessary to show, in the third place, that remedies never cure diseases when they are not capable of producing similar symptoms! The burden of this somewhat comprehensive demonstration lying entirely upon the advocates of this doctrine, it may be left to their mature reflections.

It entered into my original plan to treat of the doctrine relating to Psora, or itch,—an almost insane conception, which I am glad to get rid of, for this is a subject one does not care to handle without gloves. I am saved this trouble, however, by finding that many of the disciples of Hahnemann, those disciples the very gospel of whose faith stands upon his word, make very light of his authority on this point, although he himself says, "It has cost me twelve years of study and research to trace out the source of this incredible number of chronic affections, to discover this great truth, which remained concealed from all my predecessors and contemporaries, to establish the basis of its demonstration, and find out, at the same time, the curative medicines that were fit to combat this hydra in all its different forms."

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But, in the face of all this, the following remarks are made by Wolff, of Dresden, whose essays, according to the editor of the "Homoeopathic Examiner," "represent the opinions of a large majority of Homoeopaths in Europe."

"It cannot be unknown to any one at all familiar with Homoeopathic literature, that Hahnemann's idea of tracing the large majority of chronic diseases to actual itch has met with the greatest opposition from Homoeopathic physicians themselves." And again, "If the Psoric theory has led to no proper schism, the reason is to be found in the fact that it is almost without any influence in practice."

We are told by Jahr, that Dr. Griesselich, "Surgeon to the Grand Duke of Baden," and a "distinguished" Homoeopathist, actually asked Hahnemann for the proof that chronic diseases, such as dropsy, for instance, never arise from any other cause than itch; and that, according to common report, the venerable sage was highly incensed (fort courrouce) with Dr. Hartmann, of Leipsic, another "distinguished" Homoeopathist, for maintaining that they certainly did arise from other causes.

And Dr. Fielitz, in the "Homoeopathic Gazette" of Leipsic, after saying, in a good-natured way, that Psora is the Devil in medicine, and that physicians are divided on this point into diabolists and exorcists, declares that, according to a remark of Hahnemann, the whole civilized world is affected with Psora. I must therefore disappoint any advocate of Hahnemann who may honor me with his presence, by not attacking a doctrine on which some of the disciples of his creed would be very happy to have its adversaries waste their time and strength. I will not meddle with this excrescence, which, though often used in time of peace, would be dropped, like the limb of a shellfish, the moment it was assailed; time is too precious, and the harvest of living extravagances nods too heavily to my sickle, that I should blunt it upon straw and stubble.

I will close the subject with a brief examination of some of the statements made in Homoeopathic works, and more particularly in the brilliant Manifesto of the "Examiner," before referred to. And first, it is there stated under the head of "Homoeopathic Literature," that "*Seven hundred* volumes have been issued from the press developing the peculiarities of the system, and many of them possessed of a scientific character that savans know well how to respect." If my assertion were proper evidence in the case, I should declare, that, having seen a good many of these publications, from the year 1834, when I bought the work of the Rev. Thomas Everest, [Dr. Curie speaks of this silly pamphlet as having been published in 1835.] to within a few weeks, when I received my last importation of Homoeopathic literature, I have found that all, with a very few exceptions, were stitched pamphlets varying from twenty or thirty pages to somewhat less than a hundred, and generally resembling each other as much as so many spelling-books.

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But not being evidence in the case, I will give you the testimony of Dr. Trinks, of Dresden, who flourishes on the fifteenth page of the same Manifesto as one of the most distinguished among the Homoeopathists of Europe. I translate the sentence literally from the "Archives de la Medecine Homoeopathique."

"The literature of Homoeopathy, if that honorable name must be applied to all kinds of book-making, has been degraded to the condition of the humblest servitude. Productions without talent, without spirit, without discrimination, flat and pitiful eulogies, exaggerations surpassing the limits of the most robust faith, invectives against such as dared to doubt the dogmas which had been proclaimed, or catalogues of remedies; of such materials is it composed! From distance to distance only, have appeared some memoirs useful to science or practice, which appear as so many green oases in the midst of this literary desert."

It is a very natural as well as a curious question to ask, What has been the success of Homoeopathy in the different countries of Europe, and what is its present condition?

The greatest reliance of the advocates of Homoeopathy is of course on Germany. We know very little of its medical schools, its medical doctrines, or its medical men, compared with those of England and France. And, therefore, when an intelligent traveller gives a direct account from personal inspection of the miserable condition of the Homoeopathic hospital at Leipsic, the first established in Europe, and the first on the list of the ever-memorable Manifesto, it is easy enough answer or elude the fact by citing various hard names of "distinguished" practitioners, which sound just as well to the uninformed public as if they were Meckel, or Tiedemann, or Langenbeck. Dr. Leo-Wolf, who, to be sure, is opposed to Homoeopathy, but who is a scholar, and ought to know something of his own countrymen, assures us that "Dr. Kopp is the only German Homoeopathist, if we can call him so, who has been distinguished as an author and practitioner before he examined this method." And Dr. Lee, the same gentleman in whose travels the paragraph relating to the Leipsic Hospital is to be found, says the same thing. And I will cheerfully expose myself to any impertinent remark which it might suggest, to assure my audience that I never heard or saw one authentic Homoeopathic name of any country in Europe, which I had ever heard mentioned before as connected with medical science by a single word or deed sufficient to make it in any degree familiar to my ears, unless Arnold of Heidelberg is the anatomist who discovered a little nervous centre, called the otic ganglion. But you need ask no better proof of who and what the German adherents of this doctrine must be, than the testimony of a German Homoeopathist as to the wretched character of the works they manufacture to enforce its claims.

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As for the act of this or that government tolerating or encouraging Homoeopathy, every person of common intelligence knows that it is a mere form granted or denied according to the general principles of policy adopted in different states, or the degree of influence which some few persons who have adopted it may happen to have at court. What may be the value of certain pompous titles with which many of the advocates of Homoeopathy are honored, it might be disrespectful to question. But in the mean time the judicious inquirer may ponder over an extract which I translate from a paper relating to a personage well known to the community as Williams the Oculist, with whom I had the honor of crossing the Atlantic some years since, and who himself handed me two copies of the paper in question.

“To say that he was oculist of Louis XVIII. and of Charles X., and that he now enjoys the same title with respect to His Majesty, Louis Philippe, and the King of the Belgians, is unquestionably to say a great deal; and yet it is one of the least of his titles to public confidence. His reputation rests upon a basis more substantial even than the numerous diplomas with which he is provided, than the membership of the different medical societies which have chosen him as their associate,” *etc.*, *etc.*

And as to one more point, it is time that the public should fully understand that the common method of supporting barefaced imposture at the present day, both in Europe and in this country, consists in trumping up “Dispensaries,” “Colleges of Health,” and other advertising charitable clap-traps, which use the poor as decoy-ducks for the rich, and the proprietors of which have a strong predilection for the title of “Professor.” These names, therefore, have come to be of little or no value as evidence of the good character, still less of the high pretensions of those who invoke their authority. Nor does it follow, even when a chair is founded in connection with a well-known institution, that it has either a salary or an occupant; so that it may be, and probably is, a mere harmless piece of toleration on the part of the government if a Professorship of Homoeopathy is really in existence at Jena or Heidelberg. And finally, in order to correct the error of any who might suppose that the whole Medical Profession of Germany has long since fallen into the delusions of Hahnemann, I will quote two lines which a celebrated anatomist and surgeon (whose name will occur again in this lecture in connection with a very pleasing letter) addressed to the French Academy of Medicine in 1835. “I happened to be in Germany some months since, at a meeting of nearly six hundred physicians; one of them wished to bring up the question of Homoeopathy; they would not even listen to him.” This may have been very impolite and bigoted, but that is not precisely the point in reference to which I mention the circumstance.

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But if we cannot easily get at Germany, we can very easily obtain exact information from France and England. I took the trouble to write some months ago to two friends in Paris, in whom I could place confidence, for information upon the subject. One of them answered briefly to the effect that nothing was said about it. When the late Curator of the Lowell Institute, at his request, asked about the works upon the subject, he was told that they had remained a long time on the shelves quite unsalable, and never spoken of.

The other gentleman, [Dr. Henry T. Bigelow, now Professor of Surgery in Harvard University] whose name is well known to my audience, and who needs no commendation of mine, had the kindness to procure for me many publications upon the subject, and some information which sets the whole matter at rest, so far as Paris is concerned. He went directly to the Baillieres, the principal and almost the only publishers of all the Homoeopathic books and journals in that city. The following facts were taken by him from the account-books of this publishing firm. Four Homoeopathic Journals have been published in Paris; three of them by the Baillieres.

The reception they met with may be judged of by showing the number of subscribers to each on the books of the publishing firm.

A Review published by some other house, which lasted one year, and had about fifty subscribers, appeared in 1834, 1835.

There were only four Journals of Homoeopathy ever published in Paris. The Baillieres informed my correspondent that the sale of Homoeopathic books was much less than formerly, and that consequently they should undertake to publish no new books upon the subject, except those of Jahr or Hahnemann. "This man," says my correspondent, —referring to one of the brothers,—“the publisher and headquarters of Homoeopathy in Paris, informs me that it is going down in England and Germany as well as in Paris.” For all the facts he had stated he pledged himself as responsible.

Homoeopathy was in its prime in Paris, he said, in 1836 and 1837, and since then has been going down.

Louis told my correspondent that no person of distinction in Paris had embraced Homoeopathy, and that it was declining. If you ask who Louis is, I refer you to the well-known Homoeopathist, Peschier of Geneva, who says, addressing him, “I respect no one more than yourself; the feeling which guides your researches, your labors, and your pen, is so honorable and rare, that I could not but bow down before it; and I own, if there were any allopathist who inspired me with higher veneration, it would be him and not yourself whom I should address.”

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Among the names of "Distinguished Homoeopathists," however, displayed in imposing columns, in the index of the "Homoeopathic Examiner," are those of *Marjolin*, *Amussat*, and *Breschet*, names well known to the world of science, and the last of them identified with some of the most valuable contributions which anatomical knowledge has received since the commencement of the present century. One Dr. Chrysaora, who stands sponsor for many facts in that Journal, makes the following statement among the rest: "Professors, who are esteemed among the most distinguished of the Faculty (Faculty de Medicine), both as to knowledge and reputation, have openly confessed the power of Homoeopathia in forms of disease where the ordinary method of practice proved totally insufficient. It affords me the highest pleasure to select from among these gentlemen, Marjolin, Amussat, and Breschet."

Here is a literal translation of an original letter, now in my possession, from one of these Homoeopathists to my correspondent:—

"Dear sir, and respected professional brother:

"You have had the kindness to inform me in your letter that a new American Journal, the 'New World,' has made use of my name in support of the pretended Homoeopathic doctrines, and that I am represented as one of the warmest partisans of Homoeopathy in France.

"I am vastly surprised at the reputation manufactured for me upon the new continent; but I am obliged, in deference to truth, to reject it with my whole energy. I spurn far from me everything which relates to that charlatanism called Homoeopathy, for these pretended doctrines cannot endure the scrutiny of wise and enlightened persons, who are guided by honorable sentiments in the practice of the noblest of arts.

"Paris, 3d November, 1841

"I am, etc., etc.,

"G. Breschet,

"Professor in the Faculty of Medicine, Member of the Institute, Surgeon of Hotel Dieu, and Consulting Surgeon to the King, etc." [I first saw M. Breschet's name mentioned in that Journal]

Concerning Amussat, my correspondent writes, that he was informed by Madame Hahnemann, who converses in French more readily than her husband, and therefore often speaks for him, that "he was not a physician, neither Homoeopathist nor Allopathist, but that he was the surgeon of their own establishment; that is, performed as a surgeon all the operations they had occasion for in their practice."

I regret not having made any inquiries as to Marjolin, who, I doubt not, would strike his ponderous snuff-box until it resounded like the Grecian horse, at hearing such a doctrine associated with his respectable name. I was not aware, when writing to Paris, that this worthy Professor, whose lectures I long attended, was included in these audacious claims; but after the specimens I have given of the accuracy of the foreign correspondence of the "Homoeopathic Examiner," any further information I might obtain would seem so superfluous as hardly to be worth the postage.

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Homoeopathy may be said, then, to be in a sufficiently miserable condition in Paris. Yet there lives, and there has lived for years, the illustrious Samuel Hahnemann, who himself assured my correspondent that no place offered the advantages of Paris in its investigation, by reason of the attention there paid to it.

In England, it appears by the statement of Dr. Curie in October, 1839, about eight years after its introduction into the country, that there were eighteen Homoeopathic physicians in the United Kingdom, of whom only three were to be found out of London, and that many of these practised Homoeopathy in secret.

It will be seen, therefore, that, according to the recent statement of one of its leading English advocates, Homoeopathy had obtained not quite half as many practical disciples in England as Perkinism could show for itself in a somewhat less period from the time of its first promulgation in that country.

Dr. Curie's letter, dated London, October 30, 1839, says there is "one in Dublin, Dr. Luther; at Glasgow, Dr. Scott." The "distinguished" Chrysaora writes from Paris, dating October 20, 1839, "On the other hand, Homoeopathy is commencing to make an inroad into England by the way of Ireland. At Dublin, distinguished physicians have already embraced the new system, and a great part of the nobility and gentry of that city have emancipated themselves from the English fashion and professional authority."

But the Marquis of Anglesea and Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer patronize Homoeopathy; the Queen Dowager Adelaide has been treated by a Homoeopathic physician. "Jarley is the delight of the nobility and gentry." "The Royal Family are the patrons of Jarley."

Let me ask if a Marquis and a Knight are better than two Lords, and if the Dowager of Royalty is better than Royalty itself, all of which illustrious dignities were claimed in behalf of Benjamin Douglass Perkins?

But if the balance is thought too evenly suspended in this case, another instance can be given in which the evidence of British noblemen and their ladies is shown to be as valuable in establishing the character of a medical man or doctrine, as would be the testimony of the Marquis of Waterford concerning the present condition and prospects of missionary enterprise. I have before me an octavo volume of more than four hundred pages, in which, among much similar matter, I find highly commendatory letters from the Marchioness of Ormond, Lady Harriet Kavanagh, the Countess of Buckinghamshire, the Right Hon. Viscount Ingestre, M. P., and the Most Noble, the Marquis of Sligo,—all addressed to "John St. John Long, Esq," a wretched charlatan, twice tried for, and once convicted of, manslaughter at the Old Bailey.

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This poor creature, too, like all of his tribe, speaks of the medical profession as a great confederation of bigoted monopolists. He, too, says that "If an innovator should appear, holding out hope to those in despair, and curing disorders which the faculty have recorded as irremediable, he is at once, and without inquiry, denounced as an empiric and an impostor." He, too, cites the inevitable names of Galileo and Harvey, and refers to the feelings excited by the great discovery of Jenner. From the treatment of the great astronomer who was visited with the punishment of other heretics by the ecclesiastical authorities of a Catholic country some centuries since, there is no very direct inference to be drawn to the medical profession of the present time. His name should be babbled no longer, after having been placarded for the hundredth time in the pages of St. John Long. But if we are doomed to see constant reference to the names of Harvey and Jenner in every worthless pamphlet containing the prospectus of some new trick upon the public, let us, once for all, stare the facts in the face, and see how the discoveries of these great men were actually received by the medical profession.

In 1628, Harvey published his first work upon the circulation. His doctrines were a complete revolution of the prevailing opinions of all antiquity. They immediately found both champions and opponents; of which last, one only, Riolanus, seemed to Harvey worthy of an answer, on account of his "rank, fame, and learning." Controversy in science, as in religion, was not, in those days, carried on with all the courtesy which our present habits demand, and it is possible that some hard words may have been applied to Harvey, as it is very certain that he used the most contemptuous expressions towards others.

Harvey declares in his second letter to Riolanus, "Since the first discovery of the circulation, hardly a day, or a moment, has passed without my hearing it both well and ill spoken of; some attack it with great hostility, others defend it with high encomiums; one party believe that I have abundantly proved the truth of the doctrine against all the weight of opposing arguments, by experiments, observations, and dissections; others think it not yet sufficiently cleared up, and free from objections." Two really eminent Professors, Plempius of Louvain, and Walaeus of Leyden, were among its early advocates.

The opinions sanctioned by the authority of long ages, and the names of Hippocrates and Galen, dissolved away, gradually, but certainly, before the demonstrations of Harvey. Twenty-four years after the publication of his first work, and six years before his death, his bust in marble was placed in the Hall of the College of Physicians, with a suitable inscription recording his discoveries.

Two years after this he was unanimously invited to accept the Presidency of that body; and he lived to see his doctrine established, and all reputable opposition withdrawn.

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There were many circumstances connected with the discovery of Dr. Jenner which were of a nature to excite repugnance and opposition. The practice of inoculation for the small-pox had already disarmed that disease of many of its terrors. The introduction of a contagious disease from a brute creature into the human system naturally struck the public mind with a sensation of disgust and apprehension, and a part of the medical public may have shared these feelings. I find that Jenner's discovery of vaccination was made public in June, 1798. In July of the same year the celebrated surgeon, Mr. Cline, vaccinated a child with virus received from Dr. Jenner, and in communicating the success of this experiment, he mentions that Dr. Lister, formerly of the Small-Pox Hospital, and himself, are convinced of the efficacy of the cow-pox. In November of the same year, Dr. Pearson published his "Inquiry," containing the testimony of numerous practitioners in different parts of the kingdom, to the efficacy of the practice. Dr. *Haygarth*, who was so conspicuous in exposing the follies of Perkinism, was among the very earliest to express his opinion in favor of vaccination. In 1801, Dr. Lettsom mentions the circumstance "as being to the honor of the medical professors, that they have very generally encouraged this salutary practice, although it is certainly calculated to lessen their pecuniary advantages by its tendency to extirpate a fertile source of professional practice."

In the same year the Medical Committee of Paris spoke of vaccination in a public letter, as "the most brilliant and most important discovery of the eighteenth century." The Directors of a Society for the Extermination of the Small-Pox, in a Report dated October 1st, 1807, "congratulate the public on the very favorable opinion which the Royal College of Physicians of London, after a most minute and laborious investigation made by the command of his Majesty, have a second time expressed on the subject of vaccination, in their Report laid before the House of Commons, in the last session of Parliament; in consequence of which the sum of twenty thousand pounds was voted to Dr. Jenner, as a remuneration for his discovery, in addition to ten thousand pounds before granted." (In June, 1802.)

These and similar accusations, so often brought up against the Medical Profession, are only one mode in which is manifested a spirit of opposition not merely to medical science, but to all science, and to all sound knowledge. It is a spirit which neither understands itself nor the object at which it is aiming. It gropes among the loose records of the past, and the floating fables of the moment, to glean a few truths or falsehoods tending to prove, if they prove anything, that the persons who have passed their lives in the study of a branch of knowledge the very essence of which must always consist in long and accurate observation, are less competent to judge of new doctrines in their own department than the rest of the community. It belongs to the clown in society, the destructive in politics, and the rogue in practice.

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The name of Harvey, whose great discovery was the legitimate result of his severe training and patient study, should be mentioned only to check the pretensions of presumptuous ignorance. The example of Jenner, who gave his inestimable secret, the result of twenty-two years of experiment and researches, unpurchased, to the public,—when, as was said in Parliament, he might have made a hundred thousand pounds by it as well as any smaller sum,—should be referred to only to rebuke the selfish venders of secret remedies, among whom his early history obliges us reluctantly to record Samuel Hahnemann. Those who speak of the great body of physicians as if they were united in a league to support the superannuated notions of the past against the progress of improvement, have read the history of medicine to little purpose. The prevalent failing of this profession has been, on the contrary, to lend a too credulous ear to ambitious and plausible innovators. If at the present time ten years of public notoriety have passed over any doctrine professing to be of importance in medical science, and if it has not succeeded in raising up a powerful body of able, learned, and ingenious advocates for its claims, the fault must be in the doctrine and not in the medical profession.

Homoeopathy has had a still more extended period of trial than this, and we have seen with what results. It only remains to throw out a few conjectures as to the particular manner in which it is to break up and disappear.

1. The confidence of the few believers in this delusion will never survive the loss of friends who may die of any acute disease, under a treatment such as that prescribed by Homoeopathy. It is doubtful how far cases of this kind will be trusted to its tender mercies, but wherever it acquires any considerable foothold, such cases must come, and with them the ruin of those who practise it, should any highly valued life be thus sacrificed.
2. After its novelty has worn out, the ardent and capricious individuals who constitute the most prominent class of its patrons will return to visible doses, were it only for the sake of a change.
3. The Semi-Homoeopathic practitioner will gradually withdraw from the rotten half of his business and try to make the public forget his connection with it.
4. The ultra Homoeopathist will either recant and try to rejoin the medical profession; or he will embrace some newer and if possible equally extravagant doctrine; or he will stick to his colors and go down with his sinking doctrine. Very few will pursue the course last mentioned.

A single fact may serve to point out in what direction there will probably be a movement of the dissolving atoms of Homoeopathy. On the 13th page of the too frequently cited Manifesto of the “Examiner” I read the following stately paragraph:

“Bigelius, M. D., physician to the Emperor of Russia, whose elevated reputation is well known in Europe, has been an acknowledged advocate of Hahnemann’s doctrines for several years. He abandoned Allopathia for Homoeopathia.” The date of this statement is January, 1840. I find on looking at the booksellers’ catalogues that one Bigel, or Bigelius, to speak more classically, has been at various times publishing Homoeopathic books for some years.

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Again, on looking into the “Encyclographie des Sciences Medicales” for April, 1840, I find a work entitled “Manual of *Hydrosudopathy*, or the Treatment of Diseases by Cold Water, etc., etc., by Dr. Bigel, Physician of the School of Strasburg, Member of the Medico-Chirurgical Institute of Naples, of the Academy of St. Petersburg,—Assessor of the College of the Empire of Russia, Physician of his late Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Constantine, Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, etc.” Hydrosudopathy or Hydropathy, as it is sometimes called, is a new medical doctrine or practice which has sprung up in Germany since Homoeopathy, which it bids fair to drive out of the market, if, as Dr. Bigel says, fourteen physicians afflicted with diseases which defied themselves and their colleagues came to Graefenberg, in the year 1836 alone, and were cured. Now Dr. Bigel, “whose elevated reputation is well known in Europe,” writes as follows: “The reader will not fail to see in this defence of the curative method of Graefenberg a profession of medical faith, and he will be correct in so doing.” And his work closes with the following sentence, worthy of so distinguished an individual: “We believe, with religion, that the water of baptism purifies the soul from its original sin; let us believe also, with experience, that it is for our corporeal sins the redeemer of the human body.” If Bigel, Physician to the late Grand Duke Constantine, is identical with Bigel whom the “Examiner” calls Physician to the Emperor of Russia, it appears that he is now actively engaged in throwing cold water at once upon his patients and the future prospects of Homoeopathy.

If, as must be admitted, no one of Hahnemann’s doctrines is received with tolerable unanimity among his disciples, except the central axiom, *Similia similibus curantur*; if this axiom itself relies mainly for its support upon the folly and trickery of Hahnemann, what can we think of those who announce themselves ready to relinquish all the accumulated treasures of our art, to trifle with life upon the strength of these fantastic theories? What shall we think of professed practitioners of medicine, if, in the words of Jahr, “from ignorance, for their personal convenience, or through charlatanism, they treat their patients one day Homoeopathically and the next Allopathically;” if they parade their pretended new science before the unguarded portion of the community; if they suffer their names to be coupled with it wherever it may gain a credulous patient; and deny all responsibility for its character, refuse all argument for its doctrines, allege no palliation for the ignorance and deception interwoven with every thread of its flimsy tissue, when they are questioned by those competent to judge and entitled to an answer?

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Such is the pretended science of Homoeopathy, to which you are asked to trust your lives and the lives of those dearest to you. A mingled mass of perverse ingenuity, of tinsel erudition, of imbecile credulity, and of artful misrepresentation, too often mingled in practice, if we may trust the authority of its founder, with heartless and shameless imposition. Because it is suffered so often to appeal unanswered to the public, because it has its journals, its patrons, its apostles, some are weak enough to suppose it can escape the inevitable doom of utter disgrace and oblivion. Not many years can pass away before the same curiosity excited by one of Perkins's Tractors will be awakened at the sight of one of the Infinitesimal Globules. If it should claim a longer existence, it can only be by falling into the hands of the sordid wretches who wring their bread from the cold grasp of disease and death in the hovels of ignorant poverty.

As one humble member of a profession which for more than two thousand years has devoted itself to the pursuit of the best earthly interests of mankind, always assailed and insulted from without by such as are ignorant of its infinite perplexities and labors, always striving in unequal contest with the hundred-armed giant who walks in the noonday, and sleeps not in the midnight, yet still toiling, not merely for itself and the present moment, but for the race and the future, I have lifted my voice against this lifeless delusion, rolling its shapeless bulk into the path of a noble science it is too weak to strike, or to injure.

THE CONTAGIOUSNESS OF PUERPERAL FEVER

Printed in 1843; reprinted with additions, 1855.

The point at issue.

THE AFFIRMATIVE.

"The disease known as Puerperal Fever is so far contagious as to be frequently carried from patient to patient by physicians and nurses." O. W. Holmes, 1843.

THE NEGATIVE.

"The result of the whole discussion will, I trust, serve, not only to exalt your views of the value and dignity of our profession, but to divest your minds of the overpowering dread that you can ever become, especially to woman, under the extremely interesting circumstances of gestation and parturition, the minister of evil; that you can ever convey, in any possible manner, a horrible virus, so destructive in its effects, and so mysterious in its operations as that attributed to puerperal fever."—Professor Hodge, 1852.



"I prefer to attribute them to accident, or Providence, of which I can form a conception, rather than to a contagion of which I cannot form any clear idea, at least as to this particular malady."—Professor Meigs, 1852.

" . . . in the propagation of which they have no more to do, than with the propagation of cholera from Jessore to San Francisco, and from Mauritius to St. Petersburg."—Professor Meigs, 1854.

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"I arrived at that certainty in the matter, that I could venture to foretell what women would be affected with the disease, upon hearing by what midwife they were to be delivered, or by what nurse they were to be attended, during their lying-in; and, almost in every instance, my prediction was verified."—Gordon, 1795.

"A certain number of deaths is caused every year by the contagion of puerperal fever, communicated by the nurses and medical attendants." Farr, in Fifth Annual Report of Registrar-General of England, 1843.

". . . boards of health, if such exist, or, without them, the medical institutions of a country, should have the power of coercing, or of inflicting some kind of punishment on those who recklessly go from cases of puerperal fevers to parturient or puerperal females, without using due precaution; and who, having been shown the risk, criminally encounter it, and convey pestilence and death to the persons they are employed to aid in the most interesting and suffering period of female existence." —Copland's Medical Dictionary, Art. Puerperal States and Diseases, 1852.

"We conceive it unnecessary to go into detail to prove the contagious nature of this disease, as there are few, if any, American practitioners who do not believe in this doctrine."—Dr. Lee, in Additions to Article last cited.

[*Introductory note.*] It happened, some years ago, that a discussion arose in a Medical Society of which I was a member, involving the subject of a certain supposed cause of disease, about which something was known, a good deal suspected, and not a little feared. The discussion was suggested by a case, reported at the preceding meeting, of a physician who made an examination of the body of a patient who had died with puerperal fever, and who himself died in less than a week, apparently in consequence of a wound received at the examination, having attended several women in confinement in the mean time, all of whom, as it was alleged, were attacked with puerperal fever.

Whatever apprehensions and beliefs were entertained, it was plain that a fuller knowledge of the facts relating to the subject would be acceptable to all present. I therefore felt that it would be doing a good service to look into the best records I could find, and inquire of the most trustworthy practitioners I knew, to learn what experience had to teach in the matter, and arrived at the results contained in the following pages.



The Essay was read before the Boston Society for Medical Improvement, and, at the request of the Society, printed in the "New England Quarterly Journal of Medicine and Surgery" for April, 1843. As this Journal never obtained a large circulation, and ceased to be published after a year's existence, and as the few copies I had struck off separately were soon lost sight of among the friends to whom they were sent, the Essay can hardly be said to have been fully brought before the Profession.

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The subject of this Paper has the same profound interest for me at the present moment as it had when I was first collecting the terrible evidence out of which, as it seems to me, the commonest exercise of reason could not help shaping the truth it involved. It is not merely on account of the bearing of the question,—if there is a question,—on all that is most sacred in human life and happiness, that the subject cannot lose its interest. It is because it seems evident that a fair statement of the facts must produce its proper influence on a very large proportion of well-constituted and unprejudiced minds. Individuals may, here and there, resist the practical bearing of the evidence on their own feelings or interests; some may fail to see its meaning, as some persons may be found who cannot tell red from green; but I cannot doubt that most readers will be satisfied and convinced, to loathing, long before they have finished the dark obituary calendar laid before them.

I do not know that I shall ever again have so good an opportunity of being useful as was granted me by the raising of the question which produced this Essay. For I have abundant evidence that it has made many practitioners more cautious in their relations with puerperal females, and I have no doubt it will do so still, if it has a chance of being read, though it should call out a hundred counterblasts, proving to the satisfaction of their authors that it proved nothing. And for my part, I had rather rescue one mother from being poisoned by her attendant, than claim to have saved forty out of fifty patients to whom I had carried the disease. Thus, I am willing to avail myself of any hint coming from without to offer this paper once more to the press. The occasion has presented itself, as will be seen, in a convenient if not in a flattering form.

I send this Essay again to the *medical profession*, without the change of a word or syllable. I find, on reviewing it, that it anticipates and eliminates those secondary questions which cannot be entertained for a moment until the one great point of fact is peremptorily settled. In its very statement of the doctrine maintained it avoids all discussion of the nature of the disease “known as puerperal fever,” and all the somewhat stale philology of the word contagion. It mentions, fairly enough, the names of sceptics, or unbelievers as to the reality of personal transmission; of Dewees, of Tonnelle, of Duges, of Baudelocque, and others; of course, not including those whose works were then unwritten or unpublished; nor enumerating all the Continental writers who, in ignorance of the great mass of evidence accumulated by British practitioners, could hardly be called well informed on this subject. It meets all the array of negative cases,—those in which disease did not follow exposure,—by the striking example of small-pox, which, although one of the most contagious of diseases, is subject to the most remarkable

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irregularities and seeming caprices in its transmission. It makes full allowance for other causes besides personal transmission, especially for epidemic influences. It allows for the possibility of different modes of conveyance of the destructive principle. It recognizes and supports the belief that a series of cases may originate from a single primitive source which affects each new patient in turn; and especially from cases of Erysipelas. It does not undertake to discuss the theoretical aspect of the subject; that is a secondary matter of consideration. Where facts are numerous, and unquestionable, and unequivocal in their significance, theory must follow them as it best may, keeping time with their step, and not go before them, marching to the sound of its own drum and trumpet. Having thus narrowed its area to a limited practical platform of discussion, a matter of life and death, and not of phrases or theories, it covers every inch of it with a mass of evidence which I conceive a Committee of Husbands, who can count coincidences and draw conclusions as well as a Synod of Accoucheurs, would justly consider as affording ample reasons for an unceremonious dismissal of a practitioner (if it is conceivable that such a step could be waited for), after five or six funerals had marked the path of his daily visits, while other practitioners were not thus escorted. To the Profession, therefore, I submit the paper in its original form, and leave it to take care of itself.

To the *medical students*, into whose hands this Essay may fall, some words of introduction may be appropriate, and perhaps, to a small number of them, necessary. There are some among them who, from youth, or want of training, are easily bewildered and confused in any conflict of opinions into which their studies lead them. They are liable to lose sight of the main question in collateral issues, and to be run away with by suggestive speculations. They confound belief with evidence, often trusting the first because it is expressed with energy, and slighting the latter because it is calm and unimpassioned. They are not satisfied with proof; they cannot believe a point is settled so long as everybody is not silenced. They have not learned that error is got out of the minds that cherish it, as the taenia is removed from the body, one joint, or a few joints at a time, for the most part, rarely the whole evil at once. They naturally have faith in their instructors, turning to them for truth, and taking what they may choose to give them; babes in knowledge, not yet able to tell the breast from the bottle, pumping away for the milk of truth at all that offers, were it nothing better than a Professor's shrivelled forefinger.

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In the earliest and embryonic stage of professional development, any violent impression on the instructor's mind is apt to be followed by some lasting effect on that of the pupil. No mother's mark is more permanent than the mental naevi and moles, and excrescences, and mutilations, that students carry with them out of the lecture-room, if once the teeming intellect which nourishes theirs has been scared from its propriety by any misshapen fantasy. Even an impatient or petulant expression, which to a philosopher would be a mere index of the low state of amiability of the speaker at the moment of its utterance, may pass into the young mind as an element of its future constitution, to injure its temper or corrupt its judgment. It is a duty, therefore, which we owe to this younger class of students, to clear any important truth which may have been rendered questionable in their minds by such language, or any truth-teller against whom they may have been prejudiced by hasty epithets, from the impressions such words have left. Until this is done, they are not ready for the question, where there is a question, for them to decide. Even if we ourselves are the subjects of the prejudice, there seems to be no impropriety in showing that this prejudice is local or personal, and not an acknowledged conviction with the public at large. It may be necessary to break through our usual habits of reserve to do this, but this is the fault of the position in which others have placed us.

Two widely-known and highly-esteemed practitioners, Professors in two of the largest Medical Schools of the Union, teaching the branch of art which includes the Diseases of Women, and therefore speaking with authority; addressing in their lectures and printed publications large numbers of young men, many of them in the tenderest immaturity of knowledge, have recently taken ground in a formal way against the doctrine maintained in this paper:

On the Non-Contagious Character of Puerperal Fever: An Introductory Lecture. By Hugh L. Hodge, M. D., Professor of Obstetrics in the University of Pennsylvania. Delivered Monday, October 11, 1852. Philadelphia, 1852.

On the Nature, Signs, and Treatment of Childbed Fevers: in a Series of Letters addressed to the Students of his Class. By Charles D. Meigs, M. D., Professor of Midwifery and the Diseases of Women and Children in Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, *etc.*, *etc.* Philadelphia, 1854. Letter *vi*.

The first of the two publications, Dr. Hodge's Lecture, while its theoretical considerations and negative experiences do not seem to me to require any further notice than such as lay ready for them in my Essay written long before, is, I am pleased to say, unobjectionable in tone and language, and may be read without offence.

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This can hardly be said of the chapter of Dr. Meigs's volume which treats of Contagion in Childbed Fever. There are expressions used in it which might well put a stop to all scientific discussions, were they to form the current coin in our exchange of opinions. I leave the "very young gentlemen," whose careful expositions of the results of practice in more than six thousand cases are characterized as "the jejune and fizenless dreamings of sophomore writers," to the sympathies of those "dear young friends," and "dear young gentlemen," who will judge how much to value their instructor's counsel to think for themselves, knowing what they are to expect if they happen not to think as he does.

One unpalatable expression I suppose the laws of construction oblige me to appropriate to myself, as my reward for a certain amount of labor bestowed on the investigation of a very important question of evidence, and a statement of my own practical conclusions. I take no offence, and attempt no retort. No man makes a quarrel with me over the counterpane that covers a mother, with her new-born infant at her breast. There is no epithet in the vocabulary of slight and sarcasm that can reach my personal sensibilities in such a controversy. Only just so far as a disrespectful phrase may turn the student aside from the examination of the evidence, by discrediting or dishonoring the witness, does it call for any word of notice.

I appeal from the disparaging language by which the Professor in the Jefferson School of Philadelphia would dispose of my claims to be listened to. I appeal, not to the vote of the Society for Medical Improvement, although this was an unusual evidence of interest in the paper in question, for it was a vote passed among my own townsmen; nor to the opinion of any American, for none know better than the Professors in the great Schools of Philadelphia how cheaply the praise of native contemporary criticism is obtained. I appeal to the recorded opinions of those whom I do not know, and who do not know me, nor care for me, except for the truth that I may have uttered; to Copland, in his "Medical Dictionary," who has spoken of my Essay in phrases to which the pamphlets of American "scribblers" are seldom used from European authorities; to Ramsbotham, whose compendious eulogy is all that self-love could ask; to the "Fifth Annual Report" of the Registrar-General of England, in which the second-hand abstract of my Essay figures largely, and not without favorable comment, in an important appended paper. These testimonies, half forgotten until this circumstance recalled them, are dragged into the light, not in a paroxysm of vanity, but to show that there may be food for thought in the small pamphlet which the Philadelphia Teacher treats so lightly. They were at least unsought for, and would never have been proclaimed but for the sake of securing the privilege of a decent and unprejudiced hearing.

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I will take it for granted that they have so far counterpoised the depreciating language of my fellow-countryman and fellow-teacher as to gain me a reader here and there among the youthful class of students I am now addressing. It is only for their sake that I think it necessary to analyze, or explain, or illustrate, or corroborate any portion of the following Essay. But I know that nothing can be made too plain for beginners; and as I do not expect the practitioner, or even the more mature student, to take the trouble to follow me through an Introduction which I consider wholly unnecessary and superfluous for them, I shall not hesitate to stoop to the most elementary simplicity for the benefit of the younger student. I do this more willingly because it affords a good opportunity, as it seems to me, of exercising the untrained mind in that medical logic which does not seem to have been either taught or practised in our schools of late, to the extent that might be desired.

I will now exhibit, in a series of propositions reduced to their simplest expression, the same essential statements and conclusions as are contained in the Essay, with such commentaries and explanations as may be profitable to the inexperienced class of readers addressed.

I. It has been long believed, by many competent observers, that Puerperal Fever (so called) is sometimes carried from patient to patient by medical assistants.

II. The express object of this Essay is to prove that it is so carried.

III. In order to prove this point, it is not necessary to consult any medical theorist as to whether or not it is consistent with his preconceived notions that such a mode of transfer should exist.

IV. If the medical theorist insists on being consulted, and we see fit to indulge him, he cannot be allowed to assume that the alleged laws of contagion, deduced from observation in other diseases, shall be cited to disprove the alleged laws deduced from observation in this. Science would never make progress under such conditions. Neither the long incubation of hydrophobia, nor the protecting power of vaccination, would ever have been admitted, if the results of observation in these affections had been rejected as contradictory to the previously ascertained laws of contagion.

V. The disease in question is not a common one; producing, on the average, about three deaths in a thousand births, according to the English Registration returns which I have examined.

VI. When an unusually large number of cases of this disease occur about the same time, it is inferred, therefore, that there exists some special cause for this increased frequency. If the disease prevails extensively over a wide region of country, it is attributed without dispute to an epidemic influence. If it prevails in a single locality, as in

a hospital, and not elsewhere, this is considered proof that some local cause is there active in its production.

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VII. When a large number of cases of this disease occur in rapid succession, in one individual's ordinary practice, and few or none elsewhere, these cases appearing in scattered localities, in patients of the same average condition as those who escape under the care of others, there is the same reason for connecting the cause of the disease with the person in this instance, as with the place in that last mentioned.

VIII. Many series of cases, answering to these conditions, are given in this Essay, and many others will be referred to which have occurred since it was written.

IX. The alleged results of observation may be set aside; first, because the so-called facts are in their own nature equivocal; secondly, because they stand on insufficient authority; thirdly, because they are not sufficiently numerous. But, in this case, the disease is one of striking and well-marked character; the witnesses are experts, interested in denying and disbelieving the facts; the number of consecutive cases in many instances frightful, and the number of series of cases such that I have no room for many of them except by mere reference.

X. These results of observation, being admitted, may, we will suppose, be interpreted in different methods. Thus the coincidences may be considered the effect of chance. I have had the chances calculated by a competent person, that a given practitioner, A., shall have sixteen fatal cases in a month, on the following data: A. to average attendance upon two hundred and fifty births in a year; three deaths in one thousand births to be assumed as the average from puerperal fever; no epidemic to be at the time prevailing. It follows, from the answer given me, that if we suppose every one of the five hundred thousand annual births of England to have been recorded during the last half-century, there would not be one chance in a million million million millions that one such series should be noted. No possible fractional error in this calculation can render the chance a working probability. Applied to dozens of series of various lengths, it is obviously an absurdity. Chance, therefore, is out of the question as an explanation of the admitted coincidences.

XI. There is, therefore, some relation of cause and effect between the physician's presence and the patient's disease.

XII. Until it is proved to what removable condition attaching to the attendant the disease is owing, he is bound to stay away from his patients so soon as he finds himself singled out to be tracked by the disease. How long, and with what other precautions, I have suggested, without dictating, at the close of my Essay. If the physician does not at once act on any reasonable suspicion of his being the medium of transfer, the families where he is engaged, if they are allowed to know the facts, should decline his services for the time. His feelings on the occasion, however interesting to himself, should not be even named in this connection. A physician who talks about ceremony and gratitude, and services rendered, and the treatment he got, surely forgets himself; it is impossible that he should seriously think of these small matters where there is even a question whether

he may not carry disease, and death, and bereavement into any one of “his families,” as they are sometimes called.

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I will now point out to the young student the mode in which he may relieve his mind of any confusion, or possibly, if very young, any doubt, which the perusal of Dr. Meigs's Sixth Letter may have raised in his mind.

The most prominent ideas of the Letter are, first, that the transmissible nature of puerperal fever appears improbable, and, secondly, that it would be very inconvenient to the writer. Dr. Woodville, Physician to the Small-Pox and Inoculation Hospital in London, found it improbable, and exceedingly inconvenient to himself, that cow pox should prevent small-pox; but Dr. Jenner took the liberty to prove the fact, notwithstanding.

I will first call the young student's attention to the show of negative facts (exposure without subsequent disease), of which much seems to be thought. And I may at the same time refer him to Dr. Hodge's Lecture, where he will find the same kind of facts and reasoning. Let him now take up Watson's Lectures, the good sense and spirit of which have made his book a universal favorite, and open to the chapter on Continued Fever. He will find a paragraph containing the following sentence: "A man might say, 'I was in the battle of Waterloo, and saw many men around me fall down and die, and it was said that they were struck down by musket-balls; but I know better than that, for I was there all the time, and so were many of my friends, and we were never hit by any musket-balls. Musket-balls, therefore, could not have been the cause of the deaths we witnessed.' And if, like contagion, they were not palpable to the senses, such a person might go on to affirm that no proof existed of there being any such thing as musket-balls." Now let the student turn back to the chapter on Hydrophobia in the same volume. He will find that John Hunter knew a case in which, of twenty-one persons bitten, only one died of the disease. He will find that one dog at Charenton was bitten at different times by thirty different mad dogs, and outlived it all. Is there no such thing, then, as hydrophobia? Would one take no especial precautions if his wife, about to become a mother, had been bitten by a rabid animal, because so many escape? Or let him look at "Underwood on Diseases of Children," [Philadelphia, 1842, p. 244, note.] and he will find the case of a young woman who was inoculated eight times in thirty days, at the same time attending several children with smallpox, and yet was not infected. But seven weeks afterwards she took the disease and died.

It would seem as if the force of this argument could hardly fail to be seen, if it were granted that every one of these series of cases were so reported as to prove that there could have been no transfer of disease. There is not one of them so reported, in the Lecture or the Letter, as to prove that the disease may not have been carried by the practitioner. I strongly suspect that it was so carried in some of these cases, but from the character of the very imperfect evidence the question can never be settled without further disclosures.

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Although the Letter is, as I have implied, principally taken up with secondary and collateral questions, and might therefore be set aside as in the main irrelevant, I am willing, for the student's sake, to touch some of these questions briefly, as an illustration of its logical character.

The first thing to be done, as I thought when I wrote my Essay, was to throw out all discussions of the word contagion, and this I did effectually by the careful wording of my statement of the subject to be discussed. My object was not to settle the etymology or definition of a word, but to show that women had often died in childbed, poisoned in some way by their medical attendants. On the other point, I, at least, have no controversy with anybody, and I think the student will do well to avoid it in this connection. If I must define my position, however, as well as the term in question, I am contented with Worcester's definition; provided always this avowal do not open another side controversy on the merits of his Dictionary, which Dr. Meigs has not cited, as compared with Webster's, which he has.

I cannot see the propriety of insisting that all the laws of the eruptive fevers must necessarily hold true of this peculiar disease of puerperal women. If there were any such propriety, the laws of the eruptive fevers must at least be stated correctly. It is not true, for instance, as Dr. Meigs states, that contagion is "no respecter of persons;" that "it attacks all individuals alike." To give one example: Dr. Gregory, of the Small-Pox Hospital, who ought to know, says that persons pass through life apparently insensible to or unsusceptible of the small-pox virus, and that the same persons do not take the vaccine disease.

As to the short time of incubation, of which so much is made, we have no right to decide beforehand whether it shall be long or short, in the cases we are considering. A dissection wound may produce symptoms of poisoning in six hours; the bite of a rabid animal may take as many months.

After the student has read the case in Dr. Meigs's 136th paragraph, and the following one, in which he exclaims against the idea of contagion, because the patient, delivered on the 26th of December, was attacked in twenty-four hours, and died on the third day, let him read what happened at the "Black Assizes" of 1577 and 1750. In the first case, six hundred persons sickened the same night of the exposure, and three hundred more in three days. [Elliotson's Practice, p. 298.] Of those attacked in the latter year, the exposure being on the 11th of May, Alderman Lambert died on the 13th, Under-Sheriff Cox on the 14th, and many of note before the 20th. But these are old stories. Let the student listen then to Dr. Gerhard, whose reputation as a cautious observer he may be supposed to know. "The nurse was shaving a man, who died in a few hours after his entrance; he inhaled his breath, which had a nauseous taste, and in an hour afterwards was taken with nausea,

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cephalalgia, and singing of the ears. From that moment the attack began, and assumed a severe character. The assistant was supporting another patient, who died soon afterwards; he felt the pungent heat upon his skin, and was taken immediately with the symptoms of typhus." [Am. Jour. Med. Sciences, Feb. 1837, p. 299.] It is by notes of cases, rather than notes of admiration, that we must be guided, when we study the Revised Statutes of Nature, as laid down from the curule chairs of Medicine.

Let the student read Dr. Meigs's 140th paragraph soberly, and then remember, that not only does he infer, suspect, and surmise, but he actually asserts (page 154), "there was poison in the house," because three out of five patients admitted into a ward had puerperal fever and died. Have I not as much right to draw a positive inference from "Dr. A.'s" seventy exclusive cases as he from the three cases in the ward of the Dublin Hospital? All practical medicine, and all action in common affairs, is founded on inferences. How does Dr. Meigs know that the patients he bled in puerperal fever would not have all got well if he had not bled them?

"You see a man discharge a gun at another; you see the flash, you hear the report, you see the person fall a lifeless corpse; and you infer, from all these circumstances, that there was a ball discharged from the gun, which entered his body and caused his death, because such is the usual and natural cause of such an effect. But you did not see the ball leave the gun, pass through the air, and enter the body of the slain; and your testimony to the fact of killing is, therefore, only inferential,—in other words, circumstantial. It is possible that no ball was in the gun; and we infer that there was, only because we cannot account for death on any other supposition." [Chief Justice Gibson, in Am. Law Journal, vol. vi. p. 123.]

"The question always comes to this: Is the circumstance of intercourse with the sick followed by the appearance of the disease in a proportion of cases so much greater than any other circumstance common to any portion of the inhabitants of the place under observation, as to make it inconceivable that the succession of cases occurring in persons having that intercourse should have been the result of chance? If so, the inference is unavoidable, that that intercourse must have acted as a cause of the disease. All observations which do not bear strictly on that point are irrelevant, and, in the case of an epidemic first appearing in a town or district, a succession of two cases is sometimes sufficient to furnish evidence which, on the principle I have stated, is nearly irresistible."

Possibly an inexperienced youth may be awe-struck by the quotation from Cuvier. These words, or their equivalent, are certainly to be found in his Introduction. So are the words "top not come down"! to be found in the Bible, and they were as much meant for the ladies' head-dresses as the words of Cuvier were meant to make clinical observation wait for a permit from anybody to look with its eyes and count on its

fingers. Let the inquiring youth read the whole Introduction, and he will see what they mean.

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I intend no breach of courtesy, but this is a proper place to warn the student against skimming the prefaces and introductions of works for mottoes and embellishments to his thesis. He cannot learn anatomy by thrusting an exploring needle into the body. He will be very liable to misquote his author's meaning while he is picking off his outside sentences. He may make as great a blunder as that simple prince who praised the conductor of his orchestra for the piece just before the overture; the musician was too good a courtier to tell him that it was only the tuning of the instruments.

To the six propositions in the 142d paragraph, and the remarks about "specific" diseases, the answer, if any is necessary, seems very simple. An inflammation of a serous membrane may give rise to secretions which act as a poison, whether that be a "specific" poison or not, as Dr. Homer has told his young readers, and as dissectors know too well; and that poison may produce its symptoms in a few hours after the system has received it, as any may see in Druitt's "Surgery," if they care to look. Puerperal peritonitis may produce such a poison, and puerperal women may be very sensible to its influences, conveyed by contact or exhalation. Whether this is so or not, facts alone can determine, and to facts we have had recourse to settle it.

The following statement is made by Dr. Meigs in his 142d paragraph, and developed more at length, with rhetorical amplifications, in the 134th. "No human being, save a pregnant or parturient woman, is susceptible to the poison." This statement is wholly incorrect, as I am sorry to have to point out to a Teacher in Dr. Meigs's position. I do not object to the erudition which quotes Willis and Fernelius, the last of whom was pleasantly said to have "preserved the dregs of the Arabs in the honey of his Latinity." But I could wish that more modern authorities had not been overlooked. On this point, for instance, among the numerous facts disproving the statement, the "American Journal of Medical Sciences," published not far from his lecture-room, would have presented him with a respectable catalog of such cases. Thus he might refer to Mr. Storrs's paper "On the Contagious Effects of Puerperal Fever on the Male Subject; or on Persons not Childbearing" (Jan. 1846), or to Dr. Reid's case (April, 1846), or to Dr. Barron's statement of the children's dying of peritonitis in an epidemic of puerperal fever at the Philadelphia Hospital (Oct. 1842), or to various instances cited in Dr. Kneeland's article (April, 186). Or, if he would have referred to the "New York Journal," he might have seen Prof. Austin Flint's cases. Or, if he had honored my Essay so far, he might have found striking instances of the same kind in the first of the new series of cases there reported and elsewhere. I do not see the bearing of his proposition, if it were true. But it is one of those assertions that fall in a moment before a slight examination of the facts; and I confess my surprise, that a professor who lectures on the Diseases of Women should have ventured to make it.

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Nearly seven pages are devoted to showing that I was wrong in saying I would not be “understood to imply that there exists a doubt in the mind of any well-informed member of the medical profession as to the fact that puerperal fever is sometimes communicated from one person to another, both directly and indirectly.” I will devote seven lines to these seven pages, which seven lines, if I may say it without offence, are, as it seems to me, six more than are strictly necessary.

The following authors are cited as sceptics by Dr. Meigs: Dewees.—I cited the same passage. Did not know half the facts. Robert Lee.—Believes the disease is sometimes communicable by contagion. Tonnelle, Baudelocque. Both cited by me. Jacquemier. —Published three years after my Essay. Kiwisch. "Behindhand in knowledge of Puerperal Fever." [B. & F. Med. Rev. Jan. 1842.] Paul Dubois.—Scanzoni.

These Continental writers not well informed on this point.[See Dr. Simpson's Remarks at Meeting of Edin. Med. Chir. Soc. (Am. Jour. Oct. 1851.)]

The story of Von Busch is of interest and value, but there is nothing in it which need perplex the student. It is not pretended that the disease is always, or even, it may be, in the majority of cases, carried about by attendants; only that it is so carried in certain cases. That it may have local and epidemic causes, as well as that depending on personal transmission, is not disputed. Remember how small-pox often disappears from a community in spite of its contagious character, and the necessary exposure of many persons to those suffering from it; in both diseases contagion is only one of the coefficients of the disease.

I have already spoken of the possibility that Dr. Meigs may have been the medium of transfer of puerperal fever in some of the cases he has briefly catalogued. Of Dr. Rutter's cases I do not know how to speak. I only ask the student to read the facts stated by Dr. Condie, as given in my Essay, and say whether or not a man should allow his wife to be attended by a practitioner in whose hands “scarcely a female that has been delivered for weeks past has escaped an attack,” “while no instance of the disease has occurred in the patients of any other accoucheur practising in the same district.” If I understand Dr. Meigs and Dr. Hodge, they would not warn the physician or spare the patient under such circumstances. They would “go on,” if I understand them, not to seven, or seventy, only, but to seventy times seven, if they could find patients. If this is not what they mean, may we respectfully ask them to state what they do mean, to their next classes, in the name of humanity, if not of science!

I might repeat the question asked concerning Dr. Rutter's cases, with reference to those reported by Dr. Robertson. Perhaps, however, the student would like to know the opinion of a person in the habit of working at matters of this kind in a practical point of view. To satisfy him on this ground, I addressed the following question to the President of one of our principal Insurance Companies, leaving Dr. Meigs's book and my Essay in his hands at the same time.

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Question. "If such facts as Robertson's cases were before you, and the attendant had had ten, or even five fatal cases, or three, or two even, would you, or would you not, if insuring the life of the next patient to be taken care of by that attendant, expect an extra premium over that of an average case of childbirth?"

Answer. "Of course I should require a very large extra premium, if I would take take risk at all."

But I do not choose to add the expressions of indignation which the examination of the facts before him called out. I was satisfied from the effect they produced on him, that if all the hideous catalogues of cases now accumulated were fully brought to the knowledge of the public, nothing, since the days of Burke and Hare, has raised such a cry of horror as would be shrieked in the ears of the Profession.

Dr. Meigs has elsewhere invoked "Providence" as the alternative of accident, to account for the "coincidences." ("Obstetrics," Phil. 1852, p. 631.) If so, Providence either acts through the agency of secondary causes, as in other diseases, or not. If through such causes, let us find out what they are, as we try to do in other cases. It may be true that offences, or diseases, will come, but "woe unto him through whom they come," if we catch him in the voluntary or careless act of bringing them! But if Providence does not act through secondary causes in this particular sphere of etiology, then why does Dr. Meigs take such pains to reason so extensively about the laws of contagion, which, on that supposition, have no more to do with this case than with the plague which destroyed the people after David had numbered them? Above all, what becomes of the theological aspect of the question, when he asserts that a practitioner was "only unlucky in meeting with the epidemic cases?" (Op. cit. p. 633.) We do not deny that the God of battles decides the fate of nations; but we like to have the biggest squadrons on our side, and we are particular that our soldiers should not only say their prayers, but also keep their powder dry. We do not deny the agency of Providence in the disaster at Norwalk, but we turn off the engineer, and charge the Company five thousand dollars apiece for every life that is sacrificed.

Why a grand jury should not bring in a bill against a physician who switches off a score of women one after the other along his private track, when he knows that there is a black gulf at the end of it, down which they are to plunge, while the great highway is clear, is more than I can answer. It is not by laying the open draw to Providence that he is to escape the charge of manslaughter.

To finish with all these lesser matters of question, I am unable to see why a female must necessarily be unattended in her confinement, because she declines the services of a particular practitioner. In all the series of cases mentioned, the death-carrying attendant was surrounded by others not tracked by disease and its consequences. Which, I would ask, is worse,—to call in another, even a rival practitioner, or to submit an

unsuspecting female to a risk which an Insurance Company would have nothing to do with?

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I do not expect ever to return to this subject. There is a point of mental saturation, beyond which argument cannot be forced without breeding impatient, if not harsh, feelings towards those who refuse to be convinced. If I have so far manifested neither, it is well to stop here, and leave the rest to those younger friends who may have more stomach for the dregs of a stale argument.

The extent of my prefatory remarks may lead some to think that I attach too much importance to my own Essay. Others may wonder that I should expend so many words upon the two productions referred to, the Letter and the Lecture. I do consider my Essay of much importance so long as the doctrine it maintains is treated as a question, and so long as any important part of the defence of that doctrine is thought to rest on its evidence or arguments. I cannot treat as insignificant any opinions bearing on life, and interests dearer than life, proclaimed yearly to hundreds of young men, who will carry them to their legitimate results in practice.

The teachings of the two Professors in the great schools of Philadelphia are sure to be listened to, not only by their immediate pupils, but by the Profession at large. I am too much in earnest for either humility or vanity, but I do entreat those who hold the keys of life and death to listen to me also for this once. I ask no personal favor; but I beg to be heard in behalf of the women whose lives are at stake, until some stronger voice shall plead for them.

I trust that I have made the issue perfectly distinct and intelligible. And let it be remembered that this is no subject to be smoothed over by nicely adjusted phrases of half-assent and half-censure divided between the parties. The balance must be struck boldly and the result declared plainly. If I have been hasty, presumptuous, ill-informed, illogical; if my array of facts means nothing; if there is no reason for any caution in the view of these facts; let me be told so on such authority that I must believe it, and I will be silent henceforth, recognizing that my mind is in a state of disorganization. If the doctrine I have maintained is a mournful truth; if to disbelieve it, and to practise on this disbelief, and to teach others so to disbelieve and practise, is to carry desolation, and to charter others to carry it, into confiding families, let it be proclaimed as plainly what is to be thought of the teachings of those who sneer at the alleged dangers, and scout the very idea of precaution. Let it be remembered that persons are nothing in this matter; better that twenty pamphleteers should be silenced, or as many professors unseated, than that one mother's life should be taken. There is no quarrel here between men, but there is deadly incompatibility and exterminating warfare between doctrines. Coincidences meaning nothing, though a man have a monopoly of the disease for weeks or months; or cause and effect, the cause being in some way connected with the person; this

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is the question. If I am wrong, let me be put down by such a rebuke as no rash declaimer has received since there has been a public opinion in the medical profession of America; if I am right, let doctrines which lead to professional homicide be no longer taught from the chairs of those two great Institutions. Indifference will not do here; our Journalists and Committees have no right to take up their pages with minute anatomy and tediously detailed cases, while it is a question whether or not the "blackdeath" of child-bed is to be scattered broadcast by the agency of the mother's friend and adviser. Let the men who mould opinions look to it; if there is any voluntary blindness, any interested oversight, any culpable negligence, even, in such a matter, and the facts shall reach the public ear; the pestilence-carrier of the lying-in chamber must look to God for pardon, for man will never forgive him.

The contagiousness of puerperal fever.

In collecting, enforcing, and adding to the evidence accumulated upon this most serious subject, I would not be understood to imply that there exists a doubt in the mind of any well-informed member of the medical profession as to the fact that puerperal fever is sometimes communicated from one person to another, both directly and indirectly. In the present state of our knowledge upon this point I should consider such doubts merely as a proof that the sceptic had either not examined the evidence, or, having examined it, refused to accept its plain and unavoidable consequences. I should be sorry to think, with Dr. Rigby, that it was a case of "oblique vision;" I should be unwilling to force home the argumentum ad hominem of Dr. Blundell, but I would not consent to make a question of a momentous fact which is no longer to be considered as a subject for trivial discussions, but to be acted upon with silent promptitude. It signifies nothing that wise and experienced practitioners have sometimes doubted the reality of the danger in question; no man has the right to doubt it any longer. No negative facts, no opposing opinions, be they what they may, or whose they may, can form any answer to the series of cases now within the reach of all who choose to explore the records of medical science.

If there are some who conceive that any important end would be answered by recording such opinions, or by collecting the history of all the cases they could find in which no evidence of the influence of contagion existed, I believe they are in error. Suppose a few writers of authority can be found to profess a disbelief in contagion,—and they are very few compared with those who think differently,—is it quite clear that they formed their opinions on a view of all the facts, or is it not apparent that they relied mostly on their own solitary experience? Still further, of those whose names are quoted, is it not true that scarcely a single one could by any

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possibility have known the half or the tenth of the facts bearing on the subject which have reached such a frightful amount within the last few years? Again, as to the utility of negative facts, as we may briefly call them,—instances, namely, in which exposure has not been followed by disease,—although, like other truths, they may be worth knowing, I do not see that they are like to shed any important light upon the subject before us. Every such instance requires a good deal of circumstantial explanation before it can be accepted. It is not enough that a practitioner should have had a single case of puerperal fever not followed by others. It must be known whether he attended others while this case was in progress, whether he went directly from one chamber to others, whether he took any, and what precautions. It is important to know that several women were exposed to infection derived from the patient, so that allowance may be made for want of predisposition. Now if of negative facts so sifted there could be accumulated a hundred for every one plain instance of communication here recorded, I trust it need not be said that we are bound to guard and watch over the hundredth tenant of our fold, though the ninety and nine may be sure of escaping the wolf at its entrance. If any one is disposed, then, to take a hundred instances of lives endangered or sacrificed out of those I have mentioned, and make it reasonably clear that within a similar time and compass ten thousand escaped the same exposure, I shall thank him for his industry, but I must be permitted to hold to my own practical conclusions, and beg him to adopt or at least to examine them also. Children that walk in calico before open fires are not always burned to death; the instances to the contrary may be worth recording; but by no means if they are to be used as arguments against woollen frocks and high fenders.

I am not sure that this paper will escape another remark which it might be wished were founded in justice. It may be said that the facts are too generally known and acknowledged to require any formal argument or exposition, that there is nothing new in the positions advanced, and no need of laying additional statements before the Profession. But on turning to two works, one almost universally, and the other extensively appealed to as authority in this country, I see ample reason to overlook this objection. In the last edition of Dewees's Treatise on the "Diseases of Females," it is expressly said, "In this country, under no circumstance that puerperal fever has appeared hitherto, does it afford the slightest ground for the belief that it is contagious." In the "Philadelphia Practice of Midwifery" not one word can be found in the chapter devoted to this disease which would lead the reader to suspect that the idea of contagion had ever been entertained. It seems proper, therefore, to remind those who are in the habit of referring to these works for guidance, that there may possibly be some sources of danger they have slighted or omitted, quite as important as a trifling irregularity of diet, or a confined state of the bowels, and that whatever confidence a physician may have in his own mode of treatment, his services are of questionable value whenever he carries the bane as well as the antidote about his person.

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The practical point to be illustrated is the following:

The disease known as Puerperal Fever is so far contagious as to be frequently carried from patient to patient by physicians and nurses.

Let me begin by throwing out certain incidental questions, which, without being absolutely essential, would render the subject more complicated, and by making such concessions and assumptions as may be fairly supposed to be without the pale of discussion.

1. It is granted that all the forms of what is called puerperal fever may not be, and probably are not, equally contagious or infectious. I do not enter into the distinctions which have been drawn by authors, because the facts do not appear to me sufficient to establish any absolute line of demarcation between such forms as may be propagated by contagion and those which are never so propagated. This general result I shall only support by the authority of Dr. Ramsbotham, who gives, as the result of his experience, that the same symptoms belong to what he calls the infectious and the sporadic forms of the disease, and the opinion of Armstrong in his original Essay. If others can show any such distinction, I leave it to them to do it. But there are cases enough that show the prevalence of the disease among the patients of a single practitioner when it was in no degree epidemic, in the proper sense of the term. I may refer to those of Mr. Robertson and of Dr. Peirson, hereafter to be cited, as examples.

2. I shall not enter into any dispute about the particular mode of infection, whether it be by the atmosphere the physician carries about him into the sick-chamber, or by the direct application of the virus to the absorbing surfaces with which his hand comes in contact. Many facts and opinions are in favor of each of these modes of transmission. But it is obvious that in the majority of cases it must be impossible to decide by which of these channels the disease is conveyed, from the nature of the intercourse between the physician and the patient.

3. It is not pretended that the contagion of puerperal fever must always be followed by the disease. It is true of all contagious diseases, that they frequently spare those who appear to be fully submitted to their influence. Even the vaccine virus, fresh from the subject, fails every day to produce its legitimate effect, though every precaution is taken to insure its action. This is still more remarkably the case with scarlet fever and some other diseases.

4. It is granted that the disease may be produced and variously modified by many causes besides contagion, and more especially by epidemic and endemic influences. But this is not peculiar to the disease in question. There is no doubt that small-pox is propagated to a great extent by contagion, yet it goes through the same periods of periodical increase and diminution which have been remarked in puerperal fever. If the question is asked how we are to reconcile the

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great variations in the mortality of puerperal fever in different seasons and places with the supposition of contagion, I will answer it by another question from Mr. Farr's letter to the Registrar-General. He makes the statement that "five die weekly of small-pox in the metropolis when the disease is not epidemic,"—and adds, "The problem for solution is, —Why do the five deaths become 10, 15, 20, 31, 58, 88, weekly, and then progressively fall through the same measured steps?"

5. I take it for granted, that if it can be shown that great numbers of lives have been and are sacrificed to ignorance or blindness on this point, no other error of which physicians or nurses may be occasionally suspected will be alleged in palliation of this; but that whenever and wherever they can be shown to carry disease and death instead of health and safety, the common instincts of humanity will silence every attempt to explain away their responsibility.

The treatise of Dr. Gordon of Aberdeen was published in the year 1795, being among the earlier special works upon the disease. Apart of his testimony has been occasionally copied into other works, but his expressions are so clear, his experience is given with such manly distinctness and disinterested honesty, that it may be quoted as a model which might have been often followed with advantage.

"This disease seized such women only as were visited, or delivered by a practitioner, or taken care of by a nurse, who had previously attended patients affected with the disease."

"I had evident proofs of its infectious nature, and that the infection was as readily communicated as that of the small-pox or measles, and operated more speedily than any other infection with which I am acquainted."

"I had evident proofs that every person who had been with a patient in the puerperal fever became charged with an atmosphere of infection, which was communicated to every pregnant woman who happened to come within its sphere. This is not an assertion, but a fact, admitting of demonstration, as may be seen by a perusal of the foregoing table,"—referring to a table of seventy-seven cases, in many of which the channel of propagation was evident.

He adds, "It is a disagreeable declaration for me to mention, that I myself was the means of carrying the infection to a great number of women." He then enumerates a number of instances in which the disease was conveyed by midwives and others to the neighboring villages, and declares that "these facts fully prove that the cause of the puerperal fever, of which I treat, was a specific contagion, or infection, altogether unconnected with a noxious constitution of the atmosphere."

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But his most terrible evidence is given in these words: *"I arrived at that certainty in the matter, that I could venture to foretell what women would be affected with the disease, upon hearing by what midwife they were to be delivered, or by what nurse they were to be attended, during their lying-in: And almost in every instance, my prediction was verified."*

Even previously to Gordon, Mr. White of Manchester had said, "I am acquainted with two gentlemen in another town, where the whole business of midwifery is divided betwixt them, and it is very remarkable that one of them loses several patients every year of the puerperal fever, and the other never so much as meets with the disorder,"—a difference which he seems to attribute to their various modes of treatment. [On the Management of Lying-in Women, p. 120.]

Dr. Armstrong has given a number of instances in his Essay on Puerperal Fever, of the prevalence of the disease among the patients of a single practitioner. At Sunderland, "in all, forty-three cases occurred from the 1st of January to the 1st of October, when the disease ceased; and of this number forty were witnessed by Mr. Gregson and his assistant, Mr. Gregory, the remainder having been separately seen by three accoucheurs." There is appended to the London edition of this Essay, a letter from Mr. Gregson, in which that gentleman says, in reference to the great number of cases occurring in his practice, "The cause of this I cannot pretend fully to explain, but I should be wanting in common liberality if I were to make any hesitation in asserting, that the disease which appeared in my practice was highly contagious, and communicable from one puerperal woman to another." "It is customary among the lower and middle ranks of people to make frequent personal visits to puerperal women resident in the same neighborhood, and I have ample evidence for affirming that the infection of the disease was often carried about in that manner; and, however painful to my feelings, I must in candor declare, that it is very probable the contagion was conveyed, in some instances, by myself, though I took every possible care to prevent such a thing from happening, the moment that I ascertained that the distemper was infectious." Dr. Armstrong goes on to mention six other instances within his knowledge, in which the disease had at different times and places been limited, in the same singular manner, to the practice of individuals, while it existed scarcely if at all among the patients of others around them. Two of the gentlemen became so convinced of their conveying the contagion, that they withdrew for a time from practice.

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I find a brief notice, in an American Journal, of another series of cases, first mentioned by Mr. Davies, in the "Medical Repository." This gentleman stated his conviction that the disease is contagious.

"In the autumn of 1822 he met with twelve cases, while his medical friends in the neighborhood did not meet with any, 'or at least very few.' He could attribute this circumstance to no other cause than his having been present at the examination, after death, of two cases, some time previous, and of his having imparted the disease to his patients, notwithstanding every precaution."

Dr. Gooch says, "It is not uncommon for the greater number of cases to occur in the practice of one man, whilst the other practitioners of the neighborhood, who are not more skilful or more busy, meet with few or none. A practitioner opened the body of a woman who had died of puerperal fever, and continued to wear the same clothes. A lady whom he delivered a few days afterwards was attacked with and died of a similar disease; two more of his lying-in patients, in rapid succession, met with the same fate; struck by the thought, that he might have carried contagion in his clothes, he instantly changed them, and 'met with no more cases of the kind.' A woman in the country, who was employed as washerwoman and nurse, washed the linen of one who had died of puerperal fever; the next lying-in patient she nursed died of the same disease; a third nursed by her met with the same fate, till the neighborhood, getting afraid of her, ceased to employ her."

In the winter of the year 1824, "Several instances occurred of its prevalence among the patients of particular practitioners, whilst others who were equally busy met with few or none. One instance of this kind was very remarkable. A general practitioner, in large midwifery practice, lost so many patients from puerperal fever, that he determined to deliver no more for some time, but that his partner should attend in his place. This plan was pursued for one month, during which not a case of the disease occurred in their practice. The elder practitioner, being then sufficiently recovered, returned to his practice, but the first patient he attended was attacked by the disease and died. A physician, who met him in consultation soon afterwards, about a case of a different kind, and who knew nothing of his misfortune, asked him whether puerperal fever was at all prevalent in his neighborhood, on which he burst into tears, and related the above circumstances.

"Among the cases which I saw this season in consultation, four occurred in one month in the practice of one medical man, and all of them terminated fatally." [Lond. Med. Gaz. May 2, 1835.]

Dr. Ramsbotham asserted, in a Lecture at the London Hospital, that he had known the disease spread through a particular district, or be confined to the practice of a particular person, almost every patient being attacked with it, while others had not a single case.

It seemed capable, he thought, of conveyance, not only by common modes; but through the dress of the attendants upon the patient.

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In a letter to be found in the "London Medical Gazette" for January, 1840, Mr. Robertson of Manchester makes the statement which I here give in a somewhat condensed form.

A midwife delivered a woman on the 4th of December, 1830, who died soon after with the symptoms of puerperal fever. In one month from this date the same midwife delivered thirty women, residing in different parts of an extensive suburb, of which number sixteen caught the disease and all died. These were the only cases which had occurred for a considerable time in Manchester. The other midwives connected with the same charitable institution as the woman already mentioned are twenty-five in number, and deliver, on an average, ninety women a week, or about three hundred and eighty a month. None of these women had a case of puerperal fever. "Yet all this time this woman was crossing the other midwives in every direction, scores of the patients of the charity being delivered by them in the very same quarters where her cases of fever were happening."

Mr. Robertson remarks, that little more than half the women she delivered during this month took the fever; that on some days all escaped, on others only one or more out of three or four; a circumstance similar to what is seen in other infectious maladies.

Dr. Blundell says, "Those who have never made the experiment can have but a faint conception how difficult it is to obtain the exact truth respecting any occurrence in which feelings and interests are concerned. Omitting particulars, then, I content myself with remarking, generally, that from more than one district I have received accounts of the prevalence of puerperal fever in the practice of some individuals, while its occurrence in that of others, in the same neighborhood, was not observed. Some, as I have been told, have lost ten, twelve, or a greater number of patients, in scarcely broken succession; like their evil genius, the puerperal fever has seemed to stalk behind them wherever they went. Some have deemed it prudent to retire for a time from practice. In fine, that this fever may occur spontaneously, I admit; that its infectious nature may be plausibly disputed, I do not deny; but I add, considerately, that in my own family I had rather that those I esteemed the most should be delivered, unaided, in a stable, by the manger-side, than that they should receive the best help, in the fairest apartment, but exposed to the vapors of this pitiless disease. Gossiping friends, wet-nurses, monthly nurses, the practitioner himself, these are the channels by which, as I suspect, the infection is principally conveyed."

At a meeting of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society, Dr. King mentioned that some years since a practitioner at Woolwich lost sixteen patients from puerperal fever in the same year. He was compelled to give up practice for one or two years, his business being divided among the neighboring practitioners. No case of puerperal fever occurred afterwards, neither had any of the neighboring surgeons any cases of this disease.

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At the same meeting Mr. Hutchinson mentioned the occurrence of three consecutive cases of puerperal fever, followed subsequently by two others, all in the practice of one accoucheur.[Lancet, May 2, 1840.]

Dr. Lee makes the following statement: "In the last two weeks of September, 1827, five fatal cases of uterine inflammation came under our observation. All the individuals so attacked had been attended in labor by the same midwife, and no example of a febrile or inflammatory disease of a serious nature occurred during that period among the other patients of the Westminster General Dispensary, who had been attended by the other midwives belonging to that institution."

The recurrence of long series of cases like those I have cited, reported by those most interested to disbelieve in contagion, scattered along through an interval of half a century, might have been thought sufficient to satisfy the minds of all inquirers that here was something more than a singular coincidence. But if, on a more extended observation, it should be found that the same ominous groups of cases clustering about individual practitioners were observed in a remote country, at different times, and in widely separated regions, it would seem incredible that any should be found too prejudiced or indolent to accept the solemn truth knelled into their ears by the funeral bells from both sides of the ocean,—the plain conclusion that the physician and the disease entered, hand in hand, into the chamber of the unsuspecting patient.

That such series of cases have been observed in this country, and in this neighborhood, I proceed to show.

In Dr. Francis's "Notes to Denman's Midwifery," a passage is cited from Dr. Hosack, in which he refers to certain puerperal cases which proved fatal to several lying-in women, and in some of which the disease was supposed to be conveyed by the accoucheurs themselves.

A writer in the "New York Medical and Physical Journal" for October, 1829, in speaking of the occurrence of puerperal fever, confined to one man's practice, remarks, "We have known cases of this kind occur, though rarely, in New York."

I mention these little hints about the occurrence of such cases, partly because they are the first I have met with in American medical literature, but more especially because they serve to remind us that behind the fearful array of published facts there lies a dark list of similar events, unwritten in the records of science, but long remembered by many a desolated fireside.

Certainly nothing can be more open and explicit than the account given by Dr. Peirson of Salem, of the cases seen by him. In the first nineteen days of January, 1829, he had five consecutive cases of puerperal fever, every patient he attended being attacked, and

the three first cases proving fatal. In March of the same year he had two moderate cases, in June, another case, and in July, another, which proved fatal.

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“Up to this period,” he remarks, “I am not informed that a single case had occurred in the practice of any other physician. Since that period I have had no fatal case in my practice, although I have had several dangerous cases. I have attended in all twenty cases of this disease, of which four have been fatal. I am not aware that there has been any other case in the town of distinct puerperal peritonitis, although I am willing to admit my information may be very defective on this point. I have been told of some I ‘mixed cases,’ and ‘morbidity affections after delivery.’”

In the “Quarterly Summary of the Transactions of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia” may be found some most extraordinary developments respecting a series of cases occurring in the practice of a member of that body.

Dr. Condie called the attention of the Society to the prevalence, at the present time, of puerperal fever of a peculiarly insidious and malignant character. “In the practice of one gentleman extensively engaged as an obstetrician, nearly every female he has attended in confinement, during several weeks past, within the above limits” (the southern sections and neighboring districts), “had been attacked by the fever.”

“An important query presents itself, the Doctor observed, in reference to the particular form of fever now prevalent. Is it, namely, capable of being propagated by contagion, and is a physician who has been in attendance upon a case of the disease warranted in continuing, without interruption, his practice as an obstetrician? Dr. C., although not a believer in the contagious character of many of those affections generally supposed to be propagated in this manner, has nevertheless become convinced by the facts that have fallen under his notice, that the puerperal fever now prevailing is capable of being communicated by contagion. How otherwise can be explained the very curious circumstance of the disease in one district being exclusively confined to the practice of a single physician, a Fellow of this College, extensively engaged in obstetrical practice,—while no instance of the disease has occurred in the patients under the care of any other accoucheur practising within the same district; scarcely a female that has been delivered for weeks past has escaped an attack?”

Dr. Rutter, the practitioner referred to, “observed that, after the occurrence of a number of cases of the disease in his practice, he had left the city and remained absent for a week, but on returning, no article of clothing he then wore having been used by him before, one of the very first cases of parturition he attended was followed by an attack of the fever, and terminated fatally; he cannot, readily, therefore, believe in the transmission of the disease from female to female, in the person or clothes of the physician.”

The meeting at which these remarks were made was held on the 3d of May, 1842. In a letter dated December 20, 1842, addressed to Dr. Meigs, and to be found in the

“Medical Examiner,” he speaks of “those horrible cases of puerperal fever, some of which you did me the favor to see with me during the past summer,” and talks of his experience in the disease, “now numbering nearly seventy cases, all of which have occurred within less than a twelvemonth past.”

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And Dr. Meigs asserts, on the same page, "Indeed, I believe that his practice in that department of the profession was greater than that of any other gentleman, which was probably the cause of his seeing a greater number of the cases." This from a professor of midwifery, who some time ago assured a gentleman whom he met in consultation, that the night on which they met was the eighteenth in succession that he himself had been summoned from his repose, seems hardly satisfactory.

I must call the attention of the inquirer most particularly to the Quarterly Report above referred to, and the letters of Dr. Meigs and Dr. Rutter, to be found in the "Medical Examiner." Whatever impression they may produce upon his mind, I trust they will at least convince him that there is some reason for looking into this apparently uninviting subject.

At a meeting of the College of Physicians just mentioned, Dr. Warrington stated, that a few days after assisting at an autopsy of puerperal peritonitis, in which he laded out the contents of the abdominal cavity with his hands, he was called upon to deliver three women in rapid succession. All of these women were attacked with different forms of what is commonly called puerperal fever. Soon after these he saw two other patients, both on the same day, with the same disease. Of these five patients two died.

At the same meeting, Dr. West mentioned a fact related to him by Dr. Samuel Jackson of Northumberland. Seven females, delivered by Dr. Jackson in rapid succession, while practising in Northumberland County, were all attacked with puerperal fever, and five of them died. "Women," he said, "who had expected me to attend upon them, now becoming alarmed, removed out of my reach, and others sent for a physician residing several miles distant. These women, as well as those attended by midwives; all did well; nor did we hear of any deaths in child-bed within a radius of fifty miles, excepting two, and these I afterwards ascertained to have been caused by other diseases." He underwent, as he thought, a thorough purification, and still his next patient was attacked with the disease and died. He was led to suspect that the contagion might have been carried in the gloves which he had worn in attendance upon the previous cases. Two months or more after this he had two other cases. He could find nothing to account for these, unless it were the instruments for giving enemata, which had been used in two of the former cases, and were employed by these patients. When the first case occurred, he was attending and dressing a limb extensively mortified from erysipelas, and went immediately to the accouchement with his clothes and gloves most thoroughly imbued with its efluvia. And here I may mention, that this very Dr. Samuel Jackson of Northumberland is one of Dr. Dewees's authorities against contagion.

The three following statements are now for the first time given to the public. All of the cases referred to occurred within this State, and two of the three series in Boston and its immediate vicinity.

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I. The first is a series of cases which took place during the last spring in a town at some distance from this neighborhood. A physician of that town, Dr. C., had the following consecutive cases.

No. 1, delivered March 20, died March 24.

" 2, " April 9, " April 14.

" 3, " " 10, " " 14.

" 4, " " 11, " " 18.

" 5, " " 27, " May 3.

" 6, " " 28, had some symptoms,(recovered.)

" 7, " May 8, had some symptoms,(also recovered.)

These were the only cases attended by this physician during the period referred to. "They were all attended by him until their termination, with the exception of the patient No. 6, who fell into the hands of another physician on the 2d of May. (Dr. C. left town for a few days at this time.) Dr. C. attended cases immediately before and after the above-named periods, none of which, however, presented any peculiar symptoms of the disease."

About the 1st of July he attended another patient in a neighboring village, who died two or three days after delivery.

The first patient, it is stated, was delivered on the 20th of March. "On the 19th, Dr. C. made the autopsy of a man who died suddenly, sick only forty-eight hours; had oedema of the thigh, and gangrene extending from a little above the ankle into the cavity of the abdomen." Dr. C. wounded himself, very slightly, in the right hand during the autopsy. The hand was quite painful the night following, during his attendance on the patient No. 1. He did not see this patient after the 20th, being confined to the house, and very sick from the wound just mentioned, from this time until the 3d of April.

Several cases of erysipelas occurred in the house where the autopsy mentioned above took place, soon after the examination. There were also many cases of erysipelas in town at the time of the fatal puerperal cases which have been mentioned.

The nurse who laid out the body of the patient No. 3 was taken on the evening of the same day with sore throat and erysipelas, and died in ten days from the first attack.

The nurse who laid out the body of the patient No. 4 was taken on the day following with symptoms like those of this patient, and died in a week, without any external marks of erysipelas.

“No other cases of similar character with those of Dr. C. occurred in the practice of any of the physicians in the town or vicinity at the time. Deaths following confinement have occurred in the practice of other physicians during the past year, but they were not cases of puerperal fever. No post-mortem examinations were held in any of these puerperal cases.”

Some additional statements in this letter are deserving of insertion.

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"A physician attended a woman in the immediate neighborhood of the cases numbered 2, 3, and 4. This patient was confined the morning of March 1st, and died on the night of March 7th. It is doubtful whether this should be considered a case of puerperal fever. She had suffered from canker, indigestion, and diarrhoea for a year previous to her delivery. Her complaints were much aggravated for two or three months previous to delivery; she had become greatly emaciated, and weakened to such an extent that it had not been expected that she would long survive her confinement, if indeed she reached that period. Her labor was easy enough; she flowed a good deal, seemed exceedingly prostrated, had ringing in the ears, and other symptoms of exhaustion; the pulse was quick and small. On the second and third day there was some tenderness and tumefaction of the abdomen, which increased somewhat on the fourth and fifth. He had cases in midwifery before and after this, which presented nothing peculiar."

It is also mentioned in the same letter, that another physician had a case during the last summer and another last fall, both of which recovered.

Another gentleman reports a case last December, a second case five weeks, and another three weeks since. All these recovered. A case also occurred very recently in the practice of a physician in the village where the eighth patient of Dr. C. resides, which proved fatal. "This patient had some patches of erysipelas on the legs and arms. The same physician has delivered three cases since, which have all done well. There have been no other cases in this town or its vicinity recently. There have been some few cases of erysipelas." It deserves notice that the partner of Dr. C., who attended the autopsy of the man above mentioned and took an active part in it; who also suffered very slightly from a prick under the thumb-nail received during the examination, had twelve cases of midwifery between March 26th and April 12th, all of which did well, and presented no peculiar symptoms. It should also be stated, that during these seventeen days he was in attendance on all the cases of erysipelas in the house where the autopsy had been performed.

I owe these facts to the prompt kindness of a gentleman whose intelligence and character are sufficient guaranty for their accuracy.

The two following letters were addressed to my friend Dr. Scorer, by the gentleman in whose practice the cases of puerperal fever occurred. His name renders it unnecessary to refer more particularly to these gentlemen, who on their part have manifested the most perfect freedom and courtesy in affording these accounts of their painful experience.

"January 28, 1843.

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II. . . . "The time to which you allude was in 1830. The first case was in February, during a very cold time. She was confined the 4th, and died the 12th. Between the 10th and 28th of this month, I attended six women in labor, all of whom did well except the last, as also two who were confined March 1st and 5th. Mrs. E., confined February 28th, sickened, and died March 8th. The next day, 9th, I inspected the body, and the night after attended a lady, Mrs. B., who sickened, and died 16th. The 10th, I attended another, Mrs. G., who sickened, but recovered. March 16th, I went from Mrs. G.'s room to attend a Mrs. H., who sickened, and died 21st. The 17th, I inspected Mrs. B. On the 19th, I went directly from Mrs. H.'s room to attend another lady, Mrs. G., who also sickened, and died 22d. While Mrs. B. was sick, on 15th, I went directly from her room a few rods, and attended another woman, who was not sick. Up to 20th of this month I wore the same clothes. I now refused to attend any labor, and did not till April 21st, when, having thoroughly cleansed myself, I resumed my practice, and had no more puerperal fever.

"The cases were not confined to a narrow space. The two nearest were half a mile from each other, and half that distance from my residence. The others were from two to three miles apart, and nearly that distance from my residence. There were no other cases in their immediate vicinity which came to my knowledge. The general health of all the women was pretty good, and all the labors as good as common, except the first. This woman, in consequence of my not arriving in season, and the child being half-born at some time before I arrived, was very much exposed to the cold at the time of confinement, and afterwards, being confined in a very open, cold room. Of the six cases you perceive only one recovered.

"In the winter of 1817 two of my patients had puerperal fever, one very badly, the other not so badly. Both recovered. One other had swelled leg, or phlegmasia dolens, and one or two others did not recover as well as usual.

"In the summer of 1835 another disastrous period occurred in my practice. July 1st, I attended a lady in labor, who was afterwards quite ill and feverish; but at the time I did not consider her case a decided puerperal fever. On the 8th, I attended one who did well. On the 12th, one who was seriously sick. This was also an equivocal case, apparently arising from constipation and irritation of the rectum. These women were ten miles apart and five from my residence. On 15th and 20th, two who did well. On 25th, I attended another. This was a severe labor, and followed by unequivocal puerperal fever, or peritonitis. She recovered. August 2d and 3d, in about twenty-four hours I attended four persons. Two of them did very well; one was attacked with some of the common symptoms, which however subsided in a day or two, and the other had decided puerperal fever, but recovered. This woman resided five

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miles from me. Up to this time I wore the same coat. All my other clothes had frequently been changed. On 6th, I attended two women, one of whom was not sick at all; but the other, Mrs. L., was afterwards taken ill. On 10th, I attended a lady, who did very well. I had previously changed all my clothes, and had no garment on which had been in a puerperal room. On 12th, I was called to Mrs. S., in labor. While she was ill, I left her to visit Mrs. L., one of the ladies who was confined on 6th. Mrs. L. had been more unwell than usual, but I had not considered her case anything more than common till this visit. I had on a surtout at this visit, which, on my return to Mrs. S., I left in another room. Mrs. S. was delivered on 13th with forceps. These women both died of decided puerperal fever.

"While I attended these women in their fevers, I changed my clothes, and washed my hands in a solution of chloride of lime after each visit. I attended seven women in labor during this period, all of whom recovered without sickness.

"In my practice I have had several single cases of puerperal fever, some of whom have died and some have recovered. Until the year 1830 I had no suspicion that the disease could be communicated from one patient to another by a nurse or midwife; but I now think the foregoing facts strongly favor that idea. I was so much convinced of this fact, that I adopted the plan before related.

"I believe my own health was as good as usual at each of the above periods. I have no recollections to the contrary.

"I believe I have answered all your questions. I have been more particular on some points perhaps than necessary; but I thought you could form your own opinion better than to take mine. In 1830 I wrote to Dr. Charming a more particular statement of my cases. If I have not answered your questions sufficiently, perhaps Dr. C. may have my letter to him, and you can find your answer there." [In a letter to myself, this gentleman also stated, "I do not recollect that there was any erysipelas or any other disease particularly prevalent at the time."]

"*Boston*, February 3, 1843.

III. "*My dear sir*,—I received a note from you last evening, requesting me to answer certain questions therein proposed, touching the cases of puerperal fever which came under my observation the past summer. It gives me pleasure to comply with your request, so far as it is in my power so to do, but, owing to the hurry in preparing for a journey, the notes of the cases I had then taken were lost or mislaid. The principal facts, however, are too vivid upon my recollection to be soon forgotten. I think, therefore, that I shall be able to give you all the information you may require.

“All the cases that occurred in my practice took place between the 7th of May and the 17th of June 1842.

“They were not confined to any particular part of the city. The first two cases were patients residing at the South End, the next was at the extreme North End, one living in Sea Street and the other in Roxbury. The following is the order in which they occurred:

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“Case 1. Mrs._____ was confined on the 7th of May, at 5 o’clock, P. M., after a natural labor of six hours. At 12 o’clock at night, on the 9th (thirty-one hours after confinement), she was taken with severe chill, previous to which she was as comfortable as women usually are under the circumstances. She died on the 10th.

“Case 2. Mrs._____ was confined on the 10th of June (four weeks after Mrs. C.), at 11 A. M., after a natural, but somewhat severe labor of five hours. At 7 o’clock, on the morning of the 11th, she had a chill. Died on the 12th.

“Case 3. Mrs._____ , confined on the 14th of June, was comfortable until the 18th, when symptoms of puerperal fever were manifest. She died on the 20th.

“Case 4. Mrs._____ , confined June 17th, at 5 o’clock, A. M., was doing well until the morning of the 19th. She died on the evening of the 21st.

“Case 5. Mrs._____ was confined with her fifth child on the 17th of June, at 6 o’clock in the evening. This patient had been attacked with puerperal fever, at three of her previous confinements, but the disease yielded to depletion and other remedies without difficulty. This time, I regret to say, I was not so fortunate. She was not attacked, as were the other patients, with a chill, but complained of extreme pain in abdomen, and tenderness on pressure, almost from the moment of her confinement. In this as in the other cases, the disease resisted all remedies, and she died in great distress on the 22d of the same month. Owing to the extreme heat of the season, and my own indisposition, none of the subjects were examined after death. Dr. Channing, who was in attendance with me on the three last cases, proposed to have a post-mortem examination of the subject of case No. 5, but from some cause which I do not now recollect it was not obtained.

“You wish to know whether I wore the same clothes when attending the different cases. I cannot positively say, but I should think I did not, as the weather became warmer after the first two cases; I therefore think it probable that I made a change of at least a part of my dress. I have had no other case of puerperal fever in my own practice for three years, save those above related, and I do not remember to have lost a patient before with this disease. While absent, last July, I visited two patients sick with puerperal fever, with a friend of mine in the country. Both of them recovered.



“The cases that I have recorded were not confined to any particular constitution or temperament, but it seized upon the strong and the weak, the old and the young,—one being over forty years, and the youngest under eighteen years of age If the disease is of an erysipelalous nature, as many suppose, contagionists may perhaps find some ground for their belief in the fact, that, for two weeks previous to my first case of puerperal fever, I had been attending a severe case of erysipelas, and the infection may have been conveyed through me to the patient; but, on the other hand, why is not this the case with other physicians, or with the same physician at all times, for since my return from the country I have had a more inveterate case of erysipelas than ever before, and no difficulty whatever has attended any of my midwifery cases?”

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I am assured, on unquestionable authority, that "About three years since, a gentleman in extensive midwifery business, in a neighboring State, lost in the course of a few weeks eight patients in child-bed, seven of them being undoubted cases of puerperal fever. No other physician of the town lost a single patient of this disease during the same period." And from what I have heard in conversation with some of our most experienced practitioners, I am inclined to think many cases of the kind might be brought to light by extensive inquiry.

This long catalogue of melancholy histories assumes a still darker aspect when we remember how kindly nature deals with the parturient female, when she is not immersed in the virulent atmosphere of an impure lying-in hospital, or poisoned in her chamber by the unsuspected breath of contagion. From all causes together, not more than four deaths in a thousand births and miscarriages happened in England and Wales during the period embraced by the first "Report of the Registrar-General." In the second Report the mortality was shown to be about five in one thousand. In the Dublin Lying-in Hospital, during the seven years of Dr. Collins's mastership, there was one case of puerperal fever to 178 deliveries, or less than six to the thousand, and one death from this disease in 278 cases, or between three and four to the thousand a yet during this period the disease was endemic in the hospital, and might have gone on to rival the horrors of the pestilence of the Maternite, had not the poison been destroyed by a thorough purification.

In private practice, leaving out of view the cases that are to be ascribed to the self-acting system of propagation, it would seem that the disease must be far from common. Mr. White of Manchester says, "Out of the whole number of lying-in patients whom I have delivered (and I may safely call it a great one), I have never lost one, nor to the best of my recollection has one been greatly endangered, by the puerperal, miliary, low nervous, putrid malignant, or milk fever." Dr. Joseph Clarke informed Dr. Collins, that in the course of forty-five years' most extensive practice he lost but four patients from this disease. One of the most eminent practitioners of Glasgow, who has been engaged in very extensive practice for upwards of a quarter of a century, testifies that he never saw more than twelve cases of real puerperal fever.[Lancet, May 4, 1833]

I have myself been told by two gentlemen practising in this city, and having for many years a large midwifery business, that they had neither of them lost a patient from this disease, and by one of them that he had only seen it in consultation with other physicians. In five hundred cases of midwifery, of which Dr. Storer has given an abstract in the first number of this Journal, there was only one instance of fatal puerperal peritonitis.

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In the view of these facts, it does appear a singular coincidence, that one man or woman should have ten, twenty, thirty, or seventy cases of this rare disease following his or her footsteps with the keenness of a beagle, through the streets and lanes of a crowded city, while the scores that cross the same paths on the same errands know it only by name. It is a series of similar coincidences which has led us to consider the dagger, the musket, and certain innocent-looking white powders as having some little claim to be regarded as dangerous. It is the practical inattention to similar coincidences which has given rise to the unpleasant but often necessary documents called indictments, which has sharpened a form of the cephalotome sometimes employed in the case of adults, and adjusted that modification of the fillet which delivers the world of those who happen to be too much in the way while such striking coincidences are taking place.

I shall now mention a few instances in which the disease appears to have been conveyed by the process of direct inoculation.

Dr. Campbell of Edinburgh states that in October, 1821, he assisted at the post-mortem examination of a patient who died with puerperal fever. He carried the pelvic viscera in his pocket to the class-room. The same evening he attended a woman in labor without previously changing his clothes; this patient died. The next morning he delivered a woman with the forceps; she died also, and of many others who were seized with the disease within a few weeks, three shared the same fate in succession.

In June, 1823, he assisted some of his pupils at the autopsy of a case of puerperal fever. He was unable to wash his hands with proper care, for want of the necessary accommodations. On getting home he found that two patients required his assistance. He went without further ablution, or changing his clothes; both these patients died with puerperal fever. This same Dr. Campbell is one of Dr. Churchill's authorities against contagion.

Mr. Robertson says that in one instance within his knowledge a practitioner passed the catheter for a patient with puerperal fever late in the evening; the same night he attended a lady who had the symptoms of the disease on the second day. In another instance a surgeon was called while in the act of inspecting the body of a woman who had died of this fever, to attend a labor; within forty-eight hours this patient was seized with the fever.'

On the 16th of March, 1831, a medical practitioner examined the body of a woman who had died a few days after delivery, from puerperal peritonitis. On the evening of the 17th he delivered a patient, who was seized with puerperal fever on the 19th, and died on the 24th. Between this period and the 6th of April, the same practitioner attended two other patients, both of whom were attacked with the same disease and died.



In the autumn of 1829 a physician was present at the examination of a case of puerperal fever, dissected out the organs, and assisted in sewing up the body. He had scarcely reached home when he was summoned to attend a young lady in labor. In sixteen hours she was attacked with the symptoms of puerperal fever, and narrowly escaped with her life.

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In December, 1830, a midwife, who had attended two fatal cases of puerperal fever at the British Lying-in Hospital, examined a patient who had just been admitted, to ascertain if labor had commenced. This patient remained two days in the expectation that labor would come on, when she returned home and was then suddenly taken in labor and delivered before she could set out for the hospital. She went on favorably for two days, and was then taken with puerperal fever and died in thirty-six hours.

"A young practitioner, contrary to advice, examined the body of a patient who had died from puerperal fever; there was no epidemic at the time; the case appeared to be purely sporadic. He delivered three other women shortly afterwards; they all died with puerperal fever, the symptoms of which broke out very soon after labor. The patients of his colleague did well, except one, where he assisted to remove some coagula from the uterus; she was attacked in the same manner as those whom he had attended, and died also." The writer in the "British and Foreign Medical Review," from whom I quote this statement,—and who is no other than Dr. Rigby, adds, "We trust that this fact alone will forever silence such doubts, and stamp the well-merited epithet of 'criminal,' as above quoted, upon such attempts." [Brit. and For. Medical Review for Jan. 1842, p. 112.]

From the cases given by Mr. Ingleby, I select the following. Two gentlemen, after having been engaged in conducting the post-mortem examination of a case of puerperal fever, went in the same dress, each respectively, to a case of midwifery. "The one patient was seized with the rigor about thirty hours afterwards. The other patient was seized with a rigor the third morning after delivery. One recovered, one died." [Edin. Med. and Surg. Journal, April, 1838.]

One of these same gentlemen attended another woman in the same clothes two days after the autopsy referred to. "The rigor did not take place until the evening of the fifth day from the first visit. Result fatal." These cases belonged to a series of seven, the first of which was thought to have originated in a case of erysipelas. "Several cases of a mild character followed the foregoing seven, and their nature being now most unequivocal, my friend declined visiting all midwifery cases for a time, and there was no recurrence of the disease." These cases occurred in 1833. Five of them proved fatal. Mr. Ingleby gives another series of seven cases which occurred to a practitioner in 1836, the first of which was also attributed to his having opened several erysipelatous abscesses a short time previously.

I need not refer to the case lately read before this Society, in which a physician went, soon after performing an autopsy of a case of puerperal fever, to a woman in labor, who was seized with the same disease and perished. The forfeit of that error has been already paid.

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At a meeting of the Medical and Chirurgical Society before referred to, Dr. Merriman related an instance occurring in his own practice, which excites a reasonable suspicion that two lives were sacrificed to a still less dangerous experiment. He was at the examination of a case of puerperal fever at two o'clock in the afternoon. He took care not to touch the body. At nine o'clock the same evening he attended a woman in labor; she was so nearly delivered that he had scarcely anything to do. The next morning she had severe rigors, and in forty-eight hours she was a corpse. Her infant had erysipelas and died in two days. [Lancet, May 2, 1840.]

In connection with the facts which have been stated, it seems proper to allude to the dangerous and often fatal effects which have followed from wounds received in the post-mortem examination of patients who have died of puerperal fever. The fact that such wounds are attended with peculiar risk has been long noticed. I find that Chaussier was in the habit of cautioning his students against the danger to which they were exposed in these dissections. [Stein, *L'Art d'Accoucher*, 1794; *Dict. des Sciences Medicales*, art. "Puerperal."] The head pharmacien of the Hotel Dieu, in his analysis of the fluid effused in puerperal peritonitis, says that practitioners are convinced of its deleterious qualities, and that it is very dangerous to apply it to the denuded skin. [Journal de Pharmacie, January, 1836.] Sir Benjamin Brodie speaks of it as being well known that the inoculation of lymph or pus from the peritoneum of a puerperal patient is often attended with dangerous and even fatal symptoms. Three cases in confirmation of this statement, two of them fatal, have been reported to this Society within a few months.

Of about fifty cases of injuries of this kind, of various degrees of severity, which I have collected from different sources, at least twelve were instances of infection from puerperal peritonitis. Some of the others are so stated as to render it probable that they may have been of the same nature. Five other cases were of peritoneal inflammation; three in males. Three were what was called enteritis, in one instance complicated with erysipelas; but it is well known that this term has been often used to signify inflammation of the peritoneum covering the intestines. On the other hand, no case of typhus or typhoid fever is mentioned as giving rise to dangerous consequences, with the exception of the single instance of an undertaker mentioned by Mr. Travers, who seems to have been poisoned by a fluid which exuded from the body. The other accidents were produced by dissection, or some other mode of contact with bodies of patients who had died of various affections. They also differed much in severity, the cases of puerperal origin being among the most formidable and fatal. Now a moment's reflection will show that the number of cases of serious consequences ensuing from the dissection of the bodies of those who had

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perished of puerperal fever is so vastly disproportioned to the relatively small number of autopsies made in this complaint as compared with typhus or pneumonia (from which last disease not one case of poisoning happened), and still more from all diseases put together, that the conclusion is irresistible that a most fearful morbid poison is often generated in the course of this disease. Whether or not it is *sui generis*, confined to this disease, or produced in some others, as, for instance, erysipelas, I need, not stop to inquire.

In connection with this may be taken the following statement of Dr. Rigby. "That the discharges from a patient under puerperal fever are in the highest degree contagious we have abundant evidence in the history of lying-in hospitals. The puerperal abscesses are also contagious, and may be communicated to healthy lying-in women by washing with the same sponge; this fact has been repeatedly proved in the Vienna Hospital; but they are equally communicable to women not pregnant; on more than one occasion the women engaged in washing the soiled bed-linen of the General Lying-in Hospital have been attacked with abscess in the fingers or hands, attended with rapidly spreading inflammation of the cellular tissue."

Now add to all this the undisputed fact, that within the walls of lying-in hospitals there is often generated a miasm, palpable as the chlorine used to destroy it, tenacious so as in some cases almost to defy extirpation, deadly in some institutions as the plague; which has killed women in a private hospital of London so fast that they were buried two in one coffin to conceal its horrors; which enabled Tonnelle to record two hundred and twenty-two autopsies at the Maternite of Paris; which has led Dr. Lee to express his deliberate conviction that the loss of life occasioned by these institutions completely defeats the objects of their founders; and out of this train of cumulative evidence, the multiplied groups of cases clustering about individuals, the deadly results of autopsies, the inoculation by fluids from the living patient, the murderous poison of hospitals,—does there not result a conclusion that laughs all sophistry to scorn, and renders all argument an insult?

I have had occasion to mention some instances in which there was an apparent relation between puerperal fever and erysipelas. The length to which this paper has extended does not allow me to enter into the consideration of this most important subject. I will only say, that the evidence appears to me altogether satisfactory that some most fatal series of puerperal fever have been produced by an infection originating in the matter or effluvia of erysipelas. In evidence of some connection between the two diseases, I need not go back to the older authors, as Pouteau or Gordon, but will content myself with giving the following references, with their dates; from which it will be seen that the testimony has been constantly coming before the profession for the last few years.

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"London Cyclopaedia of Practical Medicine," article Puerperal Fever, 1833.

Mr. Ceeley's Account of the Puerperal Fever at Aylesbury. "Lancet," 1835.

Dr. Ramsbotham's Lecture. "London Medical Gazette," 1835.

Mr. Yates Ackerly's Letter in the same Journal, 1838.

Mr. Ingleby on Epidemic Puerperal Fever. "Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal," 1838.

Mr. Paley's Letter. "London Medical Gazette," 1839.

Remarks at the Medical and Chirurgical Society. "Lancet," 1840.

Dr. Rigby's "System of Midwifery." 1841.

"Nunneley on Erysipelas,"—a work which contains a large number of references on the subject. 1841.

"British and Foreign Quarterly Review," 1842.

Dr. S. Jackson of Northumberland, as already quoted from the Summary of the College of Physicians, 1842.

And lastly, a startling series of cases by Mr. Storrs of Doncaster, to be, found in the "American Journal of the Medical Sciences" for January, 1843.

The relation of puerperal fever with other continued fevers would seem to be remote and rarely obvious. Hey refers to two cases of synochus occurring in the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, in women who had attended upon puerperal patients. Dr. Collins refers to several instances in which puerperal fever has appeared to originate from a continued proximity to patients suffering with typhus.

Such occurrences as those just mentioned, though most important to be remembered and guarded against, hardly attract our notice in the midst of the gloomy facts by which they are surrounded. Of these facts, at the risk of fatiguing repetitions, I have summoned a sufficient number, as I believe, to convince the most incredulous that every attempt to disguise the truth which underlies them all is useless.

It is true that some of the historians of the disease, especially Hulme, Hull, and Leake, in England; Tonnelie, Duges, and Baudelocque, in France, profess not to have found puerperal fever contagious. At the most they give us mere negative facts, worthless against an extent of evidence which now overlaps the widest range of doubt, and doubles upon itself in the redundancy of superfluous demonstration. Examined in

detail, this and much of the show of testimony brought up to stare the daylight of conviction out of countenance, proves to be in a great measure unmeaning and inapplicable, as might be easily shown were it necessary. Nor do I feel the necessity of enforcing the conclusion which arises spontaneously from the facts which have been enumerated, by formally citing the opinions of those grave authorities who have for the last half-century been sounding the unwelcome truth it has cost so many lives to establish.

“It is to the British practitioner,” says Dr. Rigby, “that we are indebted for strongly insisting upon this important and dangerous character of puerperal fever.”

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The names of Gordon, John Clarke, Denman, Burns, Young, Hamilton, Haighton, Good, Waller; Blundell, Gooch, Ramsbotham, Douglas, Lee, Ingleby, Locock, Abercrombie, Alison; Travers, Rigby, and Watson, many of whose writings I have already referred to, may have some influence with those who prefer the weight of authorities to the simple deductions of their own reason from the facts laid before them. A few Continental writers have adopted similar conclusions. It gives me pleasure to remember, that while the doctrine has been unceremoniously discredited in one of the leading Journals, and made very light of by teachers in two of the principal Medical Schools, of this country, Dr. Channing has for many years inculcated, and enforced by examples, the danger to be apprehended and the precautions to be taken in the disease under consideration.

I have no wish to express any harsh feeling with regard to the painful subject which has come before us. If there are any so far excited by the story of these dreadful events that they ask for some word of indignant remonstrance to show that science does not turn the hearts of its followers into ice or stone, let me remind them that such words have been uttered by those who speak with an authority I could not claim. It is as a lesson rather than as a reproach that I call up the memory of these irreparable errors and wrongs. No tongue can tell the heart-breaking calamity they have caused; they have closed the eyes just opened upon a new world of love and happiness; they have bowed the strength of manhood into the dust; they have cast the helplessness of infancy into the stranger's arms, or bequeathed it, with less cruelty, the death of its dying parent. There is no tone deep enough for regret, and no voice loud enough for warning. The woman about to become a mother, or with her new-born infant upon her bosom, should be the object of trembling care and sympathy wherever she bears her tender burden, or stretches her aching limbs. The very outcast of the streets has pity upon her sister in degradation, when the seal of promised maternity is impressed upon her. The remorseless vengeance of the law, brought down upon its victim by a machinery as sure as destiny, is arrested in its fall at a word which reveals her transient claim for mercy. The solemn prayer of the liturgy singles out her sorrows from the multiplied trials of life, to plead for her in the hour of peril. God forbid that any member of the profession to which she trusts her life, doubly precious at that eventful period, should hazard it negligently, unadvisedly, or selfishly!

There may be some among those whom I address who are disposed to ask the question, What course are we to follow in relation to this matter? The facts are before them, and the answer must be left to their own judgment and conscience. If any should care to know my own conclusions, they are the following; and in taking the liberty to state them very freely and broadly, I would ask the inquirer to examine them as freely in the light of the evidence which has been laid before him.

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1. A physician holding himself in readiness to attend cases of midwifery should never take any active part in the post-mortem examination of cases of puerperal fever.
 2. If a physician is present at such autopsies, he should use thorough ablution, change every article of dress, and allow twenty-four hours or more to elapse before attending to any case of midwifery. It may be well to extend the same caution to cases of simple peritonitis.
 3. Similar precautions should be taken after the autopsy or surgical treatment of cases of erysipelas, if the physician is obliged to unite such offices with his obstetrical duties, which is in the highest degree inexpedient.
 4. On the occurrence of a single case of puerperal fever in his practice, the physician is bound to consider the next female he attends in labor, unless some weeks at least have elapsed, as in danger of being infected by him, and it is his duty to take every precaution to diminish her risk of disease and death.
 5. If within a short period two cases of puerperal fever happen close to each other, in the practice of the same physician, the disease not existing or prevailing in the neighborhood, he would do wisely to relinquish his obstetrical practice for at least one month, and endeavor to free himself by every available means from any noxious influence he may carry about with him.
 6. The occurrence of three or more closely connected cases, in the practice of one individual, no others existing in the neighborhood, and no other sufficient cause being alleged for the coincidence, is *prima facie* evidence that he is the vehicle of contagion.
 7. It is the duty of the physician to take every precaution that the disease shall not be introduced by nurses or other assistants, by making proper inquiries concerning them, and giving timely warning of every suspected source of danger.
 8. Whatever indulgence may be granted to those who have heretofore been the ignorant causes of so much misery, the time has come when the existence of a private pestilence in the sphere of a single physician should be looked upon, not as a misfortune, but a crime; and in the knowledge of such occurrences the duties of the practitioner to his profession should give way to his paramount obligations to society.
- Additional references and cases.*

Fifth Annual Report of the Registrar-General of England.

1843. Appendix. Letter from William Farr, Esq.—Several new series of cases are given in the Letter of Mr. Stows, contained in the Appendix to this Report. Mr. Stows suggests precautions similar to those I have laid down, and these precautions are strongly enforced by Mr. Farr, who is, therefore, obnoxious to the same criticisms as myself.

Hall and Dexter, in Am. Journal of Med. Sc. for January, 1844.—Cases of puerperal fever seeming to originate in erysipelas.

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Elkington, of Birmingham, in Provincial Med. Journal, cited in Am. Journ. Med. Se. for April, 1844.—Six cases in less than a fortnight, seeming to originate in a case of erysipelas.

West's Reports, in Brit. and For. Med. Review for October, 1845, and January, 1847. —Affection of the arm, resembling malignant pustule, after removing the placenta of a patient who died from puerperal fever. Reference to cases at Wurzburg, as proving contagion, and to Keiller's cases in the Monthly Journal for February, 1846, as showing connection of puerperal fever and erysipelas.

Kneeland.—Contagiousness of Puerperal Fever. Am. Jour. Med. Se., January, 1846. Also, Connection between Puerperal Fever and Epidemic Erysipelas. Ibid., April, 1846.

Robert Storrs.—Contagious Effects of Puerperal Fever on the Male Subject; or on Persons not Child-bearing. (From Provincial Med. and Surg. Journal.) Am. Jour. Med. Sc., January, 1846. Numerous cases. See also Dr. Reid's case in same Journal for April, 1846.

Routh's paper in Proc. of Royal Med. Chir. Soc., Am. Jour. Med. Sc., April, 1849, also in B. and F. Med. Chir. Review, April, 1850.

Hill, of Leuchars.—A Series of Cases illustrating the Contagious Nature of Erysipelas and of Puerperal Fever, and their Intimate Pathological Connection. (From Monthly Journal of Med. Sc.) Am. Jour. Med. Se., July, 1850.

Skoda on the Causes of Puerperal Fever. (Peritonitis in rabbits, from inoculation with different morbid secretions.) Am. Jour. Med. Se., October, 1850.

Arneth. Paper read before the National Academy of Medicine. Annales d'Hygiene, Tome LXV. 2e Partie. (Means of Disinfection proposed by M. "Semmelweis" (Semmelweiss.) Lotions of chloride of lime and use of nail-brush before admission to lying-in wards. Alleged sudden and great decrease of mortality from puerperal fever. Cause of disease attributed to inoculation with cadaveric matters.) See also Routh's paper, mentioned above.

Moir. Remarks at a meeting of the Edinburgh Medico-Chirurgical Society. Refers to cases of Dr. Kellie, of Leith. Sixteen in succession, all fatal. Also to several instances of individual pupils having had a succession of cases in various quarters of the town, while others, practising as extensively in the same localities, had none. Also to several special cases not mentioned elsewhere. Am. Jour. Med. Se. for October, 1851. (From New Monthly Journal of Med. Science.)

Simpson.—Observations at a Meeting of the Edinburgh Obstetrical Society. (An "eminent gentleman," according to Dr. Meigs, whose "name is as well known in America



as in (his) native land.” Obstetrics. Phil. 1852, pp. 368, 375.) The student is referred to this paper for a valuable resume of many of the facts, and the necessary inferences, relating to this subject. Also for another series of cases, Mr. Sidey’s, five or six in rapid succession.

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Dr. Simpson attended the dissection of two of Dr. Sidey's cases, and freely handled the diseased parts. His next four child-bed patients were affected with puerperal fever, and it was the first time he had seen it in practice. As Dr. Simpson is a gentleman (Dr. Meigs, as above), and as "a gentleman's hands are clean" (Dr. Meigs' Sixth Letter), it follows that a gentleman with clean hands may carry the disease. *Am. Jour. Med. Sc.*, October, 1851.

Peddle.—The five or six cases of Dr. Sidey, followed by the four of Dr. Simpson, did not end the series. A practitioner in Leith having examined in Dr. Simpson's house, a portion of the uterus obtained from one of the patients, had immediately afterwards three fatal cases of puerperal fever. Dr. Veddle referred to two distinct series of consecutive cases in his own practice. He had since taken precautions, and not met with any such cases. *Am. Jour. Med. Sc.*, October, 1851.

Copland. Considers it proved that puerperal fever maybe propagated by the hands and the clothes, or either, of a third person, the bed-clothes or body-clothes of a patient. Mentions a new series of cases, one of which he saw, with the practitioner who had attended them. She was the sixth he had had within a few days. All died. Dr. Copland insisted that contagion had caused these cases; advised precautionary measures, and the practitioner had no other cases for a considerable time. Considers it criminal, after the evidence adduced,—which he could have quadrupled,—and the weight of authority brought forward, for a practitioner to be the medium of transmitting contagion and death to his patients. Dr. Copland lays down rules similar to those suggested by myself, and is therefore entitled to the same epithet for so doing. *Medical Dictionary*, New York, 1852. Article, Puerperal States and Diseases.

If there is any appetite for facts so craving as to be yet unappeased,—Lesotho, necdum satiata,—more can be obtained. Dr. Hodge remarks that "the frequency and importance of this singular circumstance (that the disease is occasionally more prevalent with one practitioner than another) has been exceedingly overrated." More than thirty strings of cases, more than two hundred and fifty sufferers from puerperal fever, more than one hundred and thirty deaths appear as the results of a sparing estimate of such among the facts I have gleaned as could be numerically valued. These facts constitute, we may take it for granted, but a small fraction of those that have actually occurred. The number of them might be greater, but "'t is enough, 't will serve," in Mercutio's modest phrase, so far as frequency is concerned. For a just estimate of the importance of the singular circumstance, it might be proper to consult the languid survivors, the widowed husbands, and the motherless children, as well as "the unfortunate accoucheur."

III

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CURRENTS AND COUNTER-CURRENTS IN MEDICAL SCIENCE

An Address delivered before the Massachusetts Medical Society, at the Annual Meeting, May 30, 1860.

“Facultate magis quam violentia.”
Hippocrates.

Our Annual Meeting never fails to teach us at least one lesson. The art whose province it is to heal and to save cannot protect its own ranks from the inroads of disease and the waste of the Destroyer.

Seventeen of our associates have been taken from us since our last Anniversary. Most of them followed their calling in the villages or towns that lie among the hills or along the inland streams. Only those who have lived the kindly, mutually dependent life of the country, can tell how near the physician who is the main reliance in sickness of all the families throughout a thinly settled region comes to the hearts of the people among whom he labors, how they value him while living, how they cherish his memory when dead. For these friends of ours who have gone before, there is now no more toil; they start from their slumbers no more at the cry of pain; they sally forth no more into the storms; they ride no longer over the lonely roads that knew them so well; their wheels are rusting on their axles or rolling with other burdens; their watchful eyes are closed to all the sorrows they lived to soothe. Not one of these was famous in the great world; some were almost unknown beyond their own immediate circle. But they have left behind them that loving remembrance which is better than fame, and if their epitaphs are chiselled briefly in stone, they are written at full length on living tablets in a thousand homes to which they carried their ever-welcome aid and sympathy.

One whom we have lost, very widely known and honored, was a leading practitioner of this city. His image can hardly be dimmed in your recollection, as he stood before you only three years ago, filling the same place with which I am now honored. To speak of him at all worthily, would be to write the history of professional success, won without special aid at starting, by toil, patience, good sense, pure character, and pleasing manners; won in a straight uphill ascent, without one breathing-space until he sat down, not to rest, but to die. If prayers could have shielded him from the stroke, if love could have drawn forth the weapon, and skill could have healed the wound, this passing tribute might have been left to other lips and to another generation.

Let us hope that our dead have at last found that rest which neither summer nor winter, nor day nor night, had granted to their unending earthly labors! And let us remember that our duties to our brethren do not cease when they become unable to share our toils, or leave behind them in want and woe those whom their labor had supported. It is honorable to the Profession that it has organized an Association for the relief of its suffering members and their families; it owes this tribute to the ill-rewarded industry and

sacrifices of its less fortunate brothers who wear out health and life in the service of humanity. I have great pleasure in referring to this excellent movement, which gives our liberal profession a chance to show its liberality, and serves to unite us all, the successful and those whom fortune has cast down, in the bonds of a true brotherhood.

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A medical man, as he goes about his daily business after twenty years of practice, is apt to suppose that he treats his patients according to the teachings of his experience. No doubt this is true to some extent; to what extent depending much on the qualities of the individual. But it is easy to prove that the prescriptions of even wise physicians are very commonly founded on something quite different from experience. Experience must be based on the permanent facts of nature. But a glance at the prevalent modes of treatment of any two successive generations will show that there is a changeable as well as a permanent element in the art of healing; not merely changeable as diseases vary, or as new remedies are introduced, but changeable by the going out of fashion of special remedies, by the decadence of a popular theory from which their fitness was deduced, or other cause not more significant. There is no reason to suppose that the present time is essentially different in this respect from any other. Much, therefore, which is now very commonly considered to be the result of experience, will be recognized in the next, or in some succeeding generation, as no such result at all, but as a foregone conclusion, based on some prevalent belief or fashion of the time.

There are, of course, in every calling, those who go about the work of the day before them, doing it according to the rules of their craft, and asking no questions of the past or of the future, or of the aim and end to which their special labor is contributing. These often consider and call themselves practical men. They pull the oars of society, and have no leisure to watch the currents running this or that way; let theorists and philosophers attend to them. In the mean time, however, these currents are carrying the practical men, too, and all their work may be thrown away, and worse than thrown away, if they do not take knowledge of them and get out of the wrong ones and into the right ones as soon as they may. Sir Edward Parry and his party were going straight towards the pole in one of their arctic expeditions, travelling at the rate of ten miles a day. But the ice over which they travelled was drifting straight towards the equator, at the rate of twelve miles a day, and yet no man among them would have known that he was travelling two miles a day backward unless he had lifted his eyes from the track in which he was plodding. It is not only going backward that the plain practical workman is liable to, if he will not look up and look around; he may go forward to ends he little dreams of. It is a simple business for a mason to build up a niche in a wall; but what if, a hundred years afterwards when the wall is torn down, the skeleton of a murdered man drop out of the niche? It was a plain practical piece of carpentry for a Jewish artisan to fit two pieces of timber together according to the legal pattern in the time of Pontius Pilate; he asked no questions, perhaps, but we know what burden the cross bore on the morrow! And so, with subtler tools than trowels or axes, the statesman who works in policy without principle, the theologian who works in forms without a soul, the physician who, calling himself a practical man, refuses to recognize the larger laws which govern his changing practice, may all find that they have been building truth into the wall, and hanging humanity upon the cross.

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The truth is, that medicine, professedly founded on observation, is as sensitive to outside influences, political, religious, philosophical, imaginative, as is the barometer to the changes of atmospheric density. Theoretically it ought to go on its own straightforward inductive path, without regard to changes of government or to fluctuations of public opinion. But look a moment while I clash a few facts together, and see if some sparks do not reveal by their light a closer relation between the Medical Sciences and the conditions of Society and the general thought of the time, than would at first be suspected.

Observe the coincidences between certain great political and intellectual periods and the appearance of illustrious medical reformers and teachers. It was in the age of Pericles, of Socrates, of Plato, of Phidias, that Hippocrates gave to medical knowledge the form which it retained for twenty centuries. With the world-conquering Alexander, the world-embracing Aristotle, appropriating anatomy and physiology, among his manifold spoils of study, marched abreast of his royal pupil to wider conquests. Under the same Ptolemies who founded the Alexandrian Library and Museum, and ordered the Septuagint version of the Hebrew Scriptures, the infallible Herophilus ["Contradicere Herophilo in anatomicis, est contradicere evangelium," was a saying of Fallopius.] made those six hundred dissections of which Tertullian accused him, and the sagacious Erasistratus introduced his mild antiphlogistic treatment in opposition to the polypharmacy and antidotal practice of his time. It is significant that the large-minded Galen should have been the physician and friend of the imperial philosopher Marcus Aurelius. The Arabs gave laws in various branches of knowledge to those whom their arms had invaded, or the terror of their spreading dominion had reached, and the point from which they started was, as Humboldt acknowledges, "the study of medicine, by which they long ruled the Christian Schools," and to which they added the department of chemical pharmacy.

Look at Vesalius, the contemporary of Luther. Who can fail to see one common spirit in the radical ecclesiastic and the reforming court-physician? Both still to some extent under the dominion of the letter: Luther holding to the real presence; Vesalius actually causing to be drawn and engraved two muscles which he knew were not found in the human subject, because they had been described by Galen, from dissections of the lower animals. Both breaking through old traditions in the search of truth; one, knife in hand, at the risk of life and reputation, the other at the risk of fire and fagot, with that mightier weapon which all the devils could not silence, though they had been thicker than the tiles on the house-tops. How much the physician of the Catholic Charles V. had in common with the great religious destructive, may be guessed by the relish with which he tells the story

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how certain Pavian students exhumed the body of an “*elegans scortum*,” or lovely dame of ill repute, the favorite of a monk of the order of St. Anthony, who does not seem to have resisted temptation so well as the founder of his order. We have always ranked the physician Rabelais among the early reformers, but I do not know that Vesalius has ever been thanked for his hit at the morals of the religious orders, or for turning to the good of science what was intended for the “benefit of clergy.”

Our unfortunate medical brother, Michael Servetus, the spiritual patient to whom the theological moxa was applied over the entire surface for the cure of his heresy, came very near anticipating Harvey. The same quickened thought of the time which led him to dispute the dogma of the Church, opened his mind to the facts which contradicted the dogmas of the Faculty.

Harvey himself was but the posthumous child of the great Elizabethan period. Bacon was at once his teacher and his patient. The founder of the new inductive philosophy had only been dead two years when the treatise on the Circulation, the first-fruit of the Restoration of Science, was given to the world.

And is it to be looked at as a mere accidental coincidence, that while Napoleon was modernizing the political world, Bichat was revolutionizing the science of life and the art that is based upon it; that while the young general was scaling the Alps, the young surgeon was climbing the steeper summits of unexplored nature; that the same year read the announcement of those admirable “*Researches on Life and Death*,” and the bulletins of the battle of Marengo?

If we come to our own country, who can fail to recognize that Benjamin Rush, the most conspicuous of American physicians, was the intellectual offspring of the movement which produced the Revolution? “The same hand,” says one of his biographers, “which subscribed the declaration of the political independence of these States, accomplished their emancipation from medical systems formed in foreign countries, and wholly unsuitable to the state of diseases in America.”

Following this general course of remark, I propose to indicate in a few words the direction of the main intellectual current of the time, and to point out more particularly some of the eddies which tend to keep the science and art of medicine from moving with it, or even to carry them backwards.

The two dominant words of our time are law and average, both pointing to the uniformity of the order of being in which we live. Statistics have tabulated everything,—population, growth, wealth, crime, disease. We have shaded maps showing the geographical distribution of larceny and suicide. Analysis and classification have been at work upon

all tangible and visible objects. The Positive Philosophy of Comte has only given expression to the observing and computing mind of the nineteenth century.

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In the mean time, the great stronghold of intellectual conservatism, traditional belief, has been assailed by facts which would have been indicted as blasphemy but a few generations ago. Those new tables of the law, placed in the hands of the geologist by the same living God who spoke from Sinai to the Israelites of old, have remodelled the beliefs of half the civilized world. The solemn scepticism of science has replaced the sneering doubts of witty philosophers. The more positive knowledge we gain, the more we incline to question all that has been received without absolute proof.

As a matter of course, this movement has its partial reactions. The province of faith is claimed as a port free of entry to unsupported individual convictions. The tendency to question is met by the unanalyzing instinct of reverence. The old church calls back its frightened truants. Some who have lost their hereditary religious belief find a resource in the revelations of Spiritualism. By a parallel movement, some of those who have become medical infidels pass over to the mystic band of believers in the fancied miracles of Homoeopathy.

Under these influences transmitted to, or at least shared by, the medical profession, the old question between "Nature," so called, and "Art," or professional tradition, has reappeared with new interest. I say the old question, for Hippocrates stated the case on the side of "Nature" more than two thousand years ago. Miss Florence Nightingale,—and if I name her next to the august Father of the Healing Art, its noblest daughter well deserves that place of honor,—Miss Florence Nightingale begins her late volume with a paraphrase of his statement. But from a very early time to this there has always been a strong party against "Nature." Themison called the practice of Hippocrates "a meditation upon death." Dr. Rush says: "It is impossible to calculate the mischief which Hippocrates, has done, by first marking Nature with his name and afterwards letting her loose upon sick people. Millions have perished by her hands in all ages and countries." Sir John Forbes, whose defence of "Nature" in disease you all know, and to the testimonial in whose honor four of your Presidents have contributed, has been recently greeted, on retiring from the profession, with a wish that his retirement had been twenty years sooner, and the opinion that no man had done so much to destroy the confidence of the public in the medical profession.

In this Society we have had the Hippocratic and the Themisonic side fairly represented. The treatise of one of your early Presidents on the Mercurial Treatment is familiar to my older listeners. Others who have held the same office have been noted for the boldness of their practice, and even for partiality to the use of complex medication.

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On the side of "Nature" we have had, first of all, that remarkable discourse on Self-Limited Diseases, [On Self-Limited Diseases. A Discourse delivered before the Massachusetts Medical Society, at their Annual Meeting, May 27, 1835. By Jacob Bigelow, M. D.] which has given the key-note to the prevailing medical tendency of this neighborhood, at least, for the quarter of a century since it was delivered. Nor have we forgotten the address delivered at Springfield twenty years later, [Search out the Secrets, of Nature. By Augustus A. Gould, M. D. Read at the Annual Meeting, June 27, 1855.] full of good sense and useful suggestions, to one of which suggestions we owe the learned, impartial, judicious, well-written Prize Essay of Dr. Worthington Hooker. [Rational Therapeutics. A Prize Essay. By Worthington Hooker, M. D., of New Haven. Boston. 1857.] We should not omit from the list the important address of another of our colleagues, [On the Treatment of Compound and Complicated Fractures. By William J. Walker, M. D. Read at the Annual Meeting, May 29, 1845.] showing by numerous cases the power of Nature in healing compound fractures to be much greater than is frequently supposed,—affording, indeed, more striking illustrations than can be obtained from the history of visceral disease, of the supreme wisdom, forethought, and adaptive dexterity of that divine Architect, as shown in repairing the shattered columns which support the living temple of the body.

We who are on the side of "Nature" please ourselves with the idea that we are in the great current in which the true intelligence of the time is moving. We believe that some who oppose, or fear, or denounce our movement are themselves caught in various eddies that set back against the truth. And we do most earnestly desire and most actively strive, that Medicine, which, it is painful to remember, has been spoken of as "the withered branch of science" at a meeting of the British Association, shall be at length brought fully to share, if not to lead, the great wave of knowledge which rolls with the tides that circle the globe.

If there is any State or city which might claim to be the American headquarters of the nature-trusting heresy, provided it be one, that State is Massachusetts, and that city is its capital. The effect which these doctrines have upon the confidence reposed in the profession is a matter of opinion. For myself, I do not believe this confidence can be impaired by any investigations which tend to limit the application of troublesome, painful, uncertain, or dangerous remedies. Nay, I will venture to say this, that if every specific were to fail utterly, if the cinchona trees all died out, and the arsenic mines were exhausted, and the sulphur regions were burned up, if every drug from the vegetable, animal, and mineral kingdom were to disappear from the market, a body of enlightened men, organized as a distinct profession, would be required just as much as now, and respected and trusted as now,

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whose province should be to guard against the causes of disease, to eliminate them if possible when still present, to order all the conditions of the patient so as to favor the efforts of the system to right itself, and to give those predictions of the course of disease which only experience can warrant, and which in so many cases relieve the exaggerated fears of sufferers and their friends, or warn them in season of impending danger. Great as the loss would be if certain active remedies could no longer be obtained, it would leave the medical profession the most essential part of it's duties, and all, and more than all, its present share of honors; for it would be the death-blow to charlatanism, which depends for its success almost entirely on drugs, or at least on a nomenclature that suggests them.

There is no offence, then, or danger in expressing the opinion, that, after all which has been said, the community is still overdosed: The best proof of it is, that "no families take so little medicine as those of doctors, except those of apothecaries, and that old practitioners are more sparing of active medicines than younger ones." [Dr. James Jackson has kindly permitted me to make the following extract from a letter just received by him from Sir James Clark, and dated May 26, 1860: "As a physician advances in age, he generally, I think, places less confidence in the ordinary medical treatment than he did, not only during his early, but even his middle period of life."] The conclusion from these facts is one which the least promising of Dr. Howe's pupils in the mental department could hardly help drawing.

Part of the blame of over-medication must, I fear, rest with the profession, for yielding to the tendency to self-delusion, which seems inseparable from the practice of the art of healing. I need only touch on the common modes of misunderstanding or misapplying the evidence of nature.

First, there is the natural incapacity for sound observation, which is like a faulty ear in music. We see this in many persons who know a good deal about books, but who are not sharp-sighted enough to buy a horse or deal with human diseases.

Secondly, there is in some persons a singular inability to weigh the value of testimony; of which, I think, from a pretty careful examination of his books, Hahnemann affords the best specimen outside the walls of Bedlam.

The inveterate logical errors to which physicians have always been subject are chiefly these:

The mode of inference per enumerationem simplicem, in scholastic phrase; that is, counting only their favorable cases. This is the old trick illustrated in Lord Bacon's story of the gifts of the shipwrecked people, hung up in the temple.—Behold! they vowed these gifts to the altar, and the gods saved them. Ay, said a doubting bystander, but

how many made vows of gifts and were shipwrecked notwithstanding? The numerical system is the best corrective of this and similar errors. The arguments commonly brought against its application to all matters of medical observation, treatment included, seem to apply rather to the tabulation of facts ill observed, or improperly classified, than to the method itself.

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The post hoc ergo propter hoc error: he got well after taking my medicine; therefore in consequence of taking it.

The false induction from genuine facts of observation, leading to the construction of theories which are then deductively applied in the face of the results of direct observation. The school of Broussais has furnished us with a good example of this error.

And lastly, the error which Sir Thomas Browne calls giving “a reason of the golden tooth;” that is, assuming a falsehood as a fact, and giving reasons for it, commonly fanciful ones, as is constantly done by that class of incompetent observers who find their “golden tooth” in the fabulous effects of the homoeopathie materia medica,—which consists of sugar of milk and a nomenclature.

Another portion of the blame rests with the public itself, which insists on being poisoned. Somebody buys all the quack medicines that build palaces for the mushroom, say rather, the toadstool millionaires. Who is it? These people have a constituency of millions. The popular belief is all but universal that sick persons should feed on noxious substances. One of our members was called not long since to a man with a terribly sore mouth. On inquiry he found that the man had picked up a box of unknown pills, in Howard Street, and had proceeded to take them, on general principles, pills being good for people. They happened to contain mercury, and hence the trouble for which he consulted our associate.

The outside pressure, therefore, is immense upon the physician, tending to force him to active treatment of some kind. Certain old superstitions, still lingering in the mind of the public, and not yet utterly expelled from that of the profession, are at the bottom of this, or contribute to it largely. One of the most ancient is, that disease is a malignant agency, or entity, to be driven out of the body by offensive substances, as the smoke of the fish’s heart and liver drove the devil out of Tobit’s bridal chamber, according to the Apochrypha. Epileptics used to suck the blood from the wounds of dying gladiators. [Plinii Hist. Mundi. lib. xxviii. c. 4.] The Hon. Robert Boyle’s little book was published some twenty or thirty years before our late President, Dr. Holyoke, was born. [A Collection of Choice and Safe Remedies. The Fifth Edition, corrected. London, 1712. Dr. Holyoke was born in 1728.] In it he recommends, as internal medicines, most of the substances commonly used as fertilizers of the soil. His “Album Graecum” is best left untranslated, and his “Zebethum Occidentale” is still more transcendently unmentionable except in a strange dialect. It sounds odiously to us to hear him recommend for dysentery a powder made from “the sole of an old shoe worn by some man that walks much.” Perhaps nobody here ever heard of tying a stocking, which had been worn during the day, round the neck at night for a sore throat. The same idea of virtue in unlovely secretions! [The idea is very ancient. “Sordes hominis” “Sudore et oleo medicinam facientibus.”—Plin. xxviii. 4.]

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Even now the Homoeopathists have been introducing the venom of serpents, under the learned title of Lachesis, and outraging human nature with infusions of the pediculus capitis; that is, of course, as we understand their dilutions, the names of these things; for if a fine-tooth-comb insect were drowned in Lake Superior, we cannot agree with them in thinking that every drop of its waters would be impregnated with all the pedicular virtues they so highly value. They know what they are doing. They are appealing to the detestable old superstitious presumption in favor of whatever is nauseous and noxious as being good for the sick.

Again, we all occasionally meet persons stained with nitrate of silver, given for epilepsy. Read what Dr. Martin says, about the way in which it came to be used, in his excellent address before the Norfolk County Medical Society, and the evidence I can show, but have not time for now, and then say what you think of the practice which on such presumptions turns a white man as blue as the double-tattooed King of the Cannibal Islands! [Note A.]

If medical superstitions have fought their way down through all the rationalism and scepticism of the nineteenth century, of course the theories of the schools, supported by great names, adopted into the popular belief and incorporated with the general mass of misapprehension with reference to disease, must be expected to meet us at every turn in the shape of bad practice founded on false doctrine. A French patient complains that his blood heats him, and expects his doctor to bleed him. An English or American one says he is bilious, and will not be easy without a dose of calomel. A doctor looks at a patient's tongue, sees it coated, and says the stomach is foul; his head full of the old saburrall notion which the extreme inflammation-doctrine of Broussais did so much to root out, but which still leads, probably, to much needless and injurious wrong of the stomach and bowels by evacuants, when all they want is to be let alone. It is so hard to get anything out of the dead hand of medical tradition! The mortmain of theorists extinct in science clings as close as that of ecclesiastics defunct in law.

One practical hint may not be out of place here. It seems to be sometimes forgotten, by those who must know the fact, that the tongue is very different, anatomically and physiologically, from the stomach. Its condition does not in the least imply a similar one of the stomach, which is a very different structure, covered with a different kind of epithelium, and furnished with entirely different secretions. A silversmith will, for a dollar, make a small hoe, of solid silver, which will last for centuries, and will give a patient more comfort, used for the removal of the accumulated epithelium and fungous growths which constitute the "fur," than many a prescription with a split-footed Rx before it, addressed to the parts out of reach.

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I think more of this little implement on account of its agency in saving the Colony at Plymouth in the year 1623. Edward Winslow heard that Massasoit was sick and like to die. He found him with a houseful of people about him, women rubbing his arms and legs, and friends “making such a hellish noise” as they probably thought would scare away the devil of sickness. Winslow gave him some conserve, washed his mouth, scraped his tongue, which was in a horrid state, got down some drink, made him some broth, dosed him with an infusion of strawberry leaves and sassafras root, and had the satisfaction of seeing him rapidly recover. Massasoit, full of gratitude, revealed the plot which had been formed to destroy the colonists, whereupon the Governor ordered Captain Miles Standish to see to them; who thereupon, as everybody remembers, stabbed Pecksuot with his own knife, broke up the plot, saved the colony, and thus rendered Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Medical Society a possibility, as they now are a fact before us. So much for this parenthesis of the tongue-scraper, which helped to save the young colony from a much more serious scrape, and may save the Union yet, if a Presidential candidate should happen to be taken sick as Massasoit was, and his tongue wanted cleaning,—which process would not hurt a good many politicians, with or without a typhoid fever.

Again, see how the “bilious” theory works in every-day life here and now, illustrated by a case from actual life. A youthful practitioner, whose last molars have not been a great while cut, meets an experienced and noted physician in consultation. This is the case. A slender, lymphatic young woman is suckling two lusty twins, the intervals of suction being occupied on her part with palpitations, headaches, giddiness, throbbing in the head, and various nervous symptoms, her cheeks meantime getting bloodless, and her strength running away in company with her milk. The old experienced physician, seeing the yellowish waxy look which is common in anaemic patients, considers it a “bilious” case, and is for giving a rousing emetic. Of course, he has to be wheedled out of this, a recipe is written for beefsteaks and porter, the twins are ignominiously expelled from the anaemic bosom, and forced to take prematurely to the bottle, and this prolific mother is saved for future usefulness in the line of maternity.

The practice of making a profit on the medicine ordered has been held up to reprobation by one at least of the orators who have preceded me. That the effect of this has been ruinous in English practice I cannot doubt, and that in this country the standard of practice was in former generations lowered through the same agency is not unlikely. I have seen an old account-book in which the physician charged an extra price for gilding his rich patients’ pills. If all medicine were very costly, and the expense of it always came out of the physician’s fee, it would really

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be a less objectionable arrangement than this other most pernicious one. He would naturally think twice before he gave an emetic or cathartic which evacuated his own pocket, and be sparing of the cholagogues that emptied the biliary ducts of his own wallet, unless he were sure they were needed. If there is any temptation, it should not be in favor of giving noxious agents, as it clearly must be in the case of English druggists and "General Practitioners." The complaint against the other course is a very old one. Pliny, inspired with as truly Roman horror of quackery as the elder Cato,—who declared that the Greek doctors had sworn to exterminate all barbarians, including the Romans, with their drugs, but is said to have physicked his own wife to death, notwithstanding,—Pliny says, in so many words, that the cerates and cataplasms, plasters, collyria, and antidotes, so abundant in his time, as in more recent days, were mere tricks to make money.

A pretty strong eddy, then, or rather many eddies, setting constantly back from the current of sober observation of nature, in the direction of old superstitions and fancies, of exploded theories, of old ways of making money, which are very slow to pass out of fashion.

But there are other special American influences which we are bound to take cognizance of. If I wished to show a student the difficulties of getting at truth from medical experience, I would give him the history of epilepsy to read. If I wished him to understand the tendencies of the American medical mind, its sanguine enterprise, its self-confidence, its audacious handling of Nature, its impatience with her old-fashioned ways of taking time to get a sick man well, I would make him read the life and writings of Benjamin Rush. Dr. Rush thought and said that there were twenty times more intellect and a hundred times more knowledge in the country in 1799 than before the Revolution. His own mind was in a perpetual state of exaltation produced by the stirring scenes in which he had taken a part, and the quickened life of the time in which he lived. It was not the state to favor sound, calm observation. He was impatient, and Nature is profoundly imperturbable. We may adjust the beating of our hearts to her pendulum if we will and can, but we may be very sure that she will not change the pendulum's rate of going because our hearts are palpitating. He thought he had mastered yellow-fever. "Thank God," he said, "out of one hundred patients whom I have visited or prescribed for this day, I have lost none." Where was all his legacy of knowledge when Norfolk was decimated? Where was it when the blue flies were buzzing over the coffins of the unburied dead piled up in the cemetery of New Orleans, at the edge of the huge trenches yawning to receive them?

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One such instance will do as well as twenty. Dr. Rush must have been a charming teacher, as he was an admirable man. He was observing, rather than a sound observer; eminently observing, curious, even, about all manner of things. But he could not help feeling as if Nature had been a good deal shaken by the Declaration of Independence, and that American art was getting to be rather too much for her,—especially as illustrated in his own practice. He taught thousands of American students, he gave a direction to the medical mind of the country more than any other one man; perhaps he typifies it better than any other. It has clearly tended to extravagance in remedies and trust in remedies, as in everything else. How could a people which has a revolution once in four years, which has contrived the Bowie-knife and the revolver, which has chewed the juice out of all the superlatives in the language in Fourth of July orations, and so used up its epithets in the rhetoric of abuse that it takes two great quarto dictionaries to supply the demand; which insists in sending out yachts and horses and boys to out-sail, out-run, out-fight, and checkmate all the rest of creation; how could such a people be content with any but “heroic” practice? What wonder that the stars and stripes wave over doses of ninety grains of sulphate of quinine, [More strictly, ninety-six grains in two hours. Dunglison’s Practice, 1842, vol. ii. p. 520. Eighty grains in one dose. Ibid. p. 536. Ninety-six grains of sulphate of quinine are equal to eight ounces of good bark.—Wood & Bache.] and that the American eagle screams with delight to see three drachms of calomel given at a single mouthful?

Add to this the great number of Medical Journals, all useful, we hope, most of them necessary, we trust, many of them excellently well conducted, but which must find something to fill their columns, and so print all the new plans of treatment and new remedies they can get hold of, as the newspapers, from a similar necessity, print the shocking catastrophes and terrible murders.

Besides all this, here are we, the great body of teachers in the numberless medical schools of the Union, some of us lecturing to crowds who clap and stamp in the cities, some of us wandering over the country, like other professional fertilizers, to fecundate the minds of less demonstrative audiences at various scientific stations; all of us talking habitually to those supposed to know less than ourselves, and loving to claim as much for our art as we can, not to say for our own schools, and possibly indirectly for our own practical skill. Hence that annual crop of introductory lectures; the useful blossoming into the ornamental, as the cabbage becomes glorified in the cauliflower; that lecture-room literature of adjectives, that declamatory exaggeration, that splendid show of erudition borrowed from D’Israeli, and credited to Lord Bacon and the rest, which have suggested to our friends of the Medical Journals an occasional epigram at our expense. Hence the tendency in these productions, and in medical lectures generally, to overstate the efficacy of favorite methods of cure, and hence the premium offered for showy talkers rather than sagacious observers, for the men of adjectives rather than of nouns substantive in the more ambitious of these institutions.

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Such are some of the eddies in which we are liable to become involved and carried back out of the broad stream of philosophical, or, in other words, truth-loving, investigations. The causes of disease, in the mean time, have been less earnestly studied in the eagerness of the search for remedies. Speak softly! Women have been borne out from an old-world hospital, two in one coffin, that the horrors of their prison-house might not be known, while the very men who were discussing the treatment of the disease were stupidly conveying the infection from bed to bed, as rat-killers carry their poisons from one household to another. Do not some of you remember that I have had to fight this private-pestilence question against a scepticism which sneered in the face of a mass of evidence such as the calm statisticians of the Insurance office could not listen to without horror and indignation? ["The Contagiousness of Puerperal Fever."—N. E. Quar. Jour. of Medicine and Surgery, April, 1843. Reprinted, with Additions. Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 1855.] Have we forgotten what is told in one of the books published under our own sanction, that a simple measure of ventilation, proposed by Dr. John Clark, had saved more than sixteen thousand children's lives in a single hospital? How long would it have taken small doses of calomel and rhubarb to save as many children? These may be useful in prudent hands, but how insignificant compared to the great hygienic conditions! Causes, causes, and again causes,—more and more we fall back on these as the chief objects of our attention. The shortest system of medical practice that I know of is the oldest, but not the worst. It is older than Hippocrates, older than Chiron the Centaur. Nature taught it to the first mother when she saw her first-born child putting some ugly pebble or lurid berry into its mouth. I know not in what language it was spoken, but I know that in English it would sound thus: Spit it out!

Art can do something more than say this. It can sometimes reach the pebble or berry after it has been swallowed. But the great thing is to keep these things out of children's mouths, and as soon as they are beyond our reach, to be reasonable and patient with Nature, who means well, but does not like to hurry, and who took nine calendar months, more or less, to every mother's son among us, before she thought he was fit to be shown to the public.

Suffer me now to lay down a few propositions, whether old or new it matters little, not for your immediate acceptance, nor yet for your hasty rejection, but for your calm consideration.

But first, there are a number of terms which we are in the habit of using in a vague though not unintelligible way, and which it is as well now to define. These terms are the tools with which we are to work, and the first thing is to sharpen them. It is nothing to us that they have been sharpened a thousand times before; they always get dull in the using, and every new workman has a right to carry them to the grindstone and sharpen them to suit himself.

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Nature, in medical language, as opposed to Art, means trust in the reactions of the living system against, ordinary normal impressions.

Art, in the same language, as opposed to Nature, means an intentional resort to extraordinary abnormal impressions for the relief of disease.

The reaction of the living system is the essence of both. Food is nothing, if there is no digestive act to respond to it. We cannot raise a blister on a dead man, or hope that a carminative forced between his lips will produce its ordinary happy effect.

Disease, dis-ease,—disturbed quiet, uncomfortableness,—means imperfect or abnormal reaction of the living system, and its more or less permanent results.

Food, in its largest sense, is whatever helps to build up the normal structures, or to maintain their natural actions.

Medicine, in distinction from food, is every unnatural or noxious agent applied for the relief of disease.

Physic means properly the Natural art, and Physician is only the Greek synonyme of Naturalist.

With these few explanations I proceed to unfold the propositions I have mentioned.

Disease and death, if we may judge by the records of creation, are inherently and essentially necessary in the present order of things. A perfect intelligence, trained by a perfect education, could do no more than keep the laws of the physical and spiritual universe. An imperfect intelligence, imperfectly taught,—and this is the condition of our finite humanity,—will certainly fail to keep all these laws perfectly. Disease is one of the penalties of one of the forms of such failure. It is prefigured in the perturbations of the planets, in the disintegration of the elemental masses; it has left its traces in the fossil organisms of extinct creations. [Professor Agassiz has kindly handed me the following note: “There are abnormal structures in animals of all ages anterior to the creation of mankind. Malformed specimens of Crinoids are known from the Triassic and Jurassic deposits. Malformed and diseased bones of tertiary mammalia have been collected in the caverns of Gailenreuth with traces of healing.”]

But it is especially the prerogative, I had almost said privilege, of educated and domesticated beings, from man down to the potato, serving to teach them, and such as train them, the laws of life, and to get rid of those who will not mind or cannot be kept subject to these laws.

Disease, being always an effect, is always in exact proportion to the sum of its causes, as much in the case of Spigelius, who dies of a scratch, as in that of the man who

recovers after an iron bar has been shot through his brain. The one prevalent failing of the medical art is to neglect the causes and quarrel with the effect.

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There are certain general facts which include a good deal of what is called and treated as disease. Thus, there are two opposite movements of life to be seen in cities and elsewhere, belonging to races which, from various persistent causes, are breeding down and tending to run out, and to races which are breeding up, or accumulating vital capital,—a descending and an ascending series. Let me give an example of each; and that I may incidentally remove a common impression about this country as compared with the Old World, an impression which got tipsy with conceit and staggered into the attitude of a formal proposition in the work of Dr. Robert Knox, I will illustrate the downward movement from English experience, and the upward movement from a family history belonging to this immediate neighborhood.

Miss Nightingale speaks of “the fact so often seen of a great-grandmother, who was a tower of physical vigor, descending into a grandmother perhaps a little less vigorous, but still sound as a bell, and healthy to the core, into a mother languid and confined to her carriage and house; and lastly into a daughter sickly and confined to her bed.” So much for the descending English series; now for the ascending American series.

Something more than one hundred and thirty years ago there graduated at Harvard College a delicate youth, who lived an invalid life and died at the age of about fifty. His two children were both of moderate physical power, and one of them diminutive in stature. The next generation rose in physical development, and reached eighty years of age and more in some of its members. The fourth generation was of fair average endowment. The fifth generation, great-great-grandchildren of the slender invalid, are several of, them of extraordinary bodily and mental power; large in stature, formidable alike with their brains and their arms, organized on a more extensive scale than either of their parents.

This brief account illustrates incidentally the fallacy of the universal-degeneration theory applied to American life; the same on which one of our countrymen has lately brought some very forcible facts to bear in a muscular discussion of which we have heard rather more than is good for us. But the two series, American and English, ascending and descending, were adduced with the main purpose of showing the immense difference of vital endowments in different strains of blood; a difference to which all ordinary medication is in all probability a matter of comparatively trivial purport. Many affections which art has to strive against might be easily shown to be vital to the well-being of society. Hydrocephalus, tabes mesenterica, and other similar maladies, are natural agencies which cut off the children of races that are sinking below the decent minimum which nature has established as the condition of viability, before they reach the age of reproduction. They are really not so much diseases, as manifestations of congenital incapacity for life; the race would be ruined if art could ever learn always to preserve the individuals subject to them. We must do the best we can for them, but we ought also to know what these “diseases” mean.

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Again, invalidism is the normal state of many organizations. It can be changed to disease, but never to absolute health by medicinal appliances. There are many ladies, ancient and recent, who are perpetually taking remedies for irremediable pains and aches. They ought to have headaches and back-aches and stomach-aches; they are not well if they do not have them. To expect them to live without frequent twinges is like expecting a doctor's old chaise to go without creaking; if it did, we might be sure the springs were broken. There is no doubt that the constant demand for medicinal remedies from patients of this class leads to their over-use; often in the case of cathartics, sometimes in that of opiates. I have been told by an intelligent practitioner in a Western town, that the constant prescription of opiates by certain physicians in his vicinity has rendered the habitual use of that drug in all that region very prevalent; more common, I should think, than alcoholic drunkenness in the most intemperate localities of which I have known anything. A frightful endemic demoralization betrays itself in the frequency with which the haggard features and drooping shoulders of the opium-drunkards are met with in the streets.

The next proposition I would ask you to consider is this: The presumption always is that every noxious agent, including medicines proper, which hurts a well man, hurts a sick one. [Note B.]

Let me illustrate this proposition before you decide upon it. If it were known that a prize-fighter were to have a drastic purgative administered two or three days before a contest, or a large blister applied to his back, no one will question that it would affect the betting on his side unfavorably; we will say to the amount of five per cent. Now the drain upon the resources of the system produced in such a case must be at its minimum, for the subject is a powerful man, in the prime of life, and in admirable condition. If the drug or the blister takes five per cent. from his force of resistance, it will take at least as large a fraction from any invalid. But this invalid has to fight a champion who strikes hard but cannot be hit in return, who will press him sharply for breath, but will never pant himself while the wind can whistle through his fleshless ribs. The suffering combatant is liable to want all his stamina, and five per cent. may lose him the battle.

All noxious agents, all appliances which are not natural food or stimuli, all medicines proper, cost a patient, on the average, five per cent. of his vital force, let us say. Twenty times as much waste of force produced by any of them, that is, would exactly kill him, nothing less than kill him, and nothing more. If this, or something like this, is true, then all these medications are, *prima facie*, injurious.

In the game of Life-or-Death, Rouge et Noir, as played between the Doctor and the Sexton, this five per cent., this certain small injury entering into the chances is clearly the sexton's perquisite for keeping the green table, over which the game is played, and where he hoards up his gains. Suppose a blister to diminish a man's pain, effusion or dyspnoea to the saving of twenty per cent. in vital force; his profit from it is fifteen, in

that case, for it always hurts him five to begin with, according to our previous assumption.

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Presumptions are of vast importance in medicine, as in law. A man is presumed innocent until he is proved guilty. A medicine—that is, a noxious agent, like a blister, a seton, an emetic, or a cathartic—should always be presumed to be hurtful. It always is directly hurtful; it may sometimes be indirectly beneficial. If this presumption were established, and disease always assumed to be the innocent victim of circumstances, and not punishable by medicines, that is, noxious agents, or poisons, until the contrary was shown, we should not so frequently hear the remark commonly, perhaps erroneously, attributed to Sir Astley Cooper, but often repeated by sensible persons, that, on the whole, more harm than good is done by medication. Throw out opium, which the Creator himself seems to prescribe, for we often see the scarlet poppy growing in the cornfields, as if it were foreseen that wherever there is hunger to be fed there must also be pain to be soothed; throw out a few specifics which our art did not discover, and is hardly needed to apply [Note C.]; throw out wine, which is a food, and the vapors which produce the miracle of anaesthesia, and I firmly believe that if the whole materia medica, as now used, could be sunk to the bottom of the sea, it would be all the better for mankind,—and all the worse for the fishes.

But to justify this proposition, I must add that the injuries inflicted by over-medication are to a great extent masked by disease. Dr. Hooker believes that the typhus syncopatia of a preceding generation in New England “was often in fact a brandy and opium disease.” How is a physician to distinguish the irritation produced by his blister from that caused by the inflammation it was meant to cure? How can he tell the exhaustion produced by his evacuants from the collapse belonging to the disease they were meant to remove?

Lastly, medication without insuring favorable hygienic conditions is like amputation without ligatures. I had a chance to learn this well of old, when physician to the Broad Street district of the Boston Dispensary. There, there was no help for the utter want of wholesome conditions, and if anybody got well under my care, it must have been in virtue of the rough-and-tumble constitution which emerges from the struggle for life in the street gutters, rather than by the aid of my prescriptions.

But if the materia medica were lost overboard, how much more pains would be taken in ordering all the circumstances surrounding the patient (as can be done everywhere out of the crowded pauper districts), than are taken now by too many who think they do their duty and earn their money when they write a recipe for a patient left in an atmosphere of domestic malaria, or to the most negligent kind of nursing! I confess that I should think my chance of recovery from illness less with Hippocrates for my physician and Mrs. Gamp for my nurse, than if I were in the hands of Hahnemann himself, with Florence Nightingale or good Rebecca Taylor to care for me.

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If I am right in maintaining that the presumption is always against the use of noxious agents in disease, and if any whom I might influence should adopt this as a principle of practice, they will often find themselves embarrassed by the imperative demand of patients and their friends for such agents where a case is not made out against this standing presumption. I must be permitted to say, that I think the French, a not wholly uncivilized people, are in advance of the English and ourselves in the art of prescribing for the sick without hurting them. And I do confess that I think their varied ptisans and syrups are as much preferable to the mineral regimen of bug-poison and ratsbane, so long in favor on the other side of the Channel, as their art of preparing food for the table to the rude cookery of those hard-feeding and much-dosing islanders. We want a reorganized cuisine of invalidism perhaps as much as the culinary, reform, for which our lyceum lecturers, and others who live much at hotels and taverns, are so urgent. Will you think I am disrespectful if I ask whether, even in Massachusetts, a dose of calomel is not sometimes given by a physician on the same principle as that upon which a landlord occasionally prescribes bacon and eggs,—because he cannot think of anything else quite so handy? I leave my suggestion of borrowing a hint from French practice to your mature consideration.

I may, however, call your attention, briefly, to the singular fact, that English and American practitioners are apt to accuse French medical practice of inertness, and French surgical practice of unnecessary activity. Thus, Dr. Bostock considers French medical treatment, with certain exceptions, as “decidedly less effective” than that of his own country. Mr. S. Cooper, again, defends the simple British practice of procuring union by the first intention against the attacks of M. Roux and Baron Larrey. [Cooper’s Surg. Diet. art. “Wounds.” Yet Mr. John Bell gives the French surgeons credit for introducing this doctrine of adhesion, and accuses O’Halloran of “rudeness and ignorance,” and “bold, uncivil language,” in disputing their teaching. Princ. of Surgery, vol. i. p. 42. Mr. Hunter succeeded at last in naturalizing the doctrine and practice, but even he had to struggle against the perpetual jealousy of rivals, and died at length assassinated by an insult.] We have often heard similar opinions maintained by our own countrymen. While Anglo-American criticism blows hot or cold on the two departments of French practice, it is not, I hope, indecent to question whether all the wisdom is necessarily with us in both cases.

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Our art has had two or three lessons which have a deep meaning to those who are willing to read them honestly. The use of water-dressings in surgery completed the series of reforms by which was abolished the "coarse and cruel practice" of the older surgeons, who with their dressings and acrid balsams, their tents and leaden tubes, "absolutely delayed the cure." The doctrine of Broussais, transient as was its empire, reversed the practice of half of Christendom for a season, and taught its hasty disciples to shun their old favorite remedies as mortal poisons. This was not enough permanently to shift the presumption about drugs where it belonged, and so at last, just as the sympathetic powder and the Unguentum Armarium came in a superstitious age to kill out the abuses of external over-medication, the solemn farce of Homoeopathy was enacted in the face of our own too credulous civilization, that under shelter of its pretences the "inward bruises" of over-drugged viscera might be allowed to heal by the first intention. Its lesson we must accept, whether we will or not; its follies we are tired of talking about. The security of the medical profession against this and all similar fancies is in the average constitution of the human mind with regard to the laws of evidence.

My friends and brothers in Art! There is nothing to be feared from the utterance of any seeming heresy to which you may have listened. I cannot compromise your collective wisdom. If I have strained the truth one hair's breadth for the sake of an epigram or an antithesis, you are accustomed to count the normal pulse-beats of sound judgment, and know full well how to recognize the fever-throbs of conceit and the nervous palpitations of rhetoric.

The freedom with which each of us speaks his thought in this presence, belongs in part to the assured position of the Profession in our Commonwealth, to the attitude of Science, which is always fearless, and to the genius of the soil on which we stand, from which Nature withheld the fatal gift of malaria only to fill it with exhalations that breed the fever of inquiry in our blood and in our brain. But mainly we owe the large license of speech we enjoy to those influences and privileges common to us all as self-governing Americans.

This Republic is the chosen home of minorities, of the less power in the presence of the greater. It is a common error to speak of our distinction as consisting in the rule of the majority. Majorities, the greater material powers, have always ruled before. The history of most countries has been that of majorities, mounted majorities, clad in iron, armed with death treading down the tenfold more numerous minorities. In the old civilizations they root themselves like oaks in the soil; men must live in their shadow or cut them down. With us the majority is only the flower of the passing noon, and the minority is the bud which may open in the next morning's sun. We must be tolerant, for the thought which stammers on a single tongue today may organize itself in the growing consciousness of the time, and come back to us like the voice of the multitudinous waves of the ocean on the morrow.

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Twenty-five years have passed since one of your honored Presidents spoke to this Society of certain limitations to the power of our Art, now very generally conceded. Some were troubled, some were almost angry, thinking the Profession might suffer from such concessions. It has certainly not suffered here; if, as some affirm, it has lost respect anywhere, it was probably for other, and no doubt sufficient reasons.

Since that time the civilization of this planet has changed hands. Strike out of existence at this moment every person who was breathing on that day, May 27, 1835, and every institution of society, every art and every science would remain intact and complete in the living that would be left. Every idea the world then held has been since dissolved and recrystallized.

We are repeating the same process. Not to make silver shrines for our old divinities, even though by this craft we should have our wealth, was this Society organized and carried on by the good men and true who went before us. Not for this, but to melt the gold out of the past, though its dross should fly in dust to all the winds of heaven, to save all our old treasures of knowledge and mine deeply for new, to cultivate that mutual respect of which outward courtesy is the sign, to work together, to feel together, to take counsel together, and to stand together for the truth, now, always, here, everywhere; for this our fathers instituted, and we accept, the offices and duties of this time-honored Society.

BORDER LINES OF KNOWLEDGE IN SOME PROVINCES OF MEDICAL SCIENCE.

An Introductory Lecture delivered before the Medical Class of Harvard University, November 6, 1861.

[This Lecture appears as it would have been delivered had the time allowed been less strictly, limited. Passages necessarily omitted have been restored, and points briefly touched have been more fully considered. A few notes have been added for the benefit of that limited class of students who care to track an author through the highways and by-ways of his reading. I owe my thanks to several of my professional brethren who have communicated with me on subjects with which they are familiar; especially to Dr. John Dean, for the opportunity of profiting by his unpublished labors, and to Dr. Hasket Derby, for information and references to recent authorities relating to the anatomy and physiology of the eye.]

The entrance upon a new course of Lectures is always a period of interest to instructors and pupils. As the birth of a child to a parent, so is the advent of a new class to a teacher. As the light of the untried world to the infant, so is the dawning of the light resting over the unexplored realms of science to the student. In the name of the Faculty I welcome you, Gentlemen of the Medical Class, new-born babes of science, or lustier

nurslings, to this morning of your medical life, and to the arms and the bosom of this ancient University. Fourteen years ago I stood in this place for the first time to address those who occupied these benches. As I recall these past seasons of our joint labors, I feel that they have been on the whole prosperous, and not undeserving of their prosperity.

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For it has been my privilege to be associated with a body of true and faithful workers; I cannot praise them freely to their faces, or I should be proud to discourse of the harmonious diligence and the noble spirit in which they have toiled together, not merely to teach their several branches, but to elevate the whole standard of teaching.

I may speak with less restraint of those gentlemen who have aided me in the most laborious part of my daily duties, the Demonstrators, to whom the successive classes have owed so much of their instruction. They rise before me, the dead and the living, in the midst of the most grateful recollections. The fair, manly face and stately figure of my friend, Dr. Samuel Parkman, himself fit for the highest offices of teaching, yet willing to be my faithful assistant in the time of need, come back to me with the long sigh of regret for his early loss to our earthly companionship. Every year I speak the eulogy of Dr. Ainsworth's patient toil as I show his elaborate preparations: When I take down my "American Cyclopaedia" and borrow instruction from the learned articles of Dr. Kneeland, I cease to regret that his indefatigable and intelligent industry was turned into a broader channel. And what can I say too cordial of my long associated companion and friend, Dr. Hodges, whose admirable skill, working through the swiftest and surest fingers that ever held a scalpel among us, has delighted class after class, and filled our Museum with monuments which will convey his name to unborn generations?

This day belongs, however, not to myself and my recollections, but to all of us who teach and all of you who listen, whether experts in our specialties or aliens to their mysteries, or timid neophytes just entering the portals of the hall of science. Look in with me, then, while I attempt to throw some rays into its interior, which shall illuminate a few of its pillars and cornices, and show at the same time how many niches and alcoves remain in darkness.

Science is the topography of ignorance. From a few elevated points we triangulate vast spaces, inclosing infinite unknown details. We cast the lead, and draw up a little sand from abysses we may never reach with our dredges.

The best part of our knowledge is that which teaches us where knowledge leaves off and ignorance begins. Nothing more clearly separates a vulgar from a superior mind, than the confusion in the first between the little that it truly knows, on the one hand, and what it half knows and what it thinks it knows on the other.

That which is true of every subject is especially true of the branch of knowledge which deals with living beings. Their existence is a perpetual death and reanimation. Their identity is only an idea, for we put off our bodies many times during our lives, and dress in new suits of bones and muscles.

"Thou art not thyself;
For thou exist'st on many a thousand grains
That issue out of dust."

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If it is true that we understand ourselves but imperfectly in health, this truth is more signally manifested in disease, where natural actions imperfectly understood, disturbed in an obscure way by half-seen causes, are creeping and winding along in the dark toward their destined issue, sometimes using our remedies as safe stepping-stones, occasionally, it may be, stumbling over them as obstacles.

I propose in this lecture to show you some points of contact between our ignorance and our knowledge in several of the branches upon the study of which you are entering. I may teach you a very little directly, but I hope much more from the trains of thought I shall suggest. Do not expect too much ground to be covered in this rapid survey. Our task is only that of sending out a few pickets under the starry flag of science to the edge of that dark domain where the ensigns of the obstinate rebel, Ignorance, are flying undisputed. We are not making a reconnoissance in force, still less advancing with the main column. But here are a few roads along which we have to march together, and we wish to see clearly how far our lines extend, and where the enemy's outposts begin.

Before touching the branches of knowledge that deal with organization and vital functions, let us glance at that science which meets you at the threshold of your study, and prepares you in some measure to deal with the more complex problems of the living laboratory.

Chemistry. includes the art of separating and combining the elements of matter, and the study of the changes produced by these operations. We can hardly say too much of what it has contributed to our knowledge of the universe and our power of dealing with its materials. It has given us a catalogue raisonne of the substances found upon our planet, and shown how everything living and dead is put together from them. It is accomplishing wonders before us every day, such as Arabian story-tellers used to string together in their fables. It spreads the, sensitive film on the artificial retina which looks upon us through the optician's lens for a few seconds, and fixes an image that will outlive its original. It questions the light of the sun, and detects the vaporized metals floating around the great luminary,—iron, sodium, lithium, and the rest,—as if the chemist of our remote planet could fill his bell-glasses from its fiery atmosphere. It lends the power which flashes our messages in thrills that leave the lazy chariot of day behind them. It seals up a few dark grains in iron vases, and lo! at the touch of a single spark, rises in smoke and flame a mighty Afrit with a voice like thunder and an arm that shatters like an earthquake. The dreams of Oriental fancy have become the sober facts of our every-day life, and the chemist is the magician to whom we owe them.

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To return to the colder scientific aspect of chemistry. It has shown us how bodies stand affected to each other through an almost boundless range of combinations. It has given us a most ingenious theory to account for certain fixed relations in these combinations. It has successfully eliminated a great number of proximate compounds, more or less stable, from organic structures. It has invented others which form the basis of long series of well-known composite substances. In fact, we are perhaps becoming overburdened with our list of proximate principles, demonstrated and hypothetical.

How much nearer have we come to the secret of force than Lully and Geber and the whole crew of juggling alchemists? We have learned a great deal about the how, what have we learned about the why?

Why does iron rust, while gold remains untarnished, and gold amalgamate, while iron refuses the alliance of mercury?

The alchemists called gold Sol, the sun, and iron Mars, and pleased themselves with fancied relations between these substances and the heavenly bodies, by which they pretended to explain the facts they observed. Some of their superstitions have lingered in practical medicine to the present day, but chemistry has grown wise enough to confess the fact of absolute ignorance.

What is it that makes common salt crystallize in the form of cubes, and saltpetre in the shape of six-sided prisms? We see no reason why it should not have been just the other way, salt in prisms and saltpetre in cubes, or why either should take an exact geometrical outline, any more than coagulating albumen.

But although we had given up attempting to explain the essential nature of affinities and of crystalline types, we might have supposed that we had at least fixed the identity of the substances with which we deal, and determined the laws of their combination. All at once we find that a simple substance changes face, puts off its characteristic qualities and resumes them at will;—not merely when we liquefy or vaporize a solid, or reverse the process; but that a solid is literally transformed into another solid under our own eyes. We thought we knew phosphorus. We warm a portion of it sealed in an empty tube, for about a week. It has become a brown infusible substance, which does not shine in the dark nor oxidate in the air. We heat it to 500 F., and it becomes common phosphorus again. We transmute sulphur in the same singular way. Nature, you know, gives us carbon in the shape of coal and in that of the diamond. It is easy to call these changes by the name allotropism, but not the less do they confound our hasty generalizations.

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These facts of allotropism have some corollaries connected with them rather startling to us of the nineteenth century. There may be other transmutations possible besides those of phosphorus and sulphur. When Dr. Prout, in 1840, talked about azote and carbon being “formed” in the living system, it was looked upon as one of those freaks of fancy to which philosophers, like other men, are subject. But when Professor Faraday, in 1851, says, at a meeting of the British Association, that “his hopes are in the direction of proving that bodies called simple were really compounds, and may be formed artificially as soon as we are masters of the laws influencing their combinations,”—when he comes forward and says that he has tried experiments at transmutation, and means, if his life is spared, to try them again,—how can we be surprised at the popular story of 1861, that Louis Napoleon has established a gold-factory and is glutting the mints of Europe with bullion of his own making?

And so with reference to the law of combinations. The old maxim was, *Corpora non agunt nisi soluta*. If two substances, a and b, are inclosed in a glass vessel, c, we do not expect the glass to change them, unless a or b or the compound a b has the power of dissolving the glass. But if for a I take oxygen, for b hydrogen, and for c a piece of spongy platinum, I find the first two combine with the common signs of combustion and form water, the third in the mean time undergoing no perceptible change. It has played the part of the unwedded priest, who marries a pair without taking a fee or having any further relation with the parties. We call this catalysis, catalytic action, the action of presence, or by what learned name we choose. Give what name to it we will, it is a manifestation of power which crosses our established laws of combination at a very open angle of intersection. I think we may find an analogy for it in electrical induction, the disturbance of the equilibrium of the electricity of a body by the approach of a charged body to it, without interchange of electrical conditions between the two bodies. But an analogy is not an explanation, and why a few drops of yeast should change a saccharine mixture to carbonic acid and alcohol,—a little leaven leavening the whole lump,—not by combining with it, but by setting a movement at work, we not only cannot explain, but the fact is such an exception to the recognized laws of combination that Liebig is unwilling to admit the new force at all to which Berzelius had given the name so generally accepted.

The phenomena of isomerism, or identity of composition and proportions of constituents with difference of qualities, and of isomorphism, or identity of form in crystals which have one element substituted for another, were equally surprises to science; and although the mechanism by which they are brought about can be to a certain extent explained by a reference to the hypothetical atoms of which the elements are constituted, yet this is only turning the difficulty into a fraction with an infinitesimal denominator and an infinite numerator.

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So far we have studied the working of force and its seeming anomalies in purely chemical phenomena. But we soon find that chemical force is developed by various other physical agencies,—by heat, by light, by electricity, by magnetism, by mechanical agencies; and, vice versa, that chemical action develops heat, light, electricity, magnetism, mechanical force, as we see in our matches, galvanic batteries, and explosive compounds. Proceeding with our experiments, we find that every kind of force is capable of producing all other kinds, or, in Mr. Faraday's language, that "the various forms under which the forces of matter are made manifest have a common origin, or, in other words, are so directly related and mutually dependent that they are convertible one into another."

Out of this doctrine naturally springs that of the conservation of force, so ably illustrated by Mr. Grove, Dr. Carpenter, and Mr. Faraday. This idea is no novelty, though it seems so at first sight. It was maintained and disputed among the giants of philosophy. Des Cartes and Leibnitz denied that any new motion originated in nature, or that any ever ceased to exist; all motion being in a circle, passing from one body to another, one losing what the other gained. Newton, on the other hand, believed that new motions were generated and existing ones destroyed. On the first supposition, there is a fixed amount of force always circulating in the universe. On the second, the total amount may be increasing or diminishing. You will find in the "Annual of Scientific Discovery" for 1858 a very interesting lecture by Professor Helmholtz of Bonn, in which it is maintained that a certain portion of force is lost in every natural process, being converted into unchangeable heat, so that the universe will come to a stand-still at last, all force passing into heat, and all heat into a state of equilibrium.

The doctrines of the convertibility or specific equivalence of the various forms of force, and of its conservation, which is its logical consequence, are very generally accepted, as I believe, at the present time, among physicists. We are naturally led to the question, What is the nature of force? The three illustrious philosophers just referred to agree in attributing the general movements of the universe to the immediate Divine action. The doctrine of "preestablished harmony" was an especial contrivance of Leibnitz to remove the Creator from unworthy association with the less divine acts of living beings. Obsolete as this expression sounds to our ears, the phrase laws of the universe, which we use so constantly with a wider application, appears to me essentially identical with it.

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Force does not admit of explanation, nor of proper definition, any more than the hypothetical substratum of matter. If we assume the Infinite as omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, we cannot suppose Him excluded from any part of His creation, except from rebellious souls which voluntarily exclude Him by the exercise of their fatal prerogative of free-will. Force, then, is the act of immanent Divinity. I find no meaning in mechanical explanations. Newton's hypothesis of an ether filling the heavenly spaces does not, I confess, help my conceptions. I will, and the muscles of my vocal organs shape my speech. God wills, and the universe articulates His power, wisdom, and goodness. That is all I know. There is no bridge my mind can throw from the "immaterial" cause to the "material" effect.

The problem of force meets us everywhere, and I prefer to encounter it in the world of physical phenomena before reaching that of living actions. It is only the name for the incomprehensible cause of certain changes known to our consciousness, and assumed to be outside of it. For me it is the Deity Himself in action.

I can therefore see a large significance in the somewhat bold language of Burdach: "There is for me but one miracle, that of infinite existence, and but one mystery, the manner in which the finite proceeds from the infinite. So soon as we recognize this incomprehensible act as the general and primordial miracle, of which our reason perceives the necessity, but the manner of which our intelligence cannot grasp, so soon as we contemplate the nature known to us by experience in this light, there is for us no other impenetrable miracle or mystery."

Let us turn to a branch of knowledge which deals with certainties up to the limit of the senses, and is involved in no speculations beyond them. In certain points of view, *human anatomy* may be considered an almost exhausted science. From time to time some small organ which had escaped earlier observers has been pointed out,—such parts as the tensor tarsi, the otic ganglion, or the Pacinian bodies; but some of our best anatomical works are those which have been classic for many generations. The plates of the bones in Vesalius, three centuries old, are still masterpieces of accuracy, as of art. The magnificent work of Albinus on the muscles, published in 1747, is still supreme in its department, as the constant references of the most thorough recent treatise on the subject, that of Theile, sufficiently show. More has been done in unravelling the mysteries of the fasciae, but there has been a tendency to overdo this kind of material analysis. Alexander Thomson split them up into cobwebs, as you may see in the plates to Velpeau's *Surgical Anatomy*. I well remember how he used to shake his head over the coarse work of Scarpa and Astley Cooper,—as if Denner, who painted the separate hairs of the beard and pores of the skin in his portraits, had spoken lightly of the pictures of Rubens and Vandyk.

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Not only has little been added to the catalogue of parts, but some things long known had become half-forgotten. Louis and others confounded the solitary glands of the lower part of the small intestine with those which "the great Brunner," as Haller calls him, described in 1687 as being found in the duodenum. The display of the fibrous structure of the brain seemed a novelty as shown by Spurzheim. One is startled to find the method anticipated by Raymond Vieussens nearly two centuries ago. I can hardly think Gordon had ever looked at his figures, though he names their author, when he wrote the captious and sneering article which attracted so much attention in the pages of the "Edinburgh Review."

This is the place, if anywhere, to mention any observations I could pretend to have made in the course of my teaching the structure of the human body. I can make no better show than most of my predecessors in this well-reaped field. The nucleated cells found connected with the cancellated structure of the bones, which I first pointed out and had figured in 1847, and have shown yearly from that time to the present, and the fossa masseterica, a shallow concavity on the ramus of the lower jaw, for the lodgment of the masseter muscle, which acquires significance when examined by the side of the deep cavity on the corresponding part in some carnivora to which it answers, may perhaps be claimed as deserving attention. I have also pleased myself by making a special group of the six radiating muscles which diverge from the spine of the axis, or second cervical vertebra, and by giving to it the name *stella musculosa nuchae*. But this scanty catalogue is only an evidence that one may teach long and see little that has not been noted by those who have gone before him. Of course I do not think it necessary to include rare, but already described anomalies, such as the episternal bones, the rectus sternalis, and other interesting exceptional formations I have encountered, which have shown a curious tendency to present themselves several times in the same season, perhaps because the first specimen found calls our attention to any we may subsequently meet with.

The anatomy of the scalpel and the amphitheatre was, then, becoming an exhausted branch of investigation. But during the present century the study of the human body has changed its old aspect, and become fertile in new observations. This rejuvenescence was effected by means of two principal agencies,—new methods and a new instrument.

Descriptive anatomy, as known from an early date, is to the body what geography is to the planet. Now geography was pretty well known so long ago as when Arrowsmith, who was born in 1750, published his admirable maps. But in that same year was born Werner, who taught a new way of studying the earth, since become familiar to us all under the name of Geology.

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What geology has done for our knowledge of the earth, has been done for our knowledge of the body by that method of study to which is given the name of General Anatomy. It studies, not the organs as such, but the elements out of which the organs are constructed. It is the geology of the body, as that is the general anatomy of the earth. The extraordinary genius of Bichat, to whom more than any other we owe this new method of study, does not require Mr. Buckle's testimony to impress the practitioner with the importance of its achievements. I have heard a very wise physician question whether any important result had accrued to practical medicine from Harvey's discovery of the circulation. But Anatomy, Physiology, and Pathology have received a new light from this novel method of contemplating the living structures, which has had a vast influence in enabling the practitioner at least to distinguish and predict the course of disease. We know as well what differences to expect in the habits of a mucous and of a serous membrane, as what mineral substances to look for in the chalk or the coal measures. You have only to read Cullen's description of inflammation of the lungs or of the bowels, and compare it with such as you may find in Laennec or Watson, to see the immense gain which diagnosis and prognosis have derived from general anatomy.

The second new method of studying the human structure, beginning with the labors of Scarpa, Burns, and Colles, grew up principally during the first third of this century. It does not deal with organs, as did the earlier anatomists, nor with tissues, after the manner of Bichat. It maps the whole surface of the body into an arbitrary number of regions, and studies each region successively from the surface to the bone, or beneath it. This hardly deserves the name of a science, although Velpeau has dignified it with that title, but it furnishes an admirable practical way for the surgeon who has to operate on a particular region of the body to study that region. If we are buying a farm, we are not content with the State map or a geological chart including the estate in question. We demand an exact survey of that particular property, so that we may know what we are dealing with. This is just what regional, or, as it is sometimes called, surgical anatomy, does for the surgeon with reference to the part on which his skill is to be exercised. It enables him to see with the mind's eye through the opaque tissues down to the bone on which they lie, as if the skin were transparent as the cornea, and the organs it covers translucent as the gelatinous pulp of a medusa.

It is curious that the Japanese should have anticipated Europe in a kind of rude regional anatomy. I have seen a manikin of Japanese make traced all over with lines, and points marking their intersection. By this their doctors are guided in the performance of acupuncture, marking the safe places to thrust in needles, as we buoy out our ship-channels, and doubtless indicating to learned eyes the spots where incautious meddling had led to those little accidents of shipwreck to which patients are unfortunately liable.

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A change of method, then, has given us General and Regional Anatomy. These, too, have been worked so thoroughly, that, if not exhausted, they have at least become to a great extent fixed and positive branches of knowledge. But the first of them, General Anatomy, would never, have reached this positive condition but for the introduction of that, instrument which I have mentioned as the second great aid to modern progress.

This instrument is the achromatic microscope. For the history of the successive steps by which it became the effective scientific implement we now possess, I must refer you to the work of Mr. Quekett, to an excellent article in the "Penny Cyclopaedia," or to that of Sir David Brewster in the "Encyclopaedia Britannica." It is a most interesting piece of scientific history, which shows how the problem which Biot in 1821 pronounced insolvable was in the course of a few years practically solved, with a success equal to that which Dollond had long before obtained with the telescope. It is enough for our purpose that we are now in possession of an instrument freed from all confusions and illusions, which magnifies a thousand diameters,—a million times in surface,—without serious distortion or discoloration of its object.

A quarter of a century ago, or a little more, an instructor would not have hesitated to put John Bell's "Anatomy" and Bostock's "Physiology" into a student's hands, as good authority on their respective subjects. Let us not be unjust to either of these authors. John Bell is the liveliest medical writer that I can remember who has written since the days of delightful old Ambroise Pare. His picturesque descriptions and bold figures are as good now as they ever were, and his book can never become obsolete. But listen to what John Bell says of the microscope:

"Philosophers of the last age had been at infinite pains to find the ultimate fibre of muscles, thinking to discover its properties in its form; but they saw just in proportion to the glasses which they used, or to their practice and skill in that art, which is now almost forsaken."

Dr. Bostock's work, neglected as it is, is one which I value very highly as a really learned compilation, full of original references. But Dr. Bostock says: "Much as the naturalist has been indebted to the microscope, by bringing into view many beings of which he could not otherwise have ascertained the existence, the physiologist has not yet derived any great benefit from the instrument."

These are only specimens of the manner in which the microscope and its results were generally regarded by the generation just preceding our own.

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I have referred you to the proper authorities for the account of those improvements which about the year 1830 rendered the compound microscope an efficient and trustworthy instrument. It was now for the first time that a true general anatomy became possible. As early as 1816 Treviranus had attempted to resolve the tissues, of which Bichat had admitted no less than twenty-one, into their simple microscopic elements. How could such an attempt succeed, Henle well asks, at a time when the most extensively diffused of all the tissues, the areolar, was not at all understood? All that method could do had been accomplished by Bichat and his followers. It was for the optician to take the next step. The future of anatomy and physiology, as an enthusiastic micrologist of the time said, was in the hands of Messrs. Schieck and Pistor, famous opticians of Berlin.

In those earlier days of which I am speaking, all the points of minute anatomy were involved in obscurity. Some found globules everywhere, some fibres. Students disputed whether the conjunctiva extended over the cornea or not, and worried themselves over Gaultier de Claubry's stratified layers of the skin, or Breschet's blennogenous and chromatogenous organs. The dartos was a puzzle, the central spinal canal a myth, the decidua clothed in fable as much as the golden fleece. The structure of bone, now so beautifully made out,—even that of the teeth, in which old Leeuwenhoek, peeping with his octogenarian eyes through the minute lenses wrought with his own hands, had long ago seen the “pipes,” as he called them,—was hardly known at all. The minute structure of the viscera lay in the mists of an uncertain microscopic vision. The intimate recesses of the animal system were to the students of anatomy what the anterior of Africa long was to geographers, and the stories of microscopic explorers were as much sneered at as those of Bruce or Du Chailly, and with better reason.

Now what have we come to in our own day? In the first place, the minute structure of all the organs has been made out in the most satisfactory way. The special arrangements of the vessels and the ducts of all the glands, of the air-tubes and vesicles of the lungs, of the parts which make up the skin and other membranes, all the details of those complex parenchymatous organs which had confounded investigation so long, have been lifted out of the invisible into the sight of all observers. It is fair to mention here, that we owe a great deal to the art of minute injection, by which we are enabled to trace the smallest vessels in the midst of the tissues where they are distributed. This is an old artifice of anatomists. The famous Ruysch, who died a hundred and thirty years ago, showed that each of the viscera has its terminal vessels arranged in its own peculiar way; the same fact which you may see illustrated in Gerber's figures after the minute injections of Berres. I hope to show you many specimens of this kind in

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the microscope, the work of English and American hands. Professor Agassiz allows me also to make use of a very rich collection of injected preparations sent him by Professor Hyrtl, formerly of Prague, now of Vienna, for the proper exhibition of which I had a number of microscopes made expressly, by Mr. Grunow, during the past season. All this illustrates what has been done for the elucidation of the intimate details of formation of the organs.

But the great triumph of the microscope as applied to anatomy has been in the resolution of the organs and the tissues into their simple constituent anatomical elements. It has taken up general anatomy where Bichat left it. He had succeeded in reducing the structural language of nature to syllables, if you will permit me to use so bold an image. The microscopic observers who have come after him have analyzed these into letters, as we may call them,—the simple elements by the combination of which Nature spells out successively tissues, which are her syllables, organs which are her words, systems which are her chapters, and so goes on from the simple to the complex, until she binds up in one living whole that wondrous volume of power and wisdom which we call the human body.

The alphabet of the organization is so short and simple, that I will risk fatiguing your attention by repeating it, according to the plan I have long adopted.

A. Cells, either floating, as in the blood, or fixed, like those in the cancellated structure of bone, already referred to. Very commonly they have undergone a change of figure, most frequently a flattening which reduces them to scales, as in the epidermis and the epithelium.

B. Simple, translucent, homogeneous solid, such as is found at the back of the cornea, or forming the intercellular substance of cartilage.

C. The white fibrous element, consisting of very delicate, tenacious threads. This is the long staple textile substance of the body. It is to the organism what cotton is pretended to be to our Southern States. It pervades the whole animal fabric as areolar tissue, which is the universal packing and wrapping material. It forms the ligaments which bind the whole frame-work together. It furnishes the sinews, which are the channels of power. It enfolds every muscle. It wraps the brain in its hard, insensible folds, and the heart itself beats in a purse that is made of it.

D. The yellow elastic, fibrous element, the caoutchouc of the animal mechanism, which pulls things back into place, as the India-rubber band shuts the door we have opened.

E. The striped muscular fibre,—the red flesh, which shortens itself in obedience to the will, and thus produces all voluntary active motion.

F. The unstriped muscular fibre, more properly the fusiform-cell fibre, which carries on the involuntary internal movements.

G. The nerve-cylinder, a glassy tube, with a pith of some firmness, which conveys sensation to the brain and the principle which induces motion from it.

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H. The nerve-corpuscle, the centre of nervous power.

I. The mucous tissue, as Virchow calls it, common in embryonic structures, seen in the vitreous humor of the adult.

To these add X, granules, of indeterminate shape and size, Y, for inorganic matters, such as the salts of bone and teeth, and Z, to stand as a symbol of the fluids, and you have the letters of what I have ventured to call the alphabet of the body.

But just as in language certain diphthongs and syllables are frequently recurring, so we have in the body certain secondary and tertiary combinations, which we meet more frequently than the solitary elements of which they are composed.

Thus A B, or a collection of cells united by simple structureless solid, is seen to be extensively employed in the body under the name of cartilage. Out of this the surfaces of the articulations and the springs of the breathing apparatus are formed. But when Nature came to the buffers of the spinal column (intervertebral disks) and the washers of the joints (semilunar fibrocartilages of the knee, etc.), she required more tenacity than common cartilage possessed. What did she do? What does man do in a similar case of need? I need hardly tell you. The mason lays his bricks in simple mortar. But the plasterer works some hair into the mortar which he is going to lay in large sheets on the walls. The children of Israel complained that they had no straw to make their bricks with, though portions of it may still be seen in the crumbling pyramid of Darshour, which they are said to have built. I visited the old house on Witch Hill in Salem a year or two ago, and there I found the walls coated with clay in which straw was abundantly mingled;—the old Judaizing witch-hangers copied the Israelites in a good many things. The Chinese and the Corsicans blend the fibres of amianthus in their pottery to give it tenacity. Now to return to Nature. To make her buffers and washers hold together in the shocks to which they would be subjected, she took common cartilage and mingled the white fibrous tissue with it, to serve the same purpose as the hair in the mortar, the straw in the bricks and in the plaster of the old wall, and the amianthus in the earthen vessels. Thus we have the combination A B C, or fibro-cartilage. Again, the bones were once only gristle or cartilage, A B. To give them solidity they were infiltrated with stone, in the form of salts of lime, an inorganic element, so that bone would be spelt out by the letters A, B, and Y.

If from these organic syllables we proceed to form organic words, we shall find that Nature employs three principal forms; namely, Vessels, Membranes, and Parenchyma, or visceral tissue. The most complex of them can be resolved into a combination of these few simple anatomical constituents.

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Passing for a moment into the domain of *pathological anatomy*, we find the same elements in morbid growths that we have met with in normal structures. The pus-corpuscle and the white blood-corpuscle can only be distinguished by tracing them to their origin. A frequent form of so-called malignant disease proves to be only a collection of altered epithelium-cells. Even cancer itself has no specific anatomical element, and the diagnosis of a cancerous tumor by the microscope, though tolerably sure under the eye of an expert, is based upon accidental, and not essential points,—the crowding together of the elements, the size of the cell-nuclei, and similar variable characters.

Let us turn to *physiology*. The microscope, which has made a new science of the intimate structure of the organs, has at the same time cleared up many uncertainties concerning the mechanism of the special functions. Up to the time of the living generation of observers, Nature had kept over all her inner workshops the forbidding inscription, No Admittance! If any prying observer ventured to spy through his magnifying tubes into the mysteries of her glands and canals and fluids, she covered up her work in blinding mists and bewildering halos, as the deities of old concealed their favored heroes in the moment of danger.

Science has at length sifted the turbid light of her lenses, and blanched their delusive rainbows.

Anatomy studies the organism in space. Physiology studies it also in time. After the study of form and composition follows close that of action, and this leads us along back to the first moment of the germ, and forward to the resolution of the living frame into its lifeless elements. In this way Anatomy, or rather that branch of it which we call Histology, has become inseparably blended with the study of function. The connection between the science of life and that of intimate structure on the one hand, and composition on the other, is illustrated in the titles of two recent works of remarkable excellence,—“the Physiological Anatomy” of Todd and Bowman, and the “Physiological Chemistry” of Lehmann.

Let me briefly recapitulate a few of our acquisitions in Physiology, due in large measure to our new instruments and methods of research, and at the same time indicate the limits which form the permanent or the temporary boundaries of our knowledge. I will begin with the largest fact and with the most absolute and universally encountered limitation.

The “largest truth in Physiology” Mr. Paget considers to be “the development of ova through multiplication and division of their cells.” I would state it more broadly as the agency of the cell in all living processes. It seems at present necessary to abandon the original idea of Schwann, that we can observe the building up of a cell from the simple granules of a blastema, or formative fluid. The evidence points rather towards the axiom, *Omnis cellula a cellula*; that is, the germ of a new cell is always derived from a

preexisting cell. The doctrine of Schwann, as I remarked long ago (1844), runs parallel with the nebular theory in astronomy, and they may yet stand or fall together.

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As we have seen Nature anticipating the plasterer in fibro-cartilage, so we see her beforehand with the glassblower in her dealings with the cell. The artisan blows his vitreous bubbles, large or small, to be used afterwards as may be wanted. So Nature shapes her hyaline vesicles and modifies them to serve the needs of the part where they are found. The artisan whirls his rod, and his glass bubble becomes a flattened disk, with its bull's-eye for a nucleus. These lips of ours are all glazed with microscopic tiles formed of flattened cells, each one of them with its nucleus still as plain and relatively as prominent, to the eye of the microscopist, as the bull's-eye in the old-fashioned windowpane. Everywhere we find cells, modified or unchanged. They roll in inconceivable multitudes (five millions and more to the cubic millimetre, according to Vierordt) as blood-disks through our vessels. A close-fitting mail of flattened cells coats our surface with a panoply of imbricated scales (more than twelve thousand millions), as Harting has computed, as true a defence against our enemies as the buckler of the armadillo or the carapace of the tortoise against theirs. The same little protecting organs pave all the great highways of the interior system. Cells, again, preside over the chemical processes which elaborate the living fluids; they change their form to become the agents of voluntary and involuntary motion; the soul itself sits on a throne of nucleated cells, and flashes its mandates through skeins of glassy filaments which once were simple chains of vesicles. And, as if to reduce the problem of living force to its simplest expression, we see the yolk of a transparent egg dividing itself in whole or in part, and again dividing and subdividing, until it becomes a mass of cells, out of which the harmonious diversity of the organs arranges itself, worm or man, as God has willed from the beginning.

This differentiation having been effected, each several part assumes its special office, having a life of its own adjusted to that of other parts and the whole. "Just as a tree constitutes a mass arranged in a definite manner, in which, in every single part, in the leaves as in the root, in the trunk as in the blossom, cells are discovered to be the ultimate elements, so is it also with the forms of animal life. Every animal presents itself as a sum of vital unities, every one of which manifests all the characteristics of life."

The mechanism is as clear, as unquestionable, as absolutely settled and universally accepted, as the order of movement of the heavenly bodies, which we compute backward to the days of the observatories on the plains of Shinar, and on the faith of which we regulate the movements of war and trade by the predictions of our ephemeris.

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The mechanism, and that is all. We see the workman and the tools, but the skill that guides the work and the power that performs it are as invisible as ever. I fear that not every listener took the significance of those pregnant words in the passage I quoted from John Bell,—“thinking to discover its properties in its form.” We have discovered the working bee in this great hive of organization. We have detected the cell in the very act of forming itself from a nucleus, of transforming itself into various tissues, of selecting the elements of various secretions. But why one cell becomes nerve and another muscle, why one selects bile and another fat, we can no more pretend to tell, than why one grape sucks out of the soil the generous juice which princes hoard in their cellars, and another the wine which it takes three men to drink,—one to pour it down, another to swallow it, and a third to hold him while it is going down. Certain analogies between this selecting power and the phenomena of endosmosis in the elective affinities of chemistry we can find, but the problem of force remains here, as everywhere, unsolved and insolvable.

Do we gain anything by attempting to get rid of the idea of a special vital force because we find certain mutually convertible relations between forces in the body and out of it? I think not, any more than we should gain by getting rid of the idea and expression Magnetism because of its correlation with electricity. We may concede the unity of all forms of force, but we cannot overlook the fixed differences of its manifestations according to the conditions under which it acts. It is a mistake, however, to think the mystery is greater in an organized body than in any other. We see a stone fall or a crystal form, and there is nothing stranger left to wonder at, for we have seen the Infinite in action.

Just so far as we can recognize the ordinary modes of operation of the common forces of nature,—gravity, cohesion, elasticity, transudation, chemical action, and the rest,—we see the so-called vital acts in the light of a larger range of known facts and familiar analogies. Matteuecci's well-remembered lectures contain many and striking examples of the working of physical forces in physiological processes. Wherever rigid experiment carries us, we are safe in following this lead; but the moment we begin to theorize beyond our strict observation, we are in danger of falling into those mechanical follies which true science has long outgrown.

Recognizing the fact, then, that we have learned nothing but the machinery of life, and are no nearer to its essence, what is it that we have gained by this great discovery of the cell formation and function?

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It would have been reward enough to learn the method Nature pursues for its own sake. If the sovereign Artificer lets us into his own laboratories and workshops, we need not ask more than the privilege of looking on at his work. We do not know where we now stand in the hierarchy of created intelligences. We were made a little lower than the angels. I speak it not irreverently; as the lower animals surpass man in some of their attributes, so it may be that not every angel's eye can see as broadly and as deeply into the material works of God as man himself, looking at the firmament through an equatorial of fifteen inches' aperture, and searching into the tissues with a twelfth of an inch objective.

But there are other positive gains of a more practical character. Thus we are no longer permitted to place the seat of the living actions in the extreme vessels, which are only the carriers from which each part takes what it wants by the divine right of the omnipotent nucleated cell. The organism has become, in the words already borrowed from Virchow, "a sum of vital unities." The strictum and laxum, the increased and diminished action of the vessels, out of which medical theories and methods of treatment have grown up, have yielded to the doctrine of local cell-communities, belonging to this or that vascular district, from which they help themselves, as contractors are wont to do from the national treasury.

I cannot promise to do more than to select a few of the points of contact between our ignorance and our knowledge which present particular interest in the existing state of our physiological acquisitions. Some of them involve the microscopic discoveries of which I have been speaking, some belong to the domain of chemistry, and some have relations with other departments of physical science.

If we should begin with the digestive function, we should find that the long-agitated question of the nature of the acid of the gastric juice is becoming settled in favor of the lactic. But the whole solvent agency of the digestive fluid enters into the category of that exceptional mode of action already familiar to us in chemistry as catalysis. It is therefore doubly difficult of explanation; first, as being, like all reactions, a fact not to be accounted for except by the imaginative appeal to "affinity," and secondly, as being one of those peculiar reactions provoked by an element which stands outside and looks on without compromising itself.

The doctrine of Mulder, so widely diffused in popular and scientific belief, of the existence of a common base of all albuminous substances, the so-called protein, has not stood the test of rigorous analysis. The division of food into azotized and non-azotized is no doubt important, but the attempt to show that the first only is plastic or nutritive, while the second is simply calorific, or heat-producing, fails entirely in the face of the facts revealed by the study of man in different climates, and of numerous experiments in the feeding of animals. I must return to this subject in connection with the respiratory function.

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The sugar-making faculty of the liver is another “catalytic” mystery, as great as the rest of them, and no greater. Liver-tissue brings sugar out of the blood, or out of its own substance;—why?

Quia est in eo
Virtus saccharitiva.

Just what becomes of the sugar beyond the fact of its disappearance before it can get into the general circulation and sweeten our tempers, it is hard to say.

The pancreatic fluid makes an emulsion of the fat contained in our food, but just how the fatty particles get into the villi we must leave Brucke and Kolliker to settle if they can.

No one has shown satisfactorily the process by which the blood-corpuscles are formed out of the lymph-corpuscles, nor what becomes of them. These two questions are like those famous household puzzles,—Where do the flies come from? and, Where do the pins go to?

There is a series of organs in the body which has long puzzled physiologists,—organs of glandular aspect, but having no ducts,—the spleen, the thyroid and thymus bodies, and the suprarenal capsules. We call them vascular glands, and we believe that they elaborate colored and uncolored blood-cells; but just what changes they effect, and just how they effect them, it has proved a very difficult matter to determine. So of the noted glandules which form Peyer’s patches, their precise office, though seemingly like those of the lymphatic glands, cannot be positively assigned, so far as I know, at the present time. It is of obvious interest to learn it with reference to the pathology of typhoid fever. It will be remarked that the coincidence of their changes in this disease with enlargement of the spleen suggests the idea of a similarity of function in these two organs.

The theories of the production of animal heat, from the times of Black, Lavoisier, and Crawford to those of Liebig, are familiar to all who have paid any attention to physiological studies. The simplicity of Liebig’s views, and the popular form in which they have been presented, have given them wide currency, and incorporated them in the common belief and language of our text-books. Direct oxidation or combustion of the carbon and hydrogen contained in the food, or in the tissues themselves; the division of alimentary substances into respiratory, or non-azotized, and azotized,—these doctrines are familiar even to the classes in our high-schools. But this simple statement is boldly questioned. Nothing proves that oxygen combines (in the system) with hydrogen and carbon in particular, rather than with sulphur and azote. Such is the well-grounded statement of Robin and Verdeil. “It is very probable that animal heat is entirely produced by the chemical actions which take place in the organism, but the phenomenon is too complex to admit of our calculating it according to the quality of oxygen consumed.” These last are the words of Regnault, as cited by Mr. Lewes,

whose intelligent discussion of this and many of the most interesting physiological problems I strongly recommend to your attention.

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This single illustration covers a wider ground than the special function to which it belongs. We are learning that the chemistry of the body must be studied, not simply by its ingesta and egesta, but that there is a long intermediate series of changes which must be investigated in their own light, under their own special conditions. The expression "sum of vital unities" applies to the chemical actions, as well as to other actions localized in special parts; and when the distinguished chemists whom I have just cited entitle their work a treatise on the immediate principles of the body, they only indicate the nature of that profound and subtle analysis which must take the place of all hasty generalizations founded on a comparison of the food with residual products.

I will only call your attention to the fact, that the exceptional phenomenon of the laboratory is the prevailing law of the organism. Nutrition itself is but one great catalytic process. As the blood travels its rounds, each part selects its appropriate element and transforms it to its own likeness. Whether the appropriating agent be cell or nucleus, or a structureless solid like the intercellular substance of cartilage, the fact of its presence determines the separation of its proper constituents from the circulating fluid, so that even when we are wounded bone is replaced by bone, skin by skin, and nerve by nerve.

It is hardly without a smile that we resuscitate the old question of the 'vis insita' of the muscular fibre, so famous in the discussions of Haller and his contemporaries. Speaking generally, I think we may say that Haller's doctrine is the one now commonly received; namely, that the muscles contract in virtue of their own inherent endowments. It is true that Kolliker says no perfectly decisive fact has been brought forward to prove that the striated muscles contract without having been acted on by nerves. Yet Mr. Bowman's observations on the contraction of isolated fibres appear decisive enough (unless we consider them invalidated by Dr. Lionel Beale's recent researches), tending to show that each elementary fibre is supplied with nerves; and as to the smooth muscular fibres, we have Virchow's statement respecting the contractility of those of the umbilical cord, where there is not a trace of any nerves.

In the investigation of the nervous system, anatomy and physiology have gone hand in hand. It is very singular that so important, and seemingly simple, a fact as the connection of the nerve-tubes, at their origin or in their course, with the nerve-cells, should have so long remained open to doubt, as you may see that it did by referring to the very complete work of Sharpey and Quain (edition of 1849), the histological portion of which is cordially approved by Kolliker himself.

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Several most interesting points of the minute anatomy of the nervous centres have been laboriously and skilfully worked out by a recent graduate of this Medical School, in a monograph worthy to stand in line with those of Lockhart Clarke, Stilling, and Schroder van der Kolk. I have had the privilege of examining and of showing some of you a number of Dr. Dean's skilful preparations. I have no space to give even an abstract of his conclusions. I can only refer to his proof of the fact, that a single cell may send its processes into several different bundles of nerve-roots, and to his demonstration of the curved ascending and descending fibres from the posterior nerveroots, to reach what he has called the longitudinal columns of the cornea. I must also mention Dr. Dean's exquisite microscopic photographs from sections of the medulla oblongata, which appear to me to promise a new development, if not a new epoch, in anatomical art.

It having been settled that the nerve-tubes can very commonly be traced directly to the nerve-cells, the object of all the observers in this department of anatomy is to follow these tubes to their origin. We have an infinite snarl of telegraph wires, and we may be reasonably sure, that, if we can follow them up, we shall find each of them ends in a battery somewhere. One of the most interesting problems is to find the ganglionic origin of the great nerves of the medulla oblongata, and this is the end to which, by the aid of the most delicate sections, colored so as to bring out their details, mounted so as to be imperishable, magnified by the best instruments, and now self-recorded in the light of the truth-telling sunbeam, our fellow-student is making a steady progress in a labor which I think bids fair to rank with the most valuable contributions to histology that we have had from this side of the Atlantic.

It is interesting to see how old questions are incidentally settled in the course of these new investigations. Thus, Mr. Clarke's dissections, confirmed by preparations of Mr. Dean's which I have myself examined, placed the fact of the decussation of the pyramids—denied by Haller, by Morgagni, and even by Stilling—beyond doubt. So the spinal canal, the existence of which, at least in the adult, has been so often disputed, appears as a coarse and unequivocal anatomical fact in many of the preparations referred to.

While these studies of the structure of the cord have been going on, the ingenious and indefatigable Brown-Sequard has been investigating the functions of its different parts with equal diligence. The microscopic anatomists had shown that the ganglionic corpuscles of the gray matter of the cord are connected with each other by their processes, as well as with the nerve-roots. M. Brown-Sequard has proved by numerous experiments that the gray substance transmits sensitive impressions and muscular stimulation. The oblique ascending and descending fibres from the posterior nerve-roots,

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joining the “longitudinal columns of the cornua,” account for the results of Brown-Sequard’s sections of the posterior columns. The physiological experimenter has also made it evident that the decussation of the conductors of sensitive impressions has its seat in the spinal core, and not in the encephalon, as had been supposed. Not less remarkable than these results are the facts, which I with others of my audience have had the opportunity of observing, as shown by M. Brown-Sequard, of the artificial production of epilepsy in animals by injuring the spinal cord, and the induction of the paroxysm by pinching a certain portion of the skin. I would also call the student’s attention to his account of the relations of the nervous centres to nutrition and secretion, the last of which relations has been made the subject of an extended essay by our fellow countryman, Dr. H. F. Campbell of Georgia.

The physiology of the spinal cord seems a simple matter as you study it in Longet. The experiments of Brown-Sequard have shown the problem to be a complex one, and raised almost as many doubts as they have solved questions; at any rate, I believe all lecturers on physiology agree that there is no part of their task they dread so much as the analysis of the evidence relating to the special offices of the different portions of the medulla spinalis. In the brain we are sure that we do not know how to localize functions; in the spinal cord, we think we do know something; but there are so many anomalies, and seeming contradictions, and sources of fallacy, that beyond the facts of crossed paralysis of sensation, and the conducting agency of the gray substance, I am afraid we retain no cardinal principles discovered since the development of the reflex function took its place by Sir Charles Bell’s great discovery.

By the manner in which I spoke of the brain, you will see that I am obliged to leave phrenology sub Jove,—out in the cold,—as not one of the household of science. I am not one of its haters; on the contrary, I am grateful for the incidental good it has done. I love to amuse myself in its plaster Golgothas, and listen to the glib professor, as he discovers by his manipulations

“All that disgraced my betters met in me.”

I loved of old to see square-headed, heavy-jawed Spurzheim make a brain flower out into a corolla of marrowy filaments, as Vieussens had done before him, and to hear the dry-fibred but human-hearted George Combe teach good sense under the disguise of his equivocal system. But the pseudo-sciences, phrenology and the rest, seem to me only appeals to weak minds and the weak points of strong ones. There is a pica or false appetite in many intelligences; they take to odd fancies in place of wholesome truth, as girls gnaw at chalk and charcoal. Phrenology juggles with nature. It is so adjusted as to soak up all evidence that helps it, and shed all that harms it. It crawls forward in all weathers, like Richard Edgeworth’s

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hygrometer. It does not stand at the boundary of our ignorance, it seems to me, but is one of the will-o'-the-wisps of its undisputed central domain of bog and quicksand. Yet I should not have devoted so many words to it, did I not recognize the light it has thrown on human actions by its study of congenital organic tendencies. Its maps of the surface of the head are, I feel sure, founded on a delusion, but its studies of individual character are always interesting and instructive.

The "snapping-turtle" strikes after its natural fashion when it first comes out of the egg. Children betray their tendencies in their way of dealing with the breasts that nourish them; nay, lean venture to affirm, that long before they are born they teach their mothers something of their turbulent or quiet tempers.

"Castor gaudet equis, ovo proanatus eodem
Pugnis."

Strike out the false pretensions of phrenology; call it anthropology; let it study man the individual in distinction from man the abstraction, the metaphysical or theological lay-figure; and it becomes "the proper study of mankind," one of the noblest and most interesting of pursuits.

The whole physiology of the nervous system, from the simplest manifestation of its power in an insect up to the supreme act of the human intelligence working through the brain, is full of the most difficult yet profoundly interesting questions. The singular relations between electricity and nerve-force, relations which it has been attempted to interpret as meaning identity, in the face of palpable differences, require still more extended studies. You may be interested by Professor Faraday's statement of his opinion on the matter. "Though I am not satisfied that the nervous fluid is only electricity, still I think that the agent in the nervous system maybe an inorganic force; and if there be reason for supposing that magnetism is a higher relation of force than electricity, so it may well be imagined that the nervous power may be of a still more exalted character, and yet within the reach of experiment."

In connection with this statement, it is interesting to refer to the experiments of Helmholtz on the rapidity of transmission of the nervous actions. The rate is given differently in Valentin's report of these experiments and in that found in the "Scientific Annual" for 1858. One hundred and eighty to three hundred feet per second is the rate of movement assigned for sensation, but all such results must be very vaguely approximative. Boxers, fencers, players at the Italian game of morn, "prestidigitators," and all who depend for their success on rapidity of motion, know what differences there are in the personal equation of movement.

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Reflex action, the mechanical sympathy, if I may so call it, of distant parts; Instinct, which is crystallized intelligence,—an absolute law with its invariable planes and angles introduced into the sphere of consciousness, as raphides are inclosed in the living cells of plants; Intellect,—the operation of the thinking principle through material organs, with an appreciable waste of tissue in every act of thought, so that our clergymen's blood has more phosphates to get rid of on Monday than on any other day of the week; Will,—theoretically the absolute determining power, practically limited in different degrees by the varying organization of races and individuals, annulled or perverted by different ill-understood organic changes; on all these subjects our knowledge is in its infancy, and from the study of some of them the interdict of the Vatican is hardly yet removed.

I must allude to one or two points in the histology and physiology of the organs of sense. The anterior continuation of the retina beyond the ora serrata has been a subject of much discussion. If H. Muller and Kolliker can be relied upon, this question is settled by recognizing that a layer of cells, continued from the retina, passes over the surface of the zonula Zinnii, but that no proper nervous element is so prolonged forward.

I observe that Kolliker calls the true nervous elements of the retina "the layer of gray cerebral substance." In fact, the ganglionic corpuscles of each eye may be considered as constituting a little brain, connected with the masses behind by the commissure, commonly called the optic nerve. We are prepared, therefore, to find these two little brains in the most intimate relations with each other, as we find the cerebral hemispheres. We know that they are directly connected by fibres that arch round through the chiasma.

I mention these anatomical facts to introduce a physiological observation of my own, first announced in one of the lectures before the Medical Class, subsequently communicated to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and printed in its "Transactions" for February 14, 1860. I refer to the apparent transfer of impressions from one retina to the other, to which I have given the name reflex vision. The idea was suggested to me in consequence of certain effects noticed in employing the stereoscope. Professor William B. Rodgers has since called the attention of the American Scientific Association to some facts bearing on the subject, and to a very curious experiment of Leonardo da Vinci's, which enables the observer to look through the palm of his hand (or seem to), as if it had a hole bored through it. As he and others hesitated to accept my explanation, I was not sorry to find recently the following words in the "Observations on Man" of that acute observer and thinker, David Hartley. "An impression made on the right eye alone by a single object may propagate itself into the left, and there raise up

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an image almost equal in vividness to itself; and consequently when we see with one eye only, we may, however, have pictures in both eyes." Hartley, in 1784, had anticipated many of the doctrines which have since been systematized into the theory of reflex actions, and with which I have attempted to associate this act of reflex vision. My sixth experiment, however, in the communication referred to, appears to me to be a crucial one, proving the correctness of my explanation, and I am not aware that it has been before instituted.

Another point of great interest connected with the physiology of vision, and involved for a long time in great obscurity, is that of the adjustment of the eye to different distances. Dr. Clay Wallace of New York, who published a very ingenious little book on the eye about twenty years ago, with vignettes reminding one of Bewick, was among the first, if not the first, to describe the ciliary muscle, to which the power of adjustment is generally ascribed. It is ascertained, by exact experiment with the phacueidoscope, that accommodation depends on change of form of the crystalline lens. Where the crystalline is wanting, as Mr. Ware long ago taught, no power of accommodation remains. The ciliary muscle is generally thought to effect the change of form of the crystalline. The power of accommodation is lost after the application of atropine, in consequence, as is supposed, of the paralysis of this muscle. This, I believe, is the nearest approach to a demonstration we have on this point.

I have only time briefly to refer to Professor Draper's most ingenious theory as to the photographic nature of vision, for an account of which I must refer to his original and interesting Treatise on Physiology.

It were to be wished that the elaborate and very interesting researches of the Marquis Corti, which have revealed such singular complexity of structure in the cochlea of the ear, had done more to clear up its doubtful physiology; but I am afraid we have nothing but hypotheses for the special part it plays in the act of hearing, and that we must say the same respecting the office of the semicircular canals.

The microscope has achieved some of its greatest triumphs in teaching us the changes which occur in the development of the embryo. No more interesting discovery stands recorded in the voluminous literature of this subject than the one originally announced by Martin Barry, afterwards discredited, and still later confirmed by Mr. Newport and others; namely the fact that the fertilizing filament reaches the interior of the ovum in various animals;—a striking parallel to the action of the pollen-tube in the vegetable. But beyond the mechanical facts all is mystery in the movements of organization, as profound as in the fall of a stone or the formation of a crystal.

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To the chemist and the microscopist the living body presents the same difficulties, arising from the fact that everything is in perpetual change in the organism. The fibrine of the blood puzzles the one as much as its globules puzzle the other. The difference between the branches of science which deal with space only, and those which deal with space and time, is this: we have no glasses that can magnify time. The figure I here show you a was photographed from an object (*pleurosigma angulatum*) magnified a thousand diameters, or presenting a million times its natural surface. This other figure of the same object, enlarged from the one just shown, is magnified seven thousand diameters, or forty-nine million times in surface. When we can make the forty-nine millionth of a second as long as its integer, physiology and chemistry will approach nearer the completeness of anatomy.

Our reverence becomes more worthy, or, if you will, less unworthy of its Infinite Object in proportion as our intelligence is lifted and expanded to a higher and broader understanding of the Divine methods of action. If Galen called his heathen readers to admire, the power, the wisdom, the providence, the goodness of the “Framer of the animal body,”—if Mr. Boyle, the student of nature, as Addison and that friend of his who had known him for forty years tell us, never uttered the name of the Supreme Being without making a distinct pause in his speech, in token of his devout recognition of its awful meaning,—surely we, who inherit the accumulated wisdom of nearly two hundred years since the time of the British philosopher, and of almost two thousand since the Greek physician, may well lift our thoughts from the works we study to their great Artificer. These wonderful discoveries which we owe to that mighty little instrument, the telescope of the inner firmament with all its included worlds; these simple formulae by which we condense the observations of a generation in a single axiom; these logical analyses by which we fence out the ignorance we cannot reclaim, and fix the limits of our knowledge,—all lead us up to the inspiration of the Almighty, which gives understanding to the world’s great teachers. To fear science or knowledge, lest it disturb our old beliefs, is to fear the influx of the Divine wisdom into the souls of our fellow-men; for what is science but the piecemeal revelation,—uncovering,—of the plan of creation, by the agency of those chosen prophets of nature whom God has illuminated from the central light of truth for that single purpose?

The studies which we have glanced at are preliminary in your education to the practical arts which make use of them,—the arts of healing,—surgery and medicine. The more you examine the structure of the organs and the laws of life, the more you will find how resolutely each of the cell-republics which make up the *E pluribus unum* of the body maintains its independence. Guard it, feed it, air it, warm

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it, exercise or rest it properly, and the working elements will do their best to keep well or to get well. What do we do with ailing vegetables? Dr. Warren, my honored predecessor in this chair, bought a country-place, including half of an old orchard. A few years afterwards I saw the trees on his side of the fence looking in good health, while those on the other side were scraggy and miserable. How do you suppose this change was brought about? By watering them with Fowler's solution? By digging in calomel freely about their roots? Not at all; but by loosening the soil round them, and supplying them with the right kind of food in fitting quantities.

Now a man is not a plant, or, at least, he is a very curious one, for he carries his soil in his stomach, which is a kind—of portable flower-pot, and he grows round it, instead of out of it. He has, besides, a singularly complex nutritive apparatus and a nervous system. But recollect the doctrine already enunciated in the language of Virchow, that an animal, like a tree, is a sum of vital unities, of which the cell is the ultimate element. Every healthy cell, whether in a vegetable or an animal, necessarily performs its function properly so long as it is supplied with its proper materials and stimuli. A cell may, it is true, be congenitally defective, in which case disease is, so to speak, its normal state. But if originally sound and subsequently diseased, there has certainly been some excess, deficiency, or wrong quality in the materials or stimuli applied to it. You remove this injurious influence and substitute a normal one; remove the baked coal-ashes, for instance, from the roots of a tree, and replace them with loam; take away the salt meat from the patient's table, and replace it with fresh meat and vegetables, and the cells of the tree or the man return to their duty.

I do not know that we ever apply to a plant any element which is not a natural constituent of the vegetable structure, except perhaps externally, for the accidental purpose of killing parasites. The whole art of cultivation consists in learning the proper food and conditions of plants, and supplying them. We give them water, earths, salts of various kinds such as they are made of, with a chance to help themselves to air and light. The farmer would be laughed at who undertook to manure his fields or his trees with a salt of lead or of arsenic. These elements are not constituents of healthy plants. The gardener uses the waste of the arsenic furnaces to kill the weeds in his walks.

If the law of the animal cell, and of the animal organism, which is built up of such cells, is like that of the vegetable, we might expect that we should treat all morbid conditions of any of the vital unities belonging to an animal in the same way, by increasing, diminishing, or changing its natural food or stimuli.

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That is an aliment which nourishes; whatever we find in the organism, as a constant and integral element, either forming part of its structure, or one of the conditions of vital processes, that and that only deserves the name of aliment. I see no reason, therefore, why iron, phosphate of lime, sulphur, should not be considered food for man, as much as guano or poudrette for vegetables. Whether one or another of them is best in any given case,—whether they shall be taken alone or in combination, in large or small quantities, are separate questions. But they are elements belonging to the body, and even in moderate excess will produce little disturbance. There is no presumption against any of this class of substances, any more than against water or salt, provided they are used in fitting combinations, proportions, and forms.

But when it comes to substances alien to the healthy system, which never belong to it as normal constituents, the case is very different. There is a presumption against putting lead or arsenic into the human body, as against putting them into plants, because they do not belong there, any more than pounded glass, which, it is said, used to be given as a poison. The same thing is true of mercury and silver. What becomes of these alien substances after they get into the system we cannot always tell. But in the case of silver, from the accident of its changing color under the influence of light, we do know what happens. It is thrown out, in part at least, under the epidermis, and there it remains to the patient's dying day. This is a striking illustration of the difficulty which the system finds in dealing with non-assimilable elements, and justifies in some measure the vulgar prejudice against mineral poisons.

I trust the youngest student on these benches will not commit the childish error of confounding a presumption against a particular class of agents with a condemnation of them. Mercury, for instance, is alien to the system, and eminently disturbing in its influence. Yet its efficacy in certain forms of specific disease is acknowledged by all but the most sceptical theorists. Even the esprit moqueur of Ricord, the Voltaire of pelvic literature, submits to the time-honored constitutional authority of this great panacea in the class of cases to which he has devoted his brilliant intelligence. Still, there is no telling what evils have arisen from the abuse of this mineral. Dr. Armstrong long ago pointed out some of them, and they have become matters of common notoriety. I am pleased, therefore, when I find so able and experienced a practitioner as Dr. Williams of this city proving that iritis is best treated without mercury, and Dr. Vanderpoel showing the same thing to be true for pericarditis.

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Whatever elements nature does not introduce into vegetables, the natural food of all animal life,—directly of herbivorous, indirectly of carnivorous animals,—are to be regarded with suspicion. Arsenic-eating may seem to improve the condition of horses for a time,—and even of human beings, if Tschudi's stories can be trusted,—but it soon appears that its alien qualities are at war with the animal organization. So of copper, antimony, and other non-alimentary simple substances; everyone of them is an intruder in the living system, as much as a constable would be, quartered in our household. This does not mean that they may not, any of them, be called in for a special need, as we send for the constable when we have good reason to think we have a thief under our roof; but a man's body is his castle, as well as his house, and the presumption is that we are to keep our alimentary doors bolted against these perturbing agents.

Now the feeling is very apt to be just contrary to this. The habit has been very general with well-taught practitioners, to have recourse to the introduction of these alien elements into the system on the occasion of any slight disturbance. The tongue was a little coated, and mercury must be given; the skin was a little dry, and the patient must take antimony. It was like sending for the constable and the posse comitatus when there is only a carpet to shake or a refuse-barrel to empty. [Dr. James Johnson advises persons not ailing to take five grains of blue pill with one or two of aloes twice a week for three or four months in the year, with half a pint of compound decoction of sarsaparilla every day for the same period, to preserve health and prolong life. *Pract. Treatise on Dis. of Liver, etc.* p. 272.] The constitution bears slow poisoning a great deal better than might be expected; yet the most intelligent men in the profession have gradually got out of the habit of prescribing these powerful alien substances in the old routine way. Mr. Metcalf will tell you how much more sparingly they are given by our practitioners at the present time, than when he first inaugurated the new era of pharmacy among us. Still, the presumption in favor of poisoning out every spontaneous reaction of outraged nature is not extinct in those who are trusted with the lives of their fellow-citizens. "On examining the file of prescriptions at the hospital, I discovered that they were rudely written, and indicated a treatment, as they consisted chiefly of tartar emetic, ipecacuanha, and epsom salts, hardly favorable to the cure of the prevailing diarrhoea and dysenteries." In a report of a poisoning case now on trial, where we are told that arsenic enough was found in the stomach to produce death in twenty-four hours, the patient is said to have been treated by arsenic, phosphorus, bryonia, aconite, nuxvomica, and muriatic acid,—by a practitioner of what school it may be imagined.

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The traditional idea of always poisoning out disease, as we smoke out vermin, is now seeking its last refuge behind the wooden cannon and painted port-holes of that unblushing system of false scientific pretences which I do not care to name in a discourse addressed to an audience devoted to the study of the laws of nature in the light of the laws of evidence. It is extraordinary to observe that the system which, by its reducing medicine to a name and a farce, has accustomed all who have sense enough to see through its thin artifices to the idea that diseases get well without being “cured,” should now be the main support of the tottering poison-cure doctrine. It has unquestionably helped to teach wise people that nature heals most diseases without help from pharmaceutic art, but it continues to persuade fools that art can arrest them all with its specifics.

It is worse than useless to attempt in any way to check the freest expression of opinion as to the efficacy of any or all of the “heroic” means of treatment employed by practitioners of different schools and periods. Medical experience is a great thing, but we must not forget that there is a higher experience, which tries its results in a court of a still larger jurisdiction; that, namely, in which the laws of human belief are summoned to the witness-box, and obliged to testify to the sources of error which beset the medical practitioner. The verdict is as old as the father of medicine, who announces it in the words, “judgment is difficult.” Physicians differed so in his time, that some denied that there was any such thing as an art of medicine.

One man’s best remedies were held as mischievous by another. The art of healing was like soothsaying, so the common people said; “the same bird was lucky or unlucky, according as he flew to the right or left.”

The practice of medicine has undergone great changes within the period of my own observation. Venesection, for instance, has so far gone out of fashion, that, as I am told by residents of the New York Bellevue and the Massachusetts General Hospitals, it is almost obsolete in these institutions, at least in medical practice. The old Brunonian stimulating treatment has come into vogue again in the practice of Dr. Todd and his followers. The compounds of mercury have yielded their place as drugs of all work, and specifics for that very frequent subjective complaint, *nescio quid faciam*,—to compounds of iodine. [Sir Astley Cooper has the boldness,—or honesty,—to speak of medicines which “are given as much to assist the medical man as his patient.” Lectures (London, 1832), p. 14.] Opium is believed in, and quinine, and “rum,” using that expressive monosyllable to mean all alcoholic cordials. If Moliere were writing now, instead of *saignare*, *purgare*, and the other, he would be more like to say, *Stimulare*, *opium dare* et *potassio-iodizare*.

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I have been in relation successively with the English and American evacuant and alterative practice, in which calomel and antimony figured so largely that, as you may see in Dr. Jackson's last "Letter," Dr. Holyoke, a good representative of sterling old-fashioned medical art, counted them with opium and Peruvian bark as his chief remedies; with the moderately expectant practice of Louis; the blood-letting "coup sur coup" of Bouillaud; the contra-stimulant method of Rasori and his followers; the anti-irritant system of Broussais, with its leeching and gum-water; I have heard from our own students of the simple opium practice of the renowned German teacher, Oppolzer; and now I find the medical community brought round by the revolving cycle of opinion to that same old plan of treatment which John Brown taught in Edinburgh in the last quarter of the last century, and Miner and Tully fiercely advocated among ourselves in the early years of the present. The worthy physicians last mentioned, and their antagonist Dr. Gallup, used stronger language than we of these degenerate days permit ourselves. "The lancet is a weapon which annually slays more than the sword," says Dr. Tully. "It is probable that, for forty years past, opium and its preparations have done seven times the injury they have rendered benefit, on the great scale of the world," says Dr. Gallup.

What is the meaning of these perpetual changes and conflicts of medical opinion and practice, from an early antiquity to our own time? Simply this: all "methods" of treatment end in disappointment of those extravagant expectations which men are wont to entertain of medical art. The bills of mortality are more obviously affected by drainage, than by this or that method of practice. The insurance companies do not commonly charge a different percentage on the lives of the patients of this or that physician. In the course of a generation, more or less, physicians themselves are liable to get tired of a practice which has so little effect upon the average movement of vital decomposition. Then they are ready for a change, even if it were back again to a method which has already been tried, and found wanting.

Our practitioners, or many of them, have got back to the ways of old Dr. Samuel Danforth, who, as it is well known, had strong objections to the use of the lancet. By and by a new reputation will be made by some discontented practitioner, who, tired of seeing patients die with their skins full of whiskey and their brains muddy with opium, returns to a bold antiphlogistic treatment, and has the luck to see a few patients of note get well under it. So of the remedies which have gone out of fashion and been superseded by others. It can hardly be doubted that they will come into vogue again, more or less extensively, under the influence of that irresistible demand for change just referred to.

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Then will come the usual talk about a change in the character of disease, which has about as much meaning as that concerning "old-fashioned snow-storms." "Epidemic constitutions" of disease mean something, no doubt; a great deal as applied to malarious affections; but that the whole type of diseases undergoes such changes that the practice must be reversed from depleting to stimulating, and vice versa, is much less likely than that methods of treatment go out of fashion and come in again. If there is any disease which claims its percentage with reasonable uniformity, it is phthisis. Yet I remember that the reverend and venerable Dr. Prince of Salem told me one Commencement day, as I was jogging along towards Cambridge with him, that he recollected the time when that disease was hardly hardly known; and in confirmation of his statement mentioned a case in which it was told as a great event, that somebody down on "the Cape" had died of "a consumption." This story does not sound probable to myself, as I repeat it, yet I assure you it is true, and it shows how cautiously we must receive all popular stories of great changes in the habits of disease.

Is there no progress, then, but do we return to the same beliefs and practices which our forefathers wore out and threw away? I trust and believe that there is a real progress. We may, for instance, return in a measure to the Brunonian stimulating system, but it must be in a modified way, for we cannot go back to the simple Brunonian pathology, since we have learned too much of diseased action to accept its convenient dualism. So of other doctrines, each new Avatar strips them of some of their old pretensions, until they take their fitting place at last, if they have any truth in them, or disappear, if they were mere phantasms of the imagination.

In the mean time, while medical theories are coming in and going out, there is a set of sensible men who are never run away with by them, but practise their art sagaciously and faithfully in much the same way from generation to generation. From the time of Hippocrates to that of our own medical patriarch, there has been an apostolic succession of wise and good practitioners. If you will look at the first aphorism of the ancient Master you will see that before all remedies he places the proper conduct of the patient and his attendants, and the fit ordering of all the conditions surrounding him. The class of practitioners I have referred to have always been the most faithful in attending to these points. No doubt they have sometimes prescribed unwisely, in compliance with the prejudices of their time, but they have grown wiser as they have grown older, and learned to trust more in nature and less in their plans of interference. I believe common opinion confirms Sir James Clark's observation to this effect.

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The experience of the profession must, I think, run parallel with that of the wisest of its individual members. Each time a plan of treatment or a particular remedy comes up for trial, it is submitted to a sharper scrutiny. When Cullen wrote his *Materia Medica*, he had seriously to assail the practice of giving burnt toad, which was still countenanced by at least one medical authority of note. I have read recently in some medical journal, that an American practitioner, whose name is known to the country, is prescribing the hoof of a horse for epilepsy. It was doubtless suggested by that old fancy of wearing a portion of elk's hoof hung round the neck or in a ring, for this disease. But it is hard to persuade reasonable people to swallow the abominations of a former period. The evidence which satisfied Fernelius will not serve one of our hospital physicians.

In this way those articles of the *Materia Medica* which had nothing but loathsomeness to recommend them have been gradually dropped, and are not like to obtain any general favor again with civilized communities. The next culprits to be tried are the poisons. I have never been in the least sceptical as to the utility of some of them, when properly employed. Though I believe that at present, taking the world at large, and leaving out a few powerful agents of such immense value that they rank next to food in importance, the poisons prescribed for disease do more hurt than good, I have no doubt, and never professed to have any, that they do much good in prudent and instructed hands. But I am very willing to confess a great jealousy of many agents, and I could almost wish to see the *Materia Medica* so classed as to call suspicion upon certain ones among them.

Thus the alien elements, those which do not properly enter into the composition of any living tissue, are the most to be suspected, —mercury, lead, antimony, silver, and the rest, for the reasons I have before mentioned. Even iodine, which, as it is found in certain plants, seems less remote from the animal tissues, gives unequivocal proofs from time to time that it is hostile to some portions of the glandular system.

There is, of course, less *prima facie* objection to those agents which consist of assimilable elements, such as are found making a part of healthy tissues. These are divisible into three classes,—foods, poisons, and inert, mostly because insoluble, substances. The food of one animal or of one human being is sometimes poison to another, and vice versa; inert substances may act mechanically, so as to produce the effect of poisons; but this division holds exactly enough for our purpose.

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Strictly speaking, every poison consisting of assimilable elements may be considered as unwholesome food. It is rejected by the stomach, or it produces diarrhoea, or it causes vertigo or disturbance of the heart's action, or some other symptom for which the subject of it would consult the physician, if it came on from any other cause than taking it under the name of medicine. Yet portions of this unwholesome food which we call medicine, we have reason to believe, are assimilated; thus, castor-oil appears to be partially digested by infants, so that they require large doses to affect them medicinally. Even that deadliest of poisons, hydrocyanic acid, is probably assimilated, and helps to make living tissue, if it do not kill the patient, for the assimilable elements which it contains, given in the separate forms of amygdalin and emulsin, produce no disturbance, unless, as in Bernard's experiments, they are suffered to meet in the digestive organs. A medicine consisting of assimilable substances being then simply unwholesome food, we understand what is meant by those cumulative effects of such remedies often observed, as in the case of digitalis and strychnia. They are precisely similar to the cumulative effects of a salt diet in producing scurvy, or of spurred rye in producing dry gangrene. As the effects of such substances are a violence to the organs, we should exercise the same caution with regard to their use that we would exercise about any other kind of poisonous food,—partridges at certain seasons, for instance. Even where these poisonous kinds of food seem to be useful, we should still regard them with great jealousy. Digitalis lowers the pulse in febrile conditions. Veratrum viride does the same thing. How do we know that a rapid pulse is not a normal adjustment of nature to the condition it accompanies? Digitalis has gone out of favor; how sure are we that Veratrum viride will not be found to do more harm than good in a case of internal inflammation, taking the whole course of the disease into consideration? Think of the change of opinion with regard to the use of opium in delirium tremens (which you remember is sometimes called delirium vigilans), where it seemed so obviously indicated, since the publication of Dr. Ware's admirable essay. I respect the evidence of my contemporaries, but I cannot forget the sayings of the Father of medicine,—*Ars longa, judicium difficile*.

I am not presuming to express an opinion concerning Veratrum viride, which was little heard of when I was still practising medicine. I am only appealing to that higher court of experience which sits in judgment on all decisions of the lower medical tribunals, and which requires more than one generation for its final verdict.

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Once change the habit of mind so long prevalent among practitioners of medicine; once let it be everywhere understood that the presumption is in favor of food, and not of alien substances, of innocuous, and not of unwholesome food, for the sick; that this presumption requires very strong evidence in each particular case to overcome it; but that, when such evidence is afforded, the alien substance or the unwholesome food should be given boldly, in sufficient quantities, in the same spirit as that with which the surgeon lifts his knife against a patient,—that is, with the same reluctance and the same determination,—and I think we shall have and hear much less of charlatanism in and out of the profession. The disgrace of medicine has been that colossal system of self-deception, in obedience to which mines have been emptied of their cankering minerals, the vegetable kingdom robbed of all its noxious growths, the entrails of animals taxed for their impurities, the poison-bags of reptiles drained of their venom, and all the inconceivable abominations thus obtained thrust down the throats of human beings suffering from some fault of organization, nourishment, or vital stimulation.

Much as we have gained, we have not yet thoroughly shaken off the notion that poison is the natural food of disease, as wholesome aliment is the support of health. Cowper's lines, in "The Task," show the matter-of-course practice of his time:

"He does not scorn it, who has long endured
A fever's agonies, and fed on drugs."

Dr. Kimball of Lowell, who has been in the habit of seeing a great deal more of typhoid fever than most practitioners, and whose surgical exploits show him not to be wanting in boldness or enterprise, can tell you whether he finds it necessary to feed his patients on drugs or not. His experience is, I believe, that of the most enlightened and advanced portion of the profession; yet I think that even in typhoid fever, and certainly in many other complaints, the effects of ancient habits and prejudices may still be seen in the practice of some educated physicians.

To you, young men, it belongs to judge all that has gone before you. You come nearer to the great fathers of modern medicine than some of you imagine. Three of my own instructors attended Dr. Rush's Lectures. The illustrious Haller mentions Rush's inaugural thesis in his "Bibliotheca Anatomica;" and this same Haller, brought so close to us, tells us he remembers Ruysch, then an old man, and used to carry letters between him and Boerhaave. Look through the history of medicine from Boerhaave to this present day. You will see at once that medical doctrine and practice have undergone a long series of changes. You will see that the doctrine and practice of our own time must probably change in their turn, and that, if we can trust at all to the indications of their course, it will be in the direction of an improved hygiene and a simplified treatment.

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Especially will the old habit of violating the instincts of the sick give place to a judicious study of these same instincts. It will be found that bodily, like mental insanity, is best managed, for the most part, by natural soothing agencies. Two centuries ago there was a prescription for scurvy containing “stercoris taurini et anserini par, quantitas trium magnarum nucum,” of the hell-broth containing which “guoties-cumque sitit oeger, large bibit.” When I have recalled the humane common-sense of Captain Cook in the matter of preventing this disease; when I have heard my friend, Mr. Dana, describing the avidity with which the scurvy-stricken sailors snuffed up the earthy fragrance of fresh raw potatoes, the food which was to supply the elements wanting to their spongy tissues, I have recognized that the perfection of art is often a return to nature, and seen in this single instance the germ of innumerable beneficent future medical reforms.

I cannot help believing that medical curative treatment will by and by resolve itself in great measure into modifications of the food, swallowed and breathed, and of the natural stimuli, and that less will be expected from specifics and noxious disturbing agents, either alien or assimilable. The noted mineral-waters containing iron, sulphur, carbonic acid, supply nutritious or stimulating materials to the body as much as phosphate of lime and ammoniacal compounds do to the cereal plants. The effects of a milk and vegetable diet, of gluten bread in diabetes, of cod-liver oil in phthisis, even of such audacious innovations as the water-cure and the grape-cure, are only hints of what will be accomplished when we have learned to discover what organic elements are deficient or in excess in a case of chronic disease, and the best way of correcting the abnormal condition, just as an agriculturist ascertains the wants of his crops and modifies the composition of his soil. In acute febrile diseases we have long ago discovered that far above all drug-medication is the use of mild liquid diet in the period of excitement, and of stimulant and nutritious food in that of exhaustion. Hippocrates himself was as particular about his barley-ptisan as any Florence Nightingale of our time could be.

The generation to which you, who are just entering the profession, belong, will make a vast stride forward, as I believe, in the direction of treatment by natural rather than violent agencies. What is it that makes the reputation of Sydenham, as the chief of English physicians? His prescriptions consisted principally of simples. An aperient or an opiate, a “cardiac” or a tonic, may be commonly found in the midst of a somewhat fantastic miscellany of garden herbs. It was not by his pharmaceutic prescriptions that he gained his great name. It was by daring to order fresh air for small-pox patients, and riding on horseback for consumptives, in place of the smothering system, and the noxious and often loathsome rubbish

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of the established schools. Of course Sydenham was much abused by his contemporaries, as he frequently takes occasion to remind his reader. "I must needs conclude," he says, "either that I am void of merit, or that the candid and ingenuous part of mankind, who are formed with so excellent a temper of mind as to be no strangers to gratitude, make a very small part of the whole." If in the fearless pursuit of truth you should find the world as ungracious in the nineteenth century as he found it in the seventeenth, you may learn a lesson of self-reliance from another utterance of the same illustrious physician: "'T is none of my business to inquire what other persons think, but to establish my own observations; in order to which, I ask no favor of the reader but to peruse my writings with temper."

The physician has learned a great deal from the surgeon, who is naturally in advance of him, because he has a better opportunity of seeing the effects of his remedies. Let me shorten one of Ambroise Pare's stories for you. There had been a great victory at the pass of Susa, and they were riding into the city. The wounded cried out as the horses trampled them under their hoofs, which caused good Ambroise great pity, and made him wish himself back in Paris. Going into a stable he saw four dead soldiers, and three desperately wounded, placed with their backs against the wall. An old campaigner came up.—"Can these fellows get well?" he said. "No!" answered the surgeon. Thereupon, the old soldier walked up to them and cut all their throats, sweetly, and without wrath (*doulcement et sans cholere*). Ambroise told him he was a bad man to do such a thing. "I hope to God;" he said, "somebody will do as much for me if I ever get into such a scrape" (*accoustre de telle facon*). "I was not much salted in those days" (*bien doux de sel*), says Ambroise, "and little acquainted with the treatment of wounds." However, as he tells us, he proceeded to apply boiling oil of Sambuc (elder) after the approved fashion of the time,—with what torture to the patient may be guessed. At last his precious oil gave out, and he used instead an insignificant mixture of his own contrivance. He could not sleep that night for fear his patients who had not been scalded with the boiling oil would be poisoned by the gunpowder conveyed into their wounds by the balls. To his surprise, he found them much better than the others the next morning, and resolved never again to burn his patients with hot oil for gun-shot wounds.

This was the beginning, as nearly as we can fix it, of that reform which has introduced plain water-dressings in the place of the farrago of external applications which had been a source of profit to apothecaries and disgrace to art from, and before, the time when Pliny complained of them. A young surgeon who was at Sudley Church, laboring among the wounded of Bull Run, tells me they had nothing but water for dressing, and he (being also *doux de sel*) was astonished to see how well the wounds did under that simple treatment.

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Let me here mention a fact or two which may be of use to some of you who mean to enter the public service. You will, as it seems, have gun-shot wounds almost exclusively to deal with. Three different surgeons, the one just mentioned and two who saw the wounded of Big Bethel, assured me that they found no sabre-cuts or bayonet wounds. It is the rifle-bullet from a safe distance which pierces the breasts of our soldiers, and not the gallant charge of broad platoons and sweeping squadrons, such as we have been in the habit of considering the chosen mode of warfare of ancient and modern chivalry. [Sir Charles James Napier had the same experience in Virginia in 1813. "Potomac. We have nasty sort of fighting here, amongst creeks and bushes, and lose men without show." "Yankee never shows himself, he keeps in the thickest wood, fires and runs off."—"These five thousand in the open field might be attacked, but behind works it would be throwing away lives." He calls it "an inglorious warfare,"—says one of the leaders is "a little deficient in gumption,"—but—still my opinion is, that if we tuck up our sleeves and lay our ears back we might thrash them; that is, if we caught them out of their trees, so as to slap at them with the bayonet."—Life, etc. vol. i. p. 218 et seq.]

Another fact parallels the story of the old campaigner, and may teach some of you caution in selecting your assistants. A chaplain told it to two of our officers personally known to myself. He overheard the examination of a man who wished to drive one of the "avalanche" wagons, as they call them. The man was asked if he knew how to deal with wounded men. "Oh yes," he answered; "if they're hit here," pointing to the abdomen, "knock 'em on the head,—they can't get well."

In art and outside of it you will meet the same barbarisms that Ambroise Pare met with,—for men differ less from century to century than we are apt to suppose; you will encounter the same opposition, if you attack any prevailing opinion, that Sydenham complained of. So far as possible, let not such experiences breed in you a contempt for those who are the subjects of folly or prejudice, or foster any love of dispute for its own sake. Should you become authors, express your opinions freely; defend them rarely. It is not often that an opinion is worth expressing, which cannot take care of itself. Opposition is the best mordant to fix the color of your thought in the general belief.

It is time to bring these crowded remarks to a close. The day has been when at the beginning of a course of Lectures I should have thought it fitting to exhort you to diligence and entire devotion to your tasks as students. It is not so now. The young man who has not heard the clarion-voices of honor and of duty now sounding throughout the land, will heed no word of mine. In the camp or the city, in the field or the hospital, under sheltering roof, or half-protecting canvas, or open sky, shedding our own blood or stanching that of our wounded defenders, students or teachers, whatever our calling and our ability, we belong, not to ourselves, but to our imperilled country, whose danger is our calamity, whose ruin would be our enslavement, whose rescue shall be our earthly salvation!

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SCHOLASTIC AND BEDSIDE TEACHING.

An Introductory Lecture delivered before the Medical Class of Harvard University, November 6, 1867.

The idea is entertained by some of our most sincere professional brethren, that to lengthen and multiply our Winter Lectures will be of necessity to advance the cause of medical education. It is a fair subject for consideration whether they do not overrate the relative importance of that particular mode of instruction which forms the larger part of these courses.

As this School could only lengthen its lecture term at the expense of its "Summer Session," in which more direct, personal, and familiar teaching takes the place of our academic discourses, and in which more time can be given to hospitals, infirmaries, and practical instruction in various important specialties, whatever might be gained, a good deal would certainly be lost in our case by the exchange.

The most essential part of a student's instruction is obtained, as I believe, not in the lecture-room, but at the bedside. Nothing seen there is lost; the rhythms of disease are learned by frequent repetition; its unforeseen occurrences stamp themselves indelibly in the memory. Before the student is aware of what he has acquired, he has learned the aspects and course and probable issue of the diseases he has seen with his teacher, and the proper mode of dealing with them, so far as his master knows it. On the other hand, our ex cathedra prelections have a strong tendency to run into details which, however interesting they may be to ourselves and a few of our more curious listeners, have nothing in them which will ever be of use to the student as a practitioner. It is a perfectly fair question whether I and some other American Professors do not teach quite enough that is useless already. Is it not well to remind the student from time to time that a physician's business is to avert disease, to heal the sick, to prolong life, and to diminish suffering? Is it not true that the young man of average ability will find it as much as he can do to fit himself for these simple duties? Is it not best to begin, at any rate, by making sure of such knowledge as he will require in his daily walk, by no means discouraging him from any study for which his genius fits him when he once feels that he has become master of his chosen art.

I know that many branches of science are of the greatest value as feeders of our medical reservoirs. But the practising physician's office is to draw the healing waters, and while he gives his time to this labor he can hardly be expected to explore all the sources that spread themselves over the wide domain of science. The traveller who would not drink of the Nile until he had tracked it to its parent lakes, would be like to die of thirst; and the medical practitioner who would not use the results of many laborers in other departments without sharing their special toils, would find life far too short and art immeasurably too long.

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We owe much to Chemistry, one of the most captivating as well as important of studies; but the medical man must as a general rule content himself with a clear view of its principles and a limited acquaintance with its facts; such especially as are pertinent to his pursuits. I am in little danger of underrating Anatomy or Physiology; but as each of these branches splits up into specialties, any one of which may take up a scientific life-time, I would have them taught with a certain judgment and reserve, so that they shall not crowd the more immediately practical branches. So of all the other ancillary and auxiliary kinds of knowledge, I would have them strictly subordinated to that particular kind of knowledge for which the community looks to its medical advisers.

A medical school is not a scientific school, except just so far as medicine itself is a science. On the natural history side, medicine is a science; on the curative side, chiefly an art. This is implied in Hufeland's aphorism: "The physician must generalize the disease and individualize the patient."

The coordinated and classified results of empirical observation, in distinction from scientific experiment, have furnished almost all we know about food, the medicine of health, and medicine, the food of sickness. We eat the root of the *Solanum tuberosum* and throw away its fruit; we eat the fruit of the *Solanum Lycopersicum* and throw away its root. Nothing but vulgar experience has taught us to reject the potato ball and cook the tomato. So of most of our remedies. The subchloride of mercury, calomel, is the great British specific; the protochloride of mercury, corrosive sublimate, kills like arsenic, but no chemist could have told us it would be so.

From observations like these we can obtain certain principles from which we can argue deductively to facts of a like nature, but the process is limited, and we are suspicious of all reasoning in that direction applied to the processes of healthy and diseased life. We are continually appealing to special facts. We are willing to give Liebig's artificial milk when we cannot do better, but we watch the child anxiously whose wet-nurse is a chemist's pipkin. A pair of substantial mammary glands has the advantage over the two hemispheres of the most learned Professor's brain, in the art of compounding a nutritious fluid for infants.

The bedside is always the true centre of medical teaching. Certain branches must be taught in the lecture-room, and will necessarily involve a good deal that is not directly useful to the future practitioner. But the over ambitious and active student must not be led away by the seduction of knowledge for its own sake from his principal pursuit. The humble beginner, who is alarmed at the vast fields of knowledge opened to him, may be encouraged by the assurance that with a very slender provision of science, in distinction from practical skill, he may be a useful and acceptable member of the profession to which the health of the community is intrusted.

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To those who are not to engage in practice, the various pursuits of science hardly require to be commended. Only they must not be disappointed if they find many subjects treated in our courses as a medical class requires, rather than as a scientific class would expect, that is, with special limitations and constant reference to practical ends. Fortunately they are within easy reach of the highest scientific instruction. The business of a school like this is to make useful working physicians, and to succeed in this it is almost as important not to overcrowd the mind of the pupil with merely curious knowledge as it is to store it with useful information.

In this direction I have written my lecture, not to undervalue any form of scientific labor in its place, an unworthy thought from which I hope I need not defend myself,—but to discourage any undue inflation of the scholastic programme, which even now asks more of the student than the teacher is able to obtain from the great majority of those who present themselves for examination. I wish to take a hint in education from the Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Agriculture, who regards the cultivation of too much land as a great defect in our New England farming. I hope that our Medical Institutions may never lay themselves open to the kind of accusation Mr. Lowe brings against the English Universities, when he says that their education is made up “of words that few understand and most will shortly forget; of arts that can never be used, if indeed they can even be learnt; of histories inapplicable to our times; of languages dead and even mouldy; of grammatical rules that never had living use and are only post mortem examinations; and of statements fagoted with utter disregard of their comparative value.”

This general thought will be kept in view throughout my somewhat discursive address, which will begin with an imaginary clinical lesson from the lips of an historical personage, and close with the portrait from real life of one who, both as teacher and practitioner, was long loved and honored among us. If I somewhat overrun my hour, you must pardon me, for I can say with Pascal that I have not had the time to make my lecture shorter.

In the year 1647, that good man John Eliot, commonly called the Apostle Eliot, writing to Mr. Thomas Shepherd, the pious minister of Cambridge, referring to the great need of medical instruction for the Indians, used these words:

“I have thought in my heart that it were a singular good work, if the Lord would stirre up the hearts of some or other of his people in England to give some maintenance toward some Schoole or Collegiate exercise this way, wherein there should be Anatomies and other instructions that way, and where there might be some recompence given to any that should bring in any vegetable or other thing that is vertuous in the way of Physick.

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“There is another reason which moves my thought and desires this way, namely that our young students in Physick may be trained up better then they yet bee, who have onely theoreticall knowledge, and are forced to fall to practise before ever they saw an Anatomy made, or duely trained up in making experiments, for we never had but one Anatomy in the countrey, which Mr. Giles Firman [Firmin] now in England, did make and read upon very well, but no more of that now.”

Since the time of the Apostle Eliot the Lord has stirred up the hearts of our people to the building of many Schools and Colleges where medicine is taught in all its branches. Mr. Giles Firmin’s “Anatomy” may be considered the first ancestor of a long line of skeletons which have been dangling and rattling in our lecture-rooms for more than a century.

Teaching in New England in 1647 was a grave but simple matter. A single person, combining in many cases, as in that of Mr. Giles Firmin, the offices of physician and preacher, taught what he knew to a few disciples whom he gathered about him. Of the making of that “Anatomy” on which my first predecessor in the branch I teach “did read very well” we can know nothing. The body of some poor wretch who had swung upon the gallows, was probably conveyed by night to some lonely dwelling at the outskirts of the village, and there by the light of flaring torches hastily dissected by hands that trembled over the unwonted task. And ever and anon the master turned to his book, as he laid bare the mysteries of the hidden organs; to his precious Vesalius, it might be, or his figures repeated in the multifarious volume of Ambroise Pare; to the Aldine octavo in which Fallopius recorded his fresh observations; or that giant folio of Spigelius just issued from the press of Amsterdam, in which lovely ladies display their viscera with a coquettish grace implying that it is rather a pleasure than otherwise to show the lace-like omentum, and hold up their appendices epiploicae as if they were saying “these are our jewels.”

His teaching of medicine was no doubt chiefly clinical, and received with the same kind of faith as that which accepted his words from the pulpit. His notions of disease were based on what he had observed, seen always in the light of the traditional doctrines in which he was bred. His discourse savored of the weighty doctrines of Hippocrates, diluted by the subtle speculations of Galen, reinforced by the curious comments of the Arabian schoolmen as they were conveyed in the mellifluous language of Fernelius, blended, it may be, with something of the lofty mysticism of Van Helmont, and perhaps stealing a flavor of that earlier form of Homoeopathy which had lately come to light in Sir Kenelm Digby’s “Discourse concerning the Cure of Wounds by the Sympathetic Powder.”

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His Pathology was mythology. A malformed foetus, as the readers of Winthrop's Journal may remember, was enough to scare the colonists from their propriety, and suggest the gravest fears of portended disaster. The student of the seventeenth century opened his Licetus and saw figures of a lion with the head of a woman, and a man with the head of an elephant. He had offered to his gaze, as born of a human mother, the effigy of a winged cherub, a pterocephalous specimen, which our Professor of Pathological Anatomy would hardly know whether to treat with the reverence due to its celestial aspect, or to imprison in one of his immortalizing jars of alcohol.

His pharmacopoeia consisted mainly of simples, such as the venerable "Herball" of Gerard describes and figures in abounding affluence. St. John's wort and Clown's All-heal, with Spurge and Fennel, Saffron and Parsley, Elder and Snake-root, with opium in some form, and roasted rhubarb and the Four Great Cold Seeds, and the two Resins, of which it used to be said that whatever the Tacamahaca has not cured, the Caranna will, with the more familiar Scammony and Jalap and Black Hellebore, made up a good part of his probable list of remedies. He would have ordered Iron now and then, and possibly an occasional dose of Antimony. He would perhaps have had a rheumatic patient wrapped in the skin of a wolf or a wild cat, and in case of a malignant fever with "purples" or petechiae, or of an obstinate king's evil, he might have prescribed a certain black powder, which had been made by calcining toads in an earthen pot; a choice remedy, taken internally, or applied to any outward grief.

Except for the toad-powder and the peremptory drastics, one might have borne up against this herb doctoring as well as against some more modern styles of medication. Barbeyrac and his scholar Sydenham had not yet cleansed the Pharmacopoeia of its perilous stuff, but there is no doubt that the more sensible physicians of that day knew well enough that a good honest herb-tea which amused the patient and his nurses was all that was required to carry him through all common disorders.

The student soon learned the physiognomy of disease by going about with his master; fevers, pleurisies, asthmas, dropsies, fluxes, small-pox, sore-throats, measles, consumptions. He saw what was done for them. He put up the medicines, gathered the herbs, and so learned something of materia medica and botany. He learned these few things easily and well, for he could give his whole attention to them. Chirurgery was a separate specialty. Women in child-birth were cared for by midwives. There was no chemistry deserving the name to require his study. He did not learn a great deal, perhaps, but what he did learn was his business, namely, how to take care of sick people.

Let me give you a picture of the old-fashioned way of instruction, by carrying you with me in imagination in the company of worthy Master Giles Firmin as he makes his round of visits among the good folk of Ipswich, followed by his one student, who shall answer to the scriptural name of Luke. It will not be for entertainment chiefly, but to illustrate the one mode of teaching which can never be superseded, and which, I venture to say, is

more important than all the rest put together. The student is a green hand, as you will perceive.

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In the first dwelling they come to, a stout fellow is bellowing with colic.

“He will die, Master, of a surety, methinks,” says the timid youth in a whisper.

“Nay, Luke,” the Master answers, “’t is but a dry belly-ache. Didst thou not mark that he stayed his roaring when I did press hard over the lesser bowels? Note that he hath not the pulse of them with fevers, and by what Dorcas telleth me there hath been no long shutting up of the vice naturales. We will steep certain comforting herbs which I will shew thee, and put them in a bag and lay them on his belly. Likewise he shall have my cordial julep with a portion of this confection which we do call Theriaca Andromachi, which hath juice of poppy in it, and is a great stayer of anguish. This fellow is at his prayers to-day, but I warrant thee he shall be swearing with the best of them to-morrow.”

They jog along the bridle-path on their horses until they come to another lowly dwelling. They sit a while with a delicate looking girl in whom the ingenuous youth naturally takes a special interest. The good physician talks cheerfully with her, asks her a few questions. Then to her mother: “Good-wife, Margaret hath somewhat profited, as she telleth, by the goat’s milk she hath taken night and morning. Do thou pluck a maniple—that is an handful—of the plant called Maidenhair, and make a syrup therewith as I have shewed thee. Let her take a cup full of the same, fasting, before she sleepeth, also before she riseth from her bed.” And so they leave the house.

“What thinkest thou, Luke, of the maid we have been visiting?” “She seemeth not much ailing, Master, according to my poor judgment. For she did say she was better. And she had a red cheek and a bright eye, and she spake of being soon able to walk unto the meeting, and did seem greatly hopeful, but spare of flesh, methought, and her voice something hoarse, as of one that hath a defluxion, with some small coughing from a cold, as she did say. Speak I not truly, Master, that she will be well speedily?”

“Yea, Luke, I do think she shall be well, and mayhap speedily. But it is not here with us she shall be well. For that redness of the cheek is but the sign of the fever which, after the Grecians, we do call the hectic; and that shining of the eyes is but a sickly glazing, and they which do every day get better and likewise thinner and weaker shall find that way leadeth to the church-yard gate. This is the malady which the ancients did call tubes, or the wasting disease, and some do name the consumption. A disease whereof most that fall ailing do perish. This Margaret is not long for earth—but she knoweth it not, and still hopeth.”

“Why, then, Master, didst thou give her of thy medicine, seeing that her ail is unto death?”

“Thou shalt learn, boy, that they which are sick must have somewhat wherewith to busy their thoughts. There be some who do give these tabid or consumptives a certain posset made with lime-water and anise and liquorice and raisins of the sun, and there



be other some who do give the juice of craw-fishes boiled in barley-water with chicken-broth, but these be toys, as I do think, and ye shall find as good virtue, nay better, in this syrup of the simple called Maidenhair.”

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Something after this manner might Master Giles Firmin have delivered his clinical instructions. Somewhat in this way, a century and a half later, another New England physician, Dr. Edward Augustus Holyoke, taught a young man who came to study with him, a very diligent and intelligent youth, James Jackson by name, the same whose portrait in his advanced years hangs upon this wall, long the honored Professor of Theory and Practice in this Institution, of whom I shall say something in this Lecture. Our venerated Teacher studied assiduously afterwards in the great London Hospitals, but I think he used to quote his “old Master” ten times where he quoted Mr. Cline or Dr. Woodville once.

When I compare this direct transfer of the practical experience of a wise man into the mind of a student,—every fact one that he can use in the battle of life and death,—with the far off, unserviceable “scientific” truths that I and some others are in the habit of teaching, I cannot help asking myself whether, if we concede that our forefathers taught too little, there is not—a possibility that we may sometimes attempt to teach too much. I almost blush when I think of myself as describing the eight several facets on two slender processes of the palate bone, or the seven little twigs that branch off from the minute tympanic nerve, and I wonder whether my excellent colleague feels in the same way when he pictures himself as giving the constitution of neurin, which as he and I know very well is that of the hydrate of trimethyle-oxethyle-ammonium, or the formula for the production of alloxan, which, though none but the Professors and older students can be expected to remember it, is $C_{10}H_4N_4O_6 + 2H_2O, no5 = C_8H_4N_2O_{10} + 2CO_2 + N_2 + NH_4O, no5$.

I can bear the voice of some rough iconoclast addressing the Anatomist and the Chemist in tones of contemptuous indignation: “What is this stuff with which you are cramming the brains of young men who are to hold the lives of the community in their hands? Here is a man fallen in a fit; you can tell me all about the eight surfaces of the two processes of the palate bone, but you have not had the sense to loosen that man’s neck-cloth, and the old women are all calling you a fool? Here is a fellow that has just swallowed poison. I want something to turn his stomach inside out at the shortest notice. Oh, you have forgotten the dose of the sulphate of zinc, but you remember the formula for the production of alloxan!”

“Look you, Master Doctor,—if I go to a carpenter to come and stop a leak in my roof that is flooding the house, do you suppose I care whether he is a botanist or not? Cannot a man work in wood without knowing all about endogens and exogens, or must he attend Professor Gray’s Lectures before he can be trusted to make a box-trap? If my horse casts a shoe, do you think I will not trust a blacksmith to shoe him until I have made sure that he is sound on the distinction between the sesquioxide and the protosesquioxide of iron?”

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—But my scientific labor is to lead to useful results by and by, in the next generation, or in some possible remote future.—

“Diavolo!” as your Dr. Rabelais has it,—answers the iconoclast,—“what is that to me and my colic, to me and my strangury? I pay the Captain of the Cunard steamship to carry me quickly and safely to Liverpool, not to make a chart of the Atlantic for after voyagers! If Professor Peirce undertakes to pilot me into Boston Harbor and runs me on Cohasset rocks, what answer is it to tell me that he is Superintendent of the Coast Survey? No, Sir! I want a plain man in a pea-jacket and a sou’wester, who knows the channel of Boston Harbor, and the rocks of Boston Harbor, and the distinguished Professor is quite of my mind as to the matter, for I took the pains to ask him before I ventured to use his name in the way of illustration.”

I do not know how the remarks of the image-breaker may strike others, but I feel that they put me on my defence with regard to much of my teaching. Some years ago I ventured to show in an introductory Lecture how very small a proportion of the anatomical facts taught in a regular course, as delivered by myself and others, had any practical bearing whatever on the treatment of disease. How can I, how can any medical teacher justify himself in teaching anything that is not like to be of practical use to a class of young men who are to hold in their hands the balance in which life and death, ease and anguish, happiness and wretchedness are to be daily weighed?

I hope we are not all wrong. Oftentimes in finding how sadly ignorant of really essential and vital facts and rules were some of those whom we had been larding with the choicest scraps of science, I have doubted whether the old one-man system of teaching, when the one man was of the right sort, did not turn out better working physicians than our more elaborate method. The best practitioner I ever knew was mainly shaped to excellence in that way. I can understand perfectly the regrets of my friend Dr. John Brown of Edinburgh, for the good that was lost with the old apprenticeship system. I understand as well Dr. Latham’s fear “that many men of the best abilities and good education will be deterred from prosecuting physic as a profession, in consequence of the necessity indiscriminately laid upon all for impossible attainments.”

I feel therefore impelled to say a very few words in defence of that system of teaching adopted in our Colleges, by which we wish to supplement and complete the instruction given by private individuals or by what are often called Summer Schools.

The reason why we teach so much that is not practical and in itself useful, is because we find that the easiest way of teaching what is practical and useful. If we could in any way eliminate all that would help a man to deal successfully with disease, and teach it by itself so that it should be as tenaciously rooted in the memory, as easily summoned when wanted, as fertile in suggestion of related facts, as satisfactory to the peremptory demands of the intelligence as if taught in its scientific connections, I think it would be

our duty so to teach the momentous truths of medicine, and to regard all useless additions as an intrusion on the time which should be otherwise occupied.

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But we cannot successfully eliminate and teach by itself that which is purely practical. The easiest and surest way of acquiring facts is to learn them in groups, in systems, and systematized knowledge is science. You can very often carry two facts fastened together more easily than one by itself, as a housemaid can carry two pails of water with a hoop more easily than one without it. You can remember a man's face, made up of many features, better than you can his nose or his mouth or his eye-brow. Scores of proverbs show you that you can remember two lines that rhyme better than one without the jingle. The ancients, who knew the laws of memory, grouped the seven cities that contended for the honor of being Homer's birthplace in a line thus given by Aulus Gellius:

Smurna, Rodos, Colophon, Salamin, Ios, Argos, Athenai.

I remember, in the earlier political days of Martin Van Buren, that Colonel Stone, of the "New York Commercial," or one of his correspondents, said that six towns of New York would claim in the same way to have been the birth-place of the "Little Magician," as he was then called; and thus he gave their names, any one of which I should long ago have forgotten, but which as a group have stuck tight in my memory from that day to this;

Catskill, Saugerties, Redhook, Kinderhook, Scaghticoke, Schodac.

If the memory gains so much by mere rhythmical association, how much more will it gain when isolated facts are brought together under laws and principles, when organs are examined in their natural connections, when structure is coupled with function, and healthy and diseased action are studied as they pass one into the other! Systematic, or scientific study is invaluable as supplying a natural kind of mnemonics, if for nothing else. You cannot properly learn the facts you want from Anatomy and Chemistry in any way so easily as by taking them in their regular order, with other allied facts, only there must be common sense exercised in leaving out a great deal which belongs to each of the two branches as pure science. The dullest of teachers is the one who does not know what to omit.

The larger aim of scientific training is to furnish you with principles to which you will be able to refer isolated facts, and so bring these within the range of recorded experience. See what the "London Times" said about the three Germans who cracked open John Bull Chatwood's strong-box at the Fair the other day, while the three Englishmen hammered away in vain at Brother Jonathan Herring's. The Englishmen represented brute force. The Germans had been trained to appreciate principle. The Englishman "knows his business by rote and rule of thumb"—science, which would "teach him to do in an hour what has hitherto occupied him two hours," "is in a manner forbidden to him." To this cause the "Times" attributes the falling off of English workmen in comparison with those of the Continent.

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Granting all this, we must not expect too much from “science” as distinguished from common experience. There are ten thousand experimenters without special apparatus for every one in the laboratory. Accident is the great chemist and toxicologist. Battle is the great vivisector. Hunger has instituted researches on food such as no Liebig, no Academic Commission has ever recorded.

Medicine, sometimes impertinently, often ignorantly, often carelessly called “allopathy,” appropriates everything from every source that can be of the slightest use to anybody who is ailing in any way, or like to be ailing from any cause. It learned from a monk how to use antimony, from a Jesuit how to cure agues, from a friar how to cut for stone, from a soldier how to treat gout, from a sailor how to keep off scurvy, from a postmaster how to sound the Eustachian tube, from a dairy-maid how to prevent small-pox, and from an old market-woman how to catch the itch-insect. It borrowed acupuncture and the moxa from the Japanese heathen, and was taught the use of lobelia by the American savage. It stands ready to-day to accept anything from any theorist, from any empiric who can make out a good case for his discovery or his remedy. “Science” is one of its benefactors, but only one, out of many. Ask the wisest practising physician you know, what branches of science help him habitually, and what amount of knowledge relating to each branch he requires for his professional duties. He will tell you that scientific training has a value independent of all the special knowledge acquired. He will tell you that many facts are explained by studying them in the wider range of related facts to which they belong. He will gratefully recognize that the anatomist has furnished him with indispensable data, that the physiologist has sometimes put him on the track of new modes of treatment, that the chemist has isolated the active principles of his medicines, has taught him how to combine them, has from time to time offered him new remedial agencies, and so of others of his allies. But he will also tell you, if I am not mistaken, that his own branch of knowledge is so extensive and so perplexing that he must accept most of his facts ready made at their hands. He will own to you that in the struggle for life which goes on day and night in our thoughts as in the outside world of nature, much that he learned under the name of science has died out, and that simple homely experience has largely taken the place of that scholastic knowledge to which he and perhaps some of his instructors once attached a paramount importance.

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This, then, is my view of scientific training as conducted in courses such as you are entering on. Up to a certain point I believe in set Lectures as excellent adjuncts to what is far more important, practical instruction at the bedside, in the operating room, and under the eye of the Demonstrator. But I am so far from wishing these courses extended, that I think some of them—suppose I say my own—would almost bear curtailing. Do you want me to describe more branches of the sciatic and crural nerves? I can take Fischer's plates, and lecturing on that scale fill up my whole course and not finish the nerves alone. We must stop somewhere, and for my own part I think the scholastic exercises of our colleges have already claimed their full share of the student's time without our seeking to extend them.

I trust I have vindicated the apparent inconsequence of teaching young students a good deal that seems at first sight profitless, but which helps them to learn and retain what is profitable. But this is an inquisitive age, and if we insist on piling up beyond a certain height knowledge which is in itself mere trash and lumber to a man whose life is to be one long fight with death and disease, there will be some sharp questions asked by and by, and our quick-witted people will perhaps find they can get along as well without the professor's cap as without the bishop's mitre and the monarch's crown.

I myself have nothing to do with clinical teaching. Yet I do not hesitate to say it is more essential than all the rest put together, so far as the ordinary practice of medicine is concerned; and this is by far the most important thing to be learned, because it deals with so many more lives than any other branch of the profession. So of personal instruction, such as we give and others give in the interval of lectures, much of it at the bedside, some of it in the laboratory, some in the microscope-room, some in the recitation-room, I think it has many advantages of its own over the winter course, and I do not wish to see it shortened for the sake of prolonging what seems to me long enough already.

If I am jealous of the tendency to expand the time given to the acquisition of curious knowledge, at the expense of the plain old-fashioned bedside teachings, I only share the feeling which Sydenham expressed two hundred years ago, using an image I have already borrowed. "He would be no honest and successful pilot who was to apply himself with less industry to avoid rocks and sands and bring his vessel safely home, than to search into the causes of the ebbing and flowing of the sea, which, though very well for a philosopher, is foreign to him whose business it is to secure the ship. So neither will a physician, whose province it is to cure diseases, be able to do so, though he be a person of great genius, who bestows less time on the hidden and intricate method of nature, and adapting his means thereto, than on curious and subtle speculation."

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"Medicine is my wife and Science is my mistress," said Dr. Rush. I do not think that the breach of the seventh commandment can be shown to have been of advantage to the legitimate owner of his affections. Read what Dr. Elisha Bartlett says of him as a practitioner, or ask one of our own honored ex-professors, who studied under him, whether Dr. Rush had ever learned the meaning of that saying of Lord Bacon, that man is the minister and interpreter of Nature, or whether he did not speak habitually of Nature as an intruder in the sick room, from which his art was to expel her as an incompetent and a meddler.

All a man's powers are not too much for such a profession as Medicine. "He is a learned man," said old Parson Emmons of Franklin, "who understands one subject, and he is a very learned man who understands two subjects." Schonbein says he has been studying oxygen for thirty years. Mitscherlich said it took fourteen years to establish a new fact in chemistry. Aubrey says of Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation, that "though all his profession would allow him to be an excellent anatomist, I have never heard of any who admired his therapeutic way." My learned and excellent friend before referred to, Dr. Brown of Edinburgh, from whose very lively and sensible Essay, "Locke and Sydenham," I have borrowed several of my citations, contrasts Sir Charles Bell, the discoverer, the man of science, with Dr. Abercrombie, the master in the diagnosis and treatment of disease. It is through one of the rarest of combinations that we have in our Faculty a teacher on whom the scientific mantle of Bell has fallen, and who yet stands preeminent in the practical treatment of the class of diseases which his inventive and ardent experimental genius has illustrated. M. Brown-Sequard's example is as eloquent as his teaching in proof of the advantages of well directed scientific investigation. But those who emulate his success at once as a discoverer and a practitioner must be content like him to limit their field of practice. The highest genius cannot afford in our time to forget the ancient precept, *Divide et impera*.

"I suppose I must go and earn this guinea," said a medical man who was sent for while he was dissecting an animal. I should not have cared to be his patient. His dissection would do me no good, and his thoughts would be too much upon it. I want a whole man for my doctor, not a half one. I would have sent for a humbler practitioner, who would have given himself entirely to me, and told the other—who was no less a man than John Hunter—to go on and finish the dissection of his tiger.

Sydenham's "Read Don Quixote" should be addressed not to the student, but to the Professor of today. Aimed at him it means, "Do not be too learned."

Do not think you are going to lecture to picked young men who are training themselves to be scientific discoverers. They are of fair average capacity, and they are going to be working doctors.

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These young men are to have some very serious vital facts to deal with. I will mention a few of them.

Every other resident adult you meet in these streets is or will be more or less tuberculous. This is not an extravagant estimate, as very nearly one third of the deaths of adults in Boston last year were from phthisis. If the relative number is less in our other northern cities, it is probably in a great measure because they are more unhealthy; that is, they have as much, or nearly as much, consumption, but they have more fevers or other fatal diseases.

These heavy-eyed men with the alcoholized brains, these pallid youths with the nicotized optic ganglia and thinking-marrows brown as their own meerschaums, of whom you meet too many,—will ask all your wisdom to deal with their poisoned nerves and their enfeebled wills.

Nearly seventeen hundred children under five years of age died last year in this city. A poor human article, no doubt, in many cases, still, worth an attempt to save them, especially when we remember the effect of Dr. Clarke's suggestion at the Dublin Hospital, by which some twenty-five or thirty thousand children's lives have probably been saved in a single city.

Again, the complaint is often heard that the native population is not increasing so rapidly as in former generations. The breeding and nursing period of American women is one of peculiar delicacy and frequent infirmity. Many of them must require a considerable interval between the reproductive efforts, to repair damages and regain strength. This matter is not to be decided by an appeal to unschooled nature. It is the same question as that of the deformed pelvis,—one of degree. The facts of mal-vitalization are as much to be attended to as those of mal-formation. If the woman with a twisted pelvis is to be considered an exempt, the woman with a defective organization should be recognized as belonging to the invalid corps. We shudder to hear what is alleged as to the prevalence of criminal practices; if back of these there can be shown organic incapacity or overtaxing of too limited powers, the facts belong to the province of the practical physician, as well as of the moralist and the legislator, and require his gravest consideration.

Take the important question of bleeding. Is venesection done with forever? Six years ago it was said here in an introductory Lecture that it would doubtless come back again sooner or later. A fortnight ago I found myself in the cars with one of the most sensible and esteemed practitioners in New England. He took out his wallet and showed me two lancets, which he carried with him; he had never given up their use. This is a point you will have to consider.

Or, to mention one out of many questionable remedies, shall you give *Veratrum Viride* in fevers and inflammations? It makes the pulse slower in these affections. Then the

presumption would naturally be that it does harm. The caution with reference to it on this ground was long ago recorded in the Lecture above referred to. See what Dr. John Hughes Bennett says of it in the recent edition of his work on Medicine. Nothing but the most careful clinical experience can settle this and such points of treatment.

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These are all practical questions—questions of life and death, and every day will be full of just such questions. Take the problem of climate. A patient comes to you with asthma and wants to know where he can breathe; another comes to you with phthisis and wants to know where he can live. What boy's play is nine tenths of all that is taught in many a pretentious course of lectures, compared with what an accurate and extensive knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of different residences in these and other complaints would be to a practising physician.

I saw the other day a gentleman living in Canada, who had spent seven successive winters in Egypt, with the entire relief of certain obscure thoracic symptoms which troubled him while at home. I saw, two months ago, another gentleman from Minnesota, an observer and a man of sense, who considered that State as the great sanatorium for all pulmonary complaints. If half our grown population are or will be more or less tuberculous, the question of colonizing Florida assumes a new aspect. Even within the borders of our own State, the very interesting researches of Dr. Bowditch show that there is a great variation in the amount of tuberculous disease in different towns, apparently connected with local conditions. The hygienic map of a State is quite as valuable as its geological map, and it is the business of every practising physician to know it thoroughly. They understand this in England, and send a patient with a dry irritating cough to Torquay or Penzance, while they send another with relaxed bronchial membranes to Clifton or Brighton. Here is another great field for practical study.

So as to the all-important question of diet. "Of all the means of cure at our command," says Dr. Bennett, "a regulation of the quantity and quality of the diet is by far the most powerful." Dr. MacCormac would perhaps except the air we breathe, for he thinks that impure air, especially in sleeping rooms, is the great cause of tubercle. It is sufficiently proved that the American,—the New Englander,—the Bostonian, can breed strong and sound children, generation after generation,—nay, I have shown by the record of a particular family that vital losses may be retrieved, and a feeble race grow to lusty vigor in this very climate and locality. Is not the question why our young men and women so often break down, and how they can be kept from breaking down, far more important for physicians to settle than whether there is one cranial vertebra, or whether there are four, or none?

—But I have a taste for the homologies, I want to go deeply into the subject of embryology, I want to analyze the protonihilates precipitated from pigeon's milk by the action of the lunar spectrum,—shall I not follow my star,—shall I not obey my instinct,—shall I not give myself to the lofty pursuits of science for its own sake?

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Certainly you may, if you like. But take down your sign, or never put it up. That is the way Dr. Owen and Dr. Huxley, Dr. Agassiz and Dr. Jeffries Wyman, Dr. Gray and Dr. Charles T. Jackson settled the difficulty. We all admire the achievements of this band of distinguished doctors who do not practise. But we say of their work and of all pure science, as the French officer said of the charge of the six hundred at Balaclava, "C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre,"—it is very splendid, but it is not a practising doctor's business. His patient has a right to the cream of his life and not merely to the thin milk that is left after "science" has skimmed it off. The best a physician can give is never too good for the patient.

It is often a disadvantage to a young practitioner to be known for any accomplishment outside of his profession. Haller lost his election as Physician to the Hospital in his native city of Berne, principally on the ground that he was a poet. In his later years the physician may venture more boldly. Astruc was sixty-nine years old when he published his "Conjectures," the first attempt, we are told, to decide the authorship of the Pentateuch showing anything like a discerning criticism. Sir Benjamin Brodie was seventy years old before he left his physiological and surgical studies to indulge in psychological speculations. The period of pupilage will be busy enough in acquiring the knowledge needed, and the season of active practice will leave little leisure for any but professional studies.

Dr. Graves of Dublin, one of the first clinical teachers of our time, always insisted on his students' beginning at once to visit the hospital. At the bedside the student must learn to treat disease, and just as certainly as we spin out and multiply our academic prelections we shall work in more and more stuffing, more and more rubbish, more and more irrelevant, useless detail which the student will get rid of just as soon as he leaves us. Then the next thing will be a new organization, with an examining board of first-rate practical men, who will ask the candidate questions that mean business,—who will make him operate if he is to be a surgeon, and try him at the bedside if he is to be a physician,—and not puzzle him with scientific conundrums which not more than one of the questioners could answer himself or ever heard of since he graduated.

Or these women who are hammering at the gates on which is written "No admittance for the mothers of mankind," will by and by organize an institution, which starting from that skilful kind of nursing which Florence Nightingale taught so well, will work backwards through anodynes, palliatives, curatives, preventives, until with little show of science it imparts most of what is most valuable in those branches of the healing art it professes to teach. When that time comes, the fitness of women for certain medical duties, which Hecquet advocated in 1708, which Douglas maintained in 1736, which Dr. John Ware, long the honored Professor of Theory and Practice in this Institution, upheld within our own recollection in the face of his own recorded opinion to the contrary, will very possibly be recognized.

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My advice to every teacher less experienced than myself would be, therefore: Do not fret over the details you have to omit; you probably teach altogether too many as it is. Individuals may learn a thing with once hearing it, but the only way of teaching a whole class is by enormous repetition, representation, and illustration in all possible forms. Now and then you will have a young man on your benches like the late Waldo Burnett,—not very often, if you lecture half a century. You cannot pretend to lecture chiefly for men like that,—a Mississippi raft might as well take an ocean-steamer in tow. To meet his wants you would have to leave the rest of your class behind and that you must not do. President Allen of Jefferson College says that his instruction has been successful in proportion as it has been elementary. It may be a humiliating statement, but it is one which I have found true in my own experience.

To the student I would say, that however plain and simple may be our teaching, he must expect to forget much which he follows intelligently in the lecture-room. But it is not the same as if he had never learned it. A man must get a thing before he can forget it. There is a great world of ideas we cannot voluntarily recall,—they are outside the limits of the will. But they sway our conscious thought as the unseen planets influence the movements of those within the sphere of vision. No man knows how much he knows,—how many ideas he has,—any more than he knows how many blood-globules roll in his veins. Sometimes accident brings back here and there one, but the mind is full of irrevocable remembrances and unthinkable thoughts, which take a part in all its judgments as indestructible forces. Some of you must feel your scientific deficiencies painfully after your best efforts. But every one can acquire what is most essential. A man of very moderate ability may be a good physician, if he devotes himself faithfully to the work. More than this, a positively dull man, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, sometimes makes a safer practitioner than one who has, we will say, five per cent. more brains than his average neighbor, but who thinks it is fifty per cent. more. Skulls belonging to this last variety of the human race are more common, I may remark, than specimens like the Neanderthal cranium, a cast of which you will find on the table in the Museum.

Whether the average talent be high or low, the Colleges of the land must make the best commodity they can out of such material as the country and the cities furnish them. The community must have Doctors as it must have bread. It uses up its Doctors just as it wears out its shoes, and requires new ones. All the bread need not be French rolls, all the shoes need not be patent leather ones; but the bread must be something that can be eaten, and the shoes must be something that can be worn. Life must somehow find food for the two forces that rub everything to pieces, or burn it to ashes,—friction and oxygen. Doctors are oxydable products, and the schools must keep furnishing new ones as the old ones turn into oxyds; some of first-rate quality that burn with a great light, some of a lower grade of brilliancy, some honestly, unmistakably, by the grace of God, of moderate gifts, or in simpler phrase, dull.

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The public will give every honest and reasonably competent worker in the healing art a hearty welcome. It is on the whole very loyal to the Medical Profession. Three successive years have borne witness to the feeling with which this Institution, representing it in its educational aspect, is regarded by those who are themselves most honored and esteemed. The great Master of Natural Science bade the last year's class farewell in our behalf, in those accents which delight every audience. The Head of our ancient University honored us in the same way in the preceding season. And how can we forget that other occasion when the Chief Magistrate of the Commonwealth, that noble citizen whom we have just lost, large-souled, sweet-natured, always ready for every kind office, came among us at our bidding, and talked to us of our duties in words as full of wisdom as his heart was of goodness?

You have not much to fear, I think, from the fancy practitioners. The vulgar quackeries drop off, atrophied, one after another. Homoeopathy has long been encysted, and is carried on the body medical as quietly as an old wen. Every year gives you a more reasoning and reasonable people to deal with. See how it is in Literature. The dynasty of British dogmatists, after lasting a hundred years and more, is on its last legs. Thomas Carlyle, third in the line of descent, finds an audience very different from those which listened to the silver speech of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the sonorous phrases of Samuel Johnson. We read him, we smile at his clotted English, his "swarmery" and other picturesque expressions, but we lay down his tirade as we do one of Dr. Cumming's interpretations of prophecy, which tells us that the world is coming to an end next week or next month, if the weather permits,—not otherwise,—feeling very sure that the weather will be unfavorable.

It is the same common-sense public you will appeal to. The less pretension you make, the better they will like you in the long run. I hope we shall make everything as plain and as simple to you as we can. I would never use a long word, even, where a short one would answer the purpose. I know there are professors in this country who "ligate" arteries. Other surgeons only tie them, and it stops the bleeding just as well. It is the familiarity and simplicity of bedside instruction which makes it so pleasant as well as so profitable. A good clinical teacher is himself a Medical School. We need not wonder that our young men are beginning to announce themselves not only as graduates of this or that College, but also as pupils of some one distinguished master.

I wish to close this Lecture, if you will allow me a few moments longer, with a brief sketch of an instructor and practitioner whose character was as nearly a model one in both capacities as I can find anywhere recorded.

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Dr. *James Jackson*, Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine in this University from 1812 to 1846, and whose name has been since retained on our rolls as Professor Emeritus, died on the 27th of August last, in the ninetieth year of his age. He studied his profession, as I have already mentioned, with Dr. Holyoke of Salem, one of the few physicians who have borne witness to their knowledge of the laws of life by living to complete their hundredth year. I think the student took his Old Master, as he always loved to call him, as his model; each was worthy of the other, and both were bright examples to all who come after them.

I remember that in the sermon preached by Dr. Grazer after Dr. Holyoke's death, one of the points most insisted upon as characteristic of that wise and good old man was the perfect balance of all his faculties. The same harmonious adjustment of powers, the same symmetrical arrangement of life, the same complete fulfilment of every day's duties, without haste and without needless delay, which characterized the master, equally distinguished the scholar. A glance at the life of our own Old Master, if I can do any justice at all to his excellences, will give you something to carry away from this hour's meeting not unworthy to be remembered.

From December, 1797, to October, 1799, he remained with Dr. Holyoke as a student, a period which he has spoken of as a most interesting and most gratifying part of his life. After this he passed eight months in London, and on his return, in October, 1800, he began business in Boston.

He had followed Mr. Cline, as I have mentioned, and was competent to practise Surgery. But he found Dr. John Collins Warren had already occupied the ground which at that day hardly called for more than one leading practitioner, and wisely chose the Medical branch of the profession. He had only himself to rely upon, but he had confidence in his prospects, conscious, doubtless, of his own powers, knowing his own industry and determination, and being of an eminently cheerful and hopeful disposition. No better proof of his spirit can be given than that, just a year from the time when he began to practise as a physician, he took that eventful step which in such a man implies that he sees his way clear to a position; he married a lady blessed with many gifts, but not bringing him a fortune to paralyze his industry.

He had not miscalculated his chances in life. He very soon rose into a good practice, and began the founding of that reputation which grew with his years, until he stood by general consent at the head of his chosen branch of the profession, to say the least, in this city and in all this region of country. His skill and wisdom were the last tribunal to which the sick and suffering could appeal. The community trusted and loved him, the profession recognized him as the noblest type of the physician. The young men whom he had taught wandered through foreign hospitals;

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where they learned many things that were valuable, and many that were curious; but as they grew older and began to think more of their ability to help the sick than their power of talking about phenomena, they began to look back to the teaching of Dr. Jackson, as he, after his London experience, looked back to that of Dr. Holyoke. And so it came to be at last that the bare mention of his name in any of our medical assemblies would call forth such a tribute of affectionate regard as is only yielded to age when it brings with it the record of a life spent in well doing.

No accident ever carries a man to eminence such as his in the medical profession. He who looks for it must want it earnestly and work for it vigorously; Nature must have qualified him in many ways, and education must have equipped him with various knowledge, or his reputation will evaporate before it reaches the noon-day blaze of fame. How did Dr. Jackson gain the position which all conceded to him? In the answer to this question some among you may find a key that shall unlock the gate opening on that fair field of the future of which all dream but which not all will ever reach.

First of all, he truly loved his profession. He had no intellectual ambitions outside of it, literary, scientific or political. To him it was occupation enough to apply at the bedside the best of all that he knew for the good of his patient; to protect the community against the inroads of pestilence; to teach the young all that he himself had been taught, with all that his own experience had added; to leave on record some of the most important results of his long observation.

With his patients he was so perfect at all points that it is hard to overpraise him. I have seen many noted British and French and American practitioners, but I never saw the man so altogether admirable at the bedside of the sick as Dr. James Jackson. His smile was itself a remedy better than the potable gold and the dissolved pearls that comforted the praecordia of mediaeval monarchs. Did a patient, alarmed without cause, need encouragement, it carried the sunshine of hope into his heart and put all his whims to flight, as David's harp cleared the haunted chamber of the sullen king. Had the hour come, not for encouragement, but for sympathy, his face, his voice, his manner all showed it, because his heart felt it. So gentle was he, so thoughtful, so calm, so absorbed in the case before him, not to turn round and look for a tribute to his sagacity, not to bolster himself in a favorite theory, but to find out all he could, and to weigh gravely and cautiously all that he found, that to follow him in his morning visit was not only to take a lesson in the healing art, it was learning how to learn, how to move, how to look, how to feel, if that can be learned. To visit with Dr. Jackson was a medical education.

He was very firm, with all his kindness. He would have the truth about his patients. The nurses found it out; and the shrewder ones never ventured to tell him anything but a straight story. A clinical dialogue between Dr. Jackson and Miss Rebecca Taylor,

sometime nurse in the Massachusetts General Hospital, a mistress in her calling, was as good questioning and answering as one would be like to hear outside of the courtroom.

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Of his practice you can form an opinion from his book called "Letters to a Young Physician." Like all sensible men from the days of Hippocrates to the present, he knew that diet and regimen were more important than any drug or than all drugs put together. Witness his treatment of phthisis and of epilepsy. He retained, however, more confidence in some remedial agents than most of the younger generation would concede to them. Yet his *materia medica* was a simple one.

"When I first went to live with Dr. Holyoke," he says, "in 1797, showing me his shop, he said, 'There seems to you to be a great variety of medicines here, and that it will take you long to get acquainted with them, but most of them are unimportant. There are four which are equal to all the rest, namely, Mercury, Antimony, Bark and Opium.'" And Dr. Jackson adds, "I can only say of his practice, the longer I have lived, I have thought better and better of it." When he thought it necessary to give medicine, he gave it in earnest. He hated half-practice—giving a little of this or that, so as to be able to say that one had done something, in case a consultation was held, or a still more ominous event occurred. He would give opium, for instance, as boldly as the late Dr. Fisher of Beverly, but he followed the aphorism of the Father of Medicine, and kept extreme remedies for extreme cases.

When it came to the "non-naturals," as he would sometimes call them, after the old physicians,—namely, air, meat and drink, sleep and watching, motion and rest, the retentions and excretions, and the affections of the mind,—he was, as I have said, of the school of sensible practitioners, in distinction from that vast community of quacks, with or without the diploma, who think the chief end of man is to support apothecaries, and are never easy until they can get every patient upon a regular course of something nasty or noxious. Nobody was so precise in his directions about diet, air, and exercise, as Dr. Jackson. He had the same dislike to the *a peu pres*, the about so much, about so often, about so long, which I afterwards found among the punctilious adherents of the numerical system at La Pitie.

He used to insist on one small point with a certain philological precision, namely, the true meaning of the word "cure." He would have it that to cure a patient was simply to care for him. I refer to it as showing what his idea was of the relation of the physician to the patient. It was indeed to care for him, as if his life were bound up in him, to watch his incomings and outgoings, to stand guard at every avenue that disease might enter, to leave nothing to chance; not merely to throw a few pills and powders into one pan of the scales of Fate, while Death the skeleton was seated in the other, but to lean with his whole weight on the side of life, and shift the balance in its favor if it lay in human power to do it. Such devotion as this is only to be looked for in the man who gives himself wholly up to the business of healing, who considers Medicine itself a Science, or if not a science, is willing to follow it as an art,—the noblest of arts, which the gods and demigods of ancient religions did not disdain to practise and to teach.

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The same zeal made him always ready to listen to any new suggestion which promised to be useful, at a period of life when many men find it hard to learn new methods and accept new doctrines. Few of his generation became so accomplished as he in the arts of direct exploration; coming straight from the Parisian experts, I have examined many patients with him, and have had frequent opportunities of observing his skill in percussion and auscultation.

One element in his success, a trivial one compared with others, but not to be despised, was his punctuality. He always carried two watches,—I doubt if he told why, any more than Dr. Johnson told what he did with the orange-peel,—but probably with reference to this virtue. He was as much to be depended upon at the appointed time as the solstice or the equinox. There was another point I have heard him speak of as an important rule with him; to come at the hour when he was expected; if he had made his visit for several days successively at ten o'clock, for instance, not to put it off, if he could possibly help it, until eleven, and so keep a nervous patient and an anxious family waiting for him through a long, weary hour.

If I should attempt to characterize his teaching, I should say that while it conveyed the best results of his sagacious and extended observation, it was singularly modest, cautious, simple, sincere. Nothing was for show, for self-love; there was no rhetoric, no declamation, no triumphant "I told you so," but the plain statement of a clear-headed honest man, who knows that he is handling one of the gravest subjects that interest humanity. His positive instructions were full of value, but the spirit in which he taught inspired that loyal love of truth which lies at the bottom of all real excellence.

I will not say that, during his long career, Dr. Jackson never made an enemy. I have heard him tell how, in his very early days, old Dr. Danforth got into a towering passion with him about some professional consultation, and exploded a monosyllable or two of the more energetic kind on the occasion. I remember that that somewhat peculiar personage, Dr. Waterhouse, took it hardly when Dr. Jackson succeeded to his place as Professor of Theory and Practice. A young man of Dr. Jackson's talent and energy could hardly take the position that belonged to him without crowding somebody in a profession where three in a bed is the common rule of the household. But he was a peaceful man and a peace-maker all his days. No man ever did more, if so much, to produce and maintain the spirit of harmony for which we consider our medical community as somewhat exceptionally distinguished.

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If this harmony should ever be threatened, I could wish that every impatient and irritable member of the profession would read that beautiful, that noble Preface to the “Letters,” addressed to John Collins Warren. I know nothing finer in the medical literature of all time than this Prefatory Introduction. It is a golden prelude, fit to go with the three great Prefaces which challenge the admiration of scholars, —Calvin’s to his Institutes, De Thou’s to his History, and Casaubon’s to his Polybius,—not because of any learning or rhetoric, though it is charmingly written, but for a spirit flowing through it to which learning and rhetoric are but as the breath that is wasted on the air to the Mood that warms the heart.

Of a similar character is this short extract which I am permitted to make from a private letter of his to a dear young friend. He was eighty-three years old at the time of writing it.

“I have not loved everybody whom I have known, but I have striven to see the good points in the characters of all men and women. At first I must have done this from something in my own nature, for I was not aware of it, and yet was doing it without any plan, when one day, sixty years ago, a friend whom I loved and respected said this to me, ‘Ah, James, I see that you are destined to succeed in the world, and to make friends, because you are so ready to see the good point in the characters of those you meet.’”

I close this imperfect notice of some features in the character of this most honored and beloved of physicians by applying to him the words which were written of William Heberden, whose career was not unlike his own, and who lived to the same patriarchal age.

“From his early youth he had always entertained a deep sense of religion, a consummate love of virtue, an ardent thirst after knowledge, and an earnest desire to promote the welfare and happiness of all mankind. By these qualities, accompanied with great sweetness of manners, he acquired the love and esteem of all good men, in a degree which perhaps very few have experienced; and after passing an active life with the uniform testimony of a good conscience, he became an eminent example of its influence, in the cheerfulness and serenity of his latest age.”

Such was the man whom I offer to you as a model, young gentlemen, at the outset of your medical career. I hope that many of you will recognize some traits of your own special teachers scattered through various parts of the land in the picture I have drawn. Let me assure you that whatever you may learn in this or any other course of public lectures,—and I trust you will learn a great deal,—the daily guidance, counsel, example, of your medical father, for such the Oath of Hippocrates tells you to consider your preceptor, will, if he is in any degree like him of whom I have spoken, be the foundation on which all that we teach is reared, and perhaps outlive most of our teachings, as in Dr.

Jackson's memory the last lessons that remained with him were those of his Old Master.

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THE MEDICAL PROFESSION IN MASSACHUSETTS.

A Lecture of a Course by members of the Massachusetts Historical Society, delivered before the Lowell Institute, January 29, 1869.

The medical history of eight generations, told in an hour, must be in many parts a mere outline. The details I shall give will relate chiefly to the first century. I shall only indicate the leading occurrences, with the more prominent names of the two centuries which follow, and add some considerations suggested by the facts which have been passed in review.

A geographer who was asked to describe the tides of Massachusetts Bay, would have to recognize the circumstance that they are a limited manifestation of a great oceanic movement. To consider them apart from this, would be to localize a planetary phenomenon, and to provincialize a law of the universe. The art of healing in Massachusetts has shared more or less fully and readily the movement which, with its periods of ebb and flow, has been raising its level from age to age throughout the better part of Christendom. Its practitioners brought with them much of the knowledge and many of the errors of the Old World; they have always been in communication with its wisdom and its folly; it is not without interest to see how far the new conditions in which they found themselves have been favorable or unfavorable to the growth of sound medical knowledge and practice.

The state of medicine is an index of the civilization of an age and country,—one of the best, perhaps, by which it can be judged. Surgery invokes the aid of all the mechanical arts. From the rude violences of the age of stone,—a relic of which we may find in the practice of Zipporah, the wife of Moses,—to the delicate operations of to-day upon patients lulled into temporary insensibility, is a progress which presupposes a skill in metallurgy and in the labors of the workshop and the laboratory it has taken uncounted generations to accumulate. Before the morphia which deadens the pain of neuralgia, or the quinine which arrests the fit of an ague, can find their place in our pharmacies, commerce must have perfected its machinery, and science must have refined its processes, through periods only to be counted by the life of nations. Before the means which nature and art have put in the hands of the medical practitioner can be fairly brought into use, the prejudices of the vulgar must be overcome, the intrusions of false philosophy must be fenced out, and the partnership with the priesthood dissolved. All this implies that freedom and activity of thought which belong only to the most advanced conditions of society; and the progress towards this is by gradations as significant of wide-spread changes, as are the varying states of the barometer of far-extended conditions of the atmosphere.

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Apart, then, from its special and technical interest, my subject has a meaning which gives a certain importance, and even dignity, to details in themselves trivial and almost unworthy of record. A medical entry in Governor Winthrop's journal may seem at first sight a mere curiosity; but, rightly interpreted, it is a key to his whole system of belief as to the order of the universe and the relations between man and his Maker. Nothing sheds such light on the superstitions of an age as the prevailing interpretation and treatment of disease. When the touch of a profligate monarch was a cure for one of the most inveterate of maladies, when the common symptoms of hysteria were prayed over as marks of demoniacal possession, we might well expect the spiritual realms of thought to be peopled with still stranger delusions.

Let us go before the Pilgrims of the Mayflower, and look at the shores on which they were soon to land. A wasting pestilence had so thinned the savage tribes that it was sometimes piously interpreted as having providentially prepared the way for the feeble band of exiles. Cotton Mather, who, next to the witches, hated the "tawnies," "wild beasts," "blood-hounds," "rattlesnakes," "infidels," as in different places he calls the unhappy Aborigines, describes the condition of things in his lively way, thus: "The Indians in these Parts had newly, even about a Year or Two before, been visited with such a prodigious Pestilence; as carried away not a Tenth, but Nine Parts of Ten (yea't is said Nineteen of Twenty) among them so that the Woods were almost cleared of those pernicious Creatures to make Room for a better Growth."

What this pestilence was has been much discussed. It is variously mentioned by different early writers as "the plague," "a great and grievous plague," "a sore consumption," as attended with spots which left unhealed places on those who recovered, as making the "whole surface yellow as with a garment." Perhaps no disease answers all these conditions so well as smallpox. We know from different sources what frightful havoc it made among the Indians in after years,—in 1631, for instance, when it swept away the aboriginal inhabitants of "whole towns," and in 1633. We have seen a whole tribe, the Mandans, extirpated by it in our own day. The word "plague" was used very vaguely, as in the description of the "great sickness" found among the Indians by the expedition of 1622. This same great sickness could hardly have been yellow fever, as it occurred in the month of November. I cannot think, therefore, that either the scourge of the East or our Southern malarial pestilence was the disease that wasted the Indians. As for the yellowness like a garment, that is too familiar to the eyes of all who have ever looked on the hideous mask of confluent variola.

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Without the presence or the fear of these exotic maladies, the forlorn voyagers of the Mayflower had sickness enough to contend with. At their first landing at Cape Cod, gaunt and hungry and longing for fresh food, they found upon the sandy shore “great mussel’s, and very fat and full of sea-pearl.” Sailors and passengers indulged in the treacherous delicacy; which seems to have been the sea-clam; and found that these mollusks, like the shell the poet tells of, remembered their august abode, and treated the way-worn adventurers to a gastric reminiscence of the heaving billows. In the mean time it blew and snowed and froze. The water turned to ice on their clothes, and made them many times like coats of iron. Edward Tilley had like to have “sounded” with cold. The gunner, too, was sick unto death, but “hope of trucking” kept him on his feet,—a Yankee, it should seem, when he first touched the shore of New England. Most, if not all, got colds and coughs, which afterwards turned to scurvy, whereof many died.

How can we wonder that the crowded and tempest-tossed voyagers, many of them already suffering, should have fallen before the trials of the first winter in Plymouth? Their imperfect shelter, their insufficient supply of bread, their salted food, now in unwholesome condition, account too well for the diseases and the mortality that marked this first dreadful season; weakness, swelling of the limbs, and other signs of scurvy, betrayed the want of proper nourishment and protection from the elements. In December six of their number died, in January eight, in February, seventeen, in March thirteen. With the advance of spring the mortality diminished, the sick and lame began to recover, and the colonists, saddened but not disheartened, applied themselves to the labors of the opening year.

One of the most pressing needs of the early colonists must have been that of physicians and surgeons. In Mr. Savage’s remarkable Genealogical Dictionary of the first settlers who came over before 1692 and their descendants to the third generation, I find scattered through the four crowded volumes the names of one hundred and thirty-four medical practitioners. Of these, twelve, and probably many more, practised surgery; three were barber-surgeons. A little incident throws a glimmer from the dark lantern of memory upon William Direly, one of these practitioners with the razor and the lancet. He was lost between Boston and Roxbury in a violent tempest of wind and snow; ten days afterwards a son was born to his widow, and with a touch of homely sentiment, I had almost said poetry, they called the little creature “Fathergone” Direly. Six or seven, probably a larger number, were ministers as well as physicians, one of whom, I am sorry to say, took to drink and tumbled into the Connecticut River, and so ended. One was not only doctor, but also schoolmaster and poet. One practised medicine and kept a tavern. One was a butcher, but calls himself a surgeon in his will, a union of callings which suggests an obvious pleasantry. One female practitioner, employed by her own sex,—Ann Moore,—was the precursor of that intrepid sisterhood whose cause it has long been my pleasure and privilege to advocate on all fitting occasions.

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Outside of this list I must place the name of Thomas Wilkinson, who was complained of, is 1676, for practising contrary to law.

Many names in the catalogue of these early physicians have been associated, in later periods, with the practice of the profession, —among them, Boylston, Clark, Danforth, Homan, Jeffrey, Kittredge, Oliver, Peaslee, Randall, Shattuck, Thacher, Wellington, Williams, Woodward. Touton was a Huguenot, Burchsted a German from Silesia, Lunerus a German or a Pole; “Pighogg Churrergeon,” I hope, for the honor of the profession, was only Peacock disguised under this alias, which would not, I fear, prove very attractive to patients.

What doctrines and practice were these colonists likely to bring, with them?

Two principal schools of medical practice prevailed in the Old World during the greater part of the seventeenth century. The first held to the old methods of Galen: its theory was that the body, the microcosm, like the macrocosm, was made up of the four elements—fire, air, water, earth; having respectively the qualities hot, dry, moist, cold. The body was to be preserved in health by keeping each of these qualities in its natural proportion; heat, by the proper temperature; moisture, by the due amount of fluid; and so as to the rest. Diseases which arose from excess of heat were to be attacked by cooling remedies; those from excess of cold, by heating ones; and so of the other derangements of balance. This was truly the principle of contraries contrariis, which ill-informed persons have attempted to make out to be the general doctrine of medicine, whereas there is no general dogma other than this: disease is to be treated by anything that is proved to cure it. The means the Galenist employed were chiefly diet and vegetable remedies, with the use of the lancet and other depleting agents. He attributed the four fundamental qualities to different vegetables, in four different degrees; thus chicory was cold in the fourth degree, pepper was hot in the fourth, endive was cold and dry in the second, and bitter almonds were hot in the first and dry in the second degree. When we say “cool as a cucumber,” we are talking Galenism. The seeds of that vegetable ranked as one of “the four greater cold seeds” of this system.

Galenism prevailed mostly in the south of Europe and France. The readers of Moliere will have no difficulty in recalling some of its favorite modes of treatment, and the abundant mirth he extracted from them.

These Galenists were what we should call “herb-doctors” to-day. Their insignificant infusions lost credit after a time; their absurdly complicated mixtures excited contempt, and their nauseous prescriptions provoked loathing and disgust. A simpler and bolder practice found welcome in Germany, depending chiefly on mineral remedies, mercury, antimony, sulphur, arsenic, and the use, sometimes the secret use, of opium. Whatever we think of Paracelsus, the chief agent in

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the introduction of these remedies, and whatever limits we may assign to the use of these long-trusted mineral drugs, there can be no doubt that the chemical school, as it was called, did a great deal towards the expurgation of the old, overloaded, and repulsive pharmacopoeia. We shall find evidence in the practice of our New-England physicians of the first century, that they often employed chemical remedies, and that, by the early part of the following century, their chief trust was in the few simple, potent drugs of Paracelsus.

We have seen that many of the practitioners of medicine, during the first century of New England, were clergymen. This relation between medicine and theology has existed from a very early period; from the Egyptian priest to the Indian medicine-man, the alliance has been maintained in one form or another. The partnership was very common among our British ancestors. Mr. Ward, the Vicar of Stratford-on-Avon, himself a notable example of the union of the two characters, writing about 1660, says,

“The Saxons had their blood-letters, but under the Normans physicke, begunne in England; 300 years agoe itt was not a distinct profession by itself, but practised by men in orders, witness Nicholas de Ternham, the chief English physician and Bishop of Durham; Hugh of Evesham, a physician and cardinal; Grysant, physician and pope; John Chambers, Dr. of Physick, was the first Bishop of Peterborough; Paul Bush, a bachelor of divinitie in Oxford, was a man well read in physick as well as divinitie, he was the first bishop of Bristol.”

“Again in King Richard the Second’s time physicians and divines were not distinct professions; for one Tydeman, Bishop of Landaph and Worcester, was physician to King Richard the Second.”

This alliance may have had its share in creating and keeping up the many superstitions which have figured so largely in the history of medicine. It is curious to see that a medical work left in manuscript by the Rev. Cotton Mather and hereafter to be referred to, is running over with follies and superstitious fancies; while his contemporary and fellow-townsmen, William Douglass, relied on the same few simple remedies which, through Dr. Edward Holyoke and Dr. James Jackson, have come down to our own time, as the most important articles of the *materia medica*.

Let us now take a general glance at some of the conditions of the early settlers; and first, as to the healthfulness of the climate. The mortality of the season that followed the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth has been sufficiently accounted for. After this, the colonists seem to have found the new country agreeing very well with their English constitutions. Its clear air is the subject of eulogy. Its dainty springs of sweet water are praised not only by Higginson and Wood, but even the mischievous Morton says, that

for its delicate waters "Canaan came not near this country." There is a tendency to dilate

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on these simple blessings, which reminds one a little of the Marchioness in Dickens's story, with her orange-peel-and-water beverage. Still more does one feel the warmth of coloring,—such as we expect from converts to a new faith, and settlers who want to entice others over to their clearings, when Winslow speaks, in 1621, of “abundance of roses, white, red, and damask; single, but very sweet indeed;” a most of all, however, when, in the same connection, he says, “Here are grapes white and red, and very sweet and strong also.” This of our wild grape, a little vegetable Indian, which scalps a civilized man's mouth, as his animal representative scalps his cranium. But there is something quite charming in Winslow's picture of the luxury in which they are living. Lobsters, oysters, eels, mussels, fish and fowl, delicious fruit, including the grapes aforesaid,—if they only had “kine, horses, and sheep,” he makes no question but men would live as contented here as in any part of the world. We cannot help admiring the way in which they took their trials, and made the most of their blessings.

“And how Content they were,” says Cotton Mather, “when an Honest Man, as I have heard, inviting his Friends to a Dish of Clams, at the Table gave Thanks to Heaven, who had given them to suck the abundance of the Seas, and of the Treasures Aid in the Sands!”

Strangely enough, as it would seem, except for this buoyant determination to make the best of everything, they hardly appear to recognize the difference of the climate from that which they had left. After almost three years' experience, Winslow says, he can scarce distinguish New England from Old England, in respect of heat and cold, frost, snow, rain, winds, *etc.* The winter, he thinks (if there is a difference), is sharper and longer; but yet he may be deceived by the want of the comforts he enjoyed at home. He cannot conceive any climate to agree better with the constitution of the English, not being oppressed with extremity of heats, nor nipped by biting cold:

“By which means, blessed be God, we enjoy our health, notwithstanding those difficulties we have undergone, in such a measure as would have been admired, if we had lived in England with the like means.”

Edward Johnson, after mentioning the shifts to which they were put for food, says,—

“And yet, methinks, our children are as cheerful, fat, and lusty, with feeding upon those mussels, clams, and other fish, as they were in England with their fill of bread.”

Higginson, himself a dyspeptic, “continually in physic,” as he says, and accustomed to dress in thick clothing, and to comfort his stomach with drink that was “both strong and stale,”—the “jolly good ale and old,” I suppose, of free and easy Bishop Still's song,—found that he both could and did oftentimes drink New England water very well,—which he seems to look upon as a remarkable feat. He could go as lightclad

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as any, too, with only a light stuff cassock upon his shirt, and stuff breeches without linings. Two of his children were sickly: one,—little misshapen Mary,—died on the passage, and, in her father's words, "was the first in our ship that was buried in the bowels of the great Atlantic sea;" the other, who had been "most lamentably handled" by disease, recovered almost entirely "by the very wholesomeness of the air, altering, digesting, and drying up the cold and crude humors of the body." Wherefore, he thinks it a wise course for all cold complexions to come to take physic in New England, and ends with those often quoted words, that "a sup of New England's air is better than a whole draught of Old England's ale." Mr. Higginson died, however, "of a hectic fever," a little more than a year after his arrival.

The medical records which I shall cite show that the colonists were not exempt from the complaints of the Old World. Besides the common diseases to which their descendants are subject, there were two others, to say nothing of the dreaded small-pox, which later medical science has disarmed,—little known among us at the present day, but frequent among the first settlers. The first of these was the scurvy, already mentioned, of which Winthrop speaks in 1630, saying, that it proved fatal to those who fell into discontent, and lingered after their former conditions in England; the poor homesick creatures in fact, whom we so forget in our florid pictures of the early times of the little band in the wilderness. Many who were suffering from scurvy got well when the Lyon arrived from England, bringing store of juice of lemons. The Governor speaks of another case in 1644; and it seems probable that the disease was not of rare occurrence.

The other complaint from which they suffered, but which has nearly disappeared from among us, was intermittent fever, or fever and ague. I investigated the question as to the prevalence of this disease in New England, in a dissertation, which was published in a volume with other papers, in the year 1838. I can add little to the facts there recorded. One which escaped me was, that Joshua Scottow, in "Old Men's Tears," dated 1691, speaks of "shaking agues," as among the trials to which they had been subjected. The outline map of New England, accompanying the dissertation above referred to, indicates all the places where I had evidence that the disease had originated. It was plain enough that it used to be known in many localities where it has long ceased to be feared. Still it was and is remarkable to see what a clean bill of health in this particular respect our barren soil inherited with its sterility. There are some malarious spots on the edge of Lake Champlain, and there have been some temporary centres of malaria, within the memory of man, on one or more of our Massachusetts rivers, but these are harmless enough, for the most part, unless the millers dam them, when they are apt to retaliate with a whiff from their meadows, that sets the whole neighborhood shaking with fever and ague.

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The Pilgrims of the Mayflower had with them a good physician, a man of standing, a deacon of their church, one whom they loved and trusted, Dr. Samuel Fuller. But no medical skill could keep cold and hunger and bad food, and, probably enough, desperate homesickness in some of the feeblers sort, from doing their work. No detailed record remains of what they suffered or what was attempted for their relief during the first sad winter. The graves of those who died were levelled and sowed with grain that the losses of the little band might not be suspected by the savage tenants of the wilderness, and their story remains untold.

Of Dr. Fuller's practice, at a later period, we have an account in a letter of his to Governor Bradford, dated June, 1630. "I have been to Matapan" (now Dorchester), he says, "and let some twenty of those people bleed." Such wholesale depletion as this, except with avowed homicidal intent, is quite unknown in these days; though I once saw the noted French surgeon, Lisfranc, in a fine phlebotomizing frenzy, order some ten or fifteen patients, taken almost indiscriminately, to be bled in a single morning.

Dr. Fuller's two visits to Salem, at the request of Governor Endicott, seem to have been very satisfactory to that gentleman. Morton, the wild fellow of Merry Mount, gives a rather questionable reason for the Governor's being so well pleased with the physician's doings. The names under which he mentions the two personages, it will be seen, are not intended to be complimentary. "Dr. Noddy did a great cure for Captain Littleworth. He cured him of a disease called a wife." William Gager, who came out with Winthrop, is spoken of as "a right godly man and skilful chyrurgeon, but died of a malignant fever not very long after his arrival."

Two practitioners of the ancient town of Newbury are entitled to special notice, for different reasons. The first is Dr. John Clark, who is said by tradition to have been the first regularly educated physician who resided in New England. His portrait, in close-fitting skull-cap, with long locks and venerable flowing beard, is familiar to our eyes on the wall of our Society's antechamber. His left hand rests upon a skull, his right hand holds an instrument which deserves a passing comment. It is a trephine, a surgical implement for cutting round pieces out of broken skulls, so as to get at the fragments which have been driven in, and lift them up. It has a handle like that of a gimlet, with a claw like a hammer, to lift with, I suppose, which last contrivance I do not see figured in my books. But the point I refer to is this: the old instrument, the trepan, had a handle like a wimple, what we call a brace or bit-stock. The trephine is not mentioned at all in Peter Lowe's book, London, 1634; nor in Wiseman's great work on Surgery, London, 1676; nor in the translation of Dionis, published by Jacob Tonson, in 1710. In fact it was only brought into more general use

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by Cheselden and Sharpe so late as the beginning of the last century. As John Clark died in 1661, it is remarkable to see the last fashion in the way of skull-sawing contrivances in his hands,—to say nothing of the claw on the handle, and a Hey's saw, so called in England, lying on the table by him, and painted there more than a hundred years before Hey was born. This saw is an old invention, perhaps as old as Hippocrates, and may be seen figured in the “Armamentarium Chirurgicum” of Scultetus, or in the Works of Ambroise Pare.

Dr. Clark is said to have received a diploma before he came, for skill in lithotomy. He loved horses, as a good many doctors do, and left a good property, as they all ought to do. His grave and noble presence, with the few facts concerning him, told with more or less traditional authority, give us the feeling that the people of Newbury, and afterwards of Boston, had a wise and skilful medical adviser and surgeon in Dr. John Clark.

The venerable town of Newbury had another physician who was less fortunate. The following is a court record of 1652:

“This is to certify whom it may concern, that we the subscribers, being called upon to testify against doctor William Snelling for words by him uttered, affirm that being in way of merry discourse, a health being drank to all friends, he answered,

“I'll pledge my friends,
And for my foes
A plague for their heels
And,'——

[a similar malediction on the other extremity of their feet.]

“Since when he hath affirmed that he only intended the proverb used in the west country, nor do we believe he intended otherwise.

“[Signed] “*William Thomas.* “*Thomas Milward.*

“March 12th 1651, All which I acknowledge, and am sorry I did not expresse my intent, or that I was so weak as to use so foolish a proverb.

“[Signed] “*GULIELMUS Snelling.*”

Notwithstanding this confession and apology, the record tells us that “William Snelling in his presentment for cursing is fined ten shillings and the fees of court.”

I will mention one other name among those of the Fathers of the medical profession in New England. The “apostle” Eliot says, writing in 1647, “We never had but one

anatomy in the country, which Mr. Giles Firman, now in England, did make and read upon very well.”

Giles Firmin, as the name is commonly spelled, practised physic in this country for a time. He seems to have found it a poor business; for, in a letter to Governor Winthrop, he says, “I am strongly sett upon to studye divinitie: my studyes else must be lost, for physick is but a meene helpe.”

Giles Firmin’s Lectures on Anatomy were the first scientific teachings of the New World. While the Fathers were enlightened enough to permit such instructions, they were severe in dealing with quackery; for, in 1631, our court records show that one Nicholas Knopp, or Knapp, was sentenced to be fined or whipped “for taking upon him to cure the scurvey by a water of noe worth nor value, which he solde att a very deare rate.” Empty purses or sore backs would be common with us to-day if such a rule were enforced.

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Besides the few worthies spoken of, and others whose names I have not space to record, we must remember that there were many clergymen who took charge of the bodies as well as the souls of their patients, among them two Presidents of Harvard College, Charles Chauncy and Leonard Hoar,—and Thomas Thacher, first minister of the “Old South,” author of the earliest medical treatises printed in the country,[A Brief Rule to Guide the Common People in Small pox and Measles. 1674.] whose epitaph in Latin and Greek, said to have been written by Eleazer, an “Indian Youth” and a member of the Senior Class of Harvard College, may be found in the “Magnalia.” I miss this noble savage’s name in our triennial catalogue; and as there is many a slip between the cup and lip, one is tempted to guess that he may have lost his degree by some display of his native instinct,—possibly a flourish of the tomahawk or scalping-knife. However this may have been, the good man he celebrated was a notable instance of the Angelical Conjunction, as the author of the “Magnalia” calls it, of the offices of clergyman and medical practitioner.

Michael Wigglesworth, author of the “Day of Doom,” attended the sick, “not only as a Pastor, but as a Physician too, and this, not only in his own town, but also in all those of the vicinity.” Mather says of the sons of Charles Chauncy, “All of these did, while they had Opportunity, Preach the Gospel; and most, if not all of them, like their excellent Father before them, had an eminent skill in physick added unto their other accomplishments,” *etc.* Roger Williams is said to have saved many in a kind of pestilence which swept away many Indians.

To these names must be added, as sustaining a certain relation to the healing art, that of the first Governor Winthrop, who is said by John Cotton to have been “Help for our Bodies by Physick [and] for our Estates by Law,” and that of his son, the Governor of Connecticut, who, as we shall see, was as much physician as magistrate.

I had submitted to me for examination, in 1862, a manuscript found among the Winthrop Papers, marked with the superscription, “For my worthy friend Mr. Wintrop,” dated in 1643, London, signed Edward Stafford, and containing medical directions and prescriptions. It may be remembered by some present that I wrote a report on this paper, which was published in the “Proceedings” of this Society. Whether the paper was written for Governor John Winthrop of Massachusetts, or for his son, Governor John of Connecticut, there is no positive evidence that I have been able to obtain. It is very interesting, however, as giving short and simple practical directions, such as would be most like to be wanted and most useful, in the opinion of a physician in repute of that day.

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The diseases prescribed for are plague, small-pox, fevers, king's evil, insanity, falling-sickness, and the like; with such injuries as broken bones, dislocations, and burning with gunpowder. The remedies are of three kinds: simples, such as St. John's wort, Clown's all-heal, elder, parsley, maidenhair, mineral drugs, such as lime, saltpetre, Armenian bole, crocus metallorum, or sulphuret of antimony; and thaumaturgic or mystical, of which the chief is, "My black powder against the plague, small-pox; purples, all sorts of feavers; Poyson; either, by Way of Prevention or after Infection." This marvellous remedy was made by putting live toads into an earthen pot so as to half fill it, and baking and burning them "in the open ayre, not in an house,"—concerning which latter possibility I suspect Madam Winthrop would have had something to say,—until they could be reduced by pounding, first into a brown, and then into a black, powder. Blood-letting in some inflammations, fasting in the early stage of fevers, and some of those peremptory drugs with which most of us have been well acquainted in our time, the infragant memories of which I will not pursue beyond this slight allusion, are among his remedies.

The Winthrops, to one of whom Dr. Stafford's directions were addressed, were the medical as well as the political advisers of their fellow-citizens for three or four successive generations. One of them, Governor John of Connecticut, practised so extensively, that, but for his more distinguished title in the State, he would have been remembered as the Doctor. The fact that he practised in another colony, for the most part, makes little difference in the value of the records we have of his medical experience, which have fortunately been preserved, and give a very fair idea, in all probability, of the way in which patients were treated in Massachusetts, when they fell into intelligent and somewhat educated hands, a little after the middle of the seventeenth century:

I have before me, while writing, a manuscript collection of the medical cases treated by him, and recorded at the time in his own hand, which has been intrusted to me by our President, his descendant.

They are generally marked Hartford, and extend from the year 1657 to 1669. From these, manuscripts, and from the letters printed in the Winthrop Papers published by our Society, I have endeavored to obtain some idea of the practice of Governor John Winthrop, Junior. The learned eye of Mr. Pulsifer would have helped me, no doubt, as it has done in other cases; but I have ventured this time to attempt finding my own way among the hieroglyphics of these old pages. By careful comparison of many prescriptions, and by the aid of Schroder, Salmon, Culpeper, and other old compilers, I have deciphered many of his difficult paragraphs with their mysterious recipes.

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The Governor employed a number of the simples dear to ancient women, —- elecampane and elder and wormwood and anise and the rest; but he also employed certain mineral remedies, which he almost always indicates by their ancient symbols, or by a name which should leave them a mystery to the vulgar. I am now prepared to reveal the mystic secrets of the Governor's beneficent art, which rendered so many good and great as well as so many poor and dependent people his debtors,—at least, in their simple belief,—for their health and their lives.

His great remedy, which he gave oftener than any other, was nitre; which he ordered in doses of twenty or thirty grains to adults, and of three grains to infants. Measles, colics, sciatica, headache, giddiness, and many other ailments, all found themselves treated, and I trust bettered, by nitre; a pretty safe medicine in moderate doses, and one not likely to keep the good Governor awake at night, thinking whether it might not kill, if it did not cure. We may say as much for spermaceti, which he seems to have considered "the sovereign'st thing on earth" for inward bruises, and often prescribes after falls and similar injuries.

One of the next remedies, in point of frequency, which he was in the habit of giving, was (probably diaphoretic) antimony; a mild form of that very active metal, and which, mild as it was, left his patients very commonly with a pretty strong conviction that they had been taking something that did not exactly agree with them. Now and then he gave a little iron or sulphur or calomel, but very rarely; occasionally, a good, honest dose of rhubarb or jalap; a taste of stinging horseradish, oftener of warming guiacum; sometimes an anodyne, in the shape of mithridate,—the famous old farrago, which owed its virtue to poppy juice; [This is the remedy which a Boston divine tried to simplify. See *Electuarium Novum Alexipharmacum*, by Rev. Thomas Harward, lecturer at the Royal Chappell. Boston, 1732. This tract is in our Society's library.] very often, a harmless powder of coral; less frequently, an inert prescription of pleasing amber; and (let me say it softly within possible hearing of his honored descendant), twice or oftener, —let us hope as a last resort,—an electuary of millipedes,—sowbugs, if we must give them their homely English name. One or two other prescriptions, of the many unmentionable ones which disgraced the pharmacopoeia of the seventeenth century, are to be found, but only in very rare instances, in the faded characters of the manuscript.

The excellent Governor's accounts of diseases are so brief, that we get only a very general notion of the complaints for which he prescribed. Measles and their consequences are at first more prominent than any other one affection, but the common infirmities of both sexes and of all ages seem to have come under his healing hand. Fever and ague appears to have been of frequent occurrence.

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His published correspondence shows that many noted people were in communication with him as his patients. Roger Williams wants a little of his medicine for Mrs. Weekes's daughter; worshipful John Haynes is in receipt of his powders; troublesome Captain Underhill wants "a little white vitterall" for his wife, and something to cure his wife's friend's neuralgia, (I think his wife's friend's husband had a little rather have had it sent by the hands of Mrs. Underhill, than by those of the gallant and discursive captain); and pious John Davenport says, his wife "tooke but one halfe of one of the papers" (which probably contained the medicine he called rubila), "but could not beare the taste of it, and is discouraged from taking any more;" and honored William Leete asks for more powders for his "poore little daughter Graciana," though he found it "hard to make her take it," delicate, and of course sensitive, child as she was, languishing and dying before her time, in spite of all the bitter things she swallowed,—God help all little children in the hands of dosing doctors and howling dervishes! Restless Samuel Gorton, now tamed by the burden of fourscore and two years, writes so touching an account of his infirmities, and expresses such overflowing gratitude for the relief he has obtained from the Governor's prescriptions, wondering how "a thing so little in quantity, so little in sent, so little in taste, and so little to sence in operation, should beget and bring forth such effects," that we repent our hasty exclamation, and bless the memory of the good Governor, who gave relief to the worn-out frame of our long-departed brother, the sturdy old heretic of Rhode Island.

What was that medicine which so frequently occurs in the printed letters under the name of "rubila"? It is evidently a secret remedy, and, so far as I know, has not yet been made out. I had almost given it up in despair, when I found what appears to be a key to the mystery. In the vast multitude of prescriptions contained in the manuscripts, most of them written in symbols, I find one which I thus interpret:

"Four grains of (diaphoretic) antimony, with twenty grains of nitre, with a little salt of tin, making rubila." Perhaps something was added to redden the powder, as he constantly speaks of "rubifying" or "viridating" his prescriptions; a very common practice of prescribers, when their powders look a little too much like plain salt or sugar.

Waitstill Winthrop, the Governor's son, "was a skilful physician," says Mr. Sewall, in his funeral sermon; "and generously gave, not only his advice, but also his Medicines, for the healing of the Sick, which, by the Blessing of God, were made successful for the recovery of many." "His son John, a member of the Royal Society, speaks of himself as 'Dr. Winthrop,' and mentions one of his own prescriptions in a letter to Cotton Mather." Our President tells me that there was an heirloom of the ancient skill in his family, within his own remembrance, in the form of a certain precious eye-water, to which the late President John Quincy Adams ascribed rare virtue, and which he used to obtain from the possessor of the ancient recipe.

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These inherited prescriptions are often treasured in families, I do not doubt, for many generations. When I was yet of trivial age, and suffering occasionally, as many children do, from what one of my Cambridgeport schoolmates used to call the “ager,”—meaning thereby toothache or face-ache,—I used to get relief from a certain plaster which never went by any other name in the family than “Dr. Oliver.”

Dr. James Oliver was my great-great-grandfather, graduated in 1680, and died in 1703. This was, no doubt, one of his nostrums; for nostrum, as is well known, means nothing more than our own or my own particular medicine, or other possession or secret, and physicians in old times used to keep their choice recipes to themselves a good deal, as we have had occasion to see.

Some years ago I found among my old books a small manuscript marked “James Oliver. This Book Begun Aug. 12, 1685.” It is a rough sort of account-book, containing among other things prescriptions for patients, and charges for the same, with counter-charges for the purchase of medicines and other matters. Dr. Oliver practised in Cambridge, where may be seen his tomb with inscriptions, and with sculptured figures that look more like Diana of the Ephesians, as given in Calmet’s Dictionary, than like any angels admitted into good society here or elsewhere.

I do not find any particular record of what his patients suffered from, but I have carefully copied out the remedies he mentions, and find that they form a very respectable catalogue. Besides the usual simples, elder, parsley, fennel, saffron, snake-root, wormwood, I find the Elixir Proprietatis, with other elixire and cordials, as if he rather fancied warming medicines; but he called in the aid of some of the more energetic remedies, including iron, and probably mercury, as he bought two pounds of it at one time.

The most interesting item is his bill against the estate of Samuel Pason of Roxbury, for services during his last illness. He attended this gentleman,—for such he must have been, by the amount of physic which he took, and which his heirs paid for,—from June 4th, 1696, to September 3d of the same year, three months. I observe he charges for visits as well as for medicines, which is not the case in most of his bills. He opens the attack with a carminative appeal to the visceral conscience, and follows it up with good hard-hitting remedies for dropsy,—as I suppose the disease would have been called,—and finishes off with a rallying dose of hartshorn and iron.

It is a source of honest pride to his descendant that his bill, which was honestly paid, as it seems to have been honorably earned, amounted to the handsome total of seven pounds and two shillings. Let me add that he repeatedly prescribes plaster, one of which was very probably the “Dr. Oliver” that soothed my infant griefs, and for which I blush to say that my venerated ancestor received from Goodman Hancock the painfully exiguous sum of no pounds, no shillings, and sixpence.

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I have illustrated the practice of the first century, from the two manuscripts I have examined, as giving an impartial idea of its every-day methods. The Governor, Johannes Secundus, it is fair to remember, was an amateur practitioner, while my ancestor was a professed physician. Comparing their modes of treatment with the many scientific follies still prevailing in the Old World, and still more with the extraordinary theological superstitions of the community in which they lived, we shall find reason, I think, to consider the art of healing as in a comparatively creditable state during the first century of New England.

In addition to the evidence as to methods of treatment furnished by the manuscripts I have cited, I subjoin the following document, to which my attention was called by Dr. Shurtleff, our present Mayor. This is a letter of which the original is to be found in vol. lxi. page 10 of the "Archives" preserved at the State House in Boston. It will be seen that what the surgeon wanted consisted chiefly of opiates, stimulants, cathartics, plasters, and materials for bandages. The complex and varied formulae have given place to simpler and often more effective forms of the same remedies; but the list and the manner in which it is made out are proofs of the good sense and schooling of the surgeon, who, it may be noted, was in such haste that he neglected all his stops. He might well be in a hurry, as on the very day upon which he wrote, a great body of Indians—supposed to be six or seven hundred—appeared before Hatfield; and twenty-five resolute young men of Hadley, from which town he wrote, crossed the river and drove them away.

HADLY May 30: 76

Mr *Rawson* Sr

What we have recd by Tho: Houey the past month is not the cheifest of our wants as you have love for poor wounded I pray let us not want for these following medicines if you have not a speedy conveyance of them I pray send on purpose they are those things mentioned in my former letter but to prevent future mistakes I have wrote them att large wee have great want with the greatest halt and speed let us be supplied. Sr Yr Sert *will* LOCHS

(Endorsed)

Mr. Lockes Letter Recd from the Governor 13 Jane & acquainted ye Council with it but could not obtaine any thing to be sent in answer thereto. 13 June 1676

I have given some idea of the chief remedies used by our earlier physicians, which were both Galenic and chemical; that is, vegetable and mineral. They, of course, employed the usual perturbing medicines which Montaigne says are the chief reliance of their craft. There were, doubtless, individual practitioners who employed special remedies with exceptional boldness and perhaps success. Mr. Eliot is spoken of, in a letter of

William Leete to Winthrop, Junior, as being under Mr. Greenland's mercurial administrations. The latter was probably enough one of these specialists.

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There is another class of remedies which appears to have been employed occasionally, but, on the whole, is so little prominent as to imply a good deal of common sense among the medical practitioners, as compared with the superstitions prevailing around them. I have said that I have caught the good Governor, now and then, prescribing the electuary of millipedes; but he is entirely excused by the almost incredible fact that they were retained in the *materia medica* so late as when Rees's *Cyclopaedia* was published, and we there find the directions formerly given by the College of Edinburgh for their preparation. Once or twice we have found him admitting still more objectionable articles into his *materia medica*; in doing which, I am sorry to say that he could plead grave and learned authority. But these instances are very rare exceptions in a medical practice of many years, which is, on the whole, very respectable, considering the time and circumstances.

Some remedies of questionable though not odious character appear occasionally to have been employed by the early practitioners, but they were such as still had the support of the medical profession. Governor John Winthrop, the first, sends for East Indian bezoar, with other commodities he is writing for. Governor Endicott sends him one he had of Mr. Humfrey. I hope it was genuine, for they cheated infamously in the matter of this concretion, which ought to come out of an animal's stomach, but the real history of which resembles what is sometimes told of modern sausages.

There is a famous law-case of James the First's time, in which a goldsmith sold a hundred pounds' worth of what he called bezoar, which was proved to be false, and the purchaser got a verdict against him. Governor Endicott also sends Winthrop a unicorn's horn, which was the property of a certain Mrs. Beggarly, who, in spite of her name, seems to have been rich in medical knowledge and possessions. The famous Thomas Bartholinus wrote a treatise on the virtues of this fabulous-sounding remedy, which was published in 1641, and republished in 1678.

The "antimonial cup," a drinking vessel made of that metal, which, like our quassia-wood cups, might be filled and emptied in *saecula saeculorum* without exhausting its virtues, is mentioned by Matthew Cradock, in a letter to the elder Winthrop, but in a doubtful way, as it was thought, he says, to have shortened the days of Sir Nathaniel Riche; and Winthrop himself, as I think, refers to its use, calling it simply "the cup." An antimonial cup is included in the inventory of Samuel Seabury, who died 1680, and is valued at five shillings. There is a treatise entitled "The Universall Remedy, or the Vertues of the Antimoniall Cup, By John Evans, Minister and Preacher of God's Word, London, 1634," in our own Society's library.

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One other special remedy deserves notice, because of native growth. I do not know when Culver's root, *Leptandra Virginica* of our National Pharmacopoeia, became noted, but Cotton Mather, writing in 1716 to John Winthrop of New London, speaks of it as famous for the cure of consumptions, and wishes to get some of it, through his mediation, for Katharine, his eldest daughter. He gets it, and gives it to the "poor damsel," who is languishing, as he says, and who dies the next month,—all the sooner, I have little doubt, for this uncertain and violent drug, with which the meddlesome pedant tormented her in that spirit of well-meant but restless quackery, which could touch nothing without making mischief, not even a quotation, and yet proved at length the means of bringing a great blessing to our community, as we shall see by and by; so does Providence use our very vanities and infirmities for its wise purposes.

Externally, I find the practitioners on whom I have chiefly relied used the plasters of Paracelsus, of melilot, diachylon, and probably diaphoenicon, all well known to the old pharmacopoeias, and some of them to the modern ones,—to say nothing of "my yellow salve," of Governor John, the second, for the composition of which we must apply to his respected descendant.

The authors I find quoted are Barbette's Surgery, Camerarius on Gout, and Wecherus, of all whom notices may be found in the pages of Haller and Vanderlinden; also, Reed's Surgery, and Nicholas Culpeper's Practice of Physic and Anatomy, the last as belonging to Samuel Seabury, surgeon, before mentioned. Nicholas Culpeper was a shrewd charlatan, and as impudent a varlet as ever prescribed for a colic; but knew very well what he was about, and badgers the College with great vigor. A copy of Spigelius's famous Anatomy, in the Boston Athenaeum, has the names of Increase and Samuel Mather written in it, and was doubtless early overhauled by the youthful Cotton, who refers to the great anatomist's singular death, among his curious stories in the "Magnalia," and quotes him among nearly a hundred authors whom he cites in his manuscript "The Angel of Bethesda." Dr. John Clark's "books and instruments, with several chirurgery materials in the closet," a were valued in his inventory at sixty pounds; Dr. Matthew Fuller, who died in 1678, left a library valued at ten pounds; and a surgeon's chest and drugs valued at sixteen pounds.'

Here we leave the first century and all attempts at any further detailed accounts of medicine and its practitioners. It is necessary to show in a brief glance what had been going on in Europe during the latter part of that century, the first quarter of which had been made illustrious in the history of medical science by the discovery of the circulation.

Charles Barbeyrac, a Protestant in his religion, was a practitioner and teacher of medicine at Montpellier. His creed was in the way of his obtaining office; but the young men followed his instructions with enthusiasm. Religious and scientific freedom breed in and in, until it becomes hard to tell the family of one from that of the other. Barbeyrac



threw overboard the old complex medical farragos of the pharmacopoeias, as his church had disburdened itself of the popish ceremonies.

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Among the students who followed his instructions were two Englishmen: one of them, John Locke, afterwards author of an “Essay on the Human Understanding,” three years younger than his teacher; the other, Thomas Sydenham, five years older. Both returned to England. Locke, whose medical knowledge is borne witness to by Sydenham, had the good fortune to form a correct opinion on a disease from which the Earl of Shaftesbury was suffering, which led to an operation that saved his life. Less felicitous was his experience with a certain ancilla culinaria virgo,—which I am afraid would in those days have been translated kitchen-wench, instead of lady of the culinary department,—who turned him off after she had got tired of him, and called in another practitioner. [Locke and Sydenham, p. 124. By John Brown, M. D. Edinburgh, 1866.] This helped, perhaps, to spoil a promising doctor, and make an immortal metaphysician. At any rate, Locke laid down the professional wig and cane, and took to other studies.

The name of Thomas Sydenham is as distinguished in the history of medicine as that of John Locke in philosophy. As Barbeyrac was found in opposition to the established religion, as Locke took the rational side against orthodox Bishop Stillingfleet, so Sydenham went with Parliament against Charles, and was never admitted a Fellow by the College of Physicians, which, after he was dead, placed his bust in their hall by the side of that of Harvey.

What Sydenham did for medicine was briefly this he studied the course of diseases carefully, and especially as affected by the particular season; to patients with fever he gave air and cooling drinks, instead of smothering and heating them, with the idea of sweating out their disease; he ordered horseback exercise to consumptives; he, like his teacher, used few and comparatively simple remedies; he did not give any drug at all, if he thought none was needed, but let well enough alone. He was a sensible man, in short, who applied his common sense to diseases which he had studied with the best light of science that he could obtain.

The influence of the reform he introduced must have been more or less felt in this country, but not much before the beginning of the eighteenth century, as his great work was not published until 1675, and then in Latin. I very strongly suspect that there was not so much to reform in the simple practice of the physicians of the new community, as there was in that of the learned big-wigs of the “College,” who valued their remedies too much in proportion to their complexity, and the extravagant and fantastic ingredients which went to their making.

During the memorable century which bred and bore the Revolution, the medical profession gave great names to our history. But John Brooks belonged to the State, and Joseph Warren belongs to the country and mankind, and to speak of them would lead me beyond my limited—subject. There would be little pleasure in dwelling on the name of Benjamin Church; and as for the medical politicians, like Elisha Cooke in the early part of the century, or Charles Jarvis, the bald eagle of Boston, in its later years,

whether their practice was heroic or not, their patients were, for he is a bold man who trusts one that is making speeches and coaxing voters, to meddle with the internal politics of his corporeal republic.

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One great event stands out in the medical history of this eighteenth century; namely, the introduction of the practice of inoculation for small-pox. Six epidemics of this complaint had visited Boston in the course of a hundred years. Prayers had been asked in the churches for more than a hundred sick in a single day, and this many times. About a thousand persons had died in a twelvemonth, we are told, and, as we may infer, chiefly from this cause.

In 1721, this disease, after a respite of nineteen years, again appeared as an epidemic. In that year it was that Cotton Mather, browsing, as was his wont, on all the printed fodder that came within reach of his ever-grinding mandibles, came upon an account of inoculation as practised in Turkey, contained in the "Philosophical Transactions." He spoke of it to several physicians, who paid little heed to his story; for they knew his medical whims, and had probably been bored, as we say now-a-days, many of them, with listening to his "Angel of Bethesda," and satiated with his speculations on the Nishmath Chajim.

The Reverend Mather,—I use a mode of expression he often employed when speaking of his honored brethren,—the Reverend Mather was right this time, and the irreverent doctors who laughed at him were wrong. One only of their number disputes his claim to giving the first impulse to the practice, in Boston. This is what that person says: "The Small-Pox spread in Boston, New England, A.1721, and the Reverend Dr. Cotton Mather, having had the use of these Communications from Dr. William Douglass (that is, the writer of these words); surreptitiously, without the knowledge of his Informer, that he might have the honour of a New fangled notion, sets an Undaunted Operator to work, and in this Country about 290 were inoculated."

All this has not deprived Cotton Mather of the credit of suggesting, and a bold and intelligent physician of the honor of carrying out, the new practice. On the twenty-seventh day of June, 1721, Zabdiel Boylston of Boston inoculated his only son for smallpox,—the first person ever submitted to the operation in the New World. The story of the fierce resistance to the introduction of the practice; of how Boylston was mobbed, and Mather had a hand-grenade thrown in at his window; of how William Douglass, the Scotchman, "always positive, and sometimes accurate," as was neatly said of him, at once depreciated the practice and tried to get the credit of suggesting it, and how Lawrence Dalhonde, the Frenchman, testified to its destructive consequences; of how Edmund Massey, lecturer at St. Albans, preached against sinfully endeavoring to alter the course of nature by presumptuous interposition, which he would leave to the atheist and the scoffer, the heathen and unbeliever, while in the face of his sermon, afterwards reprinted in Boston, many of our New England clergy stood up boldly in defence of the practice,—all this has been told so well and so often that I spare you its details. Set this good hint of Cotton Mather against that letter of his to John Richards, recommending the search after witch-marks, and the application of the water-ordeal, which means throw your grandmother into the water, if she has a mole on her arm;—if she swims, she is a witch and must be hanged; if she sinks, the Lord have mercy on her soul!

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Thus did America receive this great discovery, destined to save thousands of lives, via Boston, from the hands of one of our own Massachusetts physicians.

The year 1735 was rendered sadly memorable by the epidemic of the terrible disease known as “throat distemper,” and regarded by many as the same as our “diphtheria.” Dr. Holyoke thinks the more general use of mercurials in inflammatory complaints dates from the time of their employment in this disease, in which they were thought to have proved specially useful.

At some time in the course of this century medical practice had settled down on four remedies as its chief reliance. I must repeat an incident which I have related in another of these Essays. When Dr. Holyoke, nearly seventy years ago, received young Mr. James Jackson as his student, he showed him the formidable array of bottles, jars, and drawers around his office, and then named the four remedies referred to as being of more importance than all the rest put together. These were “Mercury, Antimony, Opium, and Peruvian Bark.” I doubt if either of them remembered that, nearly seventy years before, in 1730, Dr. William Douglass, the disputatious Scotchman, mentioned those same four remedies, in the dedication of his quarrelsome essay on inoculation, as the most important ones in the hands of the physicians of his time.

In the “Proceedings” of this Society for the year 1863 is a very pleasant paper by the late Dr. Ephraim Eliot, giving an account of the leading physicians of Boston during the last quarter of the last century. The names of Lloyd, Gardiner, Welsh, Rand, Bulfinch, Danforth, John Warren, Jeffries, are all famous in local history, and are commemorated in our medical biographies. One of them, at least, appears to have been more widely known, not only as one of the first aerial voyagers, but as an explorer in the almost equally hazardous realm of medical theory. Dr. John Jeffries, the first of that name, is considered by Broussais as a leader of medical opinion in America, and so referred to in his famous “Examen des Doctrines Medicales.”

Two great movements took place in this eighteenth century, the effect of which has been chiefly felt in our own time; namely, the establishment of the Massachusetts Medical Society, and the founding of the Medical School of Harvard University.

The third century of our medical history began with the introduction of the second great medical discovery of modern times,—of all time up to that date, I may say,—once more via Boston, if we count the University village as its suburb, and once more by one of our Massachusetts physicians. In the month of July, 1800, Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse of Cambridge submitted four of his own children to the new process of vaccination,—the first persons vaccinated, as Dr. Zabdiel Boylston’s son had been the first person inoculated in the New World.

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A little before the first half of this century was completed, in the autumn of 1846, the great discovery went forth from the Massachusetts General Hospital, which repaid the debt of America to the science of the Old World, and gave immortality to the place of its origin in the memory and the heart of mankind. The production of temporary insensibility at will—*tuto, cito, jucunde*, safely, quickly, pleasantly—is one of those triumphs over the infirmities of our mortal condition which change the aspect of life ever afterwards. Rhetoric can add nothing to its glory; gratitude, and the pride permitted to human weakness, that our Bethlehem should have been chosen as the birthplace of this new embodiment of the divine mercy, are all we can yet find room for.

The present century has seen the establishment of all those great charitable institutions for the cure of diseases of the body and of the mind, which our State and our city have a right to consider as among the chief ornaments of their civilization.

The last century had very little to show, in our State, in the way of medical literature. The worthies who took care of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers, like the Revolutionary heroes, fought (with disease) and bled (their patients) and died (in spite of their own remedies); but their names, once familiar, are heard only at rare intervals. Honored in their day, not unremembered by a few solitary students of the past, their memories are going sweetly to sleep in the arms of the patient old dry-nurse, whose “blackdrop” is the never-failing anodyne of the restless generations of men. Except the lively controversy on inoculation, and floating papers in journals, we have not much of value for that long period, in the shape of medical records.

But while the trouble with the last century is to find authors to mention, the trouble of this would be to name all that we find. Of these, a very few claim unquestioned preeminence.

Nathan Smith, born in Rehoboth, Mass., a graduate of the Medical School of our University, did a great work for the advancement of medicine and surgery in New England, by his labors as teacher and author, greater, it is claimed by some, than was ever done by any other man. The two Warrens, of our time, each left a large and permanent record of a most extended surgical practice. James Jackson not only educated a whole generation by his lessons of wisdom, but bequeathed some of the most valuable results of his experience to those who came after him, in a series of letters singularly pleasant and kindly as well as instructive. John Ware, keen and cautious, earnest and deliberate, wrote the two remarkable essays which have identified his name, for all time, with two important diseases, on which he has shed new light by his original observations.

I must do violence to the modesty of the living by referring to the many important contributions to medical science by Dr. Jacob Bigelow, and especially to his discourse on “Self-limited Diseases,” an address which can be read in a single hour, but the influence of which will be felt for a century.

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Nor would the profession forgive me if I forgot to mention the admirable museum of pathological anatomy, created almost entirely by the hands of Dr. John Barnard Swett Jackson, and illustrated by his own printed descriptive catalogue, justly spoken of by a distinguished professor in the University of Pennsylvania as the most important contribution which had ever been made in this country to the branch to which it relates.

When we look at the literature of mental disease, as seen in hospital reports and special treatises, we can mention the names of Wyman, Woodward, Brigham, Bell, and Ray, all either natives of Massachusetts or placed at the head of her institutions for the treatment of the insane.

We have a right to claim also one who is known all over the civilized world as a philanthropist, to us as a townsman and a graduate of our own Medical School, Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, the guide and benefactor of a great multitude who were born to a world of inward or of outward darkness.

I cannot pass over in silence the part taken by our own physicians in those sanitary movements which are assuming every year greater importance. Two diseases especially have attracted attention, above all others, with reference to their causes and prevention; cholera, the "black death" of the nineteenth century, and consumption, the white plague of the North, both of which have been faithfully studied and reported on by physicians of our own State and city. The cultivation of medical and surgical specialties, which is fast becoming prevalent, is beginning to show its effects in the literature of the profession, which is every year growing richer in original observations and investigations.

To these benefactors who have labored for us in their peaceful vocation, we must add the noble army of surgeons, who went with the soldiers who fought the battles of their country, sharing many of their dangers, not rarely falling victims to fatigue, disease, or the deadly volleys to which they often exposed themselves in the discharge of their duties.

The pleasant biographies of the venerable Dr. Thacher, and the worthy and kind-hearted gleaner, Dr. Stephen W. Williams, who came after him, are filled with the names of men who served their generation well, and rest from their labors, followed by the blessing of those for whom they endured the toils and fatigues inseparable from their calling. The hardworking, intelligent country physician more especially deserves the gratitude of his own generation, for he rarely leaves any permanent record in the literature of his profession. Books are hard to obtain; hospitals, which are always centres of intelligence, are remote; thoroughly educated and superior men are separated by wide intervals; and long rides, though favorable to reflection, take up much of the time which might otherwise be given to the labors of the study. So it is that men of ability and vast experience, like the late Dr. Twitchell, for instance, make a great and

deserved reputation, become the oracles of large districts, and yet leave nothing, or next to nothing, by which their names shall be preserved from blank oblivion.

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One or two other facts deserve mention, as showing the readiness of our medical community to receive and adopt any important idea or discovery. The new science of Histology, as it is now called, was first brought fully before the profession of this country by the translation of Bichat's great work, "Anatomie Generale," by the late Dr. George Hayward.

The first work printed in this country on Auscultation,—that wonderful art of discovering disease, which, as it were, puts a window in the breast, through which the vital organs can be seen, to all intents and purposes, was the manual published anonymously by "A Member of the Massachusetts Medical Society."

We are now in some slight measure prepared to weigh the record of the medical profession in Massachusetts, and pass our judgment upon it. But in-order to do justice to the first generation of practitioners, we must compare what we know of their treatment of disease with the state of the art in England, and the superstitions which they saw all around them in other departments of knowledge or belief.

English medical literature must have been at a pretty low ebb when Sydenham recommended Don Quixote to Sir Richard Blackmore for professional reading. The College Pharmacopoeia was loaded with the most absurd compound mixtures, one of the most complex of which (the same which the Reverend Mr. Harward, "Lecturer at the Royal Chappel in Boston," tried to simplify), was not dropped until the year 1801. Sir Kenelm Digby was playing his fantastic tricks with the Sympathetic powder, and teaching Governor Winthrop, the second, how to cure fever and ague, which some may like to know. "Pare the patient's nails; put the parings in a little bag, and hang the bag round the neck of a live eel, and put him in a tub of water. The eel will die, and the patient will recover."

Wiseman, the great surgeon, was discoursing eloquently on the efficacy of the royal touch in scrofula. The founder of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, consorting with alchemists and astrologers, was treasuring the manuscripts of the late pious Dr. Richard Napier, in which certain letters (Rx Ris) were understood to mean Responsum Raphaelis,—the answer of the angel Raphael to the good man's medical questions. The illustrious Robert Boyle was making his collection of choice and safe remedies, including the sole of an old shoe, the thigh bone of a hanged man, and things far worse than these, as articles of his materia medica. Dr. Stafford, whose paper of directions to his "friend, Mr. Winthrop," I cited, was probably a man of standing in London; yet toad-powder was his sovereign remedy.

See what was the state of belief in other matters among the most intelligent persons of the colonies, magistrates and clergymen. Jonathan Brewster, son of the church-elder, writes the wildest letters to John Winthrop about alchemy,—"mad for making gold as the Lynn rock-borers are for finding it."

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Remember the theology and the diabolology of the time. Mr. Cotton's Theocracy was a royal government, with the King of kings as its nominal head, but with an upper chamber of saints, and a tremendous opposition in the lower house; the leader of which may have been equalled, but cannot have been surpassed by any of our earth-born politicians. The demons were prowling round the houses every night, as the foxes were sneaking about the hen-roosts. The men of Gloucester fired whole flasks of gunpowder at devils disguised as Indians and Frenchmen.

How deeply the notion of miraculous interference with the course of nature was rooted, is shown by the tenacity of the superstition about earthquakes. We can hardly believe that our Professor Winthrop, father of the old judge and the "squire," whom many of us Cambridge people remember so well, had to defend himself against the learned and excellent Dr. Prince, of the Old South Church, for discussing their phenomena as if they belonged to the province of natural science:

Not for the sake of degrading the aspect of the noble men who founded our State, do I refer to their idle beliefs and painful delusions, but to show against what influences the common sense of the medical profession had to assert itself.

Think, then, of the blazing stars, that shook their horrid hair in the sky; the phantom ship, that brought its message direct from the other world; the story of the mouse and the snake at Watertown; of the mice and the prayer-book; of the snake in church; of the calf with two heads; and of the cabbage in the perfect form of a cutlash,—all which innocent occurrences were accepted or feared as alarming portents.

We can smile at these: but we cannot smile at the account of unhappy Mary Dyer's malformed offspring; or of Mrs. Hutchinson's domestic misfortune of similar character, in the story of which the physician, Dr. John Clark of Rhode Island, alone appears to advantage; or as we read the Rev. Samuel Willard's fifteen alarming pages about an unfortunate young woman suffering with hysteria. Or go a little deeper into tragedy, and see poor Dorothy Talby, mad as Ophelia, first admonished, then whipped; at last, taking her own little daughter's life; put on trial, and standing mute, threatened to be pressed to death, confessing, sentenced, praying to be beheaded; and none the less pitilessly swung from the fatal ladder.

The cooper's crazy wife—crazy in the belief that she has committed the unpardonable sin—tries to drown her child, to save it from misery; and the poor lunatic, who would be tenderly cared for to-day in a quiet asylum, is judged to be acting under the instigation of Satan himself. Yet, after all, what can we say, who put Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," full of nightmare dreams of horror, into all our children's hands; a story in which the awful image of the man in the cage might well turn the nursery where it is read into a madhouse?

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The miserable delusion of witchcraft illustrates, in a still more impressive way, the false ideas which governed the supposed relation of men with the spiritual world. I have no doubt many physicians shared in these superstitions. Mr. Upham says they—that is, some of them—were in the habit of attributing their want of success to the fact, that an “evil hand” was on their patient. The temptation was strong, no doubt, when magistrates and ministers and all that followed their lead were contented with such an explanation. But how was it in Salem, according to Mr. Upham’s own statement? Dr. John Swinnerton was, he says, for many years the principal physician of Salem. And he says, also, “The Swinnerton family were all along opposed to Mr. Parris, and kept remarkably clear from the witchcraft delusion.” Dr. John Swinnerton—the same, by the way, whose memory is illuminated by a ray from the genius of Hawthorne—died the very year before the great witchcraft explosion took place. But who can doubt that it was from him that the family had learned to despise and to resist the base superstition; or that Bridget Bishop, whose house he rented, as Mr. Upham tells me, the first person hanged in the time of the delusion, would have found an efficient protector in her tenant, had he been living, to head the opposition of his family to the misguided clergymen and magistrates?

I cannot doubt that our early physicians brought with them many Old-World medical superstitions, and I have no question that they were more or less involved in the prevailing errors of the community in which they lived. But, on the whole, their record is a clean one, so far as we can get at it; and where it is questionable we must remember that there must have been many little-educated persons among them; and that all must have felt, to some extent, the influence of those sincere and devoted but unsafe men, the physic-practising clergymen, who often used spiritual means as a substitute for temporal ones, who looked upon a hysteric patient as possessed by the devil, and treated a fractured skull by prayers and plasters, following the advice of a ruling elder in opposition to the “unanimous opinion of seven surgeons.”

To what results the union of the two professions was liable to lead, may be seen by the example of a learned and famous person, who has left on record the product of his labors in the double capacity of clergyman and physician.

I have had the privilege of examining a manuscript of Cotton Mather’s relating to medicine, by the kindness of the librarian of the American Antiquarian Society, to which society it belongs. A brief notice of this curious document may prove not uninteresting.

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It is entitled "The Angel of Bethesda: an Essay upon the Common Maladies of Mankind, offering, first, the sentiments of Piety," *etc.*, *etc.*, and "a collection of plain but potent and Approved *remedies* for the Maladies." There are sixty-six "Capsula's," as he calls them, or chapters, in his table of contents; of which, five—from the fifteenth to the nineteenth, inclusive—are missing. This is a most unfortunate loss, as the eighteenth capsula treated of agues, and we could have learned from it something of their degree of frequency in this part of New England. There is no date to the manuscript; which, however, refers to a case observed Nov. 14, 1724.

The divine takes precedence of the physician in this extraordinary production. He begins by preaching a sermon at his unfortunate patient. Having thrown him into a cold sweat by his spiritual sudorific, he attacks him with his material remedies, which are often quite as unpalatable. The simple and cleanly practice of Sydenham, with whose works he was acquainted, seems to have been thrown away upon him. Everything he could find mentioned in the seventy or eighty authors he cites, all that the old women of both sexes had ever told him of, gets into his text, or squeezes itself into his margin.

Evolving disease out of sin, he hates it, one would say, as he hates its cause, and would drive it out of the body with all noisome appliances. "Sickness is in Fact Flagellum Dei pro peccatis mundi." So saying, he encourages the young mother whose babe is wasting away upon her breast with these reflections:

"Think; oh the grievous Effects of Sin! This wretched Infant has not arrived unto years of sense enough, to sin after the similitude of the transgression committed by Adam. Nevertheless the Transgression of Adam, who had all mankind Foederally, yea, Naturally, in him, has involved this Infant in the guilt of it. And the poison of the old serpent, which infected Adam when he fell into his Transgression, by hearkening to the Tempter, has corrupted all mankind, and is a seed unto such diseases as this Infant is now laboring under. Lord, what are we, and what are our children, but a Generation of Vipers?"

Many of his remedies are at least harmless, but his pedantry and utter want of judgment betray themselves everywhere. He piles his prescriptions one upon another, without the least discrimination. He is run away with by all sorts of fancies and superstitions. He prescribes euphrasia, eye-bright, for disease of the eyes; appealing confidently to the strange old doctrine of signatures, which inferred its use from the resemblance of its flower to the organ of vision. For the scattering of wens, the efficacy of a Dead Hand has been out of measure wonderful. But when he once comes to the odious class of remedies, he revels in them like a scarabeus. This allusion will bring us quite near enough to the inconceivable abominations with which he proposed to outrage the sinful stomachs of the unhappy confederates and accomplices of Adam.

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It is well that the treatise was never printed, yet there are passages in it worth preserving. He speaks of some remedies which have since become more universally known:

“Among the plants of our soyl, Sir William Temple singles out Five [Six] as being of the greatest virtue and most friendly to health: and his favorite plants, Sage, Rue, Saffron, Alehoof, Garlick, and Elder.”

“But these Five [Six] plants may admitt of some competitors. The QUINQUINA—How celebrated: Immoderately, Hyperbolically celebrated!”

Of Ipecacuanha, he says,—“This is now in its reign; the most fashionable vomit.”

“I am not sorry that antimonial emetics begin to be disused.”

He quotes “Mr. Lock” as recommending red poppy-water and abstinence from flesh as often useful in children’s diseases.

One of his “Capsula’s” is devoted to the animalcular origin of diseases, at the end of which he says, speaking of remedies for this supposed source of our distempers:

“Mercury we know thee: But we are afraid thou wilt kill us too, if we employ thee to kill them that kill us.

“And yett, for the cleansing of the small Blood Vessels, and making way for the free circulation of the Blood and Lymph—there is nothing like Mercurial Deobstruents.”

From this we learn that mercury was already in common use, and the subject of the same popular prejudice as in our own time.

His poetical turn shows itself here and there:

“O Nightingale, with a Thorn at thy Breast; Under the trouble of a Cough, what can be more proper than such thoughts as these?”...

If there is pathos in this, there is bathos in his apostrophe to the millipede, beginning “Poor sowbug!” and eulogizing the healing virtues of that odious little beast; of which he tells us to take “half a pound, putt ’em alive into a quart or two of wine,” with saffron and other drugs, and take two ounces twice a day.

The “Capsula” entitled “Nishmath Chajim” was printed in 1722, at New London, and is in the possession of our own Society. He means, by these words, something like the Archxus of Van Helmont, of which he discourses in a style wonderfully resembling that of Mr. Jenkinson in the “Vicar of Wakefield.” “Many of the Ancients thought there was much of a Real History in the Parable, and their Opinion was that there is, DIAPHORA

Kata tas MORPHAS, A Distinction (and so a Resemblance) of men as to their Shapes after Death.” And so on, with Ireaeus, Tertullian, Thespesius, and “the *Ta tone* PSEUCONE CROMATA,” in the place of “Sanconiathon, Manetho, Berosus,” and “Anarchon ara kai ateleutaion to pan.”

One other passage deserves notice, as it relates to the single medical suggestion which does honor to Cotton Mather’s memory. It does not appear that he availed himself of the information which he says, he obtained from his slave, for such I suppose he was.

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In his appendix to “Variolae Triumphatae,” he says,—

“There has been a wonderful practice lately used in several parts of the world, which indeed is not yet become common in our nation.

“I was first informed of it by a Garamantee servant of my own, long before I knew that any Europeans or Asiaticks had the least acquaintance with it, and some years before I was enriched with the communications of the learned Foreigners, whose accounts I found agreeing with what I received of my servant, when he shewed me the Scar of the Wound made for the operation; and said, That no person ever died of the smallpox, in their country, that had the courage to use it.

“I have since met with a considerable Number of these Africans, who all agree in one story; That in their country grandy-many dy of the small-pox: But now they learn this way: people take juice of smallpox and cutty-skin and put in a Drop; then by’nd by a little sicky, sicky: then very few little things like small-pox; and nobody dy of it; and nobody have small-pox any more. Thus, in Africa, where the poor creatures dy of the smallpox like Rotten Sheep, a merciful God has taught them an Infallible preservative. ’T is a common practice, and is attended with a constant success.”

What has come down to us of the first century of medical practice, in the hands of Winthrop and Oliver, is comparatively simple and reasonable. I suspect that the conditions of rude, stern life, in which the colonists found themselves in the wilderness, took the nonsense out of them, as the exigencies of a campaign did out of our physicians and surgeons in the late war. Good food and enough of it, pure air and water, cleanliness, good attendance, an anaesthetic, an opiate, a stimulant, quinine, and two or three common drugs, proved to be the marrow of medical treatment; and the fopperies of the pharmacopoeia went the way of embroidered shirts and white kid gloves and malacca joints, in their time of need. “Good wine is the best cordiall for her,” said Governor John Winthrop, Junior, to Samuel Symonds, speaking of that gentleman’s wife,—just as Sydenham, instead of physic, once ordered a roast chicken and a pint of canary for his patient in male hysterics.

But the profession of medicine never could reach its full development until it became entirely separated from that of divinity. The spiritual guide, the consoler in affliction, the confessor who is admitted into the secrets of our souls, has his own noble sphere of duties; but the healer of men must confine himself solely to the revelations of God in nature, as he sees their miracles with his own eyes. No doctrine of prayer or special providence is to be his excuse for not looking straight at secondary causes, and acting, exactly so far as experience justifies him, as if he were himself the divine agent which antiquity fabled him to be. While pious men were praying—humbly, sincerely, rightly, according to their knowledge—over

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the endless succession of little children dying of spasms in the great Dublin Hospital, a sagacious physician knocked some holes in the walls of the ward, let God's blessed air in on the little creatures, and so had already saved in that single hospital, as it was soberly calculated thirty years ago, more than sixteen thousand lives of these infant heirs of immortality. [Collins's *Midwifery*, p. 312. Published by order of the Massachusetts Medical Society. Boston, 1841.]

Let it be, if you will, that the wise inspiration of the physician was granted in virtue of the clergyman's supplications. Still, the habit of dealing with things seen generates another kind of knowledge, and another way of thought, from that of dealing with things unseen; which knowledge and way of thought are special means granted by Providence, and to be thankfully accepted.

The mediaeval ecclesiastics expressed a great truth in that saying, so often quoted, as carrying a reproach with it: "Ubi tres medici, duo athei,"—"Where there are three physicians, there are two atheists."

It was true then, it is true to-day, that the physician very commonly, if not very generally, denies and repudiates the deity of ecclesiastical commerce. The Being whom Ambroise Pare meant when he spoke those memorable words, which you may read over the professor's chair in the French School of Medicine, "Te le pensay, et Dieu le guarit," "I dressed his wound, and God healed it,"—is a different being from the God that scholastic theologians have projected from their consciousness, or shaped even from the sacred pages which have proved so plastic in their hands. He is a God who never leaves himself without witness, who repenteth him of the evil, who never allows a disease or an injury, compatible with the enjoyment of life, to take its course without establishing an effort, limited by certain fixed conditions, it is true, but an effort, always, to restore the broken body or the shattered mind. In the perpetual presence of this great Healing Agent, who stays the bleeding of wounds, who knits the fractured bone, who expels the splinter by a gentle natural process, who walls in the inflammation that might involve the vital organs, who draws a cordon to separate the dead part from the living, who sends his three natural anaesthetics to the over-tasked frame in due order, according to its need,—sleep, fainting, death; in this perpetual presence, it is doubtless hard for the physician to realize the theological fact of a vast and permanent sphere of the universe, where no organ finds itself in its natural medium, where no wound heals kindly, where the executive has abrogated the pardoning power, and mercy forgets its errand; where the omnipotent is unfelt save in malignant agencies, and the omnipresent is unseen and unrepresented; hard to accept the God of Dante's "Inferno," and of Bunyan's caged lunatic. If this is atheism, call three, instead of two of the trio, atheists, and it will probably come nearer the truth.

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I am not disposed to deny the occasional injurious effect of the materializing influences to which the physician is subjected. A spiritual guild is absolutely necessary to keep him, to keep us all, from becoming the “fingering slaves” that Wordsworth treats with such shrivelling scorn. But it is well that the two callings have been separated, and it is fitting that they remain apart. In settling the affairs of the late concern, I am afraid our good friends remain a little in our debt. We lent them our physician Michael Servetus in fair condition, and they returned him so damaged by fire as to be quite useless for our purposes. Their Reverend Samuel Willard wrote us a not over-wise report of a case of hysteria; and our Jean Astruc gave them (if we may trust Dr. Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible) the first discerning criticism on the authorship of the Pentateuch. Our John Locke enlightened them with his letters concerning toleration; and their Cotton Mather obscured our twilight with his “Nishmath Chajim.”

Yet we must remember that the name of Basil Valentine, the monk, is associated with whatever good and harm we can ascribe to antimony; and that the most remarkable of our specifics long bore the name of “Jesuit’s Bark,” from an old legend connected with its introduction. “Frere Jacques,” who taught the lithotomists of Paris, owes his ecclesiastical title to courtesy, as he did not belong to a religious order.

Medical science, and especially the study of mental disease, is destined, I believe, to react to much greater advantage on the theology of the future than theology has acted on medicine in the past. The liberal spirit very generally prevailing in both professions, and the good understanding between their most enlightened members, promise well for the future of both in a community which holds every point of human belief, every institution in human hands, and every word written in a human dialect, open to free discussion today, to-morrow, and to the end of time. Whether the world at large will ever be cured of trusting to specifics as a substitute for observing the laws of health, and to mechanical or intellectual formula as a substitute for character, may admit of question. Quackery and idolatry are all but immortal.

We can find most of the old beliefs alive amongst us to-day, only having changed their dresses and the social spheres in which they thrive. We think the quarrels of Galenists and chemists belong to the past, forgetting that Thomsonism has its numerous apostles in our community; that it is common to see remedies vaunted as purely vegetable, and that the prejudice against “mineral poisons,” especially mercury, is as strong in many quarters now as it was at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Names are only air, and blow away with a change of wind; but beliefs are rooted in human wants and weakness, and die hard. The oaks of Dodona are prostrate, and the shrine of Delphi is desolate; but the Pythoness

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and the Sibyl may be consulted in Lowell Street for a very moderate compensation. Nostradamus and Lilly seem impossible in our time; but we have seen the advertisements of an astrologer in our Boston papers year after year, which seems to imply that he found believers and patrons. You smiled when I related Sir Kenelm Digby's prescription with the live eel in it; but if each of you were to empty his or her pockets, would there not roll out, from more than one of them, a horse-chestnut, carried about as a cure for rheumatism? The brazen head of Roger Bacon is mute; but is not "Planchette" uttering her responses in a hundred houses of this city? We think of palmistry or chiromancy as belonging to the days of Albertus Magnus, or, if existing in our time, as given over to the gypsies; but a very distinguished person has recently shown me the line of life, and the line of fortune, on the palm of his hand, with a seeming confidence in the sanguine predictions of his career which had been drawn from them. What shall we say of the plausible and well-dressed charlatans of our own time, who trade in false pretences, like Nicholas Knapp of old, but without any fear of being fined or whipped; or of the many follies and inanities, imposing on the credulous part of the community, each of them gaping with eager, open mouth for a gratuitous advertisement by the mention of its foolish name in any respectable connection?

I turn from this less pleasing aspect of the common intelligence which renders such follies possible, to close the honorable record of the medical profession in this, our ancient Commonwealth.

We have seen it in the first century divided among clergymen, magistrates, and regular practitioners; yet, on the whole, for the time, and under the circumstances, respectable, except where it invoked supernatural agencies to account for natural phenomena.

In the second century it simplified its practice, educated many intelligent practitioners, and began the work of organizing for concerted action, and for medical teaching.

In this, our own century, it has built hospitals, perfected and multiplied its associations and educational institutions, enlarged and created museums, and challenged a place in the world of science by its literature.

In reviewing the whole course of its history we read a long list of honored names, and a precious record written in private memories, in public charities, in permanent contributions to medical science, in generous sacrifices for the country. We can point to our capital as the port of entry for the New World of the great medical discoveries of two successive centuries, and we can claim for it the triumph over the most dreaded foe that assails the human body,—a triumph which the annals of the race can hardly match in three thousand years of medical history.

THE YOUNG PRACTITIONER

[A Valedictory Address delivered to the Graduating Class of the Bellevue Hospital College, March 2, 1871.]

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The occasion which calls us together reminds us not a little of that other ceremony which unites a man and woman for life. The banns have already been pronounced which have wedded our young friends to the profession of their choice. It remains only to address to them some friendly words of cheering counsel, and to bestow upon them the parting benediction.

This is not the time for rhetorical display or ambitious eloquence. We must forget ourselves, and think only of them. To us it is an occasion; to them it is an epoch. The spectators at the wedding look curiously at the bride and bridegroom; at the bridal veil, the orange-flower garland, the giving and receiving of the ring; they listen for the tremulous "I will," and wonder what are the mysterious syllables the clergyman whispers in the ear of the married maiden. But to the newly-wedded pair what meaning in those words, "for better, for worse," "in sickness and in health," "till death us do part!" To the father, to the mother, who know too well how often the deadly nightshade is interwoven with the wreath of orange-blossoms, how empty the pageant, how momentous the reality!

You will not wonder that I address myself chiefly to those who are just leaving academic life for the sterner struggle and the larger tasks of matured and instructed manhood. The hour belongs to them; if others find patience to listen, they will kindly remember that, after all, they are but as the spectators at the wedding, and that the priest is thinking less of them than of their friends who are kneeling at the altar.

I speak more directly to you, then, gentlemen of the graduating class. The days of your education, as pupils of trained instructors, are over. Your first harvest is all garnered. Henceforth you are to be sowers as well as reapers, and your field is the world. How does your knowledge stand to-day? What have you gained as a permanent possession? What must you expect to forget? What remains for you yet to learn? These are questions which it may interest you to consider.

There is another question which must force itself on the thoughts of many among you: "How am I to obtain patients and to keep their confidence?" You have chosen a laborious calling, and made many sacrifices to fit yourselves for its successful pursuit. You wish to be employed that you may be useful, and that you may receive the reward of your industry. I would take advantage of these most receptive moments to give you some hints which may help you to realize your hopes and expectations. Such is the outline of the familiar talk I shall offer you.

Your acquaintance with some of the accessory branches is probably greater now than it will be in a year from now,—much greater than it will be ten years from now. The progress of knowledge, it may be feared, or hoped, will have outrun the text-books in which you studied these branches. Chemistry, for instance, is very apt to spoil on one's hands. "Nous avons change tout cela" might serve as the standing motto of many of

our manuals. Science is a great traveller, and wears her shoes out pretty fast, as might be expected.

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You are now fresh from the lecture-room and the laboratory. You can pass an examination in anatomy, physiology, chemistry, materia medica, which the men in large practice all around you would find a more potent sudorific than any in the Pharmacopoeia. These masters of the art of healing were once as ready with their answers as you are now, but they have got rid of a great deal of the less immediately practical part of their acquisitions, and you must undergo the same depleting process. Hard work will train it off, as sharp exercise trains off the fat of a prize-fighter.

Yet, pause a moment before you infer that your teachers must have been in fault when they furnished you with mental stores not directly convertible to practical purposes, and likely in a few years to lose their place in your memory. All systematic knowledge involves much that is not practical, yet it is the only kind of knowledge which satisfies the mind, and systematic study proves, in the long-run, the easiest way of acquiring and retaining facts which are practical. There are many things which we can afford to forget, which yet it was well to learn. Your mental condition is not the same as if you had never known what you now try in vain to recall. There is a perpetual metempsychosis of thought, and the knowledge of to-day finds a soil in the forgotten facts of yesterday. You cannot see anything in the new season of the guano you placed last year about the roots of your climbing plants, but it is blushing and breathing fragrance in your trellised roses; it has scaled your porch in the bee-haunted honey-suckle; it has found its way where the ivy is green; it is gone where the woodbine expands its luxuriant foliage.

Your diploma seems very broad to-day with your list of accomplishments, but it begins to shrink from this hour like the *Peau de Chagrin* of Balzac's story. Do not worry about it, for all the while there will be making out for you an ampler and fairer parchment, signed by old Father Time himself as President of that great University in which experience is the one perpetual and all-sufficient professor.

Your present plethora of acquirements will soon cure itself. Knowledge that is not wanted dies out like the eyes of the fishes of the Mammoth Cave. When you come to handle life and death as your daily business, your memory will of itself bid good-by to such inmates as the well-known foramina of the sphenoid bone and the familiar oxides of methyl-ethylamyl-phenyl-ammonium. Be thankful that you have once known them, and remember that even the learned ignorance of a nomenclature is something to have mastered, and may furnish pegs to hang facts upon which would otherwise have strewn the floor of memory in loose disorder.

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But your education has, after all, been very largely practical. You have studied medicine and surgery, not chiefly in books, but at the bedside and in the operating amphitheatre. It is the special advantage of large cities that they afford the opportunity of seeing a great deal of disease in a short space of time, and of seeing many cases of the same kind of disease brought together. Let us not be unjust to the claims of the schools remote from the larger centres of population. Who among us has taught better than Nathan Smith, better than Elisha Bartlett? who teaches better than some of our living contemporaries who divide their time between city and country schools? I am afraid we do not always do justice to our country brethren, whose merits are less conspicuously exhibited than those of the great city physicians and surgeons, such especially as have charge of large hospitals. There are modest practitioners living in remote rural districts who are gifted by nature with such sagacity and wisdom, trained so well in what is most essential to the practice of their art, taught so thoroughly by varied experience, forced to such manly self-reliance by their comparative isolation, that, from converse with them alone, from riding with them on their long rounds as they pass from village to village, from talking over cases with them, putting up their prescriptions, watching their expedients, listening to their cautions, marking the event of their predictions, hearing them tell of their mistakes, and now and then glory a little in the detection of another's blunder, a young man would find himself better fitted for his real work than many who have followed long courses of lectures and passed a showy examination. But the young man is exceptionally fortunate who enjoys the intimacy of such a teacher. And it must be confessed that the great hospitals, infirmaries, and dispensaries of large cities, where men of well-sifted reputations are in constant attendance, are the true centres of medical education. No students, I believe, are more thoroughly aware of this than those who have graduated at this institution. Here, as in all our larger city schools, the greatest pains are taken to teach things as well as names. You have entered into the inheritance of a vast amount of transmitted skill and wisdom, which you have taken, warm, as it were, with the life of your well-schooled instructors. You have not learned all that art has to teach you, but you are safer practitioners to-day than were many of those whose names we hardly mention without a genuflection. I had rather be cared for in a fever by the best-taught among you than by the renowned Fernelius or the illustrious Boerhaave, could they come back to us from that better world where there are no physicians needed, and, if the old adage can be trusted, not many within call. I had rather have one of you exercise his surgical skill upon me than find myself in the hands of a resuscitated Fabricius Hildanus, or even of a wise Ambroise Pare, revisiting earth in the light of the nineteenth century.

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You will not accuse me of underrating your accomplishments. You know what to do for a child in a fit, for an alderman in an apoplexy, for a girl that has fainted, for a woman in hysterics, for a leg that is broken, for an arm that is out of joint, for fevers of every color, for the sailor's rheumatism, and the tailor's cachexy. In fact you do really know so much at this very hour, that nothing but the searching test of time can fully teach you the limitations of your knowledge.

Of some of these you will permit me to remind you. You will never have outgrown the possibility of new acquisitions, for Nature is endless in her variety. But even the knowledge which you may be said to possess will be a different thing after long habit has made it a part of your existence. The *tactus eruditus* extends to the mind as well as to the finger-ends. Experience means the knowledge gained by habitual trial, and an expert is one who has been in the habit of trying. This is the kind of knowledge that made Ulysses wise in the ways of men. Many cities had he seen, and known the minds of those who dwelt in them. This knowledge it was that Chaucer's Shipman brought home with him from the sea—

"In many a tempest had his berd be shake."

This is the knowledge we place most confidence in, in the practical affairs of life.

Our training has two stages. The first stage deals with our intelligence, which takes the idea of what is to be done with the most charming ease and readiness. Let it be a game of billiards, for instance, which the marker is going to teach us. We have nothing to do but to make this ball glance from that ball and hit that other ball, and to knock that ball with this ball into a certain caecal sacculus or diverticulum which our professional friend calls a pocket. Nothing can be clearer; it is as easy as "playing upon this pipe," for which Hamlet gives Guildenstern such lucid directions. But this intelligent Me, who steps forward as the senior partner in our dual personality, turns out to be a terrible bungler. He misses those glancing hits which the hard-featured young professional person calls "carroms," and insists on pocketing his own ball instead of the other one.

It is the unintelligent Me, stupid as an idiot, that has to try a thing a thousand times before he can do it, and then never knows how he does it, that at last does it well. We have to educate ourselves through the pretentious claims of intellect, into the humble accuracy of instinct, and we end at last by acquiring the dexterity, the perfection, the certainty, which those masters of arts, the bee and the spider, inherit from Nature.

Book-knowledge, lecture-knowledge, examination-knowledge, are all in the brain. But work-knowledge is not only in the brain, it is in the senses, in the muscles, in the ganglia of the sympathetic nerves,—all over the man, as one may say, as instinct seems diffused through every part of those lower animals that have no such distinct organ as a brain. See a skilful surgeon handle a broken limb; see a wise old physician smile away a case that looks to a novice as if the sexton would soon be sent for; mark what a large

experience has done for those who were fitted to profit by it, and you will feel convinced that, much as you know, something is still left for you to learn.

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May I venture to contrast youth and experience in medical practice, something in the way the man painted the lion, that is, the lion under?

The young man knows the rules, but the old man knows-the exceptions. The young man knows his patient, but the old man knows also his patient's family, dead and alive, up and down for generations. He can tell beforehand what diseases their unborn children will be subject to, what they will die of if they live long enough, and whether they had better live at all, or remain unrealized possibilities, as belonging to a stock not worth being perpetuated. The young man feels uneasy if he is not continually doing something to stir up his patient's internal arrangements. The old man takes things more quietly, and is much more willing to let well enough alone: All these superiorities, if such they are, you must wait for time to bring you. In the meanwhile (if we will let the lion be uppermost for a moment), the young man's senses are quicker than those of his older rival. His education in all the accessory branches is more recent, and therefore nearer the existing condition of knowledge. He finds it easier than his seniors to accept the improvements which every year is bringing forward. New ideas build their nests in young men's brains. "Revolutions are not made by men in spectacles," as I once heard it remarked, and the first whispers of a new truth are not caught by those who begin to feel the need of an ear-trumpet. Granting all these advantages to the young man, he ought, nevertheless, to go on improving, on the whole, as a medical practitioner, with every year, until he has ripened into a well-mellowed maturity. But, to improve, he must be good for something at the start. If you ship a poor cask of wine to India and back, if you keep it a half a century, it only grows thinner and sharper.

You are soon to enter into relations with the public, to expend your skill and knowledge for its benefit, and find your support in the rewards of your labor. What kind of a constituency is this which is to look to you as its authorized champions in the struggle of life against its numerous enemies?

In the first place, the persons who seek the aid of the physician are very honest and sincere in their wish to get rid of their complaints, and, generally speaking, to live as long as they can. However attractively the future is painted to them, they are attached to the planet with which they are already acquainted. They are addicted to the daily use of this empirical and unchemical mixture which we call air; and would hold on to it as a tippler does to his alcoholic drinks. There is nothing men will not do, there is nothing they have not done, to recover their health and save their lives. They have submitted to be half-drowned in water, and half-choked with gases, to be buried up to their chins in earth, to be seared with hot irons like galley-slaves, to be crimped with knives, like cod-fish, to have needles thrust into their flesh, and bonfires kindled on their skin, to swallow all sorts of abominations, and to pay for all this, as if to be singed and scalded were a costly privilege, as if blisters were a blessing, and leeches were a luxury. What more can be asked to prove their honesty and sincerity?

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This same community is very intelligent with respect to a great many subjects-commerce, mechanics, manufactures, politics. But with regard to medicine it is hopelessly ignorant and never finds it out. I do not know that it is any worse in this country than in Great Britain, where Mr. Huxley speaks very freely of "the utter ignorance of the simplest laws of their own animal life, which prevails among even the most highly educated persons." And Cullen said before him "Neither the acutest genius nor the soundest judgment will avail in judging of a particular science, in regard to which they have not been exercised. I have been obliged to please my patients sometimes with reasons, and I have found that any will pass, even with able divines and acute lawyers; the same will pass with the husbands as with the wives." If the community could only be made aware of its own utter ignorance, and incompetence to form opinions on medical subjects, difficult enough to those who give their lives to the study of them, the practitioner would have an easier task. But it will form opinions of its own, it cannot help it, and we cannot blame it, even though we know how slight and deceptive are their foundations.

This is the way it happens: Every grown-up person has either been ill himself or had a friend suffer from illness, from which he has recovered. Every sick person has done something or other by somebody's advice, or of his own accord, a little before getting better. There is an irresistible tendency to associate the thing done, and the improvement which followed it, as cause and effect. This is the great source of fallacy in medical practice. But the physician has some chance of correcting his hasty inference. He thinks his prescription cured a single case of a particular complaint; he tries it in twenty similar cases without effect, and sets down the first as probably nothing more than a coincidence. The unprofessional experimenter or observer has no large experience to correct his hasty generalization. He wants to believe that the means he employed effected his cure. He feels grateful to the person who advised it, he loves to praise the pill or potion which helped him, and he has a kind of monumental pride in himself as a living testimony to its efficacy. So it is that you will find the community in which you live, be it in town or country, full of brands plucked from the burning, as they believe, by some agency which, with your better training, you feel reasonably confident had nothing to do with it. Their disease went out of itself, and the stream from the medical fire-annihilator had never even touched it.

You cannot and need not expect to disturb the public in the possession of its medical superstitions. A man's ignorance is as much his private property, and as precious in his own eyes, as his family Bible. You have only to open your own Bible at the ninth chapter of St. John's Gospel, and you will find that the logic of a restored patient was very simple then, as it is now, and very hard to deal with. My clerical friends will forgive me for poaching on their sacred territory, in return for an occasional raid upon the medical domain of which they have now and then been accused.

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A blind man was said to have been restored to sight by a young person whom the learned doctors of the Jewish law considered a sinner, and, as such, very unlikely to have been endowed with a divine gift of healing. They visited the patient repeatedly, and evidently teased him with their questions about the treatment, and their insinuations about the young man, until he lost his temper. At last he turned sharply upon them: "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."

This is the answer that always has been and always will be given by most persons when they find themselves getting well after doing anything, no matter what,—recommended by anybody, no matter whom. Lord Bacon, Robert Boyle, Bishop Berkeley, all put their faith in panaceas which we should laugh to scorn. They had seen people get well after using them. Are we any wiser than those great men? Two years ago, in a lecture before the Massachusetts Historical Society, I mentioned this recipe of Sir Kenelm Digby for fever and ague: Pare the patient's nails; put the parings in a little bag, and hang the bag round the neck of a live eel, and place him in a tub of water. The eel will die, and the patient will recover.

Referring to this prescription in the course of the same lecture, I said: "You smiled when I related Sir Kenehn Digby's prescription, with the live eel in it; but if each of you were to empty his or her pockets, would there not roll out, from more than one of them, a horse-chestnut, carried about as a cure for rheumatism?" Nobody saw fit to empty his or her pockets, and my question brought no response. But two months ago I was in a company of educated persons, college graduates every one of them, when a gentleman, well known in our community, a man of superior ability and strong common-sense, on the occasion of some talk arising about rheumatism, took a couple of very shiny horse-chestnuts from his breeches-pocket, and laid them on the table, telling us how, having suffered from the complaint in question, he had, by the advice of a friend, procured these two horse-chestnuts on a certain time a year or more ago, and carried them about him ever since; from which very day he had been entirely free from rheumatism.

This argument, from what looks like cause and effect, whether it be so or not, is what you will have to meet wherever you go, and you need not think you can answer it. In the natural course of things some thousands of persons must be getting well or better of slight attacks of colds, of rheumatic pains, every week, in this city alone. Hundreds of them do something or other in the way of remedy, by medical or other advice, or of their own motion, and the last thing they do gets the credit of the recovery. Think what a crop of remedies this must furnish, if it were all harvested!

Experience has taught, or will teach you, that most of the wonderful stories patients and others tell of sudden and signal cures are like Owen Glendower's story of the portents that announced his birth. The earth shook at your nativity, did it? Very likely, and

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“So it would have done,
At the same season, if your mother’s cat
Had kittened, though yourself had ne’er been born.”

You must listen more meekly than Hotspur did to the babbling Welshman, for ignorance is a solemn and sacred fact, and, like infancy, which it resembles, should be respected. Once in a while you will have a patient of sense, born with the gift of observation, from whom you may learn something. When you find yourself in the presence of one who is fertile of medical opinions, and affluent in stories of marvellous cures,—of a member of Congress whose name figures in certificates to the value of patent medicines, of a voluble dame who discourses on the miracles she has wrought or seen wrought with the little jokers of the sugar-of-milk globule-box, take out your watch and count the pulse; also note the time of day, and charge the price of a visit for every extra fifteen, or, if you are not very busy, every twenty minutes. In this way you will turn what seems a serious dispensation into a double blessing, for this class of patients loves dearly to talk, and it does them a deal of good, and you feel as if you had earned your money by the dose you have taken, quite as honestly as by any dose you may have ordered.

You must take the community just as it is, and make the best of it. You wish to obtain its confidence; there is a short rule for doing this which you will find useful,—deserve it. But, to deserve it in full measure, you must unite many excellences, natural and acquired.

As the basis of all the rest, you must have all those traits of character which fit you to enter into the most intimate and confidential relations with the families of which you are the privileged friend and counsellor. Medical Christianity, if I may use such a term, is of very early date. By the oath of Hippocrates, the practitioner of ancient times bound himself to enter his patient’s house with the sole purpose of doing him good, and so to conduct himself as to avoid the very appearance of evil. Let the physician of to-day begin by coming up to this standard, and add to it all the more recently discovered virtues and graces.

A certain amount of natural ability is requisite to make you a good physician, but by no means that disproportionate development of some special faculty which goes by the name of genius. A just balance of the mental powers is a great deal more likely to be useful than any single talent, even were it the power of observation; in excess. For a mere observer is liable to be too fond of facts for their own sake, so that, if he told the real truth, he would confess that he takes more pleasure in a post-mortem examination which shows him what was the matter with a patient, than in a case which insists on getting well and leaving him in the dark as to its nature. Far more likely to interfere with the sound practical balance of the mind is that speculative, theoretical tendency which has made so many men noted in their day, whose fame has passed away with their dissolving theories. Read Dr. Bartlett’s comparison of the famous Benjamin Rush with

his modest fellow-townsmen Dr. William Currie, and see the dangers into which a passion for grandiose generalizations betrayed a man of many admirable qualities.

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I warn you against all ambitious aspirations outside of your profession. Medicine is the most difficult of sciences and the most laborious of arts. It will task all your powers of body and mind if you are faithful to it. Do not dabble in the muddy sewer of politics, nor linger by the enchanted streams of literature, nor dig in far-off fields for the hidden waters of alien sciences. The great practitioners are generally those who concentrate all their powers on their business. If there are here and there brilliant exceptions, it is only in virtue of extraordinary gifts, and industry to which very few are equal.

To get business a man must really want it; and do you suppose that when you are in the middle of a heated caucus, or half-way through a delicate analysis, or in the spasm of an unfinished ode, your eyes rolling in the fine frenzy of poetical composition, you want to be called to a teething infant, or an ancient person groaning under the griefs of a lumbago? I think I have known more than one young man whose doctor's sign proclaimed his readiness to serve mankind in that capacity, but who hated the sound of a patient's knock, and as he sat with his book or his microscope, felt exactly as the old party expressed himself in my friend Mr. Brownell's poem—

“All I axes is, let me alone.”

The community soon finds out whether you are in earnest, and really mean business, or whether you are one of those diplomaed dilettanti who like the amusement of quasi medical studies, but have no idea of wasting their precious time in putting their knowledge in practice for the benefit of their suffering fellow-creatures.

The public is a very incompetent judge of your skill and knowledge, but it gives its confidence most readily to those who stand well with their professional brethren, whom they call upon when they themselves or their families are sick, whom they choose to honorable offices, whose writings and teachings they hold in esteem. A man may be much valued by the profession and yet have defects which prevent his becoming a favorite practitioner, but no popularity can be depended upon as permanent which is not sanctioned by the judgment of professional experts, and with these you will always stand on your substantial merits.

What shall I say of the personal habits you must form if you wish for success? Temperance is first upon the list. Intemperance in a physician partakes of the guilt of homicide, for the muddled brain may easily make a fatal blunder in a prescription and the unsteady hand transfix an artery in an operation. Tippling doctors have been too common in the history of medicine. Paracelsus was a sot, Radcliffe was much too fond of his glass, and Dr. James Hurlbut of Wethersfield, Connecticut, a famous man in his time, used to drink a square bottle of rum a day, with a corresponding allowance of opium to help steady his nerves. We commonly speak of a man as being the worse for liquor, but I was asking an Irish laborer one day about his doctor, who, as he said, was somewhat given to drink. “I like him best when he's a little that way,” he said; “then I

can spake to him." I pitied the poor patient who could not venture to allude to his colic or his pleurisy until his physician was tipsy.

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There are personal habits of less gravity than the one I have mentioned which it is well to guard against, or, if they are formed, to relinquish. A man who may be called at a moment's warning into the fragrant boudoir of suffering loveliness should not unsweeten its atmosphere with reminiscences of extinguished meerschaums. He should remember that the sick are sensitive and fastidious, that they love the sweet odors and the pure tints of flowers, and if his presence is not like the breath of the rose, if his hands are not like the leaf of the lily, his visit may be unwelcome, and if he looks behind him he may see a window thrown open after he has left the sick-chamber. I remember too well the old doctor who sometimes came to help me through those inward griefs to which childhood is liable. "Far off his coming"—shall I say "shone," and finish the Miltonic phrase, or leave the verb to the happy conjectures of my audience? Before him came a soul-subduing whiff of ipecacuanha, and after him lingered a shuddering consciousness of rhubarb. He had lived so much among his medicaments that he had at last become himself a drug, and to have him pass through a sick-chamber was a stronger dose than a conscientious disciple of Hahnemann would think it safe to administer.

Need I remind you of the importance of punctuality in your engagements, and of the worry and distress to patients and their friends which the want of it occasions? One of my old teachers always carried two watches, to make quite sure of being exact, and not only kept his appointments with the regularity of a chronometer, but took great pains to be at his patient's house at the time when he had reason to believe he was expected, even if no express appointment was made. It is a good rule; if you call too early, my lady's hair may not be so smooth as could be wished, and, if you keep her waiting too long, her hair may be smooth, but her temper otherwise.

You will remember, of course, always to get the weather-gage of your patient. I mean, to place him so that the light falls on his face and not on yours. It is a kind of, ocular duel that is about to take place between you; you are going to look through his features into his pulmonary and hepatic and other internal machinery, and he is going to look into yours quite as sharply to see what you think about his probabilities for time or eternity.

No matter how hard he stares at your countenance, he should never be able to read his fate in it. It should be cheerful as long as there is hope, and serene in its gravity when nothing is left but resignation. The face of a physician, like that of a diplomatist, should be impenetrable. Nature is a benevolent old hypocrite; she cheats the sick and the dying with illusions better than any anodynes. If there are cogent reasons why a patient should be undeceived, do it deliberately and advisedly, but do not betray your apprehensions through your tell-tale features.

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We had a physician in our city whose smile was commonly reckoned as being worth five thousand dollars a year to him, in the days, too, of moderate incomes. You cannot put on such a smile as that any more than you can get sunshine without sun; there was a tranquil and kindly nature under it that irradiated the pleasant face it made one happier to meet on his daily rounds. But you can cultivate the disposition, and it will work its way through to the surface, nay, more,—you can try to wear a quiet and encouraging look, and it will react on your disposition and make you like what you seem to be, or at least bring you nearer to its own likeness.

Your patient has no more right to all the truth you know than he has to all the medicine in your saddlebags, if you carry that kind of cartridge-box for the ammunition that slays disease. He should get only just so much as is good for him. I have seen a physician examining a patient's chest stop all at once, as he brought out a particular sound with a tap on the collarbone, in the attitude of a pointer who has just come on the scent or sight of a woodcock. You remember the Spartan boy, who, with unmoved countenance, hid the fox that was tearing his vitals beneath his mantle. What he could do in his own suffering you must learn to do for others on whose vital organs disease has fastened its devouring teeth. It is a terrible thing to take away hope, even earthly hope, from a fellow-creature. Be very careful what names you let fall before your patient. He knows what it means when you tell him he has tubercles or Bright's disease, and, if he hears the word carcinoma, he will certainly look it out in a medical dictionary, if he does not interpret its dread significance on the instant. Tell him he has asthmatic symptoms, or a tendency to the gouty diathesis, and he will at once think of all the asthmatic and gouty old patriarchs he has ever heard of, and be comforted. You need not be so cautious in speaking of the health of rich and remote relatives, if he is in the line of succession.

Some shrewd old doctors have a few phrases always on hand for patients that will insist on knowing the pathology of their complaints without the slightest capacity of understanding the scientific explanation. I have known the term "spinal irritation" serve well on such occasions, but I think nothing on the whole has covered so much ground, and meant so little, and given such profound satisfaction to all parties, as the magnificent phrase "congestion of the portal system."

Once more, let me recommend you, as far as possible, to keep your doubts to yourself, and give the patient the benefit of your decision. Firmness, gentle firmness, is absolutely necessary in this and certain other relations. Mr. Rarey with Cruiser, Richard with Lady Ann, Pinel with his crazy people, show what steady nerves can do with the most intractable of animals, the most irresistible of despots, and the most unmanageable of invalids.

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If you cannot acquire and keep the confidence of your patient, it is time for you to give place to some other practitioner who can. If you are wise and diligent, you can establish relations with the best of them which they will find it very hard to break. But, if they wish to employ another person, who, as they think, knows more than you do, do not take it as a personal wrong. A patient believes another man can save his life, can restore him to health, which, as he thinks, you have not the skill to do. No matter whether the patient is right or wrong, it is a great impertinence to think you have any property in him. Your estimate of your own ability is not the question, it is what the patient thinks of it. All your wisdom is to him like the lady's virtue in Raleigh's song:

"If she seem not chaste to me,
What care I how chaste she be?"

What I call a good patient is one who, having found a good physician, sticks to him till he dies. But there are many very good people who are not what I call good patients. I was once requested to call on a lady suffering from nervous and other symptoms. It came out in the preliminary conversational skirmish, half medical, half social, that I was the twenty-sixth member of the faculty into whose arms, professionally speaking, she had successively thrown herself. Not being a believer in such a rapid rotation of scientific crops, I gently deposited the burden, commending it to the care of number twenty-seven, and, him, whoever he might be, to the care of Heaven.

If there happened to be among my audience any person who wished to know on what principles the patient should choose his physician, I should give him these few precepts to think over:

Choose a man who is personally agreeable, for a daily visit from an intelligent, amiable, pleasant, sympathetic person will cost you no more than one from a sloven or a boor, and his presence will do more for you than any prescription the other will order.

Let him be a man of recognized good sense in other matters, and the chance is that he will be sensible as a practitioner.

Let him be a man who stands well with his professional brethren, whom they approve as honest, able, courteous.

Let him be one whose patients are willing to die in his hands, not one whom they go to for trifles, and leave as soon as they are in danger, and who can say, therefore, that he never loses a patient.

Do not leave the ranks of what is called the regular profession, unless you wish to go farther and fare worse, for you may be assured that its members recognize no principle which hinders their accepting any remedial agent proved to be useful, no matter from what quarter it comes. The difficulty is that the stragglers, organized under fantastic



names in pretentious associations, or lurking in solitary dens behind doors left ajar, make no real contributions to the art of healing. When they bring forward a remedial agent like chloral, like the bromide of potassium, like ether, used as an anesthetic, they will find no difficulty in procuring its recognition.

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Some of you will probably be more or less troubled by the pretensions of that parody of mediaeval theology which finds its dogma of hereditary depravity in the doctrine of psora, its miracle of transubstantiation in the mystery of its triturations and dilutions, its church in the people who have mistaken their century, and its priests in those who have mistaken their calling. You can do little with persons who are disposed to accept these curious medical superstitions. The saturation-point of individual minds with reference to evidence, and especially medical evidence, differs, and must always continue to differ, very widely. There are those whose minds are satisfied with the decillionth dilution of a scientific proof. No wonder they believe in the efficacy of a similar attenuation of bryony or pulsatilla. You have no fulcrum you can rest upon to lift an error out of such minds as these, often highly endowed with knowledge and talent, sometimes with genius, but commonly richer in the imaginative than the observing and reasoning faculties.

Let me return once more to the young graduate. Your relations to your professional brethren may be a source of lifelong happiness and growth in knowledge and character, or they may make you wretched and end by leaving you isolated from those who should be your friends and counsellors. The life of a physician becomes ignoble when he suffers himself to feed on petty jealousies and sours his temper in perpetual quarrels. You will be liable to meet an uncomfortable man here and there in the profession,—one who is so fond of being in hot water that it is a wonder all the albumen in his body is not coagulated. There are common barrators among doctors as there are among lawyers, —stirrers up of strife under one pretext and another, but in reality because they like it. They are their own worst enemies, and do themselves a mischief each time they assail their neighbors. In my student days I remember a good deal of this Donnybrook-Fair style of quarrelling, more especially in Paris, where some of the noted surgeons were always at loggerheads, and in one of our lively Western cities. Soon after I had set up an office, I had a trifling experience which may serve to point a moral in this direction. I had placed a lamp behind the glass in the entry to indicate to the passer-by where relief from all curable infirmities was to be sought and found. Its brilliancy attracted the attention of a devious youth, who dashed his fist through the glass and upset my modest luminary. All he got by his vivacious assault was that he left portions of integument from his knuckles upon the glass, had a lame hand, was very easily identified, and had to pay the glazier's bill. The moral is that, if the brilliancy of another's reputation excites your belligerent instincts, it is not worth your while to strike at it, without calculating which of you is likely to suffer most, if you do.

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You may be assured that when an ill-conditioned neighbor is always complaining of a bad taste in his mouth and an evil atmosphere about him, there is something wrong about his own secretions. In such cases there is an alternative regimen of remarkable efficacy: it is a starvation-diet of letting alone. The great majority of the profession are peacefully inclined. Their pursuits are eminently humanizing, and they look with disgust on the personalities which intrude themselves into the placid domain of an art whose province it is to heal and not to wound.

The intercourse of teacher and student in a large school is necessarily limited, but it should be, and, so far as my experience goes, it is, eminently cordial and kindly. You will leave with regret, and hold in tender remembrance, those who have taken you by the hand at your entrance on your chosen path, and led you patiently and faithfully, until the great gates at its end have swung upon their hinges, and the world lies open before you. That venerable oath to which I have before referred bound the student to regard his instructor in the light of a parent, to treat his children like brothers, to succor him in his day of need. I trust the spirit of the oath of Hippocrates is not dead in the hearts of the students of to-day. They will remember with gratitude every earnest effort, every encouraging word, which has helped them in their difficult and laborious career of study. The names they read on their diplomas will recall faces that are like family-portraits in their memory, and the echo of voices they have listened to so long will linger in their memories far into the still evening of their lives.

One voice will be heard no more which has been familiar to many among you. It is not for me, a stranger to these scenes, to speak his eulogy. I have no right to sadden this hour by dwelling on the deep regrets of friendship, or to bid the bitter tears of sorrow flow afresh. Yet I cannot help remembering what a void the death of such a practitioner as your late instructor must leave in the wide circle of those who leaned upon his counsel and assistance in their hour of need, in a community where he was so widely known and esteemed, in a school where he bore so important a part. There is no exemption from the common doom for him who holds the shield to protect others. The student is called from his bench, the professor from his chair, the practitioner in his busiest period hears a knock more peremptory than any patient's midnight summons, and goes on that unreturning visit which admits of no excuse, and suffers no delay. The call of such a man away from us is the bereavement of a great family. Nor can we help regretting the loss for him of a bright and cheerful earthly future; for the old age of a physician is one of the happiest periods of his life. He is loved and cherished for what he has been, and even in the decline of his faculties there are occasions when his experience is still appealed to, and his trembling hands are looked to with renewing hope and trust, as being yet able to stay the arm of the destroyer.

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But if there is so much left for age, how beautiful, how inspiring is the hope of youth! I see among those whom I count as listeners one by whose side I have sat as a fellow-teacher, and by whose instructions I have felt myself not too old to profit. As we borrowed him from your city, I must take this opportunity of telling you that his zeal, intelligence, and admirable faculty as an instructor were heartily and universally recognized among us. We return him, as we trust, uninjured, to the fellow-citizens who have the privilege of claiming him as their own.

And now, gentlemen of the graduating class, nothing remains but for me to bid you, in the name of those for whom I am commissioned and privileged to speak, farewell as students, and welcome as practitioners. I pronounce the two benedictions in the same breath, as the late king's demise and the new king's accession are proclaimed by the same voice at the same moment. You would hardly excuse me if I stooped to any meaner dialect than the classical and familiar language of your prescriptions, the same in which your title to the name of physician is, if, like our own institution, you follow the ancient usage, engraved upon your diplomas.

Valete, JUVENES, artis medicae studiosi; valete, discipuli, valete, filii!

Salvete, VIRI, artis medicae magister; Salvete amici; salvete fratres!

MEDICAL LIBRARIES.

[Dedicatory Address at the opening of the Medical Library in Boston, December 3, 1878.]

It is my appointed task, my honorable privilege, this evening, to speak of what has been done by others. No one can bring his tribute of words into the presence of great deeds, or try with them to embellish the memory of any inspiring achievement, without feeling and leaving with others a sense of their insufficiency. So felt Alexander when he compared even his adored Homer with the hero the poet had sung. So felt Webster when he contrasted the phrases of rhetoric with the eloquence of patriotism and of self-devotion. So felt Lincoln when on the field of Gettysburg he spoke those immortal words which Pericles could not have bettered, which Aristotle could not have criticised. So felt he who wrote the epitaph of the builder of the dome which looks down on the crosses and weathercocks that glitter over London.

We are not met upon a battle-field, except so far as every laborious achievement means a victory over opposition, indifference, selfishness, faintheartedness, and that great property of mind as well as matter,—inertia. We are not met in a cathedral, except so far as every building whose walls are lined with the products of useful and ennobling thought is a temple of the Almighty, whose inspiration has given us understanding. But we have gathered within walls which bear testimony to the self-sacrificing, persevering

efforts of a few young men, to whom we owe the origin and development of all that excites our admiration in this completed enterprise; and I might consider my task as finished if I contented myself with borrowing the last word of the architect's epitaph and only saying, Look around you!

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The reports of the librarian have told or will tell you, in some detail, what has been accomplished since the 21st of December, 1874, when six gentlemen met at the house of Dr. Henry Ingersoll Bowditch to discuss different projects for a medical library. In less than four years from that time, by the liberality of associations and of individuals, this collection of nearly ten thousand volumes, of five thousand pamphlets, and of one hundred and twenty-five journals, regularly received,—all worthily sheltered beneath this lofty roof,—has come into being under our eyes. It has sprung up, as it were; in the night like a mushroom; it stands before us in full daylight as lusty as an oak, and promising to grow and flourish in the perennial freshness of an evergreen.

To whom does our profession owe this already large collection of books, exceeded in numbers only by four or five of the most extensive medical libraries in the country, and lodged in a building so well adapted to its present needs? We will not point out individually all those younger members of the profession who have accomplished what their fathers and elder brethren had attempted and partially achieved. We need not write their names on these walls, after the fashion of those civic dignitaries who immortalize themselves on tablets of marble and gates of iron. But their contemporaries know them well, and their descendants will not forget them,—the men who first met together, the men who have given their time and their money, the faithful workers, worthy associates of the strenuous agitator who gave no sleep to his eyes, no slumber to his eyelids, until he had gained his ends; the untiring, imperturbable, tenacious, irrepressible, all-subduing agitator who neither rested nor let others rest until the success of the project was assured. If, against his injunctions, I name Dr. James Read Chadwick, it is only my revenge for his having kept me awake so often and so long while he was urging on the undertaking in which he has been preeminently active and triumphantly successful.

We must not forget the various medical libraries which preceded this: that of an earlier period, when Boston contained about seventy regular practitioners, the collection afterwards transferred to the Boston Athenaeum; the two collections belonging to the University; the Treadwell Library at the Massachusetts General Hospital; the collections of the two societies, that for Medical Improvement and that for Medical Observation; and more especially the ten thousand volumes relating to medicine belonging to our noble public city library,—too many blossoms on the tree of knowledge, perhaps, for the best fruit to ripen. But the Massachusetts Medical Society now numbers nearly four hundred members in the city of Boston. The time had arrived for a new and larger movement. There was needed a place to which every respectable member of the medical profession could obtain easy access; where, under one

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roof, all might find the special information they were seeking; where the latest medical intelligence should be spread out daily as the shipping news is posted on the bulletins of the exchange; where men engaged in a common pursuit could meet, surrounded by the mute oracles of science and art; where the whole atmosphere should be as full of professional knowledge as the apothecary's shop is of the odor of his medicaments. This was what the old men longed for,—the prophets and kings of the profession, who

“Desired it long,
But died without the sight.”

This is what the young men and those who worked under their guidance undertook to give us. And now such a library, such a reading-room, such an exchange, such an intellectual and social meeting place, we behold a fact, plain before us. The medical profession of our city, and, let us add, of all those neighboring places which it can reach with its iron arms, is united as never before by the commune vinculum, the common bond of a large, enduring, ennobling, unselfish interest. It breathes a new air of awakened intelligence. It marches abreast of the other learned professions, which have long had their extensive and valuable centralized libraries; abreast of them, but not promising to be content with that position. What glorifies a town like a cathedral? What dignifies a province like a university? What illuminates a country like its scholarship, and what is the nest that hatches scholars but a library?

The physician, some may say, is a practical man and has little use for all this book-learning. Every student has heard Sydenham's reply to Sir Richard Blackmore's question as to what books he should read,—meaning medical books. “Read Don Quixote,” was his famous answer. But Sydenham himself made medical books and may be presumed to have thought those at least worth reading. Descartes was asked where was his library, and in reply held up the dissected body of an animal. But Descartes made books, great books, and a great many of them. A physician of common sense without erudition is better than a learned one without common sense, but the thorough master of his profession must have learning added to his natural gifts.

It is not necessary to maintain the direct practical utility of all kinds of learning. Our shelves contain many books which only a certain class of medical scholars will be likely to consult. There is a dead medical literature, and there is a live one. The dead is not all ancient, the live is not all modern. There is none, modern or ancient, which, if it has no living value for the student, will not teach him something by its autopsy. But it is with the live literature of his profession that the medical practitioner is first of all concerned.

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Now there has come a great change in our time over the form in which living thought presents itself. The first printed books,—the incunabula,—were inclosed in boards of solid oak, with brazen clasps and corners; the boards by and by were replaced by pasteboard covered with calf or sheepskin; then cloth came in and took the place of leather; then the pasteboard was covered with paper instead of cloth; and at this day the quarterly, the monthly, the weekly periodical in its flimsy unsupported dress of paper, and the daily journal, naked as it came from the womb of the press, hold the larger part of the fresh reading we live upon. We must have the latest thought in its latest expression; the page must be newly turned like the morning bannock; the pamphlet must be newly opened like the ante-prandial oyster.

Thus a library, to meet the need of our time, must take, and must spread out in a convenient form, a great array of periodicals. Our active practitioners read these by preference over almost everything else. Our specialists, more particularly, depend on the month's product, on the yearly crop of new facts, new suggestions, new contrivances, as much as the farmer on the annual yield of his acres. One of the first wants, then, of the profession is supplied by our library in its great array of periodicals from many lands, in many languages. Such a number of medical periodicals no private library would have room for, no private person would pay for, or flood his tables with if they were sent him for nothing. These, I think, with the reports of medical societies and the papers contributed to them, will form the most attractive part of our accumulated medical treasures. They will be also one of our chief expenses, for these journals must be bound in volumes and they require a great amount of shelf-room; all this, in addition to the cost of subscription for those which are not furnished us gratuitously.

It is true that the value of old scientific periodicals is, other things being equal, in the inverse ratio of their age, for the obvious reason that what is most valuable in the earlier volumes of a series is drained off into the standard works with which the intelligent practitioner is supposed to be familiar. But no extended record of facts grows too old to be useful, provided only that we have a ready and sure way of getting at the particular fact or facts we are in search of.

And this leads me to speak of what I conceive to be one of the principal tasks to be performed by the present and the coming generation of scholars, not only in the medical, but in every department of knowledge. I mean the formation of indexes, and more especially of indexes to periodical literature.

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This idea has long been working in the minds of scholars, and all who have had occasion to follow out any special subject. I have a right to speak of it, for I long ago attempted to supply the want of indexes in some small measure for my own need. I had a very complete set of the "American Journal of the Medical Sciences;" an entire set of the "North American Review," and many volumes of the reprints of the three leading British quarterlies. Of what use were they to me without general indexes? I looked them all through carefully and made classified lists of all the articles I thought I should most care to read. But they soon outgrew my lists. The "North American Review" kept filling up shelf after shelf, rich in articles which I often wanted to consult, but what a labor to find them, until the index of Mr. Gushing, published a few months since, made the contents of these hundred and twenty volumes as easily accessible as the words in a dictionary! I had a copy of good Dr. Abraham Rees's Cyclopaedia, a treasure-house to my boyhood which has not lost its value for me in later years. But where to look for what I wanted? I wished to know, for instance, what Dr. Burney had to say about singing. Who would have looked for it under the Italian word *cantare*? I was curious to learn something of the etchings of Rembrandt, and where should I find it but under the head "Low Countries, Engravers of the,"—an elaborate and most valuable article of a hundred double-columned close-printed quarto pages, to which no reference, even, is made under the title Rembrandt.

There was nothing to be done, if I wanted to know where that which I specially cared for was to be found in my Rees's Cyclopaedia, but to look over every page of its forty-one quarto volumes and make out a brief list of matters of interest which I could not find by their titles, and this I did, at no small expense of time and trouble.

Nothing, therefore, could be more pleasing to me than to see the attention which has been given of late years to the great work of indexing. It is a quarter of a century since Mr. Poole published his "Index to Periodical Literature," which it is much to be hoped is soon to appear in a new edition, grown as it must be to formidable dimensions by the additions of so long a period. The "British and Foreign Medical Review," edited by the late Sir John Forties, contributed to by Huxley, Carpenter, Laycock, and others of the most distinguished scientific men of Great Britain, has an index to its twenty-four volumes, and by its aid I find this valuable series as manageable as a lexicon. The last edition of the "Encyclopaedia Britannica" had a complete index in a separate volume, and the publishers of Appletons' "American Cyclopaedia" have recently issued an index to their useful work, which must greatly add to its value. I have already referred to the index to the "North American Review," which to an American, and especially to a New Englander, is the most interesting and most

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valuable addition of its kind to our literary apparatus since the publication of Mr. Allibone's "Dictionary of Authors." I might almost dare to parody Mr. Webster's words in speaking of Hamilton, to describe what Mr. Gushing did for the solemn rows of back volumes of our honored old Review which had been long fossilizing on our shelves: "He touched the dead corpse of the 'North American,' and it sprang to its feet." A library of the best thought of the best American scholars during the greater portion of the century was brought to light by the work of the indexmaker as truly as were the Assyrian tablets by the labors of Layard.

A great portion of the best writing and reading literary, scientific, professional, miscellaneous—comes to us now, at stated intervals, in paper covers. The writer appears, as it were, in his shirt-sleeves. As soon as he has delivered his message the book-binder puts a coat on his back, and he joins the forlorn brotherhood of "back volumes," than which, so long as they are unindexed, nothing can be more exasperating. Who wants a lock without a key, a ship without a rudder, a binnacle without a compass, a check without a signature, a greenback without a goldback behind it?

I have referred chiefly to the medical journals, but I would include with these the reports of medical associations, and those separate publications which, coming in the form of pamphlets, heap themselves into chaotic piles and bundles which are worse than useless, taking up a great deal of room, and frightening everything away but mice and mousing antiquarians, or possibly at long intervals some terebrating specialist.

Arranged, bound, indexed, all these at once become accessible and valuable. I will take the first instance which happens to suggest itself. How many who know all about osteoblasts and the experiments of Ollier, and all that has grown out of them, know where to go for a paper by the late Dr. A. L. Peirson of Salem, published in the year 1840, under the modest title, Remarks on Fractures? And if any practitioner who has to deal with broken bones does not know that most excellent and practical essay, it is a great pity, for it answers very numerous questions which will be sure to suggest themselves to the surgeon and the patient as no one of the recent treatises, on my own shelves, at least, can do.

But if indexing is the special need of our time in medical literature, as in every department of knowledge, it must be remembered that it is not only an immense labor, but one that never ends. It requires, therefore, the cooperation of a large number of individuals to do the work, and a large amount of money to pay for making its results public through the press. When it is remembered that the catalogue of the library of the British Museum is contained in nearly three thousand large folios of manuscript, and not all its books are yet included, the task of indexing any considerable branch of science or literature looks as if it were

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well nigh impossible. But many hands make light work. An "Index Society" has been formed in England, already numbering about one hundred and seventy members. It aims at "supplying thorough indexes to valuable works and collections which have hitherto lacked them; at issuing indexes to the literature of special subjects; and at gathering materials for a general reference index." This society has published a little treatise setting forth the history and the art of indexing, which I trust is in the hands of some of our members, if not upon our shelves.

Something has been done in the same direction by individuals in our own country, as we have already seen. The need of it in the department of medicine is beginning to be clearly felt. Our library has already an admirable catalogue with cross references, the work of a number of its younger members cooperating in the task. A very intelligent medical student, Mr. William D. Chapin, whose excellent project is indorsed by well-known New York physicians and professors, proposes to publish a yearly index to original communications in the medical journals of the United States, classified by authors and subjects. But it is from the National Medical Library at Washington that we have the best promise and the largest expectations. That great and growing collection of fifty thousand volumes is under the eye and hand of a librarian who knows books and how to manage them. For libraries are the standing armies of civilization, and an army is but a mob without a general who can organize and marshal it so as to make it effective. The "Specimen Fasciculus of a Catalogue of the National Medical Library," prepared under the direction of Dr. Billings, the librarian, would have excited the admiration of Haller, the master scholar in medical science of the last century, or rather of the profession in all centuries, and if carried out as it is begun will be to the nineteenth all and more than all that the three Bibliothecae—Anatomica, Chirurgica, and Medicinæ-Practicæ—were to the eighteenth century. I cannot forget the story that Agassiz was so fond of telling of the king of Prussia and Fichte. It was after the humiliation and spoliation of the kingdom by Napoleon that the monarch asked the philosopher what could be done to regain the lost position of the nation. "Found a great university, Sire," was the answer, and so it was that in the year 1810 the world-renowned University of Berlin came into being. I believe that we in this country can do better than found a national university, whose professors shall be nominated in caucuses, go in and out, perhaps, like postmasters, with every change of administration, and deal with science in the face of their constituency as the courtier did with time when his sovereign asked him what o'clock it was: "Whatever hour your majesty pleases." But when we have a noble library like that at Washington, and a librarian of exceptional qualifications like the gentleman who now holds that office, I believe

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that a liberal appropriation by Congress to carry out a conscientious work for the advancement of sound knowledge and the bettering of human conditions, like this which Dr. Billings has so well begun, would redound greatly to the honor of the nation. It ought to be willing to be at some charge to make its treasures useful to its citizens, and, for its own sake, especially to that class which has charge of health, public and private. This country abounds in what are called "self-made men," and is justly proud of many whom it thus designates. In one sense no man is self-made who breathes the air of a civilized community. In another sense every man who is anything other than a phonograph on legs is self-made. But if we award his just praise to the man who has attained any kind of excellence without having had the same advantages as others whom, nevertheless, he has equalled or surpassed, let us not be betrayed into undervaluing the mechanic's careful training to his business, the thorough and laborious education of the scholar and the professional man.

Our American atmosphere is vocal with the flippant loquacity of half knowledge. We must accept whatever good can be got out of it, and keep it under as we do sorrel and mullein and witchgrass, by enriching the soil, and sowing good seed in plenty; by good teaching and good books, rather than by wasting our time in talking against it. Half knowledge dreads nothing but whole knowledge.

I have spoken of the importance and the predominance of periodical literature, and have attempted to do justice to its value. But the almost exclusive reading of it is not without its dangers. The journals contain much that is crude and unsound; the presumption; it might be maintained, is against their novelties, unless they come from observers of established credit. Yet I have known a practitioner,—perhaps more than one,—who was as much under the dominant influence of the last article he had read in his favorite medical journal as a milliner under the sway of the last fashion-plate. The difference between green and seasoned knowledge is very great, and such practitioners never hold long enough to any of their knowledge to have it get seasoned.

It is needless to say, then, that all the substantial and permanent literature of the profession should be represented upon our shelves. Much of it is there already, and as one private library after another falls into this by the natural law of gravitation, it will gradually acquire all that is most valuable almost without effort. A scholar should not be in a hurry to part with his books. They are probably more valuable to him than they can be to any other individual. What Swedenborg called "correspondence" has established itself between his intelligence and the volumes which wall him within their sacred inclosure. Napoleon said that his mind was as if furnished with drawers,—he drew out each as he wanted its contents, and closed it at will when done with

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them. The scholar's mind, to use a similar comparison, is furnished with shelves, like his library. Each book knows its place in the brain as well as against the wall or in the alcove. His consciousness is doubled by the books which encircle him, as the trees that surround a lake repeat themselves in its unruffled waters. Men talk of the nerve that runs to the pocket, but one who loves his books, and has lived long with them, has a nervous filament which runs from his sensorium to every one of them. Or, if I may still let my fancy draw its pictures, a scholar's library is to him what a temple is to the worshipper who frequents it. There is the altar sacred to his holiest experiences. There is the font where his new-born thought was baptized and first had a name in his consciousness. There is the monumental tablet of a dead belief, sacred still in the memory of what it was while yet alive. No visitor can read all this on the lettered backs of the books that have gathered around the scholar, but for him, from the Aldus on the lowest shelf to the Elzevir on the highest, every volume has a language which none but he can interpret. Be patient with the book-collector who loves his companions too well to let them go. Books are not buried with their owners, and the veriest book-miser that ever lived was probably doing far more for his successors than his more liberal neighbor who despised his learned or unlearned avarice. Let the fruit fall with the leaves still clinging round it. Who would have stripped Southey's walls of the books that filled them, when, his mind no longer capable of taking in their meaning, he would still pat and fondle them with the vague loving sense of what they had once been to him,—to him, the great scholar, now like a little child among his playthings?

We need in this country not only the scholar, but the virtuoso, who hoards the treasures which he loves, it may be chiefly for their rarity and because others who know more than he does of their value set a high price upon them. As the wine of old vintages is gently decanted out of its cobwebbed bottles with their rotten corks into clean new receptacles, so the wealth of the New World is quietly emptying many of the libraries and galleries of the Old World into its newly formed collections and newly raised edifices. And this process must go on in an accelerating ratio. No Englishman will be offended if I say that before the New Zealander takes his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's in the midst of a vast solitude, the treasures of the British Museum will have found a new shelter in the halls of New York or Boston. No Catholic will think hardly of my saying that before the Coliseum falls, and with it the imperial city, whose doom prophecy has linked with that of the almost eternal amphitheatre, the marbles, the bronzes, the paintings, the manuscripts of the Vatican will have left the shores of the Tiber for those of the Potomac, the Hudson, the Mississippi, or the Sacramento. And what a delight in the pursuit of the rarities which the eager book-hunter follows with the scent of a beagle!

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Shall I ever forget that rainy day in Lyons, that dingy bookshop, where I found the Aetius, long missing from my *Artis bledicae Principes*, and where I bought for a small pecuniary consideration, though it was marked rare, and was really *tres rare*, the *Aphorisms of Hippocrates*, edited by and with a preface from the hand of Francis Rabelais? And the vellum-bound *Tulpius*, which I came upon in Venice, afterwards my only reading when imprisoned in quarantine at Marseilles, so that the two hundred and twenty-eight cases he has recorded are, many of them, to this day still fresh in my memory. And the *Schenckius*,—the folio filled with *casus rariores*, which had strayed in among the rubbish of the bookstall on the boulevard,—and the noble old *Vesalius* with its grand frontispiece not unworthy of Titian, and the fine old *Ambroise Pare*, long waited for even in Paris and long ago, and the colossal *Spigelius* with his eviscerated beauties, and Dutch *Bidloo* with its miracles of fine engraving and bad dissection, and Italian *Mascagni*, the despair of all would-be imitators, and pre-Adamite *John de Ketam*, and antediluvian *Berengarius Carpensis*,—but why multiply names, every one of which brings back the accession of a book which was an event almost like the birth of an infant?

A library like ours must exercise the largest hospitality. A great many books may be found in every large collection which remind us of those apostolic looking old men who figure on the platform at our political and other assemblages. Some of them have spoken words of wisdom in their day, but they have ceased to be oracles; some of them never had any particularly important message for humanity, but they add dignity to the meeting by their presence; they look wise, whether they are so or not, and no one grudges them their places of honor. Venerable figure-heads, what would our platforms be without you?

Just so with our libraries. Without their rows of folios in creamy vellum, or showing their black backs with antique lettering of tarnished gold, our shelves would look as insufficient and unbalanced as a column without its base, as a statue without its pedestal. And do not think they are kept only to be spanked and dusted during that dreadful period when their owner is but too thankful to become an exile and a wanderer from the scene of single combats between dead authors and living housemaids. Men were not all cowards before *Agamemnon* or all fools before the days of *Virchow* and *Billroth*. And apart from any practical use to be derived from the older medical authors, is there not a true pleasure in reading the accounts of great discoverers in their own words? I do not pretend to hoist up the *Bibliotheca Anatomica* of *Mangetus* and spread it on my table every day. I do not get out my great *Albinus* before every lecture on the muscles, nor disturb the majestic repose of *Vesalius* every time I speak of the bones he has so admirably described and figured. But it does

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please me to read the first descriptions of parts to which the names of their discoverers or those who have first described them have become so joined that not even modern science can part them; to listen to the talk of my old volume as Willis describes his circle and Fallopius his aqueduct and Varolius his bridge and Eustachius his tube and Monro his foramen,—all so well known to us in the human body; it does please me to know the very words in which Winslow described the opening which bears his name, and Glisson his capsule and De Graaf his vesicle; I am not content until I know in what language Harvey announced his discovery of the circulation, and how Spigelius made the liver his perpetual memorial, and Malpighi found a monument more enduring than brass in the corpuscles of the spleen and the kidney.

But after all, the readers who care most for the early records of medical science and art are the specialists who are dividing up the practice of medicine and surgery as they were parcelled out, according to Herodotus, by the Egyptians. For them nothing is too old, nothing is too new, for to their books of all others is applicable the saying of D'Alembert that the author kills himself in lengthening out what the reader kills himself in trying to shorten.

There are practical books among these ancient volumes which can never grow old. Would you know how to recognize "male hysteria" and to treat it, take down your Sydenham; would you read the experience of a physician who was himself the subject of asthma, and who, notwithstanding that, in the words of Dr. Johnson, "panted on till ninety," you will find it in the venerable treatise of Sir John Floyer; would you listen to the story of the King's Evil cured by the royal touch, as told by a famous surgeon who fully believed in it, go to Wiseman; would you get at first hand the description of the spinal disease which long bore his name, do not be startled if I tell you to go to Pott,—to Percival Pott, the great surgeon of the last century.

There comes a time for every book in a library when it is wanted by somebody. It is but a few weeks since one of the most celebrated physicians in the country wrote to me from a great centre of medical education to know if I had the works of Sanctorius, which he had tried in vain to find. I could have lent him the "Medicina Statica," with its frontispiece showing Sanctorius with his dinner on the table before him, in his balanced chair which sunk with him below the level of his banquet-board when he had swallowed a certain number of ounces,—an early foreshadowing of Pettenkofer's chamber and quantitative physiology,—but the "Opera Omnia" of Sanctorius I had never met with, and I fear he had to do without it.

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I would extend the hospitality of these shelves to a class of works which we are in the habit of considering as being outside of the pale of medical science, properly so called, and sometimes of coupling with a disrespectful name. Such has always been my own practice. I have welcomed Culpeper and Salmon to my bookcase as willingly as Dioscorides or Quincy, or Paris or Wood and Bache. I have found a place for St. John Long, and read the story of his trial for manslaughter with as much interest as the laurel-water case in which John Hunter figured as a witness. I would give Samuel Hahnemann a place by the side of Samuel Thomson. Am I not afraid that some student of imaginative turn and not provided with the needful cerebral strainers without which all the refuse of gimcrack intelligences gets into the mental drains and chokes them up,—am I not afraid that some such student will get hold of the “Organon” or the “Maladies Chroniques” and be won over by their delusions, and so be lost to those that love him as a man of common sense and a brother in their high calling? Not in the least. If he showed any symptoms of infection I would for once have recourse to the principle of *similia similibus*. To cure him of Hahnemann I would prescribe my favorite homoeopathic antidote, Okie’s Bonninghausen. If that failed, I would order Grauvogl as a heroic remedy, and if he survived that uncured, I would give him my blessing, if I thought him honest, and bid him depart in peace. For me he is no longer an individual. He belongs to a class of minds which we are bound to be patient with if their Maker sees fit to indulge them with existence. We must accept the conjuring ultra-ritualist, the dreamy second adventist, the erratic spiritualist, the fantastic homoeopathist, as not unworthy of philosophic study; not more unworthy of it than the squarers of the circle and the inventors of perpetual motion, and the other whimsical visionaries to whom De Morgan has devoted his most instructive and entertaining “Budget of Paradoxes.” I hope, therefore, that our library will admit the works of the so-called Eclectics, of the Thomsonians, if any are in existence, of the Clairvoyants, if they have a literature, and especially of the Homoeopathists. This country seems to be the place for such a collection, which will by and by be curious and of more value than at present, for Homoeopathy seems to be following the pathological law of erysipelas, fading out where it originated as it spreads to new regions. At least I judge so by the following translated extract from a criticism of an American work in the “Homoeopatische Rundschau” of Leipzig for October, 1878, which I find in the “Homoeopathic Bulletin” for the month of November just passed: “While we feel proud of the spread and rise of Homoeopathy across the ocean, and while the Homoeopathic works reaching us from there, and published in a style such as is unknown in Germany, bear eloquent testimony to the eminent activity of our transatlantic colleagues, we are overcome by sorrowful regrets at the position Homoeopathy occupies in Germany. Such a work [as the American one referred to] with us would be impossible; it would lack the necessary support.”

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By all means let our library secure a good representation of the literature of Homoeopathy before it leaves us its "sorrowful regrets" and migrates with its sugar of milk pellets, which have taken the place of the old pilulae micae panis, to Alaska, to "Nova Zembla, or the Lord knows where."

What shall I say in this presence of the duties of a Librarian? Where have they ever been better performed than in our own public city library, where the late Mr. Jewett and the living Mr. Winsor have shown us what a librarian ought to be,—the organizing head, the vigilant guardian, the seeker's index, the scholar's counsellor? His work is not merely that of administration, manifold and laborious as its duties are. He must have a quick intelligence and a retentive memory. He is a public carrier of knowledge in its germs. His office is like that which naturalists attribute to the bumble-bee,—he lays up little honey for himself, but he conveys the fertilizing pollen from flower to flower.

Our undertaking, just completed,—and just begun—has come at the right time, not a day too soon. Our practitioners need a library like this, for with all their skill and devotion there is too little genuine erudition, such as a liberal profession ought to be able to claim for many of its members. In reading the recent obituary notices of the late Dr. Geddings of South Carolina, I recalled what our lamented friend Dr. Coale used to tell me of his learning and accomplishments, and I could not help reflecting how few such medical scholars we had to show in Boston or New England. We must clear up this unilluminated atmosphere, and here,—here is the true electric light which will irradiate its darkness.

The public will catch the rays reflected from the same source of light, and it needs instruction on the great subjects of health and disease,—needs it sadly. It is preyed upon by every kind of imposition almost without hindrance. Its ignorance and prejudices react upon the profession to the great injury of both. The jealous feeling, for instance, with regard to such provisions for the study of anatomy as are sanctioned by the laws in this State and carried out with strict regard to those laws, threatens the welfare, if not the existence of institutions for medical instruction wherever it is not held in check by enlightened intelligence. And on the other hand the profession has just been startled by a verdict against a physician, ruinous in its amount,—enough to drive many a hard-working young practitioner out of house and home,—a verdict which leads to the fear that suits for malpractice may take the place of the panel game and child-stealing as a means of extorting money. If the profession in this State, which claims a high standard of civilization, is to be crushed and ground beneath the upper millstone of the dearth of educational advantages and the lower millstone of ruinous penalties for what the ignorant ignorantly shall decide to be ignorance, all I can say is

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God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts!

Once more, we cannot fail to see that just as astrology has given place to astronomy, so theology, the science of Him whom by searching no man can find out, is fast being replaced by what we may not improperly call theonomy, or the science of the laws according to which the Creator acts. And since these laws find their fullest manifestations for us, at least, in rational human natures, the study of anthropology is largely replacing that of scholastic divinity. We must contemplate our Maker indirectly in human attributes as we talk of Him in human parts of speech. And this gives a sacredness to the study of man in his physical, mental, moral, social, and religious nature which elevates the faithful students of anthropology to the dignity of a priesthood, and sheds a holy light on the recorded results of their labors, brought together as they are in such a collection as this which is now spread out before us.

Thus, then, our library is a temple as truly as the dome-crowned cathedral hallowed by the breath of prayer and praise, where the dead repose and the living worship. May it, with all its treasures, be consecrated like that to the glory of God, through the contributions it shall make to the advancement of sound knowledge, to the relief of human suffering, to the promotion of harmonious relations between the members of the two noble professions which deal with the diseases of the soul and with those of the body, and to the common cause in which all good men are working, the furtherance of the well-being of their fellow-creatures!

Note.—As an illustration of the statement in the last paragraph but one, I take the following notice from the “Boston Daily Advertiser,” of December 4th, the day after the delivery of the address: “Prince Lucien Bonaparte is now living in London, and is devoting himself to the work of collecting the creeds of all religions and sects, with a view to their classification,—his object being simply scientific or anthropological.”

Since delivering the address, also, I find a leading article in the “Cincinnati Lancet and Clinic” of November 30th, headed “The Decadence of Homoeopathy,” abundantly illustrated by extracts from the “Homoeopathic Times,” the leading American organ of that sect.

In the New York “Medical Record” of the same date, which I had not seen before the delivery of my address, is an account of the action of the Homoeopathic Medical Society of Northern New York, in which Hahnemann’s theory of “dynamization” is characterized in a formal resolve as “unworthy the confidence of the Homoeopathic profession.”

It will be a disappointment to the German Homoeopathists to read in the “Homoeopathic Times” such a statement as the following: “Whatever the influences have been which have checked the outward development of Homoeopathy, it is plainly evident that the Homoeopathic school, as regards the number of its openly avowed representatives, has attained its majority, and has begun to decline both in this country and in England.”

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All which is an additional reason for making a collection of the incredibly curious literature of Homoeopathy before that pseudological inanity has faded out like so many other delusions.

SOME OF MY EARLY TEACHERS

[A Farewell Address to the Medical School of Harvard University, November 28, 1882.]

I had intended that the recitation of Friday last should be followed by a few parting words to my class and any friends who might happen to be in the lecture-room. But I learned on the preceding evening that there was an expectation, a desire, that my farewell should take a somewhat different form; and not to disappoint the wishes of those whom I was anxious to gratify, I made up my mind to appear before you with such hasty preparation as the scanty time admitted.

There are three occasions upon which a human being has a right to consider himself as a centre of interest to those about him: when he is christened, when he is married, and when he is buried. Every one is the chief personage, the hero, of his own baptism, his own wedding, and his own funeral.

There are other occasions, less momentous, in which one may make more of himself than under ordinary circumstances he would think it proper to do; when he may talk about himself, and tell his own experiences, in fact, indulge in a more or less egotistic monologue without fear or reproach.

I think I may claim that this is one of those occasions. I have delivered my last anatomical lecture and heard my class recite for the last time. They wish to hear from me again in a less scholastic mood than that in which they have known me. Will you not indulge me in telling you something of my own story?

This is the thirty-sixth Course of Lectures in which I have taken my place and performed my duties as Professor of Anatomy. For more than half of my term of office I gave instruction in Physiology, after the fashion of my predecessors and in the manner then generally prevalent in our schools, where the physiological laboratory was not a necessary part of the apparatus of instruction. It was with my hearty approval that the teaching of Physiology was constituted a separate department and made an independent Professorship. Before my time, Dr. Warren had taught Anatomy, Physiology, and Surgery in the same course of Lectures, lasting only three or four months. As the boundaries of science are enlarged, new divisions and subdivisions of its territories become necessary. In the place of six Professors in 1847, when I first became a member of the Faculty, I count twelve upon the Catalogue before me, and I find the whole number engaged in the work of instruction in the Medical School amounts to no less than fifty.

Since I began teaching in this school, the aspect of many branches of science has undergone a very remarkable transformation. Chemistry and Physiology are no longer what they were, as taught by the instructors of that time. We are looking forward to the synthesis of new organic compounds; our artificial madder is already in the market, and the indigo-raisers are now fearing that their crop will be supplanted by the manufactured article. In the living body we talk of fuel supplied and work done, in movement, in heat, just as if we were dealing with a machine of our own contrivance.

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A physiological laboratory of to-day is equipped with instruments of research of such ingenious contrivance, such elaborate construction, that one might suppose himself in a workshop where some exquisite fabric was to be wrought, such as Queens love to wear, and Kings do not always love to pay for. They are, indeed, weaving a charmed web, for these are the looms from which comes the knowledge that clothes the nakedness of the intellect. Here are the mills that grind food for its hunger, and "is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?"

But while many of the sciences have so changed that the teachers of the past would hardly know them, it has not been so with the branch I teach, or, rather, with that division of it which is chiefly taught in this amphitheatre. General anatomy, or histology, on the other hand, is almost all new; it has grown up, mainly, since I began my medical studies. I never saw a compound microscope during my years of study in Paris. Individuals had begun to use the instrument, but I never heard it alluded to by either Professors or students. In descriptive anatomy I have found little to unlearn, and not a great deal that was both new and important to learn. Trifling additions are made from year to year, not to be despised and not to be overvalued. Some of the older anatomical works are still admirable, some of the newer ones very much the contrary. I have had recent anatomical plates brought me for inspection, and I have actually button-holed the book-agent, a being commonly as hard to get rid of as the tar-baby in the negro legend, that I might put him to shame with the imperial illustrations of the bones and muscles in the great folio of Albinus, published in 1747, and the unapproached figures of the lymphatic system of Mascagni, now within a very few years of a century old, and still copied, or, rather, pretended to be copied, in the most recent works on anatomy.

I am afraid that it is a good plan to get rid of old Professors, and I am thankful to hear that there is a movement for making provision for those who are left in need when they lose their offices and their salaries. I remember one of our ancient Cambridge Doctors once asked me to get into his rickety chaise, and said to me, half humorously, half sadly, that he was like an old horse,—they had taken off his saddle and turned him out to pasture. I fear the grass was pretty short where that old servant of the public found himself grazing. If I myself needed an apology for holding my office so long, I should find it in the fact that human anatomy is much the same study that it was in the days of Vesalius and Fallopius, and that the greater part of my teaching was of such a nature that it could never become antiquated.

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Let me begin with my first experience as a medical student. I had come from the lessons of Judge Story and Mr. Ashmun in the Law School at Cambridge. I had been busy, more or less, with the pages of Blackstone and Chitty, and other text-books of the first year of legal study. More or less, I say, but I am afraid it was less rather than more. For during that year I first tasted the intoxicating pleasure of authorship. A college periodical, conducted by friends of mine, still undergraduates, tempted me into print, and there is no form of lead-poisoning which more rapidly and thoroughly pervades the blood and bones and marrow than that which reaches the young author through mental contact with type-metal. Qui a bu, boira,—he who has once been a drinker will drink again, says the French proverb. So the man or woman who has tasted type is sure to return to his old indulgence sooner or later. In that fatal year I had my first attack of authors' lead-poisoning, and I have never got quite rid of it from that day to this. But for that I might have applied myself more diligently to my legal studies, and carried a green bag in place of a stethoscope and a thermometer up to the present day.

What determined me to give up Law and apply myself to Medicine I can hardly say, but I had from the first looked upon that year's study as an experiment. At any rate, I made the change, and soon found myself introduced to new scenes and new companionships.

I can scarcely credit my memory when I recall the first impressions produced upon me by sights afterwards become so familiar that they could no more disturb a pulse-beat than the commonest of every-day experiences. The skeleton, hung aloft like a gibbeted criminal, looked grimly at me as I entered the room devoted to the students of the school I had joined, just as the fleshless figure of Time, with the hour-glass and scythe, used to glare upon me in my childhood from the "New England Primer." The white faces in the beds at the Hospital found their reflection in my own cheeks, which lost their color as I looked upon them. All this had to pass away in a little time; I had chosen my profession, and must meet its painful and repulsive aspects until they lost their power over my sensibilities.

The private medical school which I had joined was one established by Dr. James Jackson, Dr. Walter Channing, Dr. John Ware, Dr. Winslow Lewis, and Dr. George W. Otis. Of the first three gentlemen I have either spoken elsewhere or may find occasion to speak hereafter. The two younger members of this association of teachers were both graduates of our University, one of the year 1819, the other of 1818.

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Dr. Lewis was a great favorite with students. He was a man of very lively temperament, fond of old books and young people, open-hearted, free-spoken, an enthusiast in teaching, and especially at home in that apartment of the temple of science where nature is seen in undress, the anthropotomic laboratory, known to common speech as the dissecting-room. He had that quality which is the special gift of the man born for a teacher,—the power of exciting an interest in that which he taught. While he was present the apartment I speak of was the sunniest of studios in spite of its mortuary spectacles. Of the students I met there I best remember James Jackson, Junior, full of zeal and playful as a boy, a young man whose early death was a calamity to the profession of which he promised to be a chief ornament; the late Reverend J. S. C. Greene, who, as the prefix to his name signifies, afterwards changed his profession, but one of whose dissections I remember looking upon with admiration; and my friend Mr. Charles Amory, as we call him, Dr. Charles Amory, as he is entitled to be called, then, as now and always, a favorite with all about him. He had come to us from the schools of Germany, and brought with him recollections of the teachings of Blumenbach and the elder Langenbeck, father of him whose portrait hangs in our Museum. Dr. Lewis was our companion as well as our teacher. A good demonstrator is,—I will not say as important as a good Professor in the teaching of Anatomy, because I am not sure that he is not more important. He comes into direct personal relations with the students,—he is one of them, in fact, as the Professor cannot be from the nature of his duties. The Professor's chair is an insulating stool, so to speak; his age, his knowledge, real or supposed, his official station, are like the glass legs which support the electrician's piece of furniture, and cut it off from the common currents of the floor upon which it stands. Dr. Lewis enjoyed teaching and made his students enjoy being taught. He delighted in those anatomical conundrums to answer which keeps the student's eyes open and his wits awake. He was happy as he dexterously performed the tour de maitre of the old barber-surgeons, or applied the spica bandage and taught his scholars to do it, so neatly and symmetrically that the aesthetic missionary from the older centre of civilization would bend over it in blissful contemplation, as if it were a sunflower. Dr. Lewis had many other tastes, and was a favorite, not only with students, but in a wide circle, professional, antiquarian, masonic, and social.

Dr. Otis was less widely known, but was a fluent and agreeable lecturer, and esteemed as a good surgeon.

I must content myself with this glimpse at myself and a few of my fellow-students in Boston. After attending two courses of Lectures in the school of the University, I went to Europe to continue my studies.

You may like to hear something of the famous Professors of Paris in the days when I was a student in the Ecole de Medicine, and following the great Hospital teachers.

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I can hardly believe my own memory when I recall the old practitioners and Professors who were still going round the hospitals when I mingled with the train of students that attended the morning visits. See that bent old man who is groping his way through the wards of La Charity. That is the famous Baron Boyer, author of the great work on surgery in nine volumes, a writer whose clearness of style commends his treatise to general admiration, and makes it a kind of classic. He slashes away at a terrible rate, they say, when he gets hold of the subject of fistula in its most frequent habitat,—but I never saw him do more than look as if he wanted to cut a good dollop out of a patient he was examining. The short, square, substantial man with iron-gray hair, ruddy face, and white apron is Baron Larrey, Napoleon's favorite surgeon, the most honest man he ever saw,—it is reputed that he called him. To go round the Hotel des Invalides with Larrey was to live over the campaigns of Napoleon, to look on the sun of Austerlitz, to hear the cannons of Marengo, to struggle through the icy waters of the Beresina, to shiver in the snows of the Russian retreat, and to gaze through the battle smoke upon the last charge of the red lancers on the redder field of Waterloo. Larrey was still strong and sturdy as I saw him, and few portraits remain printed in livelier colors on the tablet of my memory.

Leave the little group of students which gathers about Larrey beneath the gilded dome of the Invalides and follow me to the Hotel Dieu, where rules and reigns the master-surgeon of his day, at least so far as Paris and France are concerned,—the illustrious Baron Dupuytren. No man disputed his reign, some envied his supremacy. Lisfranc shrugged his shoulders as he spoke of “ce grand homme de l'autre cots de la riviere,” that great man on the other side of the river, but the great man he remained, until he bowed before the mandate which none may disobey. “Three times,” said Bouillaud, “did the apoplectic thunderbolt fall on that robust brain,”—it yielded at last as the old bald cliff that is riven and crashes down into the valley. I saw him before the first thunderbolt had descended: a square, solid man, with a high and full-domed head, oracular in his utterances, indifferent to those around him, sometimes, it was said, very rough with them. He spoke in low, even tones, with quiet fluency, and was listened to with that hush of rapt attention which I have hardly seen in any circle of listeners unless when such men as ex-President John Quincy Adams or Daniel Webster were the speakers. I do not think that Dupuytren has left a record which explains his influence, but in point of fact he dominated those around him in a remarkable manner. You must have all witnessed something of the same kind. The personal presence of some men carries command with it, and their accents silence the crowd around them, when the same words from other lips might fall comparatively unheeded.

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As for Lisfranc, I can say little more of him than that he was a great drawer of blood and hewer of members. I remember his ordering a wholesale bleeding of his patients, right and left, whatever might be the matter with them, one morning when a phlebotomizing fit was on him. I recollect his regretting the splendid guardsmen of the old Empire,—for what? because they had such magnificent thighs to amputate. I got along about as far as that with him, when I ceased to be a follower of M. Lisfranc.

The name of Velpeau must have reached many of you, for he died in 1867, and his many works made his name widely known. Coming to Paris in wooden shoes, starving, almost, at first, he raised himself to great eminence as a surgeon and as an author, and at last obtained the Professorship to which his talents and learning entitled him. His example may be an encouragement to some of my younger hearers who are born, not with the silver spoon in their mouths, but with the two-tined iron fork in their hands. It is a poor thing to take up their milk porridge with in their young days, but in after years it will often transfix the solid dumplings that roll out of the silver spoon. So Velpeau found it. He had not what is called genius, he was far from prepossessing in aspect, looking as if he might have wielded the sledge-hammer (as I think he had done in early life) rather than the lancet, but he had industry, determination, intelligence, character, and he made his way to distinction and prosperity, as some of you sitting on these benches and wondering anxiously what is to become of you in the struggle for life will have done before the twentieth century has got halfway through its first quarter. A good sound head over a pair of wooden shoes is a great deal better than a wooden head belonging to an owner who cases his feet in calf-skin, but a good brain is not enough without a stout heart to fill the four great conduits which carry at once fuel and fire to that mightiest of engines.

How many of you who are before me are familiarly acquainted with the name of Broussais, or even with that of Andral? Both were lecturing at the Ecole de Medicine, and I often heard them. Broussais was in those days like an old volcano, which has pretty nearly used up its fire and brimstone, but is still boiling and bubbling in its interior, and now and then sends up a spirt of lava and a volley of pebbles. His theories of gastro-enteritis, of irritation and inflammation as the cause of disease, and the practice which sprang from them, ran over the fields of medicine for a time like flame over the grass of the prairies. The way in which that knotty-featured, savage old man would bring out the word irritation—with rattling and rolling reduplication of the resonant letter r—might have taught a lesson in articulation to Salvini. But Broussais's theory was languishing and well-nigh become obsolete, and this, no doubt, added vehemence to his defence of his cherished dogmas.

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Old theories, and old men who cling to them, must take themselves out of the way as the new generation with its fresh thoughts and altered habits of mind comes forward to take the place of that which is dying out. This was a truth which the fiery old theorist found it very hard to learn, and harder to bear, as it was forced upon him. For the hour of his lecture was succeeded by that of a younger and far more popular professor. As his lecture drew towards its close, the benches, thinly sprinkled with students, began to fill up; the doors creaked open and banged back oftener and oftener, until at last the sound grew almost continuous, and the voice of the lecturer became a leonine growl as he strove in vain to be heard over the noise of doors and footsteps.

Broussais was now sixty-two years old. The new generation had outgrown his doctrines, and the Professor for whose hour the benches had filled themselves belonged to that new generation. Gabriel Andral was little more than half the age of Broussais, in the full prime and vigor of manhood at thirty-seven years. He was a rapid, fluent, fervid, and imaginative speaker, pleasing in aspect and manner,—a strong contrast to the harsh, vituperative old man who had just preceded him. His Clinique Medicale is still valuable as a collection of cases, and his researches on the blood, conducted in association with Gavarret, contributed new and valuable facts to science. But I remember him chiefly as one of those instructors whose natural eloquence made it delightful to listen to him. I doubt if I or my fellow-students did full justice either to him or to the famous physician of Hotel Dieu, Chomel. We had addicted ourselves almost too closely to the words of another master, by whom we were ready to swear as against all teachers that ever were or ever would be.

This object of our reverence, I might almost say idolatry, was one whose name is well known to most of the young men before me, even to those who may know comparatively little of his works and teachings. Pierre Charles Alexandre Louis, at the age of forty-seven, as I recall him, was a tall, rather spare, dignified personage, of serene and grave aspect, but with a pleasant smile and kindly voice for the student with whom he came into personal relations. If I summed up the lessons of Louis in two expressions, they would be these; I do not hold him answerable for the words, but I will condense them after my own fashion in French, and then give them to you, expanded somewhat, in English:

Formez toujours des idees nettes.
Fuyez toujours les a peu pres.

Always make sure that you form a distinct and clear idea of the matter you are considering.

Always avoid vague approximations where exact estimates are possible; about so many,—about so much, instead of the precise number and quantity.

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Now, if there is anything on which the biological sciences have prided themselves in these latter years it is the substitution of quantitative for qualitative formulae. The “numerical system,” of which Louis was the great advocate, if not the absolute originator, was an attempt to substitute series of carefully recorded facts, rigidly counted and closely compared, for those never-ending records of vague, unverifiable conclusions with which the classics of the healing art were overloaded. The history of practical medicine had been like the story of the Danaides. “Experience” had been, from time immemorial, pouring its flowing treasures into buckets full of holes. At the existing rate of supply and leakage they would never be filled; nothing would ever be settled in medicine. But cases thoroughly recorded and mathematically analyzed would always be available for future use, and when accumulated in sufficient number would lead to results which would be trustworthy, and belong to science.

You young men who are following the hospitals hardly know how much you are indebted to Louis. I say nothing of his *Researches on Phthisis* or his great work on *Typhoid Fever*. But I consider his modest and brief *Essay on Bleeding in some Inflammatory Diseases*, based on cases carefully observed and numerically analyzed, one of the most important written contributions to practical medicine, to the treatment of internal disease, of this century, if not since the days of Sydenham. The lancet was the magician’s wand of the dark ages of medicine. The old physicians not only believed in its general efficacy as a wonder-worker in disease, but they believed that each malady could be successfully attacked from some special part of the body,—the strategic point which commanded the seat of the morbid affection. On a figure given in the curious old work of John de Ketam, no less than thirty-eight separate places are marked as the proper ones to bleed from, in different diseases. Even Louis, who had not wholly given up venesection, used now and then to order that a patient suffering from headache should be bled in the foot, in preference to any other part.

But what Louis did was this: he showed by a strict analysis of numerous cases that bleeding did not strangle,—jugulate was the word then used,—acute diseases, more especially pneumonia. This was not a reform,—it was a revolution. It was followed up in this country by the remarkable *Discourse of Dr. Jacob Bigelow upon Self-Limited Diseases*, which has, I believe, done more than any other work or essay in our own language to rescue the practice of medicine from the slavery to the drugging system which was a part of the inheritance of the profession.

Yes, I say, as I look back on the long hours of the many days I spent in the wards and in the autopsy room of La Pitie, where Louis was one of the attending physicians,—yes, Louis did a great work for practical medicine. Modest in the presence of nature, fearless in the face of authority, unwearying in the pursuit of truth, he was a man whom any student might be happy and proud to claim as his teacher and his friend, and yet, as I look back on the days when I followed his teachings, I feel that I gave myself up too exclusively to his methods of thought and study.

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There is one part of their business which certain medical practitioners are too apt to forget; namely, that what they should most of all try to do is to ward off disease, to alleviate suffering, to preserve life, or at least to prolong it if possible. It is not of the slightest interest to the patient to know whether three or three and a quarter cubic inches of his lung are hepatized. His mind is not occupied with thinking of the curious problems which are to be solved by his own autopsy,—whether this or that strand of the spinal marrow is the seat of this or that form of degeneration. He wants something to relieve his pain, to mitigate the anguish of dyspnea, to bring back motion and sensibility to the dead limb, to still the tortures of neuralgia. What is it to him that you can localize and name by some uncouth term the disease which you could not prevent and which you cannot cure? An old woman who knows how to make a poultice and how to put it on, and does it tuto, eito, jucunde, just when and where it is wanted, is better,—a thousand times better in many cases,—than a staring pathologist, who explores and thumps and doubts and guesses, and tells his patient he will be better tomorrow, and so goes home to tumble his books over and make out a diagnosis.

But in those days, I, like most of my fellow students, was thinking much more of “science” than of practical medicine, and I believe if we had not clung so closely to the skirts of Louis and had followed some of the courses of men like Trousseau,—theraputists, who gave special attention to curative methods, and not chiefly to diagnosis,—it would have been better for me and others. One thing, at any rate, we did learn in the wards of Louis. We learned that a very large proportion of diseases get well of themselves, without any special medication,—the great fact formulated, enforced, and popularized by Dr. Jacob Bigelow in the Discourse referred to. We unlearned the habit of drugging for its own sake. This detestable practice, which I was almost proscribed for condemning somewhat too epigrammatically a little more than twenty years ago, came to us, I suspect, in a considerable measure from the English “general practitioners,” a sort of prescribing apothecaries. You remember how, when the city was besieged, each artisan who was called upon in council to suggest the best means of defence recommended the articles he dealt in: the carpenter, wood; the blacksmith, iron; the mason, brick; until it came to be a puzzle to know which to adopt. Then the shoemaker said, “Hang your walls with new boots,” and gave good reasons why these should be the best of all possible defences. Now the “general practitioner” charged, as I understand, for his medicine, and in that way got paid for his visit. Wherever this is the practice, medicine is sure to become a trade, and the people learn to expect drugging, and to consider it necessary, because drugs are so universally given to the patients of the man who gets his living by them.

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It was something to have unlearned the pernicious habit of constantly giving poisons to a patient, as if they were good in themselves, of drawing off the blood which he would want in his struggle with disease, of making him sore and wretched with needless blisters, of turning his stomach with unnecessary nauseous draught and mixtures,—only because he was sick and something must be done. But there were positive as well as negative facts to be learned, and some of us, I fear, came home rich in the negatives of the expectant practice, poor in the resources which many a plain country practitioner had ready in abundance for the relief and the cure of disease. No one instructor can be expected to do all for a student which he requires. Louis taught us who followed him the love of truth, the habit of passionless listening to the teachings of nature, the most careful and searching methods of observation, and the sure means of getting at the results to be obtained from them in the constant employment of accurate tabulation. He was not a showy, or eloquent, or, I should say, a very generally popular man, though the favorite, almost the idol, of many students, especially Genevese and Bostonians. But he was a man of lofty and admirable scientific character, and his work will endure in its influences long after his name is lost sight of save to the faded eyes of the student of medical literature.

Many other names of men more or less famous in their day, and who were teaching while I was in Paris, come up before me. They are but empty sounds for the most part in the ears of persons of not more than middle age. Who of you knows anything of Richerand, author of a very popular work on Physiology, commonly put into the student's hands when I first began to ask for medical text-books? I heard him lecture once, and have had his image with me ever since as that of an old, worn-out man,—a venerable but dilapidated relic of an effete antiquity. To verify this impression I have just looked out the dates of his birth and death, and find that he was eighteen years younger than the speaker who is now addressing you. There is a terrible parallax between the period before thirty and that after threescore and ten, as two men of those ages look, one with naked eyes, one through his spectacles, at the man of fifty and thereabout. Magendie, I doubt not you have all heard of. I attended but one of his lectures. I question if one here, unless some contemporary of my own has strayed into the amphitheatre,—knows anything about Marjolin. I remember two things about his lectures on surgery, the deep tones of his voice as he referred to his oracle,—the earlier writer, Jean Louis Petit,—and his formidable snuffbox. What he taught me lies far down, I doubt not, among the roots of my knowledge, but it does not flower out in any noticeable blossoms, or offer me any very obvious fruits. Where now is the fame of Bouillaud, Professor and Deputy, the Sangrado of his time? Where is the renown of

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Piorry, percussionist and poet, expert alike in the resonances of the thoracic cavity and those of the rhyming vocabulary?—I think life has not yet done with the vivacious Ricord, whom I remember calling the Voltaire of pelvic literature,—a sceptic as to the morality of the race in general, who would have submitted Diana to treatment with his mineral specifics, and ordered a course of blue pills for the vestal virgins.

Ricord was born at the beginning of the century, and Piorry some years earlier. Cruveilhier, who died in 1874, is still remembered by his great work on pathological anatomy; his work on descriptive anatomy has some things which I look in vain for elsewhere. But where is Civiale,—where are Orfila, Gendrin, Rostan, Biett, Alibert,—jolly old Baron Alibert, whom I remember so well in his broad-brimmed hat, worn a little jauntily on one side, calling out to the students in the court-yard of the Hospital St. Louis, “Enfans de la methode naturelle, etes-vous tous ici?” “Children of the natural method [his own method of classification of skin diseases,] are you all here?” All here, then, perhaps; all where, now?

My show of ghosts is over. It is always the same story that old men tell to younger ones, some few of whom will in their turn repeat the tale, only with altered names, to their children’s children.

Like phantoms painted on the magic slide,
Forth from the darkness of the past we glide,
As living shadows for a moment seen
In airy pageant on the eternal screen,
Traced by a ray from one unchanging flame,
Then seek the dust and stillness whence we came.

Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse, whom I well remember, came back from Leyden, where he had written his Latin graduating thesis, talking of the learned Gaubius and the late illustrious Boerhaave and other dead Dutchmen, of whom you know as much, most of you, as you do of Noah’s apothecary and the family physician of Methuselah, whose prescriptions seem to have been lost to posterity. Dr. Lloyd came back to Boston full of the teachings of Cheselden and Sharpe, William Hunter, Smellie, and Warner; Dr. James Jackson loved to tell of Mr. Cline and to talk of Mr. John Hunter; Dr. Reynolds would give you his recollections of Sir Astley Cooper and Mr. Abernethy; I have named the famous Frenchmen of my student days; Leyden, Edinburgh, London, Paris, were each in turn the Mecca of medical students, just as at the present day Vienna and Berlin are the centres where our young men crowd for instruction. These also must sooner or later yield their precedence and pass the torch they hold to other hands. Where shall it next flame at the head of the long procession? Shall it find its old place on the shores of the Gulf of Salerno, or shall it mingle its rays with the northern aurora up among the fiords of Norway,—or shall it be borne across the Atlantic and reach the banks of the

Charles, where Agassiz and Wyman have taught, where Hagen still teaches, glowing like his own *Lampyrus splendidula*, with enthusiasm, where the first of American botanists and the ablest of American surgeons are still counted in the roll of honor of our great University?

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Let me add a few words which shall not be other than cheerful, as I bid farewell to this edifice which I have known so long. I am grateful to the roof which has sheltered me, to the floors which have sustained me, though I have thought it safest always to abstain from anything like eloquence, lest a burst of too emphatic applause might land my class and myself in the cellar of the collapsing structure, and bury us in the fate of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. I have helped to wear these stairs into hollows,—stairs which I trod when they were smooth and level, fresh from the plane. There are just thirty-two of them, as there were five and thirty years ago, but they are steeper and harder to climb, it seems to me, than they were then. I remember that in the early youth of this building, the late Dr. John K. Mitchell, father of our famous Dr. Weir Mitchell, said to me as we came out of the Demonstrator's room, that some day or other a whole class would go heels over head down this graded precipice, like the herd told of in Scripture story. This has never happened as yet; I trust it never will. I have never been proud of the apartment beneath the seats, in which my preparations for lecture were made. But I chose it because I could have it to myself, and I resign it, with a wish that it were more worthy of regret, into the hands of my successor, with my parting benediction. Within its twilight precincts I have often prayed for light, like Ajax, for the daylight found scanty entrance, and the gaslight never illuminated its dark recesses. May it prove to him who comes after me like the cave of the Sibyl, out of the gloomy depths of which came the oracles which shone with the rays of truth and wisdom!

This temple of learning is not surrounded by the mansions of the great and the wealthy. No stately avenues lead up to its facades and porticoes. I have sometimes felt, when conveying a distinguished stranger through its precincts to its door, that he might question whether star-eyed Science had not missed her way when she found herself in this not too attractive locality. I cannot regret that we—you, I should say—are soon to migrate to a more favored region, and carry on your work as teachers and as learners in ampler halls and under far more favorable conditions.

I hope that I may have the privilege of meeting you there, possibly may be allowed to add my words of welcome to those of my former colleagues, and in that pleasing anticipation I bid good-by to this scene of my long labors, and, for the present at least, to the friends with whom I have been associated.

APPENDUM

NOTES TO THE ADDRESS ON CURRENTS AND COUNTER CURRENTS IN MEDICAL SCIENCE.

Some passages contained in the original manuscript of the Address, and omitted in the delivery on account of its length, are restored in the text or incorporated with these Notes.

NOTE A.—

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There is good reason to doubt whether the nitrate of silver has any real efficacy in epilepsy. It has seemed to cure many cases, but epilepsy is a very uncertain disease, and there is hardly anything which has not been supposed to cure it. Dr. Copland cites many authorities in its favor, most especially Lombard's cases. But De la Berge and Monneret (*Comp. de Med. Paris*), 1839, analyze these same cases, eleven in number, and can only draw the inference of a very questionable value in the supposed remedy. Dr. James Jackson says that relief of epilepsy is not to be attained by any medicine with which he is acquainted, but by diet. (*Letters to a Young Physician*, p. 67.) Guy Patin, Dean of the Faculty of Paris, Professor at the Royal College, Author of the *Antimonial Martyrology*, a wit and a man of sense and learning, who died almost two hundred years ago, had come to the same conclusion, though the chemists of his time boasted of their remedies. "Did, you ever see a case of epilepsy cured by nitrate of silver?" I said to one of the oldest and most experienced surgeons in this country. "Never," was his instant reply. Dr. Twitchell's experience was very similar. How, then, did nitrate of silver come to be given for epilepsy? Because, as Dr. Martin has so well reminded us, lunatics were considered formerly to be under the special influence of Luna, the moon (which Esquirol, be it observed, utterly denies), and lunar caustic, or nitrate of silver, is a salt of that metal which was called luna from its whiteness, and of course must be in the closest relations with the moon. It follows beyond all reasonable question that the moon's metal, silver, and its preparations, must be the specific remedy for moonblasted maniacs and epileptics!

Yet the practitioner who prescribes the nitrate of silver supposes he is guided by the solemn experience of the past, instead of by its idle fancies. He laughs at those old physicians who placed such confidence in the right hind hoof of an elk as a remedy for the same disease, and leaves the record of his own belief in a treatment quite as fanciful and far more objectionable, written in indelible ink upon a living tablet where he who runs may read it for a whole generation, if nature spares his walking advertisement so long.

NOTE B.—

The presumption that a man is innocent until he is proved guilty, does not mean that there are no rogues, but lays the onus probandi on the party to which it properly belongs. So with this proposition. A noxious agent should never be employed in sickness unless there is ample evidence in the particular case to overcome the general presumption against all such agents, and the evidence is very apt to be defective.

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The miserable delusion of Homoeopathy builds itself upon an axiom directly the opposite of this; namely, that the sick are to be cured by poisons. *Similia similibus curantur* means exactly this. It is simply a theory of universal poisoning, nullified in practice by the infinitesimal contrivance. The only way to kill it and all similar fancies, and to throw every quack nostrum into discredit, is to root out completely the suckers of the old rotten superstition that whatever is odious or noxious is likely to be good for disease. The current of sound practice with ourselves is, I believe, setting fast in the direction I have indicated in the above proposition. To uphold the exhibition of noxious agents in disease, as the rule, instead of admitting them cautiously and reluctantly as the exception, is, as I think, an eddy of opinion in the direction of the barbarism out of which we believe our art is escaping. It is only through the enlightened sentiment and action of the Medical Profession that the community can be brought to acknowledge that drugs should always be regarded as evils.

It is true that some suppose, and our scientific and thoughtful associate, Dr. Gould, has half countenanced the opinion, that there may yet be discovered a specific for every disease. Let us not despair of the future, but let us be moderate in our expectations. When an oil is discovered that will make a bad watch keep good time; when a recipe is given which will turn an acephalous foetus into a promising child; when a man can enter the second time into his mother's womb and give her back the infirmities which twenty generations have stirred into her blood, and infused into his own through hers, we may be prepared to enlarge the National Pharmacopoeia with a list of specifics for everything but old age,—and possibly for that also.

NOTE C.—

The term specific is used here in its ordinary sense, without raising the question of the propriety of its application to these or other remedies.

The credit of introducing Cinchona rests between the Jesuits, the Countess of Chinchon, the Cardinal de Lugo, and Sir Robert Talbor, who employed it as a secret remedy. (Pereira.) Mercury as an internal specific remedy was brought into use by that impudent and presumptuous quack, as he was considered, Paracelsus. (Encyc. Brit. art. "Paracelsus.") Arsenic was introduced into England as a remedy for intermittents by Dr. Fowler, in consequence of the success of a patent medicine, the Tasteless Ague Drops, which were supposed, "probably with reason," to be a preparation of that mineral. (Rees's Cyc. art. "Arsenic.") Colchicum came into notice in a similar way, from the success of the Eau Medicinale of M. Husson, a French military officer. (Pereira.) Iodine was discovered by a saltpetre manufacturer, but applied by a physician in place of the old remedy, burnt sponge, which seems to owe its efficacy to it. (Dunglison, *New Remedies*.)

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As for Sulphur, "the common people have long used it as an ointment" for scabies. (Rees's Cyc. art. "Scabies.") The modern antiscorbutic regimen is credited to Captain Cook. "To his sagacity we are indebted for the first impulse to those regulations by which scorbutus is so successfully prevented in our navy." (Lond. Cyc. Prac. Med. art. "Scorbutus.") Iron and various salts which enter into the normal composition of the human body do not belong to the *materia medica* by our definition, but to the *materia alimentaria*.

For the first introduction of iron as a remedy, see Pereira, who gives a very curious old story.

The statement in the text concerning a portion of the *materia medica* stands exactly as delivered, and is meant exactly as it stands. No denunciation of drugs, as sparingly employed by a wise physician, was or is intended. If, however, as Dr. Gould stated in his "valuable and practical discourse" to which the Massachusetts Medical Society "listened with profit as well as interest," "Drugs, in themselves considered, may always be regarded as evils,"—any one who chooses may question whether the evils from their abuse are, on the whole, greater or less than the undoubted benefits obtained from their proper use. The large exception of opium, wine, specifics, and anaesthetics, made in the text, takes off enough from the useful side, as I fully believe, to turn the balance; so that a vessel containing none of these, but loaded with antimony, strychnine, acetate of lead, aloes, aconite, lobelia, lapis infernalis, stercus diaboli, tormentilla, and other approved, and, in skilful hands, really useful remedies, brings, on the whole, more harm than good to the port it enters.

It is a very narrow and unjust view of the practice of medicine, to suppose it to consist altogether in the use of powerful drugs, or of drugs of any kind. Far from it. "The physician may do very much for the welfare of the sick, more than others can do, although he does not, even in the major part of cases, undertake to control and overcome the disease by art. It was with these views that I never reported any patient cured at our hospital. Those who recovered their health were reported as well; not implying that they were made so by the active treatment they had received there. But it was to be understood that all patients received in that house were to be cured, that is, taken care of." (Letters to a Young Physician, by James Jackson, M. D., Boston, 1855.)

"Hygienic rules, properly enforced, fresh air, change of air, travel, attention to diet, good and appropriate food judiciously regulated, together with the administration of our tonics, porter, ale, wine, iron, *etc.*, supply the diseased or impoverished system with what Mr. Gull, of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, aptly calls the 'raw material of the blood;' and we believe that if any real improvement has taken place in medical practice, independently of those truly valuable contributions we have before described, it is in the substitution of tonics, stimulants, and general management, for drastic cathartics, for

bleeding, depressing agents, including mercury, tartar emetics, *etc.*, so much in vogue during the early part even of this century.” (F. P. Porcher, in Charleston Med. Journal and Review for January, 1860.) 1860.)

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JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY.

A memoir, Complete

By Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.

Volume I.

NOTE.

The Memoir here given to the public is based on a biographical sketch prepared by the writer at the request of the Massachusetts Historical Society for its Proceedings. The questions involving controversies into which the Society could not feel called to enter are treated at considerable length in the following pages. Many details are also given which would have carried the paper written for the Society beyond the customary limits of such tributes to the memory of its deceased members. It is still but an outline which may serve a present need and perhaps be of some assistance to a future biographer.

I.

1814-1827. To AEt. 13. *Birth and early years.*

John Motley, the great-grandfather of the subject of this Memoir, came in the earlier part of the last century from Belfast in Ireland to Falmouth, now Portland, in the District, now the State of Maine. He was twice married, and had ten children, four of the first marriage and six of the last. Thomas, the youngest son by his first wife, married Emma, a daughter of John Wait, the first Sheriff of Cumberland County under the government of the United States. Two of their seven sons, Thomas and Edward, removed from Portland to Boston in 1802 and established themselves as partners in commercial business, continuing united and prosperous for nearly half a century before the firm was dissolved.

The earlier records of New England have preserved the memory of an incident which deserves mention as showing how the historian's life was saved by a quickwitted handmaid, more than a hundred years before he was born. On the 29th of August, 1708, the French and Indians from Canada made an attack upon the town of Haverhill, in Massachusetts. Thirty or forty persons were slaughtered, and many others were carried captive into Canada.

The minister of the town, Rev. Benjamin Rolfe, was killed by a bullet through the door of his house. Two of his daughters, Mary, aged thirteen, and Elizabeth, aged nine, were sleeping in a room with the maid-servant, Hagar. When Hagar heard the whoop of the

savages she seized the children, ran with them into the cellar, and, after concealing them under two large washtubs, hid herself. The Indians ransacked the cellar, but missed the prey. Elizabeth, the younger of the two girls, grew up and married the Rev. Samuel Checkley, first minister of the "New South" Church, Boston. Her son, Rev. Samuel Checkley, Junior, was minister of the Second Church, and his successor, Rev. John Lothrop, or Lathrop, as it was more commonly spelled, married his daughter. Dr. Lothrop was great-grandson of Rev. John Lothrop, of Scituate, who had been imprisoned in England for nonconformity. The Checkleys were from Preston Capes, in Northamptonshire. The name is probably identical with that of the Chicheles or Chichleys, a well-known Northamptonshire family.

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Thomas Motley married Anna, daughter of the Rev. John Lothrop, granddaughter of the Rev. Samuel Checkley, Junior, the two ministers mentioned above, both honored in their day and generation. Eight children were born of this marriage, of whom four are still living.

John Lothrop motley, the second of these children, was born in Dorchester, now a part of Boston, Massachusetts, on the 15th of April, 1814. A member of his family gives a most pleasing and interesting picture, from his own recollections and from what his mother told him, of the childhood which was to develop into such rich maturity. The boy was rather delicate in organization, and not much given to outdoor amusements, except skating and swimming, of which last exercise he was very fond in his young days, and in which he excelled. He was a great reader, never idle, but always had a book in his hand,—a volume of poetry or one of the novels of Scott or Cooper. His fondness for plays and declamation is illustrated by the story told by a younger brother, who remembers being wrapped up in a shawl and kept quiet by sweetmeats, while he figured as the dead Caesar, and his brother, the future historian, delivered the speech of Antony over his prostrate body. He was of a most sensitive nature, easily excited, but not tenacious of any irritated feelings, with a quick sense of honor, and the most entirely truthful child, his mother used to say, that she had ever seen. Such are some of the recollections of those who knew him in his earliest years and in the most intimate relations.

His father's family was at this time living in the house No. 7 Walnut Street, looking down Chestnut Street over the water to the western hills. Near by, at the corner of Beacon Street, was the residence of the family of the first mayor of Boston, and at a little distance from the opposite corner was the house of one of the fathers of New England manufacturing enterprise, a man of superior intellect, who built up a great name and fortune in our city. The children from these three homes naturally became playmates. Mr. Motley's house was a very hospitable one, and Lothrop and two of his young companions were allowed to carry out their schemes of amusement in the garden and the garret. If one with a prescient glance could have looked into that garret on some Saturday afternoon while our century was not far advanced in its second score of years, he might have found three boys in cloaks and doublets and plumed hats, heroes and bandits, enacting more or less impromptu melodramas. In one of the boys he would have seen the embryo dramatist of a nation's life history, John Lothrop Motley; in the second, a famous talker and wit who has spilled more good things on the wasteful air in conversation than would carry a "diner-out" through half a dozen London seasons, and waked up somewhat after the usual flowering-time of authorship to find himself a very agreeable and cordially welcomed writer,—Thomas Gold Appleton. In the third he would have recognized a champion of liberty known wherever that word is spoken, an orator whom to hear is to revive all the traditions of the grace, the address, the commanding sway of the silver-tongued eloquence of the most renowned speakers,—Wendell Phillips.

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Both of young Motley's playmates have furnished me with recollections of him and of those around him at this period of his life, and I cannot do better than borrow freely from their communications. His father was a man of decided character, social, vivacious, witty, a lover of books, and himself not unknown as a writer, being the author of one or more of the well remembered "Jack Downing" letters. He was fond of having the boys read to him from such authors as Channing and Irving, and criticised their way of reading with discriminating judgment and taste. Mrs. Motley was a woman who could not be looked upon without admiration. I remember well the sweet dignity of her aspect, her "regal beauty," as Mr. Phillips truly styles it, and the charm of her serene and noble presence, which made her the type of a perfect motherhood. Her character corresponded to the promise of her gracious aspect. She was one of the fondest of mothers, but not thoughtlessly indulgent to the boy from whom she hoped and expected more than she thought it wise to let him know. The story used to be current that in their younger days this father and mother were the handsomest pair the town of Boston could show. This son of theirs was "rather tall," says Mr. Phillips, "lithe, very graceful in movement and gesture, and there was something marked and admirable in the set of his head on his shoulders,"—a peculiar elegance which was most noticeable in those later days when I knew him. Lady Byron long afterwards spoke of him as more like her husband in appearance than any other person she had met; but Mr. Phillips, who remembers the first bloom of his boyhood and youth, thinks he was handsomer than any portrait of Byron represents the poet. "He could not have been eleven years old," says the same correspondent, "when he began writing a novel. It opened, I remember, not with one solitary horseman, but with two, riding up to an inn in the valley of the Housatonic. Neither of us had ever seen the Housatonic, but it sounded grand and romantic. Two chapters were finished."

There is not much remembered of the single summer he passed at Mr. Green's school at Jamaica Plain. From that school he went to Round Hill, Northampton, then under the care of Mr. Cogswell and Mr. Bancroft. The historian of the United States could hardly have dreamed that the handsome boy of ten years was to take his place at the side of his teacher in the first rank of writers in his own department. Motley came to Round Hill, as one of his schoolmates tells me, with a great reputation, especially as a declaimer. He had a remarkable facility for acquiring languages, excelled as a reader and as a writer, and was the object of general admiration for his many gifts. There is some reason to think that the flattery he received was for a time a hindrance to his progress and the development of his character. He obtained praise too easily, and learned to trust too much to his genius. He had everything to spoil him,—beauty,

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precocious intelligence, and a personal charm which might have made him a universal favorite. Yet he does not seem to have been generally popular at this period of his life. He was wilful, impetuous, sometimes supercilious, always fastidious. He would study as he liked, and not by rule. His school and college mates believed in his great possibilities through all his forming period, but it may be doubted if those who counted most confidently on his future could have supposed that he would develop the heroic power of concentration, the long-breathed tenacity of purpose, which in after years gave effect to his brilliant mental endowments. "I did wonder," says Mr. Wendell Phillips, "at the diligence and painstaking, the drudgery shown in his historical works. In early life he had no industry, not needing it. All he cared for in a book he caught quickly,—the spirit of it, and all his mind needed or would use. This quickness of apprehension was marvellous." I do not find from the recollections of his schoolmates at Northampton that he was reproached for any grave offences, though he may have wandered beyond the prescribed boundaries now and then, and studied according to his inclinations rather than by rule. While at that school he made one acquisition much less common then than now,—a knowledge of the German language and some degree of acquaintance with its literature, under the guidance of one of the few thorough German scholars this country then possessed, Mr. George Bancroft.

II.

1827-1831. AEt. 13-17. *College life.*

Such then was the boy who at the immature, we might almost say the tender, age of thirteen entered Harvard College. Though two years after me in college standing, I remember the boyish reputation which he brought with him, especially that of a wonderful linguist, and the impression which his striking personal beauty produced upon us as he took his seat in the college chapel. But it was not until long after this period that I became intimately acquainted with him, and I must again have recourse to the classmates and friends who have favored me with their reminiscences of this period of his life. Mr. Phillips says:

"During our first year in college, though the youngest in the class, he stood third, I think, or second in college rank, and ours was an especially able class. Yet to maintain this rank he neither cared nor needed to make any effort. Too young to feel any responsibilities, and not yet awake to any ambition, he became so negligent that he was 'rusticated' [that is, sent away from college for a time]. He came back sobered, and worked rather more, but with no effort for college rank thenceforward."

I must finish the portrait of the collegian with all its lights and shadows by the help of the same friends from whom I have borrowed the preceding outlines.

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He did not care to make acquaintances, was haughty in manner and cynical in mood, at least as he appeared to those in whom he felt no special interest. It is no wonder, therefore, that he was not a popular favorite, although recognized as having very brilliant qualities. During all this period his mind was doubtless fermenting with projects which kept him in a fevered and irritable condition. "He had a small writing-table," Mr. Phillips says, "with a shallow drawer; I have often seen it half full of sketches, unfinished poems, soliloquies, a scene or two of a play, prose portraits of some pet character, *etc.* These he would read to me, though he never volunteered to do so, and every now and then he burnt the whole and began to fill the drawer again."

My friend, Mr. John Osborne Sargent, who was a year before him in college, says, in a very interesting letter with which he has favored me:

"My first acquaintance with him [Motley] was at Cambridge, when he came from Mr. Cogswell's school at Round Hill. He then had a good deal of the shyness that was just pronounced enough to make him interesting, and which did not entirely wear off till he left college. . . I soon became acquainted with him, and we used to take long walks together, sometimes taxing each other's memory for poems or passages from poems that had struck our fancy. Shelley was then a great favorite of his, and I remember that Praed's verses then appearing in the 'New Monthly' he thought very clever and brilliant, and was fond of repeating them. You have forgotten, or perhaps never knew, that Motley's first appearance in print was in the 'Collegian.' He brought me one day, in a very modest mood, a translation from Goethe, which I was most happy to oblige him by inserting. It was very prettily done, and will now be a curiosity. . . . How it happened that Motley wrote only one piece I do not remember. I had the pleasure about that time of initiating him as a member of the Knights of the Square Table,—always my favorite college club, for the reason, perhaps, that I was a sometime Grand Master. He was always a genial and jovial companion at our supper- parties at Fresh Pond and Gallagher's."

We who live in the days of photographs know how many faces belong to every individual. We know too under what different aspects the same character appears to those who study it from different points of view and with different prepossessions. I do not hesitate, therefore, to place side by side the impressions of two of his classmates as to one of his personal traits as they observed him at this period of his youth.

"He was a manly boy, with no love for or leaning to girls' company; no care for dress; not a trace of personal vanity. . . . He was, or at least seemed, wholly unconscious of his rare beauty and of the fascination of his manner; not a trace of pretence, the simplest and most natural creature in the world."

Look on that picture and on this:—

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“He seemed to have a passion for dress. But as in everything else, so in this, his fancy was a fitful one. At one time he would excite our admiration by the splendor of his outfit, and perhaps the next week he would seem to take equal pleasure in his slovenly or careless appearance.”

It is not very difficult to reconcile these two portraitures. I recollect it was said by a witty lady of a handsome clergyman well remembered among us, that he had dressy eyes. Motley so well became everything he wore, that if he had sprung from his bed and slipped his clothes on at an alarm of fire, his costume would have looked like a prince's undress. His natural presentment, like that of Count D'Orsay, was of the kind which suggests the intentional effects of an elaborate toilet, no matter how little thought or care may have been given to make it effective. I think the “passion for dress” was really only a seeming, and that he often excited admiration when he had not taken half the pains to adorn himself that many a youth less favored by nature has wasted upon his unblest exterior only to be laughed at.

I gather some other interesting facts from a letter which I have received from his early playmate and school and college classmate, Mr. T. G. Appleton.

“In his Sophomore year he kept abreast of the prescribed studies, but his heart was out of bounds, as it often had been at Round Hill when chasing squirrels or rabbits through forbidden forests. Already his historical interest was shaping his life. A tutor coming-by chance, let us hope—to his room remonstrated with him upon the heaps of novels upon his table.

“‘Yes,’ said Motley, ‘I am reading historically, and have come to the novels of the nineteenth century. Taken in the lump, they are very hard reading.’”

All Old Cambridge people know the Brattle House, with its gambrel roof, its tall trees, its perennial spring, its legendary fame of good fare and hospitable board in the days of the kindly old bon vivant, Major Brattle. In this house the two young students, Appleton and Motley, lived during a part of their college course.

“Motley's room was on the ground floor, the room to the left of the entrance. He led a very pleasant life there, tempering his college duties with the literature he loved, and receiving his friends amidst elegant surroundings, which added to the charm of his society. Occasionally we amused ourselves by writing for the magazines and papers of the day. Mr. Willis had just started a slim monthly, written chiefly by himself, but with the true magazine flavor. We wrote for that, and sometimes verses in the corner of a paper called ‘The Anti-Masonic Mirror,’ and in which corner was a woodcut of Apollo, and inviting to destruction ambitious youths by the legend underneath,—

‘Much yet remains unsung.’

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These pieces were usually dictated to each other, the poet recumbent upon the bed and a classmate ready to carry off the manuscript for the paper of the following day. 'Blackwood's' was then in its glory, its pages redolent of 'mountain dew' in every sense; the humor of the Shepherd, the elegantly brutal onslaughts upon Whigs and Cockney poets by Christopher North, intoxicated us youths. "It was young writing, and made for the young. The opinions were charmingly wrong, and its enthusiasm was half Glenlivet. But this delighted the boys. There were no reprints then, and to pass the paper-cutter up the fresh inviting pages was like swinging over the heather arm in arm with Christopher himself. It is a little singular that though we had a college magazine of our own, Motley rarely if ever wrote for it. I remember a translation from Goethe, 'The Ghost-Seer,' which he may have written for it, and a poem upon the White Mountains. Motley spoke at one of the college exhibitions an essay on Goethe so excellent that Mr. Joseph Cogswell sent it to Madam Goethe, who, after reading it, said, 'I wish to see the first book that young man will write.'"

Although Motley did not aim at or attain a high college rank, the rules of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, which confine the number of members to the first sixteen of each class, were stretched so as to include him,—a tribute to his recognized ability, and an evidence that a distinguished future was anticipated for him.

III.

1832-1833. AEt. 18-19. *Study and travel in Europe.*

Of the two years divided between the Universities of Berlin and Gottingen I have little to record. That he studied hard I cannot doubt; that he found himself in pleasant social relations with some of his fellow-students seems probable from the portraits he has drawn in his first story, "Morton's Hope," and is rendered certain so far as one of his companions is concerned. Among the records of the past to which he referred during his last visit to this country was a letter which he took from a collection of papers and handed me to read one day when I was visiting him. The letter was written in a very lively and exceedingly familiar vein. It implied such intimacy, and called up in such a lively way the gay times Motley and himself had had together in their youthful days, that I was puzzled to guess who could have addressed him from Germany in that easy and off-hand fashion. I knew most of his old friends who would be likely to call him by his baptismal name in its most colloquial form, and exhausted my stock of guesses unsuccessfully before looking at the signature. I confess that I was surprised, after laughing at the hearty and almost boyish tone of the letter, to read at the bottom of the page the signature of Bismarck. I will not say that I suspect Motley of having drawn the portrait of his friend in one of the characters of "Morton's Hope," but it is not hard to point out traits in one of them which we can believe may have belonged to the great Chancellor at an earlier period of life than that at which the world contemplates his overshadowing proportions.

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Hoping to learn something of Motley during the two years while we had lost sight of him, I addressed a letter to His Highness Prince Bismarck, to which I received the following reply:—

Foreign office, Berlin, March 11, 1878.

Sir,—I am directed by Prince Bismarck to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st of January, relating to the biography of the late Mr. Motley. His Highness deeply regrets that the state of his health and pressure of business do not allow him to contribute personally, and as largely as he would be delighted to do, to your depicting of a friend whose memory will be ever dear to him. Since I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Mr. Motley at Varzin, I have been intrusted with communicating to you a few details I have gathered from the mouth of the Prince. I enclose them as they are jotted down, without any attempt of digestion.

I have the honor to be
Your obedient servant,
Lothair Bucher.

“Prince Bismarck said:—

“I met Motley at Gottingen in 1832, I am not sure if at the beginning of Easter Term or Michaelmas Term. He kept company with German students, though more addicted to study than we members of the fighting clubs (corps). Although not having mastered yet the German language, he exercised a marked attraction by a conversation sparkling with wit, humor, and originality. In autumn of 1833, having both of us migrated from Gottingen to Berlin for the prosecution of our studies, we became fellow-lodgers in the house No. 161 Friedrich Strasse. There we lived in the closest intimacy, sharing meals and outdoor exercise. Motley by that time had arrived at talking German fluently; he occupied himself not only in translating Goethe’s poem “Faust,” but tried his hand even in composing German verses. Enthusiastic admirer of Shakespeare, Byron, Goethe, he used to spice his conversation abundantly with quotations from these his favorite authors. A pertinacious arguer, so much so that sometimes he watched my awakening in order to continue a discussion on some topic of science, poetry, or practical life, cut short by the chime of the small hours, he never lost his mild and amiable temper. Our faithful companion was Count Alexander Keyserling, a native of Courland, who has since achieved distinction as a botanist.”“Motley having entered the diplomatic service of his country, we had frequently the opportunity of renewing our friendly intercourse; at Frankfort he used to stay with me, the welcome guest of my wife; we also met at Vienna, and, later, here. The last time I saw him was in 1872 at Varzin, at the celebration of my “silver wedding,” namely, the twenty-fifth anniversary.”“The most striking feature of his handsome and delicate appearance was uncommonly large and beautiful eyes. He never entered a drawing-room without exciting the curiosity and

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sympathy of the ladies.”

It is but a glimpse of their young life which the great statesman gives us, but a bright and pleasing one. Here were three students, one of whom was to range in the flowery fields of the loveliest of the sciences, another to make the dead past live over again in his burning pages, and a third to extend an empire as the botanist spread out a plant and the historian laid open a manuscript.

IV.

1834-1839. 2Et. 20-25.

Return to America.—Study of law.—Marriage.—His first novel, “Morton’s hope.”

Of the years passed in the study of law after his return from Germany I have very little recollection, and nothing of importance to record. He never became seriously engaged in the practice of the profession he had chosen. I had known him pleasantly rather than intimately, and our different callings tended to separate us. I met him, however, not very rarely, at one house where we were both received with the greatest cordiality, and where the attractions brought together many both young and old to enjoy the society of its charming and brilliant inmates. This was at No. 14 Temple Place, where Mr. Park Benjamin was then living with his two sisters, both in the bloom of young womanhood. Here Motley found the wife to whom his life owed so much of its success and its happiness. Those who remember Mary Benjamin find it hard to speak of her in the common terms of praise which they award to the good and the lovely. She was not only handsome and amiable and agreeable, but there was a cordial frankness, an openhearted sincerity about her which made her seem like a sister to those who could help becoming her lovers. She stands quite apart in the memory of the friends who knew her best, even from the circle of young persons whose recollections they most cherish. Yet hardly could one of them have foreseen all that she was to be to him whose life she was to share. They were married on the 2d of March, 1837. His intimate friend, Mr. Joseph Lewis Stackpole, was married at about the same time to her sister, thus joining still more closely in friendship the two young men who were already like brothers in their mutual affection.

Two years after his marriage, in 1839, appeared his first work, a novel in two volumes, called “Morton’s Hope.” He had little reason to be gratified with its reception. The general verdict was not favorable to it, and the leading critical journal of America, not usually harsh or cynical in its treatment of native authorship, did not even give it a place among its “Critical Notices,” but dropped a small-print extinguisher upon it in one of the pages of its “List of New Publications.” Nothing could be more utterly disheartening than the unqualified condemnation passed upon the story. At the same time the critic

says that “no one can read ‘Morton’s Hope’ without perceiving it to have been written by a person of uncommon resources of mind and scholarship.”

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It must be confessed that, as a story, "Morton's Hope" cannot endure a searching or even a moderately careful criticism. It is wanting in cohesion, in character, even in a proper regard to circumstances of time and place; it is a map of dissected incidents which has been flung out of its box and has arranged itself without the least regard to chronology or geography. It is not difficult to trace in it many of the influences which had helped in forming or deforming the mind of the young man of twenty-five, not yet come into possession of his full inheritance of the slowly ripening qualities which were yet to assert their robust independence. How could he help admiring Byron and falling into more or less unconscious imitation of his moods if not of his special affectations? Passion showing itself off against a dark foil of cynicism; sentiment, ashamed of its own self-betrayal, and sneering at itself from time to time for fear of the laugh of the world at its sincerity,—how many young men were spoiled and how many more injured by becoming bad copies of a bad ideal! The blood of Don Juan ran in the veins of Vivian Grey and of Pelham. But if we read the fantastic dreams of Disraeli, the intellectual dandyisms of Bulwer, remembering the after careers of which these were the preludes, we can understand how there might well be something in those earlier efforts which would betray itself in the way of thought and in the style of the young men who read them during the plastic period of their minds and characters. Allow for all these influences, allow for whatever impressions his German residence and his familiarity with German literature had produced; accept the fact that the story is to the last degree disjointed, improbable, impossible; lay it aside as a complete failure in what it attempted to be, and read it, as "Vivian Grey" is now read, in the light of the career which it heralded.

"Morton's Hope" is not to be read as a novel: it is to be studied as an autobiography, a prophecy, a record of aspirations, disguised under a series of incidents which are flung together with no more regard to the unities than a pack of shuffled playing-cards. I can do nothing better than let him picture himself, for it is impossible not to recognize the portrait. It is of little consequence whether every trait is an exact copy from his own features, but it is so obvious that many of the lines are direct transcripts from nature that we may believe the same thing of many others. Let us compare his fictitious hero's story with what we have read of his own life.

In early boyhood Morton amused himself and astonished those about him by enacting plays for a puppet theatre. This was at six years old, and at twelve we find him acting in a play with other boys, just as Motley's playmates have already described him. The hero may now speak for himself, but we shall all perceive that we are listening to the writer's own story.

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"I was always a huge reader; my mind was essentially craving and insatiable. Its appetite was enormous, and it devoured too greedily for health. I rejected all guidance in my studies. I already fancied myself a misanthrope. I had taken a step very common for boys of my age, and strove with all my might to be a cynic."

He goes on to describe, under the perfectly transparent mask of his hero, the course of his studies. "To poetry, like most infants, I devoted most of my time." From modern poetry he went back to the earlier sources, first with the idea of systematic reading and at last through Chaucer and Gower and early ballads, until he lost himself "in a dismal swamp of barbarous romances and lying Latin chronicles. I got hold of the Bibliotheca Monastica, containing a copious account of Anglo-Norman authors, with notices of their works, and set seriously to reading every one of them." One profit of his antiquarianism, however, was, as he says, his attention to foreign languages,—French, Spanish, German, especially in their earliest and rudest forms of literature. From these he ascended to the ancient poets, and from Latin to Greek. He would have taken up the study of the Oriental languages, but for the advice of a relative, who begged him seriously to turn his attention to history. The paragraph which follows must speak for itself as a true record under a feigned heading.

"The groundwork of my early character was plasticity and fickleness. I was mortified by this exposure of my ignorance, and disgusted with my former course of reading. I now set myself violently to the study of history. With my turn of mind, and with the preposterous habits which I had been daily acquiring, I could not fail to make as gross mistakes in the pursuit of this as of other branches of knowledge. I imagined, on setting out, a system of strict and impartial investigation of the sources of history. I was inspired with the absurd ambition, not uncommon to youthful students, of knowing as much as their masters. I imagined it necessary for me, stripling as I was, to study the authorities; and, imbued with the strict necessity of judging for myself, I turned from the limpid pages of the modern historians to the notes and authorities at the bottom of the page. These, of course, sent me back to my monastic acquaintances, and I again found myself in such congenial company to a youthful and ardent mind as Florence of Worcester and Simeon of Durham, the Venerable Bede and Matthew Paris; and so on to Gregory and Fredegarius, down to the more modern and elegant pages of Froissart, Hollinshed, Hooker, and Stowe. Infant as I was, I presumed to grapple with masses of learning almost beyond the strength of the giants of history. A spendthrift of my time and labor, I went out of my way to collect materials, and to build for myself, when I should have known that older and abler architects had already appropriated all that was worth preserving; that the

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edifice was built, the quarry exhausted, and that I was, consequently, only delving amidst rubbish. "This course of study was not absolutely without its advantages. The mind gained a certain proportion of vigor even by this exercise of its faculties, just as my bodily health would have been improved by transporting the refuse ore of a mine from one pit to another, instead of coining the ingots which lay heaped before my eyes. Still, however, my time was squandered. There was a constant want of fitness and concentration of my energies. My dreams of education were boundless, brilliant, indefinite; but alas! they were only dreams. There was nothing accurate and defined in my future course of life. I was ambitious and conceited, but my aspirations were vague and shapeless. I had crowded together the most gorgeous and even some of the most useful and durable materials for my woof, but I had no pattern, and consequently never began to weave. "I had not made the discovery that an individual cannot learn, nor be, everything; that the world is a factory in which each individual must perform his portion of work:—happy enough if he can choose it according to his taste and talent, but must renounce the desire of observing or superintending the whole operation. . . . "From studying and investigating the sources of history with my own eyes, I went a step further; I refused the guidance of modern writers; and proceeding from one point of presumption to another, I came to the magnanimous conviction that I could not know history as I ought to know it unless I wrote it for myself. . . . "It would be tedious and useless to enlarge upon my various attempts and various failures. I forbear to comment upon mistakes which I was in time wise enough to retrieve. Pushing out as I did, without compass and without experience, on the boundless ocean of learning, what could I expect but an utter and a hopeless shipwreck? "Thus I went on, becoming more learned, and therefore more ignorant, more confused in my brain, and more awkward in my habits, from day to day. I was ever at my studies, and could hardly be prevailed upon to allot a moment to exercise or recreation. I breakfasted with a pen behind my ear, and dined in company with a folio bigger than the table. I became solitary and morose, the necessary consequence of reckless study; talked impatiently of the value of my time, and the immensity of my labors; spoke contemptuously of the learning and acquirements of the whole world, and threw out mysterious hints of the magnitude and importance of my own project. "In the midst of all this study and this infant authorship the perusal of such masses of poetry could not fail to produce their effect. Of a youth whose mind, like mine at that period, possessed some general capability, without perhaps a single prominent and marked talent, a proneness to imitation

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is sure to be the besetting sin. I consequently, for a large portion of my earlier life, never read a work which struck my fancy, without planning a better one upon its model; for my ambition, like my vanity, knew no bounds. It was a matter of course that I should be attacked by the poetic mania. I took the infection at the usual time, went through its various stages, and recovered as soon as could be expected. I discovered soon enough that emulation is not capability, and he is fortunate to whom is soonest revealed the relative extent of his ambition and his powers. "My ambition was boundless; my dreams of glory were not confined to authorship and literature alone; but every sphere in which the intellect of man exerts itself revolved in a blaze of light before me. And there I sat in my solitude and dreamed such wondrous dreams! Events were thickening around me which were soon to change the world, but they were unmarked by me. The country was changing to a mighty theatre, on whose stage those who were as great as I fancied myself to be were to enact a stupendous drama in which I had no part. I saw it not; I knew it not; and yet how infinitely beautiful were the imaginations of my solitude! Fancy shook her kaleidoscope each moment as chance directed, and lo! what new, fantastic, brilliant, but what unmeaning visions. My ambitious anticipations were as boundless as they were various and conflicting. There was not a path which leads to glory in which I was not destined to gather laurels. As a warrior I would conquer and overrun the world. As a statesman I would reorganize and govern it. As a historian I would consign it all to immortality; and in my leisure moments I would be a great poet and a man of the world." In short, I was already enrolled in that large category of what are called young men of genius,—men who are the pride of their sisters and the glory of their grandmothers,—men of whom unheard-of things are expected, till after long preparation comes a portentous failure, and then they are forgotten; subsiding into indifferent apprentices and attorneys' clerks. "Alas for the golden imaginations of our youth! They are bright and beautiful, but they fade. They glitter brightly enough to deceive the wisest and most cautious, and we garner them up in the most secret caskets of our hearts; but are they not like the coins which the Dervise gave the merchant in the story? When we look for them the next morning, do we not find them withered leaves?"

The ideal picture just drawn is only a fuller portraiture of the youth whose outlines have been already sketched by the companions of his earlier years. If his hero says, "I breakfasted with a pen behind my ear and dined in company with a folio bigger than the table," one of his family says of the boy Motley that "if there were five minutes before dinner, when he came into the parlor he always took up some book near at hand and began to read until dinner was announced." The same unbounded thirst for knowledge, the same history of various attempts and various failures, the same ambition, not yet fixed in its aim, but showing itself in restless effort, belong to the hero of the story and its narrator.

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Let no man despise the first efforts of immature genius. Nothing can be more crude as a novel, nothing more disappointing, than "Morton's Hope." But in no other of Motley's writings do we get such an inside view of his character with its varied impulses, its capricious appetites, its unregulated forces, its impatient grasp for all kinds of knowledge. With all his university experiences at home and abroad, it might be said with a large measure of truth that he was a self-educated man, as he had been a self-taught boy. His instincts were too powerful to let him work quietly in the common round of school and college training. Looking at him as his companions describe him, as he delineates himself 'mutato nomine,' the chances of success would have seemed to all but truly prophetic eyes very doubtful, if not decidedly against him. Too many brilliant young novel-readers and lovers of poetry, excused by their admirers for their shortcomings on the strength of their supposed birthright of "genius," have ended where they began; flattered into the vain belief that they were men at eighteen or twenty, and finding out at fifty that they were and always had been nothing more than boys. It was but a tangled skein of life that Motley's book showed us at twenty-five, and older men might well have doubted whether it would ever be wound off in any continuous thread. To repeat his own words, he had crowded together the materials for his work, but he had no pattern, and consequently never began to weave.

The more this first work of Motley's is examined, the more are its faults as a story and its interest as a self-revelation made manifest to the reader. The future historian, who spared no pains to be accurate, falls into the most extraordinary anachronisms in almost every chapter. Brutus in a bob-wig, Othello in a swallow-tail coat, could hardly be more incongruously equipped than some of his characters in the manner of thought, the phrases, the way of bearing themselves which belong to them in the tale, but never could have belonged to characters of our Revolutionary period. He goes so far in his carelessness as to mix up dates in such a way as almost to convince us that he never looked over his own manuscript or proofs. His hero is in Prague in June, 1777, reading a letter received from America in less than a fortnight from the date of its being written; in August of the same year he is in the American camp, where he is found in the company of a certain Colonel Waldron, an officer of some standing in the Revolutionary Army, with whom he is said to have been constantly associated for some three months, having arrived in America, as he says, on the 15th of May, that is to say, six weeks or more before he sailed, according to his previous account. Bohemia seems to have bewitched his chronology as it did Shakespeare's geography. To have made his story a consistent series of contradictions, Morton should have sailed from that Bohemian seashore which may be found in "A Winter's Tale," but not in the map of Europe.

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And yet in the midst of all these marks of haste and negligence, here and there the philosophical student of history betrays himself, the ideal of noble achievement glows in an eloquent paragraph, or is embodied in a loving portrait like that of the professor and historian Harlem. The novel, taken in connection with the subsequent developments of the writer's mind, is a study of singular interest. It is a chaos before the creative epoch; the light has not been divided from the darkness; the firmament has not yet divided the waters from the waters. The forces at work in a human intelligence to bring harmony out of its discordant movements are as mysterious, as miraculous, we might truly say, as those which give shape and order to the confused materials out of which habitable worlds are evolved. It is too late now to be sensitive over this unsuccessful attempt as a story and unconscious success as a self-portraiture. The first sketches of Paul Veronese, the first patterns of the Gobelin tapestry, are not to be criticised for the sake of pointing out their inevitable and too manifest imperfections. They are to be carefully studied as the earliest efforts of the hand which painted the Marriage at Cana, of the art which taught the rude fabrics made to be trodden under foot to rival the glowing canvas of the great painters. None of Motley's subsequent writings give such an insight into his character and mental history. It took many years to train the as yet undisciplined powers into orderly obedience, and to bring the unarranged materials into the organic connection which was needed in the construction of a work that should endure. There was a long interval between his early manhood and the middle term of life, during which the slow process of evolution was going on. There are plants which open their flowers with the first rays of the sun; there are others that wait until evening to spread their petals. It was already the high noon of life with him before his genius had truly shown itself; if he had not lived beyond this period, he would have left nothing to give him a lasting name.

V.

1841-1842. AEt. 27-28.

First diplomatic appointment, secretary of legation to the Russian mission.—Brief residence at St. Petersburg.—Letter to his mother. —Return.

In the autumn of 1841, Mr. Motley received the appointment of Secretary of Legation to the Russian Mission, Mr. Todd being then the Minister. Arriving at St. Petersburg just at the beginning of winter, he found the climate acting very unfavorably upon his spirits if not upon his health, and was unwilling that his wife and his two young children should be exposed to its rigors. The expense of living, also, was out of proportion to his income, and his letters show

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that he had hardly established himself in St. Petersburg before he had made up his mind to leave a place where he found he had nothing to do and little to enjoy. He was homesick, too, as a young husband and father with an affectionate nature like his ought to have been under these circumstances. He did not regret having made the experiment, for he knew that he should not have been satisfied with himself if he had not made it. It was his first trial of a career in which he contemplated embarking, and in which afterwards he had an eventful experience. In his private letters to his family, many of which I have had the privilege of looking over, he mentions in detail all the reasons which influenced him in forming his own opinion about the expediency of a continued residence at St. Petersburg, and leaves the decision to her in whose judgment he always had the greatest confidence. No unpleasant circumstance attended his resignation of his secretaryship, and though it must have been a disappointment to find that the place did not suit him, as he and his family were then situated, it was only at the worst an experiment fairly tried and not proving satisfactory. He left St. Petersburg after a few months' residence, and returned to America. On reaching New York he was met by the sad tidings of the death of his first-born child, a boy of great promise, who had called out all the affections of his ardent nature. It was long before he recovered from the shock of this great affliction. The boy had shown a very quick and bright intelligence, and his father often betrayed a pride in his gifts and graces which he never for a moment made apparent in regard to his own.

Among the letters which he wrote from St. Petersburg are two miniature ones directed to this little boy. His affectionate disposition shows itself very sweetly in these touching mementos of a love of which his first great sorrow was so soon to be born. Not less charming are his letters to his mother, showing the tenderness with which he always regarded her, and full of all the details which he thought would entertain one to whom all that related to her children was always interesting. Of the letters to his wife it is needless to say more than that they always show the depth of the love he bore her and the absolute trust he placed in her, consulting her at all times as his nearest and wisest friend and adviser,—one in all respects fitted “To warn, to comfort, and command.”

I extract a passage from one of his letters to his mother, as much for the sake of lending a character of reality to his brief residence at St. Petersburg as for that of the pleasant picture it gives us of an interior in that Northern capital.

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"We entered through a small vestibule, with the usual arrangement of treble doors, padded with leather to exclude the cold and guarded by two 'proud young porters' in severe cocked hats and formidable batons, into a broad hall,—threw off our furred boots and cloaks, ascended a carpeted marble staircase, in every angle of which stood a statuesque footman in gaudy coat and unblemished unmentionables, and reached a broad landing upon the top thronged as usual with servants. Thence we passed through an antechamber into a long, high, brilliantly lighted, saffron-papered room, in which a dozen card-tables were arranged, and thence into the receiving room. This was a large room, with a splendidly inlaid and polished floor, the walls covered with crimson satin, the cornices heavily incrustated with gold, and the ceiling beautifully painted in arabesque. The massive fauteuils and sofas, as also the drapery, were of crimson satin with a profusion of gilding. The ubiquitous portrait of the Emperor was the only picture, and was the same you see everywhere. This crimson room had two doors upon the side facing the three windows: The innermost opened into a large supper-room, in which a table was spread covered with the usual refreshments of European parties,—tea, ices, lemonade, and *et ceteras*,—and the other opened into a ball-room which is a sort of miniature of the 'salle blanche' of the Winter Palace, being white and gold, and very brilliantly lighted with 'ormolu' chandeliers filled with myriads of candles. This room (at least forty feet long by perhaps twenty-five) opened into a carpeted conservatory of about the same size, filled with orange-trees and japonica plants covered with fruit and flowers, arranged very gracefully into arbors, with luxurious seats under the pendent boughs, and with here and there a pretty marble statue gleaming through the green and glossy leaves. One might almost have imagined one's self in the 'land of the cypress and myrtle' instead of our actual whereabouts upon the polar banks of the Neva. Wandering through these mimic groves, or reposing from the fatigues of the dance, was many a fair and graceful form, while the brilliantly lighted ballroom, filled with hundreds of exquisitely dressed women (for the Russian ladies, if not very pretty, are graceful, and make admirable toilettes), formed a dazzling contrast with the tempered light of the 'Winter Garden.' The conservatory opened into a library, and from the library you reach the antechamber, thus completing the 'giro' of one of the prettiest houses in St. Petersburg. I waltzed one waltz and quadrilled one quadrille, but it was hard work; and as the sole occupation of these parties is dancing and card-playing—conversation apparently not being customary—they are to me not very attractive."

He could not be happy alone, and there were good reasons against his being joined by his wife and children.

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"With my reserved habits," he says, "it would take a great deal longer to become intimate here than to thaw the Baltic. I have only to 'knock that it shall be opened to me,' but that is just what I hate to do. . . . 'Man delights not me, no, nor woman neither.'"

Disappointed in his expectations, but happy in the thought of meeting his wife and children, he came back to his household to find it clad in mourning for the loss of its first-born.

VI.

1844. AEt. 30. *Letter to park Benjamin.—Political views and feelings.*

A letter to Mr. Park Benjamin, dated December 17, 1844, which has been kindly lent me by Mrs. Mary Lanman Douw of Poughkeepsie, gives a very complete and spirited account of himself at this period. He begins with a quiet, but tender reference to the death of his younger brother, Preble, one of the most beautiful youths seen or remembered among us, "a great favorite," as he says, "in the family and in deed with every one who knew him." He mentions the fact that his friends and near connections, the Stackpoles, are in Washington, which place he considers as exceptionally odious at the time when he is writing. The election of Mr. Polk as the opponent of Henry Clay gives him a discouraged feeling about our institutions. The question, he thinks, is now settled that a statesman can never again be called to administer the government of the country. He is almost if not quite in despair "because it is now proved that a man, take him for all in all, better qualified by intellectual power, energy and purity of character, knowledge of men, a great combination of personal qualities, a frank, high-spirited, manly bearing, keen sense of honor, the power of attracting and winning men, united with a vast experience in affairs, such as no man (but John Quincy Adams) now living has had and no man in this country can ever have again,—I say it is proved that a man better qualified by an extraordinary combination of advantages to administer the government than any man now living, or any man we can ever produce again, can be beaten by anybody. . . . It has taken forty years of public life to prepare such a man for the Presidency, and the result is that he can be beaten by anybody,—Mr. Polk is anybody,—he is Mr. Quelconque."

I do not venture to quote the most burning sentences of this impassioned letter. It shows that Motley had not only become interested most profoundly in the general movements of parties, but that he had followed the course of political events which resulted in the election of Mr. Polk with careful study, and that he was already looking forward to the revolt of the slave States which occurred sixteen years later. The letter is full of fiery eloquence, now and then extravagant and even violent in expression, but throbbing with a generous heat which shows the excitable spirit

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of a man who wishes to be proud of his country and does not wish to keep his temper when its acts make him ashamed of it. He is disgusted and indignant to the last degree at seeing "Mr. Quelconque" chosen over the illustrious statesman who was his favorite candidate. But all his indignation cannot repress a sense of humor which was one of his marked characteristics. After fatiguing his vocabulary with hard usage, after his unsparing denunciation of "the very dirty politics" which he finds mixed up with our popular institutions, he says,—it must be remembered that this was an offhand letter to one nearly connected with him,—

"All these things must in short, to use the energetic language of the Balm of Columbia advertisement, 'bring every generous thinking youth to that heavy sinking gloom which not even the loss of property can produce, but only the loss of hair, which brings on premature decay, causing many to shrink from being uncovered, and even to shun society, to avoid the jests and sneers of their acquaintances. The remainder of their lives is consequently spent in retirement.'"

He continues:—

"Before dropping the subject, and to show the perfect purity of my motives, I will add that I am not at all anxious about the legislation of the new government. I desired the election of Clay as a moral triumph, and because the administration of the country, at this moment of ten thousand times more importance than its legislation, would have been placed in pure, strong, and determined hands."

Then comes a dash of that satirical and somewhat cynical way of feeling which he had not as yet outgrown. He had been speaking about the general want of attachment to the Union and the absence of the sentiment of loyalty as bearing on the probable dissolution of the Union.

"I don't mean to express any opinions on these matters,—I haven't got any. It seems to me that the best way is to look at the hodge-podge, be good-natured if possible, and laugh,

'As from the height of contemplation
We view the feeble joints men totter on.'

I began a tremendous political career during the election, having made two stump speeches of an hour and a half each,—after you went away,—one in Dedham town-hall and one in Jamaica Plain, with such eminent success that many invitations came to me from the surrounding villages, and if I had continued in active political life I might have risen to be vote-distributor, or fence-viewer, or selectman, or hog-reeve, or something of the kind."

The letter from which the above passages are quoted gives the same portrait of the writer, only seen in profile, as it were, which we have already seen drawn in full face in the story of "Morton's Hope." It is charged with that 'saeva indignatio' which at times verges on misanthropic contempt for its objects, not unnatural to a high-spirited

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young man who sees his lofty ideals confronted with the ignoble facts which strew the highways of political life. But we can recognize real conviction and the deepest feeling beneath his scornful rhetoric and his bitter laugh. He was no more a mere dilettante than Swift himself, but now and then in the midst of his most serious thought some absurd or grotesque image will obtrude itself, and one is reminded of the lines on the monument of Gay rather than of the fierce epitaph of the Dean of Saint Patrick's.

VII.

1845-1847. AEt. 31-33.

First historical and critical essays.—Peter the great.—Novels of Balzac.—Polity of the puritans.

Mr. Motley's first serious effort in historical composition was an article of fifty pages in "The North American Review" for October, 1845. This was nominally a notice of two works, one on Russia, the other "A Memoir of the Life of Peter the Great." It is, however, a narrative rather than a criticism, a rapid, continuous, brilliant, almost dramatic narrative. If there had been any question as to whether the young novelist who had missed his first mark had in him the elements which might give him success as an author, this essay would have settled the question. It shows throughout that the writer has made a thorough study of his subject, but it is written with an easy and abundant, yet scholarly freedom, not as if he were surrounded by his authorities and picking out his material piece by piece, but rather as if it were the overflow of long-pursued and well-remembered studies recalled without effort and poured forth almost as a recreation.

As he betrayed or revealed his personality in his first novel, so in this first effort in another department of literature he showed in epitome his qualities as a historian and a biographer. The hero of his narrative makes his entrance at once in his character as the shipwright of Saardam, on the occasion of a visit of the great Duke of Marlborough. The portrait instantly arrests attention. His ideal personages had been drawn in such a sketchy way, they presented so many imperfectly harmonized features, that they never became real, with the exception, of course, of the story-teller himself. But the vigor with which the presentment of the imperial ship-carpenter, the sturdy, savage, eager, fiery Peter, was given in the few opening sentences, showed the movement of the hand, the glow of the color, that were in due time to display on a broader canvas the full-length portraits of William the Silent and of John of Barneveld. The style of the whole article is rich, fluent, picturesque, with light touches of humor here and there, and perhaps a trace or two of youthful jauntiness, not quite as yet outgrown. His illustrative poetical quotations are mostly from Shakespeare,—from Milton and Byron also in a passage or

two,—and now and then one is reminded that he is not unfamiliar with Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus" and the "French Revolution" of the same unmistakable writer, more perhaps by the way in which phrases borrowed from other authorities are set in the text than by any more important evidence of unconscious imitation.

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The readers who had shaken their heads over the unsuccessful story of “Morton’s Hope” were startled by the appearance of this manly and scholarly essay. This young man, it seemed, had been studying,—studying with careful accuracy, with broad purpose. He could paint a character with the ruddy life-blood coloring it as warmly as it glows in the cheeks of one of Van der Helst’s burgomasters. He could sweep the horizon in a wide general outlook, and manage his perspective and his lights and shadows so as to place and accent his special subject with its due relief and just relations. It was a sketch, or rather a study for a larger picture, but it betrayed the hand of a master. The feeling of many was that expressed in the words of Mr. Longfellow in his review of the “Twice-Told Tales” of the unknown young writer, Nathaniel Hawthorne: “When a new star rises in the heavens, people gaze after it for a season with the naked eye, and with such telescopes as they may find. . . . This star is but newly risen; and ere long the observation of numerous star-gazers, perched up on arm-chairs and editor’s tables, will inform the world of its magnitude and its place in the heaven of”—not poetry in this instance, but that serene and unclouded region of the firmament where shine unchanging the names of Herodotus and Thucydides. Those who had always believed in their brilliant schoolmate and friend at last felt themselves justified in their faith. The artist that sent this unframed picture to be hung in a corner of the literary gallery was equal to larger tasks. There was but one voice in the circle that surrounded the young essayist. He must redeem his pledge, he can and will redeem it, if he will only follow the bent of his genius and grapple with the heroic labor of writing a great history.

And this was the achievement he was already meditating.

In the mean time he was studying history for its facts and principles, and fiction for its scenery and portraits. In “The North American Review” for July, 1847, is a long and characteristic article on Balzac, of whom he was an admirer, but with no blind worship. The readers of this great story-teller, who was so long in obtaining recognition, who “made twenty assaults upon fame and had forty books killed under him” before he achieved success, will find his genius fully appreciated and fairly weighed in this discriminating essay. A few brief extracts will show its quality.

“Balzac is an artist, and only an artist. In his tranquil, unimpassioned, remorseless diagnosis of morbid phenomena, in his cool method of treating the morbid anatomy of the heart, in his curiously accurate dissection of the passions, in the patient and painful attention with which, stethoscope in hand, finger on pulse, eye everywhere, you see him watching every symptom, alive to every sound and every breath, and in the scientific accuracy with which he portrays the phenomena which have been the subject of his investigation,—in

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all this calm and conscientious study of nature he often reminds us of Goethe. Balzac, however, is only an artist . . . He is neither moral nor immoral, but a calm and profound observer of human society and human passions, and a minute, patient, and powerful delineator of scenes and characters in the world before his eyes. His readers must moralize for themselves. . . . It is, perhaps, his defective style more than anything else which will prevent his becoming a classic, for style above all other qualities seems to embalm for posterity. As for his philosophy, his principles, moral, political, or social, we repeat that he seems to have none whatever. He looks for the picturesque and the striking. He studies sentiments and sensations from an artistic point of view. He is a physiognomist, a physiologist, a bit of an anatomist, a bit of a mesmerist, a bit of a geologist, a Flemish painter, an upholsterer, a micrological, misanthropical, sceptical philosopher; but he is no moralist, and certainly no reformer.”

Another article contributed by Mr. Motley to “The North American Review” is to be found in the number for October, 1849. It is nominally a review of Talvi’s (Mrs. Robinson’s) “Geschichte der Colonisation von New England,” but in reality an essay on the Polity of the Puritans,—an historical disquisition on the principles of self-government evolved in New England, broad in its views, eloquent in its language. Its spirit is thoroughly American, and its estimate of the Puritan character is not narrowed by the nearsighted liberalism which sees the past in the pitiless light of the present,—which looks around at high noon and finds fault with early dawn for its long and dark shadows. Here is a sentence or two from the article:—

“With all the faults of the system devised by the Puritans, it was a practical system. With all their foibles, with all their teasing, tyrannical, and arbitrary notions, the Pilgrims were lovers of liberty as well as sticklers for authority. . . . Nowhere can a better description of liberty be found than that given by Winthrop, in his defence of himself before the General Court on a charge of arbitrary conduct. ‘Nor would I have you mistake your own liberty,’ he says. ‘There is a freedom of doing what we list, without regard to law or justice; this liberty is indeed inconsistent with authority; but civil, moral, and federal liberty consists in every man’s enjoying his property and having the benefit of the laws of his country; which is very consistent with a due subjection to the civil magistrate.’ . . . “We enjoy an inestimable advantage in America. One can be a republican, a democrat, without being a radical. A radical, one who would uproot, is a man whose trade is dangerous to society. Here is but little to uproot. The trade cannot flourish. All classes are conservative by necessity, for none can wish to change the structure of our polity. . .

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"The country without a past cannot be intoxicated by visions of the past of other lands. Upon this absence of the past it seems to us that much of the security of our institutions depends. Nothing interferes with the development of what is now felt to be the true principle of government, the will of the people legitimately expressed. To establish that great truth, nothing was to be torn down, nothing to be uprooted. It grew up in New England out of the seed unconsciously planted by the first Pilgrims, was not crushed out by the weight of a thousand years of error spread over the whole continent, and the Revolution was proclaimed and recognized."

VIII.

1847-1849. AEt. 33-35.

Joseph Lewis Stackpole, the friend of motley. His sudden death.—Motley in the Massachusetts house of representatives.—Second novel, "Merry-mount, A romance of the Massachusetts colony."

The intimate friendships of early manhood are not very often kept up among our people. The eager pursuit of fortune, position, office, separates young friends, and the indoor home life imprisons them in the domestic circle so generally that it is quite exceptional to find two grown men who are like brothers,—or rather unlike most brothers, in being constantly found together. An exceptional instance of such a more than fraternal relation was seen in the friendship of Mr. Motley and Mr. Joseph Lewis Stackpole. Mr. William Amory, who knew them both well, has kindly furnished me with some recollections, which I cannot improve by changing his own language.

"Their intimacy began in Europe, and they returned to this country in 1835. In 1837 they married sisters, and this cemented their intimacy, which continued to Stackpole's death in 1847. The contrast in the temperament of the two friends—the one sensitive and irritable, and the other always cool and good-natured—only increased their mutual attachment to each other, and Motley's dependence upon Stackpole. Never were two friends more constantly together or more affectionately fond of each other. As Stackpole was about eight years older than Motley, and much less impulsive and more discreet, his death was to his friend irreparable, and at the time an overwhelming blow."

Mr. Stackpole was a man of great intelligence, of remarkable personal attractions, and amiable character. His death was a loss to Motley even greater than he knew, for he needed just such a friend, older, calmer, more experienced in the ways of the world, and above all capable of thoroughly understanding him and exercising a wholesome influence over his excitable nature without the seeming of a Mentor preaching to a Telemachus. Mr. Stackpole was killed by a railroad accident on the 20th of July, 1847.

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In the same letter Mr. Amory refers to a very different experience in Mr. Motley's life,—his one year of service as a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, 1849.

"In respect to the one term during which he was a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, I can recall only one thing, to which he often and laughingly alluded. Motley, as the Chairman of the Committee on Education, made, as he thought, a most masterly report. It was very elaborate, and, as he supposed, unanswerable; but Boutwell, then a young man from some country town [Groton, Mass.], rose, and as Motley always said, demolished the report, so that he was unable to defend it against the attack. You can imagine his disgust, after the pains he had taken to render it unassailable, to find himself, as he expressed it, 'on his own dunghill,' ignominiously beaten. While the result exalted his opinion of the speech-making faculty of a Representative of a common school education, it at the same time cured him of any ambition for political promotion in Massachusetts."

To my letter of inquiry about this matter, Hon. George S. Boutwell courteously returned the following answer:—

Boston, October 14, 1878.

My dear sir,—As my memory serves me, Mr. Motley was a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives in the year 1847 1849. It may be well to consult the manual for that year. I recollect the controversy over the report from the Committee on Education.

His failure was not due to his want of faculty or to the vigor of his opponents.

In truth he espoused the weak side of the question and the unpopular one also. His proposition was to endow the colleges at the expense of the fund for the support of the common schools. Failure was inevitable. Neither Webster nor Choate could have carried the bill.

Very truly,
Geo. S. Boutwell.

No one could be more ready and willing to recognize his own failures than Motley. He was as honest and manly, perhaps I may say as sympathetic with the feeling of those about him, on this occasion, as was Charles Lamb, who, sitting with his sister in the front of the pit, on the night when his farce was damned at its first representation, gave way to the common feeling, and hissed and hooted lustily with the others around him. It was what might be expected from his honest and truthful nature, sometimes too severe in judging itself.

The commendation bestowed upon Motley's historical essays in "The North American Review" must have gone far towards compensating him for the ill success of his earlier venture. It pointed clearly towards the field in which he was to gather his laurels. And it was in the year following the publication of the first essay, or about that time (1846), that he began collecting materials for a history of Holland. Whether to tell the story of men that have lived and of events that have happened, or to create the characters and invent the incidents of an imaginary tale be the higher task, we need not stop to discuss. But the young author was just now like the great actor in Sir Joshua's picture, between the allurements of Thalia and Melpomene, still doubtful whether he was to be a romancer or a historian.

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The tale of which the title is given at the beginning of this section had been written several years before the date of its publication. It is a great advance in certain respects over the first novel, but wants the peculiar interest which belonged to that as a partially autobiographical memoir. The story is no longer disjointed and impossible. It is carefully studied in regard to its main facts. It has less to remind us of "Vivian Grey" and "Pelham," and more that recalls "Woodstock" and "Kenilworth." The personages were many of them historical, though idealized; the occurrences were many of them such as the record authenticated; the localities were drawn largely from nature. The story betrays marks of haste or carelessness in some portions, though others are elaborately studied. His preface shows that the reception of his first book had made him timid and sensitive about the fate of the second, and explains and excuses what might be found fault with, to disarm the criticism he had some reason to fear.

That old watch-dog of our American literature, "The North American Review," always ready with lambent phrases in stately "Articles" for native talent of a certain pretension, and wagging its appendix of "Critical Notices" kindly at the advent of humbler merit, treated "Merry-Mount" with the distinction implied in a review of nearly twenty pages. This was a great contrast to the brief and slighting notice of "Morton's Hope." The reviewer thinks the author's descriptive power wholly exceeds his conception of character and invention of circumstances.

"He dwells, perhaps, too long and fondly upon his imagination of the landscape as it was before the stillness of the forest had been broken by the axe of the settler; but the picture is so finely drawn, with so much beauty of language and purity of sentiment, that we cannot blame him for lingering upon the scene. . . . The story is not managed with much skill, but it has variety enough of incident and character, and is told with so much liveliness that few will be inclined to lay it down before reaching the conclusion. . . . The writer certainly needs practice in elaborating the details of a consistent and interesting novel; but in many respects he is well qualified for the task, and we shall be glad to meet him again on the half-historical ground he has chosen. His present work, certainly, is not a fair specimen of what he is able to accomplish, and its failure, or partial success, ought only to inspirit him for further effort."

The "half-historical ground" he had chosen had already led him to the entrance into the broader domain of history. The "further effort" for which he was to be inspirited had already begun. He had been for some time, as was before mentioned, collecting materials for the work which was to cast all his former attempts into the kindly shadow of oblivion, save when from time to time the light of his brilliant after success is thrown upon them to illustrate the path by which it was at length attained.

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IX.

1850. AEt. 36. *Plan of A history.—Letters.*

The reputation of Mr. Prescott was now coextensive with the realm of scholarship. The histories of the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella and of the conquest of Mexico had met with a reception which might well tempt the ambition of a young writer to emulate it, but which was not likely to be awarded to any second candidate who should enter the field in rivalry with the great and universally popular historian. But this was the field on which Mr. Motley was to venture.

After he had chosen the subject of the history he contemplated, he found that Mr. Prescott was occupied with a kindred one, so that there might be too near a coincidence between them. I must borrow from Mr. Ticknor's beautiful life of Prescott the words which introduce a letter of Motley's to Mr. William Amory, who has kindly allowed me also to make use of it.

"The moment, therefore, that he [Mr. Motley] was aware of this condition of things, and the consequent possibility that there might be an untoward interference in their plans, he took the same frank and honorable course with Mr. Prescott that Mr. Prescott had taken in relation to Mr. Irving, when he found that they had both been contemplating a 'History of the Conquest of Mexico.' The result was the same. Mr. Prescott, instead of treating the matter as an interference, earnestly encouraged Mr. Motley to go on, and placed at his disposition such of the books in his library as could be most useful to him. How amply and promptly he did it, Mr. Motley's own account will best show. It is in a letter dated at Rome, 26th February, 1859, the day he heard of Mr. Prescott's death, and was addressed to his intimate friend, Mr. William Amory, of Boston, Mr. Prescott's much-loved brother-in-law." "It seems to me but as yesterday," Mr. Motley writes, "though it must be now twelve years ago, that I was talking with our ever-lamented friend Stackpole about my intention of writing a history upon a subject to which I have since that time been devoting myself. I had then made already some general studies in reference to it, without being in the least aware that Prescott had the intention of writing the 'History of Philip the Second.' Stackpole had heard the fact, and that large preparations had already been made for the work, although 'Peru' had not yet been published. I felt naturally much disappointed. I was conscious of the immense disadvantage to myself of making my appearance, probably at the same time, before the public, with a work not at all similar in plan to 'Philip the Second,' but which must of necessity traverse a portion of the same ground." "My first thought was inevitably, as it were, only of myself. It seemed to me that I had nothing to do but to abandon at once a cherished dream, and probably to renounce authorship.

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For I had not first made up my mind to write a history, and then cast about to take up a subject. My subject had taken me up, drawn me on, and absorbed me into itself. It was necessary for me, it seemed, to write the book I had been thinking much of, even if it were destined to fall dead from the press, and I had no inclination or interest to write any other. When I had made up my mind accordingly, it then occurred to me that Prescott might not be pleased that I should come forward upon his ground. It is true that no announcement of his intentions had been made, and that he had not, I believe, even commenced his preliminary studies for Philip. At the same time I thought it would be disloyal on my part not to go to him at once, confer with him on the subject, and if I should find a shadow of dissatisfaction on his mind at my proposition, to abandon my plan altogether. "I had only the slightest acquaintance with him at that time. I was comparatively a young man, and certainly not entitled on any ground to more than the common courtesy which Prescott never could refuse to any one. But he received me with such a frank and ready and liberal sympathy, and such an open-hearted, guileless expansiveness, that I felt a personal affection for him from that hour. I remember the interview as if it had taken place yesterday. It was in his father's house, in his own library, looking on the garden-house and garden,—honored father and illustrious son,—alas! all numbered with the things that were! He assured me that he had not the slightest objection whatever to my plan, that he wished me every success, and that, if there were any books in his library bearing on my subject that I liked to use, they were entirely at my service. After I had expressed my gratitude for his kindness and cordiality, by which I had been in a very few moments set completely at ease, —so far as my fears of his disapprobation went,—I also very naturally stated my opinion that the danger was entirely mine, and that it was rather wilful of me thus to risk such a collision at my first venture, the probable consequence of which was utter shipwreck. I recollect how kindly and warmly he combated this opinion, assuring me that no two books, as he said, ever injured each other, and encouraging me in the warmest and most earnest manner to proceed on the course I had marked out for myself. "Had the result of that interview been different,—had he distinctly stated, or even vaguely hinted, that it would be as well if I should select some other topic, or had he only sprinkled me with the cold water of conventional and commonplace encouragement,—I should have gone from him with a chill upon my mind, and, no doubt, have laid down the pen at once; for, as I have already said, it was not that I cared about writing a history, but that I felt an inevitable impulse to write one particular history. "You know how kindly he always

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spoke of and to me; and the generous manner in which, without the slightest hint from me, and entirely unexpected by me, he attracted the eyes of his hosts of readers to my forthcoming work, by so handsomely alluding to it in the Preface to his own, must be almost as fresh in your memory as it is in mine. "And although it seems easy enough for a man of world-wide reputation thus to extend the right hand of fellowship to an unknown and struggling aspirant, yet I fear that the history of literature will show that such instances of disinterested kindness are as rare as they are noble."

It was not from any feeling that Mr. Motley was a young writer from whose rivalry he had nothing to apprehend. Mr. Amory says that Prescott expressed himself very decidedly to the effect that an author who had written such descriptive passages as were to be found in Mr. Motley's published writings was not to be undervalued as a competitor by any one. The reader who will turn to the description of Charles River in the eighth chapter of the second volume of "Merry-Mount," or of the autumnal woods in the sixteenth chapter of the same volume, will see good reason for Mr. Prescott's appreciation of the force of the rival whose advent he so heartily and generously welcomed.

X.

1851-1856. AEt. 37-42. *Historical studies in Europe.*-*Letter from Brussels.*

After working for several years on his projected "History of the Dutch Republic," he found that, in order to do justice to his subject, he must have recourse to the authorities to be found only in the libraries and state archives of Europe. In the year 1851 he left America with his family, to begin his task over again, throwing aside all that he had already done, and following up his new course of investigations at Berlin, Dresden, the Hague, and Brussels during several succeeding years. I do not know that I can give a better idea of his mode of life during this busy period, his occupations, his state of mind, his objects of interest outside of his special work, than by making the following extracts from a long letter to myself, dated Brussels, 20th November, 1853.

After some personal matters he continued:—

"I don't really know what to say to you. I am in a town which, for aught I know, may be very gay. I don't know a living soul in it. We have not a single acquaintance in the place, and we glory in the fact. There is something rather sublime in thus floating on a single spar in the wide sea of a populous, busy, fuming, fussy world like this. At any rate it is consonant to both our tastes. You may suppose, however, that I find it rather difficult to amuse my friends out of the incidents of so isolated an existence. Our daily career is very regular and monotonous. Our life is as stagnant as a Dutch canal. Not that I complain of it,—on the contrary,

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the canal may be richly freighted with merchandise and be a short cut to the ocean of abundant and perpetual knowledge; but, at the same time, few points rise above the level of so regular a life, to be worthy of your notice. You must, therefore, allow me to meander along the meadows of commonplace. Don't expect anything of the impetuous and boiling style. We go it weak here. I don't know whether you were ever in Brussels. It is a striking, picturesque town, built up a steep promontory, the old part at the bottom, very dingy and mouldy, the new part at the top, very showy and elegant. Nothing can be more exquisite in its way than the grande place in the very heart of the city, surrounded with those toppling, zigzag, ten-storied buildings bedizened all over with ornaments and emblems so peculiar to the Netherlands, with the brocaded Hotel de Ville on one side, with its impossible spire rising some three hundred and seventy feet into the air and embroidered to the top with the delicacy of needle-work, sugarwork, spider-work, or what you will. I haunt this place because it is my scene, my theatre. Here were enacted so many deep tragedies, so many stately dramas, and even so many farces, which have been familiar to me so long that I have got to imagine myself invested with a kind of property in the place, and look at it as if it were merely the theatre with the coulisses, machinery, drapery, *etc.*, for representing scenes which have long since vanished, and which no more enter the minds of the men and women who are actually moving across its pavements than if they had occurred in the moon. When I say that I knew no soul in Brussels I am perhaps wrong. With the present generation I am not familiar. 'En revanche,' the dead men of the place are my intimate friends. I am at home in any cemetery. With the fellows of the sixteenth century I am on the most familiar terms. Any ghost that ever flits by night across the moonlight square is at once hailed by me as a man and a brother. I call him by his Christian name at once. When you come out of this place, however, which, as I said, is in the heart of the town,—the antique gem in the modern setting,—you may go either up or down. If you go down, you will find yourself in the very nastiest complications of lanes and culs-de-sac possible, a dark entanglement of gin-shops, beer-houses, and hovels, through which charming valley dribbles the Senne (whence, I suppose, is derived Senna), the most nauseous little river in the world, which receives all the outpourings of all the drains and houses, and is then converted into beer for the inhabitants, all the many breweries being directly upon its edge. If you go up the hill instead of down, you come to an arrangement of squares, palaces, and gardens as trim and fashionable as you will find in Europe. Thus you see that our Cybele sits with her head crowned with very stately towers and her feet in a tub of very dirty water."My habits here for the present

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year are very regular. I came here, having, as I thought, finished my work, or rather the first Part (something like three or four volumes, 8vo), but I find so much original matter here, and so many emendations to make, that I am ready to despair. However, there is nothing for it but to penelopeize, pull to pieces, and stitch away again. Whatever may be the result of my labor, nobody can say that I have not worked like a brute beast,—but I don't care for the result. The labor is in itself its own reward and all I want. I go day after day to the archives here (as I went all summer at the Hague), studying the old letters and documents of the fifteenth century. Here I remain among my fellow-worms, feeding on these musty mulberry-leaves, out of which we are afterwards to spin our silk. How can you expect anything interesting from such a human cocoon? It is, however, not without its amusement in a mouldy sort of way, this reading of dead letters. It is something to read the real, bona fide signs-manual of such fellows as William of Orange, Count Egmont, Alexander Farnese, Philip *ii.*, Cardinal Granvelle, and the rest of them. It gives a 'realizing sense,' as the Americans have it. . . . There are not many public resources of amusement in this place,—if we wanted them,—which we don't. I miss the Dresden Gallery very much, and it makes me sad to think that I shall never look at the face of the Sistine Madonna again,—that picture beyond all pictures in the world, in which the artist certainly did get to heaven and painted a face which was never seen on earth—so pathetic, so gentle, so passionless, so prophetic. . . . There are a few good Rubenses here,—but the great wealth of that master is in Antwerp. The great picture of the Descent from the Cross is free again, after having been ten years in the repairing room. It has come out in very good condition. What a picture? It seems to me as if I had really stood at the cross and seen Mary weeping on John's shoulder, and Magdalen receiving the dead body of the Saviour in her arms. Never was the grand tragedy represented in so profound and dramatic a manner. For it is not only in his color in which this man so easily surpasses all the world, but in his life-like, flesh-and-blood action,—the tragic power of his composition. And is it not appalling to think of the 'large constitution of this man,' when you reflect on the acres of canvas which he has covered? How inspiring to see with what muscular, masculine vigor this splendid Fleming rushed in and plucked up drowning Art by the locks when it was sinking in the trashy sea of such creatures as the Luca Giordanos and Pietro Cortonas and the like. Well might Guido exclaim, 'The fellow mixes blood with his colors! . . . How providentially did the man come in and invoke living, breathing, moving men and women out of his canvas! Sometimes he is ranting and exaggerated, as are all men of great genius who wrestle with Nature so boldly. No doubt

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his heroines are more expansively endowed than would be thought genteel in our country, where cryptogams are so much in fashion, nevertheless there is always something very tremendous about him, and very often much that is sublime, pathetic, and moving. I defy any one of the average amount of imagination and sentiment to stand long before the Descent from the Cross without being moved more nearly to tears than he would care to acknowledge. As for color, his effects are as sure as those of the sun rising in a tropical landscape. There is something quite genial in the cheerful sense of his own omnipotence which always inspired him. There are a few fine pictures of his here, and I go in sometimes of a raw, foggy morning merely to warm myself in the blaze of their beauty."

I have been more willing to give room to this description of Rubens's pictures and the effect they produced upon Motley, because there is a certain affinity between those sumptuous and glowing works of art and the prose pictures of the historian who so admired them. He was himself a colorist in language, and called up the image of a great personage or a splendid pageant of the past with the same affluence, the same rich vitality, that floods and warms the vast areas of canvas over which the full-fed genius of Rubens disported itself in the luxury of imaginative creation.

XI.

1856-1857. AEt. 42-43.

Publication of his first historical work, "Rise of the Dutch republic." —Its reception.—Critical notices.

The labor of ten years was at last finished. Carrying his formidable manuscript with him, —and how formidable the manuscript which melts down into three solid octavo volumes is, only writers and publishers know,—he knocked at the gate of that terrible fortress from which Lintot and Curll and Tonson looked down on the authors of an older generation. So large a work as the "History of the Rise of the Dutch Republic," offered for the press by an author as yet unknown to the British public, could hardly expect a warm welcome from the great dealers in literature as merchandise. Mr. Murray civilly declined the manuscript which was offered to him, and it was published at its author's expense by Mr. John Chapman. The time came when the positions of the first-named celebrated publisher and the unknown writer were reversed. Mr. Murray wrote to Mr. Motley asking to be allowed to publish his second great work, the "History of the United Netherlands," expressing at the same time his regret at what he candidly called his mistake in the first instance, and thus they were at length brought into business connection as well as the most agreeable and friendly relations. An American edition was published by the Harpers at the same time as the London one.

If the new work of the unknown author found it difficult to obtain a publisher, it was no sooner given to the public than it found an approving, an admiring, an enthusiastic world of readers, and a noble welcome at the colder hands of the critics.

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"The Westminster Review" for April, 1856, had for its leading article a paper by Mr. Froude, in which the critic awarded the highest praise to the work of the new historian. As one of the earliest as well as one of the most important recognitions of the work, I quote some of its judgments.

"A history as complete as industry and genius can make it now lies before us of the first twenty years of the Revolt of the United Provinces; of the period in which those provinces finally conquered their independence and established the Republic of Holland. It has been the result of many years of silent, thoughtful, unobtrusive labor, and unless we are strangely mistaken, unless we are ourselves altogether unfit for this office of criticising which we have here undertaken, the book is one which will take its place among the finest histories in this or in any language. . . . All the essentials of a great writer Mr. Motley eminently possesses. His mind is broad, his industry unwearied. In power of dramatic description no modern historian, except perhaps Mr. Carlyle, surpasses him, and in analysis of character he is elaborate and distinct. His principles are those of honest love for all which is good and admirable in human character wherever he finds it, while he unaffectedly hates oppression, and despises selfishness with all his heart."

After giving a slight analytical sketch of the series of events related in the history, Mr. Froude objects to only one of the historian's estimates, that, namely, of the course of Queen Elizabeth.

"It is ungracious, however," he says, "even to find so slight a fault with these admirable volumes. Mr. Motley has written without haste, with the leisurely composure of a master. . . . We now take our leave of Mr. Motley, desiring him only to accept our hearty thanks for these volumes, which we trust will soon take their place in every English library. Our quotations will have sufficed to show the ability of the writer. Of the scope and general character of his work we have given but a languid conception. The true merit of a great book must be learned from the book itself. Our part has been rather to select varied specimens of style and power. Of Mr. Motley's antecedents we know nothing. If he has previously appeared before the public, his reputation has not crossed the Atlantic. It will not be so now. We believe that we may promise him as warm a welcome among ourselves as he will receive even in America; that his place will be at once conceded to him among the first historians in our common language."

The faithful and unwearied Mr. Allibone has swept the whole field of contemporary criticism, and shown how wide and universal was the welcome accorded to the hitherto unknown author. An article headed "Prescott and Motley," attributed to M. Guizot, which must have been translated, I suppose, from his own language, judging by its freedom from French idioms, is to be found in "The Edinburgh Review" for January, 1857. The praise, not unmingled with criticisms, which that great historian bestowed upon Motley is less significant than the fact that he superintended a translation of the "Rise of the Dutch Republic," and himself wrote the Introduction to it.

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A general chorus of approbation followed or accompanied these leading voices. The reception of the work in Great Britain was a triumph. On the Continent, in addition to the tribute paid to it by M. Guizot, it was translated into Dutch, into German, and into Russian. At home his reception was not less hearty. "The North American Review," which had set its foot on the semi-autobiographical medley which he called "Morton's Hope," which had granted a decent space and a tepid recognition to his "semi-historical" romance, in which he had already given the reading public a taste of his quality as a narrator of real events and a delineator of real personages,—this old and awe-inspiring New England and more than New England representative of the Fates, found room for a long and most laudatory article, in which the son of one of our most distinguished historians did the honors of the venerable literary periodical to the new-comer, for whom the folding-doors of all the critical headquarters were flying open as if of themselves. Mr. Allibone has recorded the opinions of some of our best scholars as expressed to him.

Dr. Lieber wrote a letter to Mr. Allibone in the strongest terms of praise. I quote one passage which in the light of after events borrows a cruel significance:—

"Congress and Parliament decree thanks for military exploits, —rarely for diplomatic achievements. If they ever voted their thanks for books,—and what deeds have influenced the course of human events more than some books?—Motley ought to have the thanks of our Congress; but I doubt not that he has already the thanks of every American who has read the work. It will leave its distinct mark upon the American mind."

Mr. Everett writes:—

"Mr. Motley's 'History of the Dutch Republic' is in my judgment a work of the highest merit. Unwearying research for years in the libraries of Europe, patience and judgment in arranging and digesting his materials, a fine historical tact, much skill in characterization, the perspective of narration, as it may be called, and a vigorous style unite to make it a very capital work, and place the name of Motley by the side of those of our great historical trio,—Bancroft, Irving, and Prescott."

Mr. Irving, Mr. Bancroft, Mr. Sumner, Mr. Hillard, united their voices in the same strain of commendation. Mr. Prescott, whose estimate of the new history is of peculiar value for obvious reasons, writes to Mr. Allibone thus:—

"The opinion of any individual seems superfluous in respect to a work on the merits of which the public both at home and abroad have pronounced so unanimous a verdict. As Motley's path crosses my own historic field, I may be thought to possess some advantage over most critics in my familiarity with the ground." "However this may be, I can honestly bear my testimony to the extent of his researches and to the accuracy with which he has given the results

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of them to the public. Far from making his book a mere register of events, he has penetrated deep below the surface and explored the cause of these events. He has carefully studied the physiognomy of the times and given finished portraits of the great men who conducted the march of the revolution. Every page is instinct with the love of freedom and with that personal knowledge of the working of free institutions which could alone enable him to do justice to his subject. We may congratulate ourselves that it was reserved for one of our countrymen to tell the story—better than it had yet been told—of this memorable revolution, which in so many of its features bears a striking resemblance to our own.”

The public welcomed the work as cordially as the critics. Fifteen thousand copies had already been sold in London in 1857. In America it was equally popular. Its author saw his name enrolled by common consent among those of the great writers of his time. Europe accepted him, his country was proud to claim him, scholarship set its jealously guarded seal upon the result of his labors, the reading world, which had not cared greatly for his stories, hung in delight over a narrative more exciting than romances; and the lonely student, who had almost forgotten the look of living men in the solitude of archives haunted by dead memories, found himself suddenly in the full blaze of a great reputation.

XII.

1856-1857. AEt. 42-43. *Visit to America.—Residence in Boylston place.*

He visited this country in 1856, and spent the winter of 1856-57 in Boston, living with his family in a house in Boylston Place. At this time I had the pleasure of meeting him often, and of seeing the changes which maturity, success, the opening of a great literary and social career, had wrought in his character and bearing. He was in every way greatly improved; the interesting, impulsive youth had ripened into a noble manhood. Dealing with great themes, his own mind had gained their dignity. Accustomed to the company of dead statesmen and heroes, his own ideas had risen to a higher standard. The flattery of society had added a new grace to his natural modesty. He was now a citizen of the world by his reputation; the past was his province, in which he was recognized as a master; the idol's pedestal was ready for him, but he betrayed no desire to show himself upon it.

XIII.

1858-1860. AEt. 44-46. *Return to England.—Social relations.—Lady Harcourt's letter.*

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During the years spent in Europe in writing his first history, from 1851 to 1856, Mr. Motley had lived a life of great retirement and simplicity, devoting himself to his work and to the education of his children, to which last object he was always ready to give the most careful supervision. He was as yet unknown beyond the circle of his friends, and he did not seek society. In this quiet way he had passed the two years of residence in Dresden, the year divided between Brussels and the Hague, and a very tranquil year spent at Vevay on the Lake of Geneva. His health at this time was tolerably good, except for nervous headaches, which frequently recurred and were of great severity. His visit to England with his manuscript in search of a publisher has already been mentioned.

In 1858 he revisited England. His fame as a successful author was there before him, and he naturally became the object of many attentions. He now made many acquaintances who afterwards became his kind and valued friends. Among those mentioned by his daughter, Lady Harcourt, are Lord Lyndhurst, Lord Carlisle, Lady William Russell, Lord and Lady Palmerston, Dean Milman, with many others. The following winter was passed in Rome, among many English and American friends.

"In the course of the next summer," his daughter writes to me, "we all went to England, and for the next two years, marked chiefly by the success of the 'United Netherlands,' our social life was most agreeable and most interesting. He was in the fulness of his health and powers; his works had made him known in intellectual society, and I think his presence, on the other hand, increased their effects. As no one knows better than you do, his belief in his own country and in its institutions at their best was so passionate and intense that it was a part of his nature, yet his refined and fastidious tastes were deeply gratified by the influences of his life in England, and the spontaneous kindness which he received added much to his happiness. At that time Lord Palmerston was Prime Minister; the weekly receptions at Cambridge House were the centre of all that was brilliant in the political and social world, while Lansdowne House, Holland House, and others were open to the 'sommities' in all branches of literature, science, rank, and politics. . . . It was the last year of Lord Macaulay's life, and as a few out of many names which I recall come Dean Milman, Mr. Froude (whose review of the 'Dutch Republic' in the 'Westminster' was one of the first warm recognitions it ever received), the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, Sir William Stirling Maxwell, then Mr. Stirling of Keir, the Sheridan family in its different brilliant members, Lord Wensleydale, and many more."

There was no society to which Motley would not have added grace and attraction by his presence, and to say that he was a welcome guest in the best houses of England is only saying that these houses are always open to those whose abilities, characters, achievements, are commended to the circles that have the best choice by the personal gifts which are nature's passport everywhere.

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XIV.

1859. AEt. 45.

Letter to Mr. Francis H. Underwood.—Plan of Mr. Motley's historical works.—Second great work, "History of the united Netherlands."

I am enabled by the kindness of Mr. Francis H. Underwood to avail myself of a letter addressed to him by Mr. Motley in the year before the publication of this second work, which gives us an insight into his mode of working and the plan he proposed to follow. It begins with an allusion which recalls a literary event interesting to many of his American friends.

Rome, March 4, 1859.

F. H. Underwood, Esq.

My dear Sir,—. . . I am delighted to hear of the great success of "The Atlantic Monthly." In this remote region I have not the chance of reading it as often as I should like, but from the specimens which I have seen I am quite sure it deserves its wide circulation. A serial publication, the contents of which are purely original and of such remarkable merit, is a novelty in our country, and I am delighted to find that it has already taken so prominent a position before the reading world. . .

The whole work [his history], of which the three volumes already published form a part, will be called "The Eighty Years' War for Liberty."

Epoch I. is the Rise of the Dutch Republic.

Epoch *ii.* Independence Achieved. From the Death of William the Silent till the Twelve Years' Truce. 1584-1609.

Epoch *iii.* Independence Recognized. From the Twelve Years' Truce to the Peace of Westphalia. 1609-1648.

My subject is a very vast one, for the struggle of the United Provinces with Spain was one in which all the leading states of Europe were more or less involved. After the death of William the Silent, the history assumes world-wide proportions. Thus the volume which I am just about terminating . . . is almost as much English history as Dutch. The Earl of Leicester, very soon after the death of Orange, was appointed governor of the provinces, and the alliance between the two countries almost amounted to a political union. I shall try to get the whole of the Leicester administration, terminating with the grand drama of the Invincible Armada, into one volume; but I doubt,



my materials are so enormous. I have been personally very hard at work, nearly two years, ransacking the British State Paper Office, the British Museum, and the Holland archives, and I have had two copyists constantly engaged in London, and two others at the Hague. Besides this, I passed the whole of last winter at Brussels, where, by special favor of the Belgian Government, I was allowed to read what no one else has ever been permitted to see,—the great mass of copies

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taken by that government from the Simancas archives, a translated epitome of which has been published by Gachard. This correspondence reaches to the death of Philip *ii.*, and is of immense extent and importance. Had I not obtained leave to read the invaluable and, for my purpose, indispensable documents at Brussels, I should have gone to Spain, for they will not be published these twenty years, and then only in a translated and excessively abbreviated and unsatisfactory form. I have read the whole of this correspondence, and made very copious notes of it. In truth, I devoted three months of last winter to that purpose alone. The materials I have collected from the English archives are also extremely important and curious. I have hundreds of interesting letters never published or to be published, by Queen Elizabeth, Burghley, Walsingham, Sidney, Drake, Willoughby, Leicester, and others. For the whole of that portion of my subject in which Holland and England were combined into one whole, to resist Spain in its attempt to obtain the universal empire, I have very abundant collections. For the history of the United Provinces is not at all a provincial history. It is the history of European liberty. Without the struggle of Holland and England against Spain, all Europe might have been Catholic and Spanish. It was Holland that saved England in the sixteenth century, and, by so doing, secured the triumph of the Reformation, and placed the independence of the various states of Europe upon a sure foundation. Of course, the materials collected by me at the Hague are of great importance. As a single specimen, I will state that I found in the archives there an immense and confused mass of papers, which turned out to be the autograph letters of Olden Barneveld during the last few years of his life; during, in short, the whole of that most important period which preceded his execution. These letters are in such an intolerable handwriting that no one has ever attempted to read them. I could read them only imperfectly myself, and it would have taken me a very long time to have acquired the power to do so; but my copyist and reader there is the most patient and indefatigable person alive, and he has quite mastered the handwriting, and he writes me that they are a mine of historical wealth for me. I shall have complete copies before I get to that period, one of signal interest, and which has never been described. I mention these matters that you may see that my work, whatever its other value may be, is built upon the only foundation fit for history,—original contemporary documents. These are all unpublished. Of course, I use the contemporary historians and pamphleteers,—Dutch, Spanish, French, Italian, German, and English,—but the most valuable of my sources are manuscript ones. I have said the little which I have said in order to vindicate the largeness of the subject. The kingdom of Holland is a small power now, but

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the Eighty Years' War, which secured the civil and religious independence of the Dutch Commonwealth and of Europe, was the great event of that whole age. The whole work will therefore cover a most remarkable epoch in human history, from the abdication of Charles Fifth to the Peace of Westphalia, at which last point the political and geographical arrangements of Europe were established on a permanent basis,—in the main undisturbed until the French Revolution. . . . I will mention that I received yesterday a letter from the distinguished M. Guizot, informing me that the first volume of the French translation, edited by him, with an introduction, has just been published. The publication was hastened in consequence of the appearance of a rival translation at Brussels. The German translation is very elegantly and expensively printed in handsome octavos; and the Dutch translation, under the editorship of the archivist general of Holland, Bakhuyzen v. d. Brink, is enriched with copious notes and comments by that distinguished scholar. There are also three different piratical reprints of the original work at Amsterdam, Leipzig, and London. I must add that I had nothing to do with the translation in any case. In fact, with the exception of M. Guizot, no one ever obtained permission of me to publish translations, and I never knew of the existence of them until I read of it in the journals. . . . I forgot to say that among the collections already thoroughly examined by me is that portion of the Simancas archives still retained in the Imperial archives of France. I spent a considerable time in Paris for the purpose of reading these documents. There are many letters of Philip *ii.* there, with apostilles by his own hand. . . . I would add that I am going to pass this summer at Venice for the purpose of reading and procuring copies from the very rich archives of that Republic, of the correspondence of their envoys in Madrid, London, and Brussels during the epoch of which I am treating.

I am also not without hope of gaining access to the archives of the Vatican here, although there are some difficulties in the way.

With kind regards . . .
I remain very truly yours,
J. L. Motley.

XV.

1860. At. 46.

Publication of the first two volumes of the "History of the united Netherlands."—Their reception.

We know something of the manner in which Mr. Motley collected his materials. We know the labors, the difficulties, the cost of his toils among the dusty records of the

past. What he gained by the years he spent in his researches is so well stated by himself that I shall borrow his own words:—

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"Thanks to the liberality of many modern governments of Europe, the archives where the state secrets of the buried centuries have so long mouldered are now open to the student of history. To him who has patience and industry, many mysteries are thus revealed which no political sagacity or critical acumen could have divined. He leans over the shoulder of Philip the Second at his writing-table, as the King spells patiently out, with cipher-key in hand, the most concealed hieroglyphics of Parma, or Guise, or Mendoza. He reads the secret thoughts of 'Fabius' [Philip *ii.*] as that cunctative Roman scrawls his marginal apostilles on each dispatch; he pries into all the stratagems of Camillus, Hortensius, Mucius, Julius, Tullius, and the rest of those ancient heroes who lent their names to the diplomatic masqueraders of the sixteenth century; he enters the cabinet of the deeply pondering Burghley, and takes from the most private drawer the memoranda which record that minister's unutterable doubtings; he pulls from the dressing-gown folds of the stealthy, soft-gliding Walsingham the last secret which he has picked from the Emperor's pigeon-holes or the Pope's pocket, and which not Hatton, nor Buckhurst, nor Leicester, nor the Lord Treasurer is to see,—nobody but Elizabeth herself; he sits invisible at the most secret councils of the Nassaus and Barneveld and Buys, or pores with Farnese over coming victories and vast schemes of universal conquest; he reads the latest bit of scandal, the minutest characteristic of king or minister, chronicled by the gossiping Venetians for the edification of the Forty; and after all this prying and eavesdropping, having seen the cross-purposes, the bribings, the windings in the dark, he is not surprised if those who were systematically deceived did not always arrive at correct conclusions."

The fascination of such a quest is readily conceivable. A drama with real characters, and the spectator at liberty to go behind the scenes and look upon and talk with the kings and queens between the acts; to examine the scenery, to handle the properties, to study the "make up" of the imposing personages of full-dress histories; to deal with them all as Thackeray has done with the Grand Monarque in one of his caustic sketches,—this would be as exciting, one might suppose, as to sit through a play one knows by heart at Drury Lane or the Theatre Francais, and might furnish occupation enough to the curious idler who was only in search of entertainment. The mechanical obstacles of half-illegible manuscript, of antiquated forms of speech, to say nothing of the intentional obscurities of diplomatic correspondence, stand, however, in the way of all but the resolute and unwearied scholar. These difficulties, in all their complex obstinacy, had been met and overcome by the heroic efforts, the concentrated devotion, of the new laborer in the unbroken fields of secret history.

Without stopping to take breath, as it were,—for his was a task 'de longue haleine,'—he proceeded to his second great undertaking.

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The first portion—consisting of two volumes—of the “History of the United Netherlands” was published in the year 1860. It maintained and increased the reputation he had already gained by his first history.

“The London Quarterly Review” devoted a long article to it, beginning with this handsome tribute to his earlier and later volumes:—

“Mr. Motley’s ‘History of the Rise of the Dutch Republic’ is already known and valued for the grasp of mind which it displays, for the earnest and manly spirit in which he has communicated the results of deep research and careful reflection. Again he appears before us, rich with the spoils of time, to tell the story of the United Netherlands from the time of William the Silent to the end of the eventful year of the Spanish Armada, and we still find him in every way worthy of this ‘great argument.’ Indeed, it seems to us that he proceeds with an increased facility of style, and with a more complete and easy command over his materials. These materials are indeed splendid, and of them most excellent use has been made. The English State Paper Office, the Spanish archives from Simancas, and the Dutch and Belgian repositories, have all yielded up their secrets; and Mr. Motley has enjoyed the advantage of dealing with a vast mass of unpublished documents, of which he has not failed to avail himself to an extent which places his work in the foremost rank as an authority for the period to which it relates. By means of his labor and his art we can sit at the council board of Philip and Elizabeth, we can read their most private dispatches. Guided by his demonstration, we are enabled to dissect out to their ultimate issues the minutest ramifications of intrigue. We join in the amusement of the popular lampoon; we visit the prison-house; we stand by the scaffold; we are present at the battle and the siege. We can scan the inmost characters of men and can view them in their habits as they lived.”

After a few criticisms upon lesser points of form and style, the writer says:—

“But the work itself must be read to appreciate the vast and conscientious industry bestowed upon it. His delineations are true and life-like, because they are not mere compositions written to please the ear, but are really taken from the facts and traits preserved in those authentic records to which he has devoted the labor of many years. Diligent and painstaking as the humblest chronicler, he has availed himself of many sources of information which have not been made use of by any previous historical writer. At the same time he is not oppressed by his materials, but has sagacity to estimate their real value, and he has combined with scholarly power the facts which they contain. He has rescued the story of the Netherlands from the domain of vague and general narrative, and has labored, with much judgment and ability, to unfold the ‘*Belli causas, et vitia, et modos*,’ and to assign to every man and every event their

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own share in the contest, and their own influence upon its fortunes. We do not wonder that his earlier publication has been received as a valuable addition, not only to English, but to European literature."

One or two other contemporary criticisms may help us with their side lights. A critic in "The Edinburgh Review" for January, 1861, thinks that "Mr. Motley has not always been successful in keeping the graphic variety of his details subordinate to the main theme of his work." Still, he excuses the fault, as he accounts it, in consideration of the new light thrown on various obscure points of history, and—

"it is atoned for by striking merits, by many narratives of great events faithfully, powerfully, and vividly executed, by the clearest and most life-like conceptions of character, and by a style which, if it sacrifices the severer principles of composition to a desire to be striking and picturesque, is always vigorous, full of animation, and glowing with the genuine enthusiasm of the writer. Mr. Motley combines as an historian two qualifications seldom found united,—to great capacity for historical research he adds much power of pictorial representation. In his pages we find characters and scenes minutely set forth in elaborate and characteristic detail, which is relieved and heightened in effect by the artistic breadth of light and shade thrown across the broader prospects of history. In an American author, too, we must commend the hearty English spirit in which the book is written; and fertile as the present age has been in historical works of the highest merit, none of them can be ranked above these volumes in the grand qualities of interest, accuracy, and truth."

A writer in "Blackwood" (May, 1861) contrasts Motley with Froude somewhat in the way in which another critic had contrasted him with Prescott. Froude, he says, remembers that there are some golden threads in the black robe of the Dominican. Motley "finds it black and thrusts it farther into the darkness."

Every writer carries more or less of his own character into his book, of course. A great professor has told me that there is a personal flavor in the mathematical work of a man of genius like Poisson. Those who have known Motley and Prescott would feel sure beforehand that the impulsive nature of the one and the judicial serenity of the other would as surely betray themselves in their writings as in their conversation and in their every movement. Another point which the critic of "Blackwood's Magazine" has noticed has not been so generally observed: it is what he calls "a dashing, offhand, rattling style,"—"fast" writing. It cannot be denied that here and there may be detected slight vestiges of the way of writing of an earlier period of Motley's literary life, with which I have no reason to think the writer just mentioned was acquainted. Now and then I can trace in the turn of a phrase, in the twinkle of an

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epithet, a faint reminiscence of a certain satirical levity, airiness, jauntiness, if I may hint such a word, which is just enough to remind me of those perilous shallows of his early time through which his richly freighted argosy had passed with such wonderful escape from their dangers and such very slight marks of injury. That which is pleasant gayety in conversation may be quite out of place in formal composition, and Motley's wit must have had a hard time of it struggling to show its spangles in the processions while his gorgeous tragedies went sweeping by.

JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY.

A MEMOIR

By Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.

Volume *ii*.

XVI.

1860-1866. AEt. 46-52.

Residence in England.—Outbreak of the civil war.—Letters to the London "Times."—Visit to America.—Appointed minister to Austria.—Lady Harcourt's letter.—Miss Motley's memorandum.

The winter of 1859-60 was passed chiefly at Oatlands Hotel, Walton-on-Thames. In 1860 Mr. Motley hired the house No. 31 Hertford Street, May Fair, London. He had just published the first two volumes of his "History of the Netherlands," and was ready for the further labors of its continuation, when the threats, followed by the outbreak, of the great civil contention in his native land brought him back from the struggles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to the conflict of the nineteenth.

His love of country, which had grown upon him so remarkably of late years, would not suffer him to be silent at such a moment. All around him he found ignorance and prejudice. The quarrel was like to be prejudged in default of a champion of the cause which to him was that of Liberty and Justice. He wrote two long letters to the London "Times," in which he attempted to make clear to Englishmen and to Europe the nature and conditions of our complex system of government, the real cause of the strife, and the mighty issues at stake. Nothing could have been more timely, nothing more needed. Mr. William Everett, who was then in England, bears strong testimony to the effect these letters produced. Had Mr. Motley done no other service to his country, this alone would entitle him to honorable remembrance as among the first defenders of the

flag, which at that moment had more to fear from what was going on in the cabinet councils of Europe than from all the armed hosts that were gathering against it.

He returned to America in 1861, and soon afterwards was appointed by Mr. Lincoln Minister to Austria. Mr. Burlingame had been previously appointed to the office, but having been objected to by the Austrian Government for political reasons, the place unexpectedly left vacant was conferred upon Motley, who had no expectation of any diplomatic appointment when he left Europe. For some interesting particulars relating to his residence in Vienna I must refer to the communications addressed to me by his daughter, Lady Harcourt, and her youngest sister, and the letters I received from him while at the Austrian capital. Lady Harcourt writes:—

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"He held the post for six years, seeing the civil war fought out and brought to a triumphant conclusion, and enjoying, as I have every reason to believe, the full confidence and esteem of Mr. Lincoln to the last hour of the President's life. In the first dark years the painful interest of the great national drama was so all-absorbing that literary work was entirely put aside, and with his countrymen at home he lived only in the varying fortunes of the day, his profound faith and enthusiasm sustaining him and lifting him above the natural influence of a by no means sanguine temperament. Later, when the tide was turning and success was nearing, he was more able to work. His social relations during the whole period of his mission were of the most agreeable character. The society of Vienna was at that time, and I believe is still, the absolute reverse of that of England, where all claims to distinction are recognized and welcomed. There the old feudal traditions were still in full force, and diplomatic representatives admitted to the court society by right of official position found it to consist exclusively of an aristocracy of birth, sixteen quarterings of nobility being necessary to a right of presentation to the Emperor and Empress. The society thus constituted was distinguished by great charm and grace of manner, the exclusion of all outer elements not only limiting the numbers, but giving the ease of a family party within the charmed circle. On the other hand, larger interests suffered under the rigid exclusion of all occupations except the army, diplomacy, and court place. The intimacy among the different members of the society was so close that, beyond a courtesy of manner that never failed, the tendency was to resist the approach of any stranger as a 'gene'. A single new face was instantly remarked and commented on in a Vienna saloon to an extent unknown in any other large capital. This peculiarity, however, worked in favor of the old resident. Kindliness of feeling increased with familiarity and grew into something better than acquaintance, and the parting with most sincere and affectionately disposed friends in the end was deeply felt on both sides. Those years were passed in a pleasant house in the Weiden Faubourg, with a large garden at the back, and I do not think that during this time there was one disagreeable incident in his relations to his colleagues, while in several cases the relations, agreeable with all, became those of close friendship. We lived constantly, of course, in diplomatic and Austrian society, and during the latter part of the time particularly his house was as much frequented and the centre of as many dancing and other receptions as any in the place. His official relations with the Foreign Office were courteous and agreeable, the successive Foreign Ministers during his stay being Count Richberg, Count Mensdorff, and Baron Beust. Austria was so far removed from any real contact with our own country that, though the interest

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in our war may have been languid, they did not pretend to a knowledge which might have inclined them to controversy, while an instinct that we were acting as a constituted government against rebellion rather inclined them to sympathy. I think I may say that as he became known among them his keen patriotism and high sense of honor and truth were fully understood and appreciated, and that what he said always commanded a sympathetic hearing among men with totally different political ideas, but with chivalrous and loyal instincts to comprehend his own. I shall never forget his account of the terrible day when the news of Mr. Lincoln's death came. By some accident a rumor of it reached him first through a colleague. He went straight to the Foreign Office for news, hoping against hope, was received by Count Mensdorff, who merely came forward and laid his arm about his shoulder with an intense sympathy beyond words."

Miss Motley, the historian's youngest daughter, has added a note to her sister's communication:—

"During his residence in Vienna the most important negotiations which he had to carry on with the Austrian Government were those connected with the Mexican affair. Maximilian at one time applied to his brother the Emperor for assistance, and he promised to accede to his demand. Accordingly a large number of volunteers were equipped and had actually embarked at Trieste, when a dispatch from Seward arrived, instructing the American Minister to give notice to the Austrian Government that if the troops sailed for Mexico he was to leave Vienna at once. My father had to go at once to Count Mensdorff with these instructions, and in spite of the Foreign Minister being annoyed that the United States Government had not sooner intimated that this extreme course would be taken, the interview was quite amicable and the troops were not allowed to sail. We were in Vienna during the war in which Denmark fought alone against Austria and Prussia, and when it was over Bismarck came to Vienna to settle the terms of peace with the Emperor. He dined with us twice during his short stay, and was most delightful and agreeable. When he and my father were together they seemed to live over the youthful days they had spent together as students, and many were the anecdotes of their boyish frolics which Bismarck related."

XVII.

1861-1863. AEt. 47-49. *Letters from Vienna.*

Soon after Mr. Motley's arrival in Vienna I received a long letter from him, most of which relates to personal matters, but which contains a few sentences of interest to the general reader as showing his zealous labors, wherever he found himself, in behalf of the great cause then in bloody debate in his own country:

November 14, 1861.

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. . . What can I say to you of cis-Atlantic things? I am almost ashamed to be away from home. You know that I had decided to remain, and had sent for my family to come to America, when my present appointment altered my plans. I do what good I can. I think I made some impression on Lord John Russell, with whom I spent two days soon after my arrival in England, and I talked very frankly and as strongly as I could to Palmerston, and I have had long conversations and correspondences with other leading men in England. I have also had an hour's [conversation] with Thouvenel in Paris. I hammered the Northern view into him as soundly as I could. For this year there will be no foreign interference with us. I don't anticipate it at any time, unless we bring it on ourselves by bad management, which I don't expect. Our fate is in our own hands, and Europe is looking on to see which side is strongest,—when it has made the discovery it will back it as also the best and the most moral. Yesterday I had my audience with the Emperor. He received me with much cordiality, and seemed interested in a long account which I gave him of our affairs. You may suppose I inculcated the Northern views. We spoke in his vernacular, and he asked me afterwards if I was a German. I mention this not from vanity, but because he asked it with earnestness, and as if it had a political significance. Of course I undeceived him. His appearance interested me, and his manner is very pleasing.

I continued to receive long and interesting letters from him at intervals during his residence as Minister at Vienna. Relating as they often did to public matters, about which he had private sources of information, his anxiety that they should not get into print was perfectly natural. As, however, I was at liberty to read his letters to others at my discretion, and as many parts of these letters have an interest as showing how American affairs looked to one who was behind the scenes in Europe, I may venture to give some extracts without fear of violating the spirit of his injunctions, or of giving offence to individuals. The time may come when his extended correspondence can be printed in full with propriety, but it must be in a future year and after it has passed into the hands of a younger generation. Meanwhile these few glimpses at his life and records of his feelings and opinions will help to make the portrait of the man we are studying present itself somewhat more clearly.

Legation of the U. S. A., Vienna, January 14, 1862.

My dear Holmes,—I have two letters of yours, November 29 and December 17, to express my thanks for. It is quite true that it is difficult for me to write with the same feeling that inspires you, —that everything around the inkstand within a radius of a thousand miles is full of deepest interest to writer and reader. I don't even intend to try to

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amuse you with Vienna matters. What is it to you that we had a very pleasant dinner-party last week at Prince Esterhazy's, and another this week at Prince Liechtenstein's, and that to-morrow I am to put on my cocked hat and laced coat to make a visit to her Imperial Majesty, the Empress Mother, and that to-night there is to be the first of the assembly balls, the Vienna Almack's, at which—I shall be allowed to absent myself altogether? It strikes me that there is likely to be left a fair field for us a few months longer, say till midsummer. The Trent affair I shall not say much about, except to state that I have always been for giving up the prisoners. I was awfully afraid, knowing that the demand had gone forth,—

“Send us your prisoners or you'll hear of it,”

that the answer would have come back in the Hotspur vein—

'And if the Devil come and roar for them,
We will not send them.”

The result would have been most disastrous, for in order to secure a most trifling advantage,—that of keeping Mason and Slidell at Fort Warren a little longer,—we should have turned our backs on all the principles maintained by us when neutral, and should have been obliged to accept a war at an enormous disadvantage. . . . But I hardly dared to hope that we should have obtained such a victory as we have done. To have disavowed the illegal transaction at once,—before any demand came from England,—to have placed that disavowal on the broad ground of principle which we have always cherished, and thus with a clear conscience, and to our entire honor, to have kept ourselves clear from a war which must have given the Confederacy the invincible alliance of England,—was exactly what our enemies in Europe did not suppose us capable of doing. But we have done it in the handsomest manner, and there is not one liberal heart in this hemisphere that is not rejoiced, nor one hater of us and of our institutions that is not gnashing his teeth with rage.

The letter of ten close pages from which I have quoted these passages is full of confidential information, and contains extracts from letters of leading statesmen. If its date had been 1762, I might feel authorized in disobeying its injunctions of privacy. I must quote one other sentence, as it shows his animus at that time towards a distinguished statesman of whom he was afterwards accused of speaking in very hard terms by an obscure writer whose intent was to harm him. In speaking of the Trent affair, Mr. Motley says: “The English premier has been foiled by our much maligned Secretary of State, of whom, on this occasion at least, one has the right to say, with Sir Henry Wotton,—

'His armor was his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill.”

“He says at the close of this long letter:

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'I wish I could bore you about something else but American politics. But there is nothing else worth thinking of in the world. All else is leather and prunella. We are living over again the days of the Dutchmen or the seventeenth-century Englishmen.'

My next letter, of fourteen closely written pages, was of similar character to the last. Motley could think of nothing but the great conflict. He was alive to every report from America, listening too with passionate fears or hopes, as the case might be, to the whispers not yet audible to the world which passed from lip to lip of the statesmen who were watching the course of events from the other side of the Atlantic with the sweet complacency of the looker-on of Lucretius; too often rejoicing in the storm that threatened wreck to institutions and an organization which they felt to be a standing menace to the established order of things in their older communities.

A few extracts from this very long letter will be found to have a special interest from the time at which they were written.

Legation of U. S. A., Vienna, February 26, 1862.

My dear Holmes,— . . . I take great pleasure in reading your prophecies, and intend to be just as free in hazarding my own, for, as you say, our mortal life is but a string of guesses at the future, and no one but an idiot would be discouraged at finding himself sometimes far out in his calculations. If I find you signally right in any of your predictions, be sure that I will congratulate and applaud. If you make mistakes, you shall never hear of them again, and I promise to forget them. Let me ask the same indulgence from you in return. This is what makes letter- writing a comfort and journalizing dangerous. . . The ides of March will be upon us before this letter reaches you. We have got to squash the rebellion soon, or be squashed forever as a nation. I don't pretend to judge military plans or the capacities of generals. But, as you suggest, perhaps I can take a more just view of the whole picture of the eventful struggle at this great distance than do those absolutely acting and suffering on the scene. Nor can I resist the desire to prophesy any more than you can do, knowing that I may prove utterly mistaken. I say, then, that one great danger comes from the chance of foreign interference. What will prevent that?

Our utterly defeating the Confederates in some great and conclusive battle; or,

Our possession of the cotton ports and opening them to European trade; or,

A most unequivocal policy of slave emancipation.

Any one of these three conditions would stave off recognition by foreign powers, until we had ourselves abandoned the attempt to reduce the South to obedience.

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The last measure is to my mind the most important. The South has, by going to war with the United States government, thrust into our hands against our will the invincible weapon which constitutional reasons had hitherto forbidden us to employ. At the same time it has given us the power to remedy a great wrong to four millions of the human race, in which we had hitherto been obliged to acquiesce. We are threatened with national annihilation, and defied to use the only means of national preservation. The question is distinctly proposed to us, Shall Slavery die, or the great Republic? It is most astounding to me that there can be two opinions in the free States as to the answer. If we do fall, we deserve our fate. At the beginning of the contest, constitutional scruples might be respectable. But now we are fighting to subjugate the South; that is, Slavery. We are fighting for nothing else that I know of. We are fighting for the Union. Who wishes to destroy the Union? The slaveholder, nobody else. Are we to spend twelve hundred millions, and raise six hundred thousand soldiers, in order to protect slavery? It really does seem to me too simple for argument. I am anxiously waiting for the coming Columbus who will set this egg of ours on end by smashing in the slavery end. We shall be rolling about in every direction until that is done. I don't know that it is to be done by proclamation. Rather perhaps by facts. . . . Well, I console myself with thinking that the people—the American people, at least—is about as wise collectively as less numerous collections of individuals, and that the people has really declared emancipation, and is only puzzling how to carry it into effect. After all, it seems to be a law of Providence, that progress should be by a spiral movement; so that when it seems most tortuous, we may perhaps be going ahead. I am firm in the faith that slavery is now wriggling itself to death. With slavery in its pristine vigor, I should think the restored Union neither possible nor desirable. Don't understand me as not taking into account all the strategical considerations against premature governmental utterances on this great subject. But are there any trustworthy friends to the Union among the slaveholders? Should we lose many Kentuckians and Virginians who are now with us, if we boldly confiscated the slaves of all rebels?—and a confiscation of property which has legs and so confiscates itself, at command, is not only a legal, but would prove a very practical measure in time of war. In brief, the time is fast approaching, I think, when 'Thorough' should be written on all our banners. Slavery will never accept a subordinate position. The great Republic and Slavery cannot both survive. We have been defied to mortal combat, and yet we hesitate to strike. These are my poor thoughts on this great subject. Perhaps you will think them crude. I was much struck with what you quote from Mr. Conway, that if emancipation

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was proclaimed on the Upper Mississippi it would be known to the negroes of Louisiana in advance of the telegraph. And if once the blacks had leave to run, how many whites would have to stay at home to guard their dissolving property? You have had enough of my maunderings. But before I conclude them, may I ask you to give all our kindest regards to Lowell, and to express our admiration for the Yankee Idyl. I am afraid of using too extravagant language if I say all I think about it. Was there ever anything more stinging, more concentrated, more vigorous, more just? He has condensed into those few pages the essence of a hundred diplomatic papers and historical disquisitions and Fourth of July orations. I was dining a day or two since with his friend Lytton (Bulwer's son, attache here) and Julian Fane (secretary of the embassy), both great admirers of him,—and especially of the "Biglow Papers;" they begged me to send them the Mason and Slidell Idyl, but I wouldn't,—I don't think it is in English nature (although theirs is very cosmopolitan and liberal) to take such punishment and come up smiling. I would rather they got it in some other way, and then told me what they thought voluntarily. I have very pleasant relations with all the J. B.'s here. They are all friendly and well disposed to the North,—I speak of the embassy, which, with the ambassador and—dress, numbers eight or ten souls, some of them very intellectual ones. There are no other J. B.'s here. I have no fear at present of foreign interference. We have got three or four months to do our work in,—a fair field and no favor. There is no question whatever that the Southern commissioners have been thoroughly snubbed in London and Paris. There is to be a blockade debate in Parliament next week, but no bad consequences are to be apprehended. The Duke de Gramont (French ambassador, and an intimate friend of the Emperor) told my wife last night that it was entirely false that the Emperor had ever urged the English government to break the blockade. "Don't believe it,—don't believe a word of it," he said. He has always held that language to me. He added that Prince Napoleon had just come out with a strong speech about us,—you will see it, doubtless, before you get this letter,—but it has not yet reached us. Shall I say anything of Austria,—what can I say that would interest you? That's the reason why I hate to write. All my thoughts are in America. Do you care to know about the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian, that shall be King hereafter of Mexico (if L. N. has his way)? He is next brother to the Emperor, but although I have had the honor of private audiences of many archdukes here, this one is a resident of Trieste. He is about thirty,—has an adventurous disposition,—some imagination,—a turn for poetry,—has voyaged a good deal about the world in the Austrian ship-of-war,—for

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in one respect he much resembles that unfortunate but anonymous ancestor of his, the King of Bohemia with the seven castles, who, according to Corporal Trim, had such a passion for navigation and sea-affairs, "with never a seaport in all his dominions." But now the present King of Bohemia has got the sway of Trieste, and is Lord High Admiral and Chief of the Marine Department. He has been much in Spain, also in South America; I have read some travels, "Reise Skizzen," of his—printed, not published. They are not without talent, and he ever and anon relieves his prose jog-trot by breaking into a canter of poetry. He adores bull-fights, and rather regrets the Inquisition, and considers the Duke of Alva everything noble and chivalrous, and the most abused of men. It would do your heart good to hear his invocations to that deeply injured shade, and his denunciations of the ignorant and vulgar protestants who have defamed him. (N.B. Let me observe that the R. of the D. R. was not published until long after the "Reise Skizzen" were written.) 'Du armer Alva! weil du dem Willen deines Herrn unerschütterlich treu vast, weil die festbestimmten grundsätze der Regierung,' etc., etc., etc. You can imagine the rest. Dear me! I wish I could get back to the sixteenth and seventeenth century. . . . But alas! the events of the nineteenth are too engrossing. If Lowell cares to read this letter, will you allow me to "make it over to him jointly," as Captain Cuttle says. I wished to write to him, but I am afraid only you would tolerate my writing so much when I have nothing to say. If he would ever send me a line I should be infinitely obliged, and would quickly respond. We read the "Washers of the Shroud" with fervid admiration. Always remember me most sincerely to the Club, one and all. It touches me nearly when you assure me that I am not forgotten by them. To-morrow is Saturday and the last of the month.—[See Appendix A.]—We are going to dine with our Spanish colleague. But the first bumper of the Don's champagne I shall drain to the health of my Parker House friends.

From another long letter dated August 31, 1862, I extract the following passages:—

"I quite agree in all that you said in your last letter. 'The imp of secession can't reenter its mother's womb.' It is merely childish to talk of the Union 'as it was.' You might as well bring back the Saxon Heptarchy. But the great Republic is destined to live and flourish, I can't doubt. . . . Do you remember that wonderful scene in Faust in which Mephistopheles draws wine for the rabble with a gimlet out of the wooden table; and how it changes to fire as they drink it, and how they all go mad, draw their knives, grasp each other by the nose, and think they are cutting off bunches of grapes at every blow, and how foolish they all look when they awake from the spell and see how the Devil has been mocking them? It always

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seems to me a parable of the great Secession. "I repeat, I can't doubt as to the ultimate result. But I dare say we have all been much mistaken in our calculations as to time. Days, months, years, are nothing in history. Men die, man is immortal, practically, even on this earth. We are so impatient, —and we are always watching for the last scene of the tragedy. Now I humbly opine that the drop is only about falling on the first act, or perhaps only the prologue. This act or prologue will be called, in after days, War for the status quo. Such enthusiasm, heroism, and manslaughter as status quo could inspire, has, I trust, been not entirely in vain, but it has been proved insufficient." "I firmly believe that when the slaveholders declared war on the United States government they began a series of events that, in the logical chain of history, cannot come to a conclusion until the last vestige of slavery is gone. Looking at the whole field for a moment dispassionately, objectively, as the dear Teutonic philosophers say, and merely as an exhibition of phenomena, I cannot imagine any other issue. Everything else may happen. This alone must happen." "But after all this isn't a war. It is a revolution. It is n't strategists that are wanted so much as believers. In revolutions the men who win are those who are in earnest. Jeff and Stonewall and the other Devil-worshippers are in earnest, but it was not written in the book of fate that the slaveholders' rebellion should be vanquished by a pro-slavery general. History is never so illogical. No, the coming 'man on horseback' on our side must be a great strategist, with the soul of that insane lion, mad old John Brown, in his belly. That is your only Promethean recipe:—

'et insani leonis
Vim stomacho apposuisse nostro.'

"I don't know why Horace runs so in my head this morning. . . .

"There will be work enough for all; but I feel awfully fidgety just now about Port Royal and Hilton Head, and about affairs generally for the next three months. After that iron-clads and the new levies must make us invincible."

In another letter, dated November 2, 1862, he expresses himself very warmly about his disappointment in the attitude of many of his old English friends with reference to our civil conflict. He had recently heard the details of the death of "the noble Wilder Dwight."

"It is unnecessary," he says, "to say how deeply we were moved. I had the pleasure of knowing him well, and I always appreciated his energy, his manliness, and his intelligent cheerful heroism. I look back upon him now as a kind of heroic type of what a young New Englander ought to be and was. I tell you that one of these days —after a generation of mankind has passed away—these youths will take their places in our history, and be regarded by the

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young men and women now unborn with the admiration which the Philip Sidneys and the Max Piccolominis now inspire. After all, what was your Chevy Chace to stir blood with like a trumpet? What noble principle, what deathless interest, was there at stake? Nothing but a bloody fight between a lot of noble gamekeepers on one side and of noble poachers on the other. And because they fought well and hacked each other to pieces like devils, they have been heroes for centuries."

The letter was written in a very excited state of feeling, and runs over with passionate love of country and indignation at the want of sympathy with the cause of freedom which he had found in quarters where he had not expected such coldness or hostile tendencies.

From a letter dated Vienna, September 22, 1863.

. . . "When you wrote me last you said on general matters this: 'In a few days we shall get the news of the success or failure of the attacks on Port Hudson and Vicksburg. If both are successful, many will say that the whole matter is about settled.' You may suppose that when I got the great news I shook hands warmly with you in the spirit across the Atlantic. Day by day for so long we had been hoping to hear the fall of Vicksburg. At last when that little concentrated telegram came, announcing Vicksburg and Gettysburg on the same day and in two lines, I found myself almost alone. . . . There was nobody in the house to join in my huzzahs but my youngest infant. And my conduct very much resembled that of the excellent Philip *ii*. when he heard the fall of Antwerp,—for I went to her door, screeching through the key-hole 'Vicksburg is ours!' just as that other 'pere de famille,' more potent, but I trust not more respectable than I, conveyed the news to his Infanta. (Fide, for the incident, an American work on the Netherlands, i. p. 263, and the authorities there cited.) It is contemptible on my part to speak thus frivolously of events which will stand out in such golden letters so long as America has a history, but I wanted to illustrate the yearning for sympathy which I felt. You who were among people grim and self-contained usually, who, I trust, were falling on each other's necks in the public streets, shouting, with tears in their eyes and triumph in their hearts, can picture my isolation." "I have never faltered in my faith, and in the darkest hours, when misfortunes seemed thronging most thickly upon us, I have never felt the want of anything to lean against; but I own I did feel like shaking hands with a few hundred people when I heard of our Fourth of July, 1863, work, and should like to have heard and joined in an American cheer or two." "I have not much to say of matters here to interest you. We have had an intensely hot, historically hot, and very long and very dry summer. I never knew before what a drought meant. In Hungary the suffering is great,

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and the people are killing the sheep to feed the pigs with the mutton. Here about Vienna the trees have been almost stripped of foliage ever since the end of August. There is no glory in the grass nor verdure in anything. "In fact, we have nothing green here but the Archduke Max, who firmly believes that he is going forth to Mexico to establish an American empire, and that it is his divine mission to destroy the dragon of democracy and reestablish the true Church, the Right Divine, and all sorts of games. Poor young man! . . . "Our information from home is to the 12th. Charleston seems to be in 'articulo mortis,' but how forts nowadays seem to fly in the face of Scripture. Those founded on a rock, and built of it, fall easily enough under the rain of Parrotts and Dahlgrens, while the house built of sand seems to bid defiance to the storm."

In quoting from these confidential letters I have been restrained from doing full justice to their writer by the fact that he spoke with such entire freedom of persons as well as events. But if they could be read from beginning to end, no one could help feeling that his love for his own country, and passionate absorption of every thought in the strife upon which its existence as a nation depended, were his very life during all this agonizing period. He can think and talk of nothing else, or, if he turns for a moment to other subjects, he reverts to the one great central interest of "American politics," of which he says in one of the letters from which I have quoted, "There is nothing else worth thinking of in the world."

But in spite of his public record as the historian of the struggle for liberty and the champion of its defenders, and while every letter he wrote betrayed in every word the intensity of his patriotic feeling, he was not safe against the attacks of malevolence. A train laid by unseen hands was waiting for the spark to kindle it, and this came at last in the shape of a letter from an unknown individual,—a letter the existence of which ought never to have been a matter of official recognition.

XVIII.

1866-1867. AEt. 52-43. *Resignation of his office.—Causes of his resignation.*

It is a relief to me that just here, where I come to the first of two painful episodes in this brilliant and fortunate career, I can preface my statement with the generous words of one who speaks with authority of his predecessor in office.

The Hon. John Jay, Ex-Minister to Austria, in the tribute to the memory of Motley read at a meeting of the New York Historical Society, wrote as follows:—

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“In singular contrast to Mr. Motley’s brilliant career as an historian stands the fact recorded in our diplomatic annals that he was twice forced from the service as one who had forfeited the confidence of the American government. This society, while he was living, recognized his fame as a statesman, diplomatist, and patriot, as belonging to America, and now that death has closed the career of Seward, Sumner, and Motley, it will be remembered that the great historian, twice humiliated, by orders from Washington, before the diplomacy and culture of Europe, appealed from the passions of the hour to the verdict of history.” Having succeeded Mr. Motley at Vienna some two years after his departure, I had occasion to read most of his dispatches, which exhibited a mastery of the subjects of which they treated, with much of the clear perception, the scholarly and philosophic tone and decided judgment, which, supplemented by his picturesque description, full of life and color, have given character to his histories. They are features which might well have served to extend the remark of Madame de Stael that a great historian is almost a statesman. I can speak also from my own observation of the reputation which Motley left in the Austrian capital. Notwithstanding the decision with which, under the direction of Mr. Seward, he had addressed the minister of foreign affairs, Count Mensdorff, afterwards the Prince Diedrickstein, protesting against the departure of an Austrian force of one thousand volunteers, who were about to embark for Mexico in aid of the ill-fated Maximilian, —a protest which at the last moment arrested the project,—Mr. Motley and his amiable family were always spoken of in terms of cordial regard and respect by members of the imperial family and those eminent statesmen, Count de Beust and Count Andrassy. His death, I am sure, is mourned to-day by the representatives of the historic names of Austria and Hungary, and by the surviving diplomats then residing near the Court of Vienna, wherever they may still be found, headed by their venerable Doyen, the Baron de Heckeren.”

The story of Mr. Motley’s resignation of his office and its acceptance by the government is this.

The President of the United States, Andrew Johnson, received a letter professing to be written from the Hotel Meurice, Paris, dated October 23, 1866, and signed “George W. M’Crackin, of New York.” This letter was filled with accusations directed against various public agents, ministers, and consuls, representing the United States in different countries. Its language was coarse, its assertions were improbable, its spirit that of the lowest of party scribblers. It was bitter against New England, especially so against Massachusetts, and it singled out Motley for the most particular abuse. I think it is still questioned whether there was any such person as the one named,—at any rate, it bore the characteristic marks of those

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vulgar anonymous communications which rarely receive any attention unless they are important enough to have the police set on the track of the writer to find his rathole, if possible. A paragraph in the "Daily Advertiser" of June 7, 1869, quotes from a Western paper a story to the effect that one William R. M'Crackin, who had recently died at----- confessed to having written the M' Crackin letter. Motley, he said, had snubbed him and refused to lend him money. "He appears to have been a Bohemian of the lowest order." Between such authorship and the anonymous there does not seem to be much to choose. But the dying confession sounds in my ears as decidedly apocryphal. As for the letter, I had rather characterize it than reproduce it. It is an offence to decency and a disgrace to the national record on which it is found. This letter of "George W. M'Crackin" passed into the hands of Mr. Seward, the Secretary of State. Most gentlemen, I think, would have destroyed it on the spot, as it was not fit for the waste-basket. Some, more cautious, might have smothered it among the piles of their private communications. If any notice was taken of it, one would say that a private note to each of the gentlemen attacked might have warned him that there were malicious eavesdroppers about, ready to catch up any careless expression he might let fall and make a scandalous report of it to his detriment.

The secretary, acquiescing without resistance in a suggestion of the President, saw fit to address a formal note to several of the gentlemen mentioned in the M'Crackin letter, repeating some of its offensive expressions, and requesting those officials to deny or confirm the report that they had uttered them.

A gentleman who is asked whether he has spoken in a "malignant" or "offensive" manner, whether he has "railed violently and shamefully" against the President of the United States, or against anybody else, might well wonder who would address such a question to the humblest citizen not supposed to be wanting in a common measure of self-respect. A gentleman holding an important official station in a foreign country, receiving a letter containing such questions, signed by the prime minister of his government, if he did not think himself imposed upon by a forgery, might well consider himself outraged. It was a letter of this kind which was sent by the Secretary of State to the Minister Plenipotentiary to the Empire of Austria. Not quite all the vulgar insolence of the M'Crackin letter was repeated. Mr. Seward did not ask Mr. Motley to deny or confirm the assertion of the letter that he was a "thorough flunky" and "un-American functionary." But he did insult him with various questions suggested by the anonymous letter,—questions that must have been felt as an indignity by the most thick-skinned of battered politicians.

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Mr. Motley was very sensitive, very high-spirited, very impulsive, very patriotic, and singularly truthful. The letter of Mr. Seward to such a man was like a buffet on the cheek of an unarmed officer. It stung like the thrust of a stiletto. It roused a resentment that could not find any words to give it expression. He could not wait to turn the insult over in his mind, to weigh the exact amount of affront in each question, to take counsel, to sleep over it, and reply to it with diplomatic measure and suavity. One hour had scarcely elapsed before his answer was written. As to his feelings as an American, he appeals to his record. This might have shown that if he erred it was on the side of enthusiasm and extravagant expressions of reverence for the American people during the heroic years just passed. He denounces the accusations as pitiful fabrications and vile calumny. He blushes that such charges could have been uttered; he is deeply wounded that Mr. Seward could have listened to such falsehood. He does not hesitate to say what his opinions are with reference to home questions, and especially to that of reconstruction.

"These opinions," he says, "in the privacy of my own household, and to occasional American visitors, I have not concealed. The great question now presenting itself for solution demands the conscientious scrutiny of every American who loves his country and believes in the human progress of which that country is one of the foremost representatives. I have never thought, during my residence at Vienna, that because I have the honor of being a public servant of the American people I am deprived of the right of discussing within my own walls the gravest subjects that can interest freemen. A minister of the United States does not cease to be a citizen of the United States, as deeply interested as others in all that relates to the welfare of his country."

Among the "occasional American visitors" spoken of above must have been some of those self-appointed or hired agents called "interviewers," who do for the American public what the Venetian spies did for the Council of Ten, what the familiars of the Inquisition did for the priesthood, who invade every public man's privacy, who listen at every key-hole, who tamper with every guardian of secrets; purveyors to the insatiable appetite of a public which must have a slain reputation to devour with its breakfast, as the monster of antiquity called regularly for his tribute of a spotless virgin.

The "interviewer" has his use, undoubtedly, and often instructs and amuses his public with gossip they could not otherwise listen to. He serves the politician by repeating the artless and unstudied remarks which fall from his lips in a conversation which the reporter has been invited to take notes of. He tickles the author's vanity by showing him off as he sits in his library unconsciously uttering the engaging items of self-portraiture which, as he

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well knows, are to be given to the public in next week's illustrated paper. The feathered end of his shaft titillates harmlessly enough, but too often the arrowhead is crusted with a poison worse than the Indian gets by mingling the wolf's gall with the rattlesnake's venom. No man is safe whose unguarded threshold the mischief-making questioner has crossed. The more unsuspecting, the more frank, the more courageous, the more social is the subject of his vivisection, the more easily does he get at his vital secrets, if he has any to be extracted. No man is safe if the hearsay reports of his conversation are to be given to the public without his own careful revision. When we remember that a proof-text bearing on the mighty question of the future life, words of supreme significance, uttered as they were in the last hour, and by the lips to which we listen as to none other,—that this text depends for its interpretation on the position of a single comma, we can readily see what wrong may be done by the unintentional blunder of the most conscientious reporter. But too frequently it happens that the careless talk of an honest and high-minded man only reaches the public after filtering through the drain of some reckless hireling's memory,—one who has played so long with other men's characters and good name that he forgets they have any value except to fill out his morning paragraphs.

Whether the author of the scandalous letter which it was disgraceful to the government to recognize was a professional interviewer or only a malicious amateur, or whether he was a paid "spotter," sent by some jealous official to report on the foreign ministers as is sometimes done in the case of conductors of city horsecars, or whether the dying miscreant before mentioned told the truth, cannot be certainly known. But those who remember Mr. Hawthorne's account of his consular experiences at Liverpool are fully aware to what intrusions and impertinences and impositions our national representatives in other countries are subjected. Those fellow-citizens who "often came to the consulate in parties of half a dozen or more, on no business whatever, but merely to subject their public servant to a rigid examination, and see how he was getting on with his duties," may very possibly have included among them some such mischief-maker as the author of the odious letter which received official recognition. Mr. Motley had spoken in one of his histories of "a set of venomous familiars who glided through every chamber and coiled themselves at every fireside." He little thought that under his own roof he himself was to be the victim of an equally base espionage.

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It was an insult on the part of the government to have sent Mr. Motley such a letter with such questions as were annexed to it. No very exact rule can be laid down as to the manner in which an insult shall be dealt with. Something depends on temperament, and his was of the warmer complexion. His first impulse, he says, was to content himself with a flat denial of the truth of the accusations. But his scrupulous honesty compelled him to make a plain statement of his opinions, and to avow the fact that he had made no secret of them in conversation under conditions where he had a right to speak freely of matters quite apart from his official duties. His answer to the accusation was denial of its charges; his reply to the insult was his resignation.

It may be questioned whether this was the wisest course, but wisdom is often disconcerted by an indignity, and even a meek Christian may forget to turn the other cheek after receiving the first blow until the natural man has asserted himself by a retort in kind. But the wrong was committed; his resignation was accepted; the vulgar letter, not fit to be spread out on these pages, is enrolled in the records of the nation, and the first deep wound was inflicted on the proud spirit of one whose renown had shed lustre on the whole country.

That the burden of this wrong may rest where it belongs, I quote the following statement from Mr. Jay's paper, already referred to.

"It is due to the memory of Mr. Seward to say, and there would seem now no further motive for concealing the truth, that I was told in Europe, on what I regarded as reliable authority, that there was reason to believe that on the receipt of Mr. Motley's resignation Mr. Seward had written to him declining to accept it, and that this letter, by a telegraphic order of President Johnson, had been arrested in the hands of a dispatch agent before its delivery to Mr. Motley, and that the curt letter of the 18th of April had been substituted in its stead."

The Hon. John Bigelow, late Minister to France, has published an article in "The International Review" for July-August, 1878, in which he defends his late friend Mr. Seward's action in this matter at the expense of the President, Mr. Andrew Johnson, and not without inferences unfavorable to the discretion of Mr. Motley. Many readers will think that the simple record of Mr. Seward's unresisting acquiescence in the action of the President is far from being to his advantage. I quote from his own conversation as carefully reported by his friend Mr. Bigelow. "Mr. Johnson was in a state of intense irritation, and more or less suspicious of everybody about him."—"Instead of throwing the letter into the fire," the President handed it to him, the secretary, and suggested answering it, and without a word, so far as appears, he simply answered, "Certainly, sir." Again, the secretary having already written to Mr. Motley that "his answer was satisfactory," the

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President, on reaching the last paragraph of Mr. Motley's letter, in which he begged respectfully to resign his post, "without waiting to learn what Mr. Seward had done or proposed to do, exclaimed, with a not unnatural asperity, 'Well, let him go,' and 'on hearing this,' said Mr. Seward, laughing, 'I did not read my dispatch.'" Many persons will think that the counsel for the defence has stated the plaintiff's case so strongly that there is nothing left for him but to show his ingenuity and his friendship for the late secretary in a hopeless argument. At any rate, Mr. Seward appears not to have made the slightest effort to protect Mr. Motley against his coarse and jealous chief at two critical moments, and though his own continuance in office may have been more important to the State than that of the Vicar of Bray was to the Church, he ought to have risked something, as it seems to me, to shield such a patriot, such a gentleman, such a scholar, from ignoble treatment; he ought to have been as ready to guard Mr. Motley from wrong as Mr. Bigelow has shown himself to shield Mr. Seward from reproach, and his task, if more delicate, was not more difficult. I am willing to accept Mr. Bigelow's loyal and honorable defence of his friend's memory as the best that could be said for Mr. Seward, but the best defence in this case is little better than an impeachment. As for Mr. Johnson, he had held the weapon of the most relentless of the 'Parcae' so long that his suddenly clipping the thread of a foreign minister's tenure of office in a fit of jealous anger is not at all surprising.

Thus finished Mr. Motley's long and successful diplomatic service at the Court of Austria. He may have been judged hasty in resigning his place; he may have committed himself in expressing his opinions too strongly before strangers, whose true character as spies and eavesdroppers he was too high-minded to suspect. But no caution could have protected him against a slanderer who hated the place he came from, the company he kept, the name he had made famous, to whom his very look and bearing —such as belong to a gentleman of natural refinement and good breeding — must have been a personal grievance and an unpardonable offence.

I will add, in illustration of what has been said, and as showing his feeling with reference to the matter, an extract from a letter to me from Vienna, dated the 12th of March, 1867.

. . . "As so many friends and so many strangers have said so much that is gratifying to me in public and private on this very painful subject, it would be like affectation, in writing to so old a friend as you, not to touch upon it. I shall confine myself, however, to one fact, which, so far as I know, may be new to you.

"Geo. W. M'Cracken is a man and a name utterly unknown to me.

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"With the necessary qualification which every man who values truth must make when asserting such a negation,—viz., to the very best of my memory and belief,—I never set eyes on him nor heard of him until now, in the whole course of my life. Not a member of my family or of the legation has the faintest recollection of any such person. I am quite convinced that he never saw me nor heard the sound of my voice. That his letter was a tissue of vile calumnies, shameless fabrications, and unblushing and contemptible falsehoods, —by whomsoever uttered,—I have stated in a reply to what ought never to have been an official letter. No man can regret more than I do that such a correspondence is enrolled in the capital among American state papers. I shall not trust myself to speak of the matter. It has been a sufficiently public scandal."

XIX.

1867-1868. AEt. 53-54.

Last two volumes of the "History of the united Netherlands."—General criticisms of Dutch scholars on Motley's historical works.

In his letter to me of March 12, 1867, just cited, Mr. Motley writes:—

"My two concluding volumes of the United Netherlands are passing rapidly through the press. Indeed, Volume *iii.* is entirely printed and a third of Volume IV.

"If I live ten years longer I shall have probably written the natural sequel to the first two works,—viz., the Thirty Years' War. After that I shall cease to scourge the public.

"I don't know whether my last two volumes are good or bad; I only know that they are true—but that need n't make them amusing.

"Alas! one never knows when one becomes a bore."

In 1868 the two concluding volumes of the "History of the Netherlands" were published at the same time in London and in New York. The events described and the characters delineated in these two volumes had, perhaps, less peculiar interest for English and American readers than some of those which had lent attraction to the preceding ones. There was no scene like the siege of Antwerp, no story like that of the Spanish Armada. There were no names that sounded to our ears like those of Sir Philip Sidney and Leicester and Amy Robsart. But the main course of his narrative flowed on with the same breadth and depth of learning and the same brilliancy of expression. The monumental work continued as nobly as it had begun. The facts had been slowly, quietly gathered, one by one, like pebbles from the empty channel of a brook. The style was fluent, impetuous, abundant, impatient, as it were, at times, and leaping the sober

boundaries prescribed to it, like the torrent which rushes through the same channel when the rains have filled it.

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Thus there was matter for criticism in his use of language. He was not always careful in the construction of his sentences. He introduced expressions now and then into his vocabulary which reminded one of his earlier literary efforts. He used stronger language at times than was necessary, coloring too highly, shading too deeply in his pictorial delineations. To come to the matter of his narrative, it must be granted that not every reader will care to follow him through all the details of diplomatic intrigues which he has with such industry and sagacity extricated from the old manuscripts in which they had long lain hidden. But we turn a few pages and we come to one of those descriptions which arrest us at once and show him in his power and brilliancy as a literary artist. His characters move before us with the features of life; we can see Elizabeth, or Philip, or Maurice, not as a name connected with events, but as a breathing and acting human being, to be loved or hated, admired or despised, as if he or she were our contemporary. That all his judgments would not be accepted as final we might easily anticipate; he could not help writing more or less as a partisan, but he was a partisan on the side of freedom in politics and religion, of human nature as against every form of tyranny, secular or priestly, of noble manhood wherever he saw it as against meanness and violence and imposture, whether clad in the soldier's mail or the emperor's purple. His sternest critics, and even these admiring ones, were yet to be found among those who with fundamental beliefs at variance with his own followed him in his long researches among the dusty annals of the past.

The work of the learned M. Groen van Prinsterer,—[Maurice et Barneveldt, Etude Historique. Utrecht, 1875.]—devoted expressly to the revision and correction of what the author considers the erroneous views of Mr. Motley on certain important points, bears, notwithstanding, such sincere and hearty tribute to his industry, his acquisitions, his brilliant qualities as a historian, that some extracts from it will be read, I think, with interest.

“My first interview, more than twenty years ago, with Mr. Lothrop Motley, has left an indelible impression on my memory.

“It was the 8th of August, 1853. A note is handed me from our eminent archivist Bakhuyzen van den Brink. It informs me that I am to receive a visit from an American, who, having been struck by the analogies between the United Provinces and the United States, between Washington and the founder of our independence, has interrupted his diplomatic career to write the life of William the First; that he has already given proof of ardor and perseverance, having worked in libraries and among collections of manuscripts, and that he is coming to pursue his studies at the Hague.”While I am surprised and delighted with this intelligence, I am informed that Mr. Motley himself is waiting for my answer. My eagerness

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to make the acquaintance of such an associate in my sympathies and my labors may be well imagined. But how shall I picture my surprise, in presently discovering that this unknown and indefatigable fellow-worker has really read, I say read and reread, our Quartos, our Folios, the enormous volumes of Bor, of van Meteren, besides a multitude of books, of pamphlets, and even of unedited documents. Already he is familiar with the events, the changes of condition, the characteristic details of the life of his and my hero. Not only is he acquainted with my Archives, but it seems as if there was nothing in this voluminous collection of which he was ignorant. . . . "In sending me the last volume of his 'History of the Foundation of the Republic of the Netherlands,' Mr. Motley wrote to me: 'Without the help of the Archives I could never have undertaken the difficult task I had set myself, and you will have seen at least from my numerous citations that I have made a sincere and conscientious study of them.' Certainly in reading such a testimonial I congratulated myself on the excellent fruit of my labors, but the gratitude expressed to me by Mr. Motley was sincerely reciprocated. The Archives are a scientific collection, and my 'Manual of National History,' written in Dutch, hardly gets beyond the limits of my own country. And here is a stranger, become our compatriot in virtue of the warmth of his sympathies, who has accomplished what was not in my power. By the detail and the charm of his narrative, by the matter and form of a work which the universality of the English language and numerous translations were to render cosmopolitan, Mr. Motley, like that other illustrious historian, Prescott, lost to science by too early death, has popularized in both hemispheres the sublime devotion of the Prince of Orange, the exceptional and providential destinies of my country, and the benedictions of the Eternal for all those who trust in Him and tremble only at his Word."

The old Dutch scholar differs in many important points from Mr. Motley, as might be expected from his creed and his life-long pursuits. This I shall refer to in connection with Motley's last work, "John of Barneveld." An historian among archivists and annalists reminds one of Sir John Lubbock in the midst of his ant-hills. Undoubtedly he disturbs the ants in their praiseworthy industry, much as his attentions may flatter them. Unquestionably the ants (if their means of expressing themselves were equal to their apparent intellectual ability) could teach him many things that he has overlooked and correct him in many mistakes. But the ants will labor ingloriously without an observer to chronicle their doings, and the archivists and annalists will pile up facts forever like so many articulates or mollusks or radiates, until the vertebrate historian comes with his generalizing ideas, his beliefs, his prejudices, his idiosyncrasies of all kinds, and brings the facts into a more or less imperfect, but still organic series of relations. The history which is not open to adverse criticism is worth little, except as material, for it is written without taking cognizance of those higher facts about which men must differ; of which Guizot writes as follows, as quoted in the work of M. Groen van Prinsterer himself.

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"It is with facts that our minds are exercised, it has nothing but facts as its materials, and when it discovers general laws these laws are themselves facts which it determines. . . . In the study of facts the intelligence may allow itself to be crushed; it may lower, narrow, materialize itself; it may come to believe that there are no facts except those which strike us at the first glance, which come close to us, which fall, as we say, under our senses; a great and gross error; there are remote facts, immense, obscure, sublime, very difficult to reach, to observe, to describe, and which are not any less facts for these reasons, and which man is not less obliged to study and to know; and if he fails to recognize them or forgets them, his thought will be prodigiously abashed, and all his ideas carry the stamp of this deterioration."

In that higher region of facts which belongs to the historian, whose task it is to interpret as well as to transcribe, Mr. Motley showed, of course, the political and religious school in which he had been brought up. Every man has a right to his "personal equation" of prejudice, and Mr. Motley, whose ardent temperament gave life to his writings, betrayed his sympathies in the disputes of which he told the story, in a way to insure sharp criticism from those of a different way of thinking. Thus it is that in the work of M. Groen van Prinsterer, from which I have quoted, he is considered as having been betrayed into error, while his critic recognizes "his manifest desire to be scrupulously impartial and truth-telling." And M. Fruin, another of his Dutch critics, says, "His sincerity, his perspicacity, the accuracy of his laborious researches, are incontestable."

Some of the criticisms of Dutch scholars will be considered in the pages which deal with his last work, "The Life of John of Barneveld."

XX.

1868-1869. AEt. 54-55.

Visit to America.—Residence at no. 2 Park street, Boston.—Address on the coming presidential election.—Address on historic progress and American democracy.—Appointed minister to England.

In June, 1868, Mr. Motley returned with his family to Boston, and established himself in the house No. 2 Park Street. During his residence here he entered a good deal into society, and entertained many visitors in a most hospitable and agreeable way.

On the 20th of October, 1868, he delivered an address before the Parker Fraternity, in the Music Hall, by special invitation. Its title was "Four Questions for the People, at the Presidential Election." This was of course what is commonly called an electioneering speech, but a speech full of noble sentiments and eloquent expression. Here are two of its paragraphs:—

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“Certainly there have been bitterly contested elections in this country before. Party spirit is always rife, and in such vivid, excitable, disputatious communities as ours are, and I trust always will be, it is the very soul of freedom. To those who reflect upon the means and end of popular government, nothing seems more stupid than in grand generalities to deprecate party spirit. Why, government by parties and through party machinery is the only possible method by which a free government can accomplish the purpose of its existence. The old republics of the past may be said to have fallen, not because of party spirit, but because there was no adequate machinery by which party spirit could develop itself with facility and regularity.” And if our Republic be true to herself, the future of the human race is assured by our example. No sweep of overwhelming armies, no ponderous treatises on the rights of man, no hymns to liberty, though set to martial music and resounding with the full diapason of a million human throats, can exert so persuasive an influence as does the spectacle of a great republic, occupying a quarter of the civilized globe, and governed quietly and sagely by the people itself.”

A large portion of this address is devoted to the proposition that it is just and reasonable to pay our debts rather than to repudiate them, and that the nation is as much bound to be honest as is the individual. “It is an awful thing,” he says, “that this should be a question at all,” but it was one of the points on which the election turned, for all that.

In his advocacy of the candidate with whom, and the government of which he became the head, his relations became afterwards so full of personal antagonism, he spoke as a man of his ardent nature might be expected to speak on such an occasion. No one doubts that his admiration of General Grant’s career was perfectly sincere, and no one at the present day can deny that the great captain stood before the historian with such a record as one familiar with the deeds of heroes and patriots might well consider as entitling him to the honors too often grudged to the living to be wasted on the dead. The speaker only gave voice to the widely prevailing feelings which had led to his receiving the invitation to speak. The time was one which called for outspoken utterance, and there was not a listener whose heart did not warm as he heard the glowing words in which the speaker recorded the noble achievements of the soldier who must in so many ways have reminded him of his favorite character, William the Silent.

On the 16th of December of this same year, 1868, Mr. Motley delivered an address before the New York Historical Society, on the occasion of the sixty-fourth anniversary of its foundation. The president of the society, Mr. Hamilton Fish, introduced the speaker as one “whose name belongs to no single country, and to no single age. As a statesman and diplomatist and patriot, he belongs to America; as a scholar, to the world of letters; as a historian, all ages will claim him in the future.”

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His subject was "Historic Progress and American Democracy." The discourse is, to use his own words, "a rapid sweep through the eons and the centuries," illustrating the great truth of the development of the race from its origin to the time in which we are living. It is a long distance from the planetary fact of the obliquity of the equator, which gave the earth its alternation of seasons, and rendered the history, if not the existence of man and of civilization a possibility, to the surrender of General Lee under the apple-tree at Appomattox Court-House. No one but a scholar familiar with the course of history could have marshalled such a procession of events into a connected and intelligible sequence. It is indeed a flight rather than a march; the reader is borne along as on the wings of a soaring poem, and sees the rising and decaying empires of history beneath him as a bird of passage marks the succession of cities and wilds and deserts as he keeps pace with the sun in his journey.

Its eloquence, its patriotism, its crowded illustrations, drawn from vast resources of knowledge, its epigrammatic axioms, its occasional pleasantries, are all characteristic of the writer.

Mr. Gulian C. Verplanck, the venerable senior member of the society, proposed the vote of thanks to Mr. Motley with words of warm commendation.

Mr. William Cullen Bryant rose and said:—

"I take great pleasure in seconding the resolution which has just been read. The eminent historian of the Dutch Republic, who has made the story of its earlier days as interesting as that of Athens and Sparta, and who has infused into the narrative the generous glow of his own genius, has the highest of titles to be heard with respectful attention by the citizens of a community which, in its origin, was an offshoot of that renowned republic. And cheerfully has that title been recognized, as the vast audience assembled here to-night, in spite of the storm, fully testifies; and well has our illustrious friend spoken of the growth of civilization and of the improvement in the condition of mankind, both in the Old World—the institutions of which he has so lately observed—and in the country which is proud to claim him as one of her children."

Soon after the election of General Grant, Mr. Motley received the appointment of Minister to England. That the position was one which was in many respects most agreeable to him cannot be doubted. Yet it was not with unmingled feelings of satisfaction, not without misgivings which warned him but too truly of the dangers about to encompass him, that he accepted the place. He writes to me on April 16, 1869:—

"I feel anything but exultation at present,—rather the opposite sensation. I feel that I am placed higher than I deserve, and at the same time that I am taking greater responsibilities than ever were assumed by me before. You will be indulgent to my mistakes and shortcomings,—and who can expect to avoid them? But the world will be



cruel, and the times are threatening. I shall do my best,—but the best may be poor enough,—and keep ‘a heart for any fate.’”

XXI.

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1869-1870. AEt. 55-56. *Recall from the English mission.—Its alleged and its probable reasons.*

The misgivings thus expressed to me in confidence, natural enough in one who had already known what it is to fall on evil days and evil tongues, were but too well justified by after events. I could have wished to leave untold the story of the English mission, an episode in Motley's life full of heart-burnings, and long to be regretted as a passage of American history. But his living appeal to my indulgence comes to me from his grave as a call for his defence, however little needed, at least as a part of my tribute to his memory. It is little needed, because the case is clear enough to all intelligent readers of our diplomatic history, and because his cause has been amply sustained by others in many ways better qualified than myself to do it justice. The task is painful, for if a wrong was done him it must be laid at the doors of those whom the nation has delighted to honor, and whose services no error of judgment or feeling or conduct can ever induce us to forget. If he confessed him, self-liable, like the rest of us, to mistakes and shortcomings, we must remember that the great officers of the government who decreed his downfall were not less the subjects of human infirmity.

The outline to be filled up is this: A new administration had just been elected. The "Alabama Treaty," negotiated by Motley's predecessor, Mr. Reverdy Johnson, had been rejected by the Senate. The minister was recalled, and Motley, nominated without opposition and unanimously confirmed by the Senate, was sent to England in his place. He was welcomed most cordially on his arrival at Liverpool, and replied in a similar strain of good feeling, expressing the same kindly sentiments which may be found in his instructions. Soon after arriving in London he had a conversation with Lord Clarendon, the British Foreign Secretary, of which he sent a full report to his own government. While the reported conversation was generally approved of in the government's dispatch acknowledging it, it was hinted that some of its expressions were stronger than were required by the instructions, and that one of its points was not conveyed in precise conformity with the President's view. The criticism was very gently worded, and the dispatch closed with a somewhat guarded paragraph repeating the government's approbation.

This was the first offence alleged against Mr. Motley. The second ground of complaint was that he had shown written minutes of this conversation to Lord Clarendon to obtain his confirmation of its exactness, and that he had—as he said, inadvertently,—omitted to make mention to the government of this circumstance until some weeks after the time of the interview.

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He was requested to explain to Lord Clarendon that a portion of his presentation and treatment of the subject discussed at the interview immediately after his arrival was disapproved by the Secretary of State, and he did so in a written communication, in which he used the very words employed by Mr. Fish in his criticism of the conversation with Lord Clarendon. An alleged mistake; a temperate criticism, coupled with a general approval; a rectification of the mistake criticised. All this within the first two months of Mr. Motley's official residence in London.

No further fault was found with him, so far as appears, in the discharge of his duties, to which he must have devoted himself faithfully, for he writes to me, under the date of December 27, 1870: "I have worked harder in the discharge of this mission than I ever did in my life." This from a man whose working powers astonished the old Dutch archivist, Groen van Prinsterer, means a good deal.

More than a year had elapsed since the interview with Lord Clarendon, which had been the subject of criticism. In the mean time a paper of instructions was sent to Motley, dated September 25, 1869, in which the points in the report of his interview which had been found fault with are so nearly covered by similar expressions, that there seemed no real ground left for difference between the government and the minister. Whatever over-statement there had been, these new instructions would imply that the government was now ready to go quite as far as the minister had gone, and in some points to put the case still more strongly. Everything was going on quietly. Important business had been transacted, with no sign of distrust or discontent on the part of the government as regarded Motley. Whatever mistake he was thought to have committed was condoned by amicable treatment, neutralized by the virtual indorsement of the government in the instructions of the 25th of September, and obsolete as a ground of quarrel by lapse of time. The question about which the misunderstanding, if such it deserves to be called, had taken place, was no longer a possible source of disagreement, as it had long been settled that the Alabama case should only be opened again at the suggestion of the British government, and that it should be transferred to Washington whenever that suggestion should again bring it up for consideration.

Such was the aspect of affairs at the American Legation in London. No foreign minister felt more secure in his place than Mr. Motley. "I thought myself," he says in the letter of December 27, "entirely in the confidence of my own government, and I know that I had the thorough confidence and the friendship of the leading personages in England." All at once, on the first of July, 1870, a letter was written by the Secretary of State, requesting him to resign. This gentle form of violence is well understood in the diplomatic service. Horace Walpole says, speaking of Lady Archibald Hamilton: "They have civilly asked her and grossly forced her to ask civilly to go away, which she has done, with a pension of twelve hundred a year." Such a request is like the embrace of the "virgin" in old torture-chambers. She is robed in soft raiment, but beneath it are the knife-blades which are ready to lacerate and kill the victim, if he awaits the pressure of the machinery already in motion.

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Mr. Motley knew well what was the logical order in an official execution, and saw fit to let the government work its will upon him as its servant. In November he was recalled.

The recall of a minister under such circumstances is an unusual if not an unprecedented occurrence. The government which appoints a citizen to represent the country at a foreign court assumes a very serious obligation to him. The next administration may turn him out and nothing will be thought of it. He may be obliged to ask for his passports and leave all at once if war is threatened between his own country and that which he represents. He may, of course, be recalled for gross misconduct. But his dismissal is very serious matter to him personally, and not to be thought of on the ground of passion or caprice. Marriage is a simple business, but divorce is a very different thing. The world wants to know the reason of it; the law demands its justification. It was a great blow to Mr. Motley, a cause of indignation to those who were interested in him, a surprise and a mystery to the world in general.

When he, his friends, and the public, all startled by this unexpected treatment, looked to find an explanation of it, one was found which seemed to many quite sufficient. Mr. Sumner had been prominent among those who had favored his appointment. A very serious breach had taken place between the President and Mr. Sumner on the important San Domingo question. It was a quarrel, in short, neither more nor less, at least so far as the President was concerned. The proposed San Domingo treaty had just been rejected by the Senate, on the thirtieth day of June, and immediately thereupon,—the very next day,—the letter requesting Mr. Motley's resignation was issued by the executive. This fact was interpreted as implying something more than a mere coincidence. It was thought that Sumner's friend, who had been supported by him as a candidate for high office, who shared many of his political ideas and feelings, who was his intimate associate, his fellow-townsmen, his companion in scholarship and cultivation, his sympathetic co-laborer in many ways, had been accounted and dealt with as the ally of an enemy, and that the shaft which struck to the heart of the sensitive envoy had glanced from the 'aes triplex' of the obdurate Senator.

Mr. Motley wrote a letter to the Secretary of State immediately after his recall, in which he reviewed his relations with the government from the time of his taking office, and showed that no sufficient reason could be assigned for the treatment to which he had been subjected. He referred finally to the public rumor which assigned the President's hostility to his friend Sumner, growing out of the San Domingo treaty question, as the cause of his own removal, and to the coincidence between the dates of the rejection of the treaty and his dismissal, with an evident belief that these two occurrences were connected by something more than accident.

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To this, a reply was received from the Secretary of State's office, signed by Mr. Fish, but so objectionable in its tone and expressions that it has been generally doubted whether the paper could claim anything more of the secretary's hand than his signature. It travelled back to the old record of the conversation with Lord Clarendon, more than a year and a half before, took up the old exceptions, warmed them over into grievances, and joined with them whatever the 'captatores verborum,' not extinct since Daniel Webster's time, could add to their number. This was the letter which was rendered so peculiarly offensive by a most undignified comparison which startled every well-bred reader. No answer was possible to such a letter, and the matter rested until the death of Mr. Motley caused it to be brought up once more for judgment.

The Honorable John Jay, in his tribute to the memory of Mr. Motley, read at a meeting of the New York Historical Society, vindicated his character against the attacks of the late executive in such a way as to leave an unfavorable impression as to the course of the government. Objection was made on this account to placing the tribute upon the minutes of the society. This led to a publication by Mr. Jay, entitled "Motley's Appeal to History," in which the propriety of the society's action is questioned, and the wrong done to him insisted upon and further illustrated.

The defence could not have fallen into better hands. Bearing a name which is, in itself, a title to the confidence of the American people, a diplomatist familiar with the rights, the customs, the traditions, the courtesies, which belong to the diplomatic service, the successor of Mr. Motley at Vienna, and therefore familiar with his official record, not self-made, which too commonly means half-made, but with careful training added to the instincts to which he had a right by inheritance, he could not allow the memory of such a scholar, of such a high-minded lover of his country, of so true a gentleman as Mr. Motley, to remain without challenge under the stigma of official condemnation. I must refer to Mr. Jay's memorial tribute as printed in the newspapers of the day, and to his "Appeal" published in "The International Review," for his convincing presentation of the case, and content myself with a condensed statement of the general and special causes of complaint against Mr. Motley, and the explanations which suggest themselves, as abundantly competent to show the insufficiency of the reasons alleged by the government as an excuse for the manner in which he was treated.

The grounds of complaint against Mr. Motley are to be looked for:—

1. In the letter of Mr. Fish to Mr. Moran, of December 30, 1870.
2. In Mr. Bancroft Davis's letter to the New York "Herald" of January 4, 1878, entitled, "Mr. Sumner, the Alabama Claims and their Settlement."
3. The reported conversations of General Grant.

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4. The reported conversations of Mr. Fish.

In considering Mr. Fish's letter, we must first notice its animus. The manner in which Dickens's two old women are brought in is not only indecorous, but it shows a state of feeling from which nothing but harsh interpretation of every questionable expression of Mr. Motley's was to be expected.

There is not the least need of maintaining the perfect fitness and rhetorical felicity of every phrase and every word used by him in his interview with Lord Clarendon. It is not to be expected that a minister, when about to hold a conversation with a representative of the government to which he is accredited, will commit his instructions to memory and recite them, like a school-boy "speaking his piece." He will give them more or less in his own language, amplifying, it may be, explaining, illustrating, at any rate paraphrasing in some degree, but endeavoring to convey an idea of their essential meaning. In fact, as any one can see, a conversation between two persons must necessarily imply a certain amount of extemporization on the part of both. I do not believe any long and important conference was ever had between two able men without each of them feeling that he had not spoken exactly in all respects as he would if he could say all over again.

Doubtless, therefore, Mr. Motley's report of his conversation shows that some of his expressions might have been improved, and others might as well have been omitted. A man does not change his temperament on taking office. General Jackson still swore "by the Eternal," and his illustrious military successor of a more recent period seems, by his own showing, to have been able to sudden impulses of excitement. It might be said of Motley, as it was said of Shakespeare by Ben Jonson, "*aliquando sufflaminandus erat.*" Yet not too much must be made of this concession. Only a determination to make out a case could, as it seems to me, have framed such an indictment as that which the secretary constructed by stringing together a slender list of pretended peccadillos. One instance will show the extreme slightness which characterizes many of the grounds of inculpation:—

The instructions say, "The government, in rejecting the recent convention, abandons neither its own claims nor those of its citizens," *etc.*

Mr. Motley said, in the course of his conversation, "At present, the United States government, while withdrawing neither its national claims nor the claims of its individual citizens against the British government," *etc.*

Mr. Fish says, "The determination of this government not to abandon its claims nor those of its citizens was stated parenthetically, and in such a subordinate way as not necessarily to attract the attention of Lord Clarendon."

What reported conversation can stand a captious criticism like this? Are there not two versions of the ten commandments which were given out in the thunder and smoke of

Sinai, and would the secretary hold that this would have been a sufficient reason to recall Moses from his “Divine Legation” at the court of the Almighty?

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There are certain expressions which, as Mr. Fish shows them apart from their connection, do very certainly seem in bad taste, if not actually indiscreet and unjustifiable. Let me give an example:—

“Instead of expressing the hope entertained by this government that there would be an early, satisfactory, and friendly settlement of the questions at issue, he volunteered the unnecessary, and from the manner in which it was thrust in, the highly objectionable statement that the United States government had no insidious purposes,” *etc.*

This sounds very badly as Mr. Fish puts it; let us see how it stands in its proper connection:—

“He [Lord Clarendon] added with some feeling, that in his opinion it would be highly objectionable that the question should be hung up on a peg, to be taken down at some convenient moment for us, when it might be difficult for the British government to enter upon its solution, and when they might go into the debate at a disadvantage. These were, as nearly as I can remember, his words, and I replied very earnestly that I had already answered that question when I said that my instructions were to propose as brief a delay as would probably be requisite for the cooling of passions and for producing the calm necessary for discussing the defects of the old treaty and a basis for a new one. The United States government had no insidious purposes,” *etc.*

Is it not evident that Lord Clarendon suggested the idea which Mr. Motley repelled as implying an insidious mode of action? Is it not just as clear that Mr. Fish’s way of reproducing the expression without the insinuation which called it forth is a practical misstatement which does Mr. Motley great wrong?

One more example of the method of wringing a dry cloth for drops of evidence ought to be enough to show the whole spirit of the paper.

Mr. Fish, in his instructions:—

“It might, indeed, well have occurred in the event of the selection by lot of the arbitrator or umpire in different cases, involving however precisely the same principles, that different awards, resting upon antagonistic principles, might have been made.”

Mr. Motley, in the conversation with Lord Clarendon:—

“I called his lordship’s attention to your very judicious suggestion that the throwing of the dice for umpires might bring about opposite decisions in cases arising out of identical principles. He agreed entirely that no principle was established by the treaty, but that the throwing of dice or drawing of lots was not a new invention on that occasion, but a not uncommon method in arbitrations. I only expressed the opinion that such an aleatory process seemed an unworthy method in arbitrations,” *etc.*

Mr. Fish, in his letter to Mr. Moran:—

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“That he had in his mind at that interview something else than his letter of instructions from this department would appear to be evident, when he says that ‘he called his lordship’s attention to your [my] very judicious suggestion that the throwing of dice for umpire might bring about opposite decisions.’ The instructions which Mr. Motley received from me contained no suggestion about throwing of dice.’ That idea is embraced in the suggestive words ‘aleatory process’ (adopted by Mr. Motley), but previously applied in a speech made in the Senate on the question of ratifying the treaty.”

Charles Sumner’s Speech on the Johnson-Clarendon Treaty, April 13, 1869:

“In the event of failure to agree, the arbitrator is determined ‘by lot’ out of two persons named by each side. Even if this aleatory proceeding were a proper device in the umpirage of private claims, it is strongly inconsistent with the solemnity which belongs to the present question.”

It is “suggestive” that the critical secretary, so keen in detecting conversational inaccuracies, having but two words to quote from a printed document, got one of them wrong. But this trivial comment must not lead the careful reader to neglect to note how much is made of what is really nothing at all. The word aleatory, whether used in its original and limited sense, or in its derived extension as a technical term of the civil law, was appropriate and convenient; one especially likely to be remembered by any person who had read Mr. Sumner’s speech,—and everybody had read it; the secretary himself doubtless got the suggestion of determining the question “by lot” from it. What more natural than that it should be used again when the subject of appealing to chance came up in conversation? It “was an excellent good word before it was ill-sorted,” and we were fortunate in having a minister who was scholar enough to know what it meant. The language used by Mr. Motley conveyed the idea of his instructions plainly enough, and threw in a compliment to their author which should have saved this passage at least from the wringing process. The example just given is, like the concession of belligerency to the insurgents by Great Britain, chiefly important as “showing animus.”

It is hardly necessary to bring forward other instances of virtual misrepresentation. If Mr. Motley could have talked his conversation over again, he would very probably have changed some expressions. But he felt bound to repeat the interview exactly as it occurred, with all the errors to which its extemporaneous character exposed it. When a case was to be made out against him, the secretary wrote, December 30, 1870:

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“Well might he say, as he did in a subsequent dispatch on the 15th of July, 1869, that he had gone beyond the strict letter of his instructions. He might have added, in direct opposition to their temper and spirit.”

Of the same report the secretary had said, June 28, 1869: “Your general presentation and treatment of the several subjects discussed in that interview meet the approval of this department.” This general approval is qualified by mild criticism of a single statement as not having been conveyed in “precise conformity” to the President’s view. The minister was told he might be well content to rest the question on the very forcible presentation he had made of the American side of the question, and that if there were expressions used stronger than were required by his instructions, they were in the right direction. The mere fact that a minute of this conversation was confidentially submitted to Lord Clarendon in order that our own government might have his authority for the accuracy of the record, which was intended exclusively for its own use, and that this circumstance was overlooked and not reported to the government until some weeks afterward, are the additional charges against Mr. Motley. The submission of the dispatch containing an account of the interview, the secretary says, is not inconsistent with diplomatic usage, but it is inconsistent with the duty of a minister not to inform his government of that submission. “Mr. Motley submitted the draft of his No. 8 to Lord Clarendon, and failed to communicate that fact to his government.” He did inform Mr. Fish, at any rate, on the 30th of July, and alleged “inadvertence” as the reason for his omission to do it before.

Inasmuch as submitting the dispatch was not inconsistent with diplomatic usage, nothing seems left to find fault with but the not very long delay in mentioning the fact, or in his making the note “private and confidential,” as is so frequently done in diplomatic correspondence.

Such were the grounds of complaint. On the strength of the conversation which had met with the general approval of the government, tempered by certain qualifications, and of the omission to report immediately to the government the fact of its verification by Lord Clarendon, the secretary rests the case against Mr. Motley. On these grounds it was that, according to him, the President withdrew all right to discuss the Alabama question from the minister whose dismissal was now only a question of time. But other evidence comes in here.

Mr. Motley says:—

“It was, as I supposed, understood before my departure for England, although not publicly announced, that the so-called Alabama negotiations, whenever renewed, should be conducted at Washington, in case of the consent of the British government.”

Mr. Sumner says, in his “Explanation in Reply to an Assault:”—

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"The secretary in a letter to me at Boston, dated at Washington, October 9, 1869, informs me that the discussion of the question was withdrawn from London 'because (the italics are the secretary's) we think that when renewed it can be carried on here with a better prospect of settlement, than where the late attempt at a convention which resulted so disastrously and was conducted so strangely was had;' and what the secretary thus wrote he repeated in conversation when we met, carefully making the transfer to Washington depend upon our advantage here, from the presence of the Senate,—thus showing that the pretext put forth to wound Mr. Motley was an afterthought."

Again we may fairly ask how the government came to send a dispatch like that of September 25, 1869, in which the views and expressions for which Mr. Motley's conversation had been criticised were so nearly reproduced, and with such emphasis that Mr. Motley says, in a letter to me, dated April 8, 1871, "It not only covers all the ground which I ever took, but goes far beyond it. No one has ever used stronger language to the British government than is contained in that dispatch. . . . It is very able and well worth your reading. Lord Clarendon called it to me 'Sumner's speech over again.' It was thought by the English cabinet to have 'out-Sumnered Sumner,' and now our government, thinking that every one in the United States had forgotten the dispatch, makes believe that I was removed because my sayings and doings in England were too much influenced by Sumner!" Mr. Motley goes on to speak of the report that an offer of his place in England was made to Sumner "to get him out of the way of San Domingo." The facts concerning this offer are now sufficiently known to the public.

Here I must dismiss Mr. Fish's letter to Mr. Moran, having, as I trust, sufficiently shown the spirit in which it was written and the strained interpretations and manifest overstatements by which it attempts to make out its case against Mr. Motley. I will not parade the two old women, whose untimely and unseemly introduction into the dress-circle of diplomacy was hardly to have been expected of the high official whose name is at the bottom of this paper. They prove nothing, they disprove nothing, they illustrate nothing—except that a statesman may forget himself. Neither will I do more than barely allude to the unfortunate reference to the death of Lord Clarendon as connected with Mr. Motley's removal, so placidly disposed of by a sentence or two in the London "Times" of January 24, 1871. I think we may consider ourselves ready for the next witness.

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Mr. J. C. Bancroft Davis, Assistant Secretary of State under President Grant and Secretary Fish, wrote a letter to the New York "Herald," under the date of January 4, 1878, since reprinted as a pamphlet and entitled "Mr. Sumner, the Alabama Claims and their Settlement." Mr. Sumner was never successfully attacked when living,—except with a bludgeon,—and his friends have more than sufficiently vindicated him since his death. But Mr. Motley comes in for his share of animadversion in Mr. Davis's letter. He has nothing of importance to add to Mr. Fish's criticisms on the interview with Lord Clarendon. Only he brings out the head and front of Mr. Motley's offending by italicizing three very brief passages from his conversation at this interview; not discreetly, as it seems to me, for they will not bear the strain that is put upon them. These are the passages:—

1. "but that such, measures must always be taken with a full view of the grave responsibilities assumed." 2. "and as being the fountain head of the disasters which had been caused to the American people." 3. "as the fruits of the proclamation."

1. It is true that nothing was said of responsibility in Mr. Motley's instructions. But the idea was necessarily involved in their statements. For if, as Mr. Motley's instructions say, the right of a power "to define its own relations," *etc.*, when a civil conflict has arisen in another state depends on its (the conflict's) having "attained a sufficient complexity, magnitude, and completeness," inasmuch as that Power has to judge whether it has or has not fulfilled these conditions, and is of course liable to judge wrong, every such act of judgment must be attended with grave responsibilities. The instructions say that "the necessity and propriety of the original concession of belligerency by Great Britain at the time it was made have been contested and are not admitted." It follows beyond dispute that Great Britain may in this particular case have incurred grave responsibilities; in fact, the whole negotiations implied as much. Perhaps Mr. Motley need not have used the word "responsibilities." But considering that the government itself said in dispatch No. 70, September 25, 1869, "The President does not deny, on the contrary he maintains, that every sovereign power decides for itself on its responsibility whether or not it will, at a given time, accord the status of belligerency," *etc.*, it was hardly worth while to use italics about Mr. Motley's employment of the same language as constituting a grave cause of offence.

2. Mr. Motley's expression, "as being the fountain head of the disasters," is a conversational paraphrase of the words of his instructions, "as it shows the beginning and the animus of that course of conduct which resulted so disastrously," which is not "in precise conformity" with his instructions, but is just such a variation as is to be expected when one is talking with another and using the words that suggest themselves at the moment, just as the familiar expression, "hung up on a peg," probably suggested itself to Lord Clarendon.

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3. "The fruits of the proclamation" is so inconsiderable a variation on the text of the instructions, "supplemented by acts causing direct damage," that the secretary's hint about want of precise conformity seems hardly to have been called for.

It is important to notice this point in the instructions: With other powers Mr. Motley was to take the position that the "recognition of the insurgents' state of war" was made "no ground of complaint;" with Great Britain that the cause of grievance was "not so much" placed upon the issuance of this recognition as upon her conduct under, and subsequent to, such recognition.

There is no need of maintaining the exact fitness of every expression used by Mr. Motley. But any candid person who will carefully read the government's dispatch No. 70, dated September 25, 1869, will see that a government holding such language could find nothing in Mr. Motley's expressions in a conversation held at his first official interview to visit with official capital punishment more than a year afterwards. If Mr. Motley had, as it was pretended, followed Sumner, Mr. Fish had "out-Sumnered" the Senator himself.

Mr. Davis's pamphlet would hardly be complete without a mysterious letter from an unnamed writer, whether a faithless friend, a disguised enemy, a secret emissary, or an injudicious alarmist, we have no means of judging for ourselves. The minister appears to have been watched by somebody in London, as he was in Vienna. This somebody wrote a private letter in which he expressed "fear and regret that Mr. Motley's bearing in his social intercourse was throwing obstacles in the way of a future settlement." The charge as mentioned in Mr. Davis's letter is hardly entitled to our attention. Mr. Sumner considered it the work of an enemy, and the recollection of the M'Crackin letter might well have made the government cautious of listening to complaints of such a character. This Somebody may have been one whom we should call Nobody. We cannot help remembering how well 'Outis' served 'Oduxseus' of old, when he was puzzled to extricate himself from an embarrassing position. 'Stat nominis umbra' is a poor showing for authority to support an attack on a public servant exposed to every form of open and insidious abuse from those who are prejudiced against his person or his birthplace, who are jealous of his success, envious of his position, hostile to his politics, dwarfed by his reputation, or hate him by the divine right of idiosyncrasy, always liable, too, to questioning comment from well-meaning friends who happen to be suspicious or sensitive in their political or social relations.

The reported sayings of General Grant and of Mr. Fish to the correspondents who talked with them may be taken for what they are worth. They sound naturally enough to have come from the speakers who are said to have uttered them. I quote the most important part of the Edinburgh letter, September 11, 1877, to the New York "Herald." These are the words attributed to General Grant:—

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“Mr. Motley was certainly a very able, very honest gentleman, fit to hold any official position. But he knew long before he went out that he would have to go. When I was making these appointments, Mr. Sumner came to me and asked me to appoint Mr. Motley as minister to the court of St. James. I told him I would, and did. Soon after Mr. Sumner made that violent speech about the Alabama claims, and the British government was greatly offended. Mr. Sumner was at the time chairman of the committee on foreign affairs. Mr. Motley had to be instructed. The instructions were prepared very carefully, and after Governor Fish and I had gone over them for the last time I wrote an addendum charging him that above all things he should handle the subject of the Alabama claims with the greatest delicacy. Mr. Motley instead of obeying his explicit instructions, deliberately fell in line with Sumner, and thus added insult to the previous injury. As soon as I heard of it I went over to the State Department and told Governor Fish to dismiss Motley at once. I was very angry indeed, and I have been sorry many a time since that I did not stick to my first determination. Mr. Fish advised delay because of Sumner’s position in the Senate and attitude on the treaty question. We did not want to stir him up just then. We dispatched a note of severe censure to Motley at once and ordered him to abstain from any further connection with that question. We thereupon commenced negotiations with the British minister at Washington, and the result was the joint high commission and the Geneva award. I supposed Mr. Motley would be manly enough to resign after that snub, but he kept on till he was removed. Mr. Sumner promised me that he would vote for the treaty. But when it was before the Senate he did all he could to beat it.”

General Grant talked again at Cairo, in Egypt.

“Grant then referred to the statement published at an interview with him in Scotland, and said the publication had some omissions and errors. He had no ill-will towards Mr. Motley, who, like other estimable men, made mistakes, and Motley made a mistake which made him an improper person to hold office under me.”“It is proper to say of me that I killed Motley, or that I made war upon Sumner for not supporting the annexation of San Domingo. But if I dare to answer that I removed Motley from the highest considerations of duty as an executive; if I presume to say that he made a mistake in his office which made him no longer useful to the country; if Fish has the temerity to hint that Sumner’s temper was so unfortunate that business relations with him became impossible, we are slandering the dead.”

“Nothing but Mortimer.” Those who knew both men—the Ex-President and the late Senator—would agree, I do not doubt, that they would not be the most promising pair of human beings to make harmonious members of a political

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happy family. “Cedant arma togae,” the life-long sentiment of Sumner, in conflict with “Stand fast and stand sure,” the well-known device of the clan of Grant, reminds one of the problem of an irresistible force in collision with an insuperable resistance. But the President says,—or is reported as saying,—“I may be blamed for my opposition to Mr. Sumner’s tactics, but I was not guided so much by reason of his personal hatred of myself, as I was by a desire to protect our national interests in diplomatic affairs.”

“It would be useless,” says Mr. Davis in his letter to the “Herald,” “to enter into a controversy whether the President may or may not have been influenced in the final determination of the moment for requesting Motley’s resignation by the feeling caused by Sumner’s personal hostility and abuse of himself.” Unfortunately, this controversy had been entered into, and the idleness of suggesting any relation of cause and effect between Mr. Motley’s dismissal and the irritation produced in the President’s mind by the rejection of the San Domingo treaty—which rejection was mainly due to Motley’s friend Sumner’s opposition —strongly insisted upon in a letter signed by the Secretary of State. Too strongly, for here it was that he failed to remember what was due to his office, to himself, and to the gentleman of whom he was writing; if indeed it was the secretary’s own hand which held the pen, and not another’s.

We might as well leave out the wrath of Achilles from the Iliad, as the anger of the President with Sumner from the story of Motley’s dismissal. The sad recital must always begin with M-----. He was, he is reported as saying, “very angry indeed” with Motley because he had, fallen in line with Sumner. He couples them together in his conversation as closely as Chang and Eng were coupled. The death of Lord Clarendon would have covered up the coincidence between the rejection of the San Domingo treaty and Mr. Motley’s dismissal very neatly, but for the inexorable facts about its date, as revealed by the London “Times.” It betrays itself as an afterthought, and its failure as a defence reminds us too nearly of the trial in which Mr. Webster said suicide is confession.

It is not strange that the spurs of the man who had so lately got out of the saddle should catch in the scholastic robe of the man on the floor of the Senate. But we should not have looked for any such antagonism between the Secretary of State and the envoy to Great Britain. On the contrary, they must have had many sympathies, and it must have cost the secretary pain, as he said it did, to be forced to communicate with Mr. Moran instead of with Mr. Motley.

He, too, was inquired of by one of the emissaries of the American Unholy Inquisition. His evidence is thus reported:

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“The reason for Mr. Motley’s removal was found in considerations of state. He misrepresented the government on the Alabama question, especially in the two speeches made by him before his arrival at his post.”

These must be the two speeches made to the American and the Liverpool chambers of commerce. If there is anything in these short addresses beyond those civil generalities which the occasion called out, I have failed to find it. If it was in these that the reason of Mr. Motley’s removal was to be looked for, it is singular that they are not mentioned in the secretary’s letter to Mr. Moran, or by Mr. Davis in his letter to the New York “Herald.” They must have been as unsuccessful as myself in the search after anything in these speeches which could be construed into misinterpretation of the government on the Alabama question.

We may much more readily accept “considerations of state” as a reason for Mr. Motley’s removal. Considerations of state have never yet failed the axe or the bowstring when a reason for the use of those convenient implements was wanted, and they are quite equal to every emergency which can arise in a republican autocracy. But for the very reason that a minister is absolutely in the power of his government, the manner in which that power is used is always open to the scrutiny, and, if it has been misused, to the condemnation, of a tribunal higher than itself; a court that never goes out of office, and which no personal feelings, no lapse of time, can silence.

The ostensible grounds on which Mr. Motley was recalled are plainly insufficient to account for the action of the government. If it was in great measure a manifestation of personal feeling on the part of the high officials by whom and through whom the act was accomplished, it was a wrong which can never be repaired and never sufficiently regretted.

Stung by the slanderous report of an anonymous eavesdropper to whom the government of the day was not ashamed to listen, he had quitted Vienna, too hastily, it may be, but wounded, indignant, feeling that he had been unworthily treated. The sudden recall from London, on no pretext whatever but an obsolete and overstated incident which had ceased to have any importance, was under these circumstances a deadly blow. It fell upon “the new-healed wound of malice,” and though he would not own it, and bore up against it, it was a shock from which he never fully recovered.

“I hope I am one of those,” he writes to me from the Hague, in 1872, “who ‘fortune’s buffets and rewards can take with equal thanks.’ I am quite aware that I have had far more than I deserve of political honors, and they might have had my post as a voluntary gift on my part had they remembered that I was an honorable man, and not treated me as a detected criminal deserves to be dealt with.”

Mr. Sumner naturally felt very deeply what he considered the great wrong done to his friend. He says:—

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“How little Mr. Motley merited anything but respect and courtesy from the secretary is attested by all who know his eminent position in London, and the service he rendered to his country. Already the London press, usually slow to praise Americans when strenuous for their country, has furnished its voluntary testimony. The ‘Daily News’ of August 16, 1870, spoke of the insulted minister in these terms:—“We are violating no confidence in saying that all the hopes of Mr. Motley’s official residence in England have been amply fulfilled, and that the announcement of his unexpected and unexplained recall was received with extreme astonishment and unfeigned regret. The vacancy he leaves cannot possibly be filled by a minister more sensitive to the honor of his government, more attentive to the interests of his country, and more capable of uniting the most vigorous performance of his public duties with the high-bred courtesy and conciliatory tact and temper that make those duties easy and successful. Mr. Motley’s successor will find his mission wonderfully facilitated by the firmness and discretion that have presided over the conduct of American affairs in this country during too brief a term, too suddenly and unaccountably concluded.”

No man can escape being found fault with when it is necessary to make out a case against him. A diplomatist is watched by the sharpest eyes and commented on by the most merciless tongues. The best and wisest has his defects, and sometimes they would seem to be very grave ones if brought up against him in the form of accusation. Take these two portraits, for instance, as drawn by John Quincy Adams. The first is that of Stratford Canning, afterwards Lord Stratford de Redcliffe:—

“He is to depart to-morrow. I shall probably see him no more. He is a proud, high-tempered Englishman, of good but not extraordinary parts; stubborn and punctilious, with a disposition to be overbearing, which I have often been compelled to check in its own way. He is, of all the foreign ministers with whom I have had occasion to treat, the man who has most severely tried my temper. Yet he has been long in the diplomatic career, and treated with governments of the most opposite characters. He has, however, a great respect for his word, and there is nothing false about him. This is an excellent quality for a negotiator. Mr. Canning is a man of forms, studious of courtesy, and tenacious of private morals. As a diplomatic man, his great want is suppleness, and his great virtue is sincerity.”

The second portrait is that of the French minister, Hyde de Neuville:—

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"No foreign minister who ever resided here has been so universally esteemed and beloved, nor have I ever been in political relations with any foreign statesman of whose moral qualities I have formed so good an opinion, with the exception of Count Romanzoff. He has not sufficient command of his temper, is quick, irritable, sometimes punctilious, occasionally indiscreet in his discourse, and tainted with Royalist and Bourbon prejudices. But he has strong sentiments of honor, justice, truth, and even liberty. His flurries of temper pass off as quickly as they rise. He is neither profound nor sublime nor brilliant; but a man of strong and good feelings, with the experience of many vicissitudes of fortune, a good but common understanding, and good intentions biased by party feelings, occasional interests, and personal affections."

It means very little to say that a man has some human imperfections, or that a public servant might have done some things better. But when a questionable cause is to be justified, the victim's excellences are looked at with the eyes of Liliput and his failings with those of Brobdingnag.

The recall of a foreign minister for alleged misconduct in office is a kind of capital punishment. It is the nearest approach to the Sultan's bowstring which is permitted to the chief magistrate of our Republic. A general can do nothing under martial law more peremptory than a President can do with regard to the public functionary whom he has appointed with the advice and consent of the Senate, but whom he can officially degrade and disgrace at his own pleasure for insufficient cause or for none at all. Like the centurion of Scripture, he says Go, and he goeth. The nation's representative is less secure in his tenure of office than his own servant, to whom he must give warning of his impending dismissal.

"A breath unmakes him as a breath has made."

The chief magistrate's responsibility to duty, to the fellow-citizen at his mercy, to his countrymen, to mankind, is in proportion to his power. His prime minister, the agent of his edicts, should feel bound to withstand him if he seeks to gratify a personal feeling under the plea of public policy, unless the minister, like the slaves of the harem, is to find his qualification for office in leaving his manhood behind him.

The two successive administrations, which treated Mr. Motley in a manner unworthy of their position and cruel, if not fatal to him, have been heard, directly or through their advocates. I have attempted to show that the defence set up for their action is anything but satisfactory. A later generation will sit in judgment upon the evidence more calmly than our own. It is not for a friend, like the writer, to anticipate its decision, but unless the reasons alleged to justify his treatment, and which have so much the air of afterthoughts, shall seem stronger to that future tribunal than they do to him, the verdict will be that Mr. Motley was twice sacrificed to personal feelings which should never have been cherished by the heads of the government, and should never have been countenanced by their chief advisers.

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JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY.

A MEMOIR

By Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.

Volume *iii*.

XXII.

1874. AEt. 60. "*Life of John of Barneveld.*"—*Criticisms.*—Groen van Prinsterer.

The full title of Mr. Motley's next and last work is "The Life and Death of John of Barneveld, Advocate of Holland; with a View of the Primary Causes and Movements of the Thirty Years' War."

In point of fact this work is a history rather than a biography. It is an interlude, a pause between the acts which were to fill out the complete plan of the "Eighty Years' Tragedy," and of which the last act, the Thirty Years' War, remains unwritten. The "Life of Barneveld" was received as a fitting and worthy continuation of the series of intellectual labor in which he was engaged. I will quote but two general expressions of approval from the two best known British critical reviews. In connection with his previous works, it forms, says "The London Quarterly," "a fine and continuous story, of which the writer and the nation celebrated by him have equal reason to be proud; a narrative which will remain a prominent ornament of American genius, while it has permanently enriched English literature on this as well as on the other side of the Atlantic."

"The Edinburgh Review" speaks no less warmly: "We can hardly give too much appreciation to that subtle alchemy of the brain which has enabled him to produce out of dull, crabbed, and often illegible state papers, the vivid, graphic, and sparkling narrative which he has given to the world."

In a literary point of view, M. Groen van Prinsterer, whose elaborate work has been already referred to, speaks of it as perhaps the most classical of Motley's productions, but it is upon this work that the force of his own and other Dutch criticisms has been chiefly expended.

The key to this biographical history or historical biography may be found in a few sentences from its opening chapter.

"There have been few men at any period whose lives have been more closely identical than his [Barneveld's] with a national history. There have been few great men in any history whose names have become less familiar to the world, and lived less in the

mouths of posterity. Yet there can be no doubt that if William the Silent was the founder of the independence of the United Provinces, Barneveld was the founder of the Commonwealth itself. . . .“Had that country of which he was so long the first citizen maintained until our own day the same proportional position among the empires of Christendom as it held in the seventeenth century, the name of John of Barneveld would have perhaps been as familiar to all men as it is at this moment to nearly every inhabitant of the Netherlands.

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Even now political passion is almost as ready to flame forth, either in ardent affection or enthusiastic hatred, as if two centuries and a half had not elapsed since his death. His name is so typical of a party, a polity, and a faith, so indelibly associated with a great historical cataclysm, as to render it difficult even for the grave, the conscientious, the learned, the patriotic, of his own compatriots to speak of him with absolute impartiality. "A foreigner who loves and admires all that is great and noble in the history of that famous republic, and can have no hereditary bias as to its ecclesiastical or political theories, may at least attempt the task with comparative coldness, although conscious of inability to do thorough justice to a most complex subject."

With all Mr. Motley's efforts to be impartial, to which even his sternest critics bear witness, he could not help becoming a partisan of the cause which for him was that of religious liberty and progress, as against the accepted formula of an old ecclesiastical organization. For the quarrel which came near being a civil war, which convulsed the state, and cost Barneveld his head, had its origin in a difference on certain points, and more especially on a single point, of religious doctrine.

As a great river may be traced back until its fountainhead is found in a thread of water streaming from a cleft in the rocks, so a great national movement may sometimes be followed until its starting-point is found in the cell of a monk or the studies of a pair of wrangling professors.

The religious quarrel of the Dutchmen in the seventeenth century reminds us in some points of the strife between two parties in our own New England, sometimes arraying the "church" on one side against the "parish," or the general body of worshippers, on the other. The portraits of Gomarus, the great orthodox champion, and Arminius, the head and front of the "liberal theology" of his day, as given in the little old quarto of Meursius, recall two ministerial types of countenance familiar to those who remember the earlier years of our century.

Under the name of "Remonstrants" and "Contra-Remonstrants,"—Arminians and old-fashioned Calvinists, as we should say,—the adherents of the two Leyden professors disputed the right to the possession of the churches, and the claim to be considered as representing the national religion. Of the seven United Provinces, two, Holland and Utrecht, were prevailingly Arminian, and the other five Calvinistic. Barneveld, who, under the title of Advocate, represented the province of Holland, the most important of them all, claimed for each province a right to determine its own state religion. Maurice the Stadholder, son of William the Silent, the military chief of the republic, claimed the right for the States-General. 'Cujus regio ejus religio' was then the accepted public doctrine of Protestant nations. Thus the provincial and the general governments were

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brought into conflict by their creeds, and the question whether the republic was a confederation or a nation, the same question which has been practically raised, and for the time at least settled, in our own republic, was in some way to be decided. After various disturbances and acts of violence by both parties, Maurice, representing the States-General, pronounced for the Calvinists or Contra-Remonstrants, and took possession of one of the great churches, as an assertion of his authority. Barneveld, representing the Arminian or Remonstrant provinces, levied a body of mercenary soldiers in several of the cities. These were disbanded by Maurice, and afterwards by an act of the States-General. Barneveld was apprehended, imprisoned, and executed, after an examination which was in no proper sense a trial. Grotius, who was on the Arminian side and involved in the inculpated proceedings, was also arrested and imprisoned. His escape, by a stratagem successfully repeated by a slave in our own times, may challenge comparison for its romantic interest with any chapter of fiction. How his wife packed him into the chest supposed to contain the folios of the great oriental scholar Erpenius, how the soldiers wondered at its weight and questioned whether it did not hold an Arminian, how the servant-maid, Elsje van Houwening, quick-witted as Morgiana of the "Forty Thieves," parried their questions and convoyed her master safely to the friendly place of refuge,—all this must be read in the vivid narrative of the author.

The questions involved were political, local, personal, and above all religious. Here is the picture which Motley draws of the religious quarrel as it divided the people:—

"In burghers' mansions, peasants' cottages, mechanics' back-parlors; on board herring-smacks, canal-boats, and East Indiamen; in shops, counting-rooms, farm-yards, guard-rooms, alehouses; on the exchange, in the tennis court, on the mall; at banquets, at burials, christenings, or bridals; wherever and whenever human creatures met each other, there was ever to be found the fierce wrangle of Remonstrant and Contra-Remonstrant, the hissing of red-hot theological rhetoric, the pelting of hostile texts. The blacksmith's iron cooled on the anvil, the tinker dropped a kettle half mended, the broker left a bargain unclinched, the Scheveningen fisherman in his wooden shoes forgot the cracks in his pinkie, while each paused to hold high converse with friend or foe on fate, free-will, or absolute foreknowledge; losing himself in wandering mazes whence there was no issue. Province against province, city against city, family against family; it was one vast scene of bickering, denunciation, heart-burnings, mutual excommunication and hatred."

The religious grounds of the quarrel which set these seventeenth-century Dutchmen to cutting each other's throats were to be looked for in the "Five Points" of the Arminians as arrayed against the "Seven Points" of the Gomarites, or Contra-Remonstrants. The most important of the differences which were to be settled by fratricide seem to have been these:—

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According to the Five Points, "God has from eternity resolved to choose to eternal life those who through his grace believe in Jesus Christ," *etc.* According to the Seven Points, "God in his election has not looked at the belief and the repentance of the elect," *etc.* According to the Five Points, all good deeds must be ascribed to God's grace in Christ, but it does not work irresistibly. The language of the Seven Points implies that the elect cannot resist God's eternal and unchangeable design to give them faith and steadfastness, and that they can never wholly and for always lose the true faith. The language of the Five Points is unsettled as to the last proposition, but it was afterwards maintained by the Remonstrant party that a true believer could, through his own fault, fall away from God and lose faith.

It must be remembered that these religious questions had an immediate connection with politics. Independently of the conflict of jurisdiction, in which they involved the parties to the two different creeds, it was believed or pretended that the new doctrines of the Remonstrants led towards Romanism, and were allied with designs which threatened the independence of the country. "There are two factions in the land," said Maurice, "that of Orange and that of Spain, and the two chiefs of the Spanish faction are those political and priestly Arminians, Uytenbogaert and Oldenbarneveld."

The heads of the two religious and political parties were in such hereditary, long-continued, and intimate relations up to the time when one signed the other's death-warrant, that it was impossible to write the life of one without also writing that of the other. For his biographer John of Barneveld is the true patriot, the martyr, whose cause was that of religious and political freedom. For him Maurice is the ambitious soldier who hated his political rival, and never rested until this rival was brought to the scaffold.

The questions which agitated men's minds two centuries and a half ago are not dead yet in the country where they produced such estrangement, violence, and wrong. No stranger could take them up without encountering hostile criticism from one party or the other. It may be and has been conceded that Mr. Motley writes as a partisan,—a partisan of freedom in politics and religion, as he understands freedom. This secures him the antagonism of one class of critics. But these critics are themselves partisans, and themselves open to the cross-fire of their antagonists. M. Groen van Prinsterer, "the learned and distinguished" editor of the "Archives et Correspondance" of the Orange and Nassau family, published a considerable volume, before referred to, in which many of Motley's views are strongly controverted. But he himself is far from being in accord with "that eminent scholar," M. Bakhuyzen van den Brink, whose name, he says, is celebrated enough to need no comment, or with M. Fruin, of whose impartiality and erudition he himself speaks in the strongest terms. The ground upon which he is attacked is thus stated in his own words:—

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"People have often pretended to find in my writings the deplorable influence of an extreme Calvinism. The Puritans of the seventeenth century are my fellow-religionists. I am a sectarian and not an historian."

It is plain enough to any impartial reader that there are at least plausible grounds for this accusation against Mr. Motley's critic. And on a careful examination of the formidable volume, it becomes obvious that Mr. Motley has presented a view of the events and the personages of the stormy epoch with which he is dealing, which leaves a battle-ground yet to be fought over by those who come after him. The dispute is not and cannot be settled.

The end of all religious discussion has come when one of the parties claims that it is thinking or acting under immediate Divine guidance. "It is God's affair, and his honor is touched," says William Lewis to Prince Maurice. Mr. Motley's critic is not less confident in claiming the Almighty as on the side of his own views. Let him state his own ground of departure:—

"To show the difference, let me rather say the contrast, between the point of view of Mr. Motley and my own, between the Unitarian and the Evangelical belief. I am issue of *Calvin*, child of the Awakening (reveil). Faithful to the device of the Reformers: Justification by faith alone, and the Word of God endures eternally. I consider history from the point of view of Merle d'Aubigne, Chalmers, Guizot. I desire to be disciple and witness of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ."

He is therefore of necessity antagonistic to a writer whom he describes in such words as these:—

"Mr. Motley is liberal and rationalist.

"He becomes, in attacking the principle of the Reformation, the passionate opponent of the Puritans and of Maurice, the ardent apologist of Barnevelt and the Arminians.

"It is understood, and he makes no mystery of it, that he inclines towards the vague and undecided doctrine of the Unitarians."

What M. Groen's idea of Unitarians is may be gathered from the statement about them which he gets from a letter of De Tocqueville.

"They are pure deists; they talk about the Bible, because they do not wish to shock too severely public opinion, which is prevailingly Christian. They have a service on Sundays; I have been there. At it they read verses from Dryden or other English poets on the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. They deliver a discourse on some point of morality, and all is said."

In point of fact the wave of protest which stormed the dikes of Dutch orthodoxy in the seventeenth century stole gently through the bars of New England Puritanism in the eighteenth.

“Though the large number,” says Mr. Bancroft, “still acknowledged the fixedness of the divine decrees, and the resistless certainty from all eternity of election and of reprobation, there were not wanting, even among the clergy, some who had modified the sternness of the ancient doctrine by making the self-direction of the active powers of man with freedom of inquiry and private judgment the central idea of a protest against Calvinism.”

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Protestantism, cut loose from an infallible church, and drifting with currents it cannot resist, wakes up once or oftener in every century, to find itself in a new locality. Then it rubs its eyes and wonders whether it has found its harbor or only lost its anchor. There is no end to its disputes, for it has nothing but a fallible vote as authority for its oracles, and these appeal only to fallible interpreters.

It is as hard to contend in argument against “the oligarchy of heaven,” as Motley calls the Calvinistic party, as it was formerly to strive with them in arms.

To this “aristocracy of God’s elect” belonged the party which framed the declaration of the Synod of Dort; the party which under the forms of justice shed the blood of the great statesman who had served his country so long and so well. To this chosen body belonged the late venerable and truly excellent as well as learned M. Groen van Prinsterer, and he exercised the usual right of examining in the light of his privileged position the views of a “liberal” and “rationalist” writer who goes to meeting on Sunday to hear verses from Dryden. This does not diminish his claim for a fair reading of the “intimate correspondence,” which he considers Mr. Motley has not duly taken into account, and of the other letters to be found printed in his somewhat disjointed and fragmentary volume.

This “intimate correspondence” shows Maurice the Stadholder indifferent and lax in internal administration and as being constantly advised and urged by his relative Count William of Nassau. This need of constant urging extends to religious as well as other matters, and is inconsistent with M. Groen van Prinsterer’s assertion that the question was for Maurice above all religious, and for Barneveld above all political. Whether its negative evidence can be considered as neutralizing that which is adduced by Mr. Motley to show the Stadholder’s hatred of the Advocate may be left to the reader who has just risen from the account of the mock trial and the swift execution of the great and venerable statesman. The formal entry on the record upon the day of his “judicial murder” is singularly solemn and impressive:—

“Monday, 13th May, 1619. To-day was executed with the sword here in the Hague, on a scaffold thereto erected in the Binnenhof before the steps of the great hall, Mr. John of Barneveld, in his life Knight, Lord of Berkel, Rodenrys, *etc.*, Advocate of Holland and West Friesland, for reasons expressed in the sentence and otherwise, with confiscation of his property, after he had served the state thirty- three years two months and five days, since 8th March, 1586; a man of great activity, business, memory, and wisdom,—yea, extraordinary in every respect. He that stands let him see that he does not fall.”

Maurice gave an account of the execution of Barneveld to Count William Lewis on the same day in a note “painfully brief and dry.”

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Most authors write their own biography consciously or unconsciously. We have seen Mr. Motley portraying much of himself, his course of life and his future, as he would have had it, in his first story. In this, his last work, it is impossible not to read much of his own external and internal personal history told under other names and with different accessories. The parallelism often accidentally or intentionally passes into divergence. He would not have had it too close if he could, but there are various passages in which it is plain enough that he is telling his own story.

Mr. Motley was a diplomatist, and he writes of other diplomatists, and one in particular, with most significant detail. It need not be supposed that he intends the “arch intriguer” Aerssens to stand for himself, or that he would have endured being thought to identify himself with the man of whose “almost devilish acts” he speaks so freely. But the sagacious reader—and he need not be very sharp-sighted—will very certainly see something more than a mere historical significance in some of the passages which I shall cite for him to reflect upon. Mr. Motley’s standard of an ambassador’s accomplishments may be judged from the following passage:—

“That those ministers [those of the Republic] were second to the representatives of no other European state in capacity and accomplishment was a fact well known to all who had dealings with them, for the states required in their diplomatic representatives knowledge of history and international law, modern languages, and the classics, as well as familiarity with political customs and social courtesies; the breeding of gentlemen, in short, and the accomplishments of scholars.”

The story of the troubles of Aerssens, the ambassador of the United Provinces at Paris, must be given at some length, and will repay careful reading.

“Francis Aerssens . . . continued to be the Dutch ambassador after the murder of Henry IV. . . . He was beyond doubt one of the ablest diplomatists in Europe. Versed in many languages, a classical student, familiar with history and international law, a man of the world and familiar with its usages, accustomed to associate with dignity and tact on friendliest terms with sovereigns, eminent statesmen, and men of letters; endowed with a facile tongue, a fluent pen, and an eye and ear of singular acuteness and delicacy; distinguished for unflagging industry and singular aptitude for secret and intricate affairs;—he had by the exercise of these various qualities during a period of nearly twenty years at the court of Henry the Great been able to render inestimable services to the Republic which he represented.” He had enjoyed the intimacy and even the confidence of Henry IV., so far as any man could be said to possess that monarch’s confidence, and his friendly relations and familiar access to the king gave him political advantages

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superior to those of any of his colleagues at the same court. "Acting entirely and faithfully according to the instructions of the Advocate of Holland, he always gratefully and copiously acknowledged the privilege of being guided and sustained in the difficult paths he had to traverse by so powerful and active an intellect. I have seldom alluded in terms to the instructions and dispatches of the chief, but every position, negotiation, and opinion of the envoy—and the reader has seen many of them is pervaded by their spirit. "It had become a question whether he was to remain at his post or return. It was doubtful whether he wished to be relieved of his embassy or not. The States of Holland voted 'to leave it to his candid opinion if in his free conscience he thinks he can serve the public any longer. If yes, he may keep his office one year more. If no, he may take leave and come home.' "Surely the States, under the guidance of the Advocate, had thus acted with consummate courtesy towards a diplomatist whose position, from no apparent fault of his own, but by the force of circumstances,—and rather to his credit than otherwise, —was gravely compromised."

The Queen, Mary de' Medici, had a talk with him, got angry, "became very red in the face," and wanted to be rid of him.

"Nor was the envoy at first desirous of remaining. . . . Nevertheless, he yielded reluctantly to Barneveld's request that he should, for the time at least, remain at his post. Later on, as the intrigues against him began to unfold themselves, and his faithful services were made use of at home to blacken his character and procure his removal, he refused to resign, as to do so would be to play into the hands of his enemies, and, by inference at least, to accuse himself of infidelity to his trust. . . . "It is no wonder that the ambassador was galled to the quick by the outrage which those concerned in the government were seeking to put upon him. How could an honest man fail to be overwhelmed with rage and anguish at being dishonored before the world by his masters for scrupulously doing his duty, and for maintaining the rights and dignity of his own country? He knew that the charges were but pretexts, that the motives of his enemies were as base as the intrigues themselves, but he also knew that the world usually sides with the government against the individual, and that a man's reputation is rarely strong enough to maintain itself unsullied in a foreign land when his own government stretches forth its hand, not to shield, but to stab him. . . .

"'I know,' he said, that this plot has been woven partly here in Holland and partly here by good correspondence in order to drive me from my post.

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“But as I have discovered this accurately, I have resolved to offer to my masters the continuance of my very humble service for such time and under such conditions as they may think good to prescribe. I prefer forcing my natural and private inclinations to giving an opportunity for the ministers of this kingdom to discredit us, and to my enemies to succeed in injuring me, and by fraud and malice to force me from my post. . . . I am truly sorry, being ready to retire, wishing to have an honorable testimony in recompense of my labors, that one is in such hurry to take advantage of my fall. . . . What envoy will ever dare to speak with vigor if he is not sustained by the government at home? . . . My enemies have misrepresented my actions, and my language as passionate, exaggerated, mischievous, but I have no passion except for the service of my superiors.”

Barneveld, from well-considered motives of public policy, was favoring his honorable recall. But he allowed a decorous interval of more than three years to elapse in which to terminate his affairs, and to take a deliberate departure from that French embassy to which the Advocate had originally promoted him, and in which there had been so many years of mutual benefit and confidence between the two statesmen. He used no underhand means. He did not abuse the power of the States-General which he wielded to cast him suddenly and brutally from the distinguished post which he occupied, and so to attempt to dishonor him before the world. Nothing could be more respectful and conciliatory than the attitude of the government from first to last towards this distinguished functionary. The Republic respected itself too much to deal with honorable agents whose services it felt obliged to dispense with as with vulgar malefactors who had been detected in crime. . . .

“This work aims at being a political study. I would attempt to exemplify the influence of individual humors and passions—some of them among the highest, and others certainly the basest that agitate humanity—upon the march of great events, upon general historical results at certain epochs, and upon the destiny of eminent personages.”

Here are two suggestive portraits:—

“The Advocate, while acting only in the name of a slender confederacy, was in truth, so long as he held his place, the prime minister of European Protestantism. There was none other to rival him, few to comprehend him, fewer still to sustain him. As Prince Maurice was at that time the great soldier of Protestantism, without clearly scanning the grandeur of the field in which he was a chief actor, or foreseeing the vastness of its future, so the Advocate was its statesman and its prophet. Could the two have worked together as harmoniously as they had done at an earlier day, it would have been a blessing for the common weal of Europe. But, alas! the evil genius of jealousy,

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which so often forbids cordial relations between soldier and statesman, already stood shrouded in the distance, darkly menacing the strenuous patriot, who was wearing his life out in exertions for what he deemed the true cause of progress and humanity. . . . "All history shows that the brilliant soldier of a republic is apt to have the advantage, in a struggle for popular affection and popular applause, over the statesman, however consummate. . . . The great battles and sieges of the prince had been on a world's theatre, had enchained the attention of Christendom, and on their issue had frequently depended, or seemed to depend, the very existence of the nation. The labors of the statesman, on the contrary, had been comparatively secret. His noble orations and arguments had been spoken with closed doors to assemblies of colleagues, rather envoys than senators, . . . while his vast labors in directing both the internal administration and especially the foreign affairs of the commonwealth had been by their very nature as secret as they were perpetual and enormous."

The reader of the "Life of Barneveld" must judge for himself whether in these and similar passages the historian was thinking solely of Maurice, the great military leader, of Barneveld, the great statesman, and of Aerssens, the recalled ambassador. He will certainly find that there were "burning questions" for ministers to handle then as now, and recognize in "that visible atmosphere of power the poison of which it is so difficult to resist" a respiratory medium as well known to the nineteenth as to the seventeenth century.

XXIII.

1874-1877. AEt. 60-63.

Death of Mrs. Motley.—Last visit to America.—Illness and death.—Lady Harcourt's communication.

On the last day of 1874, the beloved wife, whose health had for some years been failing, was taken from him by death. She had been the pride of his happier years, the stay and solace of those which had so tried his sensitive spirit. The blow found him already weakened by mental suffering and bodily infirmity, and he never recovered from it. Mr. Motley's last visit to America was in the summer and autumn of 1875. During several weeks which he passed at Nahant, a seaside resort near Boston, I saw him almost daily. He walked feebly and with some little difficulty, and complained of a feeling of great weight in the right arm, which made writing laborious. His handwriting had not betrayed any very obvious change, so far as I had noticed in his letters. His features and speech were without any paralytic character. His mind was clear except when, as on one or two occasions, he complained of some confused feeling, and walked a few minutes in the open air to compose himself. His thoughts were always tending to revert to the almost worshipped companion

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from whom death had parted him a few months before. Yet he could often be led away to other topics, and in talking of them could be betrayed into momentary cheerfulness of manner. His long-enduring and all-pervading grief was not more a tribute to the virtues and graces of her whom he mourned than an evidence of the deeply affectionate nature which in other relations endeared him to so many whose friendship was a title to love and honor.

I have now the privilege of once more recurring to the narrative of Mr. Motley's daughter, Lady Harcourt.

"The harassing work and mental distress of this time [after the recall from England], acting on an acutely nervous organization, began the process of undermining his constitution, of which we were so soon to see the results. It was not the least courageous act of his life, that, smarting under a fresh wound, tired and unhappy, he set his face immediately towards the accomplishment of fresh literary labor. After my sister's marriage in January he went to the Hague to begin his researches in the archives for John of Barneveld. The Queen of the Netherlands had made ready a house for us, and personally superintended every preparation for his reception. We remained there until the spring, and then removed to a house more immediately in the town, a charming old-fashioned mansion, once lived in by John de Witt, where he had a large library and every domestic comfort during the year of his sojourn. The incessant literary labor in an enervating climate with enfeebled health may have prepared the way for the first break in his constitution, which was to show itself soon after. There were many compensations in the life about him. He enjoyed the privilege of constant companionship with one of the warmest hearts and finest intellects which I have ever known in a woman,—the 'ame d'elite' which has passed beyond this earth. The gracious sentiment with which the Queen sought to express her sense of what Holland owed him would have been deeply felt even had her personal friendship been less dear to us all. From the King, the society of the Hague, and the diplomatic circle we had many marks of kindness. Once or twice I made short journeys with him for change of air to Amsterdam, to look for the portraits of John of Barneveld and his wife; to Bohemia, where, with the lingering hope of occupying himself with the Thirty Years' War, he looked carefully at the scene of Wallenstein's death near Prague, and later to Varzin in Pomerania for a week with Prince Bismarck, after the great events of the Franco-German war. In the autumn of 1872 we moved to England, partly because it was evident that his health and my mother's required a change; partly for private reasons to be near my sister and her children. The day after our arrival at Bournemouth occurred the rupture of a vessel on the lungs, without any apparently sufficient cause. He recovered enough to revise and complete his manuscript, and we thought him better, when

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at the end of July, in London, he was struck down by the first attack of the head, which robbed him of all after power of work, although the intellect remained untouched. Sir William Gull sent him to Cannes for the winter, where he was seized with a violent internal inflammation, in which I suppose there was again the indication of the lesion of blood-vessels. I am nearing the shadow now,—the time of which I can hardly bear to write. You know the terrible sorrow which crushed him on the last day of 1874,—the grief which broke his heart and from which he never rallied. From that day it seems to me that his life may be summed up in the two words,—patient waiting. Never for one hour did her spirit leave him, and he strove to follow its leading for the short and evil days left and the hope of the life beyond. I think I have never watched quietly and reverently the traces of one personal character remaining so strongly impressed on another nature. With herself—depreciation and unselfishness she would have been the last to believe how much of him was in her very existence; nor could we have realized it until the parting came. Henceforward, with the mind still there, but with the machinery necessary to set it in motion disturbed and shattered, he could but try to create small occupations with which to fill the hours of a life which was only valued for his children's sake. Kind and loving friends in England and America soothed the passage, and our gratitude for so many gracious acts is deep and true. His love for children, always a strong feeling, was gratified by the constant presence of my sister's babies, the eldest, a little girl who bore my mother's name, and had been her idol, being the companion of many hours and his best comforter. At the end the blow came swiftly and suddenly, as he would have wished it. It was a terrible shock to us who had vainly hoped to keep him a few years longer, but at least he was spared what he had dreaded with a great dread, a gradual failure of mental or bodily power. The mind was never clouded, the affections never weakened, and after a few hours of unconscious physical struggle he lay at rest, his face beautiful and calm, without a trace of suffering or illness. Once or twice he said, 'It has come, it has come,' and there were a few broken words before consciousness fled, but there was little time for messages or leave-taking. By a strange coincidence his life ended near the town of Dorchester, in the mother country, as if the last hour brought with it a reminiscence of his birthplace, and of his own dearly loved mother. By his own wish only the dates of his birth and death appear upon his gravestone, with the text chosen by himself, 'In God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.'"

XXIV.

CONCLUSION.—HIS CHARACTER.—HIS LABORS.—HIS REWARD.

In closing this restricted and imperfect record of a life which merits, and in due time will, I trust, receive an ampler tribute, I cannot refrain from adding a few thoughts which naturally suggest themselves, and some of which may seem quite unnecessary to the

reader who has followed the story of the historian and diplomatist's brilliant and eventful career.

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Mr. Motley came of a parentage which promised the gifts of mind and body very generally to be accounted for, in a measure at least, wherever we find them, by the blood of one or both of the parents. They gave him special attractions and laid him open to not a few temptations. Too many young men born to shine in social life, to sparkle, it may be, in conversation, perhaps in the lighter walks of literature, become agreeable idlers, self-indulgent, frivolous, incapable of large designs or sustained effort, lose every aspiration and forget every ideal. Our gilded youth want such examples as this of Motley, not a solitary, but a conspicuous one, to teach them how much better is the restlessness of a noble ambition than the narcotized stupor of club-life or the vapid amusement of a dressed-up intercourse which too often requires a questionable flavor of forbidden license to render it endurable to persons of vivacious character and temperament.

It would seem difficult for a man so flattered from his earliest days to be modest in his self-estimate; but Motley was never satisfied with himself. He was impulsive, and was occasionally, I have heard it said, over excited, when his prejudices were roughly handled. In all that related to the questions involved in our civil war, he was, no doubt, very sensitive. He had heard so much that exasperated him in the foreign society which he had expected to be in full sympathy with the cause of liberty as against slavery, that he might be excused if he showed impatience when he met with similar sentiments among his own countrymen. He felt that he had been cruelly treated by his own government, and no one who conceives himself to have been wronged and insulted must be expected to reason in naked syllogisms on the propriety of the liberties which have been taken with his name and standing. But with all his quickness of feeling, his manners were easy and courteous, simply because his nature was warm and kindly, and with all his natural fastidiousness there was nothing of the coxcomb about him.

He must have had enemies, as all men of striking individuality are sure to have; his presence cast more uncouth patriots into the shade; his learning was a reproach to the ignorant, his fame was too bright a distinction; his high-bred air and refinement, which he could not help, would hardly commend him to the average citizen in an order of things in which mediocrity is at a premium, and the natural nobility of presence, which rarely comes without family antecedents to account for it, is not always agreeable to the many whose two ideals are the man on horseback and the man in his shirt-sleeves. It may well be questioned whether Washington, with his grand manner, would be nearly as popular with what are called "the masses" as Lincoln, with his homely ways and broad stories. The experiment of universal suffrage must render the waters of political and social life more or less turbid even if they remain

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innocuous. The Cloaca Maxima can hardly mingle its contents with the stream of the Aqua Claudia, without taking something from its crystal clearness. We need not go so far as one of our well-known politicians has recently gone in saying that no great man can reach the highest position in our government, but we can safely say that, apart from military fame, the loftiest and purest and finest personal qualities are not those which can be most depended upon at the ballot-box. Strange stories are told of avowed opposition to Mr. Motley on the ground of the most trivial differences in point of taste in personal matters,—so told that it is hard to disbelieve them, and they show that the caprices which we might have thought belonged exclusively to absolute rulers among their mistresses or their minions may be felt in the councils of a great people which calls itself self-governing. It is perfectly true that Mr. Motley did not illustrate the popular type of politician. He was too high-minded, too scholarly, too generously industrious, too polished, too much at home in the highest European circles, too much courted for his personal fascinations, too remote from the trading world of caucus managers. To degrade him, so far as official capital punishment could do it, was not merely to wrong one whom the nation should have delighted to honor as showing it to the world in the fairest flower of its young civilization, but it was an indignity to a representative of the highest scholarship of native growth, which every student in the land felt as a discouragement to all sound learning and noble ambition.

If he was disappointed in his diplomatic career, he had enough, and more than enough, to console him in his brilliant literary triumphs. He had earned them all by the most faithful and patient labor. If he had not the “frame of adamant” of the Swedish hero, he had his “soul of fire.” No labors could tire him, no difficulties affright him. What most surprised those who knew him as a young man was, not his ambition, not his brilliancy, but his dogged, continuous capacity for work. We have seen with what astonishment the old Dutch scholar, Groen van Prinsterer, looked upon a man who had wrestled with authors like Bor and Van Meteren, who had grappled with the mightiest folios and toiled undiscouraged among half-illegible manuscript records. Having spared no pains in collecting his materials, he told his story, as we all know, with flowing ease and stirring vitality. His views may have been more or less partial; Philip the Second may have deserved the pitying benevolence of poor Maximilian; Maurice may have wept as sincerely over the errors of Arminius as any one of “the crocodile crew that believe in election;” Barneveld and Grotius may have been on the road to Rome; none of these things seem probable, but if they were all proved true in opposition to his views, we should still have the long roll of glowing tapestry he has woven for us, with all its life-like portraits, its almost moving pageants, its sieges where we can see the artillery flashing, its battle-fields with their smoke and fire,—pictures which cannot fade, and which will preserve his name interwoven with their own enduring colors.

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Republics are said to be ungrateful; it might be truer to say that they are forgetful. They forgive those who have wronged them as easily as they forget those who have done them good service. But History never forgets and never forgives. To her decision we may trust the question, whether the warm-hearted patriot who had stood up for his country nobly and manfully in the hour of trial, the great scholar and writer who had reflected honor upon her throughout the world of letters, the high-minded public servant, whose shortcomings it taxed the ingenuity of experts to make conspicuous enough to be presentable, was treated as such a citizen should have been dealt with. His record is safe in her hands, and his memory will be precious always in the hearts of all who enjoyed his friendship.

APPENDIX.

A.

The Saturday club.

This club, of which we were both members, and which is still flourishing, came into existence in a very quiet sort of way at about the same time as "The Atlantic Monthly," and, although entirely unconnected with that magazine, included as members some of its chief contributors. Of those who might have been met at some of the monthly gatherings in its earlier days I may mention Emerson, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Lowell, Motley, Whipple, Whittier; Professors Agassiz and Peirce; John S. Dwight; Governor Andrew, Richard H. Dana, Junior, Charles Sumner. It offered a wide gamut of intelligences, and the meetings were noteworthy occasions. If there was not a certain amount of "mutual admiration" among some of those I have mentioned it was a great pity, and implied a defect in the nature of men who were otherwise largely endowed. The vitality of this club has depended in a great measure on its utter poverty in statutes and by-laws, its entire absence of formality, and its blessed freedom from speech-making.

That holy man, Richard Baxter, says in his Preface to Alleine's "Alarm:"—

"I have done, when I have sought to remove a little scandal, which I foresaw, that I should myself write the Preface to his Life where himself and two of his friends make such a mention of my name, which I cannot own; which will seem a praising him for praising me. I confess it looketh ill-favoredly in me. But I had not the power of other men's writings, and durst not forbear that which was his due."

I do not know that I have any occasion for a similar apology in printing the following lines read at a meeting of members of the Saturday Club and other friends who came together to bid farewell to Motley before his return to Europe in 1857.

A parting health

Yes, we knew we must lose him,—though friendship may claim
To blend her green leaves with the laurels of fame,
Though fondly, at parting, we call him our own,
'T is the whisper of love when the bugle has blown.



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As the rider that rests with the spur on his heel,
As the guardsman that sleeps in his corselet of steel,
As the archer that stands with his shaft on the string,
He stoops from his toil to the garland we bring.

What pictures yet slumber unborn in his loom
Till their warriors shall breathe and their beauties shall bloom,
While the tapestry lengthens the life-glowing dyes
That caught from our sunsets the stain of their skies!

In the alcoves of death, in the charnels of time,
Where flit the dark spectres of passion and crime,
There are triumphs untold, there are martyrs unsung,
There are heroes yet silent to speak with his tongue!

Let us hear the proud story that time has bequeathed
From lips that are warm with the freedom they breathed!
Let him summon its tyrants, and tell us their doom,
Though he sweep the black past like Van Tromp with his broom!

The dream flashes by, for the west-winds awake
On pampas, on prairie, o'er mountain and lake,
To bathe the swift bark, like a sea-girdled shrine
With incense they stole from the rose and the pine.

So fill a bright cup with the sunlight that gushed
When the dead summer's jewels were trampled and crushed;
the true knight of learning,—the world holds him dear,—

Love bless him, joy crown him, God speed his career!

B.

Habits and methods of study.

Mr. Motley's daughter, Lady Harcourt, has favored me with many interesting particulars which I could not have learned except from a member of his own family. Her description of his way of living and of working will be best given in her own words:—

“He generally rose early, the hour varying somewhat at different parts of his life, according to his work and health. Sometimes when much absorbed by literary labor he would rise before seven, often lighting his own fire, and with a cup of tea or coffee writing until the family breakfast hour, after which his work was immediately resumed, and he usually sat over his writing-table until late in the afternoon, when he would take a

short walk. His dinner hour was late, and he rarely worked at night. During the early years of his literary studies he led a life of great retirement. Later, after the publication of the 'Dutch Republic' and during the years of official place, he was much in society in England, Austria, and Holland. He enjoyed social life, and particularly dining out, keenly, but was very moderate and simple in all his personal habits, and for many years before his death had entirely given up smoking. His work, when not in his own library, was in the Archives of the Netherlands, Brussels, Paris, the English State Paper Office, and the British Museum, where

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he made his own researches, patiently and laboriously consulting original manuscripts and reading masses of correspondence, from which he afterwards sometimes caused copies to be made, and where he worked for many consecutive hours a day. After his material had been thus painfully and toilsomely amassed, the writing of his own story was always done at home, and his mind, having digested the necessary matter, always poured itself forth in writing so copiously that his revision was chiefly devoted to reducing the over-abundance. He never shrank from any of the drudgery of preparation, but I think his own part of the work was sheer pleasure to him."

I should have mentioned that his residence in London while minister was at the house No. 17 Arlington Street, belonging to Lord Yarborough.

C.

Sir William GULL's account of his illness.

I have availed myself of the permission implied in the subjoined letter of Sir William Gull to make large extracts from his account of Mr. Motley's condition while under his medical care. In his earlier years he had often complained to me of those "nervous feelings connected with the respiration" referred to by this very distinguished physician. I do not remember any other habitual trouble to which he was subject.

74 Brook street, Grosvenor square, W.

February 13, 1878.

My dear sir,—I send the notes of Mr. Motley's last illness, as I promised. They are too technical for general readers, but you will make such exception as you require. The medical details may interest your professional friends. Mr. Motley's case was a striking illustration that the renal disease of so-called Bright's disease may supervene as part and parcel of a larger and antecedent change in the blood-vessels in other parts than the kidney. . . . I am, my dear sir,

Yours very truly,
William W. Gull.

To Oliver Wendell Holmes, Esq.

I first saw Mr. Motley, I believe, about the year 1870, on account of some nervous feelings connected with the respiration. At that time his general health was good, and all he complained of was occasionally a feeling of oppression about the chest. There were no physical signs of anything abnormal, and the symptoms quite passed away in the course of time, and with the use of simple antispasmodic remedies, such as camphor and the like. This was my first interview with Mr. Motley, and I was naturally



glad to have the opportunity of making his acquaintance. I remember that in our conversation I jokingly said that my wife could hardly forgive him for not making her hero, Henri IV., a perfect character, and the earnestness with which he replied 'au serieux,' I assure you I have fairly recorded the facts. After this date I did

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not see Mr. Motley for some time. He had three slight attacks of haemoptysis in the autumn of 1872, but no physical signs of change in the lung tissue resulted. So early as this I noticed that there were signs of commencing thickening in the heart, as shown by the degree and extent of its impulse. The condition of his health, though at that time not very obviously failing, a good deal arrested my attention, as I thought I could perceive in the occurrence of the haemoptysis, and in the cardiac hypertrophy, the early beginnings of vascular degeneration. In August, 1873, occurred the remarkable seizure, from the effects of which Mr. Motley never recovered. I did not see him in the attack, but was informed, as far as I can remember, that he was on a casual visit at a friend's house at luncheon (or it might have been dinner), when he suddenly became strangely excited, but not quite unconscious. . . . I believed at the time, and do so still, that there was some capillary apoplexy of the convolutions. The attack was attended with some hemiplegic weakness on the right side, and altered sensation, and ever after there was a want of freedom and ease both in the gait and in the use of the arm of that side. To my inquiries from time to time how the arm was, the patient would always flex and extend it freely, but nearly always used the expression, "There is a bedevilment in it;" though the handwriting was not much, if at all, altered.

In December, 1873, Mr. Motley went by my advice to Cannes. I wrote the following letter at the time to my friend Dr. Frank, who was practising there:—

[This letter, every word of which was of value to the practitioner who was to have charge of the patient, relates many of the facts given above, and I shall therefore only give extracts from it.]

December 29, 1873.

My dear Dr. Frank,—My friend Mr. Motley, the historian and late American Minister, whose name and fame no doubt you know very well, has by my advice come to Cannes for the winter and spring, and I have promised him to give you some account of his case. To me it is one of special interest, and personally, as respects the subject of it, of painful interest. I have known Mr. Motley for some time, but he consulted me for the present condition about midsummer. . . . If I have formed a correct opinion of the pathology of the case, I believe the smaller vessels are degenerating in several parts of the vascular area, lung, brain, and kidneys. With this view I have suggested a change of climate, a nourishing diet, *etc.*; and it is to be hoped, and I trust expected, that by great attention to the conditions of hygiene, internal and external, the progress of degeneration may be retarded. I have no doubt you will find, as time goes on, increasing evidence of renal change, but this is rather a coincidence and consequence than a cause, though

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no doubt when the renal change has reached a certain point, it becomes in its own way a factor of other lesions. I have troubled you at this length because my mind is much occupied with the pathology of these cases, and because no case can, on personal grounds, more strongly challenge our attention.

Yours very truly,
William W. Gull.

During the spring of 1874, whilst at Cannes, Mr. Motley had a sharp attack of nephritis, attended with fever; but on returning to England in July there was no important change in the health. The weakness of the side continued, and the inability to undertake any mental work. The signs of cardiac hypertrophy were more distinct. In the beginning of the year 1875 I wrote as follows:—

February 20, 1875.

My dear Mr. Motley,—. . . The examination I have just made appears to indicate that the main conditions of your health are more stable than they were some months ago, and would therefore be so far in favor of your going to America in the summer, as we talked of. The ground of my doubt has lain in the possibility of such a trip further disordering the circulation. Of this, I hope, there is now less risk.

On the 4th of June, 1875, I received the following letter:—

CALVERLY park hotel, Tunbridge wells,
June 4, 1875.

My dear sir William,—I have been absent from town for a long time, but am to be there on the 9th and 10th. Could I make an appointment with you for either of those days? I am anxious to have a full consultation with you before leaving for America. Our departure is fixed for the 19th of this month. I have not been worse than usual of late. I think myself, on the contrary, rather stronger, and it is almost impossible for me not to make my visit to America this summer, unless you should absolutely prohibit it. If neither of those days should suit you, could you kindly suggest another day? I hope, however, you can spare me half an hour on one of those days, as I like to get as much of this bracing air as I can. Will you kindly name the hour when I may call on you, and address me at this hotel. Excuse this slovenly note in pencil, but it fatigues my head and arm much more to sit at a writing-table with pen and ink.

Always most sincerely yours,
My dear Sir William,
J. L. Motley.

On Mr. Motley's return from America I saw him, and found him, I thought, rather better in general health than when he left England.

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In December, 1875, Mr. Motley consulted me for trouble of vision in reading or walking, from sensations like those produced by flakes of falling snow coming between him and the objects he was looking at. Mr. Bowman, one of our most excellent oculists, was then consulted. Mr. Bowman wrote to me as follows: "Such symptoms as exist point rather to disturbed retinal function than to any brain-mischief. It is, however, quite likely that what you fear for the brain may have had its counterpart in the nerve-structures of the eye, and as he is short-sighted, this tendency may be further intensified."

Mr. Bowman suggested no more than such an arrangement of glasses as might put the eyes, when in use, under better optic conditions.

The year 1876 was passed over without any special change worth notice. The walking powers were much impeded by the want of control over the right leg. The mind was entirely clear, though Mr. Motley did not feel equal, and indeed had been advised not to apply himself, to any literary work. Occasional conversations, when I had interviews with him on the subject of his health, proved that the attack which had weakened the movements of the right side had not impaired the mental power. The most noticeable change which had come over Mr. Motley since I first knew him was due to the death of Mrs. Motley in December, 1874. It had in fact not only profoundly depressed him, but, if I may so express it, had removed the centre of his thought to a new world. In long conversations with me of a speculative kind, after that painful event, it was plain how much his point of view of the whole course and relation of things had changed. His mind was the last to dogmatize on any subject. There was a candid and childlike desire to know, with an equal confession of the incapacity of the human intellect. I wish I could recall the actual expressions he used, but the sense was that which has been so well stated by Hooker in concluding an exhortation against the pride of the human intellect, where he remarks:—"Dangerous it were for the feeble brain of man to wade far into the doings of the Most High; whom although to know be life, and joy to make mention of His Name, yet our soundest knowledge is to know that we know Him, not indeed as He is, neither can know Him; and our safest eloquence concerning Him is our silence, when we confess without confession that His glory is inexplicable, His greatness above our capacity and reach. He is above and we upon earth; therefore it behoveth our words to be wary and few." Mrs. Motley's illness was not a long one, and the nature of it was such that its course could with certainty be predicted. Mr. Motley and her children passed the remaining days of her life, extending over about a month, with her, in the mutual understanding that she was soon to part from them. The character of the illness,

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and the natural exhaustion of her strength by suffering, lessened the shock of her death, though not the loss, to those who survived her. The last time I saw Mr. Motley was, I believe, about two months before his death, March 28, 1877. There was no great change in his health, but he complained of indescribable sensations in his nervous system, and felt as if losing the whole power of walking, but this was not obvious in his gait, although he walked shorter distances than before. I heard no more of him until I was suddenly summoned on the 29th of May into Devonshire to see him. The telegram I received was so urgent, that I suspected some rupture of a blood-vessel in the brain, and that I should hardly reach him alive; and this was the case. About two o'clock in the day he complained of a feeling of faintness, said he felt ill and should not recover; and in a few minutes was insensible with symptoms of ingravescent apoplexy. There was extensive haemorrhage into the brain, as shown by post-mortem examination, the cerebral vessels being atheromatous. The fatal haemorrhage had occurred into the lateral ventricles, from rupture of one of the middle cerebral arteries.

I am, my dear Sir,
Yours very truly,
William W. Gull.

E.

From the proceedings of the Massachusetts society.

At a meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society, held on Thursday, the 14th of June, 1877, after the reading of the records of the preceding meeting, the president, the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop, spoke as follows:

"Our first thoughts to-day, gentlemen, are of those whom we may not again welcome to these halls. We shall be in no mood, certainly, for entering on other subjects this morning until we have given some expression to our deep sense of the loss—the double loss—which our Society has sustained since our last monthly meeting."—[Edmund Quincy died May 17. John Lothrop Motley died May 29.]

After a most interesting and cordial tribute to his friend, Mr. Quincy, Mr. Winthrop continued:

"The death of our distinguished associate, Motley, can hardly have taken many of us by surprise. Sudden at the moment of its occurrence, we had long been more or less prepared for it by his failing health. It must, indeed, have been quite too evident to those who had seen him, during the last two or three years, that his life-work was finished. I think he so regarded it himself. Hopes may have been occasionally revived in the hearts of his friends, and even in his own heart, that his long-cherished purpose

of completing a History of the Thirty Years' War, as the grand consummation of his historical labors,—for which all his other volumes seemed to him to have been but the preludes and overtures, —might still be accomplished. But

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such hopes, faint and flickering from his first attack, had well-nigh died away. They were like Prescott's hopes of completing his 'Philip the Second,' or like Macaulay's hopes of finishing his brilliant 'History of England.' "But great as may be the loss to literature of such a crowning work from Motley's pen, it was by no means necessary to the completeness of his own fame. His 'Rise of the Dutch Republic,' his 'History of the United Netherlands,' and his 'Life of John of Barneveld,' had abundantly established his reputation, and given him a fixed place among the most eminent historians of our country and of our age. "No American writer, certainly, has secured a wider recognition or a higher appreciation from the scholars of the Old World. The universities of England and the learned societies of Europe have bestowed upon him their largest honors. It happened to me to be in Paris when he was first chosen a corresponding member of the Institute, and when his claims were canvassed with the freedom and earnestness which peculiarly characterize such a candidacy in France. There was no mistaking the profound impression which his first work had made on the minds of such men as Guizot and Mignet. Within a year or two past, a still higher honor has been awarded him from the same source. The journals not long ago announced his election as one of the six foreign associates of the French Academy of Moral and Political Sciences,—a distinction which Prescott would probably have attained had he lived a few years longer, until there was a vacancy, but which, as a matter of fact, I believe, Motley was the only American writer, except the late Edward Livingston, of Louisiana, who has actually enjoyed. "Residing much abroad, for the purpose of pursuing his historical researches, he had become the associate and friend of the most eminent literary men in almost all parts of the world, and the singular charms of his conversation and manners had made him a favorite guest in the most refined and exalted circles. "Of his relations to political and public life, this is hardly the occasion or the moment for speaking in detail. Misconstructions and injustices are the proverbial lot of those who occupy eminent position. It was a duke of Vienna, if I remember rightly, whom Shakespeare, in his 'Measure for Measure,' introduces as exclaiming,—

'O place and greatness, millions of false eyes
Are stuck upon thee! Volumes of report
Run with these false and most contrarious quests
Upon thy doings! Thousand 'stapes of wit
Make thee the father of their idle dream,
And rack thee in their fancies!'

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"I forbear from all application of the lines. It is enough for me, certainly, to say here, to-day, that our country was proud to be represented at the courts of Vienna and London successively by a gentleman of so much culture and accomplishment as Mr. Motley, and that the circumstances of his recall were deeply regretted by us all."His fame, however, was quite beyond the reach of any such accidents, and could neither be enhanced nor impaired by appointments or removals. As a powerful and brilliant historian we pay him our unanimous tribute of admiration and regret, and give him a place in our memories by the side of Prescott and Irving. I do not forget how many of us lament him, also, as a cherished friend."He died on the 29th ultimo, at the house of his daughter, Mrs. Sheridan, in Dorsetshire, England, and an impressive tribute to his memory was paid, in Westminster Abbey, on the following Sunday, by our Honorary Member, Dean Stanley. Such a tribute, from such lips, and with such surroundings, leaves nothing to be desired in the way of eulogy. He was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery, by the side of his beloved wife."One might well say of Motley precisely what he said of Prescott, in a letter from Rome to our associate, Mr. William Amory, immediately on hearing of Prescott's death: 'I feel inexpressibly disappointed --- speaking now for an instant purely from a literary point of view ---that the noble and crowning monument of his life, for which he had laid such massive foundations, and the structure of which had been carried forward in such a grand and masterly manner, must remain uncompleted, like the unfinished peristyle of some stately and beautiful temple on which the night of time has suddenly descended. But, still, the works which his great and untiring hand had already thoroughly finished will remain to attest his learning and genius, ---a precious and perpetual possession for his country."

.....

The President now called on Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, who said:—

"The thoughts which suggest themselves upon this occasion are such as belong to the personal memories of the dear friends whom we have lost, rather than to their literary labors, the just tribute to which must wait for a calmer hour than the present, following so closely as it does on our bereavement."

.....

"His first literary venture of any note was the story called 'Morton's Hope; or, The Memoirs of a Provincial.' This first effort failed to satisfy the critics, the public, or himself. His personality pervaded the characters and times which he portrayed, so that there was a discord between the actor and his costume. Brilliant passages could not save it; and it was plain enough that he must ripen into something better before the world would give him

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the reception which surely awaited him if he should find his true destination. "The early failures of a great writer are like the first sketches of a great artist, and well reward patient study. More than this, the first efforts of poets and story-tellers are very commonly palimpsests: beneath the rhymes or the fiction one can almost always spell out the characters which betray the writer's self. Take these passages from the story just referred to: "Ah! flattery is a sweet and intoxicating potion, whether we drink it from an earthen ewer or a golden chalice. . . . Flattery from man to woman is expected: it is a part of the courtesy of society; but when the divinity descends from the altar to burn incense to the priest, what wonder if the idolater should feel himself transformed into a god!"

"He had run the risk of being spoiled, but he had a safeguard in his aspirations.

"My ambitious anticipations,' says Morton, in the story, were as boundless as they were various and conflicting. There was not a path which leads to glory in which I was not destined to gather laurels. As a warrior, I would conquer and overrun the world; as a statesman, I would reorganize and govern it; as a historian, I would consign it all to immortality; and, in my leisure moments, I would be a great poet and a man of the world.'

"Who can doubt that in this passage of his story he is picturing his own visions, one of the fairest of which was destined to become reality?

"But there was another element in his character, which those who knew him best recognized as one with which he had to struggle hard, —that is, a modesty which sometimes tended to collapse into self-distrust. This, too, betrays itself in the sentences which follow those just quoted:—"In short,' says Morton, 'I was already enrolled in that large category of what are called young men of genius, . . . men of whom unheard-of things are expected; till after long preparation comes a portentous failure, and then they are forgotten. . . . Alas! for the golden imaginations of our youth. . . . They are all disappointments. They are bright and beautiful, but they fade.'"

The President appointed Professor Lowell to write the Memoir of Mr. Quincy, and Dr. Holmes that of Mr. Motley, for the Society's "Proceedings."

Professor William Everett then spoke as follows:

"There is one incident, sir, in Mr. Motley's career that has not been mentioned to-day, which is, perhaps, most vividly remembered by those of us who were in Europe at the

outbreak of our civil war in 1861. At that time, the ignorance of Englishmen, friendly or otherwise, about America, was infinite: they knew very little of us, and that little wrong. Americans were overwhelmed with questions, taunts, threats, misrepresentations,

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the outgrowth of ignorance, and ignoring worse than ignorance, from every class of Englishmen. Never was an authoritative exposition of our hopes and policy worse needed; and there was no one to do it. The outgoing diplomatic agents represented a bygone order of things; the representatives of Mr. Lincoln's administration had not come. At that time of anxiety, Mr. Motley, living in England as a private person, came forward with two letters in the 'Times,' which set forth the cause of the United States once and for all. No unofficial, and few official, men could have spoken with such authority, and been so certain of obtaining a hearing from Englishmen. Thereafter, amid all the clouds of falsehood and ridicule which we had to encounter, there was one lighthouse fixed on a rock to which we could go for foothold, from which we could not be driven, and against which all assaults were impotent. "There can be no question that the effect produced by these letters helped, if help had been needed, to point out Mr. Motley as a candidate for high diplomatic place who could not be overlooked. Their value was recognized alike by his fellow-citizens in America and his admirers in England; but none valued them more than the little band of exiles, who were struggling against terrible odds, and who rejoiced with a great joy to see the stars and stripes, whose centennial anniversary those guns are now celebrating, planted by a hand so truly worthy to rally every American to its support."

G.

Poem by William Cullen Bryant.

I cannot close this Memoir more appropriately than by appending the following poetical tribute:—

In memory of John Lothrop motley.

By William Cullen Bryant.

Sleep, Motley, with the great of ancient days,
Who wrote for all the years that yet shall be.
Sleep with Herodotus, whose name and praise
Have reached the isles of earth's remotest sea.
Sleep, while, defiant of the slow delays
Of Time, thy glorious writings speak for thee
And in the answering heart of millions raise
The generous zeal for Right and Liberty.
And should the days o'ertake us, when, at last,
The silence that—ere yet a human pen
Had traced the slenderest record of the past
Hushed the primeval languages of men



Upon our English tongue its spell shall cast,
Thy memory shall perish only then.

American Men of Letters

EDITED BY

Charles Dudley Warner.

*"Thou wert the morning star among the living,
Ere thy fair light had fled:
Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus, giving
New splendor to the dead."*

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.



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BY

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

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NOTE.

My thanks are due to the members of Mr. Emerson's family, and the other friends who kindly assisted me by lending interesting letters and furnishing valuable information.

The Index, carefully made by Mr. J.H. Wiggin, was revised and somewhat abridged by myself.

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Boston, November 25, 1884.

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INTRODUCTION.

"I have the feeling that every man's biography is at his own expense. He furnishes not only the facts, but the report. I mean that all biography is autobiography. It is only what he tells of himself that comes to be known and believed."

So writes the man whose life we are to pass in review, and it is certainly as true of him as of any author we could name. He delineates himself so perfectly in his various writings that the careful reader sees his nature just as it was in all its essentials, and has little more to learn than those human accidents which individualize him in space and time. About all these accidents we have a natural and pardonable curiosity. We wish to know of what race he came, what were the conditions into which he was born, what educational and social influences helped to mould his character, and what new elements Nature added to make him Ralph Waldo Emerson.

He himself believes in the hereditary transmission of certain characteristics. Though Nature appears capricious, he says, "Some qualities she carefully fixes and transmits, but some, and those the finer, she exhales with the breath of the individual, as too costly to perpetuate. But I notice also that they may become fixed and permanent in any stock, by painting and repainting them on every individual, until at last Nature adopts them and bakes them in her porcelain."

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* * * * *

We have in New England a certain number of families who constitute what may be called the Academic Races. Their names have been on college catalogues for generation after generation. They have filled the learned professions, more especially the ministry, from the old colonial days to our own time. If aptitudes for the acquisition of knowledge can be bred into a family as the qualities the sportsman wants in his dog are developed in pointers and setters, we know what we may expect of a descendant of one of the Academic Races. Other things being equal, he will take more naturally, more easily, to his books. His features will be more pliable, his voice will be more flexible, his whole nature more plastic than those of the youth with less favoring antecedents. The gift of genius is never to be reckoned upon beforehand, any more than a choice new variety of pear or peach in a seedling; it is always a surprise, but it is born with great advantages when the stock from which it springs has been long under cultivation.

These thoughts suggest themselves in looking back at the striking record of the family made historic by the birth of Ralph Waldo Emerson. It was remarkable for the long succession of clergymen in its genealogy, and for the large number of college graduates it counted on its rolls.

A genealogical table is very apt to illustrate the "survival of the fittest,"—in the estimate of the descendants. It is inclined to remember and record those ancestors who do most honor to the living heirs of the family name and traditions. As every man may count two grandfathers, four great-grandfathers, eight great-great-grandfathers, and so on, a few generations give him a good chance for selection. If he adds his distinguished grandmothers, he may double the number of personages to choose from. The great-grandfathers of Mr. Emerson at the sixth remove were thirty-two in number, unless the list was shortened by intermarriage of relatives. One of these, from whom the name descended, was Thomas Emerson of Ipswich, who furnished the staff of life to the people of that wonderfully interesting old town and its neighborhood.

His son, the Reverend Joseph Emerson, minister of the town of Mendon, Massachusetts, married Elizabeth, daughter of the Reverend Edward Bulkeley, who succeeded his father, the Reverend Peter Bulkeley, as Minister of Concord, Massachusetts.

Peter Bulkeley was therefore one of Emerson's sixty-four grandfathers at the seventh remove. We know the tenacity of certain family characteristics through long lines of descent, and it is not impossible that any one of a hundred and twenty-eight grandparents, if indeed the full number existed in spite of family admixtures, may have transmitted his or her distinguishing traits through a series of lives that cover more than two centuries, to our own contemporary. Inherited qualities move along their several paths not unlike

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the pieces in the game of chess. Sometimes the character of the son can be traced directly to that of the father or of the mother, as the pawn's move carries him from one square to the next. Sometimes a series of distinguished fathers follows in a line, or a succession of superior mothers, as the black or white bishop sweeps the board on his own color. Sometimes the distinguishing characters pass from one sex to the other indifferently, as the castle strides over the black and white squares. Sometimes an uncle or aunt lives over again in a nephew or niece, as if the knight's move were repeated on the squares of human individuality. It is not impossible, then, that some of the qualities we mark in Emerson may have come from the remote ancestor whose name figures with distinction in the early history of New England.

The Reverend Peter Bulkeley is honorably commemorated among the worthies consigned to immortality in that precious and entertaining medley of fact and fancy, enlivened by a wilderness of quotations at first or second hand, the *Magnolia Christi Americana*, of the Reverend Cotton Mather. The old chronicler tells his story so much better than any one can tell it for him that he must be allowed to speak for himself in a few extracts, transferred with all their typographical idiosyncrasies from the London-printed, folio of 1702.

"He was descended of an Honourable Family in *Bedfordshire*.—He was born at *Woodhil* (or *Odel*) in *Bedfordshire*, *January* 31st, 1582.

"His *Education* was answerable unto his *Original*; it was *Learned*, it was *Genteel*, and, which was the top of all, it was very *Pious*: At length it made him a *Batchellor* of *Divinity*, and a Fellow of *Saint John's Colledge* in *Cambridge*.—"When he came abroad into the *World*, a good benefice befel him, added unto the estate of a Gentleman, left him by his Father; whom he succeeded in his Ministry, at the place of his *Nativity*: Which one would imagine *Temptations* enough to keep him out of a *Wilderness*."

But he could not conscientiously conform to the ceremonies of the English Church, and so,—

"When Sir *Nathaniel Brent* was Arch-Bishop *Laud's* General, as Arch-Bishop *Laud* was *another's*, Complaints were made against Mr. *Bulkly*, for his Non-Conformity, and he was therefore Silenced.

"To *New-England* he therefore came, in the Year 1635; and there having been for a while, at *Cambridge*, he carried a good Number of Planters with him, up further into the *Woods*, where they gathered the *Twelfth Church*, then formed in the Colony, and call'd the Town by the Name of *Concord*.

“Here he *buried* a great Estate, while he *raised* one still,
for almost every Person whom he employed in the Affairs of his
Husbandry.—

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“He was a most excellent *Scholar*, a *very-well read* Person, and one, who in his advice to young Students, gave Demonstrations, that he knew what would go to make a *Scholar*. But it being essential unto a *Scholar* to love a *Scholar*, so did he; and in Token thereof, endowed the Library of *Harvard-Colledge* with no small part of his own. “And he was therewithal a most exalted *Christian*—In his Ministry he was another *Farel*, *Quo nemo tonuit fortius*—And the observance which his own People had for him, was also paid him from all sorts of People throughout the Land; but especially from the Ministers of the Country, who would still address him as a *Father*, a *Prophet*, a *Counsellor*, on all occasions.”

These extracts may not quite satisfy the exacting reader, who must be referred to the old folio from which they were taken, where he will receive the following counsel:—

“If then any Person would know what Mr. *Peter Bulkly* was, let him read his Judicious and Savory Treatise of the *Gospel Covenant*, which has passed through several Editions, with much Acceptance among the People of God.” It must be added that “he had a competently good Stroke at Latin Poetry; and even in his Old Age, affected sometimes to improve it. Many of his Composure are yet in our Hands.”

It is pleasant to believe that some of the qualities of this distinguished scholar and Christian were reproduced in the descendant whose life we are studying. At his death in 1659 he was succeeded, as was mentioned, by his son Edward, whose daughter became the wife of the Reverend Joseph Emerson, the minister of Mendon who, when that village was destroyed by the Indians, removed to Concord, where he died in the year 1680. This is the first connection of the name of Emerson with Concord, with which it has since been so long associated.

Edward Emerson, son of the first and father of the second Reverend Joseph Emerson, though not a minister, was the next thing to being one, for on his gravestone he is thus recorded: “Mr. Edward Emerson, sometime Deacon of the first church in Newbury.” He was noted for the virtue of patience, and it is a family tradition that he never complained but once, when he said mildly to his daughter that her dumplings were somewhat harder than needful,—“*but not often*.” This same Edward was the only break in the line of ministers who descended from Thomas of Ipswich. He is remembered in the family as having been “a merchant in Charlestown.”

Their son, the second Reverend Joseph Emerson, Minister of Malden for nearly half a century, married Mary, the daughter of the Reverend Samuel Moody,—Father Moody, —of York, Maine. Three of his sons were ministers, and one of these, William, was pastor of the church at Concord at the period of the outbreak of the Revolutionary War.

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As the successive generations narrow down towards the individual whose life we are recalling, the character of his progenitors becomes more and more important and interesting to the biographer. The Reverend William Emerson, grandfather of Ralph Waldo, was an excellent and popular preacher and an ardent and devoted patriot. He preached resistance to tyrants from the pulpit, he encouraged his townsmen and their allies to make a stand against the soldiers who had marched upon their peaceful village, and would have taken a part in the Fight at the Bridge, which he saw from his own house, had not the friends around him prevented his quitting his doorstep. He left Concord in 1776 to join the army at Ticonderoga, was taken with fever, was advised to return to Concord and set out on the journey, but died on his way. His wife was the daughter of the Reverend Daniel Bliss, his predecessor in the pulpit at Concord. This was another very noticeable personage in the line of Emerson's ancestors. His merits and abilities are described at great length on his tombstone in the Concord burial-ground. There is no reason to doubt that his epitaph was composed by one who knew him well. But the slabs which record the excellences of our New England clergymen of the past generations are so crowded with virtues that the reader can hardly help inquiring whether a sharp bargain was not driven with the stonecutter, like that which the good Vicar of Wakefield arranged with the portrait-painter. He was to represent Sophia as a shepherdess, it will be remembered, with as many sheep as he could afford to put in for nothing.

William Emerson left four children, a son bearing the same name, and three daughters, one of whom, Mary Moody Emerson, is well remembered as pictured for us by her nephew, Ralph Waldo. His widow became the wife of the Reverend Ezra Ripley, Doctor of Divinity, and his successor as Minister at Concord.

The Reverend William Emerson, the second of that name and profession, and the father of Ralph Waldo Emerson, was born in the year 1769, and graduated at Harvard College in 1789. He was settled as Minister in the town of Harvard in the year 1792, and in 1799 became Minister of the First Church in Boston. In 1796 he married Ruth Haskins of Boston. He died in 1811, leaving five sons, of whom Ralph Waldo was the second.

The interest which attaches itself to the immediate parentage of a man like Emerson leads us to inquire particularly about the characteristics of the Reverend William Emerson so far as we can learn them from his own writings and from the record of his contemporaries.

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The Reverend Dr. Sprague's valuable and well-known work, "Annals of the American Pulpit," contains three letters from which we learn some of his leading characteristics. Dr. Pierce of Brookline, the faithful chronicler of his time, speaks of his pulpit talents as extraordinary, but thinks there was not a perfect sympathy between him and the people of the quiet little town of Harvard, while he was highly acceptable in the pulpits of the metropolis. In personal appearance he was attractive; his voice was melodious, his utterance distinct, his manner agreeable. "He was a faithful and generous friend and knew how to forgive an enemy.—In his theological views perhaps he went farther on the liberal side than most of his brethren with whom he was associated.—He was, however, perfectly tolerant towards those who differed from him most widely."

Dr. Charles Lowell, another brother minister, says of him, "Mr. Emerson was a handsome man, rather tall, with a fair complexion, his cheeks slightly tinted, his motions easy, graceful, and gentlemanlike, his manners bland and pleasant. He was an honest man, and expressed himself decidedly and emphatically, but never bluntly or vulgarly.—Mr. Emerson was a man of good sense. His conversation was edifying and useful; never foolish or undignified.—In his theological opinions he was, to say the least, far from having any sympathy with Calvinism. I have not supposed that he was, like Dr. Freeman, a Humanitarian, though he may have been so."

There was no honester chronicler than our clerical Pepys, good, hearty, sweet-souled, fact-loving Dr. John Pierce of Brookline, who knew the dates of birth and death of the graduates of Harvard, starred and unstarred, better, one is tempted to say (*Hibernice*), than they did themselves. There was not a nobler gentleman in charge of any Boston parish than Dr. Charles Lowell. But after the pulpit has said what it thinks of the pulpit, it is well to listen to what the pews have to say about it.

This is what the late Mr. George Ticknor said in an article in the "Christian Examiner" for September, 1849.

"Mr. Emerson, transplanted to the First Church in Boston six years before Mr. Buckminster's settlement, possessed, on the contrary, a graceful and dignified style of speaking, which was by no means without its attraction, but he lacked the fervor that could rouse the masses, and the original resources that could command the few."

As to his religious beliefs, Emerson writes to Dr. Sprague as follows: "I did not find in any manuscript or printed sermons that I looked at, any very explicit statement of opinion on the question between Calvinists and Socinians. He inclines obviously to what is ethical and universal in Christianity; very little to the personal and historical.—I think I observe in his writings, as in the writings of Unitarians down to a recent date, a studied reserve on the subject of the nature and offices of Jesus. They had not made up their own minds on it. It was a mystery to them, and they let it remain so."

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Mr. William Emerson left, published, fifteen Sermons and Discourses, an Oration pronounced at Boston on the Fourth of July, 1802, a Collection of Psalms and Hymns, an Historical Sketch of the First Church in Boston, besides his contributions to the "Monthly Anthology," of which he was the Editor.

Ruth Haskins, the wife of William and the mother of Ralph Waldo Emerson, is spoken of by the late Dr. Frothingham, in an article in the "Christian Examiner," as a woman "of great patience and fortitude, of the serenest trust in God, of a discerning spirit, and a most courteous bearing, one who knew how to guide the affairs of her own house, as long as she was responsible for that, with the sweetest authority, and knew how to give the least trouble and the greatest happiness after that authority was resigned. Both her mind and her character were of a superior order, and they set their stamp upon manners of peculiar softness and natural grace and quiet dignity. Her sensible and kindly speech was always as good as the best instruction; her smile, though it was ever ready, was a reward."

The Reverend Dr. Furness of Philadelphia, who grew up with her son, says, "Waldo bore a strong resemblance to his father; the other children resembled their mother."

Such was the descent of Ralph Waldo Emerson. If the ideas of parents survive as impressions or tendencies in their descendants, no man had a better right to an inheritance of theological instincts than this representative of a long line of ministers. The same trains of thought and feeling might naturally gain in force from another association of near family relationship, though not of blood. After the death of the first William Emerson, the Concord minister, his widow, Mr. Emerson's grandmother, married, as has been mentioned, his successor, Dr. Ezra Ripley. The grandson spent much time in the family of Dr. Ripley, whose character he has drawn with exquisite felicity in a sketch read before The Social Circle of Concord, and published in the "Atlantic Monthly" for November, 1883. Mr. Emerson says of him: "He was identified with the ideas and forms of the New England Church, which expired about the same time with him, so that he and his coevals seemed the rear guard of the great camp and army of the Puritans, which, however in its last days declining into formalism, in the heyday of its strength had planted and liberated America.... The same faith made what was strong and what was weak in Dr. Ripley." It would be hard to find a more perfect sketch of character than Mr. Emerson's living picture of Dr. Ripley. I myself remember him as a comely little old gentleman, but he was not so communicative in a strange household as his clerical brethren, smiling John Foster of Brighton and chatty Jonathan Homer of Newton. Mr. Emerson says, "He was a natural gentleman; no dandy, but courtly, hospitable, manly, and public-spirited; his nature social, his house open to all men.—His

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brow was serene and open to his visitor, for he loved men, and he had no studies, no occupations, which company could interrupt. His friends were his study, and to see them loosened his talents and his tongue. In his house dwelt order and prudence and plenty. There was no waste and no stint. He was open-handed and just and generous. Ingratitude and meanness in his beneficiaries did not wear out his compassion; he bore the insult, and the next day his basket for the beggar, his horse and chaise for the cripple, were at their door." How like Goldsmith's good Dr. Primrose! I do not know any writing of Mr. Emerson which brings out more fully his sense of humor,—of the picturesque in character,—and as a piece of composition, continuous, fluid, transparent, with a playful ripple here and there, it is admirable and delightful.

Another of his early companionships must have exercised a still more powerful influence on his character,—that of his aunt, Mary Moody Emerson. He gave an account of her in a paper read before the Woman's Club several years ago, and published in the "Atlantic Monthly" for December, 1883. Far more of Mr. Emerson is to be found in this aunt of his than in any other of his relations in the ascending series, with whose history we are acquainted. Her story is an interesting one, but for that I must refer the reader to the article mentioned. Her character and intellectual traits are what we are most concerned with. "Her early reading was Milton, Young, Akenside, Samuel Clarke, Jonathan Edwards, and always the Bible. Later, Plato, Plotinus, Marcus Antoninus, Stewart, Coleridge, Herder, Locke, Madam De Stael, Channing, Mackintosh, Byron. Nobody can read in her manuscript, or recall the conversation of old-school people, without seeing that Milton and Young had a religious authority in their minds, and nowise the slight merely entertaining quality of modern bards. And Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus,—how venerable and organic as Nature they are in her mind!"

There are many sentences cited by Mr. Emerson which remind us very strongly of his own writings. Such a passage as the following might have come from his Essay, "Nature," but it was written when her nephew was only four years old.

"Malden, 1807, September.—The rapture of feeling I would part from for days devoted to higher discipline. But when Nature beams with such excess of beauty, when the heart thrills with hope in its Author,—feels it is related to Him more than by any ties of creation,—it exults, too fondly, perhaps, for a state of trial. But in dead of night, nearer morning, when the eastern stars glow, or appear to glow, with more indescribable lustre, a lustre which penetrates the spirits with wonder and curiosity,—then, however awed, who can fear?"—"A few pulsations of created beings, a few successions of acts, a few lamps held out in the firmament, enable us to talk of Time, make epochs, write histories, —to do more,—to date the revelations of

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God to man. But these lamps are held to measure out some of the moments of eternity, to divide the history of God's operations in the birth and death of nations, of worlds. It is a goodly name for our notions of breathing, suffering, enjoying, acting. We personify it. We call it by every name of fleeting, dreaming, vapping imagery. Yet it is nothing. We exist in eternity. Dissolve the body and the night is gone; the stars are extinguished, and we measure duration by the number of our thoughts, by the activity of reason, the discovery of truths, the acquirement of virtue, the approval of God."

Miss Mary Emerson showed something of the same feeling towards natural science which may be noted in her nephews Waldo and Charles. After speaking of "the poor old earth's chaotic state, brought so near in its long and gloomy transmutings by the geologist," she says:—

"Yet its youthful charms, as decked by the hand of Moses' Cosmogony, will linger about the heart, while Poetry succumbs to science."—"And the bare bones of this poor embryo earth may give the idea of the Infinite, far, far better than when dignified with arts and industry; its oceans, when beating the symbols of countless ages, than when covered with cargoes of war and oppression. How grand its preparation for souls, souls who were to feel the Divinity, before Science had dissected the emotions and applied its steely analysis to that state of being which recognizes neither psychology nor element."—"Usefulness, if it requires action, seems less like existence than the desire of being absorbed in God, retaining consciousness.... Scorn trifles, lift your aims; do what you are afraid to do. Sublimity of character must come from sublimity of motive."

So far as hereditary and family influences can account for the character and intellect of Ralph Waldo Emerson, we could hardly ask for a better inborn inheritance, or better counsels and examples.

* * * * *

Having traced some of the distinguishing traits which belong by descent to Mr. Emerson to those who were before him, it is interesting to note how far they showed themselves in those of his own generation, his brothers. Of these I will mention two, one of whom I knew personally.

Edward Bliss Emerson, who graduated at Harvard College in 1824, three years after Ralph Waldo, held the first place in his class. He began the study of the law with Daniel Webster, but overworked himself and suffered a temporary disturbance of his reason. After this he made another attempt, but found his health unequal to the task and exiled himself to Porto Rico, where, in 1834, he died. Two poems preserve his memory, one that of Ralph Waldo, in which he addresses his memory,—

"Ah, brother of the brief but blazing star,"

the other his own "Last Farewell," written in 1832, whilst sailing out of Boston Harbor. The lines are unaffected and very touching, full of that deep affection which united the brothers in the closest intimacy, and of the tenderest love for the mother whom he was leaving to see no more.

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I had in my early youth a key furnished me to some of the leading traits which were in due time to develop themselves in Emerson's character and intelligence. As on the wall of some great artist's studio one may find unfinished sketches which he recognizes as the first growing conceptions of pictures painted in after years, so we see that Nature often sketches, as it were, a living portrait, which she leaves in its rudimentary condition, perhaps for the reason that earth has no colors which can worthily fill in an outline too perfect for humanity. The sketch is left in its consummate incompleteness because this mortal life is not rich enough to carry out the Divine idea.

Such an unfinished but unmatched outline is that which I find in the long portrait-gallery of memory, recalled by the name of Charles Chauncy Emerson. Save for a few brief glimpses of another, almost lost among my life's early shadows, this youth was the most angelic adolescent my eyes ever beheld. Remembering what well-filtered blood it was that ran in the veins of the race from which he was descended, those who knew him in life might well say with Dryden,—

"If by traduction came thy mind
Our wonder is the less to find
A soul so charming from a stock so good."

His image is with me in its immortal youth as when, almost fifty years ago, I spoke of him in these lines, which I may venture to quote from myself, since others have quoted them before me.

Thou calm, chaste scholar! I can see thee now,
The first young laurels on thy pallid brow,
O'er thy slight figure floating lightly down
In graceful folds the academic gown,
On thy curled lip the classic lines that taught
How nice the mind that sculptured them with thought,
And triumph glistening in the clear blue eye,
Too bright to live,—but O, too fair to die.

Being about seven years younger than Waldo, he must have received much of his intellectual and moral guidance at his elder brother's hands. I told the story at a meeting of our Historical Society of Charles Emerson's coming into my study,—this was probably in 1826 or 1827,—taking up Hazlitt's "British Poets" and turning at once to a poem of Marvell's, which he read with his entrancing voice and manner. The influence of this poet is plain to every reader in some of Emerson's poems, and Charles' liking for him was very probably caught from Waldo. When Charles was nearly through college, a periodical called "The Harvard Register" was published by students and recent graduates. Three articles were contributed by him to this periodical. Two of them have the titles "Conversation," "Friendship." His quotations are from Horace and Juvenal, Plato, Plutarch, Bacon, Jeremy Taylor, Shakespeare, and Scott. There are passages in

these Essays which remind one strongly of his brother, the Lecturer of twenty-five or thirty years later. Take this as an example:—

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“Men and mind are my studies. I need no observatory high in air to aid my perceptions or enlarge my prospect. I do not want a costly apparatus to give pomp to my pursuit or to disguise its inutility. I do not desire to travel and see foreign lands and learn all knowledge and speak with all tongues, before I am prepared for my employment. I have merely to go out of my door; nay, I may stay at home at my chambers, and I shall have enough to do and enjoy.”

The feeling of this sentence shows itself constantly in Emerson's poems. He finds his inspiration in the objects about him, the forest in which he walks; the sheet of water which the hermit of a couple of seasons made famous; the lazy Musketaguid; the titmouse that mocked his weakness in the bitter cold winter's day; the mountain that rose in the horizon; the lofty pines; the lowly flowers. All talked with him as brothers and sisters, and he with them as of his own household.

The same lofty idea of friendship which we find in the man in his maturity, we recognize in one of the Essays of the youth.

“All men of gifted intellect and fine genius,” says Charles Emerson, “must entertain a noble idea of friendship. Our reverence we are constrained to yield where it is due,—to rank, merit, talents. But our affections we give not thus easily.

‘The hand of Douglas is his own.’”

—“I am willing to lose an hour in gossip with persons whom good men hold cheap. All this I will do out of regard to the decent conventions of polite life. But my friends I must know, and, knowing, I must love. There must be a daily beauty in their life that shall secure my constant attachment. I cannot stand upon the footing of ordinary acquaintance. Friendship is aristocratical—the affections which are prostituted to every suitor I will not accept.”

Here are glimpses of what the youth was to be, of what the man who long outlived him became. Here is the dignity which commands reverence,—a dignity which, with all Ralph Waldo Emerson's sweetness of manner and expression, rose almost to majesty in his serene presence. There was something about Charles Emerson which lifted those he was with into a lofty and pure region of thought and feeling. A vulgar soul stood abashed in his presence. I could never think of him in the presence of such, listening to a paltry sentiment or witnessing a mean action without recalling Milton's line,

“Back stepped those two fair angels half amazed,”

and thinking how he might well have been taken for a celestial messenger.

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No doubt there is something of idealization in all these reminiscences, and of that exaggeration which belongs to the *laudator temporis acti*. But Charles Emerson was idolized in his own time by many in college and out of college. George Stillman Hillard was his rival. Neck and neck they ran the race for the enviable position of first scholar in the class of 1828, and when Hillard was announced as having the first part assigned to him, the excitement within the college walls, and to some extent outside of them, was like that when the telegraph proclaims the result of a Presidential election,—or the Winner of the Derby. But Hillard honestly admired his brilliant rival. “Who has a part with **** at this next exhibition?” I asked him one day, as I met him in the college yard. “***** the Post,” answered Hillard. “Why call him *the Post*?” said I. “He is a wooden creature,” said Hillard. “Hear him and Charles Emerson translating from the Latin *Domus tota inflammata erat*. The Post will render the words, ‘The whole house was on fire.’ Charles Emerson will translate the sentence ‘The entire edifice was wrapped in flames.’” It was natural enough that a young admirer should prefer the Bernini drapery of Charles Emerson’s version to the simple nudity of “the Post’s” rendering.

* * * * *

The nest is made ready long beforehand for the bird which is to be bred in it and to fly from it. The intellectual atmosphere into which a scholar is born, and from which he draws the breath of his early mental life, must be studied if we would hope to understand him thoroughly.

When the present century began, the elements, thrown into confusion by the long struggle for Independence, had not had time to arrange themselves in new combinations. The active intellects of the country had found enough to keep them busy in creating and organizing a new order of political and social life. Whatever purely literary talent existed was as yet in the nebular condition, a diffused luminous spot here and there, waiting to form centres of condensation.

Such a nebular spot had been brightening in and about Boston for a number of years, when, in the year 1804, a small cluster of names became visible as representing a modest constellation of literary luminaries: John Thornton Kirkland, afterwards President of Harvard University; Joseph Stevens Buckminster; John Sylvester John Gardiner; William Tudor; Samuel Cooper Thacher; William Emerson. These were the chief stars of the new cluster, and their light reached the world, or a small part of it, as reflected from the pages of “The Monthly Anthology,” which very soon came under the editorship of the Reverend William Emerson.

The father of Ralph Waldo Emerson may be judged of in good measure by the associates with whom he was thus connected. A brief sketch of these friends and fellow-workers of his may not be out of place, for these men made the local sphere of thought into which Ralph Waldo Emerson was born.

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John Thornton Kirkland should have been seen and heard as he is remembered by old graduates of Harvard, sitting in the ancient Presidential Chair, on Commencement Day, and calling in his penetrating but musical accents: "*Expectatur Oratio in Lingua Latina*" or "*Vernacula*," if the "First Scholar" was about to deliver the English oration. It was a presence not to be forgotten. His "shining morning face" was round as a baby's, and talked as pleasantly as his voice did, with smiles for accents and dimples for punctuation. Mr. Ticknor speaks of his sermons as "full of intellectual wealth and practical wisdom, with sometimes a quaintness that bordered on humor." It was of him that the story was always told,—it may be as old as the invention of printing,—that he threw his sermons into a barrel, where they went to pieces and got mixed up, and that when he was going to preach he fished out what he thought would be about enough for a sermon, and patched the leaves together as he best might. The Reverend Dr. Lowell says: "He always found the right piece, and that was better than almost any of his brethren could have found in what they had written with twice the labor." Mr. Cabot, who knew all Emerson's literary habits, says he used to fish out the number of leaves he wanted for a lecture in somewhat the same way. Emerson's father, however, was very methodical, according to Dr. Lowell, and had "a place for everything, and everything in its place." Dr. Kirkland left little to be remembered by, and like many of the most interesting personalities we have met with, has become a very thin ghost to the grandchildren of his contemporaries.

Joseph Stevens Buckminster was the pulpit darling of his day, in Boston. The beauty of his person, the perfection of his oratory, the finish of his style, added to the sweetness of his character, made him one of those living idols which seem to be as necessary to Protestantism as images and pictures are to Romanism.

John Sylvester John Gardiner, once a pupil of the famous Dr. Parr, was then the leading Episcopal clergyman of Boston. Him I reconstruct from scattered hints I have met with as a scholarly, social man, with a sanguine temperament and the cheerful ways of a wholesome English parson, blest with a good constitution and a comfortable benefice. Mild Orthodoxy, ripened in Unitarian sunshine, is a very agreeable aspect of Christianity, and none was readier than Dr. Gardiner, if the voice of tradition may be trusted, to fraternize with his brothers of the liberal persuasion, and to make common cause with them in all that related to the interests of learning.

William Tudor was a chief connecting link between the period of the "Monthly Anthology," and that of the "North American Review," for he was a frequent contributor to the first of these periodicals, and he was the founder of the second. Edward Everett characterizes him, in speaking of his "Letters on the Eastern States," as a scholar and a gentleman, an impartial observer, a temperate champion, a liberal opponent, and a correct writer. Daniel Webster bore similar testimony to his talents and character.

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Samuel Cooper Thacher was hardly twenty years old when the “Anthology” was founded, and died when he was only a little more than thirty. He contributed largely to that periodical, besides publishing various controversial sermons, and writing the “Memoir of Buckminster.”

There was no more brilliant circle than this in any of our cities. There was none where so much freedom of thought was united to so much scholarship. The “Anthology” was the literary precursor of the “North American Review,” and the theological herald of the “Christian Examiner.” Like all first beginnings it showed many marks of immaturity. It mingled extracts and original contributions, theology and medicine, with all manner of literary chips and shavings. It had Magazine ways that smacked of Sylvanus Urban; leading articles with balanced paragraphs which recalled the marching tramp of Johnson; translations that might have been signed with the name of Creech, and Odes to Sensibility, and the like, which recalled the syrupy sweetness and languid trickle of Laura Matilda’s sentimentalities. It talked about “the London Reviewers” with a kind of provincial deference. It printed articles with quite too much of the license of Swift and Prior for the Magazines of to-day. But it had opinions of its own, and would compare well enough with the “Gentleman’s Magazine,” to say nothing of “My Grandmother’s Review, the British.” A writer in the third volume (1806) says: “A taste for the belles lettres is rapidly spreading in our country. I believe that, fifty years ago, England had never seen a Miscellany or a Review so well conducted as our ‘Anthology,’ however superior such publications may now be in that kingdom.”

It is well worth one’s while to look over the volumes of the “Anthology” to see what our fathers and grandfathers were thinking about, and how they expressed themselves. The stiffness of Puritanism was pretty well relaxed when a Magazine conducted by clergymen could say that “The child,”—meaning the new periodical,—“shall not be destitute of the manners of a gentleman, nor a stranger to genteel amusements. He shall attend Theatres, Museums, Balls, and whatever polite diversions the town shall furnish.” The reader of the “Anthology” will find for his reward an improving discourse on “Ambition,” and a commendable schoolboy’s “theme” on “Inebriation.” He will learn something which may be for his advantage about the “Anjou Cabbage,” and may profit by a “Remedy for Asthma.” A controversy respecting the merits of Sir Richard Blackmore may prove too little exciting at the present time, and he can turn for relief to the epistle “Studiosus” addresses to “Alcander.” If the lines of “The Minstrel” who hails, like Longfellow in later years, from “The District of Main,” fail to satisfy him, he cannot accuse “R.T. Paine, Jr., Esq.,” of tameness when he exclaims:—

“Rise Columbia, brave and free,
Poise the globe and bound the sea!”

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But the writers did not confine themselves to native or even to English literature, for there is a distinct mention of "Mr. Goethe's new novel," and an explicit reference to "Dante Aligheri, an Italian bard." But let the smiling reader go a little farther and he will find Mr. Buckminster's most interesting account of the destruction of Goldau. And in one of these same volumes he will find the article, by Dr. Jacob Bigelow, doubtless, which was the first hint of our rural cemeteries, and foreshadowed that new era in our underground civilization which is sweetening our atmospheric existence.

The late President Josiah Quincy, in his "History of the Boston Athenaeum," pays a high tribute of respect to the memory and the labors of the gentlemen who founded that institution and conducted the "Anthology." A literary journal had already been published in Boston, but very soon failed for want of patronage. An enterprising firm of publishers, "being desirous that the work should be continued, applied to the Reverend William Emerson, a clergyman of the place, distinguished for energy and literary taste; and by his exertions several gentlemen of Boston and its vicinity, conspicuous for talent and zealous for literature, were induced to engage in conducting the work, and for this purpose they formed themselves into a Society. This Society was not completely organized until the year 1805, when Dr. Gardiner was elected President, and William Emerson Vice-President. The Society thus formed maintained its existence with reputation for about six years, and issued ten octavo volumes from the press, constituting one of the most lasting and honorable monuments of the literature of the period, and may be considered as a true revival of polite learning in this country after that decay and neglect which resulted from the distractions of the Revolutionary War, and as forming an epoch in the intellectual history of the United States. Its records yet remain, an evidence that it was a pleasant, active, high-principled association of literary men, laboring harmoniously to elevate the literary standard of the time, and with a success which may well be regarded as remarkable, considering the little sympathy they received from the community, and the many difficulties with which they had to struggle."

The publication of the "Anthology" began in 1804, when Mr. William Emerson was thirty-four years of age, and it ceased to be published in the year of his death, 1811. Ralph Waldo Emerson was eight years old at that time. His intellectual life began, we may say, while the somewhat obscure afterglow of the "Anthology" was in the western horizon of the New England sky.

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The nebula which was to form a cluster about the “North American Review” did not take definite shape until 1815. There is no such memorial of the growth of American literature as is to be found in the first half century of that periodical. It is easy to find fault with it for uniform respectability and occasional dulness. But take the names of its contributors during its first fifty years from the literary record of that period, and we should have but a meagre list of mediocrities, saved from absolute poverty by the genius of two or three writers like Irving and Cooper. Strike out the names of Webster, Everett, Story, Sumner, and Cushing; of Bryant, Dana, Longfellow, and Lowell; of Prescott, Ticknor, Motley, Sparks, and Bancroft; of Verplanck, Hillard, and Whipple; of Stuart and Robinson; of Norton, Palfrey, Peabody, and Bowen; and, lastly, that of Emerson himself, and how much American classic literature would be left for a new edition of “Miller’s Retrospect”?

These were the writers who helped to make the “North American Review” what it was during the period of Emerson’s youth and early manhood. These, and men like them, gave Boston its intellectual character. We may count as symbols the three hills of “this darling town of ours,” as Emerson called it, and say that each had its beacon. Civil liberty lighted the torch on one summit, religious freedom caught the flame and shone from the second, and the lamp of the scholar has burned steadily on the third from the days when John Cotton preached his first sermon to those in which we are living.

The social religious influences of the first part of the century must not be forgotten. The two high-caste religions of that day were white-handed Unitarianism and ruffled-shirt Episcopalianism. What called itself “society” was chiefly distributed between them. Within less than fifty years a social revolution has taken place which has somewhat changed the relation between these and other worshipping bodies. This movement is the general withdrawal of the native New Englanders of both sexes from domestic service. A large part of the “hired help,”—for the word servant was commonly repudiated,—worshipped, not with their employers, but at churches where few or no well-appointed carriages stood at the doors. The congregations that went chiefly from the drawing-room and those which were largely made up of dwellers in the culinary studio were naturally separated by a very distinct line of social cleavage. A certain exclusiveness and fastidiousness, not reminding us exactly of primitive Christianity, was the inevitable result. This must always be remembered in judging the men and women of that day and their immediate descendants, as much as the surviving prejudices of those whose parents were born subjects of King George in the days when loyalty to the crown was a virtue. The line of social separation was more marked, probably, in Boston, the headquarters of Unitarianism, than in the other



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large cities; and even at the present day our Jerusalem and Samaria, though they by no means refuse dealing with each other, do not exchange so many cards as they do checks and dollars. The exodus of those children of Israel from the house of bondage, as they chose to consider it, and their fusion with the mass of independent citizens, got rid of a class distinction which was felt even in the sanctuary. True religious equality is harder to establish than civil liberty. No man has done more for spiritual republicanism than Emerson, though he came from the daintiest sectarian circle of the time in the whole country.

Such were Emerson's intellectual and moral parentage, nurture, and environment; such was the atmosphere in which he grew up from youth to manhood.

CHAPTER I.

Birthplace.—Boyhood.—College Life.

1803-1823. To *AET.* 20.

Ralph Waldo Emerson was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on the 25th of May, 1803.

He was the second of five sons; William, R.W., Edward Bliss, Robert Bulkeley, and Charles Chauncy.

His birthplace and that of our other illustrious Bostonian, Benjamin Franklin, were within a kite-string's distance of each other. When the baby philosopher of the last century was carried from Milk Street through the narrow passage long known as Bishop's Alley, now Hawley Street, he came out in Summer Street, very nearly opposite the spot where, at the beginning of this century, stood the parsonage of the First Church, the home of the Reverend William Emerson, its pastor, and the birthplace of his son, Ralph Waldo. The oblong quadrangle between Newbury, now Washington Street, Pond, now Bedford Street, Summer Street, and the open space called Church Green, where the New South Church was afterwards erected, is represented on Bonner's maps of 1722 and 1769 as an almost blank area, not crossed or penetrated by a single passageway.

Even so late as less than half a century ago this region was still a most attractive little *rus in urbe*. The sunny gardens of the late Judge Charles Jackson and the late Mr. S.P. Gardner opened their flowers and ripened their fruits in the places now occupied by great warehouses and other massive edifices. The most aristocratic pears, the "Saint Michael," the "Brown Bury," found their natural homes in these sheltered enclosures. The fine old mansion of Judge William Prescott looked out upon these gardens. Some

of us can well remember the window of his son's, the historian's, study, the light from which used every evening to glimmer through the leaves of the pear-trees while "The Conquest of Mexico" was achieving itself under difficulties hardly less formidable than those encountered by Cortes. It was a charmed region in which Emerson first drew his breath, and I am fortunate in having a communication from one who knew it and him longer than almost any other living person.

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Mr. John Lowell Gardner, a college classmate and life-long friend of Mr. Emerson, has favored me with a letter which contains matters of interest concerning him never before given to the public. With his kind permission I have made some extracts and borrowed such facts as seemed especially worthy of note from his letter.

"I may be said to have known Emerson from the very beginning. A very low fence divided my father's estate in Summer Street from the field in which I remember the old wooden parsonage to have existed,—but this field, when we were very young, was to be covered by Chauncy Place Church and by the brick houses on Summer Street. Where the family removed to I do not remember, but I always knew the boys, William, Ralph, and perhaps Edward, and I again associated with Ralph at the Latin School, where we were instructed by Master Gould from 1815 to 1817, entering College in the latter year."... I have no recollection of his relative rank as a scholar, but it was undoubtedly high, though not the highest. He never was idle or a loungeur, nor did he ever engage in frivolous pursuits. I should say that his conduct was absolutely faultless. It was impossible that there should be any feeling about him but of regard and affection. He had then the same manner and courtly hesitation in addressing you that you have known in him since. Still, he was not prominent in the class, and, but for what all the world has since known of him, his would not have been a conspicuous figure to his classmates in recalling College days."The fact that we were almost the only Latin School fellows in the class, and the circumstance that he was slow during the Freshman year to form new acquaintances, brought us much together, and an intimacy arose which continued through our College life. We were in the habit of taking long strolls together, often stopping for repose at distant points, as at Mount Auburn, *etc....* Emerson was not talkative; he never spoke for effect; his utterances were well weighed and very deliberately made, but there was a certain flash when he uttered anything that was more than usually worthy to be remembered. He was so universally amiable and complying that my evil spirit would sometimes instigate me to take advantage of his gentleness and forbearance, but nothing could disturb his equanimity. All that was wanting to render him an almost perfect character was a few harsher traits and perhaps more masculine vigor."On leaving College our paths in life were so remote from each other that we met very infrequently. He soon became, as it were, public property, and I was engrossed for many years in my commercial undertakings. All his course of life is known to many survivors. I am inclined to believe he had a most liberal spirit. I remember that some years since, when it was known that our classmate —— was reduced almost to absolute want by the war,

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in which he lost his two sons, Emerson exerted himself to raise a fund among his classmates for his relief, and, there being very few possible subscribers, made what I considered a noble contribution, and this you may be sure was not from any Southern sentiment on the part of Emerson. I send you herewith the two youthful productions of Emerson of which I spoke to you some time since."

The first of these is a prose Essay of four pages, written for a discussion in which the Professions of Divinity, Medicine, and Law were to be weighed against each other. Emerson had the Lawyer's side to advocate. It is a fair and sensible paper, not of special originality or brilliancy. His opening paragraph is worth citing, as showing the same instinct for truth which displayed itself in all his after writings and the conduct of his life.

"It is usual in advocating a favorite subject to appropriate all possible excellence, and endeavor to concentrate every doubtful auxiliary, that we may fortify to the utmost the theme of our attention. Such a design should be utterly disdained, except as far as is consistent with fairness; and the sophistry of weak arguments being abandoned, a bold appeal should be made to the heart, for the tribute of honest conviction, with regard to the merits of the subject."

From many boys this might sound like well-meaning commonplace, but in the history of Mr. Emerson's life that "bold appeal to the heart," that "tribute of honest conviction," were made eloquent and real. The boy meant it when he said it. To carry out his law of sincerity and self-trust the man had to sacrifice much that was dear to him, but he did not flinch from his early principles.

It must not be supposed that the blameless youth was an ascetic in his College days. The other old manuscript Mr. Gardner sends me is marked "'Song for Knights of Square Table,' R.W.E."

There are twelve verses of this song, with a chorus of two lines. The Muses and all the deities, not forgetting Bacchus, were duly invited to the festival.

"Let the doors of Olympus be open for all
To descend and make merry in Chivalry's hall."
* * * * *

Mr. Sanborn has kindly related to me several circumstances told him by Emerson about his early years.

The parsonage was situated at the corner of Summer and what is now Chauncy streets. It had a yard, and an orchard which Emerson said was as large as Dr. Ripley's, which might have been some two or three acres. Afterwards there was a brick house

looking on Summer Street, in which Emerson the father lived. It was separated, Emerson said, by a brick wall from a garden in which *pears grew* (a fact a boy is likely to remember). Master Ralph Waldo used to *sit on this wall*,—but we cannot believe he ever got off it on the wrong side, unless politely asked to do so. On the occasion of some alarm the little boy was carried in his nightgown to a neighboring house.

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After Reverend William Emerson's death Mrs. Emerson removed to a house in Beacon Street, where the Athenaeum Building now stands. She kept some boarders,—among them Lemuel Shaw, afterwards Chief Justice of the State of Massachusetts. It was but a short distance to the Common, and Waldo and Charles used to drive their mother's cow there to pasture.

* * * * *

The Reverend Doctor Rufus Ellis, the much respected living successor of William Emerson as Minister of the First Church, says that R.W. Emerson must have been born in the old parsonage, as his father (who died when he was eight years old) lived but a very short time in "the new parsonage," which was, doubtless, the "brick house" above referred to.

* * * * *

We get a few glimpses of the boy from other sources. Mr. Cooke tells us that he entered the public grammar school at the age of eight years, and soon afterwards the Latin School. At the age of eleven he was turning Virgil into very readable English heroics. He loved the study of Greek; was fond of reading history and given to the frequent writing of verses. But he thinks "the idle books under the bench at the Latin School" were as profitable to him as his regular studies.

Another glimpse of him is that given us by Mr. Ireland from the "Boyhood Memories" of Rufus Dawes. His old schoolmate speaks of him as "a spiritual-looking boy in blue nankeen, who seems to be about ten years old,—whose image more than any other is still deeply stamped upon my mind, as I then saw him and loved him, I knew not why, and thought him so angelic and remarkable." That "blue nankeen" sounds strangely, it may be, to the readers of this later generation, but in the first quarter of the century blue and yellow or buff-colored cotton from China were a common summer clothing of children. The places where the factories and streets of the cities of Lowell and Lawrence were to rise were then open fields and farms. My recollection is that we did not think very highly of ourselves when we were in blue nankeen,—a dull-colored fabric, too nearly of the complexion of the slates on which we did our ciphering.

Emerson was not particularly distinguished in College. Having a near connection in the same class as he, and being, as a Cambridge boy, generally familiar with the names of the more noted young men in College from the year when George Bancroft, Caleb Cushing, and Francis William Winthrop graduated until after I myself left College, I might have expected to hear something of a young man who afterwards became one of the great writers of his time. I do not recollect hearing of him except as keeping school for a short time in Cambridge, before he settled as a minister. His classmate, Mr. Josiah Quincy, writes thus of his college days:—

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"Two only of my classmates can be fairly said to have got into history, although one of them, Charles W. Upham [the connection of mine referred to above] has written history very acceptably. Ralph Waldo Emerson and Robert W. Barnwell, for widely different reasons, have caused their names to be known to well-informed Americans. Of Emerson, I regret to say, there are few notices in my journals. Here is the sort of way in which I speak of the man who was to make so profound an impression upon the thought of his time. 'I went to the chapel to hear Emerson's dissertation: a very good one, but rather too long to give much pleasure to the hearers.' The fault, I suspect, was in the hearers; and another fact which I have mentioned goes to confirm this belief. It seems that Emerson accepted the duty of delivering the Poem on Class Day, after seven others had been asked who positively, refused. So it appears that, in the opinion of this critical class, the author of the 'Woodnotes' and the 'Humble Bee' ranked about eighth in poetical ability. It can only be because the works of the other five [seven] have been 'heroically unwritten' that a different impression has come to prevail in the outside world. But if, according to the measurement of undergraduates, Emerson's ability as a poet was not conspicuous, it must also be admitted that, in the judgment of persons old enough to know better, he was not credited with that mastery of weighty prose which the world has since accorded him. In our senior year the higher classes competed for the Boylston prizes for English composition. Emerson and I sent in our essays with the rest and were fortunate enough to take the two prizes; but—Alas for the infallibility of academic decisions! Emerson received the second prize. I was of course much pleased with the award of this intelligent committee, and should have been still more gratified had they mentioned that the man who was to be the most original and influential writer born in America was my unsuccessful competitor. But Emerson, incubating over deeper matters than were dreamt of in the established philosophy of elegant letters, seems to have given no sign of the power that was fashioning itself for leadership in a new time. He was quiet, unobtrusive, and only a fair scholar according to the standard of the College authorities. And this is really all I have to say about my most distinguished classmate."

Barnwell, the first scholar in the class, delivered the Valedictory Oration, and Emerson the Poem. Neither of these performances was highly spoken of by Mr. Quincy.

I was surprised to find by one of the old Catalogues that Emerson roomed during a part of his College course with a young man whom I well remember, J.G.K. Gourdin. The two Gourdins, Robert and John Gaillard Keith, were dashing young fellows as I recollect them, belonging to Charleston, South Carolina. The "Southerners" were the reigning College *elegans* of that time, the *merveilleux*, the *mirliflores*, of their day. Their swallow-tail coats tapered to an arrow-point angle, and the prints of their little delicate calfskin boots in the snow were objects of great admiration to the village boys of the period. I cannot help wondering what brought Emerson and the showy, fascinating John Gourdin together as room-mates.

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CHAPTER II.

1823-1828. AET. 20-25.

Extract from a Letter to a Classmate.—School-Teaching.—Study of Divinity.—“Approbated” to Preach.—Visit to the South.—Preaching in Various Places.

We get a few brief glimpses of Emerson during the years following his graduation. He writes in 1823 to a classmate who had gone from Harvard to Andover:—

“I am delighted to hear there is such a profound studying of German and Hebrew, Parkhurst and Jahn, and such other names as the memory aches to think of, on foot at Andover. Meantime, Unitarianism will not hide her honors; as many hard names are taken, and as much theological mischief is planned, at Cambridge as at Andover. By the time this generation gets upon the stage, if the controversy will not have ceased, it will run such a tide that we shall hardly be able to speak to one another, and there will be a Guelf and Ghibelline quarrel, which cannot tell where the differences lie.”“You can form no conception how much one grovelling in the city needs the excitement and impulse of literary example. The sight of broad vellum-bound quartos, the very mention of Greek and German names, the glimpse of a dusty, tugging scholar, will wake you up to emulation for a month.”

After leaving College, and while studying Divinity, Emerson employed a part of his time in giving instruction in several places successively.

Emerson’s older brother William was teaching in Boston, and Ralph Waldo, after graduating, joined him in that occupation. In the year 1825 or 1826, he taught school also in Chelmsford, a town of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, a part of which helped to constitute the city of Lowell. One of his pupils in that school, the Honorable Josiah Gardiner Abbott, has favored me with the following account of his recollections:—

The school of which Mr. Emerson had the charge was an old-fashioned country “Academy.” Mr. Emerson was probably studying for the ministry while teaching there. Judge Abbott remembers the impression he made on the boys. He was very grave, quiet, and very impressive in his appearance. There was something engaging, almost fascinating, about him; he was never harsh or severe, always perfectly self-controlled, never punished except with words, but exercised complete command over the boys. His old pupil recalls the stately, measured way in which, for some offence the little boy had committed, he turned on him, saying only these two words: “Oh, sad!” That was enough, for he had the faculty of making the boys love him. One of his modes of instruction was to give the boys a piece of reading to carry home with them,—from some book like Plutarch’s Lives,—and the next day to examine them and find out how much they retained from their reading. Judge Abbott remembers a peculiar look in his

eyes, as if he saw something beyond what seemed to be in the field of vision. The whole impression left on this pupil's mind was such as no other teacher had ever produced upon him.

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Mr. Emerson also kept a school for a short time at Cambridge, and among his pupils was Mr. John Holmes. His impressions seem to be very much like those of Judge Abbott.

My brother speaks of Mr. Emerson thus:—

“Calm, as not doubting the virtue residing in his sceptre. Rather stern in his very infrequent rebukes. Not inclined to win boys by a surface amiability, but kindly in explanation or advice. Every inch a king in his dominion. Looking back, he seems to me rather like a captive philosopher set to tending flocks; resigned to his destiny, but not amused with its incongruities. He once recommended the use of rhyme as a cohesive for historical items.”

In 1823, two years after graduating, Emerson began studying for the ministry. He studied under the direction of Dr. Charming, attending some of the lectures in the Divinity School at Cambridge, though not enrolled as one of its regular students.

The teachings of that day were such as would now be called “old-fashioned Unitarianism.” But no creed can be held to be a finality. From Edwards to Mayhew, from Mayhew to Channing, from Channing to Emerson, the passage is like that which leads from the highest lock of a canal to the ocean level. It is impossible for human nature to remain permanently shut up in the highest lock of Calvinism. If the gates are not opened, the mere leakage of belief or unbelief will before long fill the next compartment, and the freight of doctrine finds itself on the lower level of Arminianism, or Pelagianism, or even subsides to Arianism. From this level to that of Unitarianism the outlet is freer, and the subsidence more rapid. And from Unitarianism to Christian Theism, the passage is largely open for such as cannot accept the evidence of the supernatural in the history of the church.

There were many shades of belief in the liberal churches. If De Tocqueville’s account of Unitarian preaching in Boston at the time of his visit is true, the Savoyard Vicar of Rousseau would have preached acceptably in some of our pulpits. In fact, the good Vicar might have been thought too conservative by some of our unharnessed theologians.

At the period when Emerson reached manhood, Unitarianism was the dominating form of belief in the more highly educated classes of both of the two great New England centres, the town of Boston and the University at Cambridge. President Kirkland was at the head of the College, Henry Ware was Professor of Theology, Andrews Norton of Sacred Literature, followed in 1830 by John Gorham Palfrey in the same office. James Freeman, Charles Lowell, and William Ellery Channing were preaching in Boston. I have mentioned already as a simple fact of local history, that the more exclusive social circles of Boston and Cambridge were chiefly connected with the Unitarian or Episcopalian churches. A Cambridge graduate of ambition and ability found an opening

far from undesirable in a worldly point of view, in a profession which he was led to choose by higher motives. It was in the Unitarian pulpit that the brilliant talents of Buckminster and Everett had found a noble eminence from which their light could shine before men.

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Descended from a long line of ministers, a man of spiritual nature, a reader of Plato, of Augustine, of Jeremy Taylor, full of hope for his fellow-men, and longing to be of use to them, conscious, undoubtedly, of a growing power of thought, it was natural that Emerson should turn from the task of a school-master to the higher office of a preacher. It is hard to conceive of Emerson in either of the other so-called learned professions. His devotion to truth for its own sake and his feeling about science would have kept him out of both those dusty highways. His brother William had previously begun the study of Divinity, but found his mind beset with doubts and difficulties, and had taken to the profession of Law. It is not unlikely that Mr. Emerson was more or less exercised with the same questionings. He has said, speaking of his instructors: "If they had examined me, they probably would not have let me preach at all." His eyes had given him trouble, so that he had not taken notes of the lectures which he heard in the Divinity School, which accounted for his being excused from examination. In 1826, after three years' study, he was "approved to preach" by the Middlesex Association of Ministers. His health obliging him to seek a southern climate, he went in the following winter to South Carolina and Florida. During this absence he preached several times in Charleston and other places. On his return from the South he preached in New Bedford, in Northampton, in Concord, and in Boston. His attractiveness as a preacher, of which we shall have sufficient evidence in a following chapter, led to his being invited to share the duties of a much esteemed and honored city clergyman, and the next position in which we find him is that of a settled Minister in Boston.

CHAPTER III.

1828-1833. AET. 25-30.

Settled as Colleague of Rev. Henry Ware.—Married to Ellen Louisa Tucker.—Sermon at the Ordination of Rev. H.B. Goodwin.—His Pastoral and Other Labors.—Emerson and Father Taylor.—Death of Mrs. Emerson.—Difference of Opinion with some of his Parishioners.—Sermon Explaining his Views.—Resignation of his Pastorate.

On the 11th of March, 1829, Emerson was ordained as colleague with the Reverend Henry Ware, Minister of the Second Church in Boston. In September of the same year he was married to Miss Ellen Louisa Tucker. The resignation of his colleague soon after his settlement threw all the pastoral duties upon the young minister, who seems to have performed them diligently and acceptably. Mr. Conway gives the following brief account of his labors, and tells in the same connection a story of Father Taylor too good not to be repeated:—

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“Emerson took an active interest in the public affairs of Boston. He was on its School Board, and was chosen chaplain of the State Senate. He invited the anti-slavery lecturers into his church, and helped philanthropists of other denominations in their work. Father Taylor [the Methodist preacher to the sailors], to whom Dickens gave an English fame, found in him his most important supporter when establishing the Seaman’s Mission in Boston. This was told me by Father Taylor himself in his old age. I happened to be in his company once, when he spoke rather sternly about my leaving the Methodist Church; but when I spoke of the part Emerson had in it, he softened at once, and spoke with emotion of his great friend. I have no doubt that if the good Father of Boston Seamen was proud of any personal thing, it was of the excellent answer he is said to have given to some Methodists who objected to his friendship for Emerson. Being a Unitarian, they insisted that he must go to”—[the place which a divine of Charles the Second’s day said it was not good manners to mention in church]. —“‘It does look so,’ said Father Taylor, ‘but I am sure of one thing: if Emerson goes to’”—[that place]—“he will change the climate there, and emigration will set that way.”

In 1830, Emerson took part in the services at the ordination of the Reverend H.B. Goodwin as Dr. Ripley’s colleague. His address on giving the right hand of fellowship was printed, but is not included among his collected works.

The fair prospects with which Emerson began his life as a settled minister were too soon darkened. In February, 1832, the wife of his youth, who had been for some time in failing health, died of consumption.

He had become troubled with doubts respecting a portion of his duties, and it was not in his nature to conceal these doubts from his people. On the 9th of September, 1832, he preached a sermon on the Lord’s Supper, in which he announced unreservedly his conscientious scruples against administering that ordinance, and the grounds upon which those scruples were founded. This discourse, as his only printed sermon, and as one which heralded a movement in New England theology which has never stopped from that day to this, deserves some special notice. The sermon is in no sense “Emersonian” except in its directness, its sweet temper, and outspoken honesty. He argues from his comparison of texts in a perfectly sober, old-fashioned way, as his ancestor Peter Bulkeley might have done. It happened to that worthy forefather of Emerson that upon his “pressing a piece of *Charity* disagreeable to the will of the *Ruling Elder*, there was occasioned an unhappy *Discord* in the Church of *Concord*; which yet was at last healed, by their calling in the help of a *Council* and the *Ruling Elder’s* Abdication.” So says Cotton Mather. Whether zeal had grown cooler or charity grown warmer in Emerson’s

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days we need not try to determine. The sermon was only a more formal declaration of views respecting the Lord's Supper, which he had previously made known in a conference with some of the most active members of his church. As a committee of the parish reported resolutions radically differing from his opinion on the subject, he preached this sermon and at the same time resigned his office. There was no "discord," there was no need of a "council." Nothing could be more friendly, more truly Christian, than the manner in which Mr. Emerson expressed himself in this parting discourse. All the kindness of his nature warms it throughout. He details the differences of opinion which have existed in the church with regard to the ordinance. He then argues from the language of the Evangelists that it was not intended to be a permanent institution. He takes up the statement of Paul in the Epistle to the Corinthians, which he thinks, all things considered, ought not to alter our opinion derived from the Evangelists. He does not think that we are to rely upon the opinions and practices of the primitive church. If that church believed the institution to be permanent, their belief does not settle the question for us. On every other subject, succeeding times have learned to form a judgment more in accordance with the spirit of Christianity than was the practice of the early ages.

"But, it is said, 'Admit that the rite was not designed to be perpetual.' What harm doth it?"

He proceeds to give reasons which show it to be inexpedient to continue the observance of the rite. It was treating that as authoritative which, as he believed that he had shown from Scripture, was not so. It confused the idea of God by transferring the worship of Him to Christ. Christ is the Mediator only as the instructor of man. In the least petition to God "the soul stands alone with God, and Jesus is no more present to your mind than your brother or child." Again:—

"The use of the elements, however suitable to the people and the modes of thought in the East, where it originated, is foreign and unsuited to affect us. The day of formal religion is past, and we are to seek our well-being in the formation of the soul. The Jewish was a religion of forms; it was all body, it had no life, and the Almighty God was pleased to qualify and send forth a man to teach men that they must serve him with the heart; that only that life was religious which was thoroughly good; that sacrifice was smoke and forms were shadows. This man lived and died true to that purpose; and with his blessed word and life before us, Christians must contend that it is a matter of vital importance,—really a duty to commemorate him by a certain form, whether that form be acceptable to their understanding or not. Is not this to make vain the gift of God? Is not this to turn back the hand on the dial?"

To these objections he adds the practical consideration that it brings those who do not partake of the communion service into an unfavorable relation with those who do.



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The beautiful spirit of the man shows itself in all its noble sincerity in these words at the close of his argument:—

“Having said this, I have said all. I have no hostility to this institution; I am only stating my want of sympathy with it. Neither should I ever have obtruded this opinion upon other people, had I not been called by my office to administer it. That is the end of my opposition, that I am not interested in it. I am content that it stand to the end of the world if it please men and please Heaven, and I shall rejoice in all the good it produces.”

He then announces that, as it is the prevailing opinion and feeling in our religious community that it is a part of a pastor's duties to administer this rite, he is about to resign the office which had been confided to him.

This is the only sermon of Mr. Emerson's ever published. It was impossible to hear or to read it without honoring the preacher for his truthfulness, and recognizing the force of his statement and reasoning. It was equally impossible that he could continue his ministrations over a congregation which held to the ordinance he wished to give up entirely. And thus it was, that with the most friendly feelings on both sides, Mr. Emerson left the pulpit of the Second Church and found himself obliged to make a beginning in a new career.

CHAPTER IV.

1833-1838. AET. 30-35.

Section 1. Visit to Europe.—On his Return preaches in Different Places.—Emerson in the Pulpit.—At Newton.—Fixes his Residence at Concord.—The Old Manse.—Lectures in Boston.—Lectures on Michael Angelo and on Milton published in the “North American Review.”—Beginning of the Correspondence with Carlyle.—Letters to the Rev. James Freeman Clarke.—Republication of “Sartor Resartus.”

Section 2. Emerson's Second Marriage.—His New Residence in Concord.—Historical Address.—Course of Ten Lectures on English Literature delivered in Boston.—The Concord Battle Hymn.—Preaching in Concord and East Lexington.—Accounts of his Preaching by Several Hearers.—A Course of Lectures on the Nature and Ends of History.—Address on War.—Death of Edward Bliss Emerson.—Death of Charles Chauncy Emerson.

Section 3. Publication of “Nature.”—Outline of this Essay.—Its Reception.—Address before the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

Section 1. In the year 1833 Mr. Emerson visited Europe for the first time. A great change had come over his life, and he needed the relief which a corresponding change



of outward circumstances might afford him. A brief account of this visit is prefixed to the volume entitled "English Traits." He took a short tour, in which he visited Sicily, Italy, and France, and, crossing from Boulogne, landed at the Tower Stairs in London. He finds nothing in his Diary to publish concerning visits to places. But he saw a number of distinguished persons, of whom

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he gives pleasant accounts, so singularly different in tone from the rough caricatures in which Carlyle vented his spleen and caprice, that one marvels how the two men could have talked ten minutes together, or would wonder, had not one been as imperturbable as the other was explosive. Horatio Greenough and Walter Savage Landor are the chief persons he speaks of as having met upon the Continent. Of these he reports various opinions as delivered in conversation. He mentions incidentally that he visited Professor Amici, who showed him his microscopes “magnifying (it was said) two thousand diameters.” Emerson hardly knew his privilege; he may have been the first American to look through an immersion lens with the famous Modena professor. Mr. Emerson says that his narrow and desultory reading had inspired him with the wish to see the faces of three or four writers, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Landor, De Quincey, Carlyle. His accounts of his interviews with these distinguished persons are too condensed to admit of further abbreviation. Goethe and Scott, whom he would have liked to look upon, were dead; Wellington he saw at Westminster Abbey, at the funeral of Wilberforce. His impressions of each of the distinguished persons whom he visited should be looked at in the light of the general remark which, follows:—

“The young scholar fancies it happiness enough to live with people who can give an inside to the world; without reflecting that they are prisoners, too, of their own thought, and cannot apply themselves to yours. The conditions of literary success are almost destructive of the best social power, as they do not have that frolic liberty which only can encounter a companion on the best terms. It is probable you left some obscure comrade at a tavern, or in the farms, with right mother-wit, and equality to life, when you crossed sea and land to play bo-peep with celebrated scribes. I have, however, found writers superior to their books, and I cling to my first belief that a strong head will dispose fast enough of these impediments, and give one the satisfaction of reality, the sense of having been met, and a larger horizon.”

Emerson carried a letter of introduction to a gentleman in Edinburgh, who, being unable to pay him all the desired attention, handed him over to Mr. Alexander Ireland, who has given a most interesting account of him as he appeared during that first visit to Europe. Mr. Ireland's presentation of Emerson as he heard him in the Scotch pulpit shows that he was not less impressive and attractive before an audience of strangers than among his own countrymen and countrywomen:—

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"On Sunday, the 18th of August, 1833, I heard him deliver a discourse in the Unitarian Chapel, Young Street, Edinburgh, and I remember distinctly the effect which it produced on his hearers. It is almost needless to say that nothing like it had ever been heard by them before, and many of them did not know what to make of it. The originality of his thoughts, the consummate beauty of the language in which they were clothed, the calm dignity of his bearing, the absence of all oratorical effort, and the singular directness and simplicity of his manner, free from the least shadow of dogmatic assumption, made a deep impression on me. Not long before this I had listened to a wonderful sermon by Dr. Chalmers, whose force, and energy, and vehement, but rather turgid eloquence carried, for the moment, all before them,—his audience becoming like clay in the hands of the potter. But I must confess that the pregnant thoughts and serene self-possession of the young Boston minister had a greater charm for me than all the rhetorical splendors of Chalmers. His voice was the sweetest, the most winning and penetrating of any I ever heard; nothing like it have I listened to since.

'That music in our hearts we bore
Long after it was heard no more.'"

Mr. George Gilfillan speaks of "the solemnity of his manner, and the earnest thought pervading his discourse."

As to the effect of his preaching on his American audiences, I find the following evidence in Mr. Cooke's diligently gathered collections. Mr. Sanborn says:—

"His pulpit eloquence was singularly attractive, though by no means equally so to all persons. In 1829, before the two friends had met, Bronson Alcott heard him preach in Dr. Channing's church on 'The Universality of the Moral Sentiment,' and was struck, as he said, with the youth of the preacher, the beauty of his elocution and the direct and sincere manner in which he addressed his hearers."

Mr. Charles Congdon, of New Bedford, well known as a popular writer, gives the following account of Emerson's preaching in his "Reminiscences." I borrow the quotation from Mr. Conway:—

"One day there came into our pulpit the most gracious of mortals, with a face all benignity, who gave out the first hymn and made the first prayer as an angel might have read and prayed. Our choir was a pretty good one, but its best was coarse and discordant after Emerson's voice. I remember of the sermon only that it had an indefinite charm of simplicity and wisdom, with occasional illustrations from nature, which were about the most delicate and dainty things of the kind which I had ever heard. I could understand them, if not the fresh philosophical novelties of the discourse."

Everywhere Emerson seems to have pleased his audiences. The Reverend Dr. Morison, formerly the much respected Unitarian minister of New Bedford, writes to me as follows:—

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"After Dr. Dewey left New Bedford, Mr. Emerson preached there several months, greatly to the satisfaction and delight of those who heard him. The Society would have been glad to settle him as their minister, and he would have accepted a call, had it not been for some difference of opinion, I think, in regard to the communion service. Judge Warren, who was particularly his friend, and had at that time a leading influence in the parish, with all his admiration for Mr. Emerson, did not think he could well be the pastor of a Christian church, and so the matter was settled between him and his friend, without any action by the Society."

All this shows well enough that his preaching was eminently acceptable. But every one who has heard him lecture can form an idea of what he must have been as a preacher. In fact, we have all listened, probably, to many a passage from old sermons of his,—for he tells us he borrowed from those old sermons for his lectures,—without ever thinking of the pulpit from which they were first heard.

Among the stray glimpses we get of Emerson between the time when he quitted the pulpit of his church and that when he came before the public as a lecturer is this, which I owe to the kindness of Hon. Alexander H. Rice. In 1832 or 1833, probably the latter year, he, then a boy, with another boy, Thomas R. Gould, afterwards well known as a sculptor, being at the Episcopal church in Newton, found that Mr. Emerson was sitting in the pew behind them. Gould knew Mr. Emerson, and introduced young Rice to him, and they walked down the street together. As they went along, Emerson burst into a rhapsody over the Psalms of David, the sublimity of thought, and the poetic beauty of expression of which they are full, and spoke also with enthusiasm of the Te Deum as that grand old hymn which had come down through the ages, voicing the praises of generation after generation.

When they parted at the house of young Rice's father, Emerson invited the boys to come and see him at the Allen farm, in the afternoon. They came to a piece of woods, and, as they entered it, took their hats off. "Boys," said Emerson, "here we recognize the presence of the Universal Spirit. The breeze says to us in its own language, How d' ye do? How d' ye do? and we have already taken our hats off and are answering it with our own How d' ye do? How d' ye do? And all the waving branches of the trees, and all the flowers, and the field of corn yonder, and the singing brook, and the insect and the bird,—every living thing and things we call inanimate feel the same divine universal impulse while they join with us, and we with them, in the greeting which is the salutation of the Universal Spirit."

We perceive the same feeling which pervades many of Emerson's earlier Essays and much of his verse, in these long-treasured reminiscences of the poetical improvisation with which the two boys were thus unexpectedly favored. Governor Rice continues:—

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“You know what a captivating charm there always was in Emerson’s presence, but I can never tell you how this line of thought then impressed a country boy. I do not remember anything about the remainder of that walk, nor of the after-incidents of that day,—I only remember that I went home wondering about that mystical dream of the Universal Spirit, and about what manner of man he was under whose influence I had for the first time come....”The interview left impressions that led me into new channels of thought which have been a life-long pleasure to me, and, I doubt not, taught me somewhat how to distinguish between mere theological dogma and genuine religion in the soul.”

In the summer of 1834 Emerson became a resident of Concord, Massachusetts, the town of his forefathers, and the place destined to be his home for life. He first lived with his venerable connection, Dr. Ripley, in the dwelling made famous by Hawthorne as the “Old Manse.” It is an old-fashioned gambrel-roofed house, standing close to the scene of the Fight on the banks of the river. It was built for the Reverend William Emerson, his grandfather. In one of the rooms of this house Emerson wrote “Nature,” and in the same room, some years later, Hawthorne wrote “Mosses from an Old Manse.”

The place in which Emerson passed the greater part of his life well deserves a special notice. Concord might sit for its portrait as an ideal New England town. If wanting in the variety of surface which many other towns can boast of, it has at least a vision of the distant summits of Monadnock and Wachusett. It has fine old woods, and noble elms to give dignity to its open spaces. Beautiful ponds, as they modestly call themselves,—one of which, Walden, is as well known in our literature as Windermere in that of Old England,—lie quietly in their clean basins. And through the green meadows runs, or rather lounges, a gentle, unsalted stream, like an English river, licking its grassy margin with a sort of bovine placidity and contentment. This is the Musketaquid, or Meadow River, which, after being joined by the more restless Assabet, still keeps its temper and flows peacefully along by and through other towns, to lose itself in the broad Merrimac. The names of these rivers tell us that Concord has an Indian history, and there is evidence that it was a favorite residence of the race which preceded our own. The native tribes knew as well as the white settlers where were pleasant streams and sweet springs, where corn grew tall in the meadows and fish bred fast in the unpolluted waters.

The place thus favored by nature can show a record worthy of its physical attractions. Its settlement under the lead of Emerson’s ancestor, Peter Bulkeley, was effected in the midst of many difficulties, which the enterprise and self-sacrifice of that noble leader were successful in overcoming. On the banks of the Musketaquid was fired the first fatal shot of the “rebel” farmers. Emerson appeals to the Records of the town for two hundred years as illustrating the working of our American institutions and the character of the men of Concord:—

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"If the good counsel prevailed, the sneaking counsel did not fail to be suggested; freedom and virtue, if they triumphed, triumphed in a fair field. And so be it an everlasting testimony for them, and so much ground of assurance of man's capacity for self-government."

What names that plain New England town reckons in the roll of its inhabitants! Stout Major Buttrick and his fellow-soldiers in the war of Independence, and their worthy successors in the war of Freedom; lawyers and statesmen like Samuel Hoar and his descendants; ministers like Peter Bulkeley, Daniel Bliss, and William Emerson; and men of genius such as the idealist and poet whose inspiration has kindled so many souls; as the romancer who has given an atmosphere to the hard outlines of our stern New England; as that unique individual, half college-graduate and half Algonquin, the Robinson Crusoe of Walden Pond, who carried out a school-boy whim to its full proportions, and told the story of Nature in undress as only one who had hidden in her bedroom could have told it. I need not lengthen the catalogue by speaking of the living, or mentioning the women whose names have added to its distinction. It has long been an intellectual centre such as no other country town of our own land, if of any other, could boast. Its groves, its streams, its houses, are haunted by undying memories, and its hillsides and hollows are made holy by the dust that is covered by their turf.

Such was the place which the advent of Emerson made the Delphi of New England and the resort of many pilgrims from far-off regions.

On his return from Europe in the winter of 1833-4, Mr. Emerson began to appear before the public as a lecturer. His first subjects, "Water," and the "Relation of Man to the Globe," were hardly such as we should have expected from a scholar who had but a limited acquaintance with physical and physiological science. They were probably chosen as of a popular character, easily treated in such a way as to be intelligible and entertaining, and thus answering the purpose of introducing him pleasantly to the new career he was contemplating. These lectures are not included in his published works, nor were they ever published, so far as I know. He gave three lectures during the same winter, relating the experiences of his recent tour in Europe. Having made himself at home on the platform, he ventured upon subjects more congenial to his taste and habits of thought than some of those earlier topics. In 1834 he lectured on Michael Angelo, Milton, Luther, George Fox, and Edmund Burke. The first two of these lectures, though not included in his collected works, may be found in the "North American Review" for 1837 and 1838. The germ of many of the thoughts which he has expanded in prose and verse may be found in these Essays.

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The *Cosmos* of the Ancient Greeks, the *piu nel' uno*, "The Many in One," appear in the Essay on Michael Angelo as they also appear in his "Nature." The last thought takes wings to itself and rises in the little poem entitled "Each and All." The "Rhodora," another brief poem, finds itself foreshadowed in the inquiry, "What is Beauty?" and its answer, "This great Whole the understanding cannot embrace. Beauty may be felt. It may be produced. But it cannot be defined." And throughout this Essay the feeling that truth and beauty and virtue are one, and that Nature is the symbol which typifies it to the soul, is the inspiring sentiment. *Noscitur a sociis* applies as well to a man's dead as to his living companions. A young friend of mine in his college days wrote an essay on Plato. When he mentioned his subject to Mr. Emerson, he got the caution, long remembered, "When you strike at a *King*, you must kill him." He himself knew well with what kings of thought to measure his own intelligence. What was grandest, loftiest, purest, in human character chiefly interested him. He rarely meddles with what is petty or ignoble. Like his "Humble Bee," the "yellow-breeched philosopher," whom he speaks of as

"Wiser far than human seer,"

and says of him,

"Aught unsavory or unclean
Hath my insect never seen,"

he goes through the world where coarser minds find so much that is repulsive to dwell upon,

"Seeing only what is fair,
Sipping only what is sweet."

Why Emerson selected Michael Angelo as the subject of one of his earliest lectures is shown clearly enough by the last sentence as printed in the Essay.

"He was not a citizen of any country; he belonged to the human race; he was a brother and a friend to all who acknowledged the beauty that beams in universal nature, and who seek by labor and self-denial to approach its source in perfect goodness."

Consciously or unconsciously men describe themselves in the characters they draw. One must have the mordant in his own personality or he will not take the color of his subject. He may force himself to picture that which he dislikes or even detests; but when he loves the character he delineates, it is his own, in some measure, at least, or one of which he feels that its possibilities and tendencies belong to himself. Let us try Emerson by this test in his "Essay on Milton:"—



"It is the prerogative of this great man to stand at this hour foremost of all men in literary history, and so (shall we not say?) of all men, in the power to *inspire*. Virtue goes out of him into others." ... "He is identified in the mind with all select and holy images, with the supreme interests of the human race."—"Better than any other he has discharged the office of every great man, namely, to raise the idea of Man in the minds of his contemporaries and of posterity,—to

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draw after nature a life of man, exhibiting such a composition of grace, of strength, and of virtue as poet had not described nor hero lived. Human nature in these ages is indebted to him for its best portrait. Many philosophers in England, France, and Germany, have formally dedicated their study to this problem; and we think it impossible to recall one in those countries who communicates the same vibration of hope, of self-reverence, of piety, of delight in beauty, which the name of Milton awakes.”

Emerson had the same lofty aim as Milton, “To raise the idea of man;” he had “the power to *inspire*” in a preeminent degree. If ever a man communicated those *vibrations* he speaks of as characteristic of Milton, it was Emerson. In elevation, purity, nobility of nature, he is worthy to stand with the great poet and patriot, who began like him as a school-master, and ended as the teacher in a school-house which had for its walls the horizons of every region where English is spoken. The similarity of their characters might be followed by the curious into their fortunes. Both were turned away from the clerical office by a revolt of conscience against the beliefs required of them; both lost very dear objects of affection in early manhood, and mourned for them in tender and mellifluous threnodies. It would be easy to trace many parallelisms in their prose and poetry, but to have dared to name any man whom we have known in our common life with the seraphic singer of the Nativity and of Paradise is a tribute which seems to savor of audacity. It is hard to conceive of Emerson as “an expert swordsman” like Milton. It is impossible to think of him as an abusive controversialist as Milton was in his controversy with Salmasius. But though Emerson never betrayed it to the offence of others, he must have been conscious, like Milton, of “a certain niceness of nature, an honest haughtiness,” which was as a shield about his inner nature. Charles Emerson, the younger brother, who was of the same type, expresses the feeling in his college essay on Friendship, where it is all summed up in the line he quotes:—

“The hand of Douglas is his own.”

It must be that in writing this Essay on Milton Emerson felt that he was listening in his own soul to whispers that seemed like echoes from that of the divine singer.

* * * * *

My friend, the Rev. James Freeman Clarke, a life-long friend of Emerson, who understood him from the first, and was himself a great part in the movement of which Emerson, more than any other man, was the leader, has kindly allowed me to make use of the following letters:—

TO REV. JAMES F. CLARKE, LOUISVILLE, KY.

PLYMOUTH, MASS., March 12, 1834.

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MY DEAR SIR,—As the day approaches when Mr. Lewis should leave Boston, I seize a few moments in a friendly house in the first of towns, to thank you heartily for your kindness in lending me the valued manuscripts which I return. The translations excited me much, and who can estimate the value of a good thought? I trust I am to learn much more from you hereafter of your German studies, and much I hope of your own. You asked in your note concerning Carlyle. My recollections of him are most pleasant, and I feel great confidence in his character. He understands and recognizes his mission. He is perfectly simple and affectionate in his manner, and frank, as he can well afford to be, in his communications. He expressed some impatience of his total solitude, and talked of Paris as a residence. I told him I hoped not; for I should always remember him with respect, meditating in the mountains of Nithsdale. He was cheered, as he ought to be, by learning that his papers were read with interest by young men unknown to him in this continent; and when I specified a piece which had attracted warm commendation from the New Jerusalem people here, his wife said that is always the way; whatever he has writ that he thinks has fallen dead, he hears of two or three years afterward.—He has many, many tokens of Goethe's regard, miniatures, medals, and many letters. If you should go to Scotland one day, you would gratify him, yourself, and me, by your visit to Craigenputtock, in the parish of Dunscore, near Dumfries. He told me he had a book which he thought to publish, but was in the purpose of dividing into a series of articles for "Fraser's Magazine." I therefore subscribed for that book, which he calls the "Mud Magazine," but have seen nothing of his workmanship in the two last numbers. The mail is going, so I shall finish my letter another time.

Your obliged friend and servant,

R. WALDO EMERSON.

CONCORD, MASS., November 25, 1834.

MY DEAR SIR,—Miss Peabody has kindly sent me your manuscript piece on Goethe and Carlyle. I have read it with great pleasure and a feeling of gratitude, at the same time with a serious regret that it was not published. I have forgotten what reason you assigned for not printing it; I cannot think of any sufficient one. Is it too late now? Why not change its form a little and annex to it some account of Carlyle's later pieces, to wit: "Diderot," and "Sartor Resartus." The last is complete, and he has sent it to me in a stitched pamphlet. Whilst I see its vices (relatively to the reading public) of style, I cannot but esteem it a noble philosophical poem, reflecting the ideas, institutions, men of this very hour. And it seems to me that it has so much wit and other secondary graces as must strike a class who would not care for its primary merit, that of being a sincere exhortation to seekers of truth. If you still retain your interest

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in his genius (as I see not how you can avoid, having understood it and cooperated with it so truly), you will be glad to know that he values his American readers very highly; that he does not defend this offensive style of his, but calls it questionable tentative; that he is trying other modes, and is about publishing a historical piece called "The Diamond Necklace," as a part of a great work which he meditates on the subject of the French Revolution. He says it is part of his creed that history is poetry, could we tell it right. He adds, moreover, in a letter I have recently received from him, that it has been an odd dream that he might end in the western woods. Shall we not bid him come, and be Poet and Teacher of a most scattered flock wanting a shepherd? Or, as I sometimes think, would it not be a new and worse chagrin to become acquainted with the extreme deadness of our community to spiritual influences of the higher kind? Have you read Sampson Reed's "Growth of the Mind"? I rejoice to be contemporary with that man, and cannot wholly despair of the society in which he lives; there must be some oxygen yet, and La Fayette is only just dead.

Your friend, R. WALDO EMERSON.

It occurs to me that 't is unfit to send any white paper so far as to your house, so you shall have a sentence from Carlyle's letter.

[This may be found in Carlyle's first letter, dated 12th August, 1834.] Dr. Le Baron Russell, an intimate friend of Emerson for the greater part of his life, gives me some particulars with reference to the publication of "Sartor Resartus," which I will repeat in his own words:—

"It was just before the time of which I am speaking [that of Emerson's marriage] that the 'Sartor Resartus' appeared in 'Fraser.' Emerson lent the numbers, or the collected sheets of 'Fraser,' to Miss Jackson, and we all had the reading of them. The excitement which the book caused among young persons interested in the literature of the day at that time you probably remember. I was quite carried away by it, and so anxious to own a copy, that I determined to publish an American edition. I consulted James Munroe & Co. on the subject. Munroe advised me to obtain a subscription to a sufficient number of copies to secure the cost of the publication. This, with the aid of some friends, particularly of my classmate, William Silsbee, I readily succeeded in doing. When this was accomplished, I wrote to Emerson, who up to this time had taken no part in the enterprise, asking him to write a preface. (This is the Preface which appears in the American edition, James Munroe & Co., 1836. It was omitted in the third American from the second London edition,[1] by the same publishers, 1840.) Before the first edition appeared, and after the subscription had been secured, Munroe & Co. offered to assume the whole responsibility of the publication, and to this I assented.

[Footnote 1: Revised and corrected by the author.]

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"This American edition of 1836 was the first appearance of the 'Sartor' in either country, as a distinct edition. Some copies of the sheets from 'Fraser,' it appears, were stitched together and sent to a few persons, but Carlyle could find no English publisher willing to take the responsibility of printing the book. This shows, I think, how much more interest was taken in Carlyle's writings in this country than in England."

On the 14th of May, 1834, Emerson wrote to Carlyle the first letter of that correspondence which has since been given to the world under the careful editorship of Mr. Charles Norton. This correspondence lasted from the date mentioned to the 2d of April, 1872, when Carlyle wrote his last letter to Emerson. The two writers reveal themselves as being in strong sympathy with each other, in spite of a radical difference of temperament and entirely opposite views of life. The hatred of unreality was uppermost with Carlyle; the love of what is real and genuine with Emerson. Those old moralists, the weeping and the laughing philosophers, find their counterparts in every thinking community. Carlyle did not weep, but he scolded; Emerson did not laugh, but in his gravest moments there was a smile waiting for the cloud to pass from his forehead. The Duet they chanted was a Miserere with a Te Deum for its Antiphon; a *De Profundis* answered by a *Sursum Corda*. "The ground of my existence is black as death," says Carlyle. "Come and live with me a year," says Emerson, "and if you do not like New England well enough to stay, one of these years; (when the 'History' has passed its ten editions, and been translated into as many languages) I will come and dwell with you."

Section 2. In September, 1835, Emerson was married to Miss Lydia Jackson, of Plymouth, Massachusetts. The wedding took place in the fine old mansion known as the Winslow House, Dr. Le Baron Russell and his sister standing up with the bridegroom and his bride. After their marriage, Mr. and Mrs. Emerson went to reside in the house in which he passed the rest of his life, and in which Mrs. Emerson and their daughter still reside. This is the "plain, square, wooden house," with horse-chestnut trees in the front yard, and evergreens around it, which has been so often described and figured. It is without pretensions, but not without an air of quiet dignity. A full and well-illustrated account of it and its arrangements and surroundings is given in "Poets' Homes," by Arthur Gilman and others, published by D. Lothrop & Company in 1879.

On the 12th of September, 1835, Emerson delivered an "Historical Discourse, at Concord, on the Second Centennial Anniversary of the Incorporation of the Town." There is no "mysticism," no "transcendentalism" in this plain, straightforward Address. The facts are collected and related with the patience and sobriety which became the writer as one of the Dryasdusts of our very diligent,

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very useful, very matter-of-fact, and for the most part judiciously unimaginative Massachusetts Historical Society. It looks unlike anything else Emerson ever wrote, in being provided with abundant foot-notes and an appendix. One would almost as soon have expected to see Emerson equipped with a musket and a knapsack as to find a discourse of his clogged with annotations, and trailing a supplement after it. Oracles are brief and final in their utterances. Delphi and Cumae are not expected to explain what they say.

It is the habit of our New England towns to celebrate their own worthies and their own deeds on occasions like this, with more or less of rhetorical gratitude and self-felicitation. The discourses delivered on these occasions are commonly worth reading, for there was never a clearing made in the forest that did not let in the light on heroes and heroines. Concord is on the whole the most interesting of all the inland towns of New England. Emerson has told its story in as painstaking, faithful a way as if he had been by nature an annalist. But with this fidelity, we find also those bold generalizations and sharp picturesque touches which reveal the poetic philosopher.

"I have read with care," he says, "the town records themselves. They exhibit a pleasing picture of a community almost exclusively agricultural, where no man has much time for words, in his search after things; of a community of great simplicity of manners, and of a manifest love of justice. I find our annals marked with a uniform good sense.—The tone of the record rises with the dignity of the event. These soiled and musty books are luminous and electric within. The old town clerks did not spell very correctly, but they contrive to make intelligible the will of a free and just community." ... "The matters there debated (in town meetings) are such as to invite very small consideration. The ill-spelled pages of the town records contain the result. I shall be excused for confessing that I have set a value upon any symptom of meanness and private pique which I have met with in these antique books, as proof that justice was done; that if the results of our history are approved as wise and good, it was yet a free strife; if the good counsel prevailed, the sneaking counsel did not fail to be suggested; freedom and virtue, if they triumphed, triumphed in a fair field. And so be it an everlasting testimony for them, and so much ground of assurance of man's capacity for self-government."

There was nothing in this Address which the plainest of Concord's citizens could not read understandingly and with pleasure. In fact Mr. Emerson himself, besides being a poet and a philosopher, was also a plain Concord citizen. His son tells me that he was a faithful attendant upon town meetings, and, though he never spoke, was an interested and careful listener to the debates on town matters. That respect for "mother-wit" and for all the

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wholesome human qualities which reveals itself all through his writings was bred from this kind of intercourse with men of sense who had no pretensions to learning, and in whom, for that very reason, the native qualities came out with less disguise in their expression. He was surrounded by men who ran to extremes in their idiosyncrasies; Alcott in speculations, which often led him into the fourth dimension of mental space; Hawthorne, who brooded himself into a dream—peopled solitude; Thoreau, the nullifier of civilization, who insisted on nibbling his asparagus at the wrong end, to say nothing of idolaters and echoes. He kept his balance among them all. It would be hard to find a more candid and sober record of the result of self-government in a small community than is contained in this simple discourse, patient in detail, large in treatment, more effective than any unsupported generalities about the natural rights of man, which amount to very little unless men earn the right of asserting them by attending fairly to their natural duties. So admirably is the working of a town government, as it goes on in a well-disposed community, displayed in the history of Concord's two hundred years of village life, that one of its wisest citizens had portions of the address printed for distribution, as an illustration of the American principle of self-government.

After settling in Concord, Emerson delivered courses of Lectures in Boston during several successive winters; in 1835, ten Lectures on English Literature; in 1836, twelve Lectures on the Philosophy of History; in 1837, ten Lectures on Human Culture. Some of these lectures may have appeared in print under their original titles; all of them probably contributed to the Essays and Discourses which we find in his published volumes.

On the 19th of April, 1836, a meeting was held to celebrate the completion of the monument raised in commemoration of the Concord Fight. For this occasion Emerson wrote the hymn made ever memorable by the lines:—

Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The last line of this hymn quickens the heartbeats of every American, and the whole hymn is admirable in thought and expression. Until the autumn of 1838, Emerson preached twice on Sundays to the church at East Lexington, which desired him to become its pastor. Mr. Cooke says that when a lady of the society was asked why they did not settle a friend of Emerson's whom he had urged them to invite to their pulpit, she replied: "We are a very simple people, and can understand no one but Mr. Emerson." He said of himself: "My pulpit is the Lyceum platform." Knowing that he made his Sermons contribute to his Lectures, we need not mourn over their not being reported.

In March, 1837, Emerson delivered in Boston a Lecture on War, afterwards published in Miss Peabody's "Aesthetic Papers." He recognizes war as one of the temporary necessities of a developing civilization, to disappear with the advance of mankind:—



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"At a certain stage of his progress the man fights, if he be of a sound body and mind. At a certain high stage he makes no offensive demonstration, but is alert to repel injury, and of an unconquerable heart. At a still higher stage he comes into the region of holiness; passion has passed away from him; his warlike nature is all converted into an active medicinal principle; he sacrifices himself, and accepts with alacrity wearisome tasks of denial and charity; but being attacked, he bears it, and turns the other cheek, as one engaged, throughout his being, no longer to the service of an individual, but to the common good of all men."

In 1834 Emerson's brother Edward died, as already mentioned, in the West India island where he had gone for his health. In his letter to Carlyle, of November 12th of the same year, Emerson says: "Your letter, which I received last week, made a bright light in a solitary and saddened place. I had quite recently received the news of the death of a brother in the island of Porto Rico, whose loss to me will be a lifelong sorrow." It was of him that Emerson wrote the lines "In Memoriam," in which he says,—

"There is no record left on earth
Save on tablets of the heart,
Of the rich, inherent worth,
Of the grace that on him shone
Of eloquent lips, of joyful wit;
He could not frame a word unfit,
An act unworthy to be done."

Another bereavement was too soon to be recorded. On the 7th of October, 1835, he says in a letter to Carlyle:—

"I was very glad to hear of the brother you describe, for I have one too, and know what it is to have presence in two places. Charles Chauncy Emerson is a lawyer now settled in this town, and, as I believe, no better Lord Hamlet was ever. He is our Doctor on all questions of taste, manners, or action. And one of the pure pleasures I promise myself in the months to come is to make you two gentlemen know each other."

Alas for human hopes and prospects! In less than a year from the date of that letter, on the 17th of September, 1836, he writes to Carlyle:—

"Your last letter, dated in April, found me a mourner, as did your first. I have lost out of this world my brother Charles, of whom I have spoken to you,—the friend and companion of many years, the inmate of my house, a man of a beautiful genius, born to speak well, and whose conversation for these last years has treated every grave question of humanity, and has been my daily bread. I have put so much dependence on his gifts, that we made but one man together; for I needed never to do what he could do by noble nature, much better than I. He was to have been married in this month, and at the time of his sickness and sudden death, I was adding apartments to my house for

his permanent accommodation. I wish that you could have known him. At twenty-seven years the best life is only preparation.

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He built his foundation so large that it needed the full age of man to make evident the plan and proportions of his character. He postponed always a particular to a final and absolute success, so that his life was a silent appeal to the great and generous. But some time I shall see you and speak of him."

Section 3. In the year 1836 there was published in Boston a little book of less than a hundred very small pages, entitled "Nature." It bore no name on its title-page, but was at once attributed to its real author, Ralph Waldo Emerson.

The Emersonian adept will pardon me for burdening this beautiful Essay with a commentary which is worse than superfluous for him. For it has proved for many,—I will not say a *pons asinorum*,—but a very narrow bridge, which it made their heads swim to attempt crossing, and yet they must cross it, or one domain of Emerson's intellect will not be reached.

It differed in some respects from anything he had hitherto written. It talked a strange sort of philosophy in the language of poetry. Beginning simply enough, it took more and more the character of a rhapsody, until, as if lifted off his feet by the deepened and stronger undercurrent of his thought, the writer dropped his personality and repeated the words which "a certain poet sang" to him.

This little book met with a very unemotional reception. Its style was peculiar,—almost as unlike that of his Essays as that of Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus" was unlike the style of his "Life of Schiller." It was vague, mystic, incomprehensible, to most of those who call themselves common-sense people. Some of its expressions lent themselves easily to travesty and ridicule. But the laugh could not be very loud or very long, since it took twelve years, as Mr. Higginson tells us, to sell five hundred copies. It was a good deal like Keats's

"doubtful tale from fairy-land
Hard for the non-elect to understand."

The same experience had been gone through by Wordsworth.

"Whatever is too original," says De Quincey, "will be hated at the first. It must slowly mould a public for itself; and the resistance of the early thoughtless judgments must be overcome by a counter-resistance to itself, in a better audience slowly mustering against the first. Forty and seven years it is since William Wordsworth first appeared as an author. Twenty of these years he was the scoff of the world, and his poetry a by-word of scorn. Since then, and more than once, senates have rung with acclamations to the echo of his name."

No writer is more deeply imbued with the spirit of Wordsworth than Emerson, as we cannot fail to see in turning the pages of "Nature," his first thoroughly characteristic Essay. There is the same thought in the Preface to "The Excursion" that we find in the Introduction to "Nature."

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"The foregoing generations beheld God and nature face to face; we through their eyes. Why should not we also enjoy an original relation to the universe? Why should not we have a poetry and philosophy of insight and not of tradition, and a religion by revelation to us, and not the history of theirs?"

"Paradise and groves
Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of old
Sought in the Atlantic Main, why should they be
A history only of departed things,
Or a mere fiction of what never was?"

"Nature" is a reflective prose poem. It is divided into eight chapters, which might almost as well have been called cantos.

Never before had Mr. Emerson given free utterance to the passion with which the aspects of nature inspired him. He had recently for the first time been at once master of himself and in free communion with all the planetary influences above, beneath, around him. The air of the country intoxicated him. There are sentences in "Nature" which are as exalted as the language of one who is just coming to himself after having been etherized. Some of these expressions sounded to a considerable part of his early readers like the vagaries of delirium. Yet underlying these excited outbursts there was a general tone of serenity which reassured the anxious. The gust passed over, the ripples smoothed themselves, and the stars shone again in quiet reflection.

After a passionate outbreak, in which he sees all, is nothing, loses himself in nature, in Universal Being, becomes "part or particle of God," he considers briefly, in the chapter entitled *Commodity*, the ministry of nature to the senses. A few picturesque glimpses in pleasing and poetical phrases, with a touch of archaism, and reminiscences of Hamlet and Jeremy Taylor, "the Shakspeare of divines," as he has called him, are what we find in this chapter on Commodity, or natural conveniences.

But "a nobler want of man is served by Nature, namely, the love of *Beauty*" which is his next subject. There are some touches of description here, vivid, high-colored, not so much pictures as hints and impressions for pictures.

Many of the thoughts which run through all his prose and poetry may be found here. Analogy is seen everywhere in the works of Nature. "What is common to them all,—that perfectness and harmony, is beauty."—"Nothing is quite beautiful alone: nothing but is beautiful in the whole."—"No reason can be asked or given why the soul seeks beauty." How easily these same ideas took on the robe of verse may be seen in the Poems, "Each and All," and "The Rhodora." A good deal of his philosophy comes out in these concluding sentences of the chapter:—

“Beauty in its largest and profoundest sense is one expression for the universe; God is the all-fair. Truth and goodness and beauty are but different faces of the same All. But beauty in Nature is not ultimate. It is the herald of inward and eternal beauty, and is not alone a solid and satisfactory good. It must therefore stand as a part and not as yet the highest expression of the final cause of Nature.”.

In the “Rhodora” the flower is made to answer that

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“Beauty is its own excuse for being.”

In this Essay the beauty of the flower is not enough, but it must excuse itself for being, mainly as the symbol of something higher and deeper than itself.

He passes next to a consideration of *Language*. Words are signs of natural facts, particular material facts are symbols of particular spiritual facts, and Nature is the symbol of spirit. Without going very profoundly into the subject, he gives some hints as to the mode in which languages are formed,—whence words are derived, how they become transformed and worn out. But they come at first fresh from Nature.

“A man conversing in earnest, if he watch his intellectual processes, will find that always a material image, more or less luminous, arises in his mind, contemporaneous with every thought, which furnishes the vestment of the thought. Hence good writing and brilliant discourse are perpetual allegories.”

From this he argues that country life is a great advantage to a powerful mind, inasmuch as it furnishes a greater number of these material images. They cannot be summoned at will, but they present themselves when great exigencies call for them.

“The poet, the orator, bred in the woods, whose senses have been nourished by their fair and appeasing changes, year after year, without design and without heed,—shall not lose their lesson altogether, in the roar of cities or the broil of politics. Long hereafter, amidst agitations and terror in national councils,—in the hour of revolution,—these solemn images shall reappear in their morning lustre, as fit symbols and words of the thought which the passing events shall awaken. At the call of a noble sentiment, again the woods wave, the pines murmur, the river rolls and shines, and the cattle low upon the mountains, as he saw and heard them in his infancy. And with these forms the spells of persuasion, the keys of power, are put into his hands.”

It is doing no wrong to this very eloquent and beautiful passage to say that it reminds us of certain lines in one of the best known poems of Wordsworth:—

“These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man’s eye;
But oft, in lonely rooms, and mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them
In hours of weariness sensations sweet
Felt in the blood and felt along the heart.”

It is needless to quote the whole passage. The poetry of Wordsworth may have suggested the prose of Emerson, but the prose loses nothing by the comparison.



In *Discipline*, which is his next subject, he treats of the influence of Nature in educating the intellect, the moral sense, and the will. Man is enlarged and the universe lessened and brought within his grasp, because

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“Time and space relations vanish as laws are known.”—“The moral law lies at the centre of Nature and radiates to the circumference.”—“All things with which we deal preach to us. What is a farm but a mute gospel?”—“From the child’s successive possession of his several senses up to the hour when he sayeth, ‘Thy will be done!’ he is learning the secret that he can reduce under his will, not only particular events, but great classes, nay, the whole series of events, and so conform all facts to his character.”

The unity in variety which meets us everywhere is again referred to. He alludes to the ministry of our friendships to our education. When a friend has done for our education in the way of filling our minds with sweet and solid wisdom “it is a sign to us that his office is closing, and he is commonly withdrawn from our sight in a short time.” This thought was probably suggested by the death of his brother Charles, which occurred a few months before “Nature” was published. He had already spoken in the first chapter of this little book as if from some recent experience of his own, doubtless the same bereavement. “To a man laboring under calamity, the heat of his own fire hath sadness in it. Then there is a kind of contempt of the landscape felt by him who has just lost by death a dear friend. The sky is less grand as it shuts down over less worth in the population.” This was the first effect of the loss; but after a time he recognizes a superintending power which orders events for us in wisdom which we could not see at first.

The chapter on *Idealism* must be read by all who believe themselves capable of abstract thought, if they would not fall under the judgment of Turgot, which Emerson quotes: “He that has never doubted the existence of matter may be assured he has no aptitude for metaphysical inquiries.” The most essential statement is this:—

“It is a sufficient account of that Appearance we call the World, that God will teach a human mind, and so makes it the receiver of a certain number of congruent sensations, which we call sun and moon, man and woman, house and trade. In my utter impotence to test the authenticity of the report of my senses, to know whether the impressions they make on me correspond with outlying objects, what difference does it make, whether Orion is up there in Heaven, or some god paints the image in the firmament of the Soul?”

We need not follow the thought through the argument from illusions, like that when we look at the shore from a moving ship, and others which cheat the senses by false appearances.

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The poet animates Nature with his own thoughts, perceives the affinities between Nature and the soul, with Beauty as his main end. The philosopher pursues Truth, but, “not less than the poet, postpones the apparent order and relation of things to the empire of thought.” Religion and ethics agree with all lower culture in degrading Nature and suggesting its dependence on Spirit. “The devotee flouts Nature.”—“Plotinus was ashamed of his body.”—“Michael Angelo said of external beauty, ‘it is the frail and weary weed, in which God dresses the soul, which He has called into time.’” Emerson would not undervalue Nature as looked at through the senses and “the unrenewed understanding.” “I have no hostility to Nature,” he says, “but a child’s love of it. I expand and live in the warm day like corn and melons.”—But, “seen in the light of thought, the world always is phenomenal; and virtue subordinates it to the mind. Idealism sees the world in God,”—as one vast picture, which God paints on the instant eternity, for the contemplation of the soul.

The unimaginative reader is likely to find himself off soundings in the next chapter, which has for its title *Spirit*.

Idealism only denies the existence of matter; it does not satisfy the demands of the spirit. “It leaves God out of me.”—Of these three questions, What is matter? Whence is it? Where to? The ideal theory answers the first only. The reply is that matter is a phenomenon, not a substance.

“But when we come to inquire Whence is matter? and Whereto? many truths arise to us out of the recesses of consciousness. We learn that the highest is present to the soul of man, that the dread universal essence, which is not wisdom, or love, or beauty, or power, but all in one, and each entirely, is that for which all things exist, and that by which they are; that spirit creates; that behind nature, throughout nature, spirit is present; that spirit is one and not compound; that spirit does not act upon us from without, that is, in space and time, but spiritually, or through ourselves.”—“As a plant upon the earth, so a man rests upon the bosom of God; he is nourished by unfailing fountains, and draws, at his need, inexhaustible power.”

Man may have access to the entire mind of the Creator, himself become a “creator in the finite.”

“As we degenerate, the contrast between us and our house is more evident. We are as much strangers in nature as we are aliens from God. We do not understand the notes of birds. The fox and the deer run away from us; the bear and the tiger rend us.”

All this has an Old Testament sound as of a lost Paradise. In the next chapter he dreams of Paradise regained.

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This next and last chapter is entitled *Prospects*. He begins with a bold claim for the province of intuition as against induction, undervaluing the “half sight of science” as against the “untaught sallies of the spirit,” the surmises and vaticinations of the mind,—the “imperfect theories, and sentences which contain glimpses of truth.” In a word, he would have us leave the laboratory and its crucibles for the sibyl’s cave and its tripod. We can all—or most of us, certainly—recognize something of truth, much of imagination, and more of danger in speculations of this sort. They belong to visionaries and to poets. Emerson feels distinctly enough that he is getting into the realm of poetry. He quotes five beautiful verses from George Herbert’s “Poem on Man.” Presently he is himself taken off his feet into the air of song, and finishes his Essay with “some traditions of man and nature which a certain poet sang to me.”—“A man is a god in ruins.”—“Man is the dwarf of himself. Once he was permeated and dissolved by spirit. He filled nature with his overflowing currents. Out from him sprang the sun and moon; from man the sun, from woman the moon.”—But he no longer fills the mere shell he had made for himself; “he is shrunk to a drop.” Still something of elemental power remains to him. “It is instinct.” Such teachings he got from his “poet.” It is a kind of New England Genesis in place of the Old Testament one. We read in the Sermon on the Mount: “Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect.” The discourse which comes to us from the Trimount oracle commands us, “Build, therefore, your own world. As fast as you conform your life to the pure idea in your mind, that will unfold its great proportions.” The seer of Patmos foretells a heavenly Jerusalem, of which he says, “There shall in no wise enter into it anything which defileth.” The sage of Concord foresees a new heaven on earth. “A correspondent revolution in things will attend the influx of the spirit. So fast will disagreeable appearances, swine, spiders, snakes, pests, mad-houses, prisons, enemies, vanish; they are temporary and shall be no more seen.”

* * * * *

It may be remembered that Calvin, in his Commentary on the New Testament, stopped when he came to the book of the “Revelation.” He found it full of difficulties which he did not care to encounter. Yet, considered only as a poem, the vision of St. John is full of noble imagery and wonderful beauty. “Nature” is the Book of Revelation of our Saint Radulphus. It has its obscurities, its extravagances, but as a poem it is noble and inspiring. It was objected to on the score of its pantheistic character, as Wordsworth’s “Lines composed near Tintern Abbey” had been long before. But here and there it found devout readers who were captivated by its spiritual elevation and great poetical beauty, among them one who wrote of it in the “Democratic Review” in terms of enthusiastic admiration.

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Mr. Bowen, the Professor of Natural Theology and Moral Philosophy in Harvard University, treated this singular semi-philosophical, semi-poetical little book in a long article in the "Christian Examiner," headed "Transcendentalism," and published in the January number for 1837. The acute and learned Professor meant to deal fairly with his subject. But if one has ever seen a sagacious pointer making the acquaintance of a box-tortoise, he will have an idea of the relations between the reviewer and the reviewed as they appear in this article. The professor turns the book over and over,—inspects it from plastron to carapace, so to speak, and looks for openings everywhere, sometimes successfully, sometimes in vain. He finds good writing and sound philosophy, passages of great force and beauty of expression, marred by obscurity, under assumptions and faults of style. He was not, any more than the rest of us, acclimated to the Emersonian atmosphere, and after some not unjust or unkind comments with which many readers will heartily agree, confesses his bewilderment, saying:—

"On reviewing what we have already said of this singular work, the criticism seems to be couched in contradictory terms; we can only allege in excuse the fact that the book is a contradiction in itself."

Carlyle says in his letter of February 13, 1837:—

"Your little azure-colored 'Nature' gave me true satisfaction. I read it, and then lent it about to all my acquaintances that had a sense for such things; from whom a similar verdict always came back. You say it is the first chapter of something greater. I call it rather the Foundation and Ground-plan on which you may build whatsoever of great and true has been given you to build. It is the true Apocalypse, this when the 'Open Secret' becomes revealed to a man. I rejoice much in the glad serenity of soul with which you look out on this wondrous Dwelling-place of yours and mine,—with an ear for the *Ewigen Melodien*, which pipe in the winds round us, and utter themselves forth in all sounds and sights and things; *not* to be written down by gamut-machinery; but which all right writing is a kind of attempt to write down."

The first edition of "Nature" had prefixed to it the following words from Plotinus: "Nature is but an image or imitation of wisdom, the last thing of the soul; Nature being a thing which doth only do, but not know." This is omitted in after editions, and in its place we read:—

"A subtle chain of countless rings
The next unto the farthest brings;
The eye reads omens where it goes,
And speaks all languages the rose;
And striving to be man, the worm
Mounts through all the spires of form."

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The copy of "Nature" from which I take these lines, his own, of course, like so many others which he prefixed to his different Essays, was printed in the year 1849, ten years before the publication of Darwin's "Origin of Species," twenty years and more before the publication of "The Descent of Man." But the "Vestiges of Creation," published in 1844, had already popularized the resuscitated theories of Lamarck. It seems as if Emerson had a warning from the poetic instinct which, when it does not precede the movement of the scientific intellect, is the first to catch the hint of its discoveries. There is nothing more audacious in the poet's conception of the worm looking up towards humanity, than the naturalist's theory that the progenitor of the human race was an acephalous mollusk. "I will not be sworn," says Benedick, "but love may transform me to an oyster." For "love" read science.

Unity in variety, "*il piu nell uno*" symbolism of Nature and its teachings, generation of phenomena,—appearances,—from spirit, to which they correspond and which they obey; evolution of the best and elimination of the worst as the law of being; all this and much more may be found in the poetic utterances of this slender Essay. It fell like an aerolite, unasked for, unaccounted for, unexpected, almost unwelcome,—a stumbling-block to be got out of the well-trodden highway of New England scholastic intelligence. But here and there it found a reader to whom it was, to borrow, with slight changes, its own quotation,—

"The golden key
Which opes the palace of eternity,"

inasmuch as it carried upon its face the highest certificate of truth, because it animated them to create a new world for themselves through the purification of their own souls.

Next to "Nature" in the series of his collected publications comes "The American Scholar. An Oration delivered before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Cambridge, August 31, 1837."

The Society known by these three letters, long a mystery to the uninitiated, but which, filled out and interpreted, signify that philosophy is the guide of life, is one of long standing, the annual meetings of which have called forth the best efforts of many distinguished scholars and thinkers. Rarely has any one of the annual addresses been listened to with such profound attention and interest. Mr. Lowell says of it, that its delivery "was an event without any former parallel in our literary annals, a scene to be always treasured in the memory for its picturesqueness and its inspiration. What crowded and breathless aisles, what windows clustering with eager heads, what enthusiasm of approval, what grim silence of foregone dissent!"

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Mr. Cooke says truly of this oration, that nearly all his leading ideas found expression in it. This was to be expected in an address delivered before such an audience. Every real thinker's world of thought has its centre in a few formulae, about which they revolve as the planets circle round the sun which cast them off. But those who lost themselves now and then in the pages of "Nature" will find their way clearly enough through those of "The American Scholar." It is a plea for generous culture; for the development of all the faculties, many of which tend to become atrophied by the exclusive pursuit of single objects of thought. It begins with a note like a trumpet call.

"Thus far," he says, "our holiday has been simply a friendly sign of the survival of the love of letters amongst a people too busy to give to letters any more. As such it is precious as the sign of an indestructible instinct. Perhaps the time is already come when it ought to be, and will be, something else; when the sluggard intellect of this continent will look from under its iron lids and fill the postponed expectations of the world with something better than the exertions of mechanical skill. Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close. The millions that around us are rushing into life cannot always be fed on the sere remains of foreign harvests. Events, actions arise, that must be sung, that will sing themselves. Who can doubt that poetry will revive and lead in a new age, as the star in the constellation Harp, which now flames in our zenith, astronomers announce shall one day be the pole-star for a thousand years?"

Emerson finds his text in the old fable which tells that Man, as he was in the beginning, was divided into men, as the hand was divided into fingers, the better to answer the end of his being. The fable covers the doctrine that there is One Man; present to individuals only in a partial manner; and that we must take the whole of society to find the whole man. Unfortunately the unit has been too minutely subdivided, and many faculties are practically lost for want of use. "The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk, and strut about so many walking monsters,—a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man.... Man is thus metamorphosed into a thing, into many things.... The priest becomes a form; the attorney a statute book; the mechanic a machine; the sailor a rope of the ship."

This complaint is by no means a new one. Scaliger says, as quoted by omnivorous old Burton: "*Nequaquam, nos homines sumus sed partes hominis.*" The old illustration of this used to be found in pin-making. It took twenty different workmen to make a pin, beginning with drawing the wire and ending with sticking in the paper. Each expert, skilled in one small performance only, was reduced to a minute fraction of a fraction of humanity. If the complaint was legitimate in Scaliger's time, it was better founded half a century ago when Mr. Emerson found cause for it. It has still more serious significance to-day, when in every profession, in every branch of human knowledge, special acquirements, special skill have greatly tended to limit the range of men's thoughts and working faculties.

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"In this distribution of functions the scholar is the delegated intellect. In the right state he is *Man thinking*. In the degenerate state, when the victim of society, he tends to become a mere thinker, or still worse, the parrot of other men's thinking. In this view of him, as Man thinking, the theory of his office is continued. Him Nature solicits with all her placid, all her monitory pictures; him the past instructs; him the future invites."

Emerson proceeds to describe and illustrate the influences of nature upon the mind, returning to the strain of thought with which his previous Essay has made us familiar. He next considers the influence of the past, and especially of books as the best type of that influence. "Books are the best of things well used; abused among the worst." It is hard to distil what is already a quintessence without loss of what is just as good as the product of our labor. A sentence or two may serve to give an impression of the epigrammatic wisdom of his counsel.

"Each age must write its own books, or, rather, each generation for the next succeeding. The books of an older period will not fit this."

When a book has gained a certain hold on the mind, it is liable to become an object of idolatrous regard.

"Instantly the book becomes noxious: the guide is a tyrant. The sluggish and perverted mind of the multitude, slow to open to the incursions of reason, having once so opened, having received this book, stands upon it and makes an outcry if it is disparaged. Colleges are built on it. Books are written on it by thinkers, not by Man thinking; by men of talent, that is, who start wrong, who set out from accepted dogmas, not from their own sight of principle. Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing it their duty to accept the views which Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon have given; forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and Bacon were only young men in libraries when they wrote these books.—One must be an inventor to read well. As the proverb says, 'He that would bring home the wealth of the Indies must carry out the wealth of the Indies.'—When the mind is braced by labor and invention, the page of whatever book we read becomes luminous with manifold allusion. Every sentence is doubly significant, and the sense of our author is as broad as the world."

It is not enough that the scholar should be a student of nature and of books. He must take a part in the affairs of the world about him.

"Action is with the scholar subordinate, but it is essential. Without it he is not yet man. Without it thought can never ripen into truth.—The true scholar grudges every opportunity of action past by, as a loss of power. It is the raw material out of which the intellect moulds her splendid products. A strange process, too, this by which experience is converted into thought as a mulberry leaf is converted into satin.

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The manufacture goes forward at all hours.”

Emerson does not use the words “unconscious cerebration,” but these last words describe the process in an unmistakable way. The beautiful paragraph in which he pictures the transformation, the transfiguration of experience, closes with a sentence so thoroughly characteristic, so Emersonially Emersonian, that I fear some readers who thought they were his disciples when they came to it went back and walked no more with him, at least through the pages of this discourse. The reader shall have the preceding sentence to prepare him for the one referred to.

“There is no fact, no event in our private history, which shall not, sooner or later, lose its adhesive, inert form, and astonish us by soaring from our body into the empyrean.

“Cradle and infancy, school and playground, the fear of boys, and dogs, and ferules, the love of little maids and berries, and many another fact that once filled the whole sky, are gone already; friend and relative, professions and party, town and country, nation and world must also soar and sing.”

Having spoken of the education of the scholar by nature, by books, by action, he speaks of the scholar’s duties. “They may all,” he says, “be comprised in self-trust.” We have to remember that the *self* he means is the highest self, that consciousness which he looks upon as open to the influx of the divine essence from which it came, and towards which all its upward tendencies lead, always aspiring, never resting; as he sings in “The Sphinx “:—

“The heavens that now draw him
With sweetness untold,
Once found,—for new heavens
He spurneth the old.”

“First one, then another, we drain all cisterns, and waxing greater by all these supplies, we crave a better and more abundant food. The man has never lived that can feed us ever. The human mind cannot be enshrined in a person who shall set a barrier on any one side of this unbounded, unboundable empire. It is one central fire, which, flaming now out of the lips of Etna, lightens the Capes of Sicily, and now out of the throat of Vesuvius, illuminates the towers and vineyards of Naples. It is one light which beams out of a thousand stars. It is one soul which animates all men.”

And so he comes to the special application of the principles he has laid down to the American scholar of to-day. He does not spare his censure; he is full of noble trust and manly courage. Very refreshing it is to remember in this day of specialists, when the

walking fraction of humanity he speaks of would hardly include a whole finger, but rather confine itself to the single joint of the finger, such words as these:—

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"The scholar is that man who must take up into himself all the ability of the time, all the contributions of the past, all the hopes of the future. He must be a university of knowledges.... We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe. The spirit of the American freeman is already suspected to be timid, imitative, tame.—The scholar is decent, indolent, complaisant.—The mind of this country, taught to aim at low objects, eats upon itself. There is no work for any but the decorous and the complaisant."

The young men of promise are discouraged and disgusted.

"What is the remedy? They did not yet see, and thousands of young men as hopeful now crowding to the barriers for the career do not yet see, that if the single man plant himself indomitably on his instincts, and there abide, the huge world will come round to him."

Each man must be a unit,—must yield that peculiar fruit which he was created to bear.

"We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds.—A nation of men will for the first time exist, because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men."

This grand Oration was our intellectual Declaration of Independence. Nothing like it had been heard in the halls of Harvard since Samuel Adams supported the affirmative of the question, "Whether it be lawful to resist the chief magistrate, if the commonwealth cannot otherwise be preserved." It was easy to find fault with an expression here and there. The dignity, not to say the formality of an Academic assembly was startled by the realism that looked for the infinite in "the meal in the firkin; the milk in the pan." They could understand the deep thoughts suggested by "the meanest flower that blows," but these domestic illustrations had a kind of nursery homeliness about them which the grave professors and sedate clergymen were unused to expect on so stately an occasion. But the young men went out from it as if a prophet had been proclaiming to them "Thus saith the Lord." No listener ever forgot that Address, and among all the noble utterances of the speaker it may be questioned if one ever contained more truth in language more like that of immediate inspiration.

CHAPTER V.

1838-1843. AET. 35-40.

Section 1. Divinity School Address.—Correspondence.—Lectures on Human Life.—Letters to James Freeman Clarke.—Dartmouth College Address: Literary Ethics.—Waterville College Address: The Method of Nature.—Other Addresses: Man the Reformer.—Lecture on the Times.—The



Conservative.—The Transcendentalist.—Boston “Transcendentalism.”—“The Dial.”—Brook Farm.

Section 2. First Series of Essays published.—Contents: History, Self-Reliance, Compensation, Spiritual Laws, Love, Friendship, Prudence, Heroism, The Oversoul, Circles, Intellect, Art.—Emerson’s Account of his Mode of Life in a Letter to Carlyle.—Death of Emerson’s Son.—Threnody.

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Section 1. On Sunday evening, July 15, 1838, Emerson delivered an Address before the Senior Class in Divinity College, Cambridge, which caused a profound sensation in religious circles, and led to a controversy, in which Emerson had little more than the part of Patroclus when the Greeks and Trojans fought over his body. In its simplest and broadest statement this discourse was a plea for the individual consciousness as against all historical creeds, bibles, churches; for the soul as the supreme judge in spiritual matters.

He begins with a beautiful picture which must be transferred without the change of an expression:—

“In this refulgent Summer, it has been a luxury to draw the breath of life. The grass grows, the buds burst, the meadow is spotted with fire and gold in the tint of flowers. The air is full of birds, and sweet with the breath of the pine, the balm of Gilead, and the new hay. Night brings no gloom to the heart with its welcome shade. Through the transparent darkness the stars pour their almost spiritual rays. Man under them seems a young child, and his huge globe a toy. The cool night bathes the world as with a river, and prepares his eyes again for the crimson dawn.”

How softly the phrases of the gentle iconoclast steal upon the ear, and how they must have hushed the questioning audience into pleased attention! The “Song of Songs, which is Solomon’s,” could not have wooed the listener more sweetly. “Thy lips drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue, and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.” And this was the prelude of a discourse which, when it came to be printed, fared at the hands of many a theologian, who did not think himself a bigot, as the roll which Baruch wrote with ink from the words of Jeremiah fared at the hands of Jehoiakim, the King of Judah. He listened while Jehudi read the opening passages. But “when Jehudi had read three or four leaves he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth.” Such was probably the fate of many a copy of this famous discourse.

It is reverential, but it is also revolutionary. The file-leaders of Unitarianism drew back in dismay, and the ill names which had often been applied to them were now heard from their own lips as befitting this new heresy; if so mild a reproach as that of heresy belonged to this alarming manifesto. And yet, so changed is the whole aspect of the theological world since the time when that discourse was delivered that it is read as calmly to-day as a common “Election Sermon,” if such are ever read at all. A few extracts, abstracts, and comments may give the reader who has not the Address before him some idea of its contents and its tendencies.

The material universe, which he has just pictured in its summer beauty, deserves our admiration. But when the mind opens and reveals the laws which govern the world of phenomena, it shrinks into a mere fable and illustration of this mind. What am I? What

is?—are questions always asked, never fully answered. We would study and admire forever.

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But above intellectual curiosity, there is the sentiment of virtue. Man is born for the good, for the perfect, low as he now lies in evil and weakness. "The sentiment of virtue is a reverence and delight in the presence of certain divine laws.—These laws refuse to be adequately stated.—They elude our persevering thought; yet we read them hourly in each other's faces, in each other's actions, in our own remorse.—The intuition of the moral sentiment is an insight of the perfection of the laws of the soul. These laws execute themselves.—As we are, so we associate. The good, by affinity, seek the good; the vile, by affinity, the vile. Thus, of their own volition, souls proceed into heaven, into hell."

These facts, Emerson says, have always suggested to man that the world is the product not of manifold power, but of one will, of one mind,—that one mind is everywhere active. —"All things proceed out of the same spirit, and all things conspire with it." While a man seeks good ends, nature helps him; when he seeks other ends, his being shrinks, "he becomes less and less, a mote, a point, until absolute badness is absolute death."—"When he says 'I ought;' when love warms him; when he chooses, warned from on high, the good and great deed; then deep melodies wander through his soul from Supreme Wisdom."

"This sentiment lies at the foundation of society and successively creates all forms of worship.—This thought dwelled always deepest in the minds of men in the devout and contemplative East; not alone in Palestine, where it reached its purest expression, but in Egypt, in Persia, in India, in China. Europe has always owed to Oriental genius its divine impulses. What these holy bards said, all sane men found agreeable and true. And the unique impression of Jesus upon mankind, whose name is not so much written as ploughed into the history of this world, is proof of the subtle virtue of this infusion."

But this truth cannot be received at second hand; it is an intuition. What another announces, I must find true in myself, or I must reject it. If the word of another is taken instead of this primary faith, the church, the state, art, letters, life, all suffer degradation, —"the doctrine of inspiration is lost; the base doctrine of the majority of voices usurps the place of the doctrine of the soul."

The following extract will show the view that he takes of Christianity and its Founder, and sufficiently explain the antagonism called forth by the discourse:—

"Jesus Christ belonged to the true race of prophets. He saw with open eye the mystery of the soul. Drawn by its severe harmony, ravished with its beauty, he lived in it, and had his being there. Alone in all history he estimated the greatness of man. One man was true to what is in you and me. He saw that God incarnates himself in man, and evermore goes forth anew to take possession of his World. He said, in

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this jubilee of sublime emotion, 'I am Divine. Through me God acts; through me, speaks. Would you see God, see me; or see thee, when thou also thinkest as I now think.' But what a distortion did his doctrine and memory suffer in the same, in the next, and the following ages! There is no doctrine of the Reason which will bear to be taught by the Understanding. The understanding caught this high chant from the poet's lips, and said, in the next age, 'This was Jehovah come down out of heaven. I will kill you if you say he was a man.' The idioms of his language and the figures of his rhetoric have usurped the place of his truth; and churches are not built on his principles, but on his tropes. Christianity became a Mythus, as the poetic teaching of Greece and of Egypt, before. He spoke of Miracles; for he felt that man's life was a miracle, and all that man doth, and he knew that this miracle shines as the character ascends. But the word Miracle, as pronounced by Christian churches, gives a false impression; it is Monster. It is not one with the blowing clover and the falling rain."

He proceeds to point out what he considers the great defects of historical Christianity. It has exaggerated the personal, the positive, the ritual. It has wronged mankind by monopolizing all virtues for the Christian name. It is only by his holy thoughts that Jesus serves us. "To aim to convert a man by miracles is a profanation of the soul." The preachers do a wrong to Jesus by removing him from our human sympathies; they should not degrade his life and dialogues by insulation and peculiarity.

Another defect of the traditional and limited way of using the mind of Christ is that the Moral Nature—the Law of Laws—is not explored as the fountain of the established teaching in society. "Men have come to speak of the revelation as somewhat long ago given and done, as if God were dead."—"The soul is not preached. The church seems to totter to its fall, almost all life extinct.—The stationariness of religion; the assumption that the age of inspiration is past; that the Bible is closed; the fear of degrading the character of Jesus by representing him as a man; indicate with sufficient clearness the falsehood of our theology. It is the office of a true teacher to show us that God is, not was; that he speaketh, not spake. The true Christianity—a faith like Christ's in the infinitude of Man—is lost."

When Emerson came to what his earlier ancestors would have called the "practical application," some of his young hearers must have been startled at the style of his address.

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“Yourself a new—born bard of the Holy Ghost, cast behind you all conformity, and acquaint men at first hand with Deity. Look to it first and only, that fashion, custom, authority, pleasure, and money are nothing to you,—are not bandages over your eyes, that you cannot see,—but live with the privilege of the immeasurable mind.”

Emerson recognizes two inestimable advantages as the gift of Christianity; first the Sabbath,—hardly a Christian institution,—and secondly the institution of preaching. He spoke not only eloquently, but with every evidence of deep sincerity and conviction. He had sacrificed an enviable position to that inner voice of duty which he now proclaimed as the sovereign law over all written or spoken words. But he was assailing the cherished beliefs of those before him, and of Christendom generally; not with hard or bitter words, not with sarcasm or levity, rather as one who felt himself charged with a message from the same divinity who had inspired the prophets and evangelists of old with whatever truth was in their messages. He might be wrong, but his words carried the evidence of his own serene, unshaken confidence that the spirit of all truth was with him. Some of his audience, at least, must have felt the contrast between his utterances and the formal discourses they had so long listened to, and said to themselves, “he speaks ‘as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.’”

Such teaching, however, could not be suffered to go unchallenged. Its doctrines were repudiated in the “Christian Examiner,” the leading organ of the Unitarian denomination. The Rev. Henry Ware, greatly esteemed and honored, whose colleague he had been, addressed a letter to him, in which he expressed the feeling that some of the statements of Emerson’s discourse would tend to overthrow the authority and influence of Christianity. To this note Emerson returned the following answer:—

“What you say about the discourse at Divinity College is just what I might expect from your truth and charity, combined with your known opinions. I am not a stick or a stone, as one said in the old time, and could not but feel pain in saying some things in that place and presence which I supposed would meet with dissent, I may say, of dear friends and benefactors of mine. Yet, as my conviction is perfect in the substantial truth of the doctrines of this discourse, and is not very new, you will see at once that it must appear very important that it be spoken; and I thought I could not pay the nobleness of my friends so mean a compliment as to suppress my opposition to their supposed views, out of fear of offence. I would rather say to them, these things look thus to me, to you otherwise. Let us say our uttermost word, and let the all-pervading truth, as it surely will, judge between us. Either of us would, I doubt not, be willingly apprised of his error. Meantime, I shall be admonished by this expression of your thought, to revise with

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greater care the 'address,' before it is printed (for the use of the class): and I heartily thank you for this expression of your tried toleration and love."

Dr. Ware followed up his note with a sermon, preached on the 23d of September, in which he dwells especially on the necessity of adding the idea of personality to the abstractions of Emerson's philosophy, and sent it to him with a letter, the kindness and true Christian spirit of which were only what were inseparable from all the thoughts and feelings of that most excellent and truly apostolic man.

To this letter Emerson sent the following reply:—

CONCORD, October 8, 1838.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I ought sooner to have acknowledged your kind letter of last week, and the sermon it accompanied. The letter was right manly and noble. The sermon, too, I have read with attention. If it assails any doctrine of mine,—perhaps I am not so quick to see it as writers generally,—certainly I did not feel any disposition to depart from my habitual contentment, that you should say your thought, whilst I say mine. I believe I must tell you what I think of my new position. It strikes me very oddly that good and wise men at Cambridge and Boston should think of raising me into an object of criticism. I have always been—from my very incapacity of methodical writing—a 'chartered libertine,' free to worship and free to rail,—lucky when I could make myself understood, but never esteemed near enough to the institutions and mind of society to deserve the notice of the masters of literature and religion. I have appreciated fully the advantages of my position, for I well know there is no scholar less willing or less able than myself to be a polemic. I could not give an account of myself, if challenged. I could not possibly give you one of the 'arguments' you cruelly hint at, on which any doctrine of mine stands; for I do not know what arguments are in reference to any expression of a thought. I delight in telling what I think; but if you ask me how I dare say so, or why it is so, I am the most helpless of mortal men. I do not even see that either of these questions admits of an answer. So that in the present droll posture of my affairs, when I see myself suddenly raised to the importance of a heretic, I am very uneasy when I advert to the supposed duties of such a personage, who is to make good his thesis against all comers. I certainly shall do no such thing. I shall read what you and other good men write, as I have always done, glad when you speak my thoughts, and skipping the page that has nothing for me. I shall go on just as before, seeing whatever I can, and telling what I see; and, I suppose, with the same fortune that has hitherto attended me,—the joy of finding that my abler and better brothers, who work with the sympathy of society, loving and beloved, do now and then unexpectedly confirm my conceptions, and find my nonsense is only their

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own thought in motley,—and so I am your affectionate servant,” *etc.*

The controversy which followed is a thing of the past; Emerson took no part in it, and we need not return to the discussion. He knew his office and has defined it in the clearest manner in the letter just given,—“Seeing whatever I can, and telling what I see.” But among his listeners and readers was a man of very different mental constitution, not more independent or fearless, but louder and more combative, whose voice soon became heard and whose strength soon began to be felt in the long battle between the traditional and immanent inspiration,—Theodore Parker. If Emerson was the moving spirit, he was the right arm in the conflict, which in one form or another has been waged up to the present day.

In the winter of 1838-39 Emerson delivered his usual winter course of Lectures. He names them in a letter to Carlyle as follows: “Ten Lectures: I. The Doctrine of the Soul; II. Home; III. The School; IV. Love; V. Genius; VI. The Protest; VII. Tragedy; VIII. Comedy; IX. Duty; X. Demonology. I designed to add two more, but my lungs played me false with unseasonable inflammation, so I discoursed no more on Human Life.” Two or three of these titles only are prefixed to his published Lectures or Essays; Love, in the first volume of Essays; Demonology in “Lectures and Biographical Sketches;” and “The Comic” in “Letters and Social Aims.”

* * * * *

I owe the privilege of making use of the two following letters to my kind and honored friend, James Freeman Clarke.

The first letter was accompanied by the Poem “The Humble-bee,” which was first published by Mr. Clarke in the “Western Messenger,” from the autograph copy, which begins “Fine humble-bee! fine humble-bee!” and has a number of other variations from the poem as printed in his collected works.

CONCORD, December 7, 1838.

MY DEAR SIR,—Here are the verses. They have pleased some of my friends, and so may please some of your readers, and you asked me in the spring if I hadn’t somewhat to contribute to your journal. I remember in your letter you mentioned the remark of some friend of yours that the verses, “Take, O take those lips away,” were not Shakspeare’s; I think they are. Beaumont, nor Fletcher, nor both together were ever, I think, visited by such a starry gleam as that stanza. I know it is in “Rollo,” but it is in “Measure for Measure” also; and I remember noticing that the Malones, and Stevens, and critical gentry were about evenly divided, these for Shakspeare, and those for Beaumont and Fletcher. But the internal evidence is all for one, none for the other. If he did not write it, they did not, and we shall have some fourth unknown singer. What

care we *who* sung this or that. It is we at last who sing. Your friend and servant, R.W.
EMERSON.

TO JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

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CONCORD, February 27, 1839.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am very sorry to have made you wait so long for an answer to your flattering request for two such little poems. You are quite welcome to the lines “To the Rhodora;” but I think they need the superscription [“Lines on being asked ‘Whence is the Flower?’”]. Of the other verses [“Good-by proud world,” etc] I send you a corrected copy, but I wonder so much at your wishing to print them that I think you must read them once again with your critical spectacles before they go further. They were written sixteen years ago, when I kept school in Boston, and lived in a corner of Roxbury called Canterbury. They have a slight misanthropy, a shade deeper than belongs to me; and as it seems nowadays I am a philosopher and am grown to have opinions, I think they must have an apologetic date, though I well know that poetry that needs a date is no poetry, and so you will wiselier suppress them. I heartily wish I had any verses which with a clear mind I could send you in lieu of these juvenilities. It is strange, seeing the delight we take in verses, that we can so seldom write them, and so are not ashamed to lay up old ones, say sixteen years, instead of improvising them as freely as the wind blows, whenever we and our brothers are attuned to music. I have heard of a citizen who made an annual joke. I believe I have in April or May an annual poetic *conatus* rather than *afflatus*, experimenting to the length of thirty lines or so, if I may judge from the dates of the rhythmical scraps I detect among my MSS. I look upon this incontinence as merely the redundancy of a susceptibility to poetry which makes all the bards my daily treasures, and I can well run the risk of being ridiculous once a year for the benefit of happy reading all the other days. In regard to the Providence Discourse, I have no copy of it; and as far as I remember its contents, I have since used whatever is striking in it; but I will get the MS., if Margaret Fuller has it, and you shall have it if it will pass muster. I shall certainly avail myself of the good order you gave me for twelve copies of the “Carlyle Miscellanies,” so soon as they appear. He, T.C., writes in excellent spirits of his American friends and readers.... A new book, he writes, is growing in him, though not to begin until his spring lectures are over (which begin in May). Your sister Sarah was kind enough to carry me the other day to see some pencil sketches done by Stuart Newton when in the Insane Hospital. They seemed to me to betray the richest invention, so rich as almost to say, why draw any line since you can draw all? Genius has given you the freedom of the universe, why then come within any walls? And this seems to be the old moral which we draw from our fable, read it how or where you will, that we cannot make one good stroke until we can make every possible stroke; and when we can one, every one seems superfluous. I heartily thank you

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for the good wishes you send me to open the year, and I say them back again to you. Your field is a world, and all men are your spectators, and all men respect the true and great-hearted service you render. And yet it is not spectator nor spectacle that concerns either you or me. The whole world is sick of that very ail, of being seen, and of seemliness. It belongs to the brave now to trust themselves infinitely, and to sit and hearken alone. I am glad to see William Channing is one of your coadjutors. Mrs. Jameson's new book, I should think, would bring a caravan of travellers, aesthetic, artistic, and what not, up your mighty stream, or along the lakes to Mackinaw. As I read I almost vowed an exploration, but I doubt if I ever get beyond the Hudson.

Your affectionate servant, R.W. EMERSON.

On the 24th of July, 1838, a little more than a week after the delivery of the Address before the Divinity School, Mr. Emerson delivered an Oration before the Literary Societies of Dartmouth College. If any rumor of the former discourse had reached Dartmouth, the audience must have been prepared for a much more startling performance than that to which they listened. The bold avowal which fluttered the doves of Cambridge would have sounded like the crash of doom to the cautious old tenants of the Hanover aviary. If there were any drops of false or questionable doctrine in the silver shower of eloquence under which they had been sitting, the plumage of orthodoxy glistened with unctuous repellents, and a shake or two on coming out of church left the sturdy old dogmatists as dry as ever.

Those who remember the Dartmouth College of that day cannot help smiling at the thought of the contrast in the way of thinking between the speaker and the larger part, or at least the older part, of his audience. President Lord was well known as the scriptural defender of the institution of slavery. Not long before a controversy had arisen, provoked by the setting up of the Episcopal form of worship by one of the Professors, the most estimable and scholarly Dr. Daniel Oliver. Perhaps, however, the extreme difference between the fundamental conceptions of Mr. Emerson and the endemic orthodoxy of that place and time was too great for any hostile feeling to be awakened by the sweet-voiced and peaceful-mannered speaker. There is a kind of harmony between boldly contrasted beliefs like that between complementary colors. It is when two shades of the same color are brought side by side that comparison makes them odious to each other. Mr. Emerson could go anywhere and find willing listeners among those farthest in their belief from the views he held. Such was his simplicity of speech and manner, such his transparent sincerity, that it was next to impossible to quarrel with the gentle image-breaker.

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The subject of Mr. Emerson's Address is *Literary Ethics*. It is on the same lofty plane of sentiment and in the same exalted tone of eloquence as the Phi Beta Kappa Address. The word impassioned would seem misplaced, if applied to any of Mr. Emerson's orations. But these discourses were both written and delivered in the freshness of his complete manhood. They were produced at a time when his mind had learned its powers and the work to which it was called, in the struggle which freed him from the constraint of stereotyped confessions of faith and all peremptory external authority. It is not strange, therefore, to find some of his paragraphs glowing with heat and sparkling with imaginative illustration.

"Neither years nor books," he says, "have yet availed to extirpate a prejudice rooted in me, that a scholar is the favorite of Heaven and earth, the excellency of his country, the happiest of men." And yet, he confesses that the scholars of this country have not fulfilled the reasonable expectation of mankind. "Men here, as elsewhere, are indisposed to innovation and prefer any antiquity, any usage, any livery productive of ease or profit, to the unproductive service of thought." For all this he offers those correctives which in various forms underlie all his teachings. "The resources of the scholar are proportioned to his confidence in the attributes of the Intellect." New lessons of spiritual independence, fresh examples and illustrations, are drawn from history and biography. There is a passage here so true to nature that it permits a half page of quotation and a line or two of comment:—

"An intimation of these broad rights is familiar in the sense of injury which men feel in the assumption of any man to limit their possible progress. We resent all criticism which denies us anything that lies in our line of advance. Say to the man of letters, that he cannot paint a Transfiguration, or build a steamboat, or be a grand-marshal, and he will not seem to himself depreciated. But deny to him any quality of literary or metaphysical power, and he is piqued. Concede to him genius, which is a sort of stoical *plenum* annulling the comparative, and he is content; but concede him talents never so rare, denying him genius, and he is aggrieved."

But it ought to be added that if the pleasure of denying the genius of their betters were denied to the mediocrities, their happiness would be forever blighted.

From the resources of the American Scholar Mr. Emerson passes to his tasks. Nature, as it seems to him, has never yet been truly studied. "Poetry has scarcely chanted its first song. The perpetual admonition of Nature to us is, 'The world is new, untried. Do not believe the past. I give you the universe a virgin to-day.'" And in the same way he would have the scholar look at history, at philosophy. The world belongs to the student, but he must put himself into harmony with the constitution of things. "He must embrace solitude as a bride." Not superstitiously, but after having found out, as a little experience will teach him, all that society can do for him with its foolish routine. I have spoken of the exalted strain into which Mr. Emerson sometimes rises in the midst of his general serenity. Here is an instance of it:—

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"You will hear every day the maxims of a low prudence. You will hear that the first duty is to get land and money, place and name. 'What is this truth you seek? What is this beauty?' men will ask, with derision. If, nevertheless, God have called any of you to explore truth and beauty, be bold, be firm, be true. When you shall say, 'As others do, so will I: I renounce, I am sorry for it, my early visions: I must eat the good of the land, and let learning and romantic expectations go, until a more convenient season;'—then dies the man in you; then once more perish the buds of art, and poetry, and science, as they have died already in a thousand thousand men.—Bend to the persuasion which is flowing to you from every object in nature, to be its tongue to the heart of man, and to show the besotted world how passing fair is wisdom. Why should you renounce your right to traverse the starlit deserts of truth, for the premature comforts of an acre, house, and barn? Truth also has its roof and house and board. Make yourself necessary to the world, and mankind will give you bread; and if not store of it, yet such as shall not take away your property in all men's possessions, in all men's affections, in art, in nature, and in hope."

The next Address Emerson delivered was "The Method of Nature," before the Society of the Adelphi, in Waterville College, Maine, August 11, 1841.

In writing to Carlyle on the 31st of July, he says: "As usual at this season of the year, I, incorrigible spouting Yankee, am writing an oration to deliver to the boys in one of our little country colleges nine days hence.... My whole philosophy—which is very real—teaches acquiescence and optimism. Only when I see how much work is to be done, what room for a poet—for any spiritualist—in this great, intelligent, sensual, and avaricious America, I lament my fumbling fingers and stammering tongue." It may be remembered that Mr. Matthew Arnold quoted the expression about America, which sounded more harshly as pronounced in a public lecture than as read in a private letter.

The Oration shows the same vein of thought as the letter. Its title is "The Method of Nature." He begins with congratulations on the enjoyments and promises of this literary Anniversary.

"The scholars are the priests of that thought which establishes the foundations of the castle."—"We hear too much of the results of machinery, commerce, and the useful arts. We are a puny and a fickle folk. Avarice, hesitation, and following are our diseases. The rapid wealth which hundreds in the community acquire in trade, or by the incessant expansion of our population and arts, enchants the eyes of all the rest; this luck of one is the hope of thousands, and the bribe acts like the neighborhood of a gold mine to impoverish the farm, the school, the church, the house, and the very body and feature of man."—"While the multitude of men degrade each other, and give currency to desponding doctrines, the scholar must be a bringer of hope, and must reinforce man against himself."

I think we may detect more of the manner of Carlyle in this Address than in any of those which preceded it.

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“Why then goest thou as some Boswell or literary worshipper to this saint or to that? That is the only lese-majesty. Here art thou with whom so long the universe travailed in labor; darest thou think meanly of thyself whom the stalwart Fate brought forth to unite his ragged sides, to shoot the gulf, to reconcile the irreconcilable?”

That there is an “intimate divinity” which is the source of all true wisdom, that the duty of man is to listen to its voice and to follow it, that “the sanity of man needs the poise of this immanent force,” that the rule is “Do what you know, and perception is converted into character,”—all this is strongly enforced and richly illustrated in this Oration. Just how easily it was followed by the audience, just how far they were satisfied with its large principles wrought into a few broad precepts, it would be easier at this time to ask than to learn. We notice not so much the novelty of the ideas to be found in this discourse on “The Method of Nature,” as the pictorial beauty of their expression. The deep reverence which underlies all Emerson’s speculations is well shown in this paragraph:

“We ought to celebrate this hour by expressions of manly joy. Not thanks nor prayer seem quite the highest or truest name for our communication with the infinite,—but glad and conspiring reception,—reception that becomes giving in its turn as the receiver is only the All-Giver in part and in infancy.”—“It is God in us which checks the language of petition by grander thought. In the bottom of the heart it is said: ‘I am, and by me, O child! this fair body and world of thine stands and grows. I am, all things are mine; and all mine are thine.’”

We must not quarrel with his peculiar expressions. He says, in this same paragraph, “I cannot,—nor can any man,—speak precisely of things so sublime; but it seems to me the wit of man, his strength, his grace, his tendency, his art, is the grace and the presence of God. It is beyond explanation.”

“We can point nowhere to anything final but tendency; but tendency appears on all hands; planet, system, constellation, total nature is growing like a field of maize in July; is becoming something else; is in rapid metamorphosis. The embryo does not more strive to be man, than yonder burr of light we call a nebula tends to be a ring, a comet, a globe, and parent of new stars.” “In short, the spirit and peculiarity of that impression nature makes on us is this, that it does not exist to any one, or to any number of particular ends, but to numberless and endless benefit; that there is in it no private will, no rebel leaf or limb, but the whole is oppressed by one superincumbent tendency, obeys that redundancy or excess of life which in conscious beings we call ecstasy.”

Here is another of those almost lyrical passages which seem too long for the music of rhythm and the resonance of rhyme.

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"The great Pan of old, who was clothed in a leopard skin to signify the beautiful variety of things, and the firmament, his coat of stars, was but the representative of thee, O rich and various Man! thou palace of sight and sound, carrying in thy senses the morning and the night and the unfathomable galaxy; in thy brain the geometry of the City of God; in thy heart the bower of love and the realms of right and wrong."

His feeling about the soul, which has shown itself in many of the extracts already given, is summed up in the following sentence:—

"We cannot describe the natural history of the soul, but we know that it is divine. I cannot tell if these wonderful qualities which house to-day in this mental home shall ever reassemble in equal activity in a similar frame, or whether they have before had a natural history like that of this body you see before you; but this one thing I know, that these qualities did not now begin to exist, cannot be sick with my sickness, nor buried in any grave; but that they circulate through the Universe: before the world was, they were."

It is hard to see the distinction between the omnipresent Deity recognized in our formal confessions of faith and the "pantheism" which is the object of dread to many of the faithful. But there are many expressions in this Address which must have sounded strangely and vaguely to his Christian audience. "Are there not moments in the history of heaven when the human race was not counted by individuals, but was only the Influenced; was God in distribution, God rushing into manifold benefit?" It might be feared that the practical philanthropists would feel that they lost by his counsels.

"The reform whose fame now fills the land with Temperance, Anti-Slavery, Non-Resistance, No Government, Equal Labor, fair and generous as each appears, are poor bitter things when prosecuted for themselves as an end."—"I say to you plainly there is no end to which your practical faculty can aim so sacred or so large, that if pursued for itself, will not at last become carrion and an offence to the nostril. The imaginative faculty of the soul must be fed with objects immense and eternal. Your end should be one inapprehensible to the senses; then it will be a god, always approached,—never touched; always giving health."

Nothing is plainer than that it was Emerson's calling to supply impulses and not methods. He was not an organizer, but a power behind many organizers, inspiring them with lofty motive, giving breadth, to their views, always tending to become narrow through concentration on their special objects. The Oration we have been examining was delivered in the interval between the delivery of two Addresses, one called "Man the Reformer," and another called "Lecture on the Times." In the first he preaches the dignity and virtue of manual labor; that "a man should have a farm, or a mechanical craft for

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his culture.”—That he cannot give up labor without suffering some loss of power. “How can the man who has learned but one art procure all the conveniences of life honestly? Shall we say all we think?—Perhaps with his own hands.—Let us learn the meaning of economy.—Parched corn eaten to-day that I may have roast fowl to my dinner on Sunday is a baseness; but parched corn and a house with one apartment, that I may be free of all perturbation, that I may be serene and docile to what the mind shall speak, and quit and road-ready for the lowest mission of knowledge or good will, is frugality for gods and heroes.”

This was what Emerson wrote in January, 1841. This “house with one apartment” was what Thoreau built with his own hands in 1845. In April of the former year, he went to live with Mr. Emerson, but had been on intimate terms with him previously to that time. Whether it was from him that Thoreau got the hint of the Walden cabin and the parched corn, or whether this idea was working in Thoreau’s mind and was suggested to Emerson by him, is of no great consequence. Emerson, to whom he owed so much, may well have adopted some of those fancies which Thoreau entertained, and afterwards worked out in practice. He was at the philanthropic centre of a good many movements which he watched others carrying out, as a calm and kindly spectator, without losing his common sense for a moment. It would never have occurred to him to leave all the conveniences and comforts of life to go and dwell in a shanty, so as to prove to himself that he could live like a savage, or like his friends “Teague and his jade,” as he called the man and brother and sister, more commonly known nowadays as Pat, or Patrick, and his old woman.

“The Americans have many virtues,” he says in this Address, “but they have not Faith and Hope.” Faith and Hope, Enthusiasm and Love, are the burden of this Address. But he would regulate these qualities by “a great prospective prudence,” which shall mediate between the spiritual and the actual world.

In the “Lecture on the Times” he shows very clearly the effect which a nearer contact with the class of men and women who called themselves Reformers had upon him.

“The Reforms have their higher origin in an ideal justice, but they do not retain the purity of an idea. They are quickly organized in some low, inadequate form, and present no more poetic image to the mind than the evil tradition which they reprobated. They mix the fire of the moral sentiment with personal and party heats, with measureless exaggerations, and the blindness that prefers some darling measure to justice and truth. Those who are urging with most ardor what are called the greatest benefit of mankind are narrow, self-pleasing, conceited men, and affect us as the insane do. They bite us, and we run mad also. I think the work of the reformer as innocent as other work that is done around him; but when I have seen it near!—I do not

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like it better. It is done in the same way; it is done profanely, not piously; by management, by tactics and clamor.”

All this, and much more like it, would hardly have been listened to by the ardent advocates of the various reforms, if anybody but Mr. Emerson had said it. He undervalued no sincere action except to suggest a wiser and better one. He attacked no motive which had a good aim, except in view of some larger and loftier principle. The charm of his imagination and the music of his words took away all the sting from the thoughts that penetrated to the very marrow of the entranced listeners. Sometimes it was a splendid hyperbole that illuminated a statement which by the dim light of common speech would have offended or repelled those who sat before him. He knew the force of *felix audacia* as well as any rhetorician could have taught him. He addresses the reformer with one of those daring images which defy the critics.

“As the farmer casts into the ground the finest ears of his grain, the time will come when we too shall hold nothing back, but shall eagerly convert more than we possess into means and powers, when we shall be willing to sow the sun and the moon for seeds.”

He said hard things to the reformer, especially to the Abolitionist, in his “Lecture on the Times.” It would have taken a long while to get rid of slavery if some of Emerson’s teachings in this lecture had been accepted as the true gospel of liberty. But how much its last sentence covers with its soothing tribute!

“All the newspapers, all the tongues of today will of course defame what is noble; but you who hold not of to-day, not of the times, but of the Everlasting, are to stand for it; and the highest compliment man ever receives from Heaven is the sending to him its disguised and discredited angels.”

The Lecture called “The Transcendentalist” will naturally be looked at with peculiar interest, inasmuch as this term has been very commonly applied to Emerson, and to many who were considered his disciples. It has a proper philosophical meaning, and it has also a local and accidental application to the individuals of a group which came together very much as any literary club might collect about a teacher. All this comes out clearly enough in the Lecture. In the first place, Emerson explains that the “*new views*,” as they are called, are the oldest of thoughts cast in a new mould.

“What is popularly called Transcendentalism among us is Idealism: Idealism as it appears in 1842. As thinkers, mankind have ever divided into two sects, Materialists and Idealists; the first class founding on experience, the second on consciousness; the first class beginning to think from the data of the senses, the second class perceive that the senses are not final, and say, the senses give us representations of things, but what are the things themselves, they cannot tell. The

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materialist insists on facts, on history, on the force of circumstances and the animal wants of man; the idealist on the power of Thought and of Will, on inspiration, on miracle, on individual culture.”“The materialist takes his departure from the external world, and esteems a man as one product of that. The idealist takes his departure from his consciousness, and reckons the world an appearance.—His thought, that is the Universe.”

The association of scholars and thinkers to which the name of “Transcendentalists” was applied, and which made itself an organ in the periodical known as “The Dial,” has been written about by many who were in the movement, and others who looked on or got their knowledge of it at second hand. Emerson was closely associated with these “same Transcendentalists,” and a leading contributor to “The Dial,” which was their organ. The movement borrowed its inspiration more from him than from any other source, and the periodical owed more to him than to any other writer. So far as his own relation to the circle of illuminati and the dial which they shone upon was concerned, he himself is the best witness.

In his “Historic Notes of Life and Letters in New England,” he sketches in a rapid way the series of intellectual movements which led to the development of the “new views” above mentioned. “There are always two parties,” he says, “the party of the Past and the party of the Future; the Establishment and the Movement.”

About 1820, and in the twenty years which followed, an era of activity manifested itself in the churches, in politics, in philanthropy, in literature. In our own community the influence of Swedenborg and of the genius and character of Dr. Channing were among the more immediate early causes of the mental agitation. Emerson attributes a great importance to the scholarship, the rhetoric, the eloquence, of Edward Everett, who returned to Boston in 1820, after five years of study in Europe. Edward Everett is already to a great extent a tradition, somewhat as Rufus Choate is, a voice, a fading echo, as must be the memory of every great orator. These wondrous personalities have their truest and warmest life in a few old men’s memories. It is therefore with delight that one who remembers Everett in his robes of rhetorical splendor, who recalls his full-blown, high-colored, double-flowered periods, the rich, resonant, grave, far-reaching music of his speech, with just enough of nasal vibration to give the vocal sounding-board its proper value in the harmonies of utterance,—it is with delight that such a one reads the glowing words of Emerson whenever he refers to Edward Everett. It is enough if he himself caught inspiration from those eloquent lips; but many a listener has had his youthful enthusiasm fired by that great master of academic oratory.

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Emerson follows out the train of influences which added themselves to the impulse given by Mr. Everett. German scholarship, the growth of science, the generalizations of Goethe, the idealism of Schelling, the influence of Wordsworth, of Coleridge, of Carlyle, and in our immediate community, the writings of Channing,—he left it to others to say of Emerson,—all had their part in this intellectual, or if we may call it so, spiritual revival. He describes with that exquisite sense of the ridiculous which was a part of his mental ballast, the first attempt at organizing an association of cultivated, thoughtful people. They came together, the cultivated, thoughtful people, at Dr. John Collins Warren's,—Dr. Channing, the great Dr. Channing, among the rest, full of the great thoughts he wished to impart. The preliminaries went on smoothly enough with the usual small talk,—

“When a side-door opened, the whole company streamed in to an oyster supper, crowned by excellent wines [this must have been before Dr. Warren's temperance epoch], and so ended the first attempt to establish aesthetic society in Boston.” Some time afterwards Dr. Channing opened his mind to Mr. and Mrs. Ripley, and with some care they invited a limited party of ladies and gentlemen. I had the honor to be present. —Margaret Fuller, George Ripley, Dr. Convers Francis, Theodore Parker, Dr. Hedge, Mr. Brownson, James Freeman Clarke, William H. Channing, and many others gradually drew together, and from time to time spent an afternoon at each other's houses in a serious conversation.”

With them was another, “a pure Idealist,—who read Plato as an equal, and inspired his companions only in proportion as they were intellectual.” He refers, of course to Mr. Alcott. Emerson goes on to say:—

“I think there prevailed at that time a general belief in Boston that there was some concert of *doctrinaires* to establish certain opinions, and inaugurate some movement in literature, philosophy, and religion, of which design the supposed conspirators were quite innocent; for there was no concert, and only here and there two or three men and women who read and wrote, each alone, with unusual vivacity. Perhaps they only agreed in having fallen upon Coleridge and Wordsworth and Goethe, then on Carlyle, with pleasure and sympathy. Otherwise their education and reading were not marked, but had the American superficialness, and their studies were solitary. I suppose all of them were surprised at this rumor of a school or sect, and certainly at the name of Transcendentalism, given, nobody knows by whom, or when it was applied.”

Emerson's picture of some of these friends of his is so peculiar as to suggest certain obvious and not too flattering comments.

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"In like manner, if there is anything grand and daring in human thought or virtue; any reliance on the vast, the unknown; any presentiment, any extravagance of faith, the Spiritualist adopts it as most in nature. The Oriental mind has always tended to this largeness. Buddhism is an expression of it. The Buddhist, who thanks no man, who says, 'Do not flatter your benefactors,' but who in his conviction that every good deed can by no possibility escape its reward, will not deceive the benefactor by pretending that he has done more than he should, is a Transcendentalist. "These exacting children advertise us of our wants. There is no compliment, no smooth speech with them; they pay you only this one compliment, of insatiable expectation; they aspire, they severely exact, and if they only stand fast in this watch-tower, and persist in demanding unto the end, and without end, then are they terrible friends, whereof poet and priest cannot choose but stand in awe; and what if they eat clouds, and drink wind, they have not been without service to the race of man."

The person who adopts "any presentiment, any extravagance as most in nature," is not commonly called a Transcendentalist, but is known colloquially as a "crank." The person who does not thank, by word or look, the friend or stranger who has pulled him out of the fire or water, is fortunate if he gets off with no harder name than that of a churl.

Nothing was farther from Emerson himself than whimsical eccentricity or churlish austerity. But there was occasionally an air of bravado in some of his followers as if they had taken out a patent for some knowing machine which was to give them a monopoly of its products. They claimed more for each other than was reasonable,—so much occasionally that their pretensions became ridiculous. One was tempted to ask: "What forlorn hope have you led? What immortal book have you written? What great discovery have you made? What heroic task of any kind have you performed?" There was too much talk about earnestness and too little real work done. Aspiration too frequently got as far as the alpenstock and the brandy flask, but crossed no dangerous crevasse, and scaled no arduous summit. In short, there was a kind of "Transcendentalist" dilettanteism, which betrayed itself by a phraseology as distinctive as that of the Della Crusicans of an earlier time.

In reading the following description of the "intelligent and religious persons" who belonged to the "Transcendentalist" communion, the reader must remember that it is Emerson who draws the portrait,—a friend and not a scoffer:—

"They are not good citizens, not good members of society: unwillingly they bear their part of the public and private burdens; they do not willingly share in the public charities, in the public religious rites, in the enterprise of education, of missions, foreign and domestic, in the abolition of the slave-trade, or in the temperance society. They do not even like to vote."

After arraigning the representatives of Transcendental or spiritual beliefs in this way, he summons them to plead for themselves, and this is what they have to say:—

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“New, we confess, and by no means happy, is our condition: if you want the aid of our labor, we ourselves stand in greater want of the labor. We are miserable with inaction. We perish of rest and rust: but we do not like your work.’

‘Then,’ says the world, ‘show me your own.’

‘We have none.’

‘What will you do, then?’ cries the world.

‘We will wait.’

‘How long?’

‘Until the Universe beckons and calls us to work.’

‘But whilst you wait you grow old and useless.’

‘Be it so: I can sit in a corner and *perish* (as you call it), but I will not move until I have the highest command.’”

And so the dissatisfied tenant of this unhappy creation goes on with his reasons for doing nothing.

It is easy to stay away from church and from town-meetings. It is easy to keep out of the way of the contribution box and to let the subscription paper go by us to the next door. The common duties of life and the good offices society asks of us may be left to take care of themselves while we contemplate the infinite. There is no safer fortress for indolence than “the Everlasting No.” The chimney-corner is the true arena for this class of philosophers, and the pipe and mug furnish their all-sufficient panoply. Emerson undoubtedly met with some of them among his disciples. His wise counsel did not always find listeners in a fitting condition to receive it. He was a sower who went forth to sow. Some of the good seed fell among the thorns of criticism. Some fell on the rocks of hardened conservatism. Some fell by the wayside and was picked up by the idlers who went to the lecture-room to get rid of themselves. But when it fell upon the right soil it bore a growth of thought which ripened into a harvest of large and noble lives.

Emerson shows up the weakness of his young enthusiasts with that delicate wit which warns its objects rather than wounds them. But he makes it all up with the dreamers before he can let them go.

“Society also has its duties in reference to this class, and must behold them with what charity it can. Possibly some benefit may yet accrue from them to the state. Besides our coarse implements, there must be some few finer instruments,—rain-gauges,



thermometers, and telescopes; and in society, besides farmers, sailors, and weavers, there must be a few persons of purer fire kept specially as gauges and meters of character; persons of a fine, detecting instinct, who note the smallest accumulations of wit and feeling in the by-stander. Perhaps too there might be room for the excitors and monitors; collectors of the heavenly spark, with power to convey the electricity to others. Or, as the storm-tossed vessel at sea speaks the frigate or "line-packet" to learn its longitude, so it may not be without its advantage that we should now and then encounter

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rare and gifted men, to compare the points of our spiritual compass, and verify our bearings from superior chronometers.”

It must be confessed that it is not a very captivating picture which Emerson draws of some of his transcendental friends. Their faults were naturally still more obvious to those outside of their charmed circle, and some prejudice, very possibly, mingled with their critical judgments. On the other hand we have the evidence of a visitor who knew a good deal of the world as to the impression they produced upon him:—

“There has sprung up in Boston,” says Dickens, in his “American Notes,” “a sect of philosophers known as Transcendentalists. On inquiring what this appellation might be supposed to signify, I was given to understand that whatever was unintelligible would be certainly Transcendental. Not deriving much comfort from this elucidation, I pursued the inquiry still further, and found that the Transcendentalists are followers of my friend Mr. Carlyle, or, I should rather say, of a follower of his, Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson. This gentleman has written a volume of Essays, in which, among much that is dreamy and fanciful (if he will pardon me for saying so), there is much more that is true and manly, honest and bold. Transcendentalism has its occasional vagaries (what school has not?), but it has good healthful qualities in spite of them; not least among the number a hearty disgust of Cant, and an aptitude to detect her in all the million varieties of her everlasting wardrobe. And therefore, if I were a Bostonian, I think I would be a Transcendentalist.”

In December, 1841, Emerson delivered a Lecture entitled “The Conservative.” It was a time of great excitement among the members of that circle of which he was the spiritual leader. Never did Emerson show the perfect sanity which characterized his practical judgment more beautifully than in this Lecture and in his whole course with reference to the intellectual agitation of the period. He is as fair to the conservative as to the reformer. He sees the fanaticism of the one as well as that of the other. “Conservatism tends to universal seeming and treachery; believes in a negative fate; believes that men’s tempers govern them; that for me it avails not to trust in principles, they will fail me, I must bend a little; it distrusts Nature; it thinks there is a general law without a particular application,—law for all that does not include any one. Reform in its antagonism inclines to asinine resistance, to kick with hoofs; it runs to egotism and bloated self-conceit; it runs to a bodiless pretension, to unnatural refining and elevation, which ends in hypocrisy and sensual reaction. And so, whilst we do not go beyond general statements, it may be safely affirmed of these two metaphysical antagonists that each is a good half, but an impossible whole.”

He has his beliefs, and, if you will, his prejudices, but he loves fair play, and though he sides with the party of the future, he will not be unjust to the present or the past.

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We read in a letter from Emerson to Carlyle, dated March 12, 1835, that Dr. Charming “lay awake all night, he told my friend last week, because he had learned in the evening that some young men proposed to issue a journal, to be called ‘The Transcendentalist,’ as the organ of a spiritual philosophy.” Again on the 30th of April of the same year, in a letter in which he lays out a plan for a visit of Carlyle to this country, Emerson says:—

“It was suggested that if Mr. C. would undertake a journal of which we have talked much, but which we have never yet produced, he would do us great service, and we feel some confidence that it could be made to secure him a support. It is that project which I mentioned to you in a letter by Mr. Barnard,—a book to be called ‘The Transcendentalist,’ or, ‘The Spiritual Inquirer,’ or the like.... Those who are most interested in it designed to make gratuitous contribution to its pages, until its success could be assured.”

The idea of the grim Scotchman as editor of what we came in due time to know as “The Dial!” A concert of singing mice with a savage and hungry old grimalkin as leader of the orchestra! It was much safer to be content with Carlyle’s purring from his own side of the water, as thus:—

“‘The Boston Transcendentalist,’ whatever the fate or merit of it may prove to be, is surely an interesting symptom. There must be things not dreamt of over in that *Transoceanic* parish! I shall certainly wish well to this thing; and hail it as the sure forerunner of things better.”

There were two notable products of the intellectual ferment of the Transcendental period which deserve an incidental notice here, from the close connection which Emerson had with one of them and the interest which he took in the other, in which many of his friends were more deeply concerned. These were the periodical just spoken of as a possibility realized, and the industrial community known as Brook Farm. They were to a certain extent synchronous,—the Magazine beginning in July, 1840, and expiring in April, 1844; Brook Farm being organized in 1841, and breaking up in 1847.

“The Dial” was edited at first by Margaret Fuller, afterwards by Emerson, who contributed more than forty articles in prose and verse, among them “The Conservative,” “The Transcendentalist,” “Chardon Street and Bible Convention,” and some of his best and best known poems, “The Problem,” “Woodnotes,” “The Sphinx,” “Fate.” The other principal writers were Margaret Fuller, A. Bronson Alcott, George Ripley, James Freeman Clarke, Theodore Parker, William H. Channing, Henry Thoreau, Eliot Cabot, John S. Dwight, C.P. Cranch, William Ellery Channing, Mrs. Ellen Hooper, and her sister Mrs. Caroline Tappan. Unequal as the contributions are in merit, the periodical is of singular interest. It was conceived and carried on in a spirit of boundless hope and enthusiasm. Time and a narrowing subscription list proved too hard

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a trial, and its four volumes remain stranded, like some rare and curiously patterned shell which a storm of yesterday has left beyond the reach of the receding waves. Thoreau wrote for nearly every number. Margaret Fuller, less attractive in print than in conversation, did her part as a contributor as well as editor. Theodore Parker came down with his "trip-hammer" in its pages. Mrs. Ellen Hooper published a few poems in its columns which remain, always beautiful, in many memories. Others, whose literary lives have fulfilled their earlier promise, and who are still with us, helped forward the new enterprise with their frequent contributions. It is a pleasure to turn back to "The Dial," with all its crudities. It should be looked through by the side of the "Anthology." Both were April buds, opening before the frosts were over, but with the pledge of a better season.

We get various hints touching the new Magazine in the correspondence between Emerson and Carlyle. Emerson tells Carlyle, a few months before the first number appeared, that it will give him a better knowledge of our *young people* than any he has had. It is true that unfledged writers found a place to try their wings in it, and that makes it more interesting. This was the time above all others when out of the mouth of babes and sucklings was to come forth strength. The feeling that intuition was discovering a new heaven and a new earth was the inspiration of these "young people" to whom Emerson refers. He has to apologize for the first number. "It is not yet much," he says; "indeed, though no copy has come to me, I know it is far short of what it should be, for they have suffered puffs and dulness to creep in for the sake of the complement of pages, but it is better than anything we had.—The Address of the Editors to the Readers is all the prose that is mine, and whether they have printed a few verses for me I do not know." They did print "The Problem." There were also some fragments of criticism from the writings of his brother Charles, and the poem called "The Last Farewell," by his brother Edward, which is to be found in Emerson's "May-day and other Pieces."

On the 30th of August, after the periodical had been published a couple of months, Emerson writes:—

"Our community begin to stand in some terror of Transcendentalism; and the *Dial*, poor little thing, whose first number contains scarce anything considerable or even visible, is just now honored by attacks from almost every newspaper and magazine; which at least betrays the irritability and the instincts of the good public."

Carlyle finds the second number of "The Dial" better than the first, and tosses his charitable recognition, as if into an alms-basket, with his usual air of superiority. He distinguishes what is Emerson's readily,—the rest he speaks of as the work of [Greek: oi polloi] for the most part. "But it is all good and very good as a *soul*; wants only a body, which want means a great deal." And again, "'The Dial,' too, it is all spirit like,

airi-form, aurora-borealis like. Will no *Angel* body himself out of that; no stalwart Yankee *man*, with color in the cheeks of him and a coat on his back?"

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Emerson, writing to Carlyle in March, 1842, speaks of the “dubious approbation on the part of you and other men,” notwithstanding which he found it with “a certain class of men and women, though few, an object of tenderness and religion.” So, when Margaret Fuller gave it up, at the end of the second volume, Emerson consented to become its editor. “I cannot bid you quit ‘The Dial,’” says Carlyle, “though it, too, alas, is Antinomian somewhat! *Perge, perge*, nevertheless.”

In the next letter he says:—

“I love your ‘Dial,’ and yet it is with a kind of shudder. You seem to me in danger of dividing yourselves from the Fact of this present Universe, in which alone, ugly as it is, can I find any anchorage, and soaring away after Ideas, Beliefs, Revelations and such like,—into perilous altitudes, as I think; beyond the curve of perpetual frost, for one thing. I know not how to utter what impression you give me; take the above as some stamping of the fore-hoof.”

A curious way of characterizing himself as a critic,—but he was not always as well-mannered as the Houyhnhnms.

To all Carlyle’s complaints of “The Dial’s” short-comings Emerson did not pretend to give any satisfactory answer, but his plea of guilty, with extenuating circumstances, is very honest and definite.

“For the *Dial* and its sins, I have no defence to set up. We write as we can, and we know very little about it. If the direction of these speculations is to be deplored, it is yet a fact for literary history that all the bright boys and girls in New England, quite ignorant of each other, take the world so, and come and make confession to fathers and mothers,—the boys, that they do not wish to go into trade, the girls, that they do not like morning calls and evening parties. They are all religious, but hate the churches; they reject all the ways of living of other men, but have none to offer in their stead. Perhaps one of these days a great Yankee shall come, who will easily do the unknown deed.”

“All the bright boys and girls in New England,” and “‘The Dial’ dying of inanition!” In October, 1840, Emerson writes to Carlyle:—

“We are all a little wild here with numberless projects of social reform. Not a reading man but has a draft of a new community in his waistcoat pocket. I am gently mad myself, and am resolved to live cleanly. George Ripley is talking up a colony of agriculturists and scholars, with whom he threatens to take the field and the book. One man renounces the use of animal food; and another of coin; and another of domestic hired service; and another of the state; and on the whole we have a commendable share of reason and hope.”

Mr. Ripley's project took shape in the West Roxbury Association, better known under the name of Brook Farm. Emerson was not involved in this undertaking. He looked upon it with curiosity

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and interest, as he would have looked at a chemical experiment, but he seems to have had only a moderate degree of faith in its practical working. "It was a noble and generous movement in the projectors to try an experiment of better living. One would say that impulse was the rule in the society, without centripetal balance; perhaps it would not be severe to say, intellectual sans-culottism, an impatience of the formal routinary character of our educational, religious, social, and economical life in Massachusetts." The reader will find a full detailed account of the Brook Farm experiment in Mr. Frothingham's "Life of George Ripley," its founder, and the first President of the Association. Emerson had only tangential relations with the experiment, and tells its story in his "Historic Notes" very kindly and respectfully, but with that sense of the ridiculous in the aspect of some of its conditions which belongs to the sagacious common-sense side of his nature. The married women, he says, were against the community. "It was to them like the brassy and lacquered life in hotels. The common school was well enough, but to the common nursery they had grave objections. Eggs might be hatched in ovens, but the hen on her own account much preferred the old way. A hen without her chickens was but half a hen." Is not the inaudible, inward laughter of Emerson more refreshing than the explosions of our noisiest humorists?

This is his benevolent summing up:—

"The founders of Brook Farm should have this praise, that they made what all people try to make, an agreeable place to live in. All comers, even the most fastidious, found it the pleasantest of residences. It is certain, that freedom from household routine, variety of character and talent, variety of work, variety of means of thought and instruction, art, music, poetry, reading, masquerade, did not permit sluggishness or despondency; broke up routine. There is agreement in the testimony that it was, to most of the associates, education; to many, the most important period of their life, the birth of valued friendships, their first acquaintance with the riches of conversation, their training in behavior. The art of letter-writing, it is said, was immensely cultivated. Letters were always flying, not only from house to house, but from room to room. It was a perpetual picnic, a French Revolution in small, an Age of Reason in a patty-pan."

The public edifice called the "Phalanstery" was destroyed by fire in 1846. The Association never recovered from this blow, and soon afterwards it was dissolved.

Section 2. Emerson's first volume of his collected Essays was published in 1841. In the reprint it contains the following Essays: History; Self-Reliance; Compensation; Spiritual Laws; Love; Friendship; Prudence; Heroism; The Over-Soul; Circles; Intellect; Art. "The Young American," which is now included in the volume, was not delivered until 1844.

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Once accustomed to Emerson's larger formulae we can to a certain extent project from our own minds his treatment of special subjects. But we cannot anticipate the daring imagination, the subtle wit, the curious illustrations, the felicitous language, which make the Lecture or the Essay captivating as read, and almost entrancing as listened to by the teachable disciple. The reader must be prepared for occasional extravagances. Take the Essay on History, in the first series of Essays, for instance. "Let it suffice that in the light of these two facts, namely, that the mind is One, and that nature is its correlative, history is to be read and written." When we come to the application, in the same Essay, almost on the same page, what can we make of such discourse as this? The sentences I quote do not follow immediately, one upon the other, but their sense is continuous.

"I hold an actual knowledge very cheap. Hear the rats in the wall, see the lizard on the fence, the fungus under foot, the lichen on the log. What do I know sympathetically, morally, of either of these worlds of life?—How many times we must say Rome and Paris, and Constantinople! What does Rome know of rat and lizard? What are Olympiads and Consulates to these neighboring systems of being? Nay, what food or experience or succor have they for the Esquimau seal-hunter, for the Kamchatcan in his canoe, for the fisherman, the stevedore, the porter?"

The connection of ideas is not obvious. One can hardly help being reminded of a certain great man's Rochester speech as commonly reported by the story-teller. "Rome in her proudest days never had a waterfall a hundred and fifty feet high! Greece in her palmiest days never had a waterfall a hundred and fifty feet high! Men of Rochester, go on! No people ever lost their liberty who had a waterfall a hundred and fifty feet high!"

We cannot help smiling, perhaps laughing, at the odd mixture of Rome and rats, of Olympiads and Esquimaux. But the underlying idea of the interdependence of all that exists in nature is far from ridiculous. Emerson says, not absurdly or extravagantly, that "every history should be written in a wisdom which divined the range of our affinities and looked at facts as symbols."

We have become familiar with his doctrine of "Self-Reliance," which is the subject of the second lecture of the series. We know that he always and everywhere recognized that the divine voice which speaks authoritatively in the soul of man is the source of all our wisdom. It is a man's true self, so that it follows that absolute, supreme self-reliance is the law of his being. But see how he guards his proclamation of self-reliance as the guide of mankind.

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"Truly it demands something god-like in him who has cast off the common motives of humanity and has ventured to trust himself for a task-master. High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his sight, that he may in good earnest be doctrine, society, law, to himself, that a simple purpose may be to him as strong as iron necessity is to others!"

"Compensation" might be preached in a synagogue, and the Rabbi would be praised for his performance. Emerson had been listening to a sermon from a preacher esteemed for his orthodoxy, in which it was assumed that judgment is not executed in this world, that the wicked are successful, and the good are miserable. This last proposition agrees with John Bunyan's view:—

"A Christian man is never long at ease,
When one fright's gone, another doth him seize."

Emerson shows up the "success" of the bad man and the failures and trials of the good man in their true spiritual characters, with a noble scorn of the preacher's low standard of happiness and misery, which would have made him throw his sermon into the fire.

The Essay on "Spiritual Laws" is full of pithy sayings:—

"As much virtue as there is, so much appears; as much goodness as there is, so much reverence it commands. All the devils respect virtue.—A man passes for that he is worth.—The ancestor of every action is a thought.—To think is to act.—Let a man believe in God, and not in names and places and persons. Let the great soul incarnated in some woman's form, poor and sad and single, in some Dolly or Joan, go out to service and sweep chambers and scour floors, and its effulgent day-beams cannot be hid, but to sweep and scour will instantly appear supreme and beautiful actions, the top and radiance of human life, and all people will get mops and brooms; until, lo! suddenly the great soul has enshrined itself in some other form and done some other deed, and that is now the flower and head of all living nature."

This is not any the worse for being the flowering out of a poetical bud of George Herbert's. The Essay on "Love" is poetical, but the three poems, "Initial," "Daemonic," and "Celestial Love" are more nearly equal to his subject than his prose.

There is a passage in the Lecture on "Friendship" which suggests some personal relation of Emerson's about which we cannot help being inquisitive:—

"It has seemed to me lately more possible than I knew, to carry a friendship greatly, on one side, without due correspondence on the other. Why should I cumber myself with regrets that the receiver is not capacious? It never troubles the sun that some of his rays fall wide and vain into ungrateful space, and only a small part on the reflecting planet. Let your greatness educate the crude and cold companion.... Yet these things

may hardly be said without a sort of treachery to the relation. The essence of friendship is entireness, a total

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magnanimity and trust. It must not surmise or provide for infirmity. It treats its object as a god that it may deify both."

Was he thinking of his relations with Carlyle? It is a curious subject of speculation what would have been the issue if Carlyle had come to Concord and taken up his abode under Emerson's most hospitable roof. "You shall not come nearer a man by getting into his house." How could they have got on together? Emerson was well-bred, and Carlyle was wanting in the social graces. "Come rest in this bosom" is a sweet air, heard in the distance, too apt to be followed, after a protracted season of close proximity, by that other strain,—

"No, fly me, fly me, far as pole from pole!
Rise Alps between us and whole oceans roll!"

But Emerson may have been thinking of some very different person, perhaps some "crude and cold companion" among his disciples, who was not equal to the demands of friendly intercourse.

He discourses wisely on "Prudence," a virtue which he does not claim for himself, and nobly on "Heroism," which was a shining part of his own moral and intellectual being.

The points which will be most likely to draw the reader's attention are the remarks on the literature of heroism; the claim for our own America, for Massachusetts and Connecticut River and Boston Bay, in spite of our love for the names of foreign and classic topography; and most of all one sentence which, coming from an optimist like Emerson, has a sound of sad sincerity painful to recognize.

"Who that sees the meanness of our politics but inly congratulates Washington that he is long already wrapped in his shroud, and forever safe; that he was laid sweet in his grave, the hope of humanity not yet subjugated in him. Who does not sometimes envy the good and brave who are no more to suffer from the tumults of the natural world, and await with curious complacency the speedy term of his own conversation with finite nature? And yet the love that will be annihilated sooner than treacherous has already made death impossible, and affirms itself no mortal, but a native of the deeps of absolute and inextinguishable being."

In the following Essay, "The Over-Soul," Emerson has attempted the impossible. He is as fully conscious of this fact as the reader of his rhapsody,—nay, he is more profoundly penetrated with it than any of his readers. In speaking of the exalted condition the soul is capable of reaching, he says,—

"Every man's words, who speaks from that life, must sound vain to those who do not dwell in the same thought on their own part. I dare not speak for it. My words do not



carry its august sense; they fall short and cold. Only itself can inspire whom it will, and behold! their speech shall be lyrical and sweet, and universal as the rising of the wind. Yet I desire, even by profane words, if I may not use sacred, to indicate the heaven of this deity, and to report

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what hints I have collected of the transcendent simplicity and energy of the Highest Law.”

“The Over-Soul” might almost be called the *Over-flow* of a spiritual imagination. We cannot help thinking of the “pious, virtuous, God-intoxicated” Spinoza. When one talks of the infinite in terms borrowed from the finite, when one attempts to deal with the absolute in the language of the relative, his words are not symbols, like those applied to the objects of experience, but the shadows of symbols, varying with the position and intensity of the light of the individual intelligence. It is a curious amusement to trace many of these thoughts and expressions to Plato, or Plotinus, or Proclus, or Porphyry, to Spinoza or Schelling, but the same tune is a different thing according to the instrument on which it is played. There are songs without words, and there are states in which, in place of the trains of thought moving in endless procession with ever-varying figures along the highway of consciousness, the soul is possessed by a single all-absorbing idea, which, in the highest state of spiritual exaltation, becomes a vision. Both Plotinus and Porphyry believed they were privileged to look upon Him whom “no man can see and live.”

But Emerson states his own position so frankly in his Essay entitled “Circles,” that the reader cannot take issue with him as against utterances which he will not defend. There can be no doubt that he would have confessed as much with reference to “The Over-Soul” as he has confessed with regard to “Circles,” the Essay which follows “The Over-Soul.”

“I am not careful to justify myself.... But lest I should mislead any when I have my own head and obey my whims, let me remind the reader that I am only an experimenter. Do not set the least value on what I do, or the least discredit on what I do not, as if I pretended to settle anything as true or false. I unsettle all things. No facts are to me sacred; none are profane; I simply experiment, an endless seeker, with no Past at my back.”

Perhaps, after reading these transcendental essays of Emerson, we might borrow Goethe’s language about Spinoza, as expressing the feeling with which we are left.

“I am reading Spinoza with Frau von Stein. I feel myself very near to him, though his soul is much deeper and purer than mine.

“I cannot say that I ever read Spinoza straight through, that at any time the complete architecture of his intellectual system has stood clear in view before me. But when I look into him I seem to understand him,—that is, he always appears to me consistent with himself, and I can always gather from him very salutary influences for my own way of feeling and acting.”

Emerson would not have pretended that he was always “consistent with himself,” but these “salutary influences,” restoring, enkindling, vivifying, are felt by many of his readers who would have to confess, like Dr. Walter Channing, that these thoughts, or thoughts like these, as he listened to them in a lecture, “made his head ache.”

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The three essays which follow “The Over-Soul,” “Circles,” “Intellect,” “Art,” would furnish us a harvest of good sayings, some of which we should recognize as parts of our own (borrowed) axiomatic wisdom.

“Beware when the great God lets loose a thinker on this planet. Then all things are at risk.”

“God enters by a private door into every individual.”

“God offers to every mind its choice between truth and repose. Take which you please,—you can never have both.”

“Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us, or we find it not.”

But we cannot reconstruct the Hanging Gardens with a few bricks from Babylon.

Emerson describes his mode of life in these years in a letter to Carlyle, dated May 10, 1838.

“I occupy, or improve, as we Yankees say, two acres only of God’s earth; on which is my house, my kitchen-garden, my orchard of thirty young trees, my empty barn. My house is now a very good one for comfort, and abounding in room. Besides my house, I have, I believe, \$22,000, whose income in ordinary years is six per cent. I have no other tithe or glebe except the income of my winter lectures, which was last winter \$800. Well, with this income, here at home, I am a rich man. I stay at home and go abroad at my own instance. I have food, warmth, leisure, books, friends. Go away from home, I am rich no longer. I never have a dollar to spend on a fancy. As no wise man, I suppose, ever was rich in the sense of freedom to spend, because of the inundation of claims, so neither am I, who am not wise. But at home, I am rich,—rich enough for ten brothers. My wife Lidian is an incarnation of Christianity,—I call her Asia,—and keeps my philosophy from Antinomianism; my mother, whitest, mildest, most conservative of ladies, whose only exception to her universal preference for old things is her son; my boy, a piece of love and sunshine, well worth my watching from morning to night;—these, and three domestic women, who cook, and sew and run for us, make all my household. Here I sit and read and write, with very little system, and, as far as regards composition, with the most fragmentary result: paragraphs incompressible, each sentence an infinitely repellent particle.”

A great sorrow visited Emerson and his household at this period of his life. On the 30th of October, 1841, he wrote to Carlyle: “My little boy is five years old to-day, and almost old enough to send you his love.”

Three months later, on the 28th of February, 1842, he writes once more:—

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"My dear friend, you should have had this letter and these messages by the last steamer; but when it sailed, my son, a perfect little boy of five years and three months, had ended his earthly life. You can never sympathize with me; you can never know how much of me such a young child can take away. A few weeks ago I accounted myself a very rich man, and now the poorest of all. What would it avail to tell you anecdotes of a sweet and wonderful boy, such as we solace and sadden ourselves with at home every morning and evening? From a perfect health and as happy a life and as happy influences as ever child enjoyed, he was hurried out of my arms in three short days by scarlatina. We have two babes yet, one girl of three years, and one girl of three months and a week, but a promise like that Boy's I shall never see. How often I have pleased myself that one day I should send to you this Morning Star of mine, and stay at home so gladly behind such a representative. I dare not fathom the Invisible and Untold to inquire what relations to my Departed ones I yet sustain."

This was the boy whose memory lives in the tenderest and most pathetic of Emerson's poems, the "Threnody,"—a lament not unworthy of comparison with Lycidas for dignity, but full of the simple pathos of Cowper's well-remembered lines on the receipt of his mother's picture, in the place of Milton's sonorous academic phrases.

CHAPTER VI.

1843-1848. AET. 40-45.

"The Young American."—Address on the Anniversary of the Emancipation of the Negroes in the British West Indies.[1]—Publication of the Second Series of Essays.—Contents: The Poet.—Experience.—Character. —Manners.—Gifts.—Nature.—Politics.—Nominalist and Realist.—New England Reformers.—Publication of Poems.—Second Visit to England.

[Footnote 1: These two addresses are to be found in the first and eleventh volumes, respectively, of the last collective edition of Emerson's works, namely, "Nature, Addresses, and Lectures," and "Miscellanies."]

Emerson was American in aspect, temperament, way of thinking, and feeling; American, with an atmosphere of Oriental idealism; American, so far as he belonged to any limited part of the universe. He believed in American institutions, he trusted the future of the American race. In the address first mentioned in the contents, of this chapter, delivered February 7, 1844, he claims for this country all that the most ardent patriot could ask. Not a few of his fellow-countrymen will feel the significance of the following contrast.

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“The English have many virtues, many advantages, and the proudest history in the world; but they need all and more than all the resources of the past to indemnify a heroic gentleman in that country for the mortifications prepared for him by the system of society, and which seem to impose the alternative to resist or to avoid it.... It is for Englishmen to consider, not for us; we only say, Let us live in America, too thankful for our want of feudal institutions.... If only the men are employed in conspiring with the designs of the Spirit who led us hither, and is leading us still, we shall quickly enough advance out of all hearing of others’ censures, out of all regrets of our own, into a new and more excellent social state than history has recorded.”

Thirty years have passed since the lecture from which these passages are taken was delivered. The “Young American” of that day is the more than middle-aged American of the present. The intellectual independence of our country is far more solidly established than when this lecture was written. But the social alliance between certain classes of Americans and English is more and more closely cemented from year to year, as the wealth of the new world burrows its way among the privileged classes of the old world. It is a poor ambition for the possessor of suddenly acquired wealth to have it appropriated as a feeder of the impaired fortunes of a deteriorated household, with a family record of which its representatives are unworthy. The plain and wholesome language of Emerson is on the whole more needed now than it was when spoken. His words have often been extolled for their stimulating quality; following the same analogy, they are, as in this address, in a high degree tonic, bracing, strengthening to the American, who requires to be reminded of his privileges that he may know and find himself equal to his duties.

On the first day of August, 1844, Emerson delivered in Concord an address on the Anniversary of the Emancipation of the Negroes in the British West India Islands. This discourse would not have satisfied the Abolitionists. It was too general in its propositions, full of humane and generous sentiments, but not looking to their extreme and immediate method of action.

* * * * *

Emerson’s second series of Essays was published in 1844. There are many sayings in the Essay called “The Poet,” which are meant for the initiated, rather than for him who runs, to read:—

“All that we call sacred history attests that the birth of a poet is the principal event in chronology.”

Does this sound wild and extravagant? What were the political ups and downs of the Hebrews,—what were the squabbles of the tribes with each other, or with their neighbors, compared to the birth of that poet to whom we owe the Psalms,—the sweet singer whose voice is still the dearest of all that ever sang to the heart of mankind?

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The poet finds his materials everywhere, as Emerson tells him in this eloquent apostrophe:—

“Thou true land-bird! sea-bird! air-bird! Wherever snow falls, or water flows, or birds fly, wherever day and night meet in twilight, wherever the blue heaven is hung by clouds, or sown with stars, wherever are forms with transparent boundaries, wherever are outlets into celestial space, wherever is danger and awe and love, there is Beauty, plenteous as rain, shed for thee, and though thou should'st walk the world over, thou shalt not be able to find a condition inopportune or ignoble.”

“Experience” is, as he says himself, but a fragment. It bears marks of having been written in a less tranquil state of mind than the other essays. His most important confession is this:—

“All writing comes by the grace of God, and all doing and having. I would gladly be moral and keep due metes and bounds, which I dearly love, and allow the most to the will of man; but I have set my heart on honesty in this chapter, and I can see nothing at last, in success or failure, than more or less of vital force supplied from the Eternal.”

The Essay on “Character” requires no difficult study, but is well worth the trouble of reading. A few sentences from it show the prevailing tone and doctrine.

“Character is Nature in the highest form. It is of no use to ape it, or to contend with it. Somewhat is possible of resistance and of persistence and of creation to this power, which will foil all emulation.” “There is a class of men, individuals of which appear at long intervals, so eminently endowed with insight and virtue, that they have been unanimously saluted as *divine*, and who seem to be an accumulation of that power we consider.” “The history of those gods and saints which the world has written, and then worshipped, are documents of character. The ages have exulted in the manners of a youth who owed nothing to fortune, and who was hanged at the Tyburn of his nation, who, by the pure quality of his nature, shed an epic splendor around the facts of his death which has transfigured every particular into an universal symbol for the eyes of mankind. This great defeat is hitherto our highest fact.”

In his Essay on “Manners,” Emerson gives us his ideas of a gentleman:—

“The gentleman is a man of truth, lord of his own actions and expressing that lordship in his behavior, not in any manner dependent and servile either on persons or opinions or possessions. Beyond this fact of truth and real force, the word denotes good-nature or benevolence: manhood first, and then gentleness.—Power first, or no leading class.—God knows that all sorts of gentlemen knock at the door: but whenever used in strictness, and with any emphasis, the name will be found to point at original energy.—The famous gentlemen of Europe have been of this strong

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type: Saladin, Sapor, the Cid, Julius Caesar, Scipio, Alexander, Pericles, and the lordliest personages. They sat very carelessly in their chairs, and were too excellent themselves to value any condition at a high rate.—I could better eat with one who did not respect the truth or the laws than with a sloven and unpresentable person.—The person who screams, or uses the superlative degree, or converses with heat, puts whole drawing-rooms to flight.—I esteem it a chief felicity of this country that it excels in woman.”

So writes Emerson, and proceeds to speak of woman in language which seems almost to pant for rhythm and rhyme.

This essay is plain enough for the least “transcendental” reader. Franklin would have approved it, and was himself a happy illustration of many of the qualities which go to the Emersonian ideal of good manners, a typical American, equal to his position, always as much so in the palaces and salons of Paris as in the Continental Congress, or the society of Philadelphia.

“Gifts” is a dainty little Essay with some nice distinctions and some hints which may help to give form to a generous impulse:—

“The only gift is a portion of thyself. Thou must bleed for me. Therefore the poet brings his poem; the shepherd, his lamb; the farmer, corn; the miner, a gem; the sailor, coral and shells; the painter, his picture; the girl, a handkerchief of her own sewing.” “Flowers and fruits are always fit presents; flowers, because they are a proud assertion that a ray of beauty outvalues all the utilities of the world.—Fruits are acceptable gifts, because they are the flower of commodities, and admit of fantastic values being attached to them.” “It is a great happiness to get off without injury and heart-burning from one who has had the ill-luck to be served by you. It is a very onerous business, this of being served, and the debtor naturally wishes to give you a slap.”

Emerson hates the superlative, but he does unquestionably love the tingling effect of a witty over-statement.

We have recognized most of the thoughts in the Essay entitled “Nature,” in the previous Essay by the same name, and others which we have passed in review. But there are poetical passages which will give new pleasure.

Here is a variation of the formula with which we are familiar:— “Nature is the incarnation of a thought, and turns to a thought again, as ice becomes water and gas. The world is mind precipitated, and the volatile essence is forever escaping again into the state of free thought.”

And here is a quaint sentence with which we may take leave of this Essay:—

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"They say that by electro-magnetism, your salad shall be grown from the seed, whilst your fowl is roasting for dinner: it is a symbol of our modern aims and endeavors,—of our condensation and acceleration of objects; but nothing is gained: nature cannot be cheated: man's life is but seventy salads long, grow they swift or grow they slow."

This is pretty and pleasant, but as to the literal value of the prediction, M. Jules Verne would be the best authority to consult. Poets are fond of that branch of science which, if the imaginative Frenchman gave it a name, he would probably call *Onditologie*.

It is not to be supposed that the most sanguine optimist could be satisfied with the condition of the American political world at the present time, or when the Essay on "Politics" was written, some years before the great war which changed the aspects of the country in so many respects, still leaving the same party names, and many of the characters of the old parties unchanged. This is Emerson's view of them as they then were:—

"Of the two great parties, which, at this hour, almost share the nation between them, I should say that one has the best cause, and the other contains the best men. The philosopher, the poet, or the religious man, will, of course, wish to cast his vote with the democrat, for free trade, for wide suffrage, for the abolition of legal cruelties in the penal code, and for facilitating in every manner the access of the young and the poor to the sources of wealth and power. But he can rarely accept the persons whom the so-called popular party propose to him as representatives of these liberties. They have not at heart the ends which give to the name of democracy what hope and virtue are in it. The spirit of our American radicalism is destructive and aimless; it is not loving; it has no ulterior and divine ends; but is destructive only out of hatred and selfishness. On the other side, the conservative party, composed of the most moderate, able, and cultivated part of the population, is timid, and merely defensive of property. It indicates no right, it aspires to no real good, it brands no crime, it proposes no generous policy, it does not build nor write, nor cherish the arts, nor foster religion, nor establish schools, nor encourage science, nor emancipate the slave, nor befriend the poor, or the Indian, or the immigrant. From neither party, when in power, has the world any benefit to expect in science, art, or humanity, at all commensurate with the resources of the nation."

The metaphysician who looks for a closely reasoned argument on the famous old question which so divided the schoolmen of old will find a very moderate satisfaction in the Essay entitled "Nominalism and Realism." But there are many discursive remarks in it worth gathering and considering. We have the complaint of the Cambridge "Phi Beta Kappa Oration," reiterated, that there is no complete man, but only a collection of fragmentary men.

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As a Platonist and a poet there could not be any doubt on which side were all his prejudices; but he takes his ground cautiously.

“In the famous dispute with the Nominalists, the Realists had a good deal of reason. General ideas are essences. They are our gods: they round and ennoble the most practical and sordid way of living.

“Though the uninspired man certainly finds persons a conveniency in household matters, the divine man does not respect them: he sees them as a rack of clouds, or a fleet of ripples which the wind drives over the surface of the water. But this is flat rebellion. Nature will not be Buddhist: she resents generalizing, and insults the philosopher in every moment with a million of fresh particulars.”

New England Reformers.—Would any one venture to guess how Emerson would treat this subject? With his unsparing, though amiable radicalism, his excellent common sense, his delicate appreciation of the ridiculous, too deep for laughter, as Wordsworth’s thoughts were too deep for tears, in the midst of a band of enthusiasts and not very remote from a throng of fanatics, what are we to look for from our philosopher who unites many characteristics of Berkeley and of Franklin?

We must remember when this lecture was written, for it was delivered on a Sunday in the year 1844. The Brook Farm experiment was an index of the state of mind among one section of the Reformers of whom he was writing. To remodel society and the world into a “happy family” was the aim of these enthusiasts. Some attacked one part of the old system, some another; some would build a new temple, some would rebuild the old church, some would worship in the fields and woods, if at all; one was for a phalanstery, where all should live in common, and another was meditating the plan and place of the wigwam where he was to dwell apart in the proud independence of the woodchuck and the musquash. Emerson had the largest and kindest sympathy with their ideals and aims, but he was too clear-eyed not to see through the whims and extravagances of the unpractical experimenters who would construct a working world with the lay figures they had put together, instead of flesh and blood men and women and children with all their congenital and acquired perversities. He describes these Reformers in his own good-naturedly half-satirical way:—

“They defied each other like a congress of kings; each of whom had a realm to rule, and a way of his own that made concert unprofitable. What a fertility of projects for the salvation of the world! One apostle thought all men should go to farming; and another that no man should buy or sell; that the use of money was the cardinal evil; another that the mischief was in our diet, that we eat and drink damnation. These made unleavened bread, and were foes to the death to fermentation. It was in vain urged by the housewife that God made yeast as well as dough, and loves

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fermentation just as dearly as he does vegetation; that fermentation develops the saccharine element in the grain, and makes it more palatable and more digestible. No, they wish the pure wheat, and will die but it shall not ferment. Stop, dear nature, these innocent advances of thine; let us scotch these ever-rolling wheels! Others attacked the system of agriculture, the use of animal manures in farming; and the tyranny of man over brute nature; these abuses polluted his food. The ox must be taken from the plough, and the horse from the cart, the hundred acres of the farm must be spaded, and the man must walk wherever boats and locomotives will not carry him. Even the insect world was to be defended,—that had been too long neglected, and a society for the protection of ground-worms, slugs, and mosquitoes was to be incorporated without delay. With these appeared the adepts of homoeopathy, of hydropathy, of mesmerism, of phrenology, and their wonderful theories of the Christian miracles!”

We have already seen the issue of the famous Brook Farm experiment, which was a practical outcome of the reforming agitation.

Emerson has had the name of being a leader in many movements in which he had very limited confidence, this among others to which the idealizing impulse derived from him lent its force, but for the organization of which he was in no sense responsible.

He says in the lecture we are considering:—

“These new associations are composed of men and women of superior talents and sentiments; yet it may easily be questioned whether such a community will draw, except in its beginnings, the able and the good; whether these who have energy will not prefer their choice of superiority and power in the world to the humble certainties of the association; whether such a retreat does not promise to become an asylum to those who have tried and failed rather than a field to the strong; and whether the members will not necessarily be fractions of men, because each finds that he cannot enter into it without some compromise.”

His sympathies were not allowed to mislead him; he knew human nature too well to believe in a Noah’s ark full of idealists.

All this time he was lecturing for his support, giving courses of lectures in Boston and other cities, and before the country lyceums in and out of New England.

His letters to Carlyle show how painstaking, how methodical, how punctual he was in the business which interested his distant friend. He was not fond of figures, and it must have cost him a great effort to play the part of an accountant.

He speaks also of receiving a good deal of company in the summer, and that some of this company exacted much time and attention,—more than he could spare,—is made

evident by his gentle complaints, especially in his poems, which sometimes let out a truth he would hardly have uttered in prose.

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In 1846 Emerson's first volume of poems was published. Many of the poems had been long before the public—some of the best, as we have seen, having been printed in "The Dial." It is only their being brought together for the first time which belongs especially to this period, and we can leave them for the present, to be looked over by and by in connection with a second volume of poems published in 1867, under the title, "May-Day and other Pieces."

In October, 1847, he left Concord on a second visit to England, which will be spoken of in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

1848-1853. AET. 45-50.

The "Massachusetts Quarterly Review," Visit to Europe.—England. —Scotland.—France.—"Representative Men" published. I. Uses of Great Men. II. Plato; or, the Philosopher; Plato; New Readings. III. Swedenborg; or, the Mystic. IV. Montaigne; or, the Skeptic. V. Shakespeare; or, the Poet. VI. Napoleon; or, the Man of the World. VII. Goethe; or, the Writer.—Contribution to the "Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli."

A new periodical publication was begun in Boston in 1847, under the name of the "Massachusetts Quarterly Review." Emerson wrote the "Editor's Address," but took no further active part in it, Theodore Parker being the real editor. The last line of this address is characteristic: "We rely on the truth for aid against ourselves."

On the 5th of October, 1847, Emerson sailed for Europe on his second visit, reaching Liverpool on the 22d of that month. Many of his admirers were desirous that he should visit England and deliver some courses of lectures. Mr. Alexander Ireland, who had paid him friendly attentions during his earlier visit, and whose impressions of him in the pulpit have been given on a previous page, urged his coming. Mr. Conway quotes passages from a letter of Emerson's which show that he had some hesitation in accepting the invitation, not unmingled with a wish to be heard by the English audiences favorably disposed towards him.

"I feel no call," he said, "to make a visit of literary propagandism in England. All my impulses to work of that kind would rather employ me at home." He does not like the idea of "coaxing" or advertising to get him an audience. He would like to read lectures before institutions or friendly persons who sympathize with his studies. He has had a good many decisive tokens of interest from British men and women, but he doubts whether he is much and favorably known in any one city, except perhaps in London. It proved, however, that there was a very widespread desire to hear him, and applications for lectures flowed in from all parts of the kingdom.

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From Liverpool he proceeded immediately to Manchester, where Mr. Ireland received him at the Victoria station. After spending a few hours with him, he went to Chelsea to visit Carlyle, and at the end of a week returned to Manchester to begin the series of lecturing engagements which had been arranged for him. Mr. Ireland's account of Emerson's visits and the interviews between him and many distinguished persons is full of interest, but the interest largely relates to the persons visited by Emerson. He lectured at Edinburgh, where his liberal way of thinking and talking made a great sensation in orthodox circles. But he did not fail to find enthusiastic listeners. A young student, Mr. George Cupples, wrote an article on these lectures from which, as quoted by Mr. Ireland, I borrow a single sentence,—one only, but what could a critic say more?

Speaking of his personal character, as revealed through his writings, he says: "In this respect, I take leave to think that Emerson is the most mark-worthy, the loftiest, and most heroic mere man that ever appeared." Emerson has a lecture on the superlative, to which he himself was never addicted. But what would youth be without its extravagances,—its preterpluperfect in the shape of adjectives, its unmeasured and unstinted admiration?

I need not enumerate the celebrated literary personages and other notabilities whom Emerson met in England and Scotland. He thought "the two finest mannered literary men he met in England were Leigh Hunt and De Quincey." His diary might tell us more of the impressions made upon him by the distinguished people he met, but it is impossible to believe that he ever passed such inhuman judgments on the least desirable of his new acquaintances as his friend Carlyle has left as a bitter legacy behind him. Carlyle's merciless discourse about Coleridge and Charles Lamb, and Swinburne's carnivorous lines, which take a barbarous vengeance on him for his offence, are on the level of political rhetoric rather than of scholarly criticism or characterization. Emerson never forgot that he was dealing with human beings. He could not have long endured the asperities of Carlyle, and that "loud shout of laughter," which Mr. Ireland speaks of as one of his customary explosions, would have been discordant to Emerson's ears, which were offended by such noisy manifestations.

During this visit Emerson made an excursion to Paris, which furnished him materials for a lecture on France delivered in Boston, in 1856, but never printed.

From the lectures delivered in England he selected a certain number for publication. These make up the volume entitled "Representative Men," which was published in 1850. I will give very briefly an account of its contents. The title was a happy one, and has passed into literature and conversation as an accepted and convenient phrase. It would teach us a good deal merely to consider the names he has selected as typical, and the ground of

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their selection. We get his classification of men considered as leaders in thought and in action. He shows his own affinities and repulsions, and, as everywhere, writes his own biography, no matter about whom or what he is talking. There is hardly any book of his better worth study by those who wish to understand, not Plato, not Plutarch, not Napoleon, but Emerson himself. All his great men interest us for their own sake; but we know a good deal about most of them, and Emerson holds the mirror up to them at just such an angle that we see his own face as well as that of his hero, unintentionally, unconsciously, no doubt, but by a necessity which he would be the first to recognize.

Emerson swears by no master. He admires, but always with a reservation. Plato comes nearest to being his idol, Shakespeare next. But he says of all great men: "The power which they communicate is not theirs. When we are exalted by ideas, we do not owe this to Plato, but to the idea, to which also Plato was debtor."

Emerson loves power as much as Carlyle does; he likes "rough and smooth," "scourges of God," and "darlings of the human race." He likes Julius Caesar, Charles the Fifth, of Spain, Charles the Twelfth, of Sweden, Richard Plantagenet, and Bonaparte.

"I applaud," he says, "a sufficient man, an officer equal to his office; captains, ministers, senators. I like a master standing firm on legs of iron, well born, rich, handsome, eloquent, loaded with advantages, drawing all men by fascination into tributaries and supporters of his power. Sword and staff, or talents sword-like or staff-like, carry on the work of the world. But I find him greater when he can abolish himself and all heroes by letting in this element of reason, irrespective of persons, this subtilizer and irresistible upward force, into our thoughts, destroying individualism; the power is so great that the potentate is nothing.—"The genius of humanity is the right point of view of history. The qualities abide; the men who exhibit them have now more, now less, and pass away; the qualities remain on another brow.—All that respects the individual is temporary and prospective, like the individual himself, who is ascending out of his limits into a catholic existence."

No man can be an idol for one who looks in this way at all men. But Plato takes the first place in Emerson's gallery of six great personages whose portraits he has sketched. And of him he says:—

"Among secular books Plato only is entitled to Omar's fanatical compliment to the Koran, when he said, 'Burn the libraries; for their value is in this book.' Out of Plato come all things that are still written and debated among men of thought."—"In proportion to the culture of men they become his scholars."—"How many great men Nature is incessantly sending up out of night to be *his men*!—His contemporaries

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tax him with plagiarism.—But the inventor only knows how to borrow. When we are praising Plato, it seems we are praising quotations from Solon and Sophron and Philolaus. Be it so. Every book is a quotation; and every house is a quotation out of all forests and mines and stone quarries; and every man is a quotation from all his ancestors.”

The reader will, I hope, remember this last general statement when he learns from what wide fields of authorship Emerson filled his storehouses.

A few sentences from Emerson will show us the probable source of some of the deepest thought of Plato and his disciples.

The conception of the fundamental Unity, he says, finds its highest expression in the religious writings of the East, especially in the Indian Scriptures. “The whole world is but a manifestation of Vishnu, who is identical with all things, and is to be regarded by the wise as not differing from but as the same as themselves. I neither am going nor coming; nor is my dwelling in any one place; nor art thou, thou; nor are others, others; nor am I, I.’ As if he had said, ‘All is for the soul, and the soul is Vishnu; and animals and stars are transient paintings; and light is whitewash; and durations are deceptive; and form is imprisonment; and heaven itself a decoy.’” All of which we see reproduced in Emerson’s poem “Brahma.”—“The country of unity, of immovable institutions, the seat of a philosophy delighting in abstractions, of men faithful in doctrine and in practice to the idea of a deaf, unimplorable, immense fate, is Asia; and it realizes this faith in the social institution of caste. On the other side, the genius of Europe is active and creative: it resists caste by culture; its philosophy was a discipline; it is a land of arts, inventions, trade, freedom.”—“Plato came to join, and by contact to enhance, the energy of each.”

But Emerson says,—and some will smile at hearing him say it of another,—“The acutest German, the lovingest disciple, could never tell what Platonism was; indeed, admirable texts can be quoted on both sides of every great question from him.”

The transcendent intellectual and moral superiorities of this “Euclid of holiness,” as Emerson calls him, with his “soliform eye and his boniform soul,”—the two quaint adjectives being from the mint of Cudworth,—are fully dilated upon in the addition to the original article called “Plato: New Readings.”

Few readers will be satisfied with the Essay entitled “Swedenborg; or, the Mystic.” The believers in his special communion as a revealer of divine truth will find him reduced to the level of other seers. The believers of the different creeds of Christianity will take offence at the statement that “Swedenborg and Behmen both failed by attaching themselves to the Christian symbol, instead of to the moral sentiment, which carries

innumerable christianities, humanities, divinities in its bosom.” The men of science will smile at the exorbitant claims

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put forward in behalf of Swedenborg as a scientific discoverer. “Philosophers” will not be pleased to be reminded that Swedenborg called them “cockatrices,” “asps,” or “flying serpents;” “literary men” will not agree that they are “conjurers and charlatans,” and will not listen with patience to the praises of a man who so called them. As for the poets, they can take their choice of Emerson’s poetical or prose estimate of the great Mystic, but they cannot very well accept both. In “The Test,” the Muse says:—

“I hung my verses in the wind,
Time and tide their faults may find;
All were winnowed through and through,
Five lines lasted good and true ...
Sunshine cannot bleach the snow,
Nor time unmake what poets know.
Have you eyes to find the five
Which five hundred did survive?”

In the verses which follow we learn that the five immortal poets referred to are Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, *Swedenborg*, and Goethe.

And now, in the Essay we have just been looking at, I find that “his books have no melody, no emotion, no humor, no relief to the dead prosaic level. We wander forlorn in a lack-lustre landscape. No bird ever sang in these gardens of the dead. The entire want of poetry in so transcendent a mind betokens the disease, and like a hoarse voice in a beautiful person, is a kind of warning.” Yet Emerson says of him that “He lived to purpose: he gave a verdict. He elected goodness as the clue to which the soul must cling in this labyrinth of nature.”

Emerson seems to have admired Swedenborg at a distance, but seen nearer, he liked Jacob Behmen a great deal better.

“Montaigne; or, the Skeptic,” is easier reading than the last-mentioned Essay. Emerson accounts for the personal regard which he has for Montaigne by the story of his first acquaintance with him. But no other reason was needed than that Montaigne was just what Emerson describes him as being.

“There have been men with deeper insight; but, one would say, never a man with such abundance of thought: he is never dull, never insincere, and has the genius to make the reader care for all that he cares for.” The sincerity and marrow of the man reaches to his sentences. I know not anywhere the book that seems less written. It is the language of conversation transferred to a book. Cut these words and they would bleed; they are vascular and alive.—“Montaigne talks with shrewdness, knows the world and books and himself, and uses the positive degree; never shrieks, or protests, or prays:



no weakness, no convulsion, no superlative: does not wish to jump out of his skin, or play any antics, or annihilate space or time, but is stout and solid; tastes every moment of the day; likes pain because it makes him feel himself and realize things; as we pinch ourselves to know that we are awake. He keeps the plain; he rarely

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mounts or sinks; likes to feel solid ground and the stones underneath. His writing has no enthusiasms, no aspiration; contented, self-respecting, and keeping the middle of the road. There is but one exception,—in his love for Socrates. In speaking of him, for once his cheek flushes and his style rises to passion.”

The writer who draws this portrait must have many of the same characteristics. Much as Emerson loved his dreams and his dreamers, he must have found a great relief in getting into “the middle of the road” with Montaigne, after wandering in difficult by-paths which too often led him round to the point from which he started.

As to his exposition of the true relations of skepticism to affirmative and negative belief, the philosophical reader must be referred to the Essay itself.

In writing of “Shakespeare; or, the Poet,” Emerson naturally gives expression to his leading ideas about the office of the poet and of poetry.

“Great men are more distinguished by range and extent than by originality.” A poet has “a heart in unison with his time and country.”—“There is nothing whimsical and fantastic in his production, but sweet and sad earnest, freighted with the weightiest convictions, and pointed with the most determined aim which any man or class knows of in his times.”

When Shakespeare was in his youth the drama was the popular means of amusement. It was “ballad, epic, newspaper, caucus, lecture, Punch, and library, at the same time. The best proof of its vitality is the crowd of writers which suddenly broke into this field.” Shakespeare found a great mass of old plays existing in manuscript and reproduced from time to time on the stage. He borrowed in all directions: “A great poet who appears in illiterate times absorbs into his sphere all the light which is anywhere radiating.” Homer, Chaucer, Saadi, felt that all wit was their wit. “Chaucer is a huge borrower.” Emerson gives a list of authors from whom he drew. This list is in many particulars erroneous, as I have learned from a letter of Professor Lounsbury’s which I have had the privilege of reading, but this is a detail which need not delay us.

The reason why Emerson has so much to say on this subject of borrowing, especially when treating of Plato and of Shakespeare, is obvious enough. He was arguing in his own cause,—not defending himself, as if there were some charge of plagiarism to be met, but making the proud claim of eminent domain in behalf of the masters who knew how to use their acquisitions.

“Shakespeare is the only biographer of Shakespeare; and even he can tell nothing except to the Shakespeare in us.”—“Shakespeare is as much out of the category of eminent authors as he is out of the crowd. A good reader can in a sort nestle into

Plato's brain and think from thence; but not into Shakespeare's. We are still out of doors."

After all the homage which Emerson pays to the intellect of Shakespeare, he weighs him with the rest of mankind, and finds that he shares "the halfness and imperfection of humanity."

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“He converted the elements which waited on his command into entertainment. He was master of the revels to mankind.”

And so, after this solemn verdict on Shakespeare, after looking at the forlorn conclusions of our old and modern oracles, priest and prophet, Israelite, German, and Swede, he says: “It must be conceded that these are half views of half men. The world still wants its poet-priest, who shall not trifle with Shakespeare the player, nor shall grope in graves with Swedenborg the mourner; but who shall see, speak, and act with equal inspiration.”

It is not to be expected that Emerson should have much that is new to say about “Napoleon; or, the Man of the World.”

The stepping-stones of this Essay are easy to find:—

“The instinct of brave, active, able men, throughout the middle class everywhere, has pointed out Napoleon as the incarnate democrat.—

“Napoleon is thoroughly modern, and at the highest point of his fortunes, has the very spirit of the newspapers.” As Plato borrowed, as Shakespeare borrowed, as Mirabeau “plagiarized every good thought, every good word that was spoken in France,” so Napoleon is not merely “representative, but a monopolizer and usurper of other minds.”

He was “a man of stone and iron,”—equipped for his work by nature as Sallust describes Catiline as being. “He had a directness of action never before combined with such comprehension. Here was a man who in each moment and emergency knew what to do next. He saw only the object; the obstacle must give way.”

“When a natural king becomes a titular king everybody is pleased and satisfied.”—

“I call Napoleon the agent or attorney of the middle class of modern society.—He was the agitator, the destroyer of prescription, the internal improver, the liberal, the radical, the inventor of means, the opener of doors and markets, the subverter of monopoly and abuse.”

But he was without generous sentiments, “a boundless liar,” and finishing in high colors the outline of his moral deformities, Emerson gives us a climax in two sentences which render further condemnation superfluous:—

“In short, when you have penetrated through all the circles of power and splendor, you were not dealing with a gentleman, at last, but with an impostor and rogue; and he fully deserves the epithet of Jupiter Scapin, or a sort of Scamp Jupiter.” So this exorbitant egotist narrowed, impoverished, and absorbed the power and existence of those who served him; and the universal cry of France and of Europe in 1814 was, Enough of him;

'*Assez de Bonaparte*.'"It was to this feeling that the French poet Barbier, whose death we have but lately seen announced, gave expression in the terrible satire in which he pictured France as a fiery courser bestridden by her spurred rider, who drove her in a mad career over heaps of rocks and ruins.

But after all, Carlyle's "*carriere ouverte aux talens*" is the expression for Napoleon's great message to mankind.

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“Goethe; or, the Writer,” is the last of the Representative Men who are the subjects of this book of Essays. Emerson says he had read the fifty-five volumes of Goethe, but no other German writers, at least in the original. It must have been in fulfilment of some pious vow that he did this. After all that Carlyle had written about Goethe, he could hardly help studying him. But this Essay looks to me as if he had found the reading of Goethe hard work. It flows rather languidly, toys with side issues as a stream loiters round a nook in its margin, and finds an excuse for play in every pebble. Still, he has praise enough for his author. “He has clothed our modern existence with poetry.”—“He has said the best things about nature that ever were said.—He flung into literature in his Mephistopheles the first organic figure that has been added for some ages, and which will remain as long as the Prometheus.—He is the type of culture, the amateur of all arts and sciences and events; artistic, but not artist; spiritual, but not spiritualist.—I join Napoleon with him, as being both representatives of the impatience and reaction of nature against the morgue of conventions,—two stern realists, who, with their scholars, have severally set the axe at the root of the tree of cant and seeming, for this time and for all time.”

This must serve as an *ex pede* guide to reconstruct the Essay which finishes the volume.

In 1852 there was published a Memoir of Margaret Fuller Ossoli, in which Emerson, James Freeman Clarke, and William Henry Channing each took a part. Emerson's account of her conversation and extracts from her letters and diaries, with his running commentaries and his interpretation of her mind and character, are a most faithful and vivid portraiture of a woman who is likely to live longer by what is written of her than by anything she ever wrote herself.

CHAPTER VIII.

1858-1858. AEt. 50-55.

Lectures in various Places.—Anti-Slavery Addresses.—Woman. A Lecture read before the Woman's Rights Convention.—Samuel Hoar. Speech at Concord.—Publication of “English Traits.”—The “Atlantic Monthly.”—The “Saturday Club.”

After Emerson's return from Europe he delivered lectures to different audiences,—one on Poetry, afterwards published in “Letters and Social Aims,” a course of lectures in Freeman Place Chapel, Boston, some of which have been published, one on the Anglo-Saxon Race, and many others. In January, 1855, he gave one of the lectures in a course of Anti-Slavery Addresses delivered in Tremont Temple, Boston. In the same year he delivered an address before the Anti-Slavery party of New York. His plan for the extirpation of slavery was to buy the slaves from the planters, not conceding their right to ownership, but because “it is the only practical course, and is innocent.” It would cost

two thousand millions, he says, according to the present estimate, but “was there ever any contribution that was so enthusiastically paid as this would be?”

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His optimism flowers out in all its innocent luxuriance in the paragraph from which this is quoted. Of course with notions like these he could not be hand in hand with the Abolitionists. He was classed with the Free Soilers, but he seems to have formed a party by himself in his project for buying up the negroes. He looked at the matter somewhat otherwise in 1863, when the settlement was taking place in a different currency,—in steel and not in gold:—

“Pay ransom to the owner,
And fill the bag to the brim.
Who is the owner? The slave is owner,
And ever was. Pay him.”

His sympathies were all and always with freedom. He spoke with indignation of the outrage on Sumner; he took part in the meeting at Concord expressive of sympathy with John Brown. But he was never in the front rank of the aggressive Anti-Slavery men. In his singular “Ode inscribed to W.H. Channing” there is a hint of a possible solution of the slavery problem which implies a doubt as to the permanence of the cause of all the trouble.

“The over-god
Who marries Right to Might,
Who peoples, unpeoples,—
He who exterminates
Races by stronger races,
Black by white faces,—
Knows to bring honey
Out of the lion.”

Some doubts of this kind helped Emerson to justify himself when he refused to leave his “honeyed thought” for the busy world where

“Things are of the snake.”

The time came when he could no longer sit quietly in his study, and, to borrow Mr. Cooke’s words, “As the agitation proceeded, and brave men took part in it, and it rose to a spirit of moral grandeur, he gave a heartier assent to the outward methods adopted.”

* * * * *

No woman could doubt the reverence of Emerson for womanhood. In a lecture read to the “Woman’s Rights Convention” in 1855, he takes bold, and what would then have been considered somewhat advanced, ground in the controversy then and since dividing the community. This is the way in which he expresses himself:

“I do not think it yet appears that women wish this equal share in public affairs. But it is they and not we that are to determine it. Let the laws be purged of every barbarous remainder, every barbarous impediment to women. Let the public donations for education be equally shared by them, let them enter a school as freely as a church, let them have and hold and give their property as men do theirs;—and in a few years it will easily appear whether they wish a voice in making the laws that are to govern them. If you do refuse them a vote, you will also refuse to tax them,—according to our Teutonic principle, No representation, no tax.—The new movement is only a tide shared by the spirits of man and woman; and you may proceed in the faith that whatever the woman’s heart is prompted to desire, the man’s mind is simultaneously prompted to accomplish.”

Emerson was fortunate enough to have had for many years as a neighbor, that true New England Roman, Samuel Hoar. He spoke of him in Concord before his fellow-citizens, shortly after his death, in 1856. He afterwards prepared a sketch of Mr. Hoar for “Putnam’s Magazine,” from which I take one prose sentence and the verse with which the sketch concluded:—

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"He was a model of those formal but reverend manners which make what is called a gentleman of the old school, so called under an impression that the style is passing away, but which, I suppose, is an optical illusion, as there are always a few more of the class remaining, and always a few young men to whom these manners are native."

The single verse I quote is compendious enough and descriptive enough for an Elizabethan monumental inscription.

"With beams December planets dart
His cold eye truth and conduct scanned;
July was in his sunny heart,
October in his liberal hand."

Emerson's "English Traits," forming one volume of his works, was published in 1856. It is a thoroughly fresh and original book. It is not a tourist's guide, not a detailed description of sights which tired the traveller in staring at them, and tire the reader who attacks the wearying pages in which they are recorded. Shrewd observation there is indeed, but its strength is in broad generalization and epigrammatic characterizations. They are not to be received as in any sense final; they are not like the verifiable facts of science; they are more or less sagacious, more or less well founded opinions formed by a fair-minded, sharp-witted, kind-hearted, open-souled philosopher, whose presence made every one well-disposed towards him, and consequently left him well-disposed to all the world.

A glance at the table of contents will give an idea of the objects which Emerson proposed to himself in his tour, and which take up the principal portion of his record. Only one *place* is given as the heading of a chapter,—*Stonehenge*. The other eighteen chapters have general titles, *Land, Race, Ability, Manners*, and others of similar character.

He uses plain English in introducing us to the Pilgrim fathers of the British Aristocracy:

"Twenty thousand thieves landed at Hastings. These founders of the House of Lords were greedy and ferocious dragoons, sons of greedy and ferocious pirates. They were all alike, they took everything they could carry; they burned, harried, violated, tortured, and killed, until everything English was brought to the verge of ruin. Such, however, is the illusion of antiquity and wealth, that decent and dignified men now existing boast their descent from these filthy thieves, who showed a far juster conviction of their own merits by assuming for their types the swine, goat, jackal, leopard, wolf, and snake, which they severally resembled."

The race preserves some of its better characteristics.

“They have a vigorous health and last well into middle and old age. The old men are as red as roses, and still handsome. A clear skin, a peach-bloom complexion, and good teeth are found all over the island.”

English “Manners” are characterized, according to Emerson, by pluck, vigor, independence. “Every one of these islanders is an island himself, safe, tranquil, incommunicable.” They are positive, methodical, cleanly, and formal, loving routine and conventional ways; loving truth and religion, to be sure, but inexorable on points of form.

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“They keep their old customs, costumes, and pomps, their wig and mace, sceptre and crown. A severe decorum rules the court and the cottage. Pretension and vamping are once for all distasteful. They hate nonsense, sentimentalism, and high-flown expressions; they use a studied plainness.”

“In an aristocratical country like England, not the Trial by Jury, but the dinner is the capital institution.”

“They confide in each other,—English believes in English.”—“They require the same adherence, thorough conviction, and reality in public men.”

“As compared with the American, I think them cheerful and contented. Young people in this country are much more prone to melancholy.”

Emerson’s observation is in accordance with that of Cotton Mather nearly two hundred years ago.

“*New England*, a country where splenetic Maladies are prevailing and pernicious, perhaps above any other, hath afforded numberless instances, of even pious people, who have contracted those *Melancholy Indispositions*, which have unhinged them from all service or comfort; yea, not a few persons have been hurried thereby to lay *Violent Hands* upon themselves at the last. These are among the *unsearchable Judgments* of God.”

If there is a little exaggeration about the following portrait of the Englishman, it has truth enough to excuse its high coloring, and the likeness will be smilingly recognized by every stout Briton.

“They drink brandy like water, cannot expend their quantities of waste strength on riding, hunting, swimming, and fencing, and run into absurd follies with the gravity of the Eumenides. They stoutly carry into every nook and corner of the earth their turbulent sense; leaving no lie uncontradicted; no pretension unexamined. They chew hasheesh; cut themselves with poisoned creases, swing their hammock in the boughs of the Bohon Upas, taste every poison, buy every secret; at Naples, they put St. Januarius’s blood in an alembic; they saw a hole into the head of the ‘winking virgin’ to know why she winks; measure with an English foot-rule every cell of the inquisition, every Turkish Caaba, every Holy of Holies; translate and send to Bentley the arcanum, bribed and bullied away from shuddering Bramins; and measure their own strength by the terror they cause.”

This last audacious picture might be hung up as a prose pendant to Marvell’s poetical description of Holland and the Dutch.



“A saving stupidity marks and protects their perception as the curtain of the eagle’s eye. Our swifter Americans, when they first deal with English, pronounce them stupid; but, later, do them justice as people who wear well, or hide their strength.—High and low, they are of an unctuous texture.—Their daily feasts argue a savage vigor of body.—Half their strength they put not forth. The stability

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of England is the security of the modern world.”

Perhaps nothing in any of his vigorous paragraphs is more striking than the suggestion that “if hereafter the war of races often predicted, and making itself a war of opinions also (a question of despotism and liberty coming from Eastern Europe), should menace the English civilization, these sea-kings may take once again to their floating castles and find a new home and a second millennium of power in their colonies.”

In reading some of Emerson’s pages it seems as if another Arcadia, or the new Atlantis, had emerged as the fortunate island of Great Britain, or that he had reached a heaven on earth where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal,—or if they do, never think of denying that they have done it. But this was a generation ago, when the noun “shoddy,” and the verb “to scamp,” had not grown such familiar terms to English ears as they are to-day. Emerson saw the country on its best side. Each traveller makes his own England. A Quaker sees chiefly broad brims, and the island looks to him like a field of mushrooms.

The transplanted Church of England is rich and prosperous and fashionable enough not to be disturbed by Emerson’s flashes of light that have not come through its stained windows.

“The religion of England is part of good-breeding. When you see on the continent the well-dressed Englishman come into his ambassador’s chapel, and put his face for silent prayer into his smooth-brushed hat, one cannot help feeling how much national pride prays with him, and the religion of a gentleman.” The church at this moment is much to be pitied. She has nothing left but possession. If a bishop meets an intelligent gentleman, and reads fatal interrogation in his eyes, he has no resource but to take wine with him.”

Sydney Smith had a great reverence for a bishop,—so great that he told a young lady that he used to roll a crumb of bread in his hand, from nervousness, when he sat next one at a dinner-table,—and if next an archbishop, used to roll crumbs with both hands,—but Sydney Smith would have enjoyed the tingling felicity of this last stinging touch of wit, left as lightly and gracefully as a *banderillero* leaves his little gayly ribboned dart in the shoulders of the bull with whose unwieldy bulk he is playing.

Emerson handles the formalism and the half belief of the Established Church very freely, but he closes his chapter on Religion with soft-spoken words.

“Yet if religion be the doing of all good, and for its sake the suffering of all evil, *souffrir de tout le monde, et ne faire souffrir personne*, that divine secret has existed in England from the days of Alfred to those of Romilly, of Clarkson, and of Florence Nightingale, and in thousands who have no fame.”

“English Traits” closes with Emerson’s speech at Manchester, at the annual banquet of the “Free Trade Athenaeum.” This was merely an occasional after-dinner reply to a toast which called him up, but it had sentences in it which, if we can imagine Milton to have been called up in the same way, he might well have spoken and done himself credit in their utterance.

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The total impression left by the book is that Emerson was fascinated by the charm of English society, filled with admiration of the people, tempted to contrast his New Englanders in many respects unfavorably with Old Englanders, mainly in their material and vital stamina; but with all this not blinded for a moment to the thoroughly insular limitations of the phlegmatic islander. He alternates between a turn of genuine admiration and a smile as at a people that has not outgrown its playthings. This is in truth the natural and genuine feeling of a self-governing citizen of a commonwealth where thrones and wigs and mitres seem like so many pieces of stage property. An American need not be a philosopher to hold these things cheap. He cannot help it. Madame Tussaud's exhibition, the Lord-Mayor's gilt coach, and a coronation, if one happens to be in season, are all sights to be seen by an American traveller, but the reverence which is born with the British subject went up with the smoke of the gun that fired the long echoing shot at the little bridge over the sleepy river which works its way along through the wide-awake town of Concord.

In November, 1857, a new magazine was established in Boston, bearing the name of "The Atlantic Monthly." Professor James Russell Lowell was editor-in-chief, and Messrs. Phillips and Sampson, who were the originators of the enterprise, were the publishers. Many of the old contributors to "The Dial" wrote for the new magazine, among them Emerson. He contributed twenty-eight articles in all, more than half of them verse, to different numbers, from the first to the thirty-seventh volume. Among them are several of his best known poems, such as "The Romany Girl," "Days," "Brahma," "Waldeinsamkeit," "The Titmouse," "Boston Hymn," "Saadi," and "Terminus."

At about the same time there grew up in Boston a literary association, which became at last well known as the "Saturday Club," the members dining together on the last Saturday of every month.

The Magazine and the Club have existed and flourished to the present day. They have often been erroneously thought to have some organic connection, and the "Atlantic Club" has been spoken of as if there was or had been such an institution, but it never existed.

Emerson was a member of the Saturday Club from the first; in reality before it existed as an empirical fact, and when it was only a Platonic idea. The Club seems to have shaped itself around him as a nucleus of crystallization, two or three friends of his having first formed the habit of meeting him at dinner at "Parker's," the "Will's Coffee-House" of Boston. This little group gathered others to itself and grew into a club as Rome grew into a city, almost without knowing how. During its first decade the Saturday Club brought together, as members or as visitors, many distinguished persons. At one end of the table sat Longfellow,

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florid, quiet, benignant, soft-voiced, a most agreeable rather than a brilliant talker, but a man upon whom it was always pleasant to look,—whose silence was better than many another man's conversation. At the other end of the table sat Agassiz, robust, sanguine, animated, full of talk, boy-like in his laughter. The stranger who should have asked who were the men ranged along the sides of the table would have heard in answer the names of Hawthorne, Motley, Dana, Lowell, Whipple, Peirce, the distinguished mathematician, Judge Hoar, eminent at the bar and in the cabinet, Dwight, the leading musical critic of Boston for a whole generation, Sumner, the academic champion of freedom, Andrew, "the great War Governor" of Massachusetts, Dr. Howe, the philanthropist, William Hunt, the painter, with others not unworthy of such company. And with these, generally near the Longfellow end of the table, sat Emerson, talking in low tones and carefully measured utterances to his neighbor, or listening, and recording on his mental phonograph any stray word worth remembering. Emerson was a very regular attendant at the meetings of the Saturday Club, and continued to dine at its table, until within a year or two of his death.

Unfortunately the Club had no Boswell, and its golden hours passed unrecorded.

CHAPTER IX.

1858-1863: AET. 55-60.

Essay on Persian Poetry.—Speech at the Burns Centennial Festival—Letter from Emerson to a Lady.—Tributes to Theodore Parker and to Thoreau.—Address on the Emancipation Proclamation.—Publication of "The Conduct of Life." Contents: Fate; Power; Wealth; Culture; Behavior; Worship; Considerations by the Way; Beauty; Illusions.

The Essay on Persian Poetry, published in the "Atlantic Monthly" in 1858, should be studied by all readers who are curious in tracing the influence of Oriental poetry on Emerson's verse. In many of the shorter poems and fragments published since "May-Day," as well as in the "Quatrains" and others of the later poems in that volume, it is sometimes hard to tell what is from the Persian from what is original.

On the 25th of January, 1859, Emerson attended the Burns Festival, held at the Parker House in Boston, on the Centennial Anniversary of the poet's birth. He spoke after the dinner to the great audience with such beauty and eloquence that all who listened to him have remembered it as one of the most delightful addresses they ever heard. Among his hearers was Mr. Lowell, who says of it that "every word seemed to have just dropped down to him from the clouds." Judge Hoar, who was another of his hearers, says, that though he has heard many of the chief orators of his time, he never

witnessed such an effect of speech upon men. I was myself present on that occasion, and underwent the same fascination that these gentlemen and the varied audience before the speaker experienced. His words had a passion in them not usual in the calm, pure flow most natural to his uttered thoughts; white-hot iron we are familiar with, but white-hot silver is what we do not often look upon, and his inspiring address glowed like silver fresh from the cupel.

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I am allowed the privilege of printing the following letter addressed to a lady of high intellectual gifts, who was one of the earliest, most devoted, and most faithful of his intimate friends:—

CONCORD, May 13, 1859.

Please, dear C., not to embark for home until I have despatched these lines, which I will hasten to finish. Louis Napoleon will not bayonet you the while,—keep him at the door. So long I have promised to write! so long I have thanked your long suffering! I have let pass the unreturning opportunity your visit to Germany gave to acquaint you with Gisela von Arnim (Bettina's daughter), and Joachim the violinist, and Hermann Grimm the scholar, her friends. Neither has E.,—wandering in Europe with hope of meeting you, —yet met. This contumacy of mine I shall regret as long as I live. How palsy creeps over us, with gossamer first, and ropes afterwards! and the witch has the prisoner when once she has put her eye on him, as securely as after the bolts are drawn.—Yet I and all my little company watch every token from you, and coax Mrs. H. to read us letters. I learned with satisfaction that you did not like Germany. Where then did Goethe find his lovers? Do all the women have bad noses and bad mouths? And will you stop in England, and bring home the author of "Counterparts" with you? Or did—write the novels and send them to London, as I fancied when I read them? How strange that you and I alone to this day should have his secret! I think our people will never allow genius, without it is alloyed by talent. But—is paralyzed by his whims, that I have ceased to hope from him. I could wish your experience of your friends were more animating than mine, and that there were any horoscope you could not cast from the first day. The faults of youth are never shed, no, nor the merits, and creeping time convinces ever the more of our impotence, and of the irresistibility of our bias. Still this is only science, and must remain science. Our *praxis* is never altered for that. We must forever hold our companions responsible, or they are not companions but stall-fed.

I think, as we grow older, we decrease as individuals, and as if in an immense audience who hear stirring music, none essays to offer a new stave, but we only join emphatically in the chorus. We volunteer no opinion, we despair of guiding people, but are confirmed in our perception that Nature is all right, and that we have a good understanding with it. We must shine to a few brothers, as palms or pines or roses among common weeds, not from greater absolute value, but from a more convenient nature. But 'tis almost chemistry at last, though a meta-chemistry. I remember you were such an impatient blasphemer, however musically, against the adamantine identities, in your youth, that you should take your turn of resignation now, and be a preacher of peace. But there is a little raising of the eyebrow, now and then, in the most passive acceptance,—if of an intellectual

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turn. Here comes out around me at this moment the new June,—the leaves say June, though the calendar says May,—and we must needs hail our young relatives again, though with something of the gravity of adult sons and daughters receiving a late-born brother or sister. Nature herself seems a little ashamed of a law so monstrous, billions of summers, and now the old game again without a new bract or sepal. But you will think me incorrigible with my generalities, and you so near, and will be here again this summer; perhaps with A.W. and the other travellers. My children scan curiously your E.'s drawings, as they have seen them.

The happiest winds fill the sails of you and yours!

R.W. EMERSON.

In the year 1860, Theodore Parker died, and Emerson spoke of his life and labors at the meeting held at the Music Hall to do honor to his memory. Emerson delivered discourses on Sundays and week-days in the Music Hall to Mr. Parker's society after his death. In 1862, he lost his friend Thoreau, at whose funeral he delivered an address which was published in the "Atlantic Monthly" for August of the same year. Thoreau had many rare and admirable qualities, and Thoreau pictured by Emerson is a more living personage than White of Selborne would have been on the canvas of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

The Address on the Emancipation Proclamation was delivered in Boston in September, 1862. The feeling that inspired it may be judged by the following extract:—

"Happy are the young, who find the pestilence cleansed out of the earth, leaving open to them an honest career. Happy the old, who see Nature purified before they depart. Do not let the dying die; hold them back to this world, until you have charged their ear and heart with this message to other spiritual societies, announcing the melioration of our planet:—

"Incertainties now crown themselves assured,
And Peace proclaims olives of endless age."

The "Conduct of Life" was published in 1860. The chapter on "Fate" might leave the reader with a feeling that what he is to do, as well as what he is to be and to suffer, is so largely predetermined for him, that his will, though formally asserted, has but a questionable fraction in adjusting him to his conditions as a portion of the universe. But let him hold fast to this reassuring statement:—

"If we must accept Fate, we are not less compelled to affirm liberty, the significance of the individual, the grandeur of duty, the power of character.—We are sure, that, though

we know not how, necessity does comport with liberty, the individual with the world, my polarity with the spirit of the times.”

But the value of the Essay is not so much in any light it throws on the mystery of volition, as on the striking and brilliant way in which the limitations of the individual and the inexplicable rule of law are illustrated.

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"Nature is no sentimentalist,—does not cosset or pamper us. We must see that the world is rough and surly, and will not mind drowning a man or a woman; but swallows your ship like a grain of dust.—The way of Providence is a little rude. The habit of snake and spider, the snap of the tiger and other leapers and bloody jumpers, the crackle of the bones of his prey in the coil of the anaconda,—these are in the system, and our habits are like theirs. You have just dined, and however scrupulously the slaughterhouse is concealed in the graceful distance of miles, there is complicity,—expensive races,—race living at the expense of race.—Let us not deny it up and down. Providence has a wild, rough, incalculable road to its end, and it is of no use to try to whitewash its huge, mixed instrumentalities, or to dress up that terrific benefactor in a clean shirt and white neckcloth of a student in divinity."

Emerson cautions his reader against the danger of the doctrines which he believed in so fully:—

"They who talk much of destiny, their birth-star, *etc.*, are in a lower dangerous plane, and invite the evils they fear."

But certainly no physiologist, no cattle-breeder, no Calvinistic predestinarian could put his view more vigorously than Emerson, who dearly loves a picturesque statement, has given it in these words, which have a dash of science, a flash of imagination, and a hint of the delicate wit that is one of his characteristics:—

"People are born with the moral or with the material bias;—uterine brothers with this diverging destination: and I suppose, with high magnifiers, Mr. Fraunhofer or Dr. Carpenter might come to distinguish in the embryo at the fourth day, this is a whig and that a free-soiler."

Let us see what Emerson has to say of "Power:"—

"All successful men have agreed in one thing—they were *causationists*. They believed that things went not by luck, but by law; that there was not a weak or a cracked link in the chain that joins the first and the last of things." "The key to the age may be this, or that, or the other, as the young orators describe;—the key to all ages is,—Imbecility; imbecility in the vast majority of men at all times, and, even in heroes, in all but certain eminent moments; victims of gravity, custom, and fear. This gives force to the strong, —that the multitude have no habit of self-reliance or original action.—" "We say that success is constitutional; depends on a *plus* condition of mind and body, on power of work, on courage; that is of main efficacy in carrying on the world, and though rarely found in the right state for an article of commerce, but oftener in the supernatural or excess, which makes it dangerous and destructive, yet it cannot be spared, and must be had in that form, and absorbents provided to take off its edge."

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The “two economies which are the best *succedanea*” for deficiency of temperament are concentration and drill. This he illustrates by example, and he also lays down some good, plain, practical rules which “Poor Richard” would have cheerfully approved. He might have accepted also the Essay on “Wealth” as having a good sense so like his own that he could hardly tell the difference between them.

“Wealth begins in a tight roof that keeps the rain and wind out; in a good pump that yields you plenty of sweet water; in two suits of clothes, so as to change your dress when you are wet; in dry sticks to burn; in a good double-wick lamp, and three meals; in a horse or locomotive to cross the land; in a boat to cross the sea; in tools to work with; in books to read; and so, in giving, on all sides, by tools and auxiliaries, the greatest possible extension to our powers, as if it added feet, and hands, and eyes, and blood, length to the day, and knowledge and good will. Wealth begins with these articles of necessity.—

“To be rich is to have a ticket of admission to the masterworks and chief men of each race.—

“The pulpit and the press have many commonplaces denouncing the thirst for wealth; but if men should take these moralists at their word, and leave off aiming to be rich, the moralists would rush to rekindle at all hazards this love of power in the people, lest civilization should be undone.”

Who can give better counsels on “Culture” than Emerson? But we must borrow only a few sentences from his essay on that subject. All kinds of secrets come out as we read these Essays of Emerson’s. We know something of his friends and disciples who gathered round him and sat at his feet. It is not hard to believe that he was drawing one of those composite portraits Mr. Galton has given us specimens of when he wrote as follows:—

“The pest of society is egotism. This goitre of egotism is so frequent among notable persons that we must infer some strong necessity in nature which it subserves; such as we see in the sexual attraction. The preservation of the species was a point of such necessity that Nature has secured it at all hazards by immensely overloading the passion, at the risk of perpetual crime and disorder. So egotism has its root in the cardinal necessity by which each individual persists to be what he is.” “The antidotes against this organic egotism are, the range and variety of attraction, as gained by acquaintance with the world, with men of merit, with classes of society, with travel, with eminent persons, and with the high resources of philosophy, art, and religion: books, travel, society, solitude.” “We can ill spare the commanding social benefits of cities; they must be used; yet cautiously and haughtily,—and will yield their best values to him who can best do without them. Keep the town for occasions, but the

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habits should be formed to retirement. Solitude, the safeguard of mediocrity, is to genius the stern friend, the cold, obscure shelter, where moult the wings which will bear it farther than suns and stars."

We must remember, too, that "the calamities are our friends. Try the rough water as well as the smooth. Rough water can teach lessons worth knowing. Don't be so tender at making an enemy now and then. He who aims high, must dread an easy home and popular manners."

Emerson cannot have had many enemies, if any, in his calm and noble career. He can have cherished no enmity, on personal grounds at least. But he refused his hand to one who had spoken ill of a friend whom he respected. It was "the hand of Douglas" again, —the same feeling that Charles Emerson expressed in the youthful essay mentioned in the introduction to this volume.

Here are a few good sayings about "Behavior."

"There is always a best way of doing everything, if it be to boil an egg. Manners are the happy ways of doing things; each once a stroke of genius or of love,—now repeated and hardened into usage."

Thus it is that Mr. Emerson speaks of "Manners" in his Essay under the above title.

"The basis of good manners is self-reliance.—Manners require time, as nothing is more vulgar than haste.—

"Men take each other's measure, when they meet for the first time,—and every time they meet.—

"It is not what talents or genius a man has, but how he is to his talents, that constitutes friendship and character. The man that stands by himself, the universe stands by him also."

In his Essay on "Worship," Emerson ventures the following prediction:—

"The religion which is to guide and fulfil the present and coming ages, whatever else it be, must be intellectual. The scientific mind must have a faith which is science.—There will be a new church founded on moral science, at first cold and naked, a babe in a manger again, the algebra and mathematics of ethical law, the church of men to come, without shawms or psaltery or sackbut; but it will have heaven and earth for its beams and rafters; science for symbol and illustration; it will fast enough gather beauty, music, picture, poetry."

It is a bold prophecy, but who can doubt that all improbable and unverifiable traditional knowledge of all kinds will make way for the established facts of science and history when these last reach it in their onward movement? It may be remarked that he now speaks of science more respectfully than of old. I suppose this Essay was of later date than "Beauty," or "Illusions." But accidental circumstances made such confusion in the strata of Emerson's published thought that one is often at a loss to know whether a sentence came from the older or the newer layer.

We come to "Considerations by the Way." The common-sense side of Emerson's mind has so much in common with the plain practical intelligence of Franklin that it is a pleasure to find the philosopher of the nineteenth century quoting the philosopher of the eighteenth.

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“Franklin said, 'Mankind are very superficial and dastardly: they begin upon a thing, but, meeting with a difficulty, they fly from it discouraged; but they have the means if they would employ them.'”

“Shall we judge a country by the majority, or by the minority? By the minority, surely.” Here we have the doctrine of the “saving remnant,” which we have since recognized in Mr. Matthew Arnold’s well-remembered lecture. Our republican philosopher is clearly enough outspoken on this matter of the *vox populi*. “Leave this hypocritical prating about the masses. Masses are rude, lame, unmade, pernicious in their demands, and need not to be flattered, but to be schooled. I wish not to concede anything to them, but to tame, drill, divide, and break them up, and draw individuals out of them.”

Pere Bouhours asked a question about the Germans which found its answer in due time. After reading what Emerson says about “the masses,” one is tempted to ask whether a philosopher can ever have “a constituency” and be elected to Congress? Certainly the essay just quoted from would not make a very promising campaign document. Perhaps there was no great necessity for Emerson’s returning to the subject of “Beauty,” to which he had devoted a chapter of “Nature,” and of which he had so often discoursed incidentally. But he says so many things worth reading in the Essay thus entitled in the “Conduct of Life” that we need not trouble ourselves about repetitions. The Essay is satirical and poetical rather than philosophical. Satirical when he speaks of science with something of that old feeling betrayed by his brother Charles when he was writing in 1828; poetical in the flight of imagination with which he enlivens, entertains, stimulates, inspires,—or as some may prefer to say,—amuses his listeners and readers.

The reader must decide which of these effects is produced by the following passage:—

“The feat of the imagination is in showing the convertibility of everything into every other thing. Facts which had never before left their stark common sense suddenly figure as Eleusinian mysteries. My boots and chair and candlestick are fairies in disguise, meteors, and constellations. All the facts in Nature are nouns of the intellect, and make the grammar of the eternal language. Every word has a double, treble, or centuple use and meaning. What! has my stove and pepper-pot a false bottom? I cry you mercy, good shoe-box! I did not know you were a jewel-case. Chaff and dust begin to sparkle, and are clothed about with immortality. And there is a joy in perceiving the representative or symbolic character of a fact, which no base fact or event can ever give. There are no days so memorable as those which vibrated to some stroke of the imagination.”

One is reminded of various things in reading this sentence. An ounce of alcohol, or a few whiffs from an opium-pipe, may easily make a day memorable

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by bringing on this imaginative delirium, which is apt, if often repeated, to run into visions of rodents and reptiles. A coarser satirist than Emerson indulged his fancy in "Meditations on a Broomstick," which My Lady Berkeley heard seriously and to edification. Meditations on a "Shoe-box" are less promising, but no doubt something could be made of it. A poet must select, and if he stoops too low he cannot lift the object he would fain idealize.

The habitual readers of Emerson do not mind an occasional over-statement, extravagance, paradox, eccentricity; they find them amusing and not misleading. But the accountants, for whom two and two always make four, come upon one of these passages and shut the book up as wanting in sanity. Without a certain sensibility to the humorous, no one should venture upon Emerson. If he had seen the lecturer's smile as he delivered one of his playful statements of a runaway truth, fact unhorsed by imagination, sometimes by wit, or humor, he would have found a meaning in his words which the featureless printed page could never show him.

The Essay on "Illusions" has little which we have not met with, or shall not find repeating itself in the Poems.

During this period Emerson contributed many articles in prose and verse to the "Atlantic Monthly," and several to "The Dial," a second periodical of that name published in Cincinnati. Some of these have been, or will be, elsewhere referred to.

CHAPTER X.

1863-1868. AET. 60-65.

"Boston Hymn."—"Voluntaries."—Other Poems.—"May-Day and other Pieces."—"Remarks at the Funeral Services of Abraham Lincoln."—Essay on Persian Poetry.—Address at a Meeting of the Free Religious Association.—"Progress of Culture." Address before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Harvard University.—Course of Lectures in Philadelphia.—The Degree of LL.D. conferred upon Emerson by Harvard University.—"Terminus."

The "Boston Hymn" was read by Emerson in the Music Hall, on the first day of January, 1863. It is a rough piece of verse, but noble from beginning to end. One verse of it, beginning "Pay ransom to the owner," has been already quoted; these are the three that precede it:—

"I cause from every creature
His proper good to flow:

As much as he is and doeth
So much shall he bestow.

“But laying hands on another
To coin his labor and sweat,
He goes in pawn to his victim
For eternal years in debt.

“To-day unbind the captive,
So only are ye unbound:
Lift up a people from the dust,
Trump of their rescue, sound!”

“Voluntaries,” published in the same year in the “Atlantic Monthly,” is more dithyrambic in its measure and of a more Pindaric elevation than the plain song of the “Boston Hymn.”



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"But best befriended of the God
He who, in evil times,
Warned by an inward voice,
Heeds not the darkness and the dread,
Biding by his rule and choice,
Feeling only the fiery thread
Leading over heroic ground,
Walled with mortal terror round,
To the aim which him allures,
And the sweet heaven his deed secures.
Peril around, all else appalling,
Cannon in front and leaden rain
Him duly through the clarion calling
To the van called not in vain."

It is in this poem that we find the lines which, a moment after they were written, seemed as if they had been carved on marble for a thousand years:—

"So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, *Thou must*,
The youth replies, *I can*."

"Saadi" was published in the "Atlantic Monthly" in 1864, "My Garden" in 1866, "Terminus" in 1867. In the same year these last poems with many others were collected in a small volume, entitled "May-Day, and Other Pieces." The general headings of these poems are as follows: May-Day.—The Adirondacs.—Occasional and Miscellaneous Pieces.—Nature and Life.—Elements.—Quatrains.—Translations.—Some of these poems, which were written at long intervals, have been referred to in previous pages. "The Adirondacs" is a pleasant narrative, but not to be compared for its poetical character with "May-Day," one passage from which, beginning,

"I saw the bud-crowned Spring go forth,"

is surpassingly imaginative and beautiful. In this volume will be found "Brahma," "Days," and others which are well known to all readers of poetry.

Emerson's delineations of character are remarkable for high-relief and sharp-cut lines. In his Remarks at the Funeral Services for Abraham Lincoln, held in Concord, April 19, 1865, he drew the portrait of the homespun-robed chief of the Republic with equal breadth and delicacy:—

"Here was place for no holiday magistrate, no fair weather sailor; the new pilot was hurried to the helm in a tornado. In four years,—four years of battle-days,—his

endurance, his fertility of resources, his magnanimity, were sorely tried and never found wanting. There, by his courage, his justice, his even temper, his fertile counsel, his humanity, he stood a heroic figure in the centre of a heroic epoch. He is the true history of the American people in his time. Step by step he walked before them; slow with their slowness, quickening his march by theirs, the true representative of this continent; an entirely public man; father of his country; the pulse of twenty millions throbbing in his heart, the thought of their minds articulated by his tongue."

In his "Remarks at the Organization of the Free Religious Association," Emerson stated his leading thought about religion in a very succinct and sufficiently "transcendental" way: intelligibly for those who wish to understand him; mystically to those who do not accept or wish to accept the doctrine shadowed forth in his poem, "The Sphinx."

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—“As soon as every man is apprised of the Divine Presence within his own mind,—is apprised that the perfect law of duty corresponds with the laws of chemistry, of vegetation, of astronomy, as face to face in a glass; that the basis of duty, the order of society, the power of character, the wealth of culture, the perfection of taste, all draw their essence from this moral sentiment; then we have a religion that exalts, that commands all the social and all the private action.”

Nothing could be more wholesome in a meeting of creed-killers than the suggestive remark,—

—“What I expected to find here was, some practical suggestions by which we were to reanimate and reorganize for ourselves the true Church, the pure worship. Pure doctrine always bears fruit in pure benefits. It is only by good works, it is only on the basis of active duty, that worship finds expression.—The interests that grow out of a meeting like this, should bind us with new strength to the old eternal duties.” In a later address before the same association, Emerson says:— “I object, of course, to the claim of miraculous dispensation,—certainly not to the *doctrine* of Christianity.—If you are childish and exhibit your saint as a worker of wonders, a thaumaturgist, I am repelled. That claim takes his teachings out of nature, and permits official and arbitrary senses to be grafted on the teachings.”

The “Progress of Culture” was delivered as a Phi Beta Kappa oration just thirty years after his first address before the same society. It is very instructive to compare the two orations written at the interval of a whole generation: one in 1837, at the age of thirty-four; the other in 1867, at the age of sixty-four. Both are hopeful, but the second is more sanguine than the first. He recounts what he considers the recent gains of the reforming movement:—

“Observe the marked ethical quality of the innovations urged or adopted. The new claim of woman to a political status is itself an honorable testimony to the civilization which has given her a civil status new in history. Now that by the increased humanity of law she controls her property, she inevitably takes the next step to her share in power.”

He enumerates many other gains, from the war or from the growth of intelligence,—“All, one may say, in a high degree revolutionary, teaching nations the taking of governments into their own hands, and superseding kings.”

He repeats some of his fundamental formulae.

“The foundation of culture, as of character, is at last the moral sentiment.

“Great men are they who see that spiritual is stronger than any material force, that thoughts rule the world.

“Periodicity, reaction, are laws of mind as well as of matter.”

And most encouraging it is to read in 1884 what was written in 1867,—especially in the view of future possibilities. “Bad kings and governors help us, if only they are bad enough.” *Non tali auxilio*, we exclaim, with a shudder of remembrance, and are very glad to read these concluding words: “I read the promise of better times and of greater men.”

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In the year 1866, Emerson reached the age which used to be spoken of as the “grand climacteric.” In that year Harvard University conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws, the highest honor in its gift.

In that same year, having left home on one of his last lecturing trips, he met his son, Dr. Edward Waldo Emerson, at the Brevoort House, in New York. Then, and in that place, he read to his son the poem afterwards published in the “Atlantic Monthly,” and in his second volume, under the title “Terminus.” This was the first time that Dr. Emerson recognized the fact that his father felt himself growing old. The thought, which must have been long shaping itself in the father’s mind, had been so far from betraying itself that it was a shock to the son to hear it plainly avowed. The poem is one of his noblest; he could not fold his robes about him with more of serene dignity than in these solemn lines. The reader may remember that one passage from it has been quoted for a particular purpose, but here is the whole poem:—

TERMINUS.

It is time to be old,
To take in sail:—
The god of bounds,
Who sets to seas a shore,
Came to me in his fatal rounds,
And said: “No more!
No farther shoot
Thy broad ambitious branches, and thy root.
Fancy departs: no more invent;
Contract thy firmament
To compass of a tent.
There’s not enough for this and that,
Make thy option which of two;
Economize the failing river,
Not the less revere the Giver,
Leave the many and hold the few,
Timely wise accept the terms,
Soften the fall with wary foot;
A little while
Still plan and smile,
And,—fault of novel germs,—
Mature the unfallen fruit.
Curse, if thou wilt, thy sires,
Bad husbands of their fires,
Who when they gave thee breath,
Failed to bequeath
The needful sinew stark as once,



The baresark marrow to thy bones,
But left a legacy of ebbing veins,
Inconstant heat and nerveless reins,—
Amid the Muses, left thee deaf and dumb,
Amid the gladiators, halt and numb.

“As the bird trims her to the gale
I trim myself to the storm of time,
I man the rudder, reef the sail,
Obey the voice at eve obeyed at prime:
'Lowly faithful, banish fear,
Right onward drive unharmed;
The port, well worth the cruise, is near,
And every wave is charmed.”

CHAPTER XI.

1868-1873. AET. 65-70.

Lectures on the Natural History of the Intellect.—Publication of “Society and Solitude.”
Contents: Society and Solitude. —Civilization.—Art.—Eloquence.—Domestic Life.—
Farming. —Works and Days.—Books.—Clubs.—Courage.—Success.—Old Age.—
Other Literary Labors.—Visit to California.—Burning of his House, and the Story of its
Rebuilding.—Third Visit to Europe.—His Reception at Concord on his Return.

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During three successive years, 1868, 1869, 1870, Emerson delivered a series of Lectures at Harvard University on the “Natural History of the Intellect.” These Lectures, as I am told by Dr. Emerson, cost him a great deal of labor, but I am not aware that they have been collected or reported. They will be referred to in the course of this chapter, in an extract from Prof. Thayer’s “Western Journey with Mr. Emerson.” He is there reported as saying that he cared very little for metaphysics. It is very certain that he makes hardly any use of the ordinary terms employed by metaphysicians. If he does not hold the words “subject and object” with their adjectives, in the same contempt that Mr. Ruskin shows for them, he very rarely employs either of these expressions. Once he ventures on the *not me*, but in the main he uses plain English handles for the few metaphysical tools he has occasion to employ.

“Society and Solitude” was published in 1870. The first Essay in the volume bears the same name as the volume itself.

In this first Essay Emerson is very fair to the antagonistic claims of solitary and social life. He recognizes the organic necessity of solitude. We are driven “as with whips into the desert.” But there is danger in this seclusion. “Now and then a man exquisitely made can live alone and must; but coop up most men and you undo them.—Here again, as so often, Nature delights to put us between extreme antagonisms, and our safety is in the skill with which we keep the diagonal line.—The conditions are met, if we keep our independence yet do not lose our sympathy.”

The Essay on “Civilization” is pleasing, putting familiar facts in a very agreeable way. The framed or stone-house in place of the cave or the camp, the building of roads, the change from war, hunting, and pasturage to agriculture, the division of labor, the skilful combinations of civil government, the diffusion of knowledge through the press, are well worn subjects which he treats agreeably, if not with special brilliancy:—

“Right position of woman in the State is another index.—Place the sexes in right relations of mutual respect, and a severe morality gives that essential charm to a woman which educates all that is delicate, poetic, and self-sacrificing; breeds courtesy and learning, conversation and wit, in her rough mate, so that I have thought a sufficient measure of civilization is the influence of good women.”

My attention was drawn to one paragraph for a reason which my reader will readily understand, and I trust look upon good-naturedly:—

“The ship, in its latest complete equipment, is an abridgment and compend of a nation’s arts: the ship steered by compass and chart, longitude reckoned by lunar observation and by chronometer, driven by steam; and in wildest sea-mountains, at vast distances from home,—

“The pulses of her iron heart
Go beating through the storm.”

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I cannot be wrong, it seems to me, in supposing those two lines to be an incorrect version of these two from a poem of my own called "The Steamboat:"

"The beating of her restless heart
Still sounding through the storm."

It is never safe to quote poetry from memory, at least while the writer lives, for he is ready to "cavil on the ninth part of a hair" where his verses are concerned. But extreme accuracy was not one of Emerson's special gifts, and vanity whispers to the misrepresented versifier that

'tis better to be quoted wrong
Than to be quoted not at all.

This Essay of Emerson's is irradiated by a single precept that is worthy to stand by the side of that which Juvenal says came from heaven. How could the man in whose thought such a meteoric expression suddenly announced itself fail to recognize it as divine? It is not strange that he repeats it on the page next the one where we first see it. Not having any golden letters to print it in, I will underscore it for italics, and doubly underscore it in the second extract for small capitals:—

"Now that is the wisdom of a man, in every instance of his labor,
to *hitch his wagon to a star*, and see his chore done by the gods
themselves."—

"'It was a great instruction,' said a saint in Cromwell's war, 'that the best courages are but beams of the Almighty.' HITCH YOUR WAGON TO A STAR. Let us not fag in paltry works which serve our pot and bag alone. Let us not lie and steal. No god will help. We shall find all their teams going the other way,—Charles's Wain, Great Bear, Orion, Leo, Hercules: every god will leave us. Work rather for those interests which the divinities honor and promote,—justice, love, freedom, knowledge, utility."—

Charles's Wain and the Great Bear, he should have been reminded, are the same constellation; the *Dipper* is what our people often call it, and the country folk all know "the pinters," which guide their eyes to the North Star.

I find in the Essay on "Art" many of the thoughts with which we are familiar in Emerson's poem, "The Problem." It will be enough to cite these passages:—

"We feel in seeing a noble building which rhymes well, as we do in hearing a perfect song, that it is spiritually organic; that it had a necessity in nature for being; was one of the possible forms in the Divine mind, and is now only discovered and executed by the artist, not arbitrarily composed by him. And so every genuine work of art has as much reason for being as the earth and the sun.—"The Iliad of Homer, the songs of David,

the odes of Pindar, the tragedies of Aeschylus, the Doric temples, the Gothic cathedrals, the plays of Shakspeare, all and each were made not for sport, but in grave earnest, in tears and smiles of suffering and loving men.—

—“The Gothic cathedrals were built when the builder and the priest and the people were overpowered by their faith. Love and fear laid every stone.—

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“Our arts are happy hits. We are like the musician on the lake, whose melody is sweeter than he knows.”

The discourse on “Eloquence” is more systematic, more professorial, than many of the others. A few brief extracts will give the key to its general purport:—

“Eloquence must be grounded on the plainest narrative. Afterwards, it may warm itself until it exhales symbols of every kind and color, speaks only through the most poetic forms; but, first and last, it must still be at bottom a biblical statement of fact.—

“He who will train himself to mastery in this science of persuasion must lay the emphasis of education, not on popular arts, but on character and insight.—

—“The highest platform of eloquence is the moral sentiment.—

—“Its great masters ... were grave men, who preferred their integrity to their talent, and esteemed that object for which they toiled, whether the prosperity of their country, or the laws, or a reformation, or liberty of speech, or of the press, or letters, or morals, as above the whole world and themselves also.”

“Domestic Life” begins with a picture of childhood so charming that it sweetens all the good counsel which follows like honey round the rim of the goblet which holds some tonic draught:—

“Welcome to the parents the puny struggler, strong in his weakness, his little arms more irresistible than the soldier’s, his lips touched with persuasion which Chatham and Pericles in manhood had not. His unaffected lamentations when he lifts up his voice on high, or, more beautiful, the sobbing child,—the face all liquid grief, as he tries to swallow his vexation,—soften all hearts to pity, and to mirthful and clamorous compassion. The small despot asks so little that all reason and all nature are on his side. His ignorance is more charming than all knowledge, and his little sins more bewitching than any virtue. His flesh is angels’ flesh, all alive.—All day, between his three or four sleeps, he coos like a pigeon-house, sputters and spurs and puts on his faces of importance; and when he fasts, the little Pharisee fails not to sound his trumpet before him.”

Emerson has favored his audiences and readers with what he knew about “Farming.” Dr. Emerson tells me that this discourse was read as an address before the “Middlesex Agricultural Society,” and printed in the “Transactions” of that association. He soon found out that the hoe and the spade were not the tools he was meant to work with, but he had some general ideas about farming which he expressed very happily:—

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"The farmer's office is precise and important, but you must not try to paint him in rose-color; you cannot make pretty compliments to fate and gravitation, whose minister he is. —This hard work will always be done by one kind of man; not by scheming speculators, nor by soldiers, nor professors, nor readers of Tennyson; but by men of endurance, deep-chested, long-winded, tough, slow and sure, and timely."

Emerson's chemistry and physiology are not profound, but they are correct enough to make a fine richly colored poetical picture in his imaginative presentation. He tells the commonest facts so as to make them almost a surprise:—

"By drainage we went down to a subsoil we did not know, and have found there is a Concord under old Concord, which we are now getting the best crops from; a Middlesex under Middlesex; and, in fine, that Massachusetts has a basement story more valuable and that promises to pay a better rent than all the superstructure."

In "Works and Days" there is much good reading, but I will call attention to one or two points only, as having a slight special interest of their own. The first is the boldness of Emerson's assertions and predictions in matters belonging to science and art. Thus, he speaks of "the transfusion of the blood,—which, in Paris, it was claimed, enables a man to change his blood as often as his linen!" And once more,

"We are to have the balloon yet, and the next war will be fought in the air."

Possibly; but it is perhaps as safe to predict that it will be fought on wheels; the soldiers on bicycles, the officers on tricycles.

The other point I have marked is that we find in this Essay a prose version of the fine poem, printed in "May-Day" under the title "Days." I shall refer to this more particularly hereafter.

It is wronging the Essay on "Books" to make extracts from it. It is all an extract, taken from years of thought in the lonely study and the public libraries. If I commit the wrong I have spoken of, it is under protest against myself. Every word of this Essay deserves careful reading. But here are a few sentences I have selected for the reader's consideration:—

"There are books; and it is practicable to read them because they are so few.—

"I visit occasionally the Cambridge Library, and I can seldom go there without renewing the conviction that the best of it all is already within the four walls of my study at home.—



“The three practical rules which I have to offer are, 1. Never read any book that is not a year old. 2. Never read any but famed books. 3. Never read any but what you like, or, in Shakspeare’s phrase,—

“No profit goes where is no pleasure ta’en;
In brief, Sir, study what you most affect.”

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Emerson has a good deal to say about conversation in his Essay on "Clubs," but nothing very notable on the special subject of the Essay. Perhaps his diary would have something of interest with reference to the "Saturday Club," of which he was a member, which, in fact, formed itself around him as a nucleus, and which he attended very regularly. But he was not given to personalities, and among the men of genius and of talent whom he met there no one was quieter, but none saw and heard and remembered more. He was hardly what Dr. Johnson would have called a "clubbable" man, yet he enjoyed the meetings in his still way, or he would never have come from Concord so regularly to attend them. He gives two good reasons for the existence of a club like that of which I have been speaking:—

"I need only hint the value of the club for bringing masters in their several arts to compare and expand their views, to come to an understanding on these points, and so that their united opinion shall have its just influence on public questions of education and politics."

"A principal purpose also is the hospitality of the club, as a means of receiving a worthy foreigner with mutual advantage."

I do not think "public questions of education and politics" were very prominent at the social meetings of the "Saturday Club," but "worthy foreigners," and now and then one not so worthy, added variety to the meetings of the company, which included a wide range of talents and callings.

All that Emerson has to say about "Courage" is worth listening to, for he was a truly brave man in that sphere of action where there are more cowards than are found in the battle-field. He spoke his convictions fearlessly; he carried the spear of Ithuriel, but he wore no breastplate save that which protects him

"Whose armor is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill."

He mentions three qualities as attracting the wonder and reverence of mankind: 1. Disinterestedness; 2. Practical Power; 3. Courage. "I need not show how much it is esteemed, for the people give it the first rank. They forgive everything to it. And any man who puts his life in peril in a cause which is esteemed becomes the darling of all men."—There are good and inspiring lessons for young and old in this Essay or Lecture, which closes with the spirited ballad of "George Nidiver," written "by a lady to whom all the particulars of the fact are exactly known."

Men will read any essay or listen to any lecture which has for its subject, like the one now before me, "Success." Emerson complains of the same things in America which Carlyle groaned over in England:—

“We countenance each other in this life of show, puffing advertisement, and manufacture of public opinion; and excellence is lost sight of in the hunger for sudden performance and praise.—

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"Now, though I am by no means sure that the reader will assent to all my propositions, yet I think we shall agree in my first rule for success,—that we shall drop the brag and the advertisement and take Michael Angelo's course, 'to confide in one's self and be something of worth and value.'"

Reading about "Success" is after all very much like reading in old books of alchemy. "How not to do it," is the lesson of all the books and treatises. Geber and Albertus Magnus, Roger Bacon and Raymond Lully, and the whole crew of "pauperes alchimistae," all give the most elaborate directions showing their student how to fail in transmuting Saturn into Luna and Sol and making a billionaire of himself. "Success" in its vulgar sense,—the gaining of money and position,—is not to be reached by following the rules of an instructor. Our "self-made men," who govern the country by their wealth and influence, have found their place by adapting themselves to the particular circumstances in which they were placed, and not by studying the broad maxims of "Poor Richard," or any other moralist or economist.—For such as these is meant the cheap cynical saying quoted by Emerson, "*Rien ne reussit mieux que le succes.*"

But this is not the aim and end of Emerson's teaching:—

"I fear the popular notion of success stands in direct opposition in all points to the real and wholesome success. One adores public opinion, the other private opinion; one fame, the other desert; one feats, the other humility; one lucre, the other love; one monopoly, and the other hospitality of mind."

And so, though there is no alchemy in this Lecture, it is profitable reading, assigning its true value to the sterling gold of character, the gaining of which is true success, as against the brazen idol of the market-place.

The Essay on "Old Age" has a special value from its containing two personal reminiscences: one of the venerable Josiah Quincy, a brief mention; the other the detailed record of a visit in the year 1825, Emerson being then twenty-two years old, to ex-President John Adams, soon after the election of his son to the Presidency. It is enough to allude to these, which every reader will naturally turn to first of all.

But many thoughts worth gathering are dropped along these pages. He recounts the benefits of age; the perilous capes and shoals it has weathered; the fact that a success more or less signifies little, so that the old man may go below his own mark with impunity; the feeling that he has found expression,—that his condition, in particular and in general, allows the utterance of his mind; the pleasure of completing his secular affairs, leaving all in the best posture for the future:—

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“When life has been well spent, age is a loss of what it can well spare, muscular strength, organic instincts, gross bulk, and works that belong to these. But the central wisdom which was old in infancy is young in fourscore years, and dropping off obstructions, leaves in happy subjects the mind purified and wise. I have heard that whoever loves is in no condition old. I have heard that whenever the name of man is spoken, the doctrine of immortality is announced; it cleaves to his constitution. The mode of it baffles our wit, and no whisper comes to us from the other side. But the inference from the working of intellect, hiving knowledge, hiving skill,—at the end of life just ready to be born,—affirms the inspirations of affection and of the moral sentiment.”

Other literary labors of Emerson during this period were the Introduction to “Plutarch’s Morals” in 1870, and a Preface to William Ellery Channing’s Poem, “The Wanderer,” in 1871. He made a speech at Howard University, Washington, in 1872.

In the year 1871 Emerson made a visit to California with a very pleasant company, concerning which Mr. John M. Forbes, one of whose sons married Emerson’s daughter Edith, writes to me as follows. Professor James B. Thayer, to whom he refers, has more recently written and published an account of this trip, from which some extracts will follow Mr. Forbes’s letter:—

BOSTON, February 6, 1884.

MY DEAR DR.,—What little I can give will be of a very rambling character.

One of the first memories of Emerson which comes up is my meeting him on the steamboat at returning from Detroit East. I persuaded him to stop over at Niagara, which he had never seen. We took a carriage and drove around the circuit. It was in early summer, perhaps in 1848 or 1849. When we came to Table Rock on the British side, our driver took us down on the outer part of the rock in the carriage. We passed on by rail, and the next day’s papers brought us the telegraphic news that Table Rock had fallen over; perhaps we were among the last persons on it! About 1871 I made up a party for California, including Mr. Emerson, his daughter Edith, and a number of gay young people. We drove with B——, the famous Vermont coachman, up to the Geysers, and then made the journey to the Yosemite Valley by wagon and on horseback. I wish I could give you more than a mere outline picture of the sage at this time. With the thermometer at 100 degrees he would sometimes drive with the buffalo robes drawn up over his knees, apparently indifferent to the weather, gazing on the new and grand scenes of mountain and valley through which we journeyed. I especially remember once, when riding down the steep side of a mountain, his reins hanging loose, the bit entirely out of the horse’s mouth, without his being aware that this was an unusual method of riding Pegasus, so fixed was his gaze into space,

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and so unconscious was he, at the moment, of his surroundings. In San Francisco he visited with us the dens of the opium smokers, in damp cellars, with rows of shelves around, on which were deposited the stupefied Mongolians; perhaps the lowest haunts of humanity to be found in the world. The contrast between them and the serene eye and undisturbed brow of the sage was a sight for all beholders. When we reached Salt Lake City on our way home he made a point of calling on Brigham Young, then at the summit of his power. The Prophet, or whatever he was called, was a burly, bull-necked man of hard sense, really leading a great industrial army. He did not seem to appreciate who his visitor was, at any rate gave no sign of so doing, and the chief interest of the scene was the wide contrast between these leaders of spiritual and of material forces. I regret not having kept any notes of what was said on this and other occasions, but if by chance you could get hold of Professor J.B. Thayer, who was one of our party, he could no doubt give you some notes that would be valuable. Perhaps the latest picture that remains in my mind of our friend is his wandering along the beaches and under the trees at Naushon, no doubt carrying home large stealings from my domain there, which lost none of their value from being transferred to his pages. Next to his private readings which he gave us there, the most notable recollection is that of his intense amusement at some comical songs which our young people used to sing, developing a sense of humor which a superficial observer would hardly have discovered, but which you and I know he possessed in a marked degree.

Yours always,

J.M. FORBES.

Professor James B. Thayer's little book, "A Western Journey with Mr. Emerson," is a very entertaining account of the same trip concerning which Mr. Forbes wrote the letter just given. Professor Thayer kindly read many of his notes to me before his account was published, and allows me to make such use of the book as I see fit. Such liberty must not be abused, and I will content myself with a few passages in which Emerson has a part. No extract will interest the reader more than the following:—

"'How *can* Mr. Emerson,' said one of the younger members of the party to me that day, 'be so agreeable, all the time, without getting tired!' It was the *naïve* expression of what we all had felt. There was never a more agreeable travelling companion; he was always accessible, cheerful, sympathetic, considerate, tolerant; and there was always that same respectful interest in those with whom he talked, even the humblest, which raised them in their own estimation. One thing particularly impressed me,—the sense that he seemed to have of a certain great amplitude of time and leisure. It was the behavior of one who really *believed*

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in an immortal life, and had adjusted his conduct accordingly; so that, beautiful and grand as the natural objects were, among which our journey lay, they were matched by the sweet elevation of character, and the spiritual charm of our gracious friend. Years afterwards, on that memorable day of his funeral at Concord, I found that a sentence from his own Essay on Immortality haunted my mind, and kept repeating itself all the day long; it seemed to point to the sources of his power: 'Meantime the true disciples saw through the letter the doctrine of eternity, which dissolved the poor corpse, and Nature also, and gave grandeur to the passing hour.'"

This extract will be appropriately followed by another alluding to the same subject.

"The next evening, Sunday, the twenty-third, Mr. Emerson read his address on 'Immortality,' at Dr. Stebbins's church. It was the first time that he had spoken on the Western coast; never did he speak better. It was, in the main, the same noble Essay that has since been printed. "At breakfast the next morning we had the newspaper, the 'Alta California.' It gave a meagre outline of the address, but praised it warmly, and closed with the following observations: 'All left the church feeling that an elegant tribute had been paid to the creative genius of the Great First Cause, and that a masterly use of the English language had contributed to that end.'"

The story used to be told that after the Reverend Horace Holley had delivered a prayer on some public occasion, Major Ben. Russell, of ruddy face and ruffled shirt memory, Editor of "The Columbian Centinel," spoke of it in his paper the next day as "the most eloquent prayer ever addressed to a Boston audience."

The "Alta California's" "elegant tribute" is not quite up to this rhetorical altitude.

"The minister,' said he, 'is in no danger of losing his position; he represents the moral sense and the humanities.' He spoke of his own reasons for leaving the pulpit, and added that 'some one had lately come to him whose conscience troubled him about retaining the name of Christian; he had replied that he himself had no difficulty about it. When he was called a Platonist, or a Christian, or a Republican, he welcomed it. It did not bind him to what he did not like. What is the use of going about and setting up a flag of negation?' "I made bold to ask him what he had in mind in naming his recent course of lectures at Cambridge, 'The Natural History of the Intellect.' This opened a very interesting conversation; but, alas! I could recall but little of it,—little more than the mere hintings of what he said. He cared very little for metaphysics. But he thought that as a man grows he observes certain facts about his own mind,—about memory, for example. These he had set down from time to time. As for making any methodical history,

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he did not undertake it.”

Emerson met Brigham Young at Salt Lake City, as has been mentioned, but neither seems to have made much impression upon the other. Emerson spoke of the Mormons. Some one had said, “They impress the common people, through their imagination, by Bible-names and imagery.” “Yes,” he said, “it is an after-clap of Puritanism. But one would think that after this Father Abraham could go no further.”

The charm of Boswell’s Life of Johnson is that it not merely records his admirable conversation, but also gives us many of those lesser peculiarities which are as necessary to a true biography as lights and shades to a portrait on canvas. We are much obliged to Professor Thayer therefore for the two following pleasant recollections which he has been good-natured enough to preserve for us, and with which we will take leave of his agreeable little volume:—

“At breakfast we had, among other things, pie. This article at breakfast was one of Mr. Emerson’s weaknesses. A pie stood before him now. He offered to help somebody from it, who declined; and then one or two others, who also declined; and then Mr.——; he too declined. ‘But Mr.——!’ Mr. Emerson remonstrated, with humorous emphasis, thrusting the knife under a piece of the pie, and putting the entire weight of his character into his manner,—‘but Mr.——, *what is pie for?*’”

A near friend of mine, a lady, was once in the cars with Emerson, and when they stopped for the refreshment of the passengers he was very desirous of procuring something at the station for her solace. Presently he advanced upon her with a cup of tea in one hand and a wedge of pie in the other,—such a wedge! She could hardly have been more dismayed if one of Caesar’s *cunei*, or wedges of soldiers, had made a charge against her.

Yet let me say here that pie, often foolishly abused, is a good creature, at the right time and in angles of thirty or forty degrees. In semicircles and quadrants it may sometimes prove too much for delicate stomachs. But here was Emerson, a hopelessly confirmed pie-eater, never, so far as I remember, complaining of dyspepsia; and there, on the other side, was Carlyle, feeding largely on wholesome oatmeal, groaning with indigestion all his days, and living with half his self-consciousness habitually centred beneath his diaphragm.

Like his friend Carlyle and like Tennyson, Emerson had a liking for a whiff of tobacco-smoke:—

“When alone,” he said, “he rarely cared to finish a whole cigar. But in company it was singular to see how different it was. To one who found it difficult to meet people, as he did, the effect of a cigar was agreeable; one who is smoking may be as silent as he

likes, and yet be good company. And so Hawthorne used to say that he found it. On this journey Mr. Emerson generally smoked a single cigar after our mid-day dinner, or after tea, and occasionally after both. This was multiplying, several times over, anything that was usual with him at home.”

Professor Thayer adds in a note:—

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"Like Milton, Mr. Emerson 'was extraordinary temperate in his Diet,' and he used even less tobacco. Milton's quiet day seems to have closed regularly with a pipe; he 'supped,' we are told, 'upon ... some light thing; and after a pipe of tobacco and a glass of water went to bed.'"

As Emerson's name has been connected with that of Milton in its nobler aspects, it can do no harm to contemplate him, like Milton, indulging in this semi-philosophical luxury.

One morning in July, 1872, Mr. and Mrs. Emerson woke to find their room filled with smoke and fire coming through the floor of a closet in the room over them. The alarm was given, and the neighbors gathered and did their best to put out the flames, but the upper part of the house was destroyed, and with it were burned many papers of value to Emerson, including his father's sermons. Emerson got wet and chilled, and it seems too probable that the shock hastened that gradual loss of memory which came over his declining years.

His kind neighbors did all they could to save his property and relieve his temporary needs. A study was made ready for him in the old Court House, and the "Old Manse," which had sheltered his grandfather, and others nearest to him, received him once more as its tenant.

On the 15th of October he spoke at a dinner given in New York in honor of James Anthony Froude, the historian, and in the course of this same month he set out on his third visit to Europe, accompanied by his daughter Ellen. We have little to record of this visit, which was suggested as a relief and recreation while his home was being refitted for him. He went to Egypt, but so far as I have learned the Sphinx had no message for him, and in the state of mind in which he found himself upon the mysterious and dream-compelling Nile it may be suspected that the landscape with its palms and pyramids was an unreal vision,—that, as to his Humble-bee,

"All was picture as he passed."

But while he was voyaging his friends had not forgotten him. The sympathy with him in his misfortune was general and profound. It did not confine itself to expressions of feeling, but a spontaneous movement organized itself almost without effort. If any such had been needed, the attached friend whose name is appended to the Address to the Subscribers to the Fund for rebuilding Mr. Emerson's house would have been as energetic in this new cause as he had been in the matter of procuring the reprint of "Sartor Resartus." I have his kind permission to publish the whole correspondence relating to the friendly project so happily carried out.

To the Subscribers to the Fund for the Rebuilding of Mr. Emerson's House, after the Fire of July 24, 1872:

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The death of Mr. Emerson has removed any objection which may have before existed to the printing of the following correspondence. I have now caused this to be done, that each subscriber may have the satisfaction of possessing a copy of the touching and affectionate letters in which he expressed his delight in this, to him, most unexpected demonstration of personal regard and attachment, in the offer to restore for him his ruined home. No enterprise of the kind was ever more fortunate and successful in its purpose and in its results. The prompt and cordial response to the proposed subscription was most gratifying. No contribution was solicited from any one. The simple suggestion to a few friends of Mr. Emerson that an opportunity was now offered to be of service to him was all that was needed. From the first day on which it was made, the day after the fire, letters began to come in, with cheques for large and small amounts, so that in less than three weeks I was enabled to send to Judge Hoar the sum named in his letter as received by him on the 13th of August, and presented by him to Mr. Emerson the next morning, at the Old Manse, with fitting words. Other subscriptions were afterwards received, increasing the amount on my book to eleven thousand six hundred and twenty dollars. A part of this was handed directly to the builder at Concord. The balance was sent to Mr. Emerson October 7, and acknowledged by him in his letter of October 8, 1872. All the friends of Mr. Emerson who knew of the plan which was proposed to rebuild his house, seemed to feel that it was a privilege to be allowed to express in this way the love and veneration with which he was regarded, and the deep debt of gratitude which they owed to him, and there is no doubt that a much larger amount would have been readily and gladly offered, if it had been required, for the object in view. Those who have had the happiness to join in this friendly "conspiracy" may well take pleasure in the thought that what they have done has had the effect to lighten the load of care and anxiety which the calamity of the fire brought with it to Mr. Emerson, and thus perhaps to prolong for some precious years the serene and noble life that was so dear to all of us.

My thanks are due to the friends who have made me the bearer of this message of good-will.

LE BARON RUSSELL.

BOSTON, May 8, 1882.

BOSTON, August 13, 1872.

DEAR MR. EMERSON:

It seems to have been the spontaneous desire of your friends, on hearing of the burning of your house, to be allowed the pleasure of rebuilding it.

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A few of them have united for this object, and now request your acceptance of the amount which I have to-day deposited to your order at the Concord Bank, through the kindness of our friend, Judge Hoar. They trust that you will receive it as an expression of sincere regard and affection from friends, who will, one and all, esteem it a great privilege to be permitted to assist in the restoration of your home. And if, in their eagerness to participate in so grateful a work, they may have exceeded the estimate of your architect as to what is required for that purpose, they beg that you will devote the remainder to such other objects as may be most convenient to you.

Very sincerely yours,

LE BARON RUSSELL.

CONCORD, August 14, 1872.

DR. LE B. RUSSELL:

Dear Sir,—I received your letters, with the check for ten thousand dollars inclosed, from Mr. Barrett last evening. This morning I deposited it to Mr. Emerson's credit in the Concord National Bank, and took a bank book for him, with his little balance entered at the top, and this following, and carried it to him with your letter. I told him, by way of prelude, that some of his friends had made him treasurer of an association who wished him to go to England and examine Warwick Castle and other noted houses that had been recently injured by fire, in order to get the best ideas possible for restoration, and then to apply them to a house which the association was formed to restore in this neighborhood. When he understood the thing and had read your letter, he seemed very deeply moved. He said that he had been allowed so far in life to stand on his own feet, and that he hardly knew what to say,—that the kindness of his friends was very great. I said what I thought was best in reply, and told him that this was the spontaneous act of friends, who wished the privilege of expressing in this way their respect and affection, and was done only by those who thought it a privilege to do so. I mentioned Hillard as you desired, and also Mrs. Tappan, who, it seems, had written to him and offered any assistance he might need, to the extent of five thousand dollars, personally. I think it is all right, but he said he must see the list of contributors, and would then say what he had to say about it. He told me that Mr. F.C. Lowell, who was his classmate and old friend, Mr. Bangs, Mrs. Gurney, and a few other friends, had already sent him five thousand dollars, which he seemed to think was as much as he could bear. This makes the whole a very gratifying result, and perhaps explains the absence of some names on your book.

I am glad that Mr. Emerson, who is feeble and ill, can learn what a debt of obligation his friends feel to him, and thank you heartily for what you have done about it. Very truly yours,



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E.R. HOAR.

CONCORD, August 16, 1872.

MY DEAR LE BARON:

I have wondered and melted over your letter and its accompaniments till it is high time that I should reply to it, if I can. My misfortunes, as I have lived along so far in this world, have been so few that I have never needed to ask direct aid of the host of good men and women who have cheered my life, though many a gift has come to me. And this late calamity, however rude and devastating, soon began to look more wonderful in its salvages than in its ruins, so that I can hardly feel any right to this munificent endowment with which you, and my other friends through you, have astonished me. But I cannot read your letter or think of its message without delight, that my companions and friends bear me so noble a good-will, nor without some new aspirations in the old heart toward a better deserving. Judge Hoar has, up to this time, withheld from me the names of my benefactors, but you may be sure that I shall not rest till I have learned them, every one, to repeat to myself at night and at morning.

Your affectionate friend and debtor,

R.W. EMERSON.

DR. LE BARON RUSSELL

CONCORD, October 8, 1872.

MY DEAR DOCTOR LE BARON:

I received last night your two notes, and the cheque, enclosed in one of them, for one thousand and twenty dollars.

Are my friends bent on killing me with kindness? No, you will say, but to make me live longer. I thought myself sufficiently loaded with benefits already, and you add more and more. It appears that you all will rebuild my house and rejuvenate me by sending me in my old days abroad on a young man's excursion. I am a lover of men, but this recent wonderful experience of their tenderness surprises and occupies my thoughts day by day. Now that I have all or almost all the names of the men and women who have conspired in this kindness to me (some of whom I have never personally known), I please myself with the thought of meeting each and asking, Why have we not met before? Why have you not told me that we thought alike? Life is not so long, nor sympathy of thought so common, that we can spare the society of those with whom we best agree. Well, 'tis probably my own fault by sticking ever to my solitude. Perhaps it is not too late to learn of these friends a better lesson.

Thank them for me whenever you meet them, and say to them that I am not wood or stone, if I have not yet trusted myself so far as to go to each one of them directly.

My wife insists that I shall also send her acknowledgments to them and you.

Yours and theirs affectionately,

R.W. EMERSON.

DR. LE BARON KUSSELL.

The following are the names of the subscribers to the fund for rebuilding Mr. Emerson's house:—



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Mrs. Anne S. Hooper.
Miss Alice S. Hooper.
Mrs. Caroline Tappan.
Miss Ellen S. Tappan.
Miss Mary A. Tappan.
Mr. T.G. Appleton.
Mrs. Henry Edwards.
Miss Susan E. Dorr.
Misses Wigglesworth.
Mr. Edward Wigglesworth.
Mr. J. Elliot Cabot.
Mrs. Sarah S. Russell.
Friends in New York and Philadelphia, through Mr. Williams.
Mr. William Whiting.
Mr. Frederick Beck.
Mr. H.P. Kidder.
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Mrs. S. Cabot.
Mr. James A. Dupee.
Mrs. Anna C. Lowell.
Mrs. M.F. Sayles.
Miss Helen L. Appleton.
J.R. Osgood & Co.
Mr. Richard Soule.
Mr. Francis Geo. Shaw.
Dr. R.W. Hooper.
Mr. William P. Mason.
Mr. William Gray.
Mr. Sam'l G. Ward.
Mr. J.I. Bowditch.
Mr. Geo. C. Ward.
Mrs. Luicia J. Briggs.
Mr. John E. Williams.
Dr. Le Baron Russell.



In May, 1873, Emerson returned to Concord. His friends and fellow-citizens received him with every token of affection and reverence. A set of signals was arranged to announce his arrival. Carriages were in readiness for him and his family, a band greeted him with music, and passing under a triumphal arch, he was driven to his renewed old home amidst the welcomes and the blessings of his loving and admiring friends and neighbors.

CHAPTER XII.

1873-1878. AET. 70-75.

Publication of "Parnassus."—Emerson Nominated as Candidate for the Office of Lord Rector of Glasgow University.—Publication of "Letters and Social Aims." Contents: Poetry and Imagination.—Social Aims.—Eloquence.—Resources.—The Comic.—Quotation and Originality.—Progress of Culture.—Persian Poetry.—Inspiration.—Greatness.—Immortality.—Address at the Unveiling of the Statue of "The Minute-Man" at Concord.—Publication of Collected Poems.

In December, 1874, Emerson published "Parnassus," a Collection of Poems by British and American authors. Many readers may like to see his subdivisions and arrangement of the pieces he has brought together. They are as follows: "Nature."—"Human Life."—"Intellectual."—"Contemplation."—"Moral and Religious."—"Heroic."—"Personal."—"Pictures."—"Narrative Poems and Ballads."—"Songs."—"Dirges and Pathetic Poems."—"Comic and Humorous."—"Poetry of Terror."—"Oracles and Counsels."

I have borrowed so sparingly from the rich mine of Mr. George Willis Cooke's "Ralph Waldo Emerson, His Life, Writings, and Philosophy," that I am pleased to pay him the respectful tribute of taking a leaf from his excellent work.

"This collection," he says,

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“was the result of his habit, pursued for many years, of copying into his commonplace book any poem which specially pleased him. Many of these favorites had been read to illustrate his lectures on the English poets. The book has no worthless selections, almost everything it contains bearing the stamp of genius and worth. Yet Emerson's personality is seen in its many intellectual and serious poems, and in the small number of its purely religious selections. With two or three exceptions he copies none of those devotional poems which have attracted devout souls.—His poetical sympathies are shown in the fact that one third of the selections are from the seventeenth century. Shakespeare is drawn on more largely than any other, no less than eighty-eight selections being made from him. The names of George Herbert, Herrick, Ben Jonson, and Milton frequently appear. Wordsworth appears forty-three times, and stands next to Shakespeare; while Burns, Byron, Scott, Tennyson, and Chaucer make up the list of favorites. Many little known pieces are included, and some whose merit is other than poetical.—This selection of poems is eminently that of a poet of keen intellectual tastes. I not popular in character, omitting many public favorites, and introducing very much which can never be acceptable to the general reader. The Preface is full of interest for its comments on many of the poems and poets appearing in these selections.”

I will only add to Mr. Cooke's criticism these two remarks: First, that I have found it impossible to know under which of his divisions to look for many of the poems I was in search of; and as, in the earlier copies at least, there was no paged index where each author's pieces were collected together, one had to hunt up his fragments with no little loss of time and patience, under various heads, “imitating the careful search that Isis made for the mangled body of Osiris.” The other remark is that each one of Emerson's American fellow-poets from whom he has quoted would gladly have spared almost any of the extracts from the poems of his brother-bards, if the editor would only have favored us with some specimens of his own poetry, with a single line of which he has not seen fit to indulge us.

In 1874 Emerson received the nomination by the independent party among the students of Glasgow University for the office of Lord Rector. He received five hundred votes against seven hundred for Disraeli, who was elected. He says in a letter to Dr. J. Hutchinson Sterling:—

“I count that vote as quite the fairest laurel that has ever fallen on me; and I cannot but feel deeply grateful to my young friends in the University, and to yourself, who have been my counsellor and my too partial advocate.”

Mr. Cabot informs us in his Prefatory Note to “Letters and Social Aims,” that the proof sheets of this volume, now forming the eighth of the collected works, showed even before the burning of his house and the illness which followed from the shock, that his loss of memory and of mental grasp was such as to make it unlikely that he would in any case have been able to accomplish what he had undertaken. Sentences, even

whole pages, were repeated, and there was a want of order beyond what even he would have tolerated:—

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"There is nothing here that he did not write, and he gave his full approval to whatever was done in the way of selection and arrangement; but I cannot say that he applied his mind very closely to the matter."

This volume contains eleven Essays, the subjects of which, as just enumerated, are very various. The longest and most elaborate paper is that entitled "Poetry and Imagination." I have room for little more than the enumeration of the different headings of this long Essay. By these it will be seen how wide a ground it covers. They are "Introductory;" "Poetry;" "Imagination;" "Veracity;" "Creation;" "Melody, Rhythm, Form;" "Bards and Trouveurs;" "Morals;" "Transcendency." Many thoughts with which we are familiar are reproduced, expanded, and illustrated in this Essay. Unity in multiplicity, the symbolism of nature, and others of his leading ideas appear in new phrases, not unwelcome, for they look fresh in every restatement. It would be easy to select a score of pointed sayings, striking images, large generalizations. Some of these we find repeated in his verse. Thus:—

"Michael Angelo is largely filled with the Creator that made and makes men. How much of the original craft remains in him, and he a mortal man!"

And so in the well remembered lines of "The Problem":—

"Himself from God he could not free."

"He knows that he did not make his thought,—no, his thought made him, and made the sun and stars."

"Art might obey but not surpass.
The passive Master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned."

Hope is at the bottom of every Essay of Emerson's as it was at the bottom of Pandora's box:—

"I never doubt the riches of nature, the gifts of the future, the immense wealth of the mind. O yes, poets we shall have, mythology, symbols, religion of our own.

—"Sooner or later that which is now life shall be poetry, and every fair and manly trait shall add a richer strain to the song."

Under the title "Social Aims" he gives some wise counsel concerning manners and conversation. One of these precepts will serve as a specimen—if we have met with it before it is none the worse for wear:—



“Shun the negative side. Never worry people with; your contritions, nor with dismal views of politics or society. Never name sickness; even if you could trust yourself on that perilous topic, beware of unmuzzling a valetudinarian, who will give you enough of it.”

We have had one Essay on “Eloquence” already. One extract from this new discourse on the same subject must serve our turn:—

“These are ascending stairs,—a good voice, winning manners, plain speech, chastened, however, by the schools into correctness; but we must come to the main matter, of power of statement,—know your fact; hug your fact. For the essential thing is heat, and heat comes of sincerity. Speak what you know and believe; and are personally in it; and are answerable for every word. Eloquence is *the power to translate a truth into language perfectly intelligible to the person to whom you speak.*”

The italics are Emerson's.

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If our learned and excellent John Cotton used to sweeten his mouth before going to bed with a bit of Calvin, we may as wisely sweeten and strengthen our sense of existence with a morsel or two from Emerson's Essay on "Resources":—

"A Schopenhauer, with logic and learning and wit, teaching pessimism,—teaching that this is the worst of all possible worlds, and inferring that sleep is better than waking, and death than sleep,—all the talent in the world cannot save him from being odious. But if instead of these negatives you give me affirmatives; if you tell me that there is always life for the living; that what man has done man can do; that this world belongs to the energetic; that there is always a way to everything desirable; that every man is provided, in the new bias of his faculty, with a key to nature, and that man only rightly knows himself as far as he has experimented on things,—I am invigorated, put into genial and working temper; the horizon opens, and we are full of good-will and gratitude to the Cause of Causes."

The Essay or Lecture on "The Comic" may have formed a part of a series he had contemplated on the intellectual processes. Two or three sayings in it will show his view sufficiently:—

"The essence of all jokes, of all comedy, seems to be an honest or well-intended halfness; a non-performance of what is pretended to be performed, at the same time that one is giving loud pledges of performance. "If the essence of the Comic be the contrast in the intellect between the idea and the false performance, there is good reason why we should be affected by the exposure. We have no deeper interest than our integrity, and that we should be made aware by joke and by stroke of any lie we entertain. Besides, a perception of the comic seems to be a balance-wheel in our metaphysical structure. It appears to be an essential element in a fine character.—A rogue alive to the ludicrous is still convertible. If that sense is lost, his fellow-men can do little for him."

These and other sayings of like purport are illustrated by well-preserved stories and anecdotes not for the most part of very recent date.

"Quotation and Originality" furnishes the key to Emerson's workshop. He believed in quotation, and borrowed from everybody and every book. Not in any stealthy or shame-faced way, but proudly, royally, as a king borrows from one of his attendants the coin that bears his own image and superscription.

"All minds quote. Old and new make the warp and woof of every moment. There is no thread that is not a twist of these two strands.—We quote not only books and proverbs, but arts, sciences, religion, customs, and laws; nay, we quote temples and houses, tables and chairs by imitation.—

“The borrowing is often honest enough and comes of magnanimity and stoutness. A great man quotes bravely, and will not draw on his invention when his memory serves him with a word as good.

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“Next to the originator of a good sentence is the first quoter of it.”—

—“The Progress of Culture,” his second Phi Beta Kappa oration, has already been mentioned.

—The lesson of self-reliance, which he is never tired of inculcating, is repeated and enforced in the Essay on “Greatness.”

“There are certain points of identity in which these masters agree. Self-respect is the early form in which greatness appears.—Stick to your own; don’t inculcate yourself in the local, social, or national crime, but follow the path your genius traces like the galaxy of heaven for you to walk in.” “Every mind has a new compass, a new direction of its own, differencing its genius and aim from every other mind.—We call this specialty the *bias* of each individual. And none of us will ever accomplish anything excellent or commanding except when he listens to this whisper which is heard by him alone.”

If to follow this native bias is the first rule, the second is concentration.—To the bias of the individual mind must be added the most catholic receptivity for the genius of others.

“Shall I tell you the secret of the true scholar? It is this: Every man I meet is my master in some point, and in that I learn of him.”—

“The man whom we have not seen, in whom no regard of self degraded the adorer of the laws,—who by governing himself governed others; sportive in manner, but inexorable in act; who sees longevity in his cause; whose aim is always distinct to him; who is suffered to be himself in society; who carries fate in his eye;—he it is whom we seek, encouraged in every good hour that here or hereafter he shall he found.”

What has Emerson to tell us of “Inspiration?”

“I believe that nothing great or lasting can be done except by inspiration, by leaning on the secret augury.—

“How many sources of inspiration can we count? As many as our affinities. But to a practical purpose we may reckon a few of these.”

I will enumerate them briefly as he gives them, but not attempting to reproduce his comments on each:—

1. Health. 2. The experience of writing letters. 3. The renewed sensibility which comes after seasons of decay or eclipse of the faculties. 4. The power of the will. 5. Atmospheric causes, especially the influence of morning. 6. Solitary converse with

nature. 7. Solitude of itself, like that of a country inn in summer, and of a city hotel in winter. 8. Conversation. 9. New poetry; by which, he says, he means chiefly old poetry that is new to the reader.

“Every book is good to read which sets the reader in a working mood.”

What can promise more than an Essay by Emerson on “Immortality”? It is to be feared that many readers will transfer this note of interrogation to the Essay itself. What is the definite belief of Emerson as expressed in this discourse,—what does it mean? We must tack together such sentences as we can find that will stand for an answer:—

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"I think all sound minds rest on a certain preliminary conviction, namely, that if it be best that conscious personal life shall continue, it will continue; if not best, then it will not; and we, if we saw the whole, should of course see that it was better so."

This is laying the table for a Barmecide feast of nonentity, with the possibility of a real banquet to be provided for us. But he continues:—

"Schiller said, 'What is so universal as death must be benefit.'"

He tells us what Michael Angelo said, how Plutarch felt, how Montesquieu thought about the question, and then glances off from it to the terror of the child at the thought of life without end, to the story of the two skeptical statesmen whose unsatisfied inquiry through a long course of years he holds to be a better affirmative evidence than their failure to find a confirmation was negative. He argues from our delight in permanence, from the delicate contrivances and adjustments of created things, that the contriver cannot be forever hidden, and says at last plainly:—

"Everything is prospective, and man is to live hereafter. That the world is for his education is the only sane solution of the enigma."

But turn over a few pages and we may read:—

"I confess that everything connected with our personality fails. Nature never spares the individual; we are always balked of a complete success; no prosperity is promised to our self-esteem. We have our indemnity only in the moral and intellectual reality to which we aspire. That is immortal, and we only through that. The soul stipulates for no private good. That which is private I see not to be good. 'If truth live, I live; if justice live, I live,' said one of the old saints, 'and these by any man's suffering are enlarged and enthroned.'"

Once more we get a dissolving view of Emerson's creed, if such a word applies to a statement like the following:—

—"I mean that I am a better believer, and all serious souls are better believers in the immortality than we can give grounds for. The real evidence is too subtle, or is higher than we can write down in propositions, and therefore Wordsworth's 'Ode' is the best modern essay on the subject."

Wordsworth's "Ode" is a noble and beautiful dream; is it anything more? The reader who would finish this Essay, which I suspect to belong to an early period of Emerson's development, must be prepared to plunge into mysticism and lose himself at last in an Oriental apologue. The eschatology which rests upon an English poem and an Indian fable belongs to the realm of reverie and of imagination rather than the domain of reason.

On the 19th of April, 1875, the hundredth anniversary of the "Fight at the Bridge," Emerson delivered a short Address at the unveiling of the statue of "The Minute-Man," erected at the place of the conflict, to commemorate the event. This is the last Address he ever wrote, though he delivered one or more after this date. From the manuscript which lies before me I extract a single passage:—

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"In the year 1775 we had many enemies and many friends in England, but our one benefactor was King George the Third. The time had arrived for the political severance of America, that it might play its part in the history of this globe, and the inscrutable divine Providence gave an insane king to England. In the resistance of the Colonies, he alone was immovable on the question of force. England was so dear to us that the Colonies could only be absolutely disunited by violence from England, and only one man could compel the resort to violence. Parliament wavered, Lord North wavered, all the ministers wavered, but the king had the insanity of one idea; he was immovable, he insisted on the impossible, so the army was sent, America was instantly united, and the Nation born."

There is certainly no mark of mental failure in this paragraph, written at a period when he had long ceased almost entirely from his literary labors.

Emerson's collected "Poems" constitute the ninth volume of the recent collected edition of his works. They will be considered in a following chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

1878-1882. AET. 75-79.

Last Literary Labors.—Addresses and Essays.—"Lectures and Biographical Sketches."—"Miscellanies."

The decline of Emerson's working faculties went on gently and gradually, but he was not condemned to entire inactivity. His faithful daughter, Ellen, followed him with assiduous, quiet, ever watchful care, aiding his failing memory, bringing order into the chaos of his manuscript, an echo before the voice whose words it was to shape for him when his mind faltered and needed a momentary impulse.

With her helpful presence and support he ventured from time to time to read a paper before a select audience. Thus, March 30, 1878, he delivered a Lecture in the Old South Church,—*"Fortune of the Republic."* On the 5th of May, 1879, he read a Lecture in the Chapel of Divinity College, Harvard University,—*"The Preacher."* In 1881 he read a paper on Carlyle before the Massachusetts Historical Society.—He also published a paper in the *"North American Review,"* in 1878,—*"The Sovereignty of Ethics,"* and one on *"Superlatives,"* in *"The Century"* for February, 1882.

But in these years he was writing little or nothing. All these papers were taken from among his manuscripts of different dates. The same thing is true of the volumes published since his death; they were only compilations from his stores of unpublished matter, and their arrangement was the work of Mr. Emerson's friend and literary

executor, Mr. Cabot. These volumes cannot be considered as belonging to any single period of his literary life.

Mr. Cabot prefixes to the tenth volume of Emerson's collected works, which bears the title, "Lectures and Biographical Sketches," the following:—

"NOTE.

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"Of the pieces included in this volume the following, namely, those from 'The Dial,' 'Character,' 'Plutarch,' and the biographical sketches of Dr. Ripley, of Mr. Hoar, and of Henry Thoreau, were printed by Mr. Emerson before I took any part in the arrangement of his papers. The rest, except the sketch of Miss Mary Emerson, I got ready for his use in readings to his friends, or to a limited public. He had given up the regular practice of lecturing, but would sometimes, upon special request, read a paper that had been prepared for him from his manuscripts, in the manner described in the Preface to 'Letters and Social Aims,'—some former lecture serving as a nucleus for the new. Some of these papers he afterwards allowed to be printed; others, namely, 'Aristocracy,' 'Education,' 'The Man of Letters,' 'The Scholar,' 'Historic Notes of Life and Letters in New England,' 'Mary Moody Emerson,' are now published for the first time."

Some of these papers I have already had occasion to refer to. From several of the others I will make one or two extracts,—a difficult task, so closely are the thoughts packed together.

From "Demonology":—

"I say to the table-rappers

'I will believe

Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know,'
And so far will I trust thee, gentle Kate!"

"Meantime far be from me the impatience which cannot brook the supernatural, the vast; far be from me the lust of explaining away all which appeals to the imagination, and the great presentiments which haunt us. Willingly I too say Hail! to the unknown, awful powers which transcend the ken of the understanding."

I will not quote anything from the Essay called "Aristocracy." But let him who wishes to know what the word means to an American whose life has come from New England soil, whose ancestors have breathed New England air for many generations, read it, and he will find a new interpretation of a very old and often greatly wronged appellation.

"Perpetual Forces" is one of those prose poems,—of his earlier epoch, I have no doubt, —in which he plays with the facts of science with singular grace and freedom.

What man could speak more fitly, with more authority of "Character," than Emerson? When he says, "If all things are taken away, I have still all things in my relation to the Eternal," we feel that such an utterance is as natural to his pure spirit as breathing to the frame in which it was imprisoned.

We have had a glimpse of Emerson as a school-master, but behind and far above the teaching drill-master's desk is the chair from which he speaks to us of "Education."

Compare the short and easy method of the wise man of old,—“He that spareth his rod hateth his son,” with this other, “Be the companion of his thought, the friend of his friendship, the lover of his virtue,—but no kinsman of his sin.”

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“The Superlative” will prove light and pleasant reading after these graver essays. [Greek: *Maedhen agan*]*—ne quid nimis*,—nothing in excess, was his precept as to adjectives.

Two sentences from “The Sovereignty of Ethics” will go far towards reconciling elderly readers who have not forgotten the Westminster Assembly’s Catechism with this sweet-souled dealer in spiritual dynamite:—

“Luther would cut his hand off sooner than write theses against the pope if he suspected that he was bringing on with all his might the pale negations of Boston Unitarianism.—

“If I miss the inspiration of the saints of Calvinism, or of Platonism, or of Buddhism, our times are not up to theirs, or, more truly, have not yet their own legitimate force.”

So, too, this from “The Preacher”:—

“All civil mankind have agreed in leaving one day for contemplation against six for practice. I hope that day will keep its honor and its use.—The Sabbath changes its forms from age to age, but the substantial benefit endures.”

The special interest of the Address called “The Man of Letters” is, that it was delivered during the war. He was no advocate for peace where great principles were at the bottom of the conflict:—

“War, seeking for the roots of strength, comes upon the moral aspects at once.—War ennobles the age.—Battle, with the sword, has cut many a Gordian knot in twain which all the wit of East and West, of Northern and Border statesmen could not untie.”

“The Scholar” was delivered before two Societies at the University of Virginia so late as the year 1876. If I must select any of its wise words, I will choose the questions which he has himself italicized to show his sense of their importance:—

“For all men, all women, Time, your country, your condition, the invisible world are the interrogators: *Who are you? What do you? Can you obtain what you wish? Is there method in your consciousness? Can you see tendency in your life? Can you help any soul?*” Can he answer these questions? Can he dispose of them? Happy if you can answer them mutely in the order and disposition of your life! Happy for more than yourself, a benefactor of men, if you can answer them in works of wisdom, art, or poetry; bestowing on the general mind of men organic creations, to be the guidance and delight of all who know them.”

The Essay on “Plutarch” has a peculiar value from the fact that Emerson owes more to him than to any other author except Plato, who is one of the only two writers quoted

oftener than Plutarch. *Mutato nomine*, the portrait which Emerson draws of the Greek moralist might stand for his own:—

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“Whatever is eminent in fact or in fiction, in opinion, in character, in institutions, in science—natural, moral, or metaphysical, or in memorable sayings drew his attention and came to his pen with more or less fulness of record.

“A poet in verse or prose must have a sensuous eye, but an intellectual co-perception. Plutarch’s memory is full and his horizon wide. Nothing touches man but he feels to be his.

“Plutarch had a religion which Montaigne wanted, and which defends him from wantonness; and though Plutarch is as plain spoken, his moral sentiment is always pure.—

“I do not know where to find a book—to borrow a phrase of Ben Jonson’s—‘so rammed with life,’ and this in chapters chiefly ethical, which are so prone to be heavy and sentimental.—His vivacity and abundance never leave him to loiter or pound on an incident.—“In his immense quotation and allusion we quickly cease to discriminate between what he quotes and what he invents.—’Tis all Plutarch, by right of eminent domain, and all property vests in this emperor.“It is in consequence of this poetic trait in his mind, that I confess that, in reading him, I embrace the particulars, and carry a faint memory of the argument or general design of the chapter; but he is not less welcome, and he leaves the reader with a relish and a necessity for completing his studies.

“He is a pronounced idealist, who does not hesitate to say, like another Berkeley, ‘Matter is itself privation.’—

“Of philosophy he is more interested in the results than in the method. He has a just instinct of the presence of a master, and prefers to sit as a scholar with Plato than as a disputant.

“His natural history is that of a lover and poet, and not of a physicist.

“But though curious in the questions of the schools on the nature and genesis of things, his extreme interest in every trait of character, and his broad humanity, lead him constantly to Morals, to the study of the Beautiful and Good. Hence his love of heroes, his rule of life, and his clear convictions of the high destiny of the soul. La Harpe said that ‘Plutarch is the genius the most naturally moral that ever existed.’

“Plutarch thought ‘truth to be the greatest good that man can receive, and the goodliest blessing that God can give.’

“All his judgments are noble. He thought with Epicurus that it is more delightful to do than to receive a kindness.

“Plutarch was well-born, well-conditioned—eminently social, he was a king in his own house, surrounded himself with select friends, and knew the high value of good conversation.—

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"He had that universal sympathy with genius which makes all its victories his own; though he never used verse, he had many qualities of the poet in the power of his imagination, the speed of his mental associations, and his sharp, objective eyes. But what specially marks him, he is a chief example of the illumination of the intellect by the force of morals."

How much, of all this would have been recognized as just and true if it had been set down in an obituary notice of Emerson!

I have already made use of several of the other papers contained in this volume, and will merely enumerate all that follow the "Plutarch." Some of the titles will be sure to attract the reader. They are "Historic Notes of Life and Letters in New England;" "The Chardon Street Convention;" "Ezra Ripley, D.D.;" "Mary Moody Emerson;" "Samuel Hoar;" "Thoreau;" "Carlyle."—

Mr. Cabot prefaces the eleventh and last volume of Emerson's writings with the following "Note":—

"The first five pieces in this volume, and the 'Editorial Address' from the 'Massachusetts Quarterly Review,' were published by Mr. Emerson long ago. The speeches at the John Brown, the Walter Scott, and the Free Religious Association meetings were published at the time, no doubt with his consent, but without any active co-operation on his part. The 'Fortune of the Republic' appeared separately in 1879; the rest have never been published. In none was any change from the original form made by me, except in the 'Fortune of the Republic,' which was made up of several lectures for the occasion upon which it was read."

The volume of "Miscellanies" contains no less than twenty-three pieces of very various lengths and relating to many different subjects. The five referred to as having been previously published are, "The Lord's Supper," the "Historical Discourse in Concord," the "Address at the Dedication of the Soldiers' Monument in Concord," the "Address on Emancipation in the British West Indies," and the Lecture or Essay on "War,"—all of which have been already spoken of.

Next in order comes a Lecture on the "Fugitive Slave Law." Emerson says, "I do not often speak on public questions.—My own habitual view is to the well-being of scholars." But he leaves his studies to attack the institution of slavery, from which he says he himself has never suffered any inconvenience, and the "Law," which the abolitionists would always call the "Fugitive Slave *Bill*." Emerson had a great admiration for Mr. Webster, but he did not spare him as he recalled his speech of the seventh of March, just four years before the delivery of this Lecture. He warns against false leadership:—



“To make good the cause of Freedom, you must draw off from all foolish trust in others. —He only who is able to stand alone is qualified for society. And that I understand to be the end for which a soul exists in this world,—to be himself the counter-balance of all falsehood and all wrong.—The Anglo-Saxon race is proud and strong and selfish.—England maintains trade, not liberty.”

Cowper had said long before this:—

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“doing good,
Disinterested good, is not our trade.”

And America found that England had not learned that trade when, fifteen years after this discourse was delivered, the conflict between the free and slave states threatened the ruin of the great Republic, and England forgot her Anti-slavery in the prospect of the downfall of “a great empire which threatens to overshadow the whole earth.”

It must be remembered that Emerson had never been identified with the abolitionists. But an individual act of wrong sometimes gives a sharp point to a blunt dagger which has been kept in its sheath too long:—

“The events of the last few years and months and days have taught us the lessons of centuries. I do not see how a barbarous community and a civilized community can constitute one State. I think we must get rid of slavery or we must get rid of freedom.”

These were his words on the 26th of May, 1856, in his speech on “The Assault upon Mr. Sumner.” A few months later, in his “Speech on the Affairs of Kansas,” delivered almost five years before the first gun was fired at Fort Sumter, he spoke the following fatally prophetic and commanding words:—

“The hour is coming when the strongest will not be strong enough. A harder task will the new revolution of the nineteenth century be than was the revolution of the eighteenth century. I think the American Revolution bought its glory cheap. If the problem was new, it was simple. If there were few people, they were united, and the enemy three thousand miles off. But now, vast property, gigantic interests, family connections, webs of party, cover the land with a net-work that immensely multiplies the dangers of war.” “Fellow-citizens, in these times full of the fate of the Republic, I think the towns should hold town meetings, and resolve themselves into Committees of Safety, go into permanent sessions, adjourning from week to week, from month to month. I wish we could send the sergeant-at-arms to stop every American who is about to leave the country. Send home every one who is abroad, lest they should find no country to return to. Come home and stay at home while there is a country to save. When it is lost it will be time enough then for any who are luckless enough to remain alive to gather up their clothes and depart to some land where freedom exists.”

Two short speeches follow, one delivered at a meeting for the relief of the family of John Brown, on the 18th of November, 1859, the other after his execution:—

“Our blind statesmen,” he says, “go up and down, with committees of vigilance and safety, hunting for the origin of this new heresy. They will need a very vigilant committee indeed to find its birthplace, and a very strong force to root it out. For the arch-Abolitionist, older than Brown, and older than the Shenandoah Mountains, is Love,

whose other name is Justice, which was before Alfred, before Lycurgus, before Slavery, and will be after it.”

From his “Discourse on Theodore Parker” I take the following vigorous sentence:—

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“His commanding merit as a reformer is this, that he insisted beyond all men in pulpits, —I cannot think of one rival,—that the essence of Christianity is its practical morals; it is there for use, or it is nothing; and if you combine it with sharp trading, or with ordinary city ambitions to gloze over municipal corruptions, or private intemperance, or successful fraud, or immoral politics, or unjust wars, or the cheating of Indians, or the robbery of frontier nations, or leaving your principles at home to follow on the high seas or in Europe a supple complaisance to tyrants,—it is hypocrisy, and the truth is not in you; and no love of religious music, or of dreams of Swedenborg, or praise of John Wesley, or of Jeremy Taylor, can save you from the Satan which you are.”

The Lecture on “American Civilization,” made up from two Addresses, one of which was delivered at Washington on the 31st of January, 1862, is, as might be expected, full of anti-slavery. That on the “Emancipation Proclamation,” delivered in Boston in September, 1862, is as full of “silent joy” at the advent of “a day which most of us dared not hope to see,—an event worth the dreadful war, worth its costs and uncertainties.”

From the “Remarks” at the funeral services for Abraham Lincoln, held in Concord on the 19th of April, 1865, I extract this admirably drawn character of the man:—

“He is the true history of the American people in his time. Step by step he walked before them; slow with their slowness, quickening his march by theirs, the true representative of this continent; an entirely public man; father of his country, the pulse of twenty millions throbbing in his heart, the thought of their minds articulated by his tongue.”

The following are the titles of the remaining contents of this volume: “Harvard Commemoration Speech;” “Editor’s Address: Massachusetts Quarterly Review;” “Woman;” “Address to Kossuth;” “Robert Burns;” “Walter Scott;” “Remarks at the Organization of the Free Religious Association;” “Speech at the Annual Meeting of the Free Religious Association;” “The Fortune of the Republic.” In treating of the “Woman Question,” Emerson speaks temperately, delicately, with perfect fairness, but leaves it in the hands of the women themselves to determine whether they shall have an equal part in public affairs. “The new movement,” he says, “is only a tide shared by the spirits of man and woman; and you may proceed in the faith that whatever the woman’s heart is prompted to desire, the man’s mind is simultaneously prompted to accomplish.”

It is hard to turn a leaf in any book of Emerson’s writing without finding some pithy remark or some striking image or witty comment which illuminates the page where we find it and tempts us to seize upon it for an extract. But I must content myself with these few sentences from “The Fortune of the Republic,” the last address he ever delivered, in which his belief in America and her institutions, and his trust in the Providence which overrules all nations and all worlds, have found fitting utterance:—

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“Let the passion for America cast out the passion for Europe. Here let there be what the earth waits for,—exalted manhood. What this country longs for is personalities, grand persons, to counteract its materialities. For it is the rule of the universe that corn shall serve man, and not man corn.” “They who find America insipid,—they for whom London and Paris have spoiled their own homes, can be spared to return to those cities. I not only see a career at home for more genius than we have, but for more than there is in the world.” “Our helm is given up to a better guidance than our own; the course of events is quite too strong for any helmsman, and our little wherry is taken in tow by the ship of the great Admiral which knows the way, and has the force to draw men and states and planets to their good.”

With this expression of love and respect for his country and trust in his country's God, we may take leave of Emerson's prose writings.

CHAPTER XIV.

EMERSON'S POEMS.

The following “Prefatory Note” by Mr. Cabot introduces the ninth volume of the series of Emerson's collected works:—

“This volume contains nearly all the pieces included in the POEMS and MAY-DAY of former editions. In 1876 Mr. Emerson published a selection from his poems, adding six new ones, and omitting many. Of those omitted, several are now restored, in accordance with the expressed wishes of many readers and lovers of them. Also some pieces never before published are here given in an Appendix, on various grounds. Some of them appear to have had Emerson's approval, but to have been withheld because they were unfinished. These it seemed best not to suppress, now that they can never receive their completion. Others, mostly of an early date, remained unpublished doubtless because of their personal and private nature. Some of these seem to have an autobiographic interest sufficient to justify their publication. Others again, often mere fragments, have been admitted as characteristic, or as expressing in poetic form thoughts found in the Essays. “In coming to a decision in these cases, it seemed on the whole preferable to take the risk of including too much rather than the opposite, and to leave the task of further winnowing to the hands of time.” “As was stated in the Preface to the first volume of this edition of Mr. Emerson's writings, the readings adopted by him in the “Selected Poems” have not always been followed here, but in some cases preference has been given to corrections made by him when he was in fuller strength than at the time of the last revision.

“A change in the arrangement of the stanzas of “May-Day,” in the part representative of the march of Spring, received his sanction as bringing them more nearly in accordance with the events in Nature.”

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Emerson's verse has been a fertile source of discussion. Some have called him a poet and nothing but a poet, and some have made so much of the palpable defects of his verse that they have forgotten to recognize its true claims. His prose is often highly poetical, but his verse is something more than the most imaginative and rhetorical passages of his prose. An illustration presently to be given will make this point clear.

Poetry is to prose what the so-called full dress of the ball-room is to the plainer garments of the household and the street. Full dress, as we call it, is so full of beauty that it cannot hold it all, and the redundancy of nature overflows the narrowed margin of satin or velvet.

It reconciles us to its approach to nudity by the richness of its drapery and ornaments. A pearl or diamond necklace or a blushing bouquet excuses the liberal allowance of undisguised nature. We expect from the fine lady in her brocades and laces a generosity of display which we should reprimand with the virtuous severity of Tartuffe if ventured upon by the waiting-maid in her calicoes. So the poet reveals himself under the protection of his imaginative and melodious phrases,—the flowers and jewels of his vocabulary.

Here is a prose sentence from Emerson's "Works and Days:"—

"The days are ever divine as to the first Aryans. They come and go like muffled and veiled figures, sent from a distant friendly party; but they say nothing, and if we do not use the gifts they bring, they carry them as silently away."

Now see this thought in full dress, and then ask what is the difference between prose and poetry:—

"DAYS.

"Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days,
Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
And marching single in an endless file,
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.
To each they offer gifts after his will,
Bread, kingdom, stars, and sky that holds them all.
I, in my pleached garden watched the pomp,
Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
Turned and departed silent. I too late
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn."

—Cinderella at the fireside, and Cinderella at the prince's ball! The full dress version of the thought is glittering with new images like bracelets and brooches and ear-rings, and

fringed with fresh adjectives like edges of embroidery. That one word *pleached*, an heirloom from Queen Elizabeth's day, gives to the noble sonnet an antique dignity and charm like the effect of an ancestral jewel. But mark that now the poet reveals himself as he could not in the prosaic form of the first extract. It is his own neglect of his great opportunity of which he now speaks, and not merely the indolent indifference of others. It is himself who is the object of scorn. Self-revelation of beauty embellished by ornaments is the privilege of full dress; self-revelation

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in the florid costume of verse is the divine right of the poet. Passion that must express itself longs always for the freedom of rhythmic utterance. And in spite of the exaggeration and extravagance which shield themselves under the claim of poetic license, I venture to affirm that "*In vino veritas*" is not truer than *In carmine veritas*. As a further illustration of what has just been said of the self-revelations to be looked for in verse, and in Emerson's verse more especially, let the reader observe how freely he talks about his bodily presence and infirmities in his poetry,—subjects he never referred to in prose, except incidentally, in private letters.

Emerson is so essentially a poet that whole pages of his are like so many litanies of alternating chants and recitations. His thoughts slip on and off their light rhythmic robes just as the mood takes him, as was shown in the passage I have quoted in prose and in verse. Many of the metrical preludes to his lectures are a versified and condensed abstract of the leading doctrine of the discourse. They are a curious instance of survival; the lecturer, once a preacher, still wants his text; and finds his scriptural motto in his own rhythmic inspiration.

Shall we rank Emerson among the great poets or not?

"The great poets are judged by the frame of mind they induce; and to them, of all men, the severest criticism is due."

These are Emerson's words in the Preface to "Parnassus."

His own poems will stand this test as well as any in the language. They lift the reader into a higher region of thought and feeling. This seems to me a better test to apply to them than the one which Mr. Arnold cited from Milton. The passage containing this must be taken, not alone, but with the context. Milton had been speaking of "Logic" and of "Rhetoric," and spoke of poetry "as being less subtle and fine, but more simple, sensuous, and passionate." This relative statement, it must not be forgotten, is conditioned by what went before. If the terms are used absolutely, and not comparatively, as Milton used them, they must be very elastic if they would stretch widely enough to include all the poems which the world recognizes as masterpieces, nay, to include some of the best of Milton's own.

In spite of what he said about himself in his letter to Carlyle, Emerson was not only a poet, but a very remarkable one. Whether a great poet or not will depend on the scale we use and the meaning we affix to the term. The heat at eighty degrees of Fahrenheit is one thing and the heat at eighty degrees of Reaumur is a very different matter. The rank of poets is a point of very unstable equilibrium. From the days of Homer to our own, critics have been disputing about the place to be assigned to this or that member

of the poetic hierarchy. It is not the most popular poet who is necessarily the greatest; Wordsworth never

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had half the popularity of Scott or Moore. It is not the multitude of remembered passages which settles the rank of a metrical composition as poetry. Gray's "Elegy," it is true, is full of lines we all remember, and is a great poem, if that term can be applied to any piece of verse of that length. But what shall we say to the "Ars Poetica" of Horace? It is crowded with lines worn smooth as old sesterces by constant quotation. And yet we should rather call it a versified criticism than a poem in the full sense of that word. And what shall we do with Pope's "Essay on Man," which has furnished more familiar lines than "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained" both together? For all that, we know there is a school of writers who will not allow that Pope deserves the name of poet.

It takes a generation or two to find out what are the passages in a great writer which are to become commonplaces in literature and conversation. It is to be remembered that Emerson is one of those authors whose popularity must diffuse itself from above downwards. And after all, few will dare assert that "The Vanity of Human Wishes" is greater as a poem than Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind," or Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale," because no line in either of these poems is half so often quoted as

"To point a moral or adorn a tale."

We cannot do better than begin our consideration of Emerson's poetry with Emerson's own self-estimate. He says in a fit of humility, writing to Carlyle:—

"I do not belong to the poets, but only to a low department of literature, the reporters, suburban men."

But Miss Peabody writes to Mr. Ireland:—

"He once said to me, 'I am not a great poet—but whatever is of me *is a poet.*'"

These opposite feelings were the offspring of different moods and different periods.

Here is a fragment, written at the age of twenty-eight, in which his self-distrust and his consciousness of the "vision," if not "the faculty, divine," are revealed with the brave nudity of the rhythmic confessional:—

"A dull uncertain brain,
But gifted yet to know
That God has cherubim who go
Singing an immortal strain,
Immortal here below.
I know the mighty bards,



I listen while they sing,
And now I know
The secret store
Which these explore
When they with torch of genius pierce
The tenfold clouds that cover
The riches of the universe
From God's adoring lover.
And if to me it is not given
To fetch one ingot thence
Of that unfading gold of Heaven
His merchants may dispense,
Yet well I know the royal mine
And know the sparkle of its ore,
Know Heaven's truth from lies that shine,—
Explored, they teach us to explore."

These lines are from "The Poet," a series of fragments given in the "Appendix," which, with his first volume, "Poems," his second, "May-Day, and other Pieces," form the complete ninth volume of the new series. These fragments contain some of the loftiest and noblest passages to be found in his poetical works, and if the reader should doubt which of Emerson's self-estimates in his two different moods spoken of above had most truth in it, he could question no longer after reading "The Poet."

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Emerson has the most exalted ideas of the true poetic function, as this passage from “Merlin” sufficiently shows:—

“Thy trivial harp will never please
Or fill my craving ear;
Its chords should ring as blows the breeze,
Free, peremptory, clear.
No jingling serenader’s art
Nor tinkling of piano-strings
Can make the wild blood start
In its mystic springs;
The kingly bard
Must smite the chords rudely and hard,
As with hammer or with mace;
That they may render back
Artful thunder, which conveys
Secrets of the solar track,
Sparks of the supersolar blaze.

* * * * *

Great is the art,
Great be the manners of the bard.
He shall not his brain encumber
With the coil of rhythm and number;
But leaving rule and pale forethought
He shall aye climb
For his rhyme.
‘Pass in, pass in,’ the angels say,
‘In to the upper doors,
Nor count compartments of the floors,
But mount to paradise
By the stairway of surprise.’”

And here is another passage from “The Poet,” mentioned in the quotation before the last, in which the bard is spoken of as performing greater miracles than those ascribed to Orpheus:—

“A Brother of the world, his song
Sounded like a tempest strong
Which tore from oaks their branches broad,
And stars from the ecliptic road.
Time wore he as his clothing-weeds,
He sowed the sun and moon for seeds.



As melts the iceberg in the seas,
As clouds give rain to the eastern breeze,
As snow-banks thaw in April's beam,
The solid kingdoms like a dream
Resist in vain his motive strain,
They totter now and float amain.
For the Muse gave special charge
His learning should be deep and large,
And his training should not scant
The deepest lore of wealth or want:
His flesh should feel, his eyes should read
Every maxim of dreadful Need;
In its fulness he should taste
Life's honeycomb, but not too fast;
Full fed, but not intoxicated;
He should be loved; he should be hated;
A blooming child to children dear,
His heart should palpitate with fear."

We look naturally to see what poets were Emerson's chief favorites. In his poems "The Test" and "The Solution," we find that the five whom he recognizes as defying the powers of destruction are Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Swedenborg, Goethe.

Here are a few of his poetical characterizations from "The Harp:"—

"And this at least I dare affirm,
Since genius too has bound and term,
There is no bard in all the choir,
Not Homer's self, the poet-sire,
Wise Milton's odes of pensive pleasure,
Or Shakespeare whom no mind can measure,
Nor Collins' verse of tender pain,
Nor Byron's clarion of disdain,
Scott, the delight of generous boys,
Or Wordsworth, Pan's recording voice,—
Not one of all can put in verse,
Or to this presence could rehearse
The sights and voices ravishing
The boy knew on the hills in spring."—

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In the notice of "Parnassus" some of his preferences have been already mentioned.

Comparisons between men of genius for the sake of aggrandizing the one at the expense of the other are the staple of the meaner kinds of criticism. No lover of art will clash a Venetian goblet against a Roman amphora to see which is strongest; no lover of nature undervalues a violet because it is not a rose. But comparisons used in the way of description are not odious.

The difference between Emerson's poetry and that of the contemporaries with whom he would naturally be compared is that of algebra and arithmetic. He deals largely in general symbols, abstractions, and infinite series. He is always seeing the universal in the particular. The great multitude of mankind care more for two and two, something definite, a fixed quantity, than for $a + b$'s and x^2 's,—symbols used for undetermined amounts and indefinite possibilities. Emerson is a citizen of the universe who has taken up his residence for a few days and nights in this travelling caravansary between the two inns that hang out the signs of Venus and Mars. This little planet could not provincialize such a man. The multiplication-table is for the every day use of every day earth-people, but the symbols he deals with are too vast, sometimes, we must own, too vague, for the unilluminated terrestrial and arithmetical intelligence. One cannot help feeling that he might have dropped in upon us from some remote centre of spiritual life, where, instead of addition and subtraction, children were taught quaternions, and where the fourth dimension of space was as familiarly known to everybody as a foot-measure or a yard-stick is to us. Not that he himself dealt in the higher or the lower mathematics, but he saw the hidden spiritual meaning of things as Professor Cayley or Professor Sylvester see the meaning of their mysterious formulae. Without using the Rosetta-stone of Swedenborg, Emerson finds in every phenomenon of nature a hieroglyphic. Others measure and describe the monuments,—he reads the sacred inscriptions. How alive he makes Monads! Dinocrates undertook to "hew Mount Athos to the shape of man" in the likeness of Alexander the Great. Without the help of tools or workmen, Emerson makes "Cheshire's haughty hill" stand before us an impersonation of kingly humanity, and talk with us as a god from Olympus might have talked.

This is the fascination of Emerson's poetry; it moves in a world of universal symbolism. The sense of the infinite fills it with its majestic presence. It shows, also, that he has a keen delight in the every-day aspects of nature. But he looks always with the eye of a poet, never with that of the man of science. The law of association of ideas is wholly different in the two. The scientific man connects objects in sequences and series, and in so doing is guided by their collective resemblances. His aim is to classify and index all that he sees and

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contemplates so as to show the relations which unite, and learn the laws that govern, the subjects of his study. The poet links the most remote objects together by the slender filament of wit, the flowery chain of fancy, or the living, pulsating cord of imagination, always guided by his instinct for the beautiful. The man of science clings to his object, as the marsupial embryo to its teat, until he has filled himself as full as he can hold; the poet takes a sip of his dew-drop, throws his head up like a chick, rolls his eyes around in contemplation of the heavens above him and the universe in general, and never thinks of asking a Linnaean question as to the flower that furnished him his dew-drop. The poetical and scientific natures rarely coexist; Haller and Goethe are examples which show that such a union may occur, but as a rule the poet is contented with the colors of the rainbow and leaves the study of Fraunhofer's lines to the man of science.

Though far from being a man of science, Emerson was a realist in the best sense of that word. But his realities reached to the highest heavens: like Milton,—

“He passed the flaming bounds of place and time;
The living throne, the sapphire blaze
Where angels tremble while they gaze,
HE SAW”—

Everywhere his poetry abounds in celestial imagery. If Galileo had been a poet as well as an astronomer, he would hardly have sowed his verse thicker with stars than we find them in the poems of Emerson.

Not less did Emerson clothe the common aspects of life with the colors of his imagination. He was ready to see beauty everywhere:—

“Thou can’st not wave thy staff in air,
Or dip thy paddle in the lake,
But it carves the bow of beauty there,
And the ripples in rhyme the oar forsake.”

He called upon the poet to

“Tell men what they knew before;
Paint the prospect from their door.”

And his practice was like his counsel. He saw our plain New England life with as honest New England eyes as ever looked at a huckleberry-bush or into a milking-pail.

This noble quality of his had its dangerous side. In one of his exalted moods he would have us

“Give to barrows, trays and pans
Grace and glimmer of romance.”

But in his Lecture on “Poetry and Imagination,” he says:—

“What we once admired as poetry has long since come to be a sound
of tin pans; and many of our later books we have outgrown. Perhaps
Homer and Milton will be tin pans yet.”

The “grace and glimmer of romance” which was to invest the tin pan are forgotten, and he uses it as a belittling object for comparison. He himself was not often betrayed into the mistake of confounding the prosaic with the poetical, but his followers, so far as the “realists” have taken their hint from him, have done it most thoroughly. Mr. Whitman enumerates all the objects he happens

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to be looking at as if they were equally suggestive to the poetical mind, furnishing his reader a large assortment on which he may exercise the fullest freedom of selection. It is only giving him the same liberty that Lord Timothy Dexter allowed his readers in the matter of punctuation, by leaving all stops out of his sentences, and printing at the end of his book a page of commas, semicolons, colons, periods, notes of interrogation and exclamation, with which the reader was expected to “pepper” the pages as he might see fit.

French realism does not stop at the tin pan, but must deal with the slop-pail and the wash-tub as if it were literally true that

“In the mud and scum of things
There alway, alway something sings.”

Happy were it for the world if M. Zola and his tribe would stop even there; but when they cross the borders of science into its infected districts, leaving behind them the reserve and delicacy which the genuine scientific observer never forgets to carry with him, they disgust even those to whom the worst scenes they describe are too wretchedly familiar. The true realist is such a man as Parent du Chatelet; exploring all that most tries the senses and the sentiments, and reporting all truthfully, but soberly, chastely, without needless circumstance, or picturesque embellishment, for a useful end, and not for a mere sensational effect.

What a range of subjects from “The Problem” and “Uriel” and “Forerunners” to “The Humble-Bee” and “The Titmouse!” Nor let the reader who thinks the poet must go far to find a fitting theme fail to read the singularly impressive home-poem, “Hamatreya,” beginning with the names of the successive owners of a piece of land in Concord,—probably the same he owned after the last of them:—

“Bulkeley, Hunt, Willard, Hosmer, Meriam, Flint,”

and ending with the austere and solemn “Earth-Song.”

Full of poetical feeling, and with a strong desire for poetical expression, Emerson experienced a difficulty in the mechanical part of metrical composition. His muse picked her way as his speech did in conversation and in lecturing. He made desperate work now and then with rhyme and rhythm, showing that though a born poet he was not a born singer. Think of making “feeble” rhyme with “people,” “abroad” with “Lord,” and contemplate the following couplet which one cannot make rhyme without actual verbiage:—

"Where feeds the moose, and walks the surly bear,
And up the tall mast runs the woodpeck"-are!

And how could prose go on all-fours more unmetrically than this?

"In Adirondac lakes
At morn or noon the guide rows bare-headed."

It was surely not difficult to say—

"At morn or noon bare-headed rows the guide." And yet while we note these blemishes, many of us will confess that we like his uncombed verse better, oftentimes, than if it were trimmed more neatly and disposed more nicely. When he is at his best, his lines flow with careless ease, as a mountain stream tumbles, sometimes rough and sometimes smooth, but all the more interesting for the rocks it runs against and the grating of the pebbles it rolls over.

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There is one trick of verse which Emerson occasionally, not very often, indulges in. This is the crowding of a redundant syllable into a line. It is a liberty which is not to be abused by the poet. Shakespeare, the supreme artist, and Milton, the “mighty-mouth’d inventor of harmonies,” knew how to use it effectively. Shelley employed it freely. Bryant indulged in it occasionally, and wrote an article in an early number of the “North American Review” in defence of its use. Willis was fond of it. As a relief to monotony it may be now and then allowed,—may even have an agreeable effect in breaking the monotony of too formal verse. But it may easily become a deformity and a cause of aversion. A humpback may add picturesqueness to a procession, but if there are too many humpbacks in line we turn away from the sight of them. Can any ear reconcile itself to the last of these three lines of Emerson’s?

“Oh, what is Heaven but the fellowship
Of minds that each can stand against the world
By its own meek and incorruptible will?”

These lines that lift their backs up in the middle—span-worm lines, we may call them—are not to be commended for common use because some great poets have now and then admitted them. They have invaded some of our recent poetry as the canker-worms gather on our elms in June. Emerson has one or two of them here and there, but they never swarm on his leaves so as to frighten us away from their neighborhood.

As for the violently artificial rhythms and rhymes which have reappeared of late in English and American literature, Emerson would as soon have tried to ride three horses at once in a circus as to shut himself up in triolets, or attempt any cat’s-cradle tricks of rhyming sleight of hand.

If we allow that Emerson is not a born singer, that he is a careless versifier and rhymer, we must still recognize that there is something in his verse which belongs, indissolubly, sacredly, to his thought. Who would decant the wine of his poetry from its quaint and antique-looking *lagena*?—Read his poem to the Aeolian harp (“The Harp”) and his model betrays itself:—

“These syllables that Nature spoke,
And the thoughts that in him woke
Can adequately utter none
Save to his ear the wind-harp lone.
Therein I hear the Parcae reel
The threads of man at their humming wheel,
The threads of life and power and pain,
So sweet and mournful falls the strain.
And best can teach its Delphian chord
How Nature to the soul is moored,

If once again that silent string,
As erst it wont, would thrill and ring.”

There is no need of quoting any of the poems which have become familiar to most true lovers of poetry. Emerson saw fit to imitate the Egyptians by placing “The Sphinx” at the entrance of his temple of song. This poem was not fitted to attract worshippers. It is not easy of comprehension, not pleasing in movement. As at first written it had one verse in it which sounded so much like a nursery rhyme that Emerson was prevailed upon to omit it in the later versions. There are noble passages in it, but they are for the adept and not for the beginner. A commonplace young person taking up the volume and puzzling his or her way along will come by and by to the verse:—



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"Have I a lover
Who is noble and free?—
I would he were nobler
Than to love me."

The commonplace young person will be apt to say or think *c'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas—l'amour*.

The third poem in the volume, "The Problem," should have stood first in order. This ranks among the finest of Emerson's poems. All his earlier verse has a certain freshness which belongs to the first outburst of song in a poetic nature. "Each and All," "The Humble-Bee," "The Snow-Storm," should be read before "Uriel," "The World-Soul," or "Mithridates." "Monadnoc" will be a good test of the reader's taste for Emerson's poetry, and after this "Woodnotes."

In studying his poems we must not overlook the delicacy of many of their descriptive portions. If in the flights of his imagination he is like the strong-winged bird of passage, in his exquisite choice of descriptive epithets he reminds me of the *tenui-rostrals*. His subtle selective instinct penetrates the vocabulary for the one word he wants, as the long, slender bill of those birds dives deep into the flower for its drop of honey. Here is a passage showing admirably the two different conditions: wings closed and the selective instinct picking out its descriptive expressions; then suddenly wings flashing open and the imagination in the firmament, where it is always at home. Follow the pitiful inventory of insignificances of the forlorn being he describes with a pathetic humor more likely to bring a sigh than a smile, and then mark the grand hyperbole of the last two lines. The passage is from the poem called "Destiny":—

"Alas! that one is born in blight,
Victim of perpetual slight:
When thou lookest on his face,
Thy heart saith 'Brother, go thy ways!
None shall ask thee what thou doest,
Or care a rush for what thou knowest.
Or listen when thou repliest,
Or remember where thou liest,
Or how thy supper is sodden;
And another is born
To make the sun forgotten."

Of all Emerson's poems the "Concord Hymn" is the most nearly complete and faultless, —but it is not distinctively Emersonian. It is such a poem as Collins might have written, —it has the very movement and melody of the "Ode on the Death of Mr. Thomson," and of the "Dirge in Cymbeline," with the same sweetness and tenderness of feeling. Its one conspicuous line,

“And fired the shot heard round the world,”

must not take to itself all the praise deserved by this perfect little poem, a model for all of its kind. Compact, expressive, serene, solemn, musical, in four brief stanzas it tells the story of the past, records the commemorative act of the passing day, and invokes the higher Power that governs the future to protect the Memorial-stone sacred to Freedom and her martyrs.

These poems of Emerson’s find the readers that must listen to them and delight in them, as the “Ancient Mariner” fastened upon the man who must hear him. If any doubter wishes to test his fitness for reading them, and if the poems already mentioned are not enough to settle the question, let him read the paragraph of “May-Day,” beginning,—

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"I saw the bud-crowned Spring go forth,"

"Sea-shore," the fine fragments in the "Appendix" to his published works, called, collectively, "The Poet," blocks bearing the mark of poetic genius, but left lying round for want of the structural instinct, and last of all, that which is, in many respects, first of all, the "Threnody," a lament over the death of his first-born son. This poem has the dignity of "Lycidas" without its refrigerating classicism, and with all the tenderness of Cowper's lines on the receipt of his mother's picture. It may well compare with others of the finest memorial poems in the language,—with Shelley's "Adonais," and Matthew Arnold's "Thyrsis," leaving out of view Tennyson's "In Memoriam" as of wider scope and larger pattern.

Many critics will concede that there is much truth in Mr. Arnold's remark on the want of "evolution" in Emerson's poems. One is struck with the fact that a great number of fragments lie about his poetical workshop: poems begun and never finished; scraps of poems, chips of poems, paving the floor with intentions never carried out. One cannot help remembering Coleridge with his incomplete "Christabel," and his "Abyssinian Maid," and her dulcimer which she never got a tune out of. We all know there was good reason why Coleridge should have been infirm of purpose. But when we look at that great unfinished picture over which Allston labored with the hopeless ineffectiveness of Sisyphus; when we go through a whole gallery of pictures by an American artist in which the backgrounds are slighted as if our midsummer heats had taken away half the artist's life and vigor; when we walk round whole rooms full of sketches, impressions, effects, symphonies, invisibilities, and other apologies for honest work, it would not be strange if it should suggest a painful course of reflections as to the possibility that there may be something in our climatic or other conditions which tends to scholastic and artistic anaemia and insufficiency,—the opposite of what we find showing itself in the full-blooded verse of poets like Browning and on the flaming canvas of painters like Henri Regnault. Life seemed lustier in Old England than in New England to Emerson, to Hawthorne, and to that admirable observer, Mr. John Burroughs. Perhaps we require another century or two of acclimation.

Emerson never grappled with any considerable metrical difficulties. He wrote by preference in what I have ventured to call the normal respiratory measure,—octosyllabic verse, in which one common expiration is enough and not too much for the articulation of each line. The "fatal facility" for which this verse is noted belongs to it as recited and also as written, and it implies the need of only a minimum of skill and labor. I doubt if Emerson would have written a verse of poetry if he had been obliged to use the Spenserian stanza. In the simple measures he habitually employed he found least hindrance to his thought.

Page 2003

Every true poet has an atmosphere as much as every great painter. The golden sunshine of Claude and the pearly mist of Corot belonged to their way of looking at nature as much as the color of their eyes and hair belonged to their personalities. So with the poets; for Wordsworth the air is always serene and clear, for Byron the sky is uncertain between storm and sunshine. Emerson sees all nature in the same pearly mist that wraps the willows and the streams of Corot. Without its own characteristic atmosphere, illuminated by

“The light that never was on sea or land,”

we may have good verse but no true poem. In his poetry there is not merely this atmosphere, but there is always a mirage in the horizon.

Emerson's poetry is eminently subjective,—if Mr. Ruskin, who hates the word, will pardon me for using it in connection with a reference to two of his own chapters in his “Modern Painters.” These are the chapter on “The Pathetic Fallacy,” and the one which follows it “On Classical Landscape.” In these he treats of the transfer of a writer's mental or emotional conditions to the external nature which he contemplates. He asks his readers to follow him in a long examination of what he calls by the singular name mentioned, “the pathetic fallacy,” because, he says, “he will find it eminently characteristic of the modern mind; and in the landscape, whether of literature or art, he will also find the modern painter endeavoring to express something which he, as a living creature, imagines in the lifeless object, while the classical and mediaeval painters were content with expressing the unimaginary and actual qualities of the object itself.”

Illustrations of Mr. Ruskin's “pathetic fallacy” may be found almost anywhere in Emerson's poems. Here is one which offers itself without search:—

“Daily the bending skies solicit man,
The seasons chariot him from this exile,
The rainbow hours bedeck his glowing wheels,
The storm-winds urge the heavy weeks along,
Suns haste to set, that so remoter lights
Beckon the wanderer to his vaster home.”

The expression employed by Ruskin gives the idea that he is dealing with a defect. If he had called the state of mind to which he refers the *sympathetic illusion*, his readers might have looked upon it more justly.

It would be a pleasant and not a difficult task to trace the resemblances between Emerson's poetry and that of other poets. Two or three such resemblances have been incidentally referred to, a few others may be mentioned.

In his contemplative study of Nature he reminds us of Wordsworth, at least in certain brief passages, but he has not the staying power of that long-breathed, not to say long-winded, lover of landscapes. Both are on the most intimate terms with Nature, but Emerson contemplates himself as belonging to her, while Wordsworth feels as if she belonged to him.



Page 2004

“Good-by, proud world,”

recalls Spenser and Raleigh. “The Humble-Bee” is strongly marked by the manner and thought of Marvell. Marvell’s

“Annihilating all that’s made
To a green thought in a green shade,”

may well have suggested Emerson’s

“The green silence dost displace
With thy mellow, breezy bass.”

“The Snow-Storm” naturally enough brings to mind the descriptions of Thomson and of Cowper, and fragment as it is, it will not suffer by comparison with either.

“Woodnotes,” one of his best poems, has passages that might have been found in Milton’s “Comus;” this, for instance:—

“All constellations of the sky
Shed their virtue through his eye.
Him Nature giveth for defence
His formidable innocence.”

Of course his Persian and Indian models betray themselves in many of his poems, some of which, called translations, sound as if they were original.

So we follow him from page to page and find him passing through many moods, but with one pervading spirit:—

“Melting matter into dreams,
Panoramas which I saw,
And whatever glows or seems
Into substance, into Law.”

We think in reading his “Poems” of these words of Sainte-Beuve:—

“The greatest poet is not he who has done the best; it is he who suggests the most; he, not all of whose meaning is at first obvious, and who leaves you much to desire, to explain, to study; much to complete in your turn.”

Just what he shows himself in his prose, Emerson shows himself in his verse. Only when he gets into rhythm and rhyme he lets us see more of his personality, he ventures upon more audacious imagery, his flight is higher and swifter, his brief crystalline sentences have dissolved and pour in continuous streams. Where they came from, or

whither they flow to empty themselves, we cannot always say,—it is enough to enjoy them as they flow by us.

Incompleteness—want of beginning, middle, and end,—is their too common fault. His pages are too much like those artists' studios all hung round with sketches and “bits” of scenery. “The Snow-Storm” and “Sea-Shore” are “bits” out of a landscape that was never painted, admirable, so far as they go, but forcing us to ask, “Where is the painting for which these scraps are studies?” or “Out of what great picture have these pieces been cut?”

We do not want his fragments to be made wholes,—if we did, what hand could be found equal to the task? We do not want his rhythms and rhymes smoothed and made more melodious. They are as honest as Chaucer's, and we like them as they are, not modernized or manipulated by any versifying drill-sergeant,—if we wanted them reshaped whom could we trust to meddle with them?

His poetry is elemental; it has the rock beneath it in the eternal laws on which it rests; the roll of deep waters in its grander harmonies; its air is full of Aeolian strains that waken and die away as the breeze wanders over them; and through it shines the white starlight, and from time to time flashes a meteor that startles us with its sudden brilliancy.

Page 2005

After all our criticisms, our selections, our analyses, our comparisons, we have to recognize that there is a charm in Emerson's poems which cannot be defined any more than the fragrance of a rose or a hyacinth,—any more than the tone of a voice which we should know from all others if all mankind were to pass before us, and each of its articulating representatives should call us by name.

All our crucibles and alembics leave unaccounted for the great mystery of *style*. "The style is of [a part of] the man himself," said Buffon, and this saying has passed into the stronger phrase, "The style is the man."

The "personal equation" which differentiates two observers is not confined to the tower of the astronomer. Every human being is individualized by a new arrangement of elements. His mind is a safe with a lock to which only certain letters are the key. His ideas follow in an order of their own. His words group themselves together in special sequences, in peculiar rhythms, in unlooked-for combinations, the total effect of which is to stamp all that he says or writes with his individuality. We may not be able to assign the reason of the fascination the poet we have been considering exercises over us. But this we can say, that he lives in the highest atmosphere of thought; that he is always in the presence of the infinite, and ennobles the accidents of human existence so that they partake of the absolute and eternal while he is looking at them; that he unites a royal dignity of manner with the simplicity of primitive nature; that his words and phrases arrange themselves, as if by an elective affinity of their own, with a *curiosa felicitas* which captivates and enthralls the reader who comes fully under its influence, and that through all he sings as in all he says for us we recognize the same serene, high, pure intelligence and moral nature, infinitely precious to us, not only in themselves, but as a promise of what the transplanted life, the air and soil and breeding of this western world may yet educe from their potential virtues, shaping themselves, at length, in a literature as much its own as the Rocky Mountains and the Mississippi.

CHAPTER XV.

Recollections of Emerson's Last Years.—Mr. Conway's Visits.—Extracts from Mr. Whitman's Journal.—Dr. Le Baron Russell's Visit.—Dr. Edward Emerson's Account.—Illness and Death.—Funeral Services.

Mr. Conway gives the following account of two visits to Emerson after the decline of his faculties had begun to make itself obvious:—

Page 2006

“In 1875, when I stayed at his house in Concord for a little time, it was sad enough to find him sitting as a listener before those who used to sit at his feet in silence. But when alone with him he conversed in the old way, and his faults of memory seemed at times to disappear. There was something striking in the kind of forgetfulness by which he suffered. He remembered the realities and uses of things when he could not recall their names. He would describe what he wanted or thought of; when he could not recall ‘chair’ he could speak of that which supports the human frame, and ‘the implement that cultivates the soil’ must do for plough.—“In 1880, when I was last in Concord, the trouble had made heavy strides. The intensity of his silent attention to every word that was said was painful, suggesting a concentration of his powers to break through the invisible walls closing around them. Yet his face was serene; he was even cheerful, and joined in our laughter at some letters his eldest daughter had preserved, from young girls, trying to coax autograph letters, and in one case asking for what price he would write a valedictory address she had to deliver at college. He was still able to joke about his ‘naughty memory;’ and no complaint came from him when he once rallied himself on living too long. Emerson appeared to me strangely beautiful at this time, and the sweetness of his voice, when he spoke of the love and providence at his side, is quite indescribable.”—

One of the later glimpses we have of Emerson is that preserved in the journal of Mr. Whitman, who visited Concord in the autumn of 1881. Mr. Ireland gives a long extract from this journal, from which I take the following:—

“On entering he had spoken very briefly, easily and politely to several of the company, then settled himself in his chair, a trifle pushed back, and, though a listener and apparently an alert one, remained silent through the whole talk and discussion. And so, there Emerson sat, and I looking at him. A good color in his face, eyes clear, with the well-known expression of sweetness, and the old clear-peering aspect quite the same.”

Mr. Whitman met him again the next day, Sunday, September 18th, and records:—

“As just said, a healthy color in the cheeks, and good light in the eyes, cheery expression, and just the amount of talking that best suited, namely, a word or short phrase only where needed, and almost always with a smile.”

Dr. Le Baron Russell writes to me of Emerson at a still later period:—

Page 2007

“One incident I will mention which occurred at my last visit to Emerson, only a few months before his death. I went by Mrs. Emerson’s request to pass a Sunday at their house at Concord towards the end of June. His memory had been failing for some time, and his mind as you know was clouded, but the old charm of his voice and manner had never left him. On the morning after my arrival Mrs. Emerson took us into the garden to see the beautiful roses in which she took great delight. One red rose of most brilliant color she called our attention to especially; its ‘hue’ was so truly ‘angry and brave’ that I involuntarily repeated Herbert’s line,—

‘Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,’—

from the verses which Emerson had first repeated to me so long ago. Emerson looked at the rose admiringly, and then as if by a sudden impulse lifted his hat gently, and said with a low bow, ‘I take off my hat to it.’”

Once a poet, always a poet. It was the same reverence for the beautiful that he had shown in the same way in his younger days on entering the wood, as Governor Rice has told us the story, given in an earlier chapter.

I do not remember Emerson’s last time of attendance at the “Saturday Club,” but I recollect that he came after the trouble in finding words had become well marked. “My memory hides itself,” he said. The last time I saw him, living, was at Longfellow’s funeral. I was sitting opposite to him when he rose, and going to the side of the coffin, looked intently upon the face of the dead poet. A few minutes later he rose again and looked once more on the familiar features, not apparently remembering that he had just done so. Mr. Conway reports that he said to a friend near him, “That gentleman was a sweet, beautiful soul, but I have entirely forgotten his name.”

Dr. Edward Emerson has very kindly furnished me, in reply to my request, with information regarding his father’s last years which will interest every one who has followed his life through its morning and midday to the hour of evening shadows.

“May-Day,” which was published in 1867, was made up of the poems written since his first volume appeared. After this he wrote no poems, but with some difficulty fitted the refrain to the poem “Boston,” which had remained unfinished since the old Anti-slavery days. “Greatness,” and the “Phi Beta Kappa Oration” of 1867, were among his last pieces of work. His College Lectures, “The Natural History of the Intellect,” were merely notes recorded years before, and now gathered and welded together. In 1876 he revised his poems, and made the selections from them for the “Little Classic” edition of his works, then called “Selected Poems.” In that year he gave his “Address to the Students of the University of Virginia.” This was a paper written long before, and its revision, with the aid of his daughter Ellen, was accomplished with much difficulty.

Page 2008

The year 1867 was about the limit of his working life. During the last five years he hardly answered a letter. Before this time it had become increasingly hard for him to do so, and he always postponed and thought he should feel more able the next day, until his daughter Ellen was compelled to assume the correspondence. He did, however, write some letters in 1876, as, for instance, the answer to the invitation of the Virginia students.

Emerson left off going regularly to the "Saturday Club" probably in 1875. He used to depend on meeting Mr. Cabot there, but after Mr. Cabot began to come regularly to work on "Letters and Social Aims," Emerson, who relied on his friendly assistance, ceased attending the meetings. The trouble he had in finding the word he wanted was a reason for his staying away from all gatherings where he was called upon to take a part in conversation, though he the more willingly went to lectures and readings and to church. His hearing was very slightly impaired, and his sight remained pretty good, though he sometimes said letters doubled, and that "M's" and "N's" troubled him to read. He recognized the members of his own family and his *old* friends; but, as I infer from this statement, he found a difficulty in remembering the faces of new acquaintances, as is common with old persons.

He continued the habit of reading,—read through all his printed works with much interest and surprise, went through all his manuscripts, and endeavored, unsuccessfully, to index them. In these Dr. Emerson found written "Examined 1877 or 1878," but he found no later date.

In the last year or two he read anything which he picked up on his table, but he read the same things over, and whispered the words like a child. He liked to look over the "Advertiser," and was interested in the "Nation." He enjoyed pictures in books and showed them with delight to guests.

All this with slight changes and omissions is from the letter of Dr. Emerson in answer to my questions. The twilight of a long, bright day of life may be saddening, but when the shadow falls so gently and gradually, with so little that is painful and so much that is soothing and comforting, we do not shrink from following the imprisoned spirit to the very verge of its earthly existence.

But darker hours were in the order of nature very near at hand. From these he was saved by his not untimely release from the imprisonment of the worn-out bodily frame.

In April, 1882, Emerson took a severe cold, and became so hoarse that he could hardly speak. When his son, Dr. Edward Emerson, called to see him, he found him on the sofa, feverish, with more difficulty of expression than usual, dull, but not uncomfortable. As he lay on his couch he pointed out various objects, among others a portrait of Carlyle "the good man,—my friend." His son told him that he had seen Carlyle, which seemed to please him much. On the following day the unequivocal

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signs of pneumonia showed themselves, and he failed rapidly. He still recognized those around him, among the rest Judge Hoar, to whom he held out his arms for a last embrace. A sharp pain coming on, ether was administered with relief. And in a little time, surrounded by those who loved him and whom he loved, he passed quietly away. He lived very nearly to the completion of his seventy-ninth year, having been born May 25, 1803, and his death occurring on the 27th of April, 1882.

Mr. Ireland has given a full account of the funeral, from which are, for the most part, taken the following extracts:—

“The last rites over the remains of Ralph Waldo Emerson took place at Concord on the 30th of April. A special train from Boston carried a large number of people. Many persons were on the street, attracted by the services, but were unable to gain admission to the church where the public ceremonies were held. Almost every building in town bore over its entrance-door a large black and white rosette with other sombre draperies. The public buildings were heavily draped, and even the homes of the very poor bore outward marks of grief at the loss of their friend and fellow-townsmen. “The services at the house, which were strictly private, occurred at 2.30, and were conducted by Rev. W.H. Furness of Philadelphia, a kindred spirit and an almost life-long friend. They were simple in character, and only Dr. Furness took part in them. The body lay in the front northeast room, in which were gathered the family and close friends of the deceased. The only flowers were contained in three vases on the mantel, and were lilies of the valley, red and white roses, and arbutus. The adjoining room and hall were filled with friends and neighbors. “At the church many hundreds of persons were awaiting the arrival of the procession, and all the space, except the reserved pews, was packed. In front of the pulpit were simple decorations, boughs of pine covered the desk, and in their centre was a harp of yellow jonquils, the gift of Miss Louisa M. Alcott. Among the floral tributes was one from the teachers and scholars in the Emerson school. By the sides of the pulpit were white and scarlet geraniums and pine boughs, and high upon the wall a laurel wreath. “Before 3.30 the pall-bearers brought in the plain black walnut coffin, which was placed before the pulpit. The lid was turned back, and upon it was put a cluster of richly colored pansies and a small bouquet of roses. While the coffin was being carried in, ‘Pleyel’s Hymn’ was rendered on the organ by request of the family of the deceased. Dr. James Freeman Clarke then entered the pulpit. Judge E. Rockwood Hoar remained by the coffin below, and when the congregation became quiet, made a brief and pathetic address, his voice many times trembling with emotion.”

I subjoin this most impressive “Address” entire, from the manuscript with which Judge Hoar has kindly favored me:—

Page 2010

"The beauty of Israel is fallen in its high place! Mr. Emerson has died; and we, his friends and neighbors, with this sorrowing company, have turned aside the procession from his home to his grave,—to this temple of his fathers, that we may here unite in our parting tribute of memory and love." "There is nothing to mourn for him. That brave and manly life was rounded out to the full length of days. That dying pillow was softened by the sweetest domestic affection; and as he lay down to the sleep which the Lord giveth his beloved, his face was as the face of an angel, and his smile seemed to give a glimpse of the opening heavens." "Wherever the English language is spoken throughout the world his fame is established and secure. Throughout this great land and from beyond the sea will come innumerable voices of sorrow for this great public loss. But we, his neighbors and townsmen, feel that he was *ours*. He was descended from the founders of the town. He chose our village as the place where his lifelong work was to be done. It was to our fields and orchards that his presence gave such value; it was our streets in which the children looked up to him with love, and the elders with reverence. He was our ornament and pride.

"He is gone—is dust,—
He the more fortunate! Yea, he hath finished!
For him there is no longer any future.
His life is bright—bright without spot it was
And cannot cease to be. No ominous hour
Knocks at his door with tidings of mishap.
Far off is he, above desire and fear;
No more submitted to the change and chance
Of the uncertain planets.—

"The bloom is vanished from my life,
For, oh! he stood beside me like my youth;
Transformed for me the real to a dream,
Clothing the palpable and the familiar
With golden exhalations of the dawn.
Whatever fortunes wait my future toils,
The *beautiful* is vanished and returns not.'

"That lofty brow, the home of all wise thoughts and high aspirations,—those lips of eloquent music,—that great soul, which trusted in God and never let go its hope of immortality,—that large heart, to which everything that belonged to man was welcome,—that hospitable nature, loving and tender and generous, having no repulsion or scorn for anything but meanness and baseness,—oh, friend, brother, father, lover, teacher, inspirer, guide! is there no more that we can do now than to give thee this our hail and farewell!"

Judge Hoar's remarks were followed by the congregation singing the hymns, "Thy will be done," "I will not fear the fate provided by Thy love." The Rev. Dr. Furness then read selections from the Scriptures.

The Rev. James Freeman Clarke then delivered an "Address," from which I extract two eloquent and inspiring passages, regretting to omit any that fell from lips so used to noble utterances and warmed by their subject,—for there is hardly a living person more competent to speak or write of Emerson than this high-minded and brave-souled man, who did not wait until he was famous to be his admirer and champion.

Page 2011

"The saying of the Liturgy is true and wise, that 'in the midst of life we are in death.' But it is still more true that in the midst of death we are in life. Do we ever believe so much in immortality as when we look on such a dear and noble face, now so still, which a few hours ago was radiant with thought and love? 'He is not here: he is risen.' That power which we knew,—that soaring intelligence, that soul of fire, that ever-advancing spirit,—*that* cannot have been suddenly annihilated with the decay of these earthly organs. It has left its darkened dust behind. It has outsoared the shadow of our night. God does not trifle with his creatures by bringing to nothing the ripe fruit of the ages by the lesion of a cerebral cell, or some bodily tissue. Life does not die, but matter dies off from it. The highest energy we know, the soul of man, the unit in which meet intelligence, imagination, memory, hope, love, purpose, insight,—this agent of immense resource and boundless power,—this has not been subdued by its instrument. When we think of such an one as he, we can only think of life, never of death." Such was his own faith, as expressed in his paper on 'Immortality.' But he himself was the best argument for immortality. Like the greatest thinkers, he did not rely on logical proof, but on the higher evidence of universal instincts,—the vast streams of belief which flow through human thought like currents in the ocean; those shoreless rivers which forever roll along their paths in the Atlantic and Pacific, not restrained by banks, but guided by the revolutions of the globe and the attractions of the sun."

* * * * *

"Let us then ponder his words:—

'Wilt thou not ope thy heart to know
What rainbows teach and sunsets show?
Voice of earth to earth returned,
Prayers of saints that inly burned,
Saying, *What is excellent*
As God lives, is permanent;
Hearts are dust, hearts' loves remain;
Hearts' love will meet thee again.

* * * *

House and tenant go to ground
Lost in God, in Godhead found."

After the above address a feeling prayer was offered by Rev. Howard M. Brown, of Brookline, and the benediction closed the exercises in the church. Immediately before the benediction, Mr. Alcott recited the following sonnet, which he had written for the occasion:—



“His harp is silent: shall successors rise,
Touching with venturous hand the trembling string,
Kindle glad raptures, visions of surprise,
And wake to ecstasy each slumbering thing?
Shall life and thought flash new in wondering eyes,
As when the seer transcendent, sweet, and wise,
World-wide his native melodies did sing,
Flushed with fair hopes and ancient memories?
Ah, no! That matchless lyre shall silent lie:
None hath the vanished minstrel’s wondrous skill
To touch that instrument with art and will.
With him, winged poesy doth droop and die;
While our dull age, left voiceless, must lament
The bard high heaven had for its service sent.”

Page 2012

"Over an hour was occupied by the passing files of neighbors, friends, and visitors looking for the last time upon the face of the dead poet. The body was robed completely in white, and the face bore a natural and peaceful expression. From the church the procession took its way to the cemetery. The grave was made beneath a tall pine-tree upon the hill-top of Sleepy Hollow, where lie the bodies of his friends Thoreau and Hawthorne, the upturned sod being concealed by strewings of pine boughs. A border of hemlock spray surrounded the grave and completely lined its sides. The services here were very brief, and the casket was soon lowered to its final resting-place." "The Rev. Dr. Haskins, a cousin of the family, an Episcopal clergyman, read the Episcopal Burial Service, and closed with the Lord's Prayer, ending at the words, 'and deliver us from evil.' In this all the people joined. Dr. Haskins then pronounced the benediction. After it was over the grandchildren passed the open grave and threw flowers into it."

So vanished from human eyes the bodily presence of Ralph Waldo Emerson, and his finished record belongs henceforth to memory.

CHAPTER XVI.

EMERSON.—A RETROSPECT.

Personality and Habits of Life.—His Commission and Errand.—As a Lecturer.—His Use of Authorities.—Resemblance to Other Writers.—As influenced by Others.—His Place as a Thinker.—Idealism and Intuition.—Mysticism.—His Attitude respecting Science.—As an American.—His Fondness for Solitary Study.—His Patience and Amiability.—Feeling with which he was regarded.—Emerson and Burns.—His Religious Belief.—His Relations with Clergymen.—Future of his Reputation.—His Life judged by the Ideal Standard.

Emerson's earthly existence was in the estimate of his own philosophy so slight an occurrence in his career of being that his relations to the accidents of time and space seem quite secondary matters to one who has been long living in the companionship of his thought. Still, he had to be born, to take in his share of the atmosphere in which we are all immersed, to have dealings with the world of phenomena, and at length to let them all "soar and sing" as he left his earthly half-way house. It is natural and pardonable that we should like to know the details of the daily life which the men whom we admire have shared with common mortals, ourselves among the rest. But Emerson has said truly "Great geniuses have the shortest biographies. Their cousins can tell you nothing about them. They lived in their writings, and so their home and street life was trivial and commonplace."

The reader has had many extracts from Emerson's writings laid before him. It was no easy task to choose them, for his paragraphs are so condensed, so much in the nature

of abstracts, that it is like distilling absolute alcohol to attempt separating the spirit of what he says from his undiluted thought. His books are all so full of his life to their last syllable that we might letter every volume *Emersoniana*, by Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Page 2013

From the numerous extracts I have given from Emerson's writings it may be hoped that the reader will have formed an idea for himself of the man and of the life which have been the subjects of these pages. But he may probably expect something like a portrait of the poet and moralist from the hand of his biographer, if the author of this Memoir may borrow the name which will belong to a future and better equipped laborer in the same field. He may not unreasonably look for some general estimate of the life work of the scholar and thinker of whom he has been reading. He will not be disposed to find fault with the writer of the Memoir if he mentions many things which would seem very trivial but for the interest they borrow from the individual to whom they relate.

Emerson's personal appearance was that of a scholar, the descendant of scholars. He was tall and slender, with the complexion which is bred in the alcove and not in the open air. He used to tell his son Edward that he measured six feet in his shoes, but his son thinks he could hardly have straightened himself to that height in his later years. He was very light for a man of his stature. He got on the scales at Cheyenne, on his trip to California, comparing his weight with that of a lady of the party. A little while afterwards he asked of his fellow-traveller, Professor Thayer, "How much did I weigh? A hundred and forty?" "A hundred and forty and a half," was the answer. "Yes, yes, a hundred and forty and a half! That *half* I prize; it is an index of better things!"

Emerson's head was not such as Schopenhauer insists upon for a philosopher. He wore a hat measuring six and seven eighths on the *cephalometer* used by hatters, which is equivalent to twenty-one inches and a quarter of circumference. The average size is from seven to seven and an eighth, so that his head was quite small in that dimension. It was long and narrow, but lofty, almost symmetrical, and of more nearly equal breadth in its anterior and posterior regions than many or most heads.

His shoulders sloped so much as to be commented upon for this peculiarity by Mr. Gilfillan, and like "Ammon's great son," he carried one shoulder a little higher than the other. His face was thin, his nose somewhat accipitrine, casting a broad shadow; his mouth rather wide, well formed and well closed, carrying a question and an assertion in its finely finished curves; the lower lip a little prominent, the chin shapely and firm, as becomes the corner-stone of the countenance. His expression was calm, sedate, kindly, with that look of refinement, centring about the lips, which is rarely found in the male New Englander, unless the family features have been for two or three cultivated generations the battlefield and the playground of varied thoughts and complex emotions as well as the sensuous and nutritive port of entry. His whole look was irradiated by an ever active inquiring intelligence. His manner was noble and gracious. Few of our fellow-countrymen have had larger opportunities of seeing distinguished personages than our present minister at the Court of St. James. In a recent letter to myself, which I trust Mr. Lowell will pardon my quoting, he says of Emerson:—

Page 2014

"There was a majesty about him beyond all other men I have known, and he habitually dwelt in that ampler and diviner air to which most of us, if ever, only rise in spurts."

From members of his own immediate family I have derived some particulars relating to his personality and habits which are deserving of record.

His hair was brown, quite fine, and, till he was fifty, very thick. His eyes were of the "strongest and brightest blue." The member of the family who tells me this says:—

"My sister and I have looked for many years to see whether any one else had such absolutely blue eyes, and have never found them except in sea-captains. I have seen three sea-captains who had them."

He was not insensible to music, but his gift in that direction was very limited, if we may judge from this family story. When he was in College, and the singing-master was gathering his pupils, Emerson presented himself, intending to learn to sing. The master received him, and when his turn came, said to him, "Chord!" "What?" said Emerson. "Chord! Chord! I tell you," repeated the master. "I don't know what you mean," said Emerson. "Why, sing! Sing a note." "So I made some kind of a noise, and the singing-master said, 'That will do, sir. You need not come again.'"

Emerson's mode of living was very simple: coffee in the morning, tea in the evening, animal food by choice only once a day, wine only when with others using it, but always *pie* at breakfast. "It stood before him and was the first thing eaten." Ten o'clock was his bed-time, six his hour of rising until the last ten years of his life, when he rose at seven. Work or company sometimes led him to sit up late, and this he could do night after night. He never was hungry,—could go any time from breakfast to tea without food and not know it, but was always ready for food when it was set before him.

He always walked from about four in the afternoon till tea-time, and often longer when the day was fine, or he felt that he should work the better.

It is plain from his writings that Emerson was possessed all his life long with the idea of his constitutional infirmity and insufficiency. He hated invalidism, and had little patience with complaints about ill-health, but in his poems, and once or twice in his letters to Carlyle, he expresses himself with freedom about his own bodily inheritance. In 1827, being then but twenty-four years old, he writes:—

"I bear in youth the sad infirmities
That use to undo the limb and sense of age."

Four years later:—

"Has God on thee conferred
A bodily presence mean as Paul's,

Yet made thee bearer of a word
Which sleepy nations as with trumpet calls?"

and again, in the same year:—

"Leave me, Fear, thy throbs are base,
Trembling for the body's sake."—

Almost forty years from the first of these dates we find him bewailing in "Terminus" his inherited weakness of organization.

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And in writing to Carlyle, he says:—

“You are of the Anakirn and know nothing of the debility and postponement of the blonde constitution.”

Again, “I am the victim of miscellany—miscellany of designs, vast debility and procrastination.”

He thought too much of his bodily insufficiencies, which, it will be observed, he refers to only in his private correspondence, and in that semi-nudity of self-revelation which is the privilege of poetry. His presence was fine and impressive, and his muscular strength was enough to make him a rapid and enduring walker.

Emerson’s voice had a great charm in conversation, as in the lecture-room. It was never loud, never shrill, but singularly penetrating. He was apt to hesitate in the course of a sentence, so as to be sure of the exact word he wanted; picking his way through his vocabulary, to get at the best expression of his thought, as a well-dressed woman crosses the muddy pavement to reach the opposite sidewalk. It was this natural slight and not unpleasant semicolon pausing of the memory which grew upon him in his years of decline, until it rendered conversation laborious and painful to him.

He never laughed loudly. When he laughed it was under protest, as it were, with closed doors, his mouth shut, so that the explosion had to seek another respiratory channel, and found its way out quietly, while his eyebrows and nostrils and all his features betrayed the “ground swell,” as Professor Thayer happily called it, of the half-suppressed convulsion. He was averse to loud laughter in others, and objected to Margaret Fuller that she made him laugh too much.

Emerson was not rich in some of those natural gifts which are considered the birthright of the New Englander. He had not the mechanical turn of the whittling Yankee. I once questioned him about his manual dexterity, and he told me he could split a shingle four ways with one nail, —which, as the intention is not to split it at all in fastening it to the roof of a house or elsewhere, I took to be a confession of inaptitude for mechanical works. He does not seem to have been very accomplished in the handling of agricultural implements either, for it is told in the family that his little son, Waldo, seeing him at work with a spade, cried out, “Take care, papa,—you will dig your leg.”

He used to regret that he had no ear for music. I have said enough about his verse, which often jars on a sensitive ear, showing a want of the nicest perception of harmonies and discords in the arrangement of the words.

There are stories which show that Emerson had a retentive memory in the earlier part of his life. It is hard to say from his books whether he had or not, for he jotted down such a

multitude of things in his diary that this was a kind of mechanical memory which supplied him with endless materials of thought and subjects for his pen.

Lover and admirer of Plato as Emerson was, the doors of the academy, over which was the inscription [Greek: *maedeis hageometraetos eseito*]—Let no one unacquainted with geometry enter here,—would have been closed to him. All the exact sciences found him an unwilling learner. He says of himself that he cannot multiply seven by twelve with impunity.

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In an unpublished manuscript kindly submitted to me by Mr. Frothingham, Emerson is reported as saying, "God has given me the seeing eye, but not the working hand." His gift was insight: he saw the germ through its envelop; the particular in the light of the universal; the fact in connection with the principle; the phenomenon as related to the law; all this not by the slow and sure process of science, but by the sudden and searching flashes of imaginative double vision. He had neither the patience nor the method of the inductive reasoner; he passed from one thought to another not by logical steps but by airy flights, which left no footprints. This mode of intellectual action when found united with natural sagacity becomes poetry, philosophy, wisdom, or prophecy in its various forms of manifestation. Without that gift of natural sagacity (*odoratio quaedam venatica*),—a good scent for truth and beauty,—it appears as extravagance, whimsicality, eccentricity, or insanity, according to its degree of aberration. Emerson was eminently sane for an idealist. He carried the same sagacity into the ideal world that Franklin showed in the affairs of common life.

He was constitutionally fastidious, and had to school himself to become able to put up with the terrible inflictions of uncongenial fellowships. We must go to his poems to get at his weaknesses. The clown of the first edition of "Monadnoc" "with heart of cat and eyes of bug," disappears in the after-thought of the later version of the poem, but the eye that recognized him and the nature that recoiled from him were there still. What must he not have endured from the persecutions of small-minded worshippers who fastened upon him for the interminable period between the incoming and the outgoing railroad train! He was a model of patience and good temper. We might have feared that he lacked the sensibility to make such intrusions and offences an annoyance. But when Mr. Frothingham gratifies the public with those most interesting personal recollections which I have had the privilege of looking over, it will be seen that his equanimity, admirable as it was, was not incapable of being disturbed, and that on rare occasions he could give way to the feeling which showed itself of old in the doom pronounced on the barren fig-tree.

Of Emerson's affections his home-life, and those tender poems in memory of his brothers and his son, give all the evidence that could be asked or wished for. His friends were all who knew him, for none could be his enemy; and his simple graciousness of manner, with the sincerity apparent in every look and tone, hardly admitted indifference on the part of any who met him were it but for a single hour. Even the little children knew and loved him, and babes in arms returned his angelic smile. Of the friends who were longest and most intimately associated with him, it is needless to say much in this place. Of those who are living, it is hardly time to speak;

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of those who are dead, much has already been written. Margaret Fuller,—I must call my early schoolmate as I best remember her,—leaves her life pictured in the mosaic of five artists,—Emerson himself among the number; Thoreau is faithfully commemorated in the loving memoir by Mr. Sanborn; Theodore Parker lives in the story of his life told by the eloquent Mr. Weiss; Hawthorne awaits his portrait from the master-hand of Mr. Lowell.

How nearly any friend, other than his brothers Edward and Charles, came to him, I cannot say, indeed I can hardly guess. That “majesty” Mr. Lowell speaks of always seemed to hedge him round like the divinity that doth hedge a king. What man was he who would lay his hand familiarly upon his shoulder and call him Waldo? No disciple of Father Mathew would be likely to do such a thing. There may have been such irreverent persons, but if any one had so ventured at the “Saturday Club,” it would have produced a sensation like Brummel’s “George, ring the bell,” to the Prince Regent. His ideas of friendship, as of love, seem almost too exalted for our earthly conditions, and suggest the thought as do many others of his characteristics, that the spirit which animated his mortal frame had missed its way on the shining path to some brighter and better sphere of being.

Not so did Emerson appear among the plain working farmers of the village in which he lived. He was a good, unpretending fellow-citizen who put on no airs, who attended town-meetings, took his part in useful measures, was no great hand at farming, but was esteemed and respected, and felt to be a principal source of attraction to Concord, for strangers came flocking to the place as if it held the tomb of Washington.

* * * * *

What was the errand on which he visited our earth,—the message with which he came commissioned from the Infinite source of all life?

Every human soul leaves its port with sealed orders. These may be opened earlier or later on its voyage, but until they are opened no one can tell what is to be his course or to what harbor he is bound.

Emerson inherited the traditions of the Boston pulpit, such as they were, damaged, in the view of the prevailing sects of the country, perhaps by too long contact with the “Sons of Liberty,” and their revolutionary notions. But the most “liberal” Boston pulpit still held to many doctrines, forms, and phrases open to the challenge of any independent thinker.

In the year 1832 this young priest, then a settled minister, “began,” as was said of another,—“to be about thirty years of age.” He had opened his sealed orders and had read therein:

Thou shalt not profess that which thou dost not believe.

Thou shalt not heed the voice of man when it agrees not with the voice of God in thine own soul.

Thou shalt study and obey the laws of the Universe and they will be thy fellow-servants.

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Thou shalt speak the truth as thou seest it, without fear, in the spirit of kindness to all thy fellow-creatures, dealing with the manifold interests of life and the typical characters of history.

Nature shall be to thee as a symbol. The life of the soul, in conscious union with the Infinite, shall be for thee the only real existence.

This pleasing show of an external world through which thou art passing is given thee to interpret by the light which is in thee. Its least appearance is not unworthy of thy study. Let thy soul be open and thine eyes will reveal to thee beauty everywhere.

Go forth with thy message among thy fellow-creatures; teach them they must trust themselves as guided by that inner light which dwells with the pure in heart, to whom it was promised of old that they shall see God.

Teach them that each generation begins the world afresh, in perfect freedom; that the present is not the prisoner of the past, but that today holds captive all yesterdays, to compare, to judge, to accept, to reject their teachings, as these are shown by its own morning's sun.

To thy fellow-countrymen thou shalt preach the gospel of the New World, that here, here in our America, is the home of man; that here is the promise of a new and more excellent social state than history has recorded.

Thy life shall be as thy teachings, brave, pure, truthful, beneficent, hopeful, cheerful, hospitable to all honest belief, all sincere thinkers, and active according to thy gifts and opportunities.

* * * * *

He was true to the orders he had received. Through doubts, troubles, privations, opposition, he would not

"bate a jot
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer
Right onward."

All through the writings of Emerson the spirit of these orders manifests itself. His range of subjects is very wide, ascending to the highest sphere of spiritual contemplation, bordering on that "intense inane" where thought loses itself in breathless ecstasy, and stooping to the homeliest maxims of prudence and the every-day lessons of good manners, And all his work was done, not so much

"As ever in his great Taskmaster's eye,"

as in the ever-present sense of divine companionship.

He was called to sacrifice his living, his position, his intimacies, to a doubt, and he gave them all up without a murmur. He might have been an idol, and he broke his own pedestal to attack the idolatry which he saw all about him. He gave up a comparatively easy life for a toilsome and trying one; he accepted a precarious employment, which hardly kept him above poverty, rather than wear the golden padlock on his lips which has held fast the conscience of so many pulpit Chrysostoms. Instead of a volume or two of sermons, bridled with a text and harnessed with a confession of faith, he bequeathed us a long series of Discourses and Essays in which we know we have his honest thoughts, free from that professional bias which tends to make the pulpit teaching of the fairest-minded preacher follow a diagonal of two forces,—the promptings of his personal and his ecclesiastical opinions.

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Without a church or a pulpit, he soon had a congregation. It was largely made up of young persons of both sexes, young by nature, if not in years, who, tired of routine and formulae, and full of vague aspirations, found in his utterances the oracles they sought. To them, in the words of his friend and neighbor Mr. Alcott, he

“Sang his full song of hope and lofty cheer.”

Nor was it only for a few seasons that he drew his audiences of devout listeners around him. Another poet, his Concord neighbor, Mr. Sanborn, who listened to him many years after the first flush of novelty was over, felt the same enchantment, and recognized the same inspiring life in his words, which had thrilled the souls of those earlier listeners.

“His was the task and his the lordly gift
Our eyes, our hearts, bent earthward, to uplift.”

This was his power,—to inspire others, to make life purer, loftier, calmer, brighter. Optimism is what the young want, and he could no more help taking the hopeful view of the universe and its future than Claude could help flooding his landscapes with sunshine.

“Nature,” published in 1836, “the first clear manifestation of his genius,” as Mr. Norton calls it, revealed him as an idealist and a poet, with a tendency to mysticism. If he had been independent in circumstances, he would doubtless have developed more freely in these directions. But he had his living to get and a family to support, and he must look about him for some paying occupation. The lecture-room naturally presented itself to a scholar accustomed to speaking from the pulpit. This medium of communicating thought was not as yet very popular, and the rewards it offered were but moderate. Emerson was of a very hopeful nature, however, and believed in its possibilities.

—“I am always haunted with brave dreams of what might be accomplished in the lecture-room,—so free and so unpretending a platform,—a Delos not yet made fast. I imagine an eloquence of infinite variety, rich as conversation can be, with anecdote, joke, tragedy, epics and pindarics, argument and confession.” So writes Emerson to Carlyle in 1841.

It would be as unfair to overlook the special form in which Emerson gave most of his thoughts to the world, as it would be to leave out of view the calling of Shakespeare in judging his literary character. Emerson was an essayist and a lecturer, as Shakespeare was a dramatist and a play-actor.

The exigencies of the theatre account for much that is, as it were, accidental in the writings of Shakespeare. The demands of the lecture-room account for many peculiarities which are characteristic of Emerson as an author. The play must be in five acts, each of a given length. The lecture must fill an hour and not overrun it. Both play

and lecture must be vivid, varied, picturesque, stimulating, or the audience would tire before the allotted time was over.

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Both writers had this in common: they were poets and moralists. They reproduced the conditions of life in the light of penetrative observation and ideal contemplation; they illustrated its duties in their breach and in their observance, by precepts and well-chosen portraits of character. The particular form in which they wrote makes little difference when we come upon the utterance of a noble truth or an elevated sentiment.

It was not a simple matter of choice with the dramatist or the lecturer in what direction they should turn their special gifts. The actor had learned his business on the stage; the lecturer had gone through his apprenticeship in the pulpit. Each had his bread to earn, and he must work, and work hard, in the way open before him. For twenty years the playwright wrote dramas, and retired before middle age with a good estate to his native town. For forty years Emerson lectured and published lectures, and established himself at length in competence in the village where his ancestors had lived and died before him. He never became rich, as Shakespeare did. He was never in easy circumstances until he was nearly seventy years old. Lecturing was hard work, but he was under the “base necessity,” as he called it, of constant labor, writing in summer, speaking everywhere east and west in the trying and dangerous winter season.

He spoke in great cities to such cultivated audiences as no other man could gather about him, and in remote villages where he addressed plain people whose classics were the Bible and the “Farmer’s Almanac.” Wherever he appeared in the lecture-room, he fascinated his listeners by his voice and manner; the music of his speech pleased those who found his thought too subtle for their dull wits to follow.

When the Lecture had served its purpose, it came before the public in the shape of an Essay. But the Essay never lost the character it borrowed from the conditions under which it was delivered; it was a lay sermon,—*concio ad populum*. We must always remember what we are dealing with. “Expect nothing more of my power of construction,—no ship-building, no clipper, smack, nor skiff even, only boards and logs tied together.”—“Here I sit and read and write, with very little system, and, as far as regards composition, with the most fragmentary result: paragraphs incompressible, each sentence an infinitely repellent particle.” We have then a moralist and a poet appearing as a Lecturer and an Essayist, and now and then writing in verse. He liked the freedom of the platform. “I preach in the Lecture-room,” he says, “and there it tells, for there is no prescription. You may laugh, weep, reason, sing, sneer, or pray, according to your genius.” In England, he says, “I find this lecturing a key which opens all doors.” But he did not tend to overvalue the calling which from “base necessity” he followed so diligently. “Incorrigible spouting Yankee,” he calls himself; and again,

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"I peddle out all the wit I can gather from Time or from Nature, and am pained at heart to see how thankfully that little is received." Lecture-peddling was a hard business and a poorly paid one in the earlier part of the time when Emerson was carrying his precious wares about the country and offering them in competition with the cheapest itinerants, with shilling concerts and negro-minstrel entertainments. But one could get a kind of living out of it if he had invitations enough. I remember Emerson's coming to my house to know if I could fill his place at a certain Lyceum so that he might accept a very advantageous invitation in another direction. I told him that I was unfortunately engaged for the evening mentioned. He smiled serenely, saying that then he supposed he must give up the new stove for that season.

No man would accuse Emerson of parsimony of ideas. He crams his pages with the very marrow of his thought. But in weighing out a lecture he was as punctilious as Portia about the pound of flesh. His utterance was deliberate and spaced with not infrequent slight delays. Exactly at the end of the hour the lecture stopped. Suddenly, abruptly, but quietly, without peroration of any sort, always with "a gentle shock of mild surprise" to the unprepared listener. He had weighed out the full measure to his audience with perfect fairness.

[Greek: oste thalanta gunhae cheruhaetis halaethaes
Aetestathmhon hechon echousa kahi heirion hamphis hanhelkei
Ishazous ina paishin haeikhea misthon haraetai,]

or, in Bryant's version,

"as the scales Are held by some just woman, who maintains By spinning wool her household,—carefully She poises both the wool and weights, to make The balance even, that she may provide A pittance for her babes."—

As to the charm of his lectures all are agreed. It is needless to handle this subject, for Mr. Lowell has written upon it. Of their effect on his younger listeners he says, "To some of us that long past experience remains the most marvellous and fruitful we have ever had. Emerson awakened us, saved us from the body of this death. It is the sound of the trumpet that the young soul longs for, careless of what breath may fill it. Sidney heard it in the ballad of 'Chevy Chase,' and we in Emerson. Nor did it blow retreat, but called us with assurance of victory."

There was, besides these stirring notes, a sweet seriousness in Emerson's voice that was infinitely soothing. So might "Peace, be still," have sounded from the lips that silenced the storm. I remember that in the dreadful war-time, on one of the days of anguish and terror, I fell in with Governor Andrew, on his way to a lecture of Emerson's, where he was going, he said, to relieve the strain upon his mind. An hour passed in

listening to that flow of thought, calm and clear as the diamond drops that distil from a mountain rock, was a true nepenthe for a careworn soul.

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An author whose writings are like mosaics must have borrowed from many quarries. Emerson had read more or less thoroughly through a very wide range of authors. I shall presently show how extensive was his reading. No doubt he had studied certain authors diligently, a few, it would seem, thoroughly. But let no one be frightened away from his pages by the terrible names of Plotinus and Proclus and Porphyry, of Behmen or Spinoza, or of those modern German philosophers with whom it is not pretended that he had any intimate acquaintance. Mr. George Ripley, a man of erudition, a keen critic, a lover and admirer of Emerson, speaks very plainly of his limitations as a scholar.

“As he confesses in the Essay on ‘Books,’ his learning is second hand; but everything sticks which his mind can appropriate. He defends the use of translations, and I doubt whether he has ever read ten pages of his great authorities, Plato, Plutarch, Montaigne, or Goethe, in the original. He is certainly no friend of profound study any more than of philosophical speculation. Give him a few brilliant and suggestive glimpses, and he is content.”

One correction I must make to this statement. Emerson says he has “contrived to read” almost every volume of Goethe, and that he has fifty-five of them, but that he has read nothing else in German, and has not looked into him for a long time. This was in 1840, in a letter to Carlyle. It was up-hill work, it may be suspected, but he could not well be ignorant of his friend’s great idol, and his references to Goethe are very frequent.

Emerson’s quotations are like the miraculous draught of fishes. I hardly know his rivals except Burton and Cotton Mather. But no one would accuse him of pedantry. Burton quotes to amuse himself and his reader; Mather quotes to show his learning, of which he had a vast conceit; Emerson quotes to illustrate some original thought of his own, or because another writer’s way of thinking falls in with his own,—never with a trivial purpose. Reading as he did, he must have unconsciously appropriated a great number of thoughts from others. But he was profuse in his references to those from whom he borrowed,—more profuse than many of his readers would believe without taking the pains to count his authorities. This I thought it worth while to have done, once for all, and I will briefly present the results of the examination. The named references, chiefly to authors, as given in the table before me, are three thousand three hundred and ninety-three, relating to eight hundred and sixty-eight different individuals. Of these, four hundred and eleven are mentioned more than once; one hundred and fifty-five, five times or more; sixty-nine, ten times or more; thirty-eight, fifteen times or more; and twenty-seven, twenty times or more. These twenty-seven names alone, the list of which is here given, furnish no less than one thousand and sixty-five references.

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Authorities. Number of times mentioned.

Shakespeare.....112

Napoleon.....84

Plato.....81

Plutarch.....70

Goethe.....62

Swift.....49

Bacon.....47

Milton.....46

Newton.....43

Homer.....42

Socrates.....42

Swedenborg.....40

Montaigne.....30

Saadi.....30

Luther.....30

Webster.....27

Aristotle.....25

Hafiz.....25

Wordsworth.....25

Burke.....24

Saint Paul.....24

Dante.....22

Shattuck (Hist. of
Concord).....21

Chaucer.....20

Coleridge.....20

Michael Angelo...20

The name of Jesus occurs fifty-four times.

It is interesting to observe that Montaigne, Franklin, and Emerson all show the same fondness for Plutarch.

Montaigne says, "I never settled myself to the reading of any book of solid learning but Plutarch and Seneca."

Franklin says, speaking of the books in his father's library, "There was among them Plutarch's Lives, which I read abundantly, and I still think that time spent to great advantage."

Emerson says, "I must think we are more deeply indebted to him than to all the ancient writers."

Studies of life and character were the delight of all these four moralists. As a judge of character, Dr. Hedge, who knew Emerson well, has spoken to me of his extraordinary gift, and no reader of "English Traits" can have failed to mark the formidable penetration of the intellect which looked through those calm cerulean eyes.

Noscitur a sociis is as applicable to the books a man most affects as well as to the companions he chooses. It is with the kings of thought that Emerson most associates. As to borrowing from his royal acquaintances his ideas are very simple and expressed without reserve.

"All minds quote. Old and new make the warp and woof of every moment. There is no thread that is not a twist of these two strands. By necessity, by proclivity, and by delight, we all quote."

What Emerson says of Plutarch applies very nearly to himself.

"In his immense quotation and allusion we quickly cease to discriminate between what he quotes and what he invents. We sail on his memory into the ports of every nation, enter into every private property, and do not stop to discriminate owners, but give him the praise of all."

Mr. Ruskin and Lord Tennyson have thought it worth their while to defend themselves from the charge of plagiarism. Emerson would never have taken the trouble to do such a thing. His mind was overflowing with thought as a river in the season of flood, and was full of floating fragments from an endless variety of sources. He drew ashore whatever he wanted that would serve his purpose. He makes no secret of his mode of writing. "I dot evermore in my endless journal, a line on every knowable in nature; but the arrangement loiters long, and I get a brick-kiln instead of a house." His journal is "full of disjointed dreams and audacities." Writing by the aid of this, it is natural enough that he should speak of his "lapidary style" and say "I build my house of boulders."

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"It is to be remembered," says Mr. Ruskin, "that all men who have sense and feeling are continually helped: they are taught by every person they meet, and enriched by everything that falls in their way. The greatest is he who has been oftenest aided; and if the attainments of all human minds could be traced to their real sources, it would be found that the world had been laid most under contribution by the men of most original powers, and that every day of their existence deepened their debt to their race, while it enlarged their gifts to it."

The reader may like to see a few coincidences between Emerson's words and thoughts and those of others.

Some sayings seem to be a kind of family property. "Scorn trifles" comes from Aunt Mary Moody Emerson, and reappears in her nephew, Ralph Waldo.—"What right have you, Sir, to your virtue? Is virtue piecemeal? This is a jewel among the rags of a beggar." So writes Ralph Waldo Emerson in his Lecture "New England Reformers."—"Hiding the badges of royalty beneath the gown of the mendicant, and ever on the watch lest their rank be betrayed by the sparkle of a gem from under their rags." Thus wrote Charles Chauncy Emerson in the "Harvard Register" nearly twenty years before.

"The hero is not fed on sweets,
Daily his own heart he eats."

The image comes from Pythagoras via Plutarch.

Now and then, but not with any questionable frequency, we find a sentence which recalls Carlyle.

"The national temper, in the civil history, is not flashy or whiffling. The slow, deep English mass smoulders with fire, which at last sets all its borders in flame. The wrath of London is not French wrath, but has a long memory, and in hottest heat a register and rule."

Compare this passage from "English Traits" with the following one from Carlyle's "French Revolution":—

"So long this Gallic fire, through its successive changes of color and character, will blaze over the face of Europe, and afflict and scorch all men:—till it provoke all men, till it kindle another kind of fire, the Teutonic kind, namely; and be swallowed up, so to speak, in a day! For there is a fire comparable to the burning of dry jungle and grass; most sudden, high-blazing: and another fire which we liken to the burning of coal, or even of anthracite coal, but which no known thing will put out."

“O what are heroes, prophets, men
But pipes through which the breath of man doth blow
A momentary music.”

The reader will find a similar image in one of Burns's letters, again in one of Coleridge's poetical fragments, and long before any of them, in a letter of Leibnitz.

“He builded better than he knew”

is the most frequently quoted line of Emerson. The thought is constantly recurring in our literature. It helps out the minister's sermon; and a Fourth of July Oration which does not borrow it is like the “Address without a Phoenix” among the Drury Lane mock poems. Can we find any trace of this idea elsewhere?

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In a little poem of Coleridge's, "William Tell," are these two lines:

"On wind and wave the boy would toss
Was great, nor knew how great he was."

The thought is fully worked out in the celebrated Essay of Carlyle called "Characteristics." It reappears in Emerson's poem "Fate."

"Unknown to Cromwell as to me
Was Cromwell's measure and degree;
Unknown to him as to his horse,
If he than his groom is better or worse."

It is unnecessary to illustrate this point any further in this connection. In dealing with his poetry other resemblances will suggest themselves. All the best poetry the world has known is full of such resemblances. If we find Emerson's wonderful picture, "Initial Love" prefigured in the "Symposium" of Plato, we have only to look in the "Phaedrus" and we shall find an earlier sketch of Shakespeare's famous group,—

"The lunatic, the lover, and the poet."

Sometimes these resemblances are nothing more than accidental coincidences; sometimes the similar passages are unconsciously borrowed from another; sometimes they are paraphrases, variations, embellished copies, *editions de luxe* of sayings that all the world knows are old, but which it seems to the writer worth his while to say over again. The more improved versions of the world's great thoughts we have, the better, and we look to the great minds for them. The larger the river the more streams flow into it. The wide flood of Emerson's discourse has a hundred rivers and thousands of streamlets for its tributaries.

It was not from books only that he gathered food for thought and for his lectures and essays. He was always on the lookout in conversation for things to be remembered. He picked up facts one would not have expected him to care for. He once corrected me in giving Flora Temple's time at Kalamazoo. I made a mistake of a quarter of a second, and he set me right. He was not always so exact in his memory, as I have already shown in several instances. Another example is where he speaks of Quintus Curtius, the historian, when he is thinking of Mettus Curtius, the self-sacrificing equestrian. Little inaccuracies of this kind did not concern him much; he was a wholesale dealer in illustrations, and could not trouble himself about a trifling defect in this or that particular article.

Emerson was a man who influenced others more than others influenced him. Outside of his family connections, the personalities which can be most easily traced in his own are those of Carlyle, Mr. Alcott, and Thoreau. Carlyle's harsh virility could not be without

its effect on his valid, but sensitive nature. Alcott's psychological and physiological speculations interested him as an idealist. Thoreau lent him a new set of organs of sense of wonderful delicacy. Emerson looked at nature as a poet, and his natural history, if left to himself, would have been as vague as that of Polonius. But Thoreau

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had a pair of eyes which, like those of the Indian deity, could see the smallest emmet on the blackest stone in the darkest night,—or come nearer to seeing it than those of most mortals. Emerson's long intimacy with him taught him to give an outline to many natural objects which would have been poetic nebulae to him but for this companionship. A nicer analysis would detect many alien elements mixed with his individuality, but the family traits predominated over all the external influences, and the personality stood out distinct from the common family qualities. Mr. Whipple has well said: "Some traits of his mind and character may be traced back to his ancestors, but what doctrine of heredity can give us the genesis of his genius? Indeed the safest course to pursue is to quote his own words, and despairingly confess that it is the nature of genius 'to spring, like the rainbow daughter of Wonder, from the invisible, to abolish the past and refuse all history.'"

* * * * *

Emerson's place as a thinker is somewhat difficult to fix. He cannot properly be called a psychologist. He made notes and even delivered lectures on the natural history of the intellect; but they seem to have been made up, according to his own statement, of hints and fragments rather than of the results of systematic study. He was a man of intuition, of insight, a seer, a poet, with a tendency to mysticism. This tendency renders him sometimes obscure, and once in a while almost, if not quite, unintelligible. We can, for this reason, understand why the great lawyer turned him over to his daughters, and Dr. Walter Channing complained that his lecture made his head ache. But it is not always a writer's fault that he is not understood. Many persons have poor heads for abstractions; and as for mystics, if they understand themselves it is quite as much as can be expected. But that which is mysticism to a dull listener may be the highest and most inspiring imaginative clairvoyance to a brighter one. It is to be hoped that no reader will take offence at the following anecdote, which may be found under the title "Diogenes," in the work of his namesake, Diogenes Laertius. I translate from the Latin version.

"Plato was talking about ideas, and spoke of *mensality* and *cyathity* [*tableity*, and *gobletity*]. 'I can see a table and a goblet,' said the cynic, 'but I can see no such things as tableity and gobletity.' 'Quite so,' answered Plato, 'because you have the eyes to see a goblet and a table with, but you have not the brains to understand tableity and gobletity.'"

This anecdote may be profitably borne in mind in following Emerson into the spheres of intuition and mystical contemplation.

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Emerson was an idealist in the Platonic sense of the word, a spiritualist as opposed to a materialist. He believes, he says, “as the wise Spenser teaches,” that the soul makes its own body. This, of course, involves the doctrine of preexistence; a doctrine older than Spenser, older than Plato or Pythagoras, having its cradle in India, fighting its way down through Greek philosophers and Christian fathers and German professors, to our own time, when it has found Pierre Leroux, Edward Beecher, and Brigham Young among its numerous advocates. Each has his fancies on the subject. The geography of an undiscovered country and the soundings of an ocean that has never been sailed over may belong to romance and poetry, but they do not belong to the realm of knowledge.

That the organ of the mind brings with it inherited aptitudes is a simple matter of observation. That it inherits truths is a different proposition. The eye does not bring landscapes into the world on its retina,—why should the brain bring thoughts? Poetry settles such questions very simply by saying it is so.

The poet in Emerson never accurately differentiated itself from the philosopher. He speaks of Wordsworth’s Ode on the Intimations of Immortality as the high-water mark of the poetry of this century. It sometimes seems as if he had accepted the lofty rhapsodies of this noble Ode as working truths.

“Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.”

In accordance with this statement of a divine inheritance from a preexisting state, the poet addresses the infant:—

“Mighty prophet! Seer blest!
On whom those truths do rest
Which we are toiling all our lives to find.”—

These are beautiful fancies, but the philosopher will naturally ask the poet what are the truths which the child has lost between its cradle and the age of eight years, at which Wordsworth finds the little girl of whom he speaks in the lines,—

“A simple child—
That lightly draws its breath
And feels its life in every limb,—
What should it know of death?”



What should it, sure enough, or of any other of those great truths which Time with its lessons, and the hardening of the pulpy brain can alone render appreciable to the consciousness? Undoubtedly every brain has its own set of moulds ready to shape all material of thought into its own individual set of patterns. If the mind comes into consciousness with a good set of moulds derived by "traduction," as Dryden called it, from a good ancestry, it may be all very well to give the counsel to the youth to plant himself on his instincts. But the individual to whom this counsel is given probably has dangerous as well as wholesome instincts. He has also a great deal besides the instincts to be considered. His instincts

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are mixed up with innumerable acquired prejudices, erroneous conclusions, deceptive experiences, partial truths, one-sided tendencies. The clearest insight will often find it hard to decide what is the real instinct, and whether the instinct itself is, in theological language, from God or the devil. That which was a safe guide for Emerson might not work well with Lacenaire or Jesse Pomeroy. The cloud of glory which the babe brings with it into the world is a good set of instincts, which dispose it to accept moral and intellectual truths,—not the truths themselves. And too many children come into life trailing after them clouds which are anything but clouds of glory.

It may well be imagined that when Emerson proclaimed the new doctrine,—new to his young disciples,—of planting themselves on their instincts, consulting their own spiritual light for guidance,—trusting to intuition,—without reference to any other authority, he opened the door to extravagances in any unbalanced minds, if such there were, which listened to his teachings. Too much was expected out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. The children shut up by Psammetichus got as far as one word in their evolution of an original language, but *bekkos* was a very small contribution towards a complete vocabulary. “The Dial” was well charged with intuitions, but there was too much vagueness, incoherence, aspiration without energy, effort without inspiration, to satisfy those who were looking for a new revelation.

The gospel of intuition proved to be practically nothing more or less than this: a new manifesto of intellectual and spiritual independence. It was no great discovery that we see many things as truths which we cannot prove. But it was a great impulse to thought, a great advance in the attitude of our thinking community, when the profoundly devout religious free-thinker took the ground of the undevout and irreligious free-thinker, and calmly asserted and peaceably established the right and the duty of the individual to weigh the universe, its laws and its legends, in his own balance, without fear of authority, or names, or institutions.

All this brought its dangers with it, like other movements of emancipation. For the *Fay ce que voudras* of the revellers of Medmenham Abbey, was substituted the new motto, *Pense ce que voudras*. There was an intoxication in this newly proclaimed evangel which took hold of some susceptible natures and betrayed itself in prose and rhyme, occasionally of the Bedlam sort. Emerson’s disciples were never accused of falling into the more perilous snares of antinomianism, but he himself distinctly recognizes the danger of it, and the counterbalancing effect of household life, with its curtain lectures and other benign influences. Extravagances of opinion cure themselves. Time wore off the effects of the harmless debauch, and restored the giddy revellers to the regimen of sober thought, as reformed spiritual inebriates.

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Such were some of the incidental effects of the Emersonian declaration of independence. It was followed by a revolutionary war of opinion not yet ended or at present like to be. A local outbreak, if you will, but so was throwing the tea overboard. A provincial affair, if the Bohemian press likes that term better, but so was the skirmish where the gun was fired the echo of which is heard in every battle for freedom all over the world.

* * * * *

Too much has been made of Emerson's mysticism. He was an intellectual rather than an emotional mystic, and withal a cautious one. He never let go the string of his balloon. He never threw over all his ballast of common sense so as to rise above an atmosphere in which a rational being could breathe. I found in his library William Law's edition of Jacob Behmen. There were all those wonderful diagrams over which the reader may have grown dizzy,—just such as one finds on the walls of lunatic asylums,—evidences to all sane minds of cerebral strabismus in the contrivers of them. Emerson liked to lose himself for a little while in the vagaries of this class of minds, the dangerous proximity of which to insanity he knew and has spoken of. He played with the incommunicable, the inconceivable, the absolute, the antinomies, as he would have played with a bundle of jack-straws. "Brahma," the poem which so mystified the readers of the "Atlantic Monthly," was one of his spiritual divertissements. To the average Western mind it is the nearest approach to a Torricellian vacuum of intelligibility that language can pump out of itself. If "Rejected Addresses" had not been written half a century before Emerson's poem, one would think these lines were certainly meant to ridicule and parody it.

"The song of Braham is an Irish howl;
Thinking is but an idle waste of thought,
And nought is everything and everything is nought."

Braham, Hazlitt might have said, is so obviously the anagram of Brahma that dulness itself could not mistake the object intended.

Of course no one can hold Emerson responsible for the "Yoga" doctrine of Brahmanism, which he has amused himself with putting in verse. The oriental side of Emerson's nature delighted itself in these narcotic dreams, born in the land of the poppy and of hashish. They lend a peculiar charm to his poems, but it is not worth while to try to construct a philosophy out of them. The knowledge, if knowledge it be, of the mystic is not transmissible. It is not cumulative; it begins and ends with the solitary dreamer, and the next who follows him has to build his own cloud-castle as if it were the first aerial edifice that a human soul had ever constructed.

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Some passages of “Nature,” “The Over-Soul,” “The Sphinx,” “Uriel,” illustrate sufficiently this mood of spiritual exaltation. Emerson’s calm temperament never allowed it to reach the condition he sometimes refers to,—that of ecstasy. The passage in “Nature” where he says “I become a transparent eyeball” is about as near it as he ever came. This was almost too much for some of his admirers and worshippers. One of his most ardent and faithful followers, whose gifts as an artist are well known, mounted the eyeball on legs, and with its cornea in front for a countenance and its optic nerve projecting behind as a queue, the spiritual cyclops was shown setting forth on his travels.

Emerson’s reflections in the “transcendental” mood do beyond question sometimes irresistibly suggest the close neighborhood of the sublime to the ridiculous. But very near that precipitous border line there is a charmed region where, if the statelier growths of philosophy die out and disappear, the flowers of poetry next the very edge of the chasm have a peculiar and mysterious beauty. “Uriel” is a poem which finds itself perilously near to the gulf of unsounded obscurity, and has, I doubt not, provoked the mirth of profane readers; but read in a lucid moment, it is just obscure enough and just significant enough to give the voltaic thrill which comes from the sudden contacts of the highest imaginative conceptions.

Human personality presented itself to Emerson as a passing phase of universal being. Born of the Infinite, to the Infinite it was to return. Sometimes he treats his own personality as interchangeable with objects in nature,—he would put it off like a garment and clothe himself in the landscape. Here is a curious extract from “The Adirondacs,” in which the reader need not stop to notice the parallelism with Byron’s—

“The sky is changed,—and such a change! O night
And storm and darkness, ye are wondrous strong.”—

Now Emerson:—

“And presently the sky is changed; O world! What pictures and what harmonies are thine! The clouds are rich and dark, the air serene, *So like the soul of me, what if’t were me?*”

We find this idea of confused personal identity also in a brief poem printed among the “Translations” in the Appendix to Emerson’s Poems. These are the last two lines of “The Flute, from Hilali”:—

“Saying, Sweetheart! the old mystery remains,
If I am I; thou, thou, or thou art I?”

The same transfer of personality is hinted in the line of Shelley’s “Ode to the West Wind”:



“Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!”

Once more, how fearfully near the abyss of the ridiculous! A few drops of alcohol bring about a confusion of mind not unlike this poetical metempsychosis.

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The laird of Balnamoon had been at a dinner where they gave him cherry-brandy instead of port wine. In driving home over a wild tract of land called Munrimmon Moor his hat and wig blew off, and his servant got out of the gig and brought them to him. The hat he recognized, but not the wig. "It's no my wig, Hairy [Harry], lad; it's no my wig," and he would not touch it. At last Harry lost his patience: "Ye'd better tak' it, sir, for there's nae waile [choice] o' wigs on Munrimmon Moor." And in our earlier days we used to read of the bewildered market-woman, whose *Ego* was so obscured when she awoke from her slumbers that she had to leave the question of her personal identity to the instinct of her four-footed companion:—

"If it be I, he'll wag his little tail;
And if it be not I, he'll loudly bark and wail."

I have not lost my reverence for Emerson in showing one of his fancies for a moment in the distorting mirror of the ridiculous. He would doubtless have smiled with me at the reflection, for he had a keen sense of humor. But I take the opportunity to disclaim a jesting remark about "a foreshell of the Infinite" which Mr. Conway has attributed to me, who am innocent of all connection with it.

The mystic appeals to those only who have an ear for the celestial concords, as the musician only appeals to those who have the special endowment which enables them to understand his compositions. It is not for organizations untuned to earthly music to criticise the great composers, or for those who are deaf to spiritual harmonies to criticise the higher natures which lose themselves in the strains of divine contemplation. The bewildered reader must not forget that passage of arms, previously mentioned, between Plato and Diogenes.

* * * * *

Emerson looked rather askance at Science in his early days. I remember that his brother Charles had something to say in the "Harvard Register" (1828) about its disenchantments. I suspect the prejudice may have come partly from Wordsworth. Compare this verse of his with the lines of Emerson's which follow it.

"Physician art thou, one all eyes;
Philosopher, a fingering slave,
One that would peep and botanize
Upon his mother's grave?"

Emerson's lines are to be found near the end of the Appendix in the new edition of his works.

"Philosophers are lined with eyes within,
And, being so, the sage unmakes the man.



In love he cannot therefore cease his trade;
Scarce the first blush has overspread his cheek,
He feels it, introverts his learned eye
To catch the unconscious heart in the very act.
His mother died,—the only friend he had,—
Some tears escaped, but his philosophy
Couched like a cat, sat watching close behind
And throttled all his passion. Is't not like
That devil-spider that devours her mate
Scarce freed from her embraces?"

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The same feeling comes out in the Poem “Blight,” where he says the “young scholars who invade our hills”

“Love not the flower they pluck, and know it not,
And all their botany is Latin names;”

and in “The Walk,” where the “learned men” with their glasses are contrasted with the sons of Nature,—the poets are no doubt meant,—much to the disadvantage of the microscopic observers. Emerson’s mind was very far from being of the scientific pattern. Science is quantitative,—loves the foot-rule and the balance,—methodical, exhaustive, indifferent to the beautiful as such. The poet is curious, asks all manner of questions, and never thinks of waiting for the answer, still less of torturing Nature to get at it. Emerson wonders, for instance,—

“Why Nature loves the number five,”

but leaves his note of interrogation without troubling himself any farther. He must have picked up some wood-craft and a little botany from Thoreau, and a few chemical notions from his brother-in-law, Dr. Jackson, whose name is associated with the discovery of artificial anaesthesia. It seems probable that the genial companionship of Agassiz, who united with his scientific genius, learning, and renown, most delightful social qualities, gave him a kinder feeling to men of science and their pursuits than he had entertained before that great master came among us. At any rate he avails himself of the facts drawn from their specialties without scruple when they will serve his turn. But he loves the poet always better than the scientific student of nature. In his Preface to the Poems of Mr. W.E. Channing, he says:—

“Here is a naturalist who sees the flower and the bud with a poet’s curiosity and awe, and does not count the stamens in the aster, nor the feathers in the wood-thrush, but rests in the surprise and affection they awake.”—

This was Emerson’s own instinctive attitude to all the phenomena of nature.

Emerson’s style is epigrammatic, incisive, authoritative, sometimes quaint, never obscure, except when he is handling nebulous subjects. His paragraphs are full of brittle sentences that break apart and are independent units, like the fragments of a coral colony. His imagery is frequently daring, leaping from the concrete to the abstract, from the special to the general and universal, and *vice versa*, with a bound that is like a flight. Here are a few specimens of his pleasing *audacities*:—

“There is plenty of wild azote and carbon unappropriated, but it is naught till we have made it up into loaves and soup.”—

“He arrives at the sea-shore and a sumptuous ship has floored and carpeted for him the stormy Atlantic.”—

“If we weave a yard of tape in all humility and as well as we can, long hereafter we shall see it was no cotton tape at all but some galaxy which we braided, and that the threads were Time and Nature.”—

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“Tapping the tempest for a little side wind.”—

“The locomotive and the steamboat, like enormous shuttles, shoot every day across the thousand various threads of national descent and employment and bind them fast in one web.”—

He is fond of certain archaisms and unusual phrases. He likes the expression “mother-wit,” which he finds in Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare, and other old writers. He often uses the word “husband” in its earlier sense of economist. His use of the word “haughty” is so fitting, and it sounds so nobly from his lips, that we could wish its employment were forbidden henceforth to voices which vulgarize it. But his special, constitutional, word is “fine,” meaning something like dainty, as Shakespeare uses it,—“my dainty Ariel,”—“fine Ariel.” It belongs to his habit of mind and body as “faint” and “swoon” belong to Keats. This word is one of the ear-marks by which Emerson’s imitators are easily recognized. “Melioration” is another favorite word of Emerson’s. A clairvoyant could spell out some of his most characteristic traits by the aid of his use of these three words; his inborn fastidiousness, subdued and kept out of sight by his large charity and his good breeding, showed itself in his liking for the word “haughty;” his exquisite delicacy by his fondness for the word “fine,” with a certain shade of meaning; his optimism in the frequent recurrence of the word “melioration.”

We must not find fault with his semi-detached sentences until we quarrel with Solomon and criticise the Sermon on the Mount. The “point and surprise” which he speaks of as characterizing the style of Plutarch belong eminently to his own. His fertility of illustrative imagery is very great. His images are noble, or, if borrowed from humble objects, ennobled by his handling. He throws his royal robe over a milking-stool and it becomes a throne. But chiefly he chooses objects of comparison grand in themselves. He deals with the elements at first hand. Such delicacy of treatment, with such breadth and force of effect, is hard to match anywhere, and we know him by his style at sight. It is as when the slight fingers of a girl touch the keys of some mighty and many-voiced organ, and send its thunders rolling along the aisles and startling the stained windows of a great cathedral. We have seen him as an unpretending lecturer. We follow him round as he “peddles out all the wit he can gather from Time or from Nature,” and we find that “he has changed his market cart into a chariot of the sun,” and is carrying about the morning light as merchandise.

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Emerson was as loyal an American, as thorough a New Englander, as home-loving a citizen, as ever lived. He arraigned his countrymen sharply for their faults. Mr. Arnold made one string of his epithets familiar to all of us,—“This great, intelligent, sensual, and avaricious America.” This was from a private letter to Carlyle. In his Essay, “Works and Days,” he is quite as outspoken: “This mendicant America, this curious, peering, itinerant, imitative America.” “I see plainly,” he says, “that our society is as bigoted to the respectabilities of religion and education as yours.” “The war,” he says, “gave back integrity to this erring and immoral nation.” All his life long he recognized the faults and errors of the new civilization. All his life long he labored diligently and lovingly to correct them. To the dark prophecies of Carlyle, which came wailing to him across the ocean, he answered with ever hopeful and cheerful anticipations. “Here,” he said, in words I have already borrowed, “is the home of man—here is the promise of a new and more excellent social state than history has recorded.”

Such a man as Emerson belongs to no one town or province or continent; he is the common property of mankind; and yet we love to think of him as breathing the same air and treading the same soil that we and our fathers and our children have breathed and trodden. So it pleases us to think how fondly he remembered his birthplace; and by the side of Franklin’s bequest to his native city we treasure that golden verse of Emerson’s:

“A blessing through the ages thus
Shield all thy roofs and towers,
GOD WITH THE FATHERS, SO WITH US,
Thou darling town of ours!”

Emerson sympathized with all generous public movements, but he was not fond of working in associations, though he liked well enough to attend their meetings as a listener and looker-on. His study was his workshop, and he preferred to labor in solitude. When he became famous he paid the penalty of celebrity in frequent interruptions by those “devastators of the day” who sought him in his quiet retreat. His courtesy and kindness to his visitors were uniform and remarkable. Poets who come to recite their verses and reformers who come to explain their projects are among the most formidable of earthly visitations. Emerson accepted his martyrdom with meek submission; it was a martyrdom in detail, but collectively its petty tortures might have satisfied a reasonable inquisitor as the punishment of a moderate heresy. Except in that one phrase above quoted he never complained of his social oppressors, so far as I remember, in his writings. His perfect amiability was one of his most striking characteristics, and in a nature fastidious as was his in its whole organization, it implied a self-command worthy of admiration.

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The natural purity and elevation of Emerson's character show themselves in all that he writes. His life corresponded to the ideal we form of him from his writings. This it was which made him invulnerable amidst all the fierce conflicts his gentle words excited. His white shield was so spotless that the least scrupulous combatants did not like to leave their defacing marks upon it. One would think he was protected by some superstition like that which Voltaire refers to as existing about Boileau,—

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“Ne disons pas mal de Nicolas,—cela porte malheur.”

(Don't let us abuse Nicolas,—it brings ill luck.) The cooped-up dogmatists whose very citadel of belief he was attacking, and who had their hot water and boiling pitch and flaming brimstone ready for the assailants of their outer defences, withheld their missiles from him, and even sometimes, in a movement of involuntary human sympathy, sprinkled him with rose-water. His position in our Puritan New England was in some respects like that of Burns in Presbyterian Scotland. The *dour* Scotch ministers and elders could not cage their minstrel, and they could not clip his wings; and so they let this morning lark rise above their theological mists, and sing to them at heaven's gate, until he had softened all their hearts and might nestle in their bosoms and find his perch on “the big ha' bible,” if he would,—and as he did. So did the music of Emerson's words and life steal into the hearts of our stern New England theologians, and soften them to a temper which would have seemed treasonable weakness to their stiff-kneed forefathers. When a man lives a life commended by all the Christian virtues, enlightened persons are not so apt to cavil at his particular beliefs or unbeliefs as in former generations. We do, however, wish to know what are the convictions of any such persons in matters of highest interest about which there is so much honest difference of opinion in this age of deep and anxious and devout religious scepticism.

It was a very wise and a very prudent course which was taken by Simonides, when he was asked by his imperial master to give him his ideas about the Deity. He begged for a day to consider the question, but when the time came for his answer he wanted two days more, and at the end of these, four days. In short, the more he thought about it, the more he found himself perplexed.

The name most frequently applied to Emerson's form of belief is Pantheism. How many persons who shudder at the sound of this word can tell the difference between that doctrine and their own professed belief in the omnipresence of the Deity?

Theodore Parker explained Emerson's position, as he understood it, in an article in the “Massachusetts Quarterly Review.” I borrow this quotation from Mr. Cooke:—

“He has an absolute confidence in God. He has been foolishly accused of Pantheism, which sinks God in nature, but no man is further from it. He never sinks God in man; he does not stop with the law, in matter or morals, but goes to the Law-giver; yet probably it would not be so easy for him to give his definition of God, as it would be for most graduates at Andover or Cambridge.”

We read in his Essay, “Self-Reliance”: “This is the ultimate fact which we so quickly reach on this, as on every topic, the resolution of all into the ever-blessed ONE. Self-existence is the attribute of the Supreme Cause, and it constitutes the measure of good by the degree in which it enters into all lower forms.”

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The “ever-blessed ONE” of Emerson corresponds to the Father in the doctrine of the Trinity. The “Over-Soul” of Emerson is that aspect of Deity which is known to theology as the Holy Spirit. Jesus was for him a divine manifestation, but only as other great human souls have been in all ages and are to-day. He was willing to be called a Christian just as he was willing to be called a Platonist.

Explanations are apt not to explain much in dealing with subjects like this. “Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?” But on certain great points nothing could be clearer than the teaching of Emerson. He believed in the doctrine of spiritual influx as sincerely as any Calvinist or Swedenborgian. His views as to fate, or the determining conditions of the character, brought him near enough to the doctrine of predestination to make him afraid of its consequences, and led him to enter a caveat against any denial of the self-governing power of the will.

His creed was a brief one, but he carried it everywhere with him. In all he did, in all he said, and so far as all outward signs could show, in all his thoughts, the indwelling Spirit was his light and guide; through all nature he looked up to nature’s God; and if he did not worship the “man Christ Jesus” as the churches of Christendom have done, he followed his footsteps so nearly that our good Methodist, Father Taylor, spoke of him as more like Christ than any man he had known.

Emerson was in friendly relations with many clergymen of the church from which he had parted. Since he left the pulpit, the lesson, not of tolerance, for that word is an insult as applied by one set of well-behaved people to another, not of charity, for that implies an impertinent assumption, but of good feeling on the part of divergent sects and their ministers has been taught and learned as never before. Their official Confessions of Faith make far less difference in their human sentiments and relations than they did even half a century ago. These ancient creeds are handed along down, to be kept in their phials with their stoppers fast, as attar of rose is kept in its little bottles; they are not to be opened and exposed to the atmosphere so long as their perfume,—the odor of sanctity,—is diffused from the carefully treasured receptacles,—perhaps even longer than that.

Out of the endless opinions as to the significance and final outcome of Emerson’s religious teachings I will select two as typical.

Dr. William Hague, long the honored minister of a Baptist church in Boston, where I had the pleasure of friendly acquaintance with him, has written a thoughtful, amiable paper on Emerson, which he read before the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society. This Essay closes with the following sentence:—

“Thus, to-day, while musing, as at the beginning, over the works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, we recognize now as ever his imperial genius as one of the greatest of writers; at the same time, his life work, as a whole, tested by its supreme ideal, its

method and its fruitage, shows also a great waste of power, verifying the saying of Jesus touching the harvest of human life: 'HE THAT GATHERETH NOT WITH ME SCATTERETH ABROAD.'"

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"But when Dean Stanley returned from America, it was to report," says Mr. Conway ("Macmillan," June, 1879), that religion had there passed through an evolution from Edwards to Emerson, and that 'the genial atmosphere which Emerson has done so much to promote is shared by all the churches equally.'"

What is this "genial atmosphere" but the very spirit of Christianity? The good Baptist minister's Essay is full of it. He comes asking what has become of Emerson's "wasted power" and lamenting his lack of "fruitage," and lo! he himself has so ripened and mellowed in that same Emersonian air that the tree to which he belongs would hardly know him. The close-communication clergyman handles the arch-heretic as tenderly as if he were the nursing mother of a new infant Messiah. A few generations ago this preacher of a new gospel would have been burned; a little later he would been tried and imprisoned; less than fifty years ago he was called infidel and atheist; names which are fast becoming relinquished to the intellectual half-breeds who sometimes find their way into pulpits and the so-called religious periodicals.

It is not within our best-fenced churches and creeds that the self-governing American is like to find the religious freedom which the Concord prophet asserted with the strength of Luther and the sweetness of Melancthon, and which the sovereign in his shirt-sleeves will surely claim. Milton was only the precursor of Emerson when he wrote:—

"Neither is God appointed and confined, where and out of what place these his chosen shall be first heard to speak; for he sees not as man sees, chooses not as man chooses, lest we should devote ourselves again to set places and assemblies, and outward callings of men, planting our faith one while in the old convocation house, and another while in the Chapel at Westminster, when all the faith and religion that shall be there canonized is not sufficient without plain conviction, and the charity of patient instruction, to supple the least bruise of conscience, to edify the meanest Christian who desires to walk in the spirit and not in the letter of human trust, for all the number of voices that can be there made; no, though Harry the Seventh himself there, with all his liege tombs about him, should lend their voices from the dead, to swell their number."

The best evidence of the effect produced by Emerson's writings and life is to be found in the attention he has received from biographers and critics. The ground upon which I have ventured was already occupied by three considerable Memoirs. Mr. George Willis Cooke's elaborate work is remarkable for its careful and thorough analysis of Emerson's teachings. Mr. Moncure Daniel Conway's "Emerson at Home and Abroad" is a lively picture of its subject by one long and well acquainted with him. Mr. Alexander Ireland's "Biographical Sketch" brings together, from a great variety of sources, as well as from his own recollections, the facts of Emerson's history and the comments of those whose opinions were best worth reproducing. I must refer to this volume for a bibliography of the various works and Essays of which Emerson furnished the subject.

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From the days when Mr. Whipple attracted the attention of our intelligent, but unawakened reading community, by his discriminating and appreciative criticisms of Emerson's Lectures, and Mr. Lowell drew the portrait of the New England "Plotinus-Montaigne" in his brilliant "Fable for Critics," to the recent essays of Mr. Matthew Arnold, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Henry Norman, and Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman, Emerson's writings have furnished one of the most enduring *pieces de resistance* at the critical tables of the old and the new world.

He early won the admiration of distinguished European thinkers and writers: Carlyle accepted his friendship and his disinterested services; Miss Martineau fully recognized his genius and sounded his praises; Miss Bremer fixed her sharp eyes on him and pronounced him "a noble man." Professor Tyndall found the inspiration of his life in Emerson's fresh thought; and Mr. Arnold, who clipped his medals reverently but unsparingly, confessed them to be of pure gold, even while he questioned whether they would pass current with posterity. He found discerning critics in France, Germany, and Holland. Better than all is the testimony of those who knew him best. They who repeat the saying that "a prophet is not without honor save in his own country," will find an exception to its truth in the case of Emerson. Read the impressive words spoken at his funeral by his fellow-townsmen, Judge Hoar; read the glowing tributes of three of Concord's poets,—Mr. Alcott, Mr. Channing, and Mr. Sanborn,—and it will appear plainly enough that he, whose fame had gone out into all the earth, was most of all believed in, honored, beloved, lamented, in the little village circle that centred about his own fireside.

It is a not uninteresting question whether Emerson has bequeathed to the language any essay or poem which will resist the flow of time like "the adamant of Shakespeare," and remain a classic like the Essays of Addison or Gray's Elegy. It is a far more important question whether his thought entered into the spirit of his day and generation, so that it modified the higher intellectual, moral, and religious life of his time, and, as a necessary consequence, those of succeeding ages. *Corpora non agunt nisi soluta*, and ideas must be dissolved and taken up as well as material substances before they can act. "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die," or rather lose the form with which it was sown. Eight stanzas of four lines each have made the author of "The Burial of Sir John Moore" an immortal, and endowed the language with a classic, perfect as the most finished cameo. But what is the gift of a mourning ring to the bequest of a perpetual annuity? How many lives have melted into the history of their time, as the gold was lost in Corinthian brass, leaving no separate monumental trace of their influence, but adding weight and color and worth to the age of which they formed a part and the generations that came after them! We can dare to predict of Emerson, in the words of his old friend and disciple, Mr. Cranch:—

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"The wise will know thee and the good will love,
The age to come will feel thy impress given
In all that lifts the race a step above
Itself, and stamps it with the seal of heaven."

It seems to us, to-day, that Emerson's best literary work in prose and verse must live as long as the language lasts; but whether it live or fade from memory, the influence of his great and noble life and the spoken and written words which were its exponents, blends, indestructible, with the enduring elements of civilization.

* * * * *

It is not irreverent, but eminently fitting, to compare any singularly pure and virtuous life with that of the great exemplar in whose footsteps Christendom professes to follow. The time was when the divine authority of his gospel rested chiefly upon the miracles he is reported to have wrought. As the faith in these exceptions to the general laws of the universe diminished, the teachings of the Master, of whom it was said that he spoke as never man spoke, were more largely relied upon as evidence of his divine mission. Now, when a comparison of these teachings with those of other religious leaders is thought by many to have somewhat lessened the force of this argument, the life of the sinless and self-devoted servant of God and friend of man is appealed to as the last and convincing proof that he was an immediate manifestation of the Divinity.

Judged by his life Emerson comes very near our best ideal of humanity. He was born too late for the trial of the cross or the stake, or even the jail. But the penalty of having an opinion of his own and expressing it was a serious one, and he accepted it as cheerfully as any of Queen Mary's martyrs accepted his fiery baptism. His faith was too large and too deep for the formulae he found built into the pulpit, and he was too honest to cover up his doubts under the flowing vestments of a sacred calling. His writings, whether in prose or verse, are worthy of admiration, but his manhood was the underlying quality which gave them their true value. It was in virtue of this that his rare genius acted on so many minds as a trumpet call to awaken them to the meaning and the privileges of this earthly existence with all its infinite promise. No matter of what he wrote or spoke, his words, his tones, his looks, carried the evidence of a sincerity which pervaded them all and was to his eloquence and poetry like the water of crystallization; without which they would effloresce into mere rhetoric. He shaped an ideal for the commonest life, he proposed an object to the humblest seeker after truth. Look for beauty in the world around you, he said, and you shall see it everywhere. Look within, with pure eyes and simple trust, and you shall find the Deity mirrored in your own soul. Trust yourself because you trust the voice of God in your inmost consciousness.

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There are living organisms so transparent that we can see their hearts beating and their blood flowing through their glassy tissues. So transparent was the life of Emerson; so clearly did the true nature of the man show through it. What he taught others to be, he was himself. His deep and sweet humanity won him love and reverence everywhere among those whose natures were capable of responding to the highest manifestations of character. Here and there a narrow-eyed sectary may have avoided or spoken ill of him; but if He who knew what was in man had wandered from door to door in New England as of old in Palestine, we can well believe that one of the thresholds which "those blessed feet" would have crossed, to hallow and receive its welcome, would have been that of the lovely and quiet home of Emerson.

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OUR HUNDRED DAYS IN EUROPE

BY

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

To

MY DAUGHTER AMELIA

(MRS. TURNER SARGENT)



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MY FAITHFUL AND DEVOTED COMPANION

THIS OUTLINE OF OUR SUMMER EXCURSION

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

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OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES AT THE AGE OF 82. From a painting by Sarah W. Whitman

ROBERT BROWNING

MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL

PLACE DE LA CONCORDE

INTRODUCTORY.

A PROSPECTIVE VISIT.

After an interval of more than fifty years, I propose taking a second look at some parts of Europe. It is a Rip Van Winkle experiment which I am promising myself. The changes wrought by half a century in the countries I visited amount almost to a transformation. I left the England of William the Fourth, of the Duke of Wellington, of Sir Robert Peel; the France of Louis Philippe, of Marshal Soult, of Thiers, of Guizot. I went from Manchester to Liverpool by the new railroad, the only one I saw in Europe. I looked upon England from the box of a stage-coach, upon France from the coupe of a diligence, upon Italy from the cushion of a carrozza. The broken windows of Apsley House were still boarded up when I was in London. The asphalt pavement was not laid in Paris. The Obelisk of Luxor was lying in its great boat in the Seine, as I remember it. I did not see it erected; it must have been an exciting scene to witness, the engineer standing underneath, so as to be crushed by the great stone if it disgraced him by falling in the process. As for the dynasties which have overlaid each other like Dr. Schliemann's Trojan cities, there is no need of moralizing over a history which instead of Finis is constantly ending with What next?

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With regard to the changes in the general conditions of society and the advance in human knowledge, think for one moment what fifty years have done! I have often imagined myself escorting some wise man of the past to our Saturday Club, where we often have distinguished strangers as our guests. Suppose there sat by me, I will not say Sir Isaac Newton, for he has been too long away from us, but that other great man, whom Professor Tyndall names as next to him in intellectual stature, as he passes along the line of master minds of his country, from the days of Newton to our own,—Dr. Thomas Young, who died in 1829. Would he or I be the listener, if we were side by side? However humble I might feel in such a presence, I should be so clad in the grandeur of the new discoveries, inventions, ideas, I had to impart to him that I should seem to myself like the ambassador of an Emperor. I should tell him of the ocean steamers, the railroads that spread themselves like cobwebs over the civilized and half-civilized portions of the earth, the telegraph and the telephone, the photograph and the spectroscope. I should hand him a paper with the morning news from London to read by the electric light, I should startle him with a friction match, I should amaze him with the incredible truths about anesthesia, I should astonish him with the later conclusions of geology, I should dazzle him by the fully developed law of the correlation of forces, I should delight him with the cell-doctrine, I should confound him with the revolutionary apocalypse of Darwinism. All this change in the aspects, position, beliefs, of humanity since the time of Dr. Young's death, the date of my own graduation from college!

I ought to consider myself highly favored to have lived through such a half century. But it seems to me that in walking the streets of London and Paris I shall revert to my student days, and appear to myself like a relic of a former generation. Those who have been born into the inheritance of the new civilization feel very differently about it from those who have lived their way into it. To the young and those approaching middle age all these innovations in life and thought are as natural, as much a matter of course, as the air they breathe; they form a part of the inner framework of their intelligence, about which their mental life is organized. To men and women of more than threescore and ten they are external accretions, like the shell of a mollusk, the jointed plates of an articulate. This must be remembered in reading anything written by those who knew the century in its teens; it is not likely to be forgotten, for the fact betrays itself in all the writer's thoughts and expressions.

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The story of my first visit to Europe is briefly this: my object was to study the medical profession, chiefly in Paris, and I was in Europe about two years and a half, from April, 1833, to October, 1835. I sailed in the packet ship Philadelphia from New York for Portsmouth, where we arrived after a passage of twenty-four days. A week was spent in visiting Southampton, Salisbury, Stonehenge, Wilton, and the Isle of Wight. I then crossed the Channel to Havre, from which I went to Paris. In the spring and summer of 1834 I made my principal visit to England and Scotland. There were other excursions to the Rhine and to Holland, to Switzerland and to Italy, but of these I need say nothing here. I returned in the packet ship Utica, sailing from Havre, and reaching New York after a passage of forty-two days.

A few notes from my recollections will serve to recall the period of my first visit to Europe, and form a natural introduction to the experiences of my second. I take those circumstances which happen to suggest themselves.

After a short excursion to Strasbourg, down the Rhine, and through Holland, a small steamer took us from Rotterdam across the Channel, and we found ourselves in the British capital.

The great sight in London is—London. No man understands himself as an infinitesimal until he has been a drop in that ocean, a grain of sand on that sea-margin, a mote in its sunbeam, or the fog or smoke which stands for it; in plainer phrase, a unit among its millions.

I had two letters to persons in England: one to kind and worthy Mr. Petty Vaughan, who asked me to dinner; one to pleasant Mr. William Clift, conservator of the Hunterian Museum, who asked me to tea.

To Westminster Abbey. What a pity it could not borrow from Paris the towers of Notre Dame! But the glory of its interior made up for this shortcoming. Among the monuments, one to Rear Admiral Charles Holmes, a descendant, perhaps, of another namesake, immortalized by Dryden in the “Annus Mirabilis” as

“the Achates of the general’s fight.”

He accompanied Wolfe in his expedition which resulted in the capture of Quebec. My relative, I will take it for granted, as I find him in Westminster Abbey. Blood is thicker than water,—and warmer than marble, I said to myself, as I laid my hand on the cold stone image of the once famous Admiral.

To the Tower, to see the lions,—of all sorts. There I found a “poor relation,” who made my acquaintance without introduction. A large baboon, or ape,—some creature of that family,—was sitting at the open door of his cage, when I gave him offence by approaching too near and inspecting him too narrowly. He made a spring at me, and if



the keeper had not pulled me back would have treated me unhandsomely, like a quadrumanous rough, as he was. He succeeded in stripping my waistcoat of its buttons, as one would strip a pea-pod of its peas.

To Vauxhall Gardens. All Americans went there in those days, as they go to Madame Tussaud's in these times. There were fireworks and an exhibition of polar scenery. "Mr. Collins, the English PAGANINI," treated us to music on his violin. A comic singer gave us a song, of which I remember the line,

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"You'll find it all in the agony bill."

This referred to a bill proposed by Sir Andrew Agnew, a noted Scotch Sabbatarian agitator.

To the opera to hear Grisi. The king, William the Fourth, was in his box; also the Princess Victoria, with the Duchess of Kent. The king tapped with his white-gloved hand on the ledge of the box when he was pleased with the singing.—To a morning concert and heard the real Paganini. To one of the lesser theatres and heard a monologue by the elder Mathews, who died a year or two after this time. To another theatre, where I saw Listen in Paul Pry. Is it not a relief that I am abstaining from description of what everybody has heard described?

To Windsor. Machinery to the left of the road. Recognized it instantly, by recollection of the plate in "Rees's Cyclopaedia," as Herschel's great telescope.—Oxford. Saw only its outside. I knew no one there, and no one knew me.—Blenheim,—the Titians best remembered of its objects on exhibition. The great Derby day of the Epsom races. Went to the race with a coach-load of friends and acquaintances. Plenipotentiary, the winner, "rode by P. Connelly." So says Herring's picture of him, now before me. Chestnut, a great "bullock" of a horse, who easily beat the twenty-two that started. Every New England deacon ought to see one Derby day to learn what sort of a world this is he lives in. Man is a sporting as well as a praying animal.

Stratford-on-Avon. Emotions, but no scribbling of name on walls.—Warwick. The castle. A village festival, "The Opening of the Meadows," a true exhibition of the semi-barbarism which had come down from Saxon times.—Yorkshire. "The Hangman's Stone." Story told in my book called the "Autocrat," etc. York Cathedral.—Northumberland. Alnwick Castle. The figures on the walls which so frightened my man John when he ran away from Scotland in his boyhood. Berwick-on-Tweed. A regatta going on; a very pretty show. Scotland. Most to be remembered, the incomparable loveliness of Edinburgh.—Sterling. The view of the Links of Forth from the castle. The whole country full of the romance of history and poetry. Made one acquaintance in Scotland, Dr. Robert Knox, who asked my companion and myself to breakfast. I was treated to five entertainments in Great Britain: the breakfast just mentioned; lunch with Mrs. Macadam,—the good old lady gave me bread, and not a stone; dinner with Mr. Vaughan; one with Mr. Stanley, the surgeon; tea with Mr. Clift,—for all which attentions I was then and am still grateful, for they were more than I had any claim to expect. Fascinated with Edinburgh. Strolls by Salisbury Crag; climb to the top of Arthur's Seat; delight of looking up at the grand old castle, of looking down on Holyrood Palace, of watching the groups on Calton Hill, wandering in the quaint old streets and sauntering on the sidewalks of the noble avenues, even at that time adding beauty to the new city. The weeks

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I spent in Edinburgh are among the most memorable of my European experiences. To the Highlands, to the Lakes, in short excursions; to Glasgow, seen to disadvantage under gray skies and with slippery pavements. Through England rapidly to Dover and to Calais, where I found the name of M. Dessein still belonging to the hotel I sought, and where I read Sterne's "Preface Written in a Desobligeante," sitting in the vehicle most like one that I could find in the stable. From Calais back to Paris, where I began working again.

All my travelling experiences, including a visit to Switzerland and Italy in the summer and autumn of 1835, were merely interludes of my student life in Paris. On my return to America, after a few years of hospital and private practice, I became a Professor in Harvard University, teaching Anatomy and Physiology, afterwards Anatomy alone, for the period of thirty-five years, during part of which time I paid some attention to literature, and became somewhat known as the author of several works in prose and verse which have been well received. My prospective visit will not be a professional one, as I resigned my office in 1882, and am no longer known chiefly as a teacher or a practitioner.

BOSTON, *April*, 1886.

OUR HUNDRED DAYS IN EUROPE

I.

I begin this record with the columnar, self-reliant capital letter to signify that there is no disguise in its egoisms. If it were a chapter of autobiography, this is what the reader would look for as a matter of course. Let him consider it as being such a chapter, and its egoisms will require no apology.

I have called the record *our* hundred days, because I was accompanied by my daughter, without the aid of whose younger eyes and livelier memory, and especially of her faithful diary, which no fatigue or indisposition was allowed to interrupt, the whole experience would have remained in my memory as a photograph out of focus.

We left Boston on the 29th of April, 1886, and reached New York on the 29th of August, four months of absence in all, of which nearly three weeks were taken up by the two passages; one week was spent in Paris, and the rest of the time in England and Scotland.

No one was so much surprised as myself at my undertaking this visit. Mr. Gladstone, a strong man for his years, is reported as saying that he is too old to travel, at least to



cross the ocean, and he is younger than I am,—just four months, to a day, younger. It is true that Sir Henry Holland came to this country, and travelled freely about the world, after he was eighty years old; but his pitcher went to the well once too often, and met the usual doom of fragile articles. When my friends asked me why I did not go to Europe, I reminded them of the fate of Thomas Parr. He was only twice my age, and was getting on finely towards his two hundredth year, when the Earl of Arundel carried him up to London, and, being feasted and made a lion of, he found there a premature and early grave at the age of only one hundred and fifty-two years. He lies in Westminster Abbey, it is true, but he would probably have preferred the upper side of his own hearth-stone to the under side of the slab which covers him.

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I should never have thought of such an expedition if it had not been suggested by a member of my family that I should accompany my daughter, who was meditating a trip to Europe. I remembered how many friends had told me I ought to go; among the rest, Mr. Emerson, who had spoken to me repeatedly about it. I had not seen Europe for more than half a century, and I had a certain longing for one more sight of the places I remembered, and others it would be a delight to look upon. There were a few living persons whom I wished to meet. I was assured that I should be kindly received in England. All this was tempting enough, but there was an obstacle in the way which I feared, and, as it proved, not without good reason. I doubted whether I could possibly breathe in a narrow state-room. In certain localities I have found myself liable to attacks of asthma, and, although I had not had one for years, I felt sure that I could not escape it if I tried to sleep in a state-room.

I did not escape it, and I am glad to tell my story about it, because it excuses some of my involuntary social shortcomings, and enables me to thank collectively all those kind members of the profession who trained all the artillery of the pharmacopoeia upon my troublesome enemy, from bicarbonate of soda and Vichy water to arsenic and dynamite. One costly contrivance, sent me by the Reverend Mr. Haweis, whom I have never duly thanked for it, looked more like an angelic trump for me to blow in a better world than what I believe it is, an inhaling tube intended to prolong my mortal respiration. The best thing in my experience was recommended to me by an old friend in London. It was Himrod's asthma cure, one of the many powders, the smoke of which when burning is inhaled. It is made in Providence, Rhode Island, and I had to go to London to find it. It never failed to give at least temporary relief, but nothing enabled me to sleep in my state-room, though I had it all to myself, the upper berth being removed. After the first night and part of the second, I never lay down at all while at sea. The captain allowed me to have a candle and sit up in the saloon, where I worried through the night as I best might. How could I be in a fit condition to accept the attention of my friends in Liverpool, after sitting up every night for more than a week; and how could I be in a mood for the catechizing of interviewers, without having once lain down during the whole return passage? I hope the reader will see why I mention these facts. They explain and excuse many things; they have been alluded to, sometimes with exaggeration, in the newspapers, and I could not tell my story fairly without mentioning them. I got along well enough as soon as I landed, and have had no return of the trouble since I have been back in my own home. I will not advertise an assortment of asthma remedies for sale, but I assure my kind friends I have had no use for any one of them since I have walked the Boston pavements, drank, not the Cochituate, but the Belmont spring water, and breathed the lusty air of my native northeasters.

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My companion and I required an attendant, and we found one of those useful androgynous personages known as *courier-maids*, who had travelled with friends of ours, and who was ready to start with us at a moment's warning. She was of English birth, lively, short-gaited, serviceable, more especially in the first of her dual capacities. So far as my wants were concerned, I found her zealous and active in providing for my comfort.

It was no sooner announced in the papers that I was going to England than I began to hear of preparations to welcome me. An invitation to a club meeting was cabled across the Atlantic. One of my countrywomen who has a house in London made an engagement for me to meet friends at her residence. A reverend friend, who thought I had certain projects in my head, wrote to me about lecturing: where I should appear, what fees I should obtain, and such business matters. I replied that I was going to England to spend money, not to make it; to hear speeches, very possibly, but not to make them; to revisit scenes I had known in my younger days; to get a little change of my routine, which I certainly did; and to enjoy a little rest, which I as certainly did not, at least in London. In a word, I wished a short vacation, and had no thought of doing anything more important than rubbing a little rust off and enjoying myself, while at the same time I could make my companion's visit somewhat pleasanter than it would be if she went without me. The visit has answered most of its purposes for both of us, and if we have saved a few recollections which our friends can take any pleasure in reading, this slight record may be considered a work of supererogation.

The Cephalaria was to sail at half past six in the morning, and at that early hour a company of well-wishers was gathered on the wharf at East Boston to bid us good-by. We took with us many tokens of their thoughtful kindness; flowers and fruits from Boston and Cambridge, and a basket of champagne from a Concord friend whose company is as exhilarating as the sparkling wine he sent us. With the other gifts came a small tin box, about as big as a common round wooden match box. I supposed it to hold some pretty gimcrack, sent as a pleasant parting token of remembrance. It proved to be a most valued daily companion, useful at all times, never more so than when the winds were blowing hard and the ship was struggling with the waves. There must have been some magic secret in it, for I am sure that I looked five years younger after closing that little box than when I opened it. Time will explain its mysterious power.

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All the usual provisions for comfort made by seagoing experts we had attended to. Impermeable rugs and fleecy shawls, head-gear to defy the rudest northeasters, sea-chairs of ample dimensions, which we took care to place in as sheltered situations as we could find,—all these were a matter of course. Everybody stays on deck as much as possible, and lies wrapped up and spread out at full length on his or her sea-chair, so that the deck looks as if it had a row of mummies on exhibition. Nothing is more comfortable, nothing, I should say, more indispensable, than a hot-water bag,—or rather, *two* hot-water bags; for they will burst sometimes, as I found out, and a passenger who has become intimate with one of these warm bosom friends feels its loss almost as if it were human.

Passengers carry all sorts of luxuries on board, in the firm faith that they shall be able to profit by them all. Friends send them various indigestibles. To many all these well-meant preparations soon become a mockery, almost an insult. It is a clear case of *Sic(k) vos non vobis*. The tougher neighbor is the gainer by these acts of kindness; the generosity of a sea-sick sufferer in giving away the delicacies which seemed so desirable on starting is not ranked very high on the books of the recording angel. With us three things were best: grapes, oranges, and especially oysters, of which we had provided a half barrel in the shell. The “butcher” of the ship opened them fresh for us every day, and they were more acceptable than anything else.

Among our ship’s company were a number of family relatives and acquaintances. We formed a natural group at one of the tables, where we met in more or less complete numbers. I myself never missed; my companion, rarely. Others were sometimes absent, and sometimes came to time when they were in a very doubtful state, looking as if they were saying to themselves, with Lear,—

“Down, thou climbing sorrow,
Thy element’s below.”

As for the intellectual condition of the passengers, I should say that faces were prevaillingly vacuous, their owners half hypnotized, as it seemed, by the monotonous throb and tremor of the great sea-monster on whose back we were riding. I myself had few thoughts, fancies, emotions. One thing above all struck me as never before,—the terrible solitude of the ocean.

“So lonely ’twas that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.”

Whole days passed without our seeing a single sail. The creatures of the deep which gather around sailing vessels are perhaps frightened off by the noise and stir of the steamship. At any rate, we saw nothing more than a few porpoises, so far as I remember.

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No man can find himself over the abysses, the floor of which is paved with wrecks and white with the bones of the shrieking myriads of human beings whom the waves have swallowed up, without some thought of the dread possibilities hanging over his fate. There is only one way to get rid of them: that which an old sea-captain mentioned to me, namely, to keep one's self under opiates until he wakes up in the harbor where he is bound. I did not take this as serious advice, but its meaning is that one who has all his senses about him cannot help being anxious. My old friend, whose beard had been shaken in many a tempest, knew too well that there is cause enough for anxiety.

What does the reader suppose was the source of the most ominous thought which forced itself upon my mind, as I walked the decks of the mighty vessel? Not the sound of the rushing winds, nor the sight of the foam-crested billows; not the sense of the awful imprisoned force which was wrestling in the depths below me. The ship is made to struggle with the elements, and the giant has been tamed to obedience, and is manacled in bonds which an earthquake would hardly rend asunder. No! It was the sight of the *boats* hanging along at the sides of the deck,—the boats, always suggesting the fearful possibility that before another day dawns one may be tossing about in the watery Sahara, shelterless, fireless, almost foodless, with a fate before him he dares not contemplate. No doubt we should feel worse without the boats; still they are dreadful tell-tales. To all who remember Gericault's Wreck of the Medusa,—and those who have seen it do not forget it,—the picture the mind draws is one it shudders at. To be sure, the poor wretches in the painting were on a raft, but to think of fifty people in one of these open boats! Let us go down into the cabin, where at least we shall not see them.

The first morning at sea revealed the mystery of the little round tin box. The process of *shaving*, never a delightful one, is a very unpleasant and awkward piece of business when the floor on which one stands, the glass in which he looks, and he himself are all describing those complex curves which make cycles and epicycles seem like simplicity itself. The little box contained a reaping machine, which gathered the capillary harvest of the past twenty-four hours with a thoroughness, a rapidity, a security, and a facility which were a surprise, almost a revelation. The idea of a guarded cutting edge is an old one; I remember the "Plantagenet" razor, so called, with the comb-like row of blunt teeth, leaving just enough of the edge free to do its work. But this little affair had a blade only an inch and a half long by three quarters of an inch wide. It had a long slender handle, which took apart for packing, and was put together with the greatest ease. It was, in short, a lawn-mower for the masculine growth of which the proprietor wishes to rid his countenance.

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The mowing operation required no glass, could be performed with almost reckless boldness, as one cannot cut himself, and in fact had become a pleasant amusement instead of an irksome task. I have never used any other means of shaving from that day to this. I was so pleased with it that I exhibited it to the distinguished tonsors of Burlington Arcade, half afraid they would assassinate me for bringing in an innovation which bid fair to destroy their business. They probably took me for an agent of the manufacturers; and so I was, but not in their pay nor with their knowledge. I determined to let other persons know what a convenience I had found the "Star Razor" of Messrs. Kampf, of New York, without fear of reproach for so doing. I know my danger,—does not Lord Byron say, "I have even been accused of writing puffs for Warren's blacking"? I was once offered pay for a poem in praise of a certain stove polish, but I declined. It is pure good-will to my race which leads me to commend the Star Razor to all who travel by land or by sea, as well as to all who stay at home.

With the first sight of land many a passenger draws a long sigh of relief. Yet everybody knows that the worst dangers begin after we have got near enough to see the shore, for there are several ways of landing, not all of which are equally desirable. On Saturday, May 8th, we first caught a glimpse of the Irish coast, and at half past four in the afternoon we reached the harbor of Queenstown. A tug came off, bringing newspapers, letters, and so forth, among the rest some thirty letters and telegrams for me. This did not look much like rest, but this was only a slight prelude to what was to follow. I was in no condition to go on shore for sight-seeing, as some of the passengers did.

We made our way through the fog towards Liverpool, and arrived at 1.30, on Sunday, May 9th. A special tug came to take us off: on it were the American consul, Mr. Russell, the vice-consul, Mr. Sewall, Dr. Nevins, and Mr. Rathbone, who came on behalf of our as yet unseen friend, Mr. Willett, of Brighton, England. Our Liverpool friends were meditating more hospitalities to us than, in our fatigued condition, we were equal to supporting. They very kindly, however, acquiesced in our wishes, which were for as much rest as we could possibly get before any attempt to busy ourselves with social engagements. So they conveyed us to the Grand Hotel for a short time, and then saw us safely off to the station to take the train for Chester, where we arrived in due season, and soon found ourselves comfortably established at the Grosvenor Arms Hotel. A large basket of Surrey primroses was brought by Mr. Rathbone to my companion. I had set before me at the hotel a very handsome floral harp, which my friend's friend had offered me as a tribute. It made melody in my ears as sweet as those hyacinths of Shelley's, the music of whose bells was so

"delicate, soft, and intense,
It was felt like an odor within the sense."

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At Chester we had the blissful security of being unknown, and were left to ourselves. Americans know Chester better than most other old towns in England, because they so frequently stop there awhile on their way from Liverpool to London. It has a mouldy old cathedral, an old wall, partly Roman, strange old houses with overhanging upper floors, which make sheltered sidewalks and dark basements. When one sees an old house in New England with the second floor projecting a foot or two beyond the wall of the ground floor, the country boy will tell him that "them haouses was built so th't th' folks upstairs could shoot the Injins when they was tryin' to git threew th' door or int' th' winder." There are plenty of such houses all over England, where there are no "Injins" to shoot. But the story adds interest to the somewhat lean traditions of our rather dreary past, and it is hardly worth while to disturb it. I always heard it in my boyhood. Perhaps it is true; certainly it was a very convenient arrangement for discouraging an untimely visit. The oval lookouts in porches, common in our Essex County, have been said to answer a similar purpose, that of warning against the intrusion of undesirable visitors. The walk round the old wall of Chester is wonderfully interesting and beautiful. At one part it overlooks a wide level field, over which the annual races are run. I noticed that here as elsewhere the short grass was starred with daisies. They are not considered in place in a well-kept lawn. But remembering the cuckoo song in "Love's Labour's Lost," "When daisies pied ... do paint the meadows with delight," it was hard to look at them as unwelcome intruders.

The old cathedral seemed to me particularly mouldy, and in fact too high-flavored with antiquity. I could not help comparing some of the ancient cathedrals and abbey churches to so many old cheeses. They have a tough gray rind and a rich interior, which find food and lodging for numerous tenants who live and die under their shelter or their shadow,—lowly servitors some of them, portly dignitaries others, humble holy ministers of religion many, I doubt not,—larvae of angels, who will get their wings by and by. It is a shame to carry the comparison so far, but it is natural enough; for Cheshire cheeses are among the first things we think of as we enter that section of the country, and this venerable cathedral is the first that greets the eyes of great numbers of Americans.

We drove out to Eaton Hall, the seat of the Duke of Westminster, the many-millioned lord of a good part of London. It is a palace, high-roofed, marble-columned, vast, magnificent, everything but homelike, and perhaps homelike to persons born and bred in such edifices. A painter like Paul Veronese finds a palace like this not too grand for his banqueting scenes. But to those who live, as most of us do, in houses of moderate dimensions, snug, comfortable, which the owner's presence fills sufficiently, leaving

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room for a few visitors, a vast marble palace is disheartening and uninviting. I never get into a very large and lofty saloon without feeling as if I were a weak solution of myself,—my personality almost drowned out in the flood of space about me. The wigwam is more homelike than the cavern. Our wooden houses are a better kind of wigwam; the marble palaces are artificial caverns, vast, resonant, chilling, good to visit, not desirable to live in, for most of us. One's individuality should betray itself in all that surrounds him; he should *secrete* his shell, like a mollusk; if he can sprinkle a few pearls through it, so much the better. It is best, perhaps, that one should avoid being a duke and living in a palace,—that is, if he has his choice in the robing chamber where souls are fitted with their earthly garments.

One of the most interesting parts of my visit to Eaton Hall was my tour through the stables. The Duke is a famous breeder and lover of the turf. Mr. Rathbone and myself soon made the acquaintance of the chief of the stable department. Readers of Homer do not want to be reminded that *hippodamoio*, horse-subduer, is the genitive of an epithet applied as a chief honor to the most illustrious heroes. It is the last word of the last line of the Iliad, and fitly closes the account of the funeral pageant of Hector, the tamer of horses. We Americans are a little shy of confessing that any title or conventional grandeur makes an impression upon us. If at home we wince before any official with a sense of blighted inferiority, it is by general confession the clerk at the hotel office. There is an excuse for this, inasmuch as he holds our destinies in his hands, and decides whether, in case of accident, we shall have to jump from the third or sixth story window. Lesser grandeurs do not find us very impressible. There is, however, something about the man who deals in horses which takes down the spirit, however proud, of him who is unskilled in equestrian matters and unused to the horse-lover's vocabulary. We followed the master of the stables, meekly listening and once in a while questioning. I had to fall back on my reserves, and summoned up memories half a century old to gain the respect and win the confidence of the great horse-subduer. He showed us various fine animals, some in their stalls, some outside of them. Chief of all was the renowned Bend Or, a Derby winner, a noble and beautiful bay, destined in a few weeks to gain new honors on the same turf in the triumph of his offspring Ormonde, whose acquaintance we shall make by-and-by.

The next day, Tuesday, May 11th, at 4.25, we took the train for London. We had a saloon car, which had been thoughtfully secured for us through unseen, not unsuspected, agencies, which had also beautified the compartment with flowers.

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Here are some of my first impressions of England as seen from the carriage and from the cars.—How very English! I recall Birket Foster's Pictures of English Landscape,—a beautiful, poetical series of views, but hardly more poetical than the reality. How thoroughly England *is groomed*! Our New England out-of-doors landscape often looks as if it had just got out of bed, and had not finished its toilet. The glowing green of everything strikes me: green hedges in place of our rail-fences, always ugly, and our rude stone-walls, which are not wanting in a certain look of fitness approaching to comeliness, and are really picturesque when lichen-coated, but poor features of landscape as compared to these universal hedges. I am disappointed in the trees, so far; I have not seen one large tree as yet. Most of those I see are of very moderate dimensions, feathered all the way up their long slender trunks, with a lop-sided mop of leaves at the top, like a wig which has slipped awry. I trust that I am not finding everything *couleur de rose*; but I certainly do find the cheeks of children and young persons of such brilliant rosy hue as I do not remember that I have ever seen before. I am almost ready to think this and that child's face has been colored from a pink saucer. If the Saxon youth exposed for sale at Rome, in the days of Pope Gregory the Great, had complexions like these children, no wonder that the pontiff exclaimed, Not *Angli*, but *angeli*! All this may sound a little extravagant, but I am giving my impressions without any intentional exaggeration. How far these first impressions may be modified by after-experiences there will be time enough to find out and to tell. It is better to set them down at once just as they are. A first impression is one never to be repeated; the second look will see much that was not noticed before, but it will not reproduce the sharp lines of the *first proof*, which is always interesting, no matter what the eye or the mind fixes upon. "I see men as trees walking." That first experience could not be mended. When Dickens landed in Boston, he was struck with the brightness of all the objects he saw,—buildings, signs, and so forth. When I landed in Liverpool, everything looked very dark, very dingy, very massive, in the streets I drove through. So in London, but in a week it all seemed natural enough.

We got to the hotel where we had engaged quarters, at eleven o'clock in the evening of Wednesday, the 12th of May. Everything was ready for us,—a bright fire blazing and supper waiting. When we came to look at the accommodations, we found they were not at all adapted to our needs. It was impossible to stay there another night. So early the next morning we sent out our courier-maid, a dove from the ark, to find us a place where we could rest the soles of our feet. London is a nation of something like four millions of inhabitants, and one does not feel easy without he has an assured place

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of shelter. The dove flew all over the habitable districts of the city,—inquired at as many as twenty houses. No roosting-place for our little flock of three. At last the good angel who followed us everywhere, in one shape or another, pointed the wanderer to a place which corresponded with all our requirements and wishes. This was at No. 17 Dover Street, Mackellar's Hotel, where we found ourselves comfortably lodged and well cared for during the whole time we were in London. It was close to Piccadilly and to Bond Street. Near us, in the same range, were Brown's Hotel and Batt's Hotel, both widely known to the temporary residents of London.

We were but partially recovered from the fatigues and trials of the voyage when our arrival pulled the string of the social shower-bath, and the invitations began pouring down upon us so fast that we caught our breath, and felt as if we should be smothered. The first evening saw us at a great dinner-party at our well-remembered friend Lady Harcourt's. Twenty guests, celebrities and agreeable persons, with or without titles. The tables were radiant with silver, glistening with choice porcelain, blazing with a grand show of tulips. This was our "baptism of fire" in that long conflict which lasts through the London season. After dinner came a grand reception, most interesting, but fatiguing to persons hardly as yet in good condition for social service. We lived through it, however, and enjoyed meeting so many friends, known and unknown, who were very cordial and pleasant in their way of receiving us.

It was plain that we could not pretend to answer all the invitations which flooded our tables. If we had attempted it, we should have found no time for anything else. A secretary was evidently a matter of immediate necessity. Through the kindness of Mrs. Pollock, we found a young lady who was exactly fitted for the place. She was installed in the little room intended for her, and began the work of accepting with pleasure and regretting our inability, of acknowledging the receipt of books, flowers, and other objects, and being very sorry that we could not subscribe to this good object and attend that meeting in behalf of a deserving charity,—in short, writing almost everything for us except autographs, which I can warrant were always genuine. The poor young lady was almost tired out sometimes, having to stay at her table, on one occasion, so late as eleven in the evening, to get through her day's work. I simplified matters for her by giving her a set of formulae as a base to start from, and she proved very apt at the task of modifying each particular letter to suit its purpose.

From this time forward continued a perpetual round of social engagements. Breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, teas, receptions with spread tables, two, three, and four deep of an evening, with receiving company at our own rooms, took up the day, so that we had very little time for common sight-seeing.

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Of these kinds of entertainments, the breakfast, though pleasant enough when the company is agreeable, as I always found it, is the least convenient of all times and modes of visiting. You have already interviewed one breakfast, and are expecting soon to be coquetting with a tempting luncheon. If one had as many stomachs as a ruminant, he would not mind three or four serious meals a day, not counting the tea as one of them. The luncheon is a very convenient affair: it does not require special dress; it is informal; it is soon over, and may be made light or heavy, as one chooses. The afternoon tea is almost a necessity in London life. It is considered useful as “a pick me up,” and it serves an admirable purpose in the social system. It costs the household hardly any trouble or expense. It brings people together in the easiest possible way, for ten minutes or an hour, just as their engagements or fancies may settle it. A cup of tea at the right moment does for the virtuous reveller all that Falstaff claims for a good sherris-sack, or at least the first half of its “twofold operation:” “It ascends me into the brain; dries me there all the foolish and dull and crudy vapors which environ it; makes it apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery and delectable shapes, which delivered over to the voice, the tongue, which is the birth, becomes excellent wit.”

But it must have the right brain to work upon, and I doubt if there is any brain to which it is so congenial and from which it brings so much as that of a first-rate London old lady. I came away from the great city with the feeling that this most complex product of civilization was nowhere else developed to such perfection. The octogenarian Londoness has been in society,—let us say the highest society,—all her days. She is as tough as an old macaw, or she would not have lasted so long. She has seen and talked with all the celebrities of three generations, all the beauties of at least half a dozen decades. Her wits have been kept bright by constant use, and as she is free of speech it requires some courage to face her. Yet nobody can be more agreeable, even to young persons, than one of these precious old dowagers. A great beauty is almost certainly thinking how she looks while one is talking with her; an authoress is waiting to have one praise her book; but a grand old lady, who loves London society, who lives in it, who understands young people and all sorts of people, with her high-colored recollections of the past and her grand-maternal interests in the new generation, is the best of companions, especially over a cup of tea just strong enough to stir up her talking ganglions.

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A breakfast, a lunch, a tea, is a circumstance, an occurrence, in social life, but a dinner is an event. It is the full-blown flower of that cultivated growth of which those lesser products are the buds. I will not try to enumerate, still less to describe, the various entertainments to which we were invited, and many of which we attended. Among the professional friends I found or made during this visit to London, none were more kindly attentive than Dr. Priestley, who, with his charming wife, the daughter of the late Robert Chambers, took more pains to carry out our wishes than we could have asked or hoped for. At his house I first met Sir James Paget and Sir William Gull, long well known to me, as to the medical profession everywhere, as preeminent in their several departments. If I were an interviewer or a newspaper reporter, I should be tempted to give the impression which the men and women of distinction I met made upon me; but where all were cordial, where all made me feel as nearly as they could that I belonged where I found myself, whether the ceiling were a low or a lofty one, I do not care to differentiate my hosts and my other friends. *Fortemque Gyan fortemque Cloanthum*, —I left my microscope and my test-papers at home.

Our friends, several of them, had a pleasant way of sending their carriages to give us a drive in the Park, where, except in certain permitted regions, the common numbered vehicles are not allowed to enter. Lady Harcourt sent her carriage for us to go to her sister's, Mrs. Mildmay's, where we had a pleasant little "tea," and met one of the most agreeable and remarkable of those London old ladies I have spoken of. For special occasions we hired an unnumbered carriage, with professionally equipped driver and footman.

Mrs. Bloomfield Moore sent her carriage for us to take us to a lunch at her house, where we met Mr. Browning, Sir Henry and Lady Layard, Oscar Wilde and his handsome wife, and other well-known guests. After lunch, recitations, songs, *etc.* House full of pretty things. Among other curiosities a portfolio of drawings illustrating Keeley's motor, which, up to this time, has manifested a remarkably powerful *vis inertice*, but which promises miracles. In the evening a grand reception at Lady Granville's, beginning (for us, at least) at eleven o'clock. The house a palace, and A—— thinks there were a thousand people there. We made the tour of the rooms, saw many great personages, had to wait for our carriage a long time, but got home at one o'clock.

English people have queer notions about iced-water and ice-cream. "You will surely die, eating such cold stuff," said a lady to my companion. "Oh, no," she answered, "but I should certainly die were I to drink your two cups of strong tea." I approved of this "counter" on the teacup, but I did not think either of them was in much danger.

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The next day Rev. Mr. Haweis sent his carriage, and we drove in the Park. In the afternoon we went to our Minister's to see the American ladies who had been presented at the drawing-room. After this, both of us were glad to pass a day or two in comparative quiet, except that we had a room full of visitors. So many persons expressed a desire to make our acquaintance that we thought it would be acceptable to them if we would give a reception ourselves. We were thinking how we could manage it with our rooms at the hotel, which were not arranged so that they could be thrown together. Still, we were planning to make the best of them, when Dr. and Mrs. Priestley suggested that we should receive our company at their house. This was a surprise, and a most welcome one, and A—— and her kind friend busied themselves at once about the arrangements.

We went to a luncheon at Lansdowne House, Lord Rosebery's residence, not far from our hotel. My companion tells a little incident which may please an American six-year-old: "The eldest of the four children, Sibyl, a pretty, bright child of six, told me that she wrote a letter to the Queen. I said, 'Did you begin, Dear Queen?' 'No,' she answered, 'I began, Your Majesty, and signed myself, Your little humble servant, Sibyl.'" A very cordial and homelike reception at this great house, where a couple of hours were passed most agreeably.

On the following Sunday I went to Westminster Abbey to hear a sermon from Canon Harford on A Cheerful Life. A lively, wholesome, and encouraging discourse, such as it would do many a forlorn New England congregation good to hear. In the afternoon we both went together to the Abbey. Met our Beverly neighbor, Mrs. Vaughan, and adopted her as one of our party. The seats we were to have were full, and we had to be stowed where there was any place that would hold us. I was smuggled into a stall, going through long and narrow passages, between crowded rows of people, and found myself at last with a big book before me and a set of official personages around me, whose duties I did not clearly understand. I thought they might be mutes, or something of that sort, salaried to look grave and keep quiet. After service we took tea with Dean Bradley, and after tea we visited the Jerusalem Chamber. I had been twice invited to weddings in that famous room: once to the marriage of my friend Motley's daughter, then to that of Mr. Frederick Locker's daughter to Lionel Tennyson, whose recent death has been so deeply mourned. I never expected to see that Jerusalem in which Harry the Fourth died, but there I found myself in the large panelled chamber, with all its associations. The older memories came up but vaguely; an American finds it as hard to call back anything over two or three centuries old as a sucking-pump to draw up water from a depth of over thirty-three feet and a fraction. After this A—— went to a musical party, dined with the Vaughans, and had a good time among American friends.

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The next evening we went to the Lyceum Theatre to see Mr. Irving. He had placed the Royal box at our disposal, so we invited our friends the Priestleys to go with us, and we all enjoyed the evening mightily. Between the scenes we went behind the curtain, and saw the very curious and admirable machinery of the dramatic spectacle. We made the acquaintance of several imps and demons, who were got up wonderfully well. Ellen Terry was as fascinating as ever. I remembered that once before I had met her and Mr. Irving behind the scenes. It was at the Boston Theatre, and while I was talking with them a very heavy piece of scenery came crashing down, and filled the whole place with dust. It was but a short distance from where we were standing, and I could not help thinking how near our several life-dramas came to a simultaneous *exeunt omnes*.

A long visit from a polite interviewer, shopping, driving, calling, arranging about the people to be invited to our reception, and an agreeable dinner at Chelsea with my American friend, Mrs. Merritt, filled up this day full enough, and left us in good condition for the next, which was to be a very busy one.

In the Introduction to these papers, I mentioned the fact that more than half a century ago I went to the famous Derby race at Epsom. I determined, if possible, to see the Derby of 1886, as I had seen that of 1834. I must have spoken of this intention to some interviewer, for I find the following paragraph in an English sporting newspaper, "The Field," for May 29th, 1886:—

"The Derby has always been the one event in the racing year which statesmen, philosophers, poets, essayists, and *litterateurs* desire to see once in their lives. A few years since Mr. Gladstone was induced by Lord Granville and Lord Wolverton to run down to Epsom on the Derby day. The impression produced upon the Prime Minister's sensitive and emotional mind was that the mirth and hilarity displayed by his compatriots upon Epsom race-course was Italian rather than English in its character. On the other hand, Gustave Dore, who also saw the Derby for the first and only time in his life, exclaimed, as he gazed with horror upon the faces below him, *Quelle scene brutale!* We wonder to which of these two impressions Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes inclined, if he went last Wednesday to Epsom! Probably the well-known, *etc.*, *etc.*—Of one thing Dr. Holmes may rest finally satisfied: the Derby of 1886 may possibly have seemed to him far less exciting than that of 1834; but neither in 1834 nor in any other year was the great race ever won by a better sportsman or more honorable man than the Duke of Westminster."

My desire to see the Derby of this year was of the same origin and character as that which led me to revisit many scenes which I remembered. I cared quite as much about renewing old impressions as about getting new ones. I enjoyed everything which I had once seen all the more from the blending of my recollections with the present as it was before me.

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The Derby day of 1834 was exceedingly windy and dusty. Our party, riding on the outside of the coach, was half smothered with the dust, and arrived in a very deteriorated condition, but recompensed for it by the extraordinary sights we had witnessed. There was no train in those days, and the whole road between London and Epsom was choked with vehicles of all kinds, from four-in-hands to donkey-carts and wheelbarrows. My friends and I mingled freely in the crowds, and saw all the "humours" of the occasion. The thimble-riggers were out in great force, with their light, movable tables, the cups or thimbles, and the "little jokers," and the coachman, the sham gentleman, the country greenhorn, all properly got up and gathered about the table. I think we had "Aunt Sally," too,—the figure with a pipe in her mouth, which one might shy a stick at for a penny or two and win something, I forget what. The clearing the course of stragglers, and the chasing about of the frightened little dog who had got in between the thick ranks of spectators, reminded me of what I used to see on old "artillery election" days.

It was no common race that I went to see in 1834. "It is asserted in the columns of a contemporary that Plenipotentiary was absolutely the best horse of the century." This was the winner of the race I saw so long ago. Herring's colored portrait, which I have always kept, shows him as a great, powerful chestnut horse, well deserving the name of "bullock," which one of the jockeys applied to him. "Rumor credits Dr. Holmes," so "The Field" says, "with desiring mentally to compare his two Derbies with each other." I was most fortunate in my objects of comparison. The horse I was about to see win was not unworthy of being named with the renowned champion of my earlier day. I quote from a writer in the "London Morning Post," whose words, it will be seen, carry authority with them:—

"Deep as has hitherto been my reverence for Plenipotentiary, Bay Middleton, and Queen of Trumps from hearsay, and for Don John, Crucifix, *etc.*, *etc.*, from my own personal knowledge, I am inclined to award the palm to Ormonde as the best three-year-old I have ever seen during close upon half a century's connection with the turf."

Ormonde, the Duke of Westminster's horse, was the son of that other winner of the Derby, Bend Or, whom I saw at Eaton Hall.

Perhaps some coeval of mine may think it was a rather youthful idea to go to the race. I cannot help that. I was off on my first long vacation for half a century, and had a right to my whims and fancies. But it was one thing to go in with a vast crowd at five and twenty, and another thing to run the risks of the excursion at more than thrice that age. I looked about me for means of going safely, and could think of nothing better than to ask one of the pleasantest and kindest of gentlemen, to whom I had a letter from Mr. Winthrop, at whose house I had had the pleasure

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of making his acquaintance. Lord Rosebery suggested that the best way would be for me to go in the special train which was to carry the Prince of Wales. First, then, I was to be introduced to his Royal Highness, which office was kindly undertaken by our very obliging and courteous Minister, Mr. Phelps. After this all was easily arranged, and I was cared for as well as if I had been Mr. Phelps himself. On the grand stand I found myself in the midst of the great people, who were all very natural, and as much at their ease as the rest of the world. The Prince is of a lively temperament and a very cheerful aspect,—a young girl would call him “jolly” as well as “nice.” I recall the story of “Mr. Pope” and his Prince of Wales, as told by Horace Walpole. “Mr. Pope, you don’t love princes.” “Sir, I beg your pardon.” “Well, you don’t love kings, then.” “Sir, I own I love the lion best before his claws are grown.” Certainly, nothing in Prince Albert Edward suggests any aggressive weapons or tendencies. The lovely, youthful-looking, gracious Alexandra, the always affable and amiable Princess Louise, the tall youth who sees the crown and sceptre afar off in his dreams, the slips of girls so like many school misses we left behind us,—all these grand personages, not being on exhibition, but off enjoying themselves, just as I was and as other people were, seemed very much like their fellow-mortals. It is really easier to feel at home with the highest people in the land than with the awkward commoner who was knighted yesterday. When “My Lord and Sir Paul” came into the Club which Goldsmith tells us of, the hilarity of the evening was instantly checked. The entrance of a dignitary like the present Prince of Wales would not have spoiled the fun of the evening. If there is any one accomplishment specially belonging to princes, it is that of making the persons they meet feel at ease.

The grand stand to which I was admitted was a little privileged republic. I remember Thackeray’s story of his asking some simple question of a royal or semi-royal personage whom he met in the courtyard of an hotel, which question his Highness did not answer, but called a subordinate to answer for him. I had been talking some time with a tall, good-looking gentleman, whom I took for a nobleman to whom I had been introduced. Something led me to think I was mistaken in the identity of this gentleman. I asked him, at last, if he were not So and So. “No,” he said, “I am Prince Christian.” You are a Christian prince, anyhow, I said to myself, if I may judge by your manners.

I once made a similar mistake in addressing a young fellow-citizen of some social pretensions. I apologized for my error.

“No offence,” he answered.

Offence indeed! I should hope not. But he had not the “*maniere de prince*”, or he would never have used that word.

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I must say something about the race I had taken so much pains to see. There was a preliminary race, which excited comparatively little interest. After this the horses were shown in the paddock, and many of our privileged party went down from the stand to look at them. Then they were brought out, smooth, shining, fine-drawn, frisky, spirit-stirring to look upon,—most beautiful of all the bay horse Ormonde, who could hardly be restrained, such was his eagerness for action. The horses disappear in the distance.—They are off,—not yet distinguishable, at least to me. A little waiting time, and they swim into our ken, but in what order of precedence it is as yet not easy to say. Here they come! Two horses have emerged from the ruck, and are sweeping, rushing, storming, towards us, almost side by side. One slides by the other, half a length, a length, a length and a half. Those are Archer's colors, and the beautiful bay Ormonde flashes by the line, winner of the Derby of 1886. "The Bard" has made a good fight for the first place, and comes in second. Poor Archer, the king of the jockeys! He will bestride no more Derby winners. A few weeks later he died by his own hand.

While the race was going on, the yells of the betting crowd beneath us were incessant. It must have been the frantic cries and movements of these people that caused Gustave Dore to characterize it as a brutal scene. The vast mob which thronged the wide space beyond the shouting circle just round us was much like that of any other fair, so far as I could see from my royal perch. The most conspicuous object was a man on an immensely tall pair of stilts, stalking about among the crowd. I think it probable that I had as much enjoyment in forming one of the great mob in 1834 as I had among the grandeurs in 1886, but the last is pleasanter to remember and especially to tell of.

After the race we had a luncheon served us, a comfortable and substantial one, which was very far from unwelcome. I did not go to the Derby to bet on the winner. But as I went in to luncheon, I passed a gentleman standing in custody of a plate half covered with sovereigns. He politely asked me if I would take a little paper from a heap there was lying by the plate, and add a sovereign to the collection already there. I did so, and, unfolding my paper, found it was a blank, and passed on. The pool, as I afterwards learned, fell to the lot of the Turkish Ambassador. I found it very windy and uncomfortable on the more exposed parts of the grand stand, and was glad that I had taken a shawl with me, in which I wrapped myself as if I had been on shipboard. This, I told my English friends, was the more civilized form of the Indian's blanket. My report of the weather does not say much for the English May, but it is generally agreed upon that this is a backward and unpleasant spring.

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After my return from the race we went to a large dinner at Mr. Phelps's house, where we met Mr. Browning again, and the Lord Chancellor Herschell, among others. Then to Mrs. Cyril Flower's, one of the most sumptuous houses in London; and after that to Lady Rothschild's, another of the private palaces, with ceilings lofty as firmaments, and walls that might have been copied from the New Jerusalem. There was still another great and splendid reception at Lady Dalhousie's, and a party at Mrs. Smith's, but we were both tired enough to be willing to go home after what may be called a pretty good day's work at enjoying ourselves.

We had been a fortnight in London, and were now inextricably entangled in the meshes of the golden web of London social life.

II.

The reader who glances over these papers, and, finding them too full of small details and the lesser personal matters which belong naturally to private correspondences, turns impatiently from them, has my entire sympathy and good-will. He is not one of those for whom these pages are meant. Having no particular interest in the writer or his affairs, he does not care for the history of "the migrations from the blue bed to the brown" and the many Mistress Quicklyisms of circumstantial narrative. Yet all this may be pleasant reading to relatives and friends.

But I must not forget that a new generation of readers has come into being since I have been writing for the public, and that a new generation of aspiring and brilliant authors has grown into general recognition. The dome of Boston State House, which is the centre of my little universe, was glittering in its fresh golden pellicle before I had reached the scriptural boundary of life. It has lost its lustre now, and the years which have dulled its surface have whitened the dome of that fragile structure in which my consciousness holds the session of its faculties. Time is not to be cheated. It is easy to talk of perennial youth, and to toy with the flattering fictions which every ancient personage accepts as true so far as he himself is concerned, and laughs at as foolish talk when he hears them applied to others. When, in my exulting immaturity, I wrote the lines not unknown to the reading public under the name of "The Last Leaf", I spoke of the possibility that I myself might linger on the old bough until the buds and blossoms of a new spring were opening and spreading all around me. I am not as yet the solitary survivor of my literary contemporaries, and, remembering who my few coevals are, it may well be hoped that I shall not be. But I feel lonely, very lonely, in the pages through which I wander. These are new names in the midst of which I find my own. In another sense I am very far from alone. I have daily assurances that I have a constituency of known and unknown personal friends, whose indulgence I have no need of asking. I know there are readers enough who will be pleased

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to follow me in my brief excursion, *because I am myself*, and will demand no better reason. If I choose to write for them, I do no injury to those for whom my personality is an object of indifference. They will find on every shelf some publications which are not intended for them, and which they prefer to let alone. No person is expected to help himself to everything set before him at a public table. I will not, therefore, hesitate to go on with the simple story of our Old World experiences.

Thanks to my Indian blanket,—my shawl, I mean,—I found myself nothing the worse for my manifold adventures of the 27th of May. The cold wind sweeping over Epsom downs reminded me of our own chilling easterly breezes; especially the northeasterly ones, which are to me less disagreeable than the southeasterly. But the poetical illusion about an English May,—

“Zephyr with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying,”—

and all that, received a shrewd thrust. Zephyr ought to have come in an ulster, and offered Aurora a warm petticoat. However, in spite of all difficulties, I brought off my recollections of the Derby of 1886 in triumph, and am now waiting for the colored portrait of Ormonde with Archer on his back,—Archer, the winner of five Derby races, one of which was won by the American horse Iroquois. When that picture, which I am daily expecting, arrives, I shall have it framed and hung by the side of Herring’s picture of Plenipotentiary, the horse I saw win the Derby in 1834. These two, with an old portrait of the great Eclipse, who, as my engraving of 1780 (Stubbs’s) says, “was never beat, or ever had occasion for Whip or Spur,” will constitute my entire sporting gallery. I have not that vicious and demoralizing love of horse-flesh which makes it next to impossible to find a perfectly honest hippophile. But a racer is the realization of an ideal quadruped,—

“A pard-like spirit, beautiful and swift;”

so ethereal, so bird-like, that it is no wonder that the horse about whom those old story-tellers lied so stoutly,—telling of his running a mile in a minute,—was called Flying Childers.

The roses in Mrs. Pfeiffer’s garden were hardly out of flower when I lunched with her at her pretty villa at Putney. There I met Mr. Browning, Mr. Holman Hunt, Mrs. Ritchie, Miss Anna Swanwick, the translator of AEschylus, and other good company, besides that of my entertainer.

One of my very agreeable experiences was a call from a gentleman with whom I had corresponded, but whom I had never met. This was Mr. John Bellows, of Gloucester,

publisher, printer, man of letters, or rather of words; for he is the author of that truly remarkable little manual, "The Bona Fide Pocket Dictionary of the French and English Languages." To the review of this little book, which is dedicated to Prince Lucien Bonaparte, the "London Times" devoted a full column. I never heard any one who had used it speak of it except with admiration. The modest Friend may be surprised to find himself at full length in my pages, but those who know the little miracle of typography, its conciseness, completeness, arrangement, will not wonder that I was gratified to see the author, who sent it to me, and who has written me most interesting letters on the local antiquities of Gloucester and its neighborhood.

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We lunched that day at Lady Camperdown's, where we were happy to meet Miss Frances Power Cobbe. In the afternoon we went by invitation to a "tea and talk" at the Reverend Mr. Haweis's, at Chelsea. We found the house close packed, but managed to get through the rooms, shaking innumerable hands of the reverend gentleman's parishioners and other visitors. It was very well arranged, so as not to be too fatiguing, and we left the cordial gathering in good condition. We drove home with Bishop and Mrs. Ellicott.

After this Sir James Paget called, and took me to a small and early dinner-party; and A — went with my secretary, the young lady of whom I have spoken, to see "Human Nature," at Drury Lane Theatre.

On the following day, after dining with Lady Holland (wife of Sir Henry, niece of Macaulay), we went across the street to our neighbor's, Lady Stanley's. There was to be a great meeting of schoolmistresses, in whose work her son, the Honorable Lyulph Stanley, is deeply interested. Alas! The schoolma'ams were just leaving as we entered the door, and all we saw of them was the trail of their descending robes. I was very sorry for this, for I have a good many friends among our own schoolmistresses, — friends whom I never saw, but know through the kind words they have addressed to me.

No place in London looks more reserved and exclusive than Devonshire House, standing back behind its high wall, extending along Piccadilly. There is certainly nothing in its exterior which invites intrusion. We had the pleasure of taking tea in the great house, accompanying our American friend, Lady Harcourt, and were graciously received and entertained by Lady Edward Cavendish. Like the other great houses, it is a museum of paintings, statues, objects of interest of all sorts. It must be confessed that it is pleasanter to go through the rooms with one of the ladies of the household than under the lead of a liveried servant. Lord Hartington came in while we were there. All the men who are distinguished in political life become so familiar to the readers of "Punch" in their caricatures, that we know them at sight. Even those who can claim no such public distinction are occasionally the subjects of the caricaturist, as some of us have found out for ourselves. A good caricature, which seizes the prominent features and gives them the character Nature hinted, but did not fully carry out, is a work of genius. Nature herself is a remorseless caricaturist, as our daily intercourse with our fellow men and women makes evident to us, and as is curiously illustrated in the figures of Charles Lebrun, showing the relations between certain human faces and those of various animals. Hardly an English statesman in bodily presence could be mistaken by any of "Punch's" readers.

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On the same day that we made this quiet visit we attended a great and ceremonious assembly. There were two parts in the programme, in the first of which I was on the stage *solus*,—that is, without my companion; in the second we were together. This day, Saturday, the 29th of May, was observed as the Queen's birthday, although she was born on the 24th. Sir William Harcourt gave a great dinner to the officials of his department, and later in the evening Lady Rosebery held a reception at the Foreign Office. On both these occasions everybody is expected to be in court dress, but my host told me I might present myself in ordinary evening dress. I thought that I might feel awkwardly among so many guests, all in the wedding garments, knee-breeches and the rest, without which I ventured among them. I never passed an easier evening in any company than among these official personages. Sir William took me under the shield of his ample presence, and answered all my questions about the various notable personages at his table in a way to have made my fortune if I had been a reporter. From the dinner I went to Mrs. Gladstone's, at 10 Downing Street, where A—— called for me. She had found a very small and distinguished company there, Prince Albert Victor among the rest. At half past eleven we walked over to the Foreign Office to Lady Rosebery's reception.

Here Mr. Gladstone was of course the centre of a group, to which I was glad to add myself. His features are almost as familiar to me as my own, for a photograph of him in his library has long stood on my revolving bookcase, with a large lens before it. He is one of a small circle of individuals in whom I have had and still have a special personal interest. The year 1809, which introduced me to atmospheric existence, was the birth-year of Gladstone, Tennyson, Lord Houghton, and Darwin. It seems like an honor to have come into the world in such company, but it is more likely to promote humility than vanity in a common mortal to find himself coeval with such illustrious personages. Men born in the same year watch each other, especially as the sands of life begin to run low, as we can imagine so many damaged hour-glasses to keep an eye on each other. Women, of course, never know who are their contemporaries.

Familiar to me as were the features of Mr. Gladstone, I looked upon him with astonishment. For he stood before me with epaulets on his shoulders and a rapier at his side, as military in his aspect as if he had been Lord Wolseley, to whom I was introduced a short time afterwards. I was fortunate enough to see and hear Mr. Gladstone on a still more memorable occasion, and can afford to leave saying what were my impressions of the very eminent statesman until I speak of that occasion.

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A great number of invitations had been given out for the reception at Lady Rosebery's, —over two thousand, my companion heard it said. Whatever the number was, the crowd was very great,—so great that one might well feel alarmed for the safety of any delicate person who was in the *pack* which formed itself at one place in the course of the evening. Some obstruction must have existed *a fronte*, and the *vis a tergo* became fearful in its pressure on those who were caught in the jam. I began thinking of the crushes in which I had been caught, or which I had read and heard of: the terrible time at the execution of Holloway and Haggerty, where some forty persons were squeezed or trampled to death; the Brooklyn Theatre and other similar tragedies; the crowd I was in at the unveiling of the statue on the column of the Place Vendome, where I felt as one may suppose Giles Corey did when, in his misery, he called for “more weight” to finish him. But there was always a *deus ex machina* for us when we were in trouble. Looming up above the crowd was the smiling and encouraging countenance of the ever active, always present, always helpful Mr. Smalley. He cleared a breathing space before us. For a short time it was really a formidable wedging together of people, and if a lady had fainted in the press, she might have run a serious risk before she could have been extricated. No more “marble halls” for us, if we had to undergo the *peine forte et dure* as the condition of our presence! We were both glad to escape from this threatened asphyxia, and move freely about the noble apartments. Lady Rosebery, who was kindness itself, would have had us stay and sit down in comfort at the supper-table, after the crowd had thinned, but we were tired with all we had been through, and ordered our carriage. *Ordered our carriage!*

“I can call spirits from the vasty deep.” ...
But will they come when you do call for them?”

The most formidable thing about a London party is getting away from it. “C’est le *dernier pas qui coute*.” A crowd of anxious persons in retreat is hanging about the windy door, and the breezy stairway, and the airy hall.

A stentorian voice, hard as that of Rhadamanthus, exclaims,—

“Lady Vere de Vere’s carriage stops the way!”

If my Lady Vere de Vere is not on hand, and that pretty quickly, off goes her carriage, and the stern voice bawls again,—

“Mrs. Smith’s carriage stops the way!”

Mrs. Smith’s particular Smith may be worth his millions and live in his marble palace; but if Mrs. Smith thinks her coachman is going to stand with his horses at that door until she appears, she is mistaken, for she is a minute late, and now the coach moves on, and Rhadamanthus calls aloud,—

“Mrs. Brown’s carriage stops the way!”

Half the lung fevers that carry off the great people are got waiting for their carriages.

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I know full well that many readers would be disappointed if I did not mention some of the grand places and bring in some of the great names that lend their lustre to London society. We were to go to a fine musical party at Lady Rothschild's on the evening of the 30th of May. It happened that the day was Sunday, and if we had been as punctilious as some New England Sabbatarians, we might have felt compelled to decline the tempting invitation. But the party was given by a daughter of Abraham, and in every Hebrew household the true Sabbath was over. We were content for that evening to shelter ourselves under the old dispensation.

The party, or concert, was a very brilliant affair. Patti sang to us, and a tenor, and a violinist played for us. How we two Americans came to be in so favored a position I do not know; all I do know is that we were shown to our places, and found them very agreeable ones. In the same row of seats was the Prince of Wales, two chairs off from A——'s seat. Directly in front of A—— was the Princess of Wales, "in ruby velvet, with six rows of pearls encircling her throat, and two more strings falling quite low;" and next her, in front of me, the startling presence of Lady de Grey, formerly Lady Lonsdale, and before that Gladys Herbert. On the other side of the Princess sat the Grand Duke Michael of Russia.

As we are among the grandest of the grandees, I must enliven my sober account with an extract from my companion's diary:—

"There were several great beauties there, Lady Claude Hamilton, a queenly blonde, being one. Minnie Stevens Paget had with her the pretty Miss Langdon, of New York. Royalty had one room for supper, with its attendant lords and ladies. Lord Rothschild took me down to a long table for a sit-down supper,—there were some thirty of us. The most superb pink orchids were on the table. The [Thane] of —— sat next me, and how he stared before he was introduced! ... This has been the finest party we have been to, sitting comfortably in such a beautiful ball-room, gazing at royalty in the flesh, and at the shades of departed beauties on the wall, by Sir Joshua and Gainsborough. It was a new experience to find that the royal lions fed upstairs, and mixed animals below!"

A visit to Windsor had been planned, under the guidance of a friend whose kindness had already shown itself in various forms, and who, before we left England, did for us more than we could have thought of owing to any one person. This gentleman, Mr. Willett, of Brighton, called with Mrs. Willett to take us on the visit which had been arranged between us.

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Windsor Castle, which everybody knows, or can easily learn, all about, is one of the largest of those huge caverns in which the descendants of the original cave men, when they have reached the height of human grandeur, delight to shelter themselves. It seems as if such a great hollow quarry of rock would strike a chill through every tenant, but modern improvements reach even the palaces of kings and queens, and the regulation temperature of the castle, or of its inhabited portions, is fixed at sixty-five degrees of Fahrenheit. The royal standard was not floating from the tower of the castle, and everything was quiet and lonely. We saw all we wanted to,—pictures, furniture, and the rest. My namesake, the Queen's librarian, was not there to greet us, or I should have had a pleasant half-hour in the library with that very polite gentleman, whom I had afterwards the pleasure of meeting in London.

After going through all the apartments in the castle that we cared to see, or our conductress cared to show us, we drove in the park, along the "three-mile walk," and in the by-roads leading from it. The beautiful avenue, the open spaces with scattered trees here and there, made this a most delightful excursion. I saw many fine oaks, one about sixteen feet of honest girth, but no one which was very remarkable. I wished I could have compared the handsomest of them with one in Beverly, which I never look at without taking my hat off. This is a young tree, with a future before it, if barbarians do not meddle with it, more conspicuous for its spread than its circumference, stretching not very far from a hundred feet from bough-end to bough-end. I do not think I saw a specimen of the British *Quercus robur* of such consummate beauty. But I know from Evelyn and Strutt what England has to boast of, and I will not challenge the British oak.

Two sensations I had in Windsor park, or forest, for I am not quite sure of the boundary which separates them. The first was the lovely sight of the *hawthorn* in full bloom. I had always thought of the hawthorn as a pretty shrub, growing in hedges; as big as a currant bush or a barberry bush, or some humble plant of that character. I was surprised to see it as a tree, standing by itself, and making the most delicious roof a pair of young lovers could imagine to sit under. It looked at a little distance like a young apple-tree covered with new-fallen snow. I shall never see the word hawthorn in poetry again without the image of the snowy but far from chilling canopy rising before me. It is the very bower of young love, and must have done more than any growth of the forest to soften the doom brought upon man by the fruit of the forbidden tree. No wonder that

"In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love,"

with the object of his affections awaiting him in this boudoir of nature. What a pity that Zekle, who courted Huldry over the apples she was peeling, could not have made love as the bucolic youth does, when

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“Every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale!”

(I will have it *love-tale*, in spite of Warton’s comment.) But I suppose it does not make so much difference, for love transmutes the fruit in Huldry’s lap into the apples of the Hesperides.

In this way it is that the associations with the poetry we remember come up when we find ourselves surrounded by English scenery. The great poets build temples of song, and fill them with images and symbols which move us almost to adoration; the lesser minstrels fill a panel or gild a cornice here and there, and make our hearts glad with glimpses of beauty. I felt all this as I looked around and saw the hawthorns in full bloom, in the openings among the oaks and other trees of the forest. Presently I heard a sound to which I had never listened before, and which I have never heard since:—

Coooo—coooo!

Nature had sent one cuckoo from her aviary to sing his double note for me, that I might not pass away from her pleasing show without once hearing the call so dear to the poets. It was the last day of spring. A few more days, and the solitary voice might have been often heard; for the bird becomes so common as to furnish Shakespeare an image to fit “the skipping king.”—

“He was but as the cuckoo is in June,
Heard, not regarded.”

For the lyric poets the cuckoo is “companion of the spring,” “darling of the spring;” coming with the daisy, and the primrose, and the blossoming sweet-pea. Where the sound came from I could not tell; it puzzled Wordsworth, with younger eyes than mine, to find whence issued

“that cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.”

Only one hint of the prosaic troubled my emotional delight: I could not help thinking how capitally the little rogue imitated the cuckoo clock, with the sound of which I was pretty well acquainted.

On our return from Windsor we had to get ready for another great dinner with our Minister, Mr. Phelps. As we are in the habit of considering our great officials as public property, and as some of my readers want as many glimpses of high life as a decent regard to republican sensibilities will permit, I will borrow a few words from the diary to which I have often referred:—



“The Princess Louise was there with the Marquis, and I had the best opportunity of seeing how they receive royalty at private houses. Mr. and Mrs. Phelps went down to the door to meet her the moment she came, and then Mr. Phelps entered the drawing-room with the Princess on his arm, and made the tour of the room with her, she bowing and speaking to each one of us. Mr. Goschen took me in to dinner, and Lord Lorne was on my other side. All of the flowers were of the royal color, red. It was a grand dinner.... The Austrian Ambassador, Count Karoli, took Mrs. Phelps in [to dinner], his position being higher than that of even the Duke [of Argyll], who sat upon her right.”

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It was a very rich experience for a single day: the stately abode of royalty, with all its manifold historical recollections, the magnificent avenue of forest trees, the old oaks, the hawthorn in full bloom, and the one cry of the cuckoo, calling me back to Nature in her spring-time freshness and glory; then, after that, a great London dinner-party at a house where the kind host and the gracious hostess made us feel at home, and where we could meet the highest people in the land,—the people whom we who live in a simpler way at home are naturally pleased to be with under such auspices. What of all this shall I remember longest? Let me not seem ungrateful to my friends who planned the excursion for us, or to those who asked us to the brilliant evening entertainment, but I feel as Wordsworth felt about the cuckoo,—he will survive all the other memories.

“And I can listen to thee yet,
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.”

Nothing is more hackneyed than an American's description of his feelings in the midst of the scenes and objects he has read of all his days, and is looking upon for the first time. To each of us it appears in some respects in the same way, but with a difference for every individual. We may smile at Irving's emotions at the first sight of a distinguished Englishman on his own soil,—the ingenious Mr. Roscoe, as an earlier generation would have called him. Our tourists, who are constantly going forward and back between England and America, lose all sense of the special distinctions between the two countries which do not bear on their personal convenience. Happy are those who go with unworn, unsatiated sensibilities from the New World to the Old; as happy, it may be, those who come from the Old World to the New, but of that I cannot form a judgment.

On the first day of June we called by appointment upon Mr. Peel, the Speaker of the House of Commons, and went through the Houses of Parliament. We began with the train-bearer, then met the housekeeper, and presently were joined by Mr. Palgrave. The “Golden Treasury” stands on my drawing-room table at home, and the name on its title-page had a familiar sound. This gentleman is, I believe, a near relative of Professor Francis Turner Palgrave, its editor.

Among other things to which Mr. Palgrave called our attention was the death-warrant of Charles the First. One name in the list of signers naturally fixed our eyes upon it. It was that of John Dixwell. A lineal descendant of the old regicide is very near to me by family connection, Colonel Dixwell having come to this country, married, and left a posterity, which has resumed the name, dropped for the sake of safety at the time when he, Goffe, and Whalley, were in concealment in various parts of New England.

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We lunched with the Speaker, and had the pleasure of the company of Archdeacon Farrar. In the afternoon we went to a tea at a very grand house, where, as my companion says in her diary, "it took full six men in red satin knee-breeches to let us in." Another grand personage asked us to dine with her at her country place, but we were too full of engagements. In the evening we went to a large reception at Mr. Gosse's. It was pleasant to meet artists and scholars,—the kind of company to which we are much used in our aesthetic city. I found our host as agreeable at home as he was when in Boston, where he became a favorite, both as a lecturer and as a visitor.

Another day we visited Stafford House, where Lord Ronald Gower, himself an artist, did the honors of the house, showing us the pictures and sculptures, his own included, in a very obliging and agreeable way. I have often taken note of the resemblances of living persons to the portraits and statues of their remote ancestors. In showing us the portrait of one of his own far-back progenitors, Lord Ronald placed a photograph of himself in the corner of the frame. The likeness was so close that the photograph might seem to have been copied from the painting, the dress only being changed. The Duke of Sutherland, who had just come back from America, complained that the dinners and lunches had used him up. I was fast learning how to sympathize with him.

Then to Grosvenor House to see the pictures. I best remember Gainsborough's beautiful Blue Boy, commonly so called, from the color of his dress, and Sir Joshua's Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse, which everybody knows in engravings. We lunched in clerical company that day, at the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol's, with the Archbishop of York, the Reverend Mr. Haweis, and others as guests. I told A—— that she was not sufficiently impressed with her position at the side of an archbishop; she was not *crumbling bread* in her nervous excitement. The company did not seem to remember Sydney Smith's remark to the young lady next him at a dinner-party: "My dear, I see you are nervous, by your crumbling your bread as you do. I always crumble bread when I sit by a bishop, and when I sit by an archbishop I crumble bread with both hands." That evening I had the pleasure of dining with the distinguished Mr. Bryce, whose acquaintance I made in our own country, through my son, who has introduced me to many agreeable persons of his own generation, with whose companionship I am glad to mend the broken and merely fragmentary circle of old friendships.

The 3d of June was a memorable day for us, for on the evening of that day we were to hold our reception. If Dean Bradley had proposed our meeting our guests in the Jerusalem Chamber, I should hardly have been more astonished. But these kind friends meant what they said, and put the offer in such a shape that it was impossible to resist it. So we sent out our cards to a few hundreds of persons,—those

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who we thought might like invitations. I was particularly desirous that many members of the medical profession whom I had not met, but who felt well disposed towards me, should be at this gathering. The meeting was in every respect a success. I wrote a prescription for as many baskets of champagne as would be consistent with the well-being of our guests, and such light accompaniments as a London company is wont to expect under similar circumstances. My own recollections of the evening, unclouded by its festivities, but confused by its multitudinous succession of introductions, are about as definite as the Duke of Wellington's alleged monosyllabic description of the battle of Waterloo. But A—— writes in her diary: "From nine to twelve we stood, receiving over three hundred people out of the four hundred and fifty we invited." As I did not go to Europe to visit hospitals or museums, I might have missed seeing some of those professional brethren whose names I hold in honor and whose writings are in my library. If any such failed to receive our cards of invitation, it was an accident which, if I had known, I should have deeply regretted. So far as we could judge by all we heard, our unpretentious party gave general satisfaction. Many different social circles were represented, but it passed off easily and agreeably. I can say this more freely, as the credit of it belongs so largely to the care and self-sacrificing efforts of Dr. Priestley and his charming wife.

I never refused to write in the birthday book or the album of the humblest schoolgirl or schoolboy, and I could not refuse to set my name, with a verse from one of my poems, in the album of the Princess of Wales, which was sent me for that purpose. It was a nice new book, with only two or three names in it, and those of musical composers,—Rubinstein's, I think, was one of them,—so that I felt honored by the great lady's request. I ought to describe the book, but I only remember that it was quite large and sumptuously elegant, and that I copied into it the last verse of a poem of mine called "The Chambered Nautilus," as I have often done for plain republican albums.

The day after our simple reception was notable for three social events in which we had our part. The first was a lunch at the house of Mrs. Cyril Flower, one of the finest in London,—Surrey House, as it is called. Mr. Browning, who seems to go everywhere, and is one of the vital elements of London society, was there as a matter of course. Miss Cobbe, many of whose essays I have read with great satisfaction, though I cannot accept all her views, was a guest whom I was very glad to meet a second time.

In the afternoon we went to a garden-party given by the Princess Louise at Kensington Palace, a gloomy-looking edifice, which might be taken for a hospital or a poorhouse. Of all the festive occasions which I attended, the garden-parties were to me the most formidable. They are all very well for young people, and for those who do not mind the nipping and eager air, with which, as I have said, the climate of England, no less than that of America, falsifies all the fine things the poets have said about May, and, I may

add, even June. We wandered about the grounds, spoke with the great people, stared at the odd ones, and said to ourselves,—at least I said to myself,—with Hamlet,

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“The air bites shrewdly, it is very cold.”

[Illustration: Robert Browning.]

The most curious personages were some East Indians, a chocolate-colored lady, her husband, and children. The mother had a diamond on the side of her nose, its setting riveted on the inside, one might suppose; the effect was peculiar, far from captivating. A — said that she should prefer the good old-fashioned nose-ring, as we find it described and pictured by travellers. She saw a great deal more than I did, of course. I quote from her diary: “The little Eastern children made their native salaam to the Princess by prostrating themselves flat on their little stomachs in front of her, putting their hands between her feet, pushing them aside, and kissing the print of her feet!”

I really believe one or both of us would have run serious risks of catching our “death o’ cold,” if we had waited for our own carriage, which seemed forever in coming forward. The good Lady Holland, who was more than once our guardian angel, brought us home in hers. So we got warmed up at our own hearth, and were ready in due season for the large and fine dinner-party at Archdeacon Farrar’s, where, among other guests, were Mrs. Phelps, our Minister’s wife, who is a great favorite alike with Americans and English, Sir John Millais, Mr. Tyndall, and other interesting people.

I am sorry that we could not have visited Newstead Abbey. I had a letter from Mr. Thornton Lothrop to Colonel Webb, the present proprietor, with whom we lunched. I have spoken of the pleasure I had when I came accidentally upon persons with whose name and fame I had long been acquainted. A similar impression was that which I received when I found myself in the company of the bearer of an old historic name. When my host at the lunch introduced a stately-looking gentleman as Sir Kenelm Digby, it gave me a start, as if a ghost had stood before me. I recovered myself immediately, however, for there was nothing of the impalpable or immaterial about the stalwart personage who bore the name. I wanted to ask him if he carried any of his ancestor’s “powder of sympathy” about with him. Many, but not all, of my readers remember that famous man’s famous preparation. When used to cure a wound, it was applied to the weapon that made it; the part was bound up so as to bring the edges of the wound together, and by the wondrous influence of the sympathetic powder the healing process took place in the kindest possible manner. Sir Kenelm, the ancestor, was a gallant soldier, a grand gentleman, and the husband of a wonderfully beautiful wife, whose charms he tried to preserve from the ravages of time by various experiments. He was also the homoeopathist of his day, the Elisha Perkins (metallic tractors) of his generation. The “mind cure” people might adopt him as one of their precursors.

I heard a curious statement which was illustrated in the person of one of the gentlemen we met at this table. It is that English sporting men are often deaf on one side, in consequence of the noise of the frequent discharge of their guns affecting the right ear. This is a very convenient infirmity for gentlemen who indulge in slightly aggressive

remarks, but when they are hit back never seem to be conscious at all of the *riposte*,—the return thrust of the fencer.

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Dr. Allchin called and took me to a dinner, where I met many professional brothers, and enjoyed myself highly.

By this time every day was pledged for one or more engagements, so that many very attractive invitations had to be declined. I will not follow the days one by one, but content myself with mentioning some of the more memorable visits. I had been invited to the Rabelais Club, as I have before mentioned, by a cable message. This is a club of which the late Lord Houghton was president, and of which I am a member, as are several other Americans. I was afraid that the gentlemen who met,

“To laugh and shake in Rabelais’s easy chair,”

might be more hilarious and demonstrative in their mirth than I, a sober New Englander in the superfluous decade, might find myself equal to. But there was no uproarious jollity; on the contrary, it was a pleasant gathering of literary people and artists, who took their pleasure not sadly, but serenely, and I do not remember a single explosive guffaw.

Another day, after going all over Dudley House, including Lady Dudley’s boudoir, “in light blue satin, the prettiest room we have seen,” A—— says, we went, by appointment, to Westminster Abbey, where we spent two hours under the guidance of Archdeacon Farrar. I think no part of the Abbey is visited with so much interest as Poets’ Corner. We are all familiarly acquainted with it beforehand. We are all ready for “O rare Ben Jonson!” as we stand over the place where he was planted standing upright, as if he had been dropped into a post-hole. We remember too well the foolish and flippant mockery of Gay’s “Life is a Jest.” If I were dean of the cathedral, I should be tempted to alter the *J* to a *G*. Then we could read it without contempt; for life *is* a gest, an achievement,—or always ought to be. Westminster Abbey is too crowded with monuments to the illustrious dead and those who have been considered so in their day to produce any other than a confused impression. When we visit the tomb of Napoleon at the Invalides, no side-lights interfere with the view before us in the field of mental vision. We see the Emperor; Marengo, Austerlitz, Waterloo, Saint Helena, come before us, with him as their central figure. So at Stratford,—the Cloptons and the John a Combes, with all their memorials, cannot make us lift our eyes from the stone which covers the dust that once breathed and walked the streets of Stratford as Shakespeare.

Ah, but here is one marble countenance that I know full well, and knew for many a year in the flesh! Is there an American who sees the bust of Longfellow among the effigies of the great authors of England without feeling a thrill of pleasure at recognizing the features of his native fellow-countryman in the Valhalla of his ancestral fellow-countrymen? There are many memorials in Poets’ Corner and elsewhere in the Abbey which could be better spared than that. Too many that were placed there as

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luminaries have become conspicuous by their obscurity in the midst of that illustrious company. On the whole, the Abbey produces a distinct sense of being overcrowded. It appears too much like a lapidary's store-room. Look up at the lofty roof, which we willingly pardon for shutting out the heaven above us,—at least in an average London day; look down at the floor and think of what precious relics it covers; but do not look around you with the hope of getting any clear, concentrated, satisfying effect from this great museum of gigantic funereal bricabrac. Pardon me, shades of the mighty dead! I had something of this feeling, but at another hour I might perhaps be overcome by emotion, and weep, as my fellow-countryman did at the grave of the earliest of his ancestors. I should love myself better in that aspect than I do in this coldblooded criticism; but it suggested itself, and as no flattery can soothe, so no censure can wound, “the dull, cold ear of death.”

Of course we saw all the sights of the Abbey in a hurried way, yet with such a guide and expositor as Archdeacon Farrar our two hours' visit was worth a whole day with an indiscriminating verger, who recites his lesson by rote, and takes the life out of the little mob that follows him round by emphasizing the details of his lesson, until “Patience on a monument” seems to the sufferer, who knows what he wants and what he does not want, the nearest emblem of himself he can think of. Amidst all the imposing recollections of the ancient edifice, one impressed me in the inverse ratio of its importance. The Archdeacon pointed out the little holes in the stones, in one place, where the boys of the choir used to play marbles, before America was discovered, probably,—centuries before, it may be. It is a strangely impressive glimpse of a living past, like the *graffiti* of Pompeii. I find it is often the accident rather than the essential which fixes my attention and takes hold of my memory. This is a tendency of which I suppose I ought to be ashamed, if we have any right to be ashamed of those idiosyncrasies which are ordered for us. It is the same tendency which often leads us to prefer the picturesque to the beautiful. Mr. Gilpin liked the donkey in a forest landscape better than the horse. A touch of imperfection interferes with the beauty of an object and lowers its level to that of the picturesque. The accident of the holes in the stone of the noble building, for the boys to play marbles with, makes me a boy again and at home with them, after looking with awe upon the statue of Newton, and turning with a shudder from the ghastly monument of Mrs. Nightingale.

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What a life must be that of one whose years are passed chiefly in and about the great Abbey! Nowhere does Macbeth's expression "dusty death" seem so true to all around us. The dust of those who have been lying century after century below the marbles piled over them,—the dust on the monuments they lie beneath; the dust on the memories those monuments were raised to keep living in the recollection of posterity,—dust, dust, dust, everywhere, and we ourselves but shapes of breathing dust moving amidst these objects and remembrances! Come away! The good Archdeacon of the "Eternal Hope" has asked us to take a cup of tea with him. The tea-cup will be a cheerful substitute for the funeral urn, and a freshly made infusion of the fragrant leaf is one of the best things in the world to lay the dust of sad reflections.

It is a somewhat fatiguing pleasure to go through the Abbey, in spite of the intense interest no one can help feeling. But my day had but just begun when the two hours we had devoted to the visit were over. At a quarter before eight, my friend Mr. Frederick Locker called for me to go to a dinner at the Literary Club. I was particularly pleased to dine with this association, as it reminded me of our own Saturday Club, which sometimes goes by the same name as the London one. They complimented me with a toast, and I made some kind of a reply. As I never went prepared with a speech for any such occasion, I take it for granted that I thanked the company in a way that showed my gratitude rather than my eloquence. And now, the dinner being over, my day was fairly begun.

This was to be a memorable date in the record of the year, one long to be remembered in the political history of Great Britain. For on this day, the 7th of June, Mr. Gladstone was to make his great speech on the Irish question, and the division of the House on the Government of Ireland Bill was to take place. The whole country, to the corners of its remotest colony, was looking forward to the results of this evening's meeting of Parliament. The kindness of the Speaker had furnished me with a ticket, entitling me to a place among the "distinguished guests," which I presented without modestly questioning my right to the title.

The pressure for entrance that evening was very great, and I, coming after my dinner with the Literary Club, was late upon the ground. The places for "distinguished guests" were already filled. But all England was in a conspiracy to do everything possible to make my visit agreeable. I did not take up a great deal of room,—I might be put into a seat with the ambassadors and foreign ministers. And among them I was presently installed. It was now between ten and eleven o'clock, as nearly as I recollect. The House had been in session since four o'clock. A gentleman was speaking, who was, as my unknown next neighbor told me, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, a leading member, as we all know, of the opposition. When he sat down there was

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a hush of expectation, and presently Mr. Gladstone rose to his feet. A great burst of applause welcomed him, lasting more than a minute. His clean-cut features, his furrowed cheeks, his scanty and whitened hair, his well-shaped but not extraordinary head, all familiarized by innumerable portraits and emphasized in hundreds of caricatures, revealed him at once to every spectator. His great speech has been universally read, and I need only speak of the way in which it was delivered. His manner was forcible rather than impassioned or eloquent; his voice was clear enough, but must have troubled him somewhat, for he had a small bottle from which he poured something into a glass from time to time and swallowed a little, yet I heard him very well for the most part. In the last portion of his speech he became animated and inspiring, and his closing words were uttered with an impressive solemnity: "Think, I beseech you, think well, think wisely, think not for a moment, but for the years that are to come, before you reject this bill."

After the burst of applause which followed the conclusion of Mr. Gladstone's speech, the House proceeded to the division on the question of passing the bill to a second reading. While the counting of the votes was going on there was the most intense excitement. A rumor ran round the House at one moment that the vote was going in favor of the second reading. It soon became evident that this was not the case, and presently the result was announced, giving a majority of thirty against the bill, and practically overthrowing the liberal administration. Then arose a tumult of applause from the conservatives and a wild confusion, in the midst of which an Irish member shouted, "Three cheers for the Grand Old Man!" which were lustily given, with waving of hats and all but Donnybrook manifestations of enthusiasm.

I forgot to mention that I had a very advantageous seat among the diplomatic gentlemen, and was felicitating myself on occupying one of the best positions in the House, when an usher politely informed me that the Russian Ambassador, in whose place I was sitting, had arrived, and that I must submit to the fate of eviction. Fortunately, there were some steps close by, on one of which I found a seat almost as good as the one I had just left.

It was now two o'clock in the morning, and I had to walk home, not a vehicle being attainable. I did not know my way to my headquarters, and I had no friend to go with me, but I fastened on a stray gentleman, who proved to be an ex-member of the House, and who accompanied me to 17 Dover Street, where I sought my bed with a satisfying sense of having done a good day's work and having been well paid for it.

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On the 8th of June we visited the Record Office for a sight of the Domesday Book and other ancient objects of interest there preserved. As I looked at this too faithful memorial of an inexorable past, I thought of the battle of Hastings and all its consequences, and that reminded me of what I have long remembered as I read it in Dr. Robert Knox's "Races of Men." Dr. Knox was the monocular Waterloo surgeon, with whom I remember breakfasting, on my first visit to England and Scotland. His celebrity is less owing to his book than to the unfortunate connection of his name with the unforgotten Burke and Hare horrors. This is his language in speaking of Hastings: "... that bloody field, surpassing far in its terrible results the unhappy day of Waterloo. From this the Celt has recovered, but not so the Saxon. To this day he feels, and feels deeply, the most disastrous day that ever befell his race; here he was trodden down by the Norman, whose iron heel is on him yet.... To this day the Saxon race in England have never recovered a tithe of their rights, and probably never will."

The Conqueror meant to have a thorough summing up of his stolen property. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle says,—I quote it at second hand,—“So very straitly did he cause the survey to be made, that there was not a single hyde, nor a yardland of ground, nor—it is shameful to say what he thought no shame to do—was there an ox or a cow, or a pig passed by, and that was not down in the accounts, and then all these writings were brought to him.” The “looting” of England by William and his “twenty thousand thieves,” as Mr. Emerson calls his army, was a singularly methodical proceeding, and Domesday Book is a searching inventory of their booty, movable and immovable.

From this reminder of the past we turned to the remembrances of home; A—— going to dine with a transplanted Boston friend and other ladies from that blessed centre of New England life, while I dined with a party of gentlemen at my friend Mr. James Russell Lowell's.

I had looked forward to this meeting with high expectations, and they were abundantly satisfied. I knew that Mr. Lowell must gather about him, wherever he might be, the choicest company, but what his selection would be I was curious to learn. I found with me at the table my own countrymen and his, Mr. Smalley and Mr. Henry James. Of the other guests, Mr. Leslie Stephen was my only old acquaintance in person; but Du Maurier and Tenniel I have met in my weekly “Punch” for many a year; Mr. Lang, Mr. Oliphant, Mr. Townsend, we all know through their writings; Mr. Burne-Jones and Mr. Alma Tadema, through the frequent reproductions of their works in engravings, as well as by their paintings. If I could report a dinner-table conversation, I might be tempted to say something of my talk with Mr. Oliphant. I like well enough conversation which floats safely over the shallows, touching bottom at intervals with a commonplace incident or truism

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to push it along; I like better to find a few fathoms of depth under the surface; there is a still higher pleasure in the philosophical discourse which calls for the deep sea line to reach bottom; but best of all, when one is in the right mood, is the contact of intelligences when they are off soundings in the ocean of thought. Mr. Oliphant is what many of us call a mystic, and I found a singular pleasure in listening to him. This dinner at Mr. Lowell's was a very remarkable one for the men it brought together, and I remember it with peculiar interest. My entertainer holds a master-key to London society, and he opened the gate for me into one of its choicest preserves on that evening.

I did not undertake to renew my old acquaintance with hospitals and museums. I regretted that I could not be with my companion, who went through the Natural History Museum with the accomplished director, Professor W. H. Flower. One old acquaintance I did resuscitate. For the second time I took the hand of Charles O'Byrne, the celebrated Irish giant of the last century. I met him, as in my first visit, at the Royal College of Surgeons, where I accompanied Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson. He was in the condition so longed for by Sydney Smith on a very hot day; namely, with his flesh taken off, and sitting, or rather standing, in his bones. The skeleton measures eight feet, and the living man's height is stated as having been eight feet two, or four inches, by different authorities. His hand was the only one I took, either in England or Scotland, which had not a warm grasp and a hearty welcome in it.

A—— went with Boston friends to see "Faust" a second time, Mr. Irving having offered her the Royal box, and the polite Mr. Bram Stoker serving the party with tea in the little drawing-room behind the box; so that she had a good time while I was enjoying myself at a dinner at Sir Henry Thompson's, where I met Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Browning, and other distinguished gentlemen. These dinners of Sir Henry's are well known for the good company one meets at them, and I felt myself honored to be a guest on this occasion.

Among the pleasures I had promised myself was that of a visit to Tennyson, at the Isle of Wight. I feared, however, that this would be rendered impracticable by reason of the very recent death of his younger son, Lionel. But I learned from Mr. Locker-Lampson, whose daughter Mr. Lionel Tennyson had married, that the poet would be pleased to see me at his place, Farringford; and by the kind intervention of Mr. Locker-Lampson, better known to the literary world as Frederick Locker, arrangements were made for my daughter and myself to visit him. I considered it a very great favor, for Lord Tennyson has a poet's fondness for the tranquillity of seclusion, which many curious explorers of society fail to remember. Lady Tennyson is an invalid, and though nothing could be more gracious than her reception of us both, I fear it may have

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cost her an effort which she would not allow to betray itself. Mr. Hallam Tennyson and his wife, both of most pleasing presence and manners, did everything to make our stay agreeable. I saw the poet to the best advantage, under his own trees and walking over his own domain. He took delight in pointing out to me the finest and the rarest of his trees,—and there were many beauties among them. I recalled my morning's visit to Whittier at Oak Knoll, in Danvers, a little more than a year ago, when he led me to one of his favorites, an aspiring evergreen which shot up like a flame. I thought of the graceful American elms in front of Longfellow's house and the sturdy English elms that stand in front of Lowell's. In this garden of England, the Isle of Wight, where everything grows with such a lavish extravagance of greenness that it seems as if it must bankrupt the soil before autumn, I felt as if weary eyes and overtaxed brains might reach their happiest haven of rest. We all remember Shenstone's epigram on the pane of a tavern window. If we find our "warmest welcome at an inn," we find our most soothing companionship in the trees among which we have lived, some of which we may ourselves have planted. We lean against them, and they never betray our trust; they shield us from the sun and from the rain; their spring welcome is a new birth, which never loses its freshness; they lay their beautiful robes at our feet in autumn; in winter they "stand and wait," emblems of patience and of truth, for they hide nothing, not even the little leaf-buds which hint to us of hope, the last element in their triple symbolism.

This digression, suggested by the remembrance of the poet under his trees, breaks my narrative, but gives me the opportunity of paying a debt of gratitude. For I have owned many beautiful trees, and loved many more outside of my own leafy harem. Those who write verses have no special claim to be lovers of trees, but so far as one is of the poetical temperament he is likely to be a tree-lover. Poets have, as a rule, more than the average nervous sensibility and irritability. Trees have no nerves. They live and die without suffering, without self-questioning or self-reproach. They have the divine gift of silence. They cannot obtrude upon the solitary moments when one is to himself the most agreeable of companions. The whole vegetable world, even "the meanest flower that blows," is lovely to contemplate. What if creation had paused there, and you or I had been called upon to decide whether self-conscious life should be added in the form of the existing animal creation, and the hitherto peaceful universe should come under the rule of Nature as we now know her,

"red in tooth and claw"?

Are we not glad that the responsibility of the decision did not rest on us?

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I am sorry that I did not ask Tennyson to read or repeat to me some lines of his own. Hardly any one perfectly understands a poem but the poet himself. One naturally loves his own poem as no one else can. It fits the mental mould in which it was cast, and it will not exactly fit any other. For this reason I had rather listen to a poet reading his own verses than hear the best elocutionist that ever spouted recite them. He may not have a good voice or enunciation, but he puts his heart and his inter-penetrative intelligence into every line, word, and syllable. I should have liked to hear Tennyson read such lines as

“Laborious orient ivory, sphere in sphere;”

and in spite of my good friend Matthew Arnold’s *in terrorem*, I should have liked to hear Macaulay read,

“And Aulus the Dictator
Stroked Auster’s raven mane,”

and other good mouthable lines, from the “Lays of Ancient Rome.” Not less should I like to hear Mr. Arnold himself read the passage beginning,—

“In his cool hall with haggard eyes
The Roman noble lay.”

The next day Mrs. Hallam Tennyson took A—— in her pony cart to see Alum Bay, The Needles, and other objects of interest, while I wandered over the grounds with Tennyson. After lunch his carriage called for us, and we were driven across the island, through beautiful scenery, to Ventnor, where we took the train to Ryde, and there the steamer to Portsmouth, from which two hours and a half of travel carried us to London.

* * * * *

My first visit to Cambridge was at the invitation of Mr. Gosse, who asked me to spend Sunday, the 13th of June, with him. The rooms in Neville Court, Trinity College, occupied by Sir William Vernon Harcourt when lecturing at Cambridge, were placed at my disposal. The room I slept in was imposing with the ensigns armorial of the Harcourts and others which ornamented its walls. I had great delight in walking through the quadrangles, along the banks of the Cam, and beneath the beautiful trees which border it. Mr. Gosse says that I stopped in the second court of Clare, and looked around and smiled as if I were bestowing my benediction. He was mistaken: I smiled as if I were receiving a benediction from my dear old grandmother; for Cambridge in New England is my mother town, and Harvard University in Cambridge is my Alma Mater. She is the daughter of Cambridge in Old England, and my relationship is thus made clear.



Mr. Gosse introduced me to many of the younger and some of the older men of the university. Among my visits was one never to be renewed and never to be forgotten. It was to the Master of Trinity, the Reverend William Hepworth Thompson. I hardly expected to have the privilege of meeting this very distinguished and greatly beloved personage, famous not alone for scholarship, or as the successor of Dr. Whewell in his high office, but also as having

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said some of the wittiest things which we have heard since Voltaire's *pour encourager les autres*. I saw him in his chamber, a feeble old man, but noble to look upon in all "the monumental pomp of age." He came very near belonging to the little group I have mentioned as my coevals, but was a year after us. Gentle, dignified, kindly in his address as if I had been his schoolmate, he left a very charming impression. He gave me several mementoes of my visit, among them a beautiful engraving of Sir Isaac Newton, representing him as one of the handsomest of men. Dr. Thompson looked as if he could not be very long for this world, but his death, a few weeks after my visit, was a painful surprise to me. I had been just in time to see "the last of the great men" at Cambridge, as my correspondent calls him, and I was very grateful that I could store this memory among the hoarded treasures I have been laying by for such possible extra stretch of time as may be allowed me.

My second visit to Cambridge will be spoken of in due season.

While I was visiting Mr. Gosse at Cambridge, A—— was not idle. On Saturday she went to Lambeth, where she had the pleasure and honor of shaking hands with the Archbishop of Canterbury in his study, and of looking about the palace with Mrs. Benson. On Sunday she went to the Abbey, and heard "a broad and liberal sermon" from Archdeacon Farrar. Our young lady-secretary stayed and dined with her, and after dinner sang to her. "A peaceful, happy Sunday," A—— says in her diary,—not less peaceful, I suspect, for my being away, as my callers must have got many a "not at 'ome" from young Robert of the multitudinous buttons.

On Monday, the 14th of June, after getting ready for our projected excursions, we had an appointment which promised us a great deal of pleasure. Mr. Augustus Harris, the enterprising and celebrated manager of Drury Lane Theatre, had sent us an invitation to occupy a box, having eight seats, at the representation of "Carmen." We invited the Priestleys and our Boston friends, the Shimminses, to take seats with us. The chief singer in the opera was Marie Roze, who looked well and sang well, and the evening went off very happily. After the performance we were invited by Mr. Harris to a supper of some thirty persons, where we were the special guests. The manager toasted me, and I said something,—I trust appropriate; but just what I said is as irrecoverable as the orations of Demosthenes on the seashore, or the sermons of St. Francis to the beasts and birds.

Of all the attentions I received in England, this was, perhaps, the least to be anticipated or dreamed of. To be feted and toasted and to make a speech in Drury Lane Theatre would not have entered into my flightiest conceptions, if I had made out a programme beforehand. It is a singularly gratifying recollection. Drury Lane Theatre is so full of associations with literature, with the great actors and actresses of

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the past, with the famous beauties who have stood behind the footlights and the splendid audiences that have sat before them, that it is an admirable nucleus for remembrances to cluster around. It was but a vague spot in memory before, but now it is a bright centre for other images of the past. That one evening seems to make me the possessor of all its traditions from the time when it rose from its ashes, when Byron's poem was written and recited, and when the brothers Smith gave us the "Address without a Phoenix," and all those exquisite parodies which make us feel towards their originals somewhat as our dearly remembered Tom Appleton did when he said, in praise of some real green turtle soup, that it was almost as good as mock.

With much regret we gave up an invitation we had accepted to go to Durdans to dine with Lord Rosebery. We must have felt very tired indeed to make so great a sacrifice, but we had to be up until one o'clock getting ready for the next day's journey; writing, packing, and attending to what we left behind us as well as what was in prospect.

On the morning of Wednesday, June 16th, Dr. Donald Macalister called to attend us on our second visit to Cambridge, where we were to be the guests of his cousin, Alexander Macalister, Professor of Anatomy, who, with Mrs. Macalister, received us most cordially. There was a large luncheon-party at their house, to which we sat down in our travelling dresses. In the evening they had a dinner-party, at which were present, among others, Professor Stokes, President of the Royal Society, and Professor Wright. We had not heard much talk of political matters at the dinner-tables where we had been guests, but A—— sat near a lady who was very earnest in advocating the Irish side of the great impending question.

The 17th of June is memorable in the annals of my country. On that day of the year 1775 the battle of Bunker's Hill was fought on the height I see from the window of my library, where I am now writing. The monument raised in memory of our defeat, which was in truth a victory, is almost as much a part of the furniture of the room as its chairs and tables; outside, as they are inside, furniture. But the 17th of June, 1886, is memorable to me above all the other anniversaries of that day I have known. For on that day I received from the ancient University of Cambridge, England, the degree of Doctor of Letters, "Doctor Litt.," in its abbreviated academic form. The honor was an unexpected one; that is, until a short time before it was conferred.

Invested with the academic gown and cap, I repaired in due form at the appointed hour to the Senate Chamber. Every seat was filled, and among the audience were youthful faces in large numbers, looking as if they were ready for any kind of outbreak of enthusiasm or hilarity.

The first degree conferred was that of LL.D., on Sir W. A. White, G.C.M., G.C.B., to whose long list of appended initials it seemed like throwing a perfume on the violet to add three more letters.

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When I was called up to receive my honorary title, the young voices were true to the promise of the young faces. There was a great noise, not hostile nor unpleasant in its character, in answer to which I could hardly help smiling my acknowledgments. In presenting me for my degree the Public Orator made a Latin speech, from which I venture to give a short extract, which I would not do for the world if it were not disguised by being hidden in the mask of a dead language. But there will be here and there a Latin scholar who will be pleased with the way in which the speaker turned a compliment to the candidate before him, with a reference to one of his poems and to some of his prose works.

"Juvat nuper audivisse eum cujus carmen prope primum 'Folium ultimum' nominatum est, folia adhuc plura e scriniis suis esse prolaturum. Novimus quanta lepore descripserit colloquia illa antemeridiana, symposia illa sobria et severa, sed eadem festiva et faceta, in quibus totiens mutata persona, modo poeta, modo professor, modo princeps et arbiter, loquendi, inter convivas suos regnat."

I had no sooner got through listening to the speech and receiving my formal sentence as Doctor of Letters than the young voices broke out in fresh clamor. There were cries of "A speech! a speech!" mingled with the title of a favorite poem by John Howard Payne, having a certain amount of coincidence with the sound of my name. The play upon the word was not absolutely a novelty to my ear, but it was good-natured, and I smiled again, and perhaps made a faint inclination, as much as to say, "I hear you, young gentlemen, but I do not forget that I am standing on my dignity, especially now since a new degree has added a moral cubit to my stature." Still the cries went on, and at last I saw nothing else to do than to edge back among the silk gowns, and so lose myself and be lost to the clamorous crowd in the mass of dignitaries. It was not indifference to the warmth of my welcome, but a feeling that I had no claim to address the audience because some of its younger members were too demonstrative. I have not forgotten my very cordial reception, which made me feel almost as much at home in the old Cambridge as in the new, where I was born and took my degrees, academic, professional, and honorary.

The university town left a very deep impression upon my mind, in which a few grand objects predominate over the rest, all being of a delightful character. I was fortunate enough to see the gathering of the boats, which was the last scene in their annual procession. The show was altogether lovely. The pretty river, about as wide as the Housatonic, I should judge, as that slender stream winds through "Canoe Meadow," my old Pittsfield residence, the gaily dressed people who crowded the banks, the flower-crowned boats, with the gallant young oarsmen who handled them so skilfully, made a picture not often equalled. The walks, the bridges, the quadrangles, the historic college

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buildings, all conspired to make the place a delight and a fascination. The library of Trinity College, with its rows of busts by Roubiliac and Woolner, is a truly noble hall. But beyond, above all the rest, the remembrance of King's College Chapel, with its audacious and richly wrought roof and its wide and lofty windows, glowing with old devices in colors which are ever fresh, as if just from the furnace, holds the first place in my gallery of Cambridge recollections.

I cannot do justice to the hospitalities which were bestowed upon us in Cambridge. Professor and Mrs. Macalister, aided by Dr. Donald Macalister, did all that thoughtful hosts could do to make us feel at home. In the afternoon the ladies took tea at Mr. Oscar Browning's. In the evening we went to a large dinner at the invitation of the Vice-Chancellor. Many little points which I should not have thought of are mentioned in A——'s diary. I take the following extract from it, toning down its vivacity more nearly to my own standard:—

"Twenty were there. The Master of St. John's took me in, and the Vice-Chancellor was on the other side.... The Vice-Chancellor rose and returned thanks after the meats and before the sweets, as usual. I have now got used to this proceeding, which strikes me as extraordinary. Everywhere here in Cambridge, and the same in Oxford, I believe, they say grace and give thanks. A gilded ewer and flat basin were passed, with water in the basin to wash with, and we all took our turn at the bath! Next to this came the course with the finger-bowls!... Why two baths?"

On Friday, the 18th, I went to a breakfast at the Combination Room, at which about fifty gentlemen were present, Dr. Sandys taking the chair. After the more serious business of the morning's repast was over, Dr. Macalister, at the call of the chairman, arose, and proposed my welfare in a very complimentary way. I of course had to respond, and I did so in the words which came of their own accord to my lips. After my unpremeditated answer, which was kindly received, a young gentleman of the university, Mr. Heitland, read a short poem, of which the following is the title:—

LINES OF GREETING TO DR. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

AT BREAKFAST IN COMBINATION ROOM, ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND.

I wish I dared quote more than the last two verses of these lines, which seemed to me, not unused to giving and receiving complimentary tributes, singularly happy, and were so considered by all who heard them. I think I may venture to give the two verses referred to:—



“By all sweet memory of the saints and sages
Who wrought among us in the days of yore;
By youths who, turning now life’s early pages,
Ripen to match the worthies gone before:

“On us, O son of England’s greatest daughter,
A kindly word from heart and tongue bestow;
Then chase the sunsets o’er the western water,
And bear our blessing with you as you go.”

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I need not say that I left the English Cambridge with a heart full of all grateful and kindly emotions.

I must not forget that I found at Cambridge, very pleasantly established and successfully practising his profession, a former student in the dental department of our Harvard Medical School, Dr. George Cunningham, who used to attend my lectures on anatomy. In the garden behind the quaint old house in which he lives is a large medlar-tree,—the first I remember seeing.

On this same day we bade good-by to Cambridge, and took the two o'clock train to Oxford, where we arrived at half past five. At this first visit we were to be the guests of Professor Max Mueller, at his fine residence in Norham Gardens. We met there, at dinner, Mr. Herkomer, whom we have recently had with us in Boston, and one or two others. In the evening we had music; the professor playing on the piano, his two daughters, Mrs. Conybeare and her unmarried sister, singing, and a young lady playing the violin. It was a very lovely family picture; a pretty house, surrounded by attractive scenery; scholarship, refinement, simple elegance, giving distinction to a home which to us seemed a pattern of all we could wish to see beneath an English roof. It all comes back to me very sweetly, but very tenderly and sadly, for the voice of the elder of the two sisters who sang to us is heard no more on earth, and a deep shadow has fallen over the household we found so bright and cheerful.

Everything was done to make me enjoy my visit to Oxford, but I was suffering from a severe cold, and was paying the penalty of too much occupation and excitement. I missed a great deal in consequence, and carried away a less distinct recollection of this magnificent seat of learning than of the sister university.

If one wishes to know the magic of names, let him visit the places made memorable by the lives of the illustrious men of the past in the Old World. As a boy I used to read the poetry of Pope, of Goldsmith, and of Johnson. How could I look at the Bodleian Library, or wander beneath its roof, without recalling the lines from "The Vanity of Human Wishes"?

"When first the college rolls receive his name,
The young enthusiast quits his ease for fame;
Resistless burns the fever of renown,
Caught from the strong contagion of the gown:
O'er Bodley's dome his future labors spread,
And Bacon's mansion trembles o'er his head."

The last line refers to Roger Bacon. "There is a tradition that the study of Friar Bacon, built on an arch over the bridge, will fall when a man greater than Bacon shall pass under it. To prevent so shocking an accident, it was pulled down many years since." We shall meet with a similar legend in another university city. Many persons have been

shy of these localities, who were in no danger whatever of meeting the fate threatened by the prediction.

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We passed through the Bodleian Library, only glancing at a few of its choicest treasures, among which the exquisitely illuminated missals were especially tempting objects of study. It was almost like a mockery to see them opened and closed, without having the time to study their wonderful miniature paintings. A walk through the grounds of Magdalen College, under the guidance of the president of that college, showed us some of the fine trees for which I was always looking. One of these, a wych-elm (Scotch elm of some books), was so large that I insisted on having it measured. A string was procured and carefully carried round the trunk, above the spread of the roots and below that of the branches, so as to give the smallest circumference. I was curious to know how the size of the trunk of this tree would compare with that of the trunks of some of our largest New England elms. I have measured a good many of these. About sixteen feet is the measurement of a large elm, like that on Boston Common, which all middle-aged people remember. From twenty-two to twenty-three feet is the ordinary maximum of the very largest trees. I never found but one exceed it: that was the great Springfield elm, which looked as if it might have been formed by the coalescence from the earliest period of growth, of two young trees. When I measured this in 1837, it was twenty-four feet eight inches in circumference at five feet from the ground; growing larger above and below. I remembered this tree well, as we measured the string which was to tell the size of its English rival. As we came near the end of the string, I felt as I did when I was looking at the last dash of Ormonde and The Bard at Epsom.—Twenty feet, and a long piece of string left.—Twenty-one. —Twenty-two.—Twenty-three.—An extra heartbeat or two.—Twenty-four! —Twenty-five and six inches over!!—The Springfield elm may have grown a foot or more since I measured it, fifty years ago, but the tree at Magdalen stands ahead of all my old measurements. Many of the fine old trees, this in particular, may have been known in their younger days to Addison, whose favorite walk is still pointed out to the visitor.

I would not try to compare the two university towns, as one might who had to choose between them. They have a noble rivalry, each honoring the other, and it would take a great deal of weighing one point of superiority against another to call either of them the first, except in its claim to antiquity.

After a garden-party in the afternoon, a pleasant evening at home, when the professor played and his daughter Beatrice sang, and a garden-party the next day, I found myself in somewhat better condition, and ready for the next move.

[Illustration: Magdalen College, Oxford.]

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At noon on the 23d of June we left for Edinburgh, stopping over night at York, where we found close by the station an excellent hotel, and where the next morning we got one of the best breakfasts we had in our whole travelling experience. At York we wandered to and through a flower-show, and *did* the cathedral, as people *do* all the sights they see under the lead of a paid exhibitor, who goes through his lesson like a sleepy old professor. I missed seeing the slab with the inscription *miserrimus*. There may be other stones bearing this sad superlative, but there is a story connected with this one, which sounds as if it might be true.

In the year 1834, I spent several weeks in Edinburgh. I was fascinated by the singular beauties of that “romantic town,” which Scott called his own, and which holds his memory, with that of Burns, as a most precious part of its inheritance. The castle with the precipitous rocky wall out of which it grows, the deep ravines with their bridges, pleasant Calton Hill and memorable Holyrood Palace, the new town and the old town with their strange contrasts, and Arthur’s Seat overlooking all,—these varied and enchanting objects account for the fondness with which all who have once seen Edinburgh will always regard it.

We were the guests of Professor Alexander Crum Brown, a near relative of the late beloved and admired Dr. John Brown. Professor and Mrs. Crum Brown did everything to make our visit a pleasant one. We met at their house many of the best known and most distinguished people of Scotland. The son of Dr. John Brown dined with us on the day of our arrival, and also a friend of the family, Mr. Barclay, to whom we made a visit on the Sunday following. Among the visits I paid, none was more gratifying to me than one which I made to Dr. John Brown’s sister. No man could leave a sweeter memory than the author of “Rab and his Friends,” of “Pet Marjorie,” and other writings, all full of the same loving, human spirit. I have often exchanged letters with him, and I thought how much it would have added to the enjoyment of my visit if I could have taken his warm hand and listened to his friendly voice. I brought home with me a precious little manuscript, written expressly for me by one who had known Dr. John Brown from the days of her girlhood, in which his character appears in the same lovable and loving light as that which shines in every page he himself has written.

On Friday, the 25th, I went to the hall of the university, where I was to receive the degree of LL.D. The ceremony was not unlike that at Cambridge, but had one peculiar feature: the separate special investment of the candidate with the *hood*, which Johnson defines as “an ornamental fold which hangs down the back of a graduate.” There were great numbers of students present, and they showed the same exuberance of spirits as that which had forced me to withdraw from the urgent calls at Cambridge.

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The cries, if possible, were still louder and more persistent; they must have a speech and they would have a speech, and what could I do about it? I saw but one way of pacifying a crowd as noisy and long-breathed as that which for about the space of two hours cried out, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" So I stepped to the front and made a brief speech, in which, of course, I spoke of the "*perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*." A speech without that would have been like that "Address without a Phoenix" before referred to. My few remarks were well received, and quieted the shouting Ephesians of the warm-brained and warm-hearted northern university. It gave me great pleasure to meet my friend Mr. Underwood, now American consul in Glasgow, where he has made himself highly esteemed and respected.

In my previous visit to Edinburgh in 1834, I was fond of rambling along under Salisbury Crags, and climbing the sides of Arthur's Seat. I had neither time nor impulse for such walks during this visit, but in driving out to dine at Nidrie, the fine old place now lived in by Mr. Barclay and his daughters, we passed under the crags and by the side of the great hill. I had never heard, or if I had I had forgotten, the name and the story of "Samson's Ribs." These are the columnar masses of rock which form the face of Salisbury Crags. There is a legend that one day one of these pillars will fall and crush the greatest man that ever passes under them. It is said that a certain professor was always very shy of "Samson's Ribs," for fear the prophecy might be fulfilled in his person. We were most hospitably received at Mr. Barclay's, and the presence of his accomplished and pleasing daughters made the visit memorable to both of us. There was one picture on their walls, that of a lady, by Sir Joshua, which both of us found very captivating. This is what is often happening in the visits we make. Some painting by a master looks down upon us from its old canvas, and leaves a lasting copy of itself, to be stored in memory's picture gallery. These surprises are not so likely to happen in the New World as in the Old.

It seemed cruel to be forced to tear ourselves away from Edinburgh, where so much had been done to make us happy, where so much was left to see and enjoy, but we were due in Oxford, where I was to receive the last of the three degrees with which I was honored in Great Britain.

Our visit to Scotland gave us a mere glimpse of the land and its people, but I have a very vivid recollection of both as I saw them on my first visit, when I made an excursion into the Highlands to Stirling and to Glasgow, where I went to church, and wondered over the uncouth ancient psalmody, which I believe is still retained in use to this day. I was seasoned to that kind of poetry in my early days by the verses of Tate and Brady, which I used to hear "entuned in the nose ful swetely," accompanied by vigorous rasping of a huge bass-viol. No wonder that Scotland welcomed the song of Burns!

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On our second visit to Oxford we were to be the guests of the Vice-Chancellor of the university, Dr. Jowett. This famous scholar and administrator lives in a very pleasant establishment, presided over by the Muses, but without the aid of a Vice-Chancellor. The hospitality of this classic mansion is well known, and we added a second pleasant chapter to our previous experience under the roof of Professor Max Mueller. There was a little company there before us, including the Lord Chancellor and Lady Herschell, Lady Camilla Wallop, Mr. Browning, and Mr. Lowell. We were too late, in consequence of the bad arrangement of the trains, and had to dine by ourselves, as the whole party had gone out to a dinner, to which we should have accompanied them had we not been delayed. We sat up long enough to see them on their return, and were glad to get to bed, after our day's journey from Edinburgh to Oxford.

At eleven o'clock on the following day we who were to receive degrees met at Balliol College, whence we proceeded in solemn procession to the Sheldonian Theatre. Among my companions on this occasion were Mr. John Bright, the Lord Chancellor Herschell, and Mr. Aldis Wright. I have an instantaneous photograph, which was sent me, of this procession. I can identify Mr. Bright and myself, but hardly any of the others, though many better acquainted with their faces would no doubt recognize them. There is a certain sensation in finding one's self invested with the academic gown, conspicuous by its red facings, and the cap with its square top and depending tassel, which is not without its accompanying satisfaction. One can walk the streets of any of the university towns in his academic robes without being jeered at, as I am afraid he would be in some of our own thoroughfares. There is a noticeable complacency in the members of our Phi Beta Kappa society when they get the pink and blue ribbons in their buttonholes, on the day of annual meeting. How much more when the scholar is wrapped in those flowing folds, with their flaming borders, and feels the dignity of the distinction of which they are the symbol! I do not know how Mr. John Bright felt, but I cannot avoid the impression that some in the ranks which moved from Balliol to the Sheldonian felt as if Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like the candidates for the degree of D.C.L.

After my experience at Cambridge and Edinburgh, I might have felt some apprehension about my reception at Oxford. I had always supposed the audience assembled there at the conferring of degrees was a more demonstrative one than that at any other of the universities, and I did not wish to be forced into a retreat by calls for a speech, as I was at Cambridge, nor to repeat my somewhat irregular proceeding of addressing the audience, as at Edinburgh. But when I found that Mr. John Bright was to be one of the recipients of the degree I felt safe, for if he made a speech I should be justified in saying a few words, if I thought

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it best; and if he, one of the most eloquent men in England, remained silent, I surely need not make myself heard on the occasion. It was a great triumph for him, a liberal leader, to receive the testimonial of a degree from the old conservative university. To myself it was a graceful and pleasing compliment; to him it was a grave and significant tribute. As we marched through the crowd on our way from Balliol, the people standing around recognized Mr. Bright, and cheered him vociferously.

The exercises in the Sheldonian Theatre were more complex and lasted longer than those at the other two universities. The candidate stepped forward and listened to one sentence, then made another move forward and listened to other words, and at last was welcomed to all the privileges conferred by the degree of Doctor of Civil Law, which was announced as being bestowed upon him. Mr. Bright, of course, was received with immense enthusiasm. I had every reason to be gratified with my own reception. The only "chaffing" I heard was the question from one of the galleries, "Did he come in the One-Hoss Shay?"—at which there was a hearty laugh, joined in as heartily by myself. A part of the entertainment at this ceremony consisted in the listening to the reading of short extracts from the prize essays, some or all of them in the dead languages, which could not have been particularly intelligible to a large part of the audience. During these readings there were frequent *interpellations*, as the French call such interruptions, something like these: "That will do, sir!" or "You had better stop, sir!"—always, I noticed, with the sir at the end of the remark. With us it would have been "Dry up!" or "Hold on!" At last came forward the young poet of the occasion, who read an elaborate poem, "Savonarola," which was listened to in most respectful silence, and loudly applauded at its close, as I thought, deservedly. Prince and Princess Christian were among the audience. They were staying with Professor and Mrs. Max Mueller, whose hospitalities I hope they enjoyed as much as we did. One or two short extracts from A——'s diary will enliven my record: "The Princess had a huge bouquet, and going down the aisle had to bow both ways at once, it seemed to me: but then she has the Guelph spine and neck! Of course it is necessary that royalty should have more elasticity in the frame than we poor ordinary mortals. After all this we started for a luncheon at All Souls, but had to wait (impatiently) for H. R. H. to rest herself, while our resting was done standing."

It is a long while since I read Madame d'Arblay's *Recollections*, but if I remember right, *standing* while royalty rests its bones is one of the drawbacks to a maid of honor's felicity.

"Finally, at near three, we went into a great luncheon of some fifty. There were different tables, and I sat at the one with royalty. The Provost of Oriel took me in, and Mr. Browning was on my other side. Finally, we went home to rest, but the others started out again to go to a garden-party, but that was beyond us." After all this came a dinner-party of twenty at the Vice-Chancellor's, and after that a reception, where among others

we met Lord and Lady Coleridge, the lady resplendent in jewels. Even after London, this could hardly be called a day of rest.

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The Chinese have a punishment which consists simply in keeping the subject of it awake, by the constant teasing of a succession of individuals employed for the purpose. The best of our social pleasures, if carried beyond the natural power of physical and mental endurance, begin to approach the character of such a penance. After this we got a little rest; did some mild sight-seeing, heard some good music, called on the Max Muellers, and bade them good-by with the warmest feeling to all the members of a household which it was a privilege to enter. There only remained the parting from our kind entertainer, the Vice-Chancellor, who added another to the list of places which in England and Scotland were made dear to us by hospitality, and are remembered as true homes to us while we were under their roofs.

On the second day of July we left the Vice-Chancellor's, and went to the Randolph Hotel to meet our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Willett, from Brighton, with whom we had an appointment of long standing. With them we left Oxford, to enter on the next stage of our pilgrimage.

IV.

It had been the intention of Mr. Willett to go with us to visit Mr. Ruskin, with whom he is in the most friendly relations. But a letter from Mr. Ruskin's sister spoke of his illness as being too serious for him to see company, and we reluctantly gave up this part of our plan.

My first wish was to revisit Stratford-on-Avon, and as our travelling host was guided in everything by our inclinations, we took the cars for Stratford, where we arrived at five o'clock in the afternoon. It had been arranged beforehand that we should be the guests of Mr. Charles E. Flower, one of the chief citizens of Stratford, who welcomed us to his beautiful mansion in the most cordial way, and made us once more at home under an English roof.

I well remembered my visit to Stratford in 1834. The condition of the old house in which Shakespeare was born was very different from that in which we see it to-day. A series of photographs taken in different years shows its gradual transformation since the time when the old projecting angular sign-board told all who approached "The immortal Shakespeare was born in this House." How near the old house came to sharing the fortunes of Jumbo under the management of our enterprising countryman, Mr. Barnum, I am not sure; but that he would have "traded" for it, if the proprietors had been willing, I do not doubt, any more than I doubt that he would make an offer for the Tower of London, if that venerable structure were in the market. The house in which Shakespeare was born is the Santa Casa of England. What with my recollections and the photographs with which I was familiarly acquainted, it had nothing very new for me. Its outside had undergone great changes, but its bare interior was little altered.

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My previous visit was a hurried one,—I took but a glimpse, and then went on my way. Now, for nearly a week I was a resident of Stratford-on-Avon. How shall I describe the perfectly ideal beauty of the new home in which I found myself! It is a fine house, surrounded by delightful grounds, which skirt the banks of the Avon for a considerable distance, and come close up to the enclosure of the Church of the Holy Trinity, beneath the floor of which lie the mortal remains of Shakespeare. The Avon is one of those narrow English rivers in which half a dozen boats might lie side by side, but hardly wide enough for a race between two rowing abreast of each other. Just here the river is comparatively broad and quiet, there being a dam a little lower down the stream. The waters were a perfect mirror, as I saw them on one of the still days we had at Stratford. I do not remember ever before seeing cows walking with their legs in the air, as I saw them reflected in the Avon. Along the banks the young people were straying. I wondered if the youthful swains quoted Shakespeare to their ladyloves. Could they help recalling Romeo and Juliet? It is quite impossible to think of any human being growing up in this place which claims Shakespeare as its child, about the streets of which he ran as a boy, on the waters of which he must have often floated, without having his image ever present. Is it so? There are some boys, from eight to ten or a dozen years old, fishing in the Avon, close by the grounds of “Avonbank,” the place at which we are staying. I call to the little group. I say, “Boys, who was this man Shakespeare, people talk so much about?” Boys turn round and look up with a plentiful lack of intelligence in their countenances. “Don’t you know who he was nor what he was?” Boys look at each other, but confess ignorance.—Let us try the universal stimulant of human faculties. “Here are some pennies for the boy that will tell me what that Mr. Shakespeare was.” The biggest boy finds his tongue at last. “He was a writer,—he wrote plays.” That was as much as I could get out of the youngling. I remember meeting some boys under the monument upon Bunker Hill, and testing their knowledge as I did that of the Stratford boys. “What is this great stone pillar here for?” I asked. “Battle fought here,—great battle.” “Who fought?” “Americans and British.” (I never hear the expression Britishers.) “Who was the general on the American side?” “Don’ know,—General Washington or somebody.”—What is an old battle, though it may have settled the destinies of a nation, to the game of base-ball between the Boston and Chicago Nines which is to come off to-morrow, or to the game of marbles which Tom and Dick are just going to play together under the shadow of the great obelisk which commemorates the conflict?

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The room more especially assigned to me looked out, at a distance of not more than a stone's-throw, on the northern aspect of the church where Shakespeare lies buried. Workmen were busy on the roof of the transept. I could not conveniently climb up to have a talk with the roofers, but I have my doubts whether they were thinking all the time of the dust over which they were working. How small a matter literature is to the great seething, toiling, struggling, love-making, bread-winning, child-rearing, death-awaiting men and women who fill this huge, palpitating world of ours! It would be worth while to pass a week or a month among the plain, average people of Stratford. What is the relative importance in human well-being of the emendations of the text of Hamlet and the patching of the old trousers and the darning of the old stockings which task the needles of the hard-working households that fight the battle of life in these narrow streets and alleys? I ask the question; the reader may answer it.

Our host, Mr. Flower, is more deeply interested, perhaps, than any other individual in the "Shakespeare Memorial" buildings which have been erected on the banks of the Avon, a short distance above the Church of the Holy Trinity. Under Mr. Flower's guidance we got into one of his boats, and were rowed up the stream to the Memorial edifice. There is a theatre, in a round tower which has borrowed some traits from the octagon "Globe" theatre of Shakespeare's day; a Shakespeare library and portrait gallery are forming; and in due time these buildings, of stately dimensions and built solidly of brick, will constitute a Shakespearean centre which will attract to itself many mementoes now scattered about in various parts of the country.

On the 4th of July we remembered our native land with all the affectionate pride of temporary exiles, and did not forget to drink at lunch to the prosperity and continued happiness of the United States of America. In the afternoon we took to the boat again, and were rowed up the river to the residence of Mr. Edgar Flower, where we found another characteristic English family, with its nine children, one of whom was the typical English boy, most pleasing and attractive in look, voice, and manner.

I attempt no description of the church, the birthplace, or the other constantly visited and often described localities. The noble bridge, built in the reign of Henry VII. by Sir Hugh Clopton, and afterwards widened, excited my admiration. It was a much finer piece of work than the one built long afterwards. I have hardly seen anything which gave me a more striking proof of the thoroughness of the old English workmen. They built not for an age, but for all time, and the New Zealander will have to wait a long while before he will find in any one of the older bridges that broken arch from which he is to survey the ruins of London.

It is very pleasant to pick up a new epithet to apply to the poet upon whose genius our language has nearly exhausted itself. It delights me to speak of him in the words which I have just found in a memoir not yet a century old, as "the Warwickshire bard," "the inestimable Shakespeare."

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Ever since Miss Bacon made her insane attempt to unearth what is left of Shakespeare's bodily frame, the thought of doing reverently and openly what she would have done by stealth has been entertained by psychologists, artists, and others who would like to know what were his cranial developments, and to judge from the conformation of the skull and face which of the various portraits is probably the true one. There is little doubt that but for the curse invoked upon the person who should disturb his bones, in the well-known lines on the slab which covers him, he would rest, like Napoleon, like Washington, in a fitting receptacle of marble or porphyry. In the transfer of his remains the curiosity of men of science and artists would have been gratified, if decay had spared the more durable portions of his material structure. It was probably not against such a transfer that the lines were written,—whoever was their author,—but in the fear that they would be carried to the charnel-house.

“In this charnel-house was contained a vast collection of human bones. How long they had been deposited there is not easily to be determined; but it is evident, from the immense quantity contained in the vault, it could have been used for no other purpose for many ages.” “It is probable that from an early contemplation of this dreary spot Shakespeare imbibed that horror of a violation of sepulture which is observable in many parts of his writings.”

The body of Raphael was disinterred in 1833 to settle a question of identity of the remains, and placed in a new coffin of lead, which was deposited in a marble sarcophagus presented by the Pope. The sarcophagus, with its contents, was replaced in the same spot from which the remains had been taken. But for the inscription such a transfer of the bones of Shakespeare would have been proposed, and possibly carried out. Kings and emperors have frequently been treated in this way after death, and the proposition is no more an indignity than was that of the exhumation of the remains of Napoleon, or of Andre, or of the author of “Home, Sweet Home.” But sentiment, a tender regard for the supposed wishes of the dead poet, and a natural dread of the consequences of violating a dying wish, coupled with the execration of its contemner, are too powerful for the arguments of science and the pleadings of art. If Shakespeare's body had been embalmed,—which there is no reason that I know of to suppose,—the desire to compare his features with the bust and the portraits would have been much more imperative. When the body of Charles the First was examined, under the direction of Sir Henry Hall, in the presence of the Regent, afterwards George the Fourth, the face would have been recognized at once by all who were acquainted with Vandyke's portrait of the monarch, if the lithograph which comes attached to Sir Henry's memoir is an accurate representation of what they found. Even the bony framework of the face, as I have had occasion to know, has sometimes a striking likeness to what it was when clothed in its natural features. As between the first engraved portrait and the bust in the church, the form of the bones of the head and face would probably be decisive. But the world can afford to live without solving this doubt, and leave his perishing vesture of decay to its repose.

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After seeing the Shakespeare shrines, we drove over to Shottery, and visited the Anne Hathaway cottage. I am not sure whether I ever saw it before, but it was as familiar to me as if I had lived in it. The old lady who showed it was agreeably communicative, and in perfect keeping with the place.

A delightful excursion of ten or a dozen miles carried our party, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Flower, Mr. and Mrs. Willett, with A—— and myself, to Compton Wynyate, a most interesting old mansion, belonging to the Marquis of Northampton, who, with his daughter-in-law, Lady William Compton, welcomed us and showed us all the wonders of the place. It was a fine morning, but hot enough for one of our American July days. The drive was through English rural scenery; that is to say, it was lovely. The old house is a great curiosity. It was built in the reign of Henry the Eighth, and has passed through many vicissitudes. The place, as well as the edifice, is a study for the antiquarian. Remains of the old moat which surrounded it are still distinguishable. The twisted and variously figured chimneys are of singular variety and exceptional forms. Compton Wynyate is thought to get its name from the vineyards formerly under cultivation on the hillsides, which show the signs of having been laid out in terraces. The great hall, with its gallery, and its hangings, and the long table made from the trunk of a single tree, carries one back into the past centuries. There are strange nooks and corners and passages in the old building, and one place, a queer little “cubby-hole,” has the appearance of having been a Roman Catholic chapel. I asked the master of the house, who pointed out the curiosities of the place most courteously, about the ghosts who of course were tenants in common with the living proprietors. I was surprised when he told me there were none. It was incredible, for here was every accommodation for a spiritual visitant. I should have expected at least one haunted chamber, to say nothing of blood-stains that could never be got rid of; but there were no legends of the supernatural or the terrible.

Refreshments were served us, among which were some hot-house peaches, ethereally delicate as if they had grown in the Elysian Fields and been stolen from a banquet of angels. After this we went out on the lawn, where, at Lady William Compton’s request, I recited one or two poems; the only time I did such a thing in England.

It seems as if Compton Wynyate must have been written about in some novel or romance,—perhaps in more than one of both. It is the place of all others to be the scene of a romantic story. It lies so hidden away among the hills that its vulgar name, according to old Camden, was “Compton in the Hole.” I am not sure that it was the scene of any actual conflict, but it narrowly escaped demolition in the great civil war, and in 1646 it was garrisoned by the Parliament army.

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On the afternoon of July 6th, our hosts had a large garden-party. If nothing is more trying than one of these out-of-door meetings on a cold, windy, damp day, nothing can be more delightful than such a social gathering if the place and the weather are just what we could wish them. The garden-party of this afternoon was as near perfection as such a meeting could well be. The day was bright and warm, but not uncomfortably hot, to me, at least. The company strolled about the grounds, or rested on the piazzas, or watched the birds in the aviary, or studied rudimentary humanity in the monkey, or, better still, in a charming baby, for the first time on exhibition since she made the acquaintance of sunshine. Every one could dispose of himself or herself as fancy might suggest. I broke away at one time, and wandered alone by the side of the Avon, under the shadow of the tall trees upon its bank. The whole scene was as poetical, as inspiring, as any that I remember. It would be easy to write verses about it, but unwritten poems are so much better!

One reminiscence of that afternoon claims precedence over all the rest. The reader must not forget that I have been a medical practitioner, and for thirty-five years a professor in a medical school. Among the guests whom I met in the grounds was a gentleman of the medical profession, whose name I had often heard, and whom I was very glad to see and talk with. This was Mr. Lawson Tait, F.R.C.S., M.D., of Birmingham. Mr., or more properly Dr., Tait has had the most extraordinary success in a class of cases long considered beyond the reach of surgery. If I refer to it as a scientific *hari kari*, not for the taking but for the saving of life, I shall come near enough to its description. This operation is said to have been first performed by an American surgeon in Danville, Kentucky, in the year 1809. So rash and dangerous did it seem to most of the profession that it was sometimes spoken of as if to attempt it were a crime. Gradually, however, by improved methods, and especially by the most assiduous care in nursing the patient after the operation, the mortality grew less and less, until it was recognized as a legitimate and indeed an invaluable addition to the resources of surgery. Mr. Lawson Tait has had, so far as I have been able to learn, the most wonderful series of successful cases on record: namely, one hundred and thirty-nine consecutive operations without a single death.

As I sat by the side of this great surgeon, a question suggested itself to my mind which I leave the reader to think over. Which would give the most satisfaction to a thoroughly humane and unselfish being, of cultivated intelligence and lively sensibilities: to have written all the plays which Shakespeare has left as an inheritance for mankind, or to have snatched from the jaws of death more than a hundred fellow-creatures,—almost seven scores of suffering women,—and restored them to sound and comfortable existence? It would

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be curious to get the answers of a hundred men and a hundred women, of a hundred young people and a hundred old ones, of a hundred scholars and a hundred operatives. My own specialty is asking questions, not answering them, and I trust I shall not receive a peck or two of letters inquiring of me how I should choose if such a question were asked me. It may prove as fertile a source of dispute as "The Lady or the Tiger."

It would have been a great thing to pass a single night close to the church where Shakespeare's dust lies buried. A single visit by daylight leaves a comparatively slight impression. But when, after a night's sleep, one wakes up and sees the spire and the old walls full before him, that impression is very greatly deepened, and the whole scene becomes far more a reality. Now I was nearly a whole week at Stratford-on-Avon. The church, its exterior, its interior, the birthplace, the river, had time to make themselves permanent images in my mind. To effect this requires a certain amount of exposure, as much as in the case of a photographic negative.

* * * * *

And so we bade good-by to Stratford-on-Avon and its hospitalities, with grateful remembrances of our kind entertainers and all they did for our comfort and enjoyment.

Where should we go next? Our travelling host proposed Great Malvern, a famous watering-place, where we should find peace, rest, and good accommodations. So there we went, and soon found ourselves installed at the "Foley Arms" hotel. The room I was shown to looked out upon an apothecary's shop, and from the window of that shop stared out upon me a plaster bust which I recognized as that of Samuel Hahnemann. I was glad to change to another apartment, but it may be a comfort to some of his American followers to know that traces of homoeopathy,—or what still continues to call itself so,—survive in the Old World, which we have understood was pretty well tired of it.

We spent several days very pleasantly at Great Malvern. It lies at the foot of a range of hills, the loftiest of which is over a thousand feet in height. A—— and I thought we would go to the top of one of these, known as the Beacon. We hired a "four-wheeler," dragged by a much-enduring horse and in charge of a civil young man. We turned out of one of the streets not far from the hotel, and found ourselves facing an ascent which looked like what I should suppose would be a pretty steep toboggan slide. We both drew back. "*Facilis ascensus*," I said to myself, "*sed revocare gradum*." It is easy enough to get up if you are dragged up, but how will it be to come down such a declivity? When we reached it on our return, the semi-precipice had lost all its terrors. We had seen and travelled over so much worse places that this little bit of slanting road seemed as nothing. The road which wound up to the summit of the Beacon was narrow and uneven. It ran close to the edge of the steep hillside,—so

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close that there were times when every one of our forty digits curled up like a bird's claw. If we went over, it would not be a fall down a good honest precipice,—a swish through the air and a smash at the bottom,—but a tumbling, and a rolling over and over, and a bouncing and bumping, ever accelerating, until we bounded into the level below, all ready for the coroner. At one sudden turn of the road the horse's body projected so far over its edge that A—— declared if the beast had been an inch longer he would have toppled over. When we got close to the summit we found the wind blowing almost a gale. A—— says in her diary that I (meaning her honored parent) “nearly blew off from the top of the mountain.” It is true that the force of the wind was something fearful, and seeing that two young men near me were exposed to its fury, I offered an arm to each of them, which they were not too proud to accept; A—— was equally attentive to another young person; and having seen as much of the prospect as we cared to, we were glad to get back to our four-wheeler and our hotel, after a perilous journey almost comparable to Mark Twain's ascent of the Riffelberg.

At Great Malvern we were deliciously idle. We walked about the place, rested quietly, drove into the neighboring country, and made a single excursion,—to Tewkesbury. There are few places better worth seeing than this fine old town, full of historical associations and monumental relics. The magnificent old abbey church is the central object of interest. The noble Norman tower, one hundred and thirty-two feet in height, was once surmounted by a spire, which fell during divine service on Easter Day of the year 1559. The arch of the west entrance is sixteen feet high and thirty-four feet wide. The fourteen columns of the nave are each six feet and three inches in diameter and thirty feet in height. I did not take these measurements from the fabric itself, but from the guidebook, and I give them here instead of saying that the columns were huge, enormous, colossal, as they did most assuredly seem to me. The old houses of Tewkesbury compare well with the finest of those in Chester. I have a photograph before me of one of them, in which each of the three upper floors overhangs the one beneath it, and the windows in the pointed gable above project over those of the fourth floor.

I ought to have visited the site of Holme Castle, the name of which reminds me of my own origin. “The meaning of the Saxon word ‘Holme’ is a meadow surrounded with brooks, and here not only did the castle bear the name, but the meadow is described as the ‘Holme,—where the castle was.’” The final s in the name as we spell it is a frequent addition to old English names, as Camden mentions, giving the name Holmes among the examples. As there is no castle at the Holme now, I need not pursue my inquiries any further. It was by accident that I stumbled on this bit of archaeology, and as I have a good many namesakes, it may perhaps please some of them to be told about it. Few of us hold any castles, I think, in these days, except those *chateaux en Espagne*, of which I doubt not, many of us are lords and masters.

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In another of our excursions we visited a venerable church, where our attention was called to a particular monument. It was erected to the memory of one of the best of husbands by his "wretched widow," who records upon the marble that there never was such a man on the face of the earth before, and never will be again, and that there never was anybody so miserable as she,—no, never, never, never! These are not the exact words, but this is pretty nearly what she declares. The story is that she married again within a year.

From my window at the Foley Arms I can see the tower of the fine old abbey church of Malvern, which would be a centre of pilgrimages if it were in our country. But England is full of such monumental structures, into the history of which the local antiquarians burrow, and pass their peaceful lives in studying and writing about them with the same innocent enthusiasm that White of Selborne manifested in studying nature as his village showed it to him.

In our long drives we have seen everywhere the same picturesque old cottages, with the pretty gardens, and abundant flowers, and noble trees, more frequently elms than any other. One day—it was on the 10th of July—we found ourselves driving through what seemed to be a gentleman's estate, an ample domain, well wooded and well kept. On inquiring to whom this place belonged, I was told that the owner was Sir Edmund Lechmere. The name had a very familiar sound to my ears. Without rising from the table at which I am now writing, I have only to turn my head, and in full view, at the distance of a mile, just across the estuary of the Charles, shining in the morning sun, are the roofs and spires and chimneys of East Cambridge, always known in my younger days as Lechmere's Point. Judge Richard Lechmere was one of our old Cambridge Tories, whose property was confiscated at the time of the Revolution. An engraving of his handsome house, which stands next to the Vassall house, long known as Washington's headquarters, and since not less celebrated as the residence of Longfellow, is before me, on one of the pages of the pleasing little volume, "The Cambridge of 1776." I take it for granted that our Lechmeres were of the same stock as the owner of this property. If so, he probably knows all that I could tell him about his colonial relatives, who were very grand people, belonging to a little aristocratic circle of friends and relatives who were faithful to their king and their church. The Baroness Riedesel, wife of a Hessian officer who had been captured, was for a while resident in this house, and her name, scratched on a window-pane, was long shown as a sight for eyes unused to titles other than governor, judge, colonel, and the like. I was tempted to present myself at Sir Edmund's door as one who knew something about the Lechmeres in America, but I did not feel sure how cordially a descendant of the rebels who drove off Richard and Mary Lechmere would be received.

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From Great Malvern we went to Bath, another place where we could rest and be comfortable. The Grand Pump-Room Hotel was a stately building, and the bath-rooms were far beyond anything I had ever seen of that kind. The remains of the old Roman baths, which appear to have been very extensive, are partially exposed. What surprises one all over the Old World is to see how deeply all the old civilizations contrive to get buried. Everybody seems to have lived in the cellar. It is hard to believe that the cellar floor was once the sun surface of the smiling earth.

I looked forward to seeing Bath with a curious kind of interest. I once knew one of those dear old English ladies whom one finds all the world over, with their prim little ways, and their gilt prayer-books, and lavender-scented handkerchiefs, and family recollections. She gave me the idea that Bath, a city where the great people often congregate, was more especially the paradise of decayed gentlewomen. There, she told me, persons with very narrow incomes—not *demi-fortunes*, but *demi-quart-de-fortunes*—could find everything arranged to accommodate their modest incomes. I saw the evidence of this everywhere. So great was the delight I had in looking in at the shop-windows of the long street which seemed to be one of the chief thoroughfares that, after exploring it in its full extent by myself, I went for A——, and led her down one side its whole length and up the other. In these shops the precious old dears could buy everything they wanted in the most minute quantities. Such tempting heaps of lumps of white sugar, only twopence! Such delectable cakes, two for a penny! Such seductive scraps of meat, which would make a breakfast nourishing as well as relishing, possibly even what called itself a dinner, blushing to see themselves labelled threepence or fourpence! We did not know whether to smile or to drop a tear, as we contemplated these baits hung out to tempt the coins from the exiguous purses of ancient maidens, forlorn widows, withered annuitants, stranded humanity in every stage of shipwrecked penury. I am reminded of Thackeray's "Jack Spiggot." "And what are your pursuits, Jack?" says I. "Sold out when the governor died. Mother lives at Bath. Go down there once a year for a week. Dreadful slow. Shilling whist." Mrs. Gaskell's picture of "Cranford" is said to have been drawn from a village in Cheshire, but Bath must have a great deal in common with its "elegant economies." Do not make the mistake, however, of supposing that this splendid watering-place, sometimes spoken of as "the handsomest city in Britain," is only a city of refuge for people that have seen better days. Lord Macaulay speaks of it as "that beautiful city which charms even eyes familiar with the masterpieces of Bramante and Palladio." If it is not quite so conspicuous as a fashionable resort as it was in the days of Beau Nash or of Christopher Anstey, it has never lost its

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popularity. Chesterfield writes in 1764, "The number of people in this place is infinite," and at the present time the annual influx of visitors is said to vary from ten to fourteen thousand. Many of its public buildings are fine, and the abbey church, dating from 1499, is an object of much curiosity, especially on account of the sculptures on its western facade. These represent two ladders, with angels going up and down upon them,—suggested by a dream of the founder of the church, repeating that of Jacob.

On the 14th of July we left Bath for Salisbury. While passing Westbury, one of our fellow-passengers exclaimed, "Look out! Look out!" "What is it?" "The horse! the horse!" All our heads turned to the window, and all our eyes fastened on the figure of a white horse, upon a hillside some miles distant. This was not the white horse which Mr. Thomas Hughes has made famous, but one of much less archaic aspect and more questionable history. A little book which we bought tells us all we care to know about it. "It is formed by excoiating the turf over the steep slope of the northern escarpment of Salisbury Plain." It was "remodelled" in 1778, and "restored" in 1873 at a cost of between sixty and seventy pounds. It is said that a smaller and ruder horse stood here from time immemorial, and was made to commemorate a victory of Alfred over the Danes. However that may be, the horse we now see on the hillside is a very modern-looking and well-shaped animal, and is of the following dimensions: length, 170 feet; height from highest part of back, 128 feet; thickness of body, 55 feet; length of head, 50 feet; eye, 6 by 8 feet. It is a very pretty little object as we see it in the distance.

Salisbury Cathedral was my first love among all the wonderful ecclesiastical buildings which I saw during my earlier journey. I looked forward to seeing it again with great anticipations of pleasure, which were more than realized.

Our travelling host had taken a whole house in the Close,—a privileged enclosure, containing the cathedral, the bishop's palace, houses of the clergy, and a limited number of private residences, one of the very best of which was given over entirely into the hands of our party during our visit. The house was about as near the cathedral as Mr. Flower's house, where we stayed at Stratford-on-Avon, was to the Church of the Holy Trinity. It was very completely furnished, and in the room assigned to me as my library I found books in various languages, showing that the residence was that of a scholarly person.

If one had to name the apple of the eye of England, I think he would be likely to say that Salisbury Cathedral was as near as he could come to it, and that the white of the eye was Salisbury Close. The cathedral is surrounded by a high wall, the gates of which,—its eyelids,—are closed every night at a seasonable hour, at which the virtuous inhabitants are expected to be in their safe and sacred quarters. Houses

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within this hallowed precinct naturally bring a higher rent than those of the unsanctified and unprotected region outside of its walls. It is a realm of peace, glorified by the divine edifice, which lifts the least imaginative soul upward to the heavens its spire seems trying to reach; beautified by rows of noble elms which stretch high aloft, as if in emulation of the spire; beatified by holy memories of the good and great men who have worn their lives out in the service of the church of which it is one of the noblest temples.

For a whole week we lived under the shadow of the spire of the great cathedral. Our house was opposite the north transept, only separated by the road in front of it from the cathedral grounds. Here, as at Stratford, I learned what it was to awake morning after morning and find that I was not dreaming, but there in the truth-telling daylight the object of my admiration, devotion, almost worship, stood before me. I need not here say anything more of the cathedral, except that its perfect exterior is hardly equalled in beauty by its interior, which looks somewhat bare and cold. It was my impression that there is more to study than to admire in the interior, but I saw the cathedral so much oftener on the outside than on the inside that I may not have done justice to the latter aspect of the noble building.

Nothing could be more restful than our week at Salisbury. There was enough in the old town besides the cathedral to interest us,—old buildings, a museum, full of curious objects, and the old town itself. When I was there the first time, I remember that we picked up a guide-book in which we found a verse that has remained in my memory ever since. It is an epitaph on a native of Salisbury who died in Venice.

“Born in the English Venice, thou didst dye
Dear Friend, in the Italian Salisbury.”

This would be hard to understand except for the explanation which the local antiquarians give us of its significance. The Wiltshire Avon flows by or through the town, which is drained by brooks that run through its streets. These, which used to be open, are now covered over, and thus the epitaph becomes somewhat puzzling, as there is nothing to remind one of Venice in walking about the town.

While at Salisbury we made several excursions: to Old Sarum; to Bemerton, where we saw the residence of holy George Herbert, and visited the little atom of a church in which he ministered; to Clarendon Park; to Wilton, the seat of the Earl of Pembroke, a most interesting place for itself and its recollections; and lastly to Stonehenge. My second visit to the great stones after so long an interval was a strange experience. But what is half a century to a place like Stonehenge? Nothing dwarfs an individual life like one of these massive, almost unchanging monuments of an antiquity which refuses to be measured. The “Shepherd of Salisbury Plain” was represented by an old man, who told all he knew and a good deal more about the great stones, and sheared a living, not

from sheep, but from visitors, in the shape of shillings and sixpences. I saw nothing that wore unwoven wool on its back in the neighborhood of the monuments, but sheep are shown straggling among them in the photographs.



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The broken circle of stones, some in their original position, some bending over like old men, some lying prostrate, suggested the thoughts which took form in the following verses. They were read at the annual meeting, in January, of the class which graduated at Harvard College in the year 1829. Eight of the fifty-nine men who graduated sat round the small table. There were several other classmates living, but infirmity, distance, and other peremptory reasons kept them from being with us. I have read forty poems at our successive annual meetings. I will introduce this last one by quoting a stanza from the poem I read in 1851:—

As one by one is falling
Beneath the leaves or snows,
Each memory still recalling
The broken ring shall close,
Till the night winds softly pass
O'er the green and growing grass,
Where it waves on the graves
Of the "Boys of 'Twenty-nine."

THE BROKEN CIRCLE.

I stood on Sarum's treeless plain,
The waste that careless Nature owns;
Lone tenants of her bleak domain,
Loomed huge and gray the Druid stones.

Upheaved in many a billowy mound
The sea-like, naked turf arose,
Where wandering flocks went nibbling round
The mingled graves of friends and foes.

The Briton, Roman, Saxon, Dane,
This windy desert roamed in turn;
Unmoved these mighty blocks remain
Whose story none that lives may learn.

Erect, half buried, slant or prone,
These awful listeners, blind and dumb,
Hear the strange tongues of tribes unknown,
As wave on wave they go and come.

"Who are you, giants, whence and why?"
I stand and ask in blank amaze;
My soul accepts their mute reply:
"A mystery, as are you that gaze.



"A silent Orpheus wrought the charm
From riven rocks their spoils to bring;
A nameless Titan lent his arm
To range us in our magic ring.

"But Time with still and stealthy stride,
That climbs and treads and levels all,
That bids the loosening keystone slide,
And topples down the crumbling wall,—

"Time, that unbuilds the quarried past,
Leans on these wrecks that press the sod;
They slant, they stoop, they fall at last,
And strew the turf their priests have trod.

"No more our altar's wreath of smoke
Floats up with morning's fragrant dew;
The fires are dead, the ring is broke,
Where stood the many stand the few."

—My thoughts had wandered far away,
Borne off on Memory's outspread wing,
To where in deepening twilight lay
The wrecks of friendship's broken ring.

Ah me! of all our goodly train
How few will find our banquet hall!
Yet why with coward lips complain
That this must lean and that must fall?



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Cold is the Druid's altar-stone,
Its vanished flame no more returns;
But ours no chilling damp has known,—
Unchanged, unchanging, still it burns.

So let our broken circle stand
A wreck, a remnant, yet the same,
While one last, loving, faithful hand
Still lives to feed its altar-flame!

My heart has gone back over the waters to my old friends and my own home. When this vision has faded, I will return to the silence of the lovely Close and the shadow of the great Cathedral.

V.

The remembrance of home, with its early and precious and long-enduring friendships, has intruded itself among my recollections of what I saw and heard, of what I felt and thought, in the distant land I was visiting. I must return to the scene where I found myself when the suggestion of the broken circle ran away with my imagination.

The literature of Stonehenge is extensive, and illustrates the weakness of archaeologists almost as well as the "Praetorium" of Scott's "Antiquary." "In 1823," says a local handbook, "H. Browne, of Amesbury, published 'An Illustration of Stonehenge and Abury,' in which he endeavored to show that both of these monuments were antediluvian, and that the latter was formed under the direction of Adam. He ascribes the present dilapidated condition of Stonehenge to the operation of the general deluge; for, he adds, 'to suppose it to be the work of any people since the flood is entirely monstrous.'"

We know well enough how great stones—pillars and obelisks—are brought into place by means of our modern appliances. But if the great blocks were raised by a mob of naked Picts, or any tribe that knew none of the mechanical powers but the lever, how did they set them up and lay the cross-stones, the imposts, upon the uprights? It is pleasant, once in a while, to think how we should have managed any such matters as this if left to our natural resources. We are all interested in the make-shifts of Robinson Crusoe. Now the rudest tribes make cords of some kind, and the earliest, or almost the earliest, of artificial structures is an earth-mound. If a hundred, or hundreds, of men could drag the huge stones many leagues, as they must have done to bring them to their destined place, they could have drawn each of them up a long slanting mound ending in a sharp declivity, with a hole for the foot of the stone at its base. If the stone were now tipped over, it would slide into its place, and could be easily raised from its slanting position to the perpendicular. Then filling in the space between the mound and

two contiguous stones, the impost could be dragged up to its position. I found a pleasure in working at this simple mechanical problem, as a change from the more imaginative thoughts suggested by the mysterious monuments.

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One incident of our excursion to Stonehenge had a significance for me which renders it memorable in my personal experience. As we drove over the barren plain, one of the party suddenly exclaimed, "Look! Look! See the lark rising!" I looked up with the rest. There was the bright blue sky, but not a speck upon it which my eyes could distinguish. Again, one called out, "Hark! Hark! Hear him singing!" I listened, but not a sound reached my ear. Was it strange that I felt a momentary pang? *Those that look out at the windows are darkened, and all the daughters of music are brought low.* Was I never to see or hear the soaring songster at Heaven's gate,—unless,—unless,—if our mild humanized theology promises truly, I may perhaps hereafter listen to him singing far down beneath me? For in whatever world I may find myself, I hope I shall always love our poor little spheroid, so long my home, which some kind angel may point out to me as a gilded globule swimming in the sunlight far away. After walking the streets of pure gold in the New Jerusalem, might not one like a short vacation, to visit the well-remembered green fields and flowery meadows? I had a very sweet emotion of self-pity, which took the sting out of my painful discovery that the orchestra of my pleasing life-entertainment was unstringing its instruments, and the lights were being extinguished,—that the show was almost over. All this I kept to myself, of course, except so far as I whispered it to the unseen presence which we all feel is in sympathy with us, and which, as it seemed to my fancy, was looking into my eyes, and through them into my soul, with the tender, tearful smile of a mother who for the first time gently presses back the longing lips of her as yet unweaned infant.

On our way back from Stonehenge we stopped and took a cup of tea with a friend of our host, Mr. Nightingale. His house, a bachelor establishment, was very attractive to us by the beauty within and around it. His collection of "china," as Pope and old-fashioned people call all sorts of earthenware, excited the enthusiasm of our host, whose admiration of some rare pieces in the collection was so great that it would have run into envy in a less generous nature.

It is very delightful to find one's self in one of these English country residences. The house is commonly old, and has a history. It is oftentimes itself a record, like that old farmhouse my friend John Bellows wrote to me about, which chronicled half a dozen reigns by various architectural marks as exactly as if it had been an official register. "The stately homes of England," as we see them at Wilton and Longford Castle, are not more admirable in their splendors than "the blessed homes of England" in their modest beauty. Everywhere one may see here old parsonages by the side of ivy-mantled churches, and the comfortable mansions where generations of country squires have lived in peace, while their sons have gone forth to fight England's battles, and carry her flags of war and commerce all over the world. We in America can hardly be said to have such a possession as a family home. We encamp,—not under canvas, but in fabrics of wood or more lasting materials, which are pulled down after a brief occupancy by the builders, and possibly their children, or are modernized so that the former dwellers in them would never recognize their old habitations.



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In my various excursions from Salisbury I was followed everywhere by the all-pervading presence of the towering spire. Just what it was in that earlier visit, when my eyes were undimmed and my sensibilities unworn, just such I found it now. As one drives away from the town, the roofs of the houses drop out of the landscape, the lesser spires disappear one by one, until the great shaft is left standing alone,—solitary as the broken statue of Ozymandias in the desert, as the mast of some mighty ship above the waves which have rolled over the foundering vessel. Most persons will, I think, own to a feeling of awe in looking up at it. Few can look down from a great height without creepings and crispations, if they do not get as far as vertigos and that aerial calenture which prompts them to jump from the pinnacle on which they are standing. It does not take much imagination to make one experience something of the same feeling in looking up at a very tall steeple or chimney. To one whose eyes are used to Park Street and the Old South steeples as standards of height, a spire which climbs four hundred feet towards the sky is a new sensation. Whether I am more “afraid of that which is high” than I was at my first visit, as I should be on the authority of Ecclesiastes, I cannot say, but it was quite enough for me to let my eyes climb the spire, and I had no desire whatever to stand upon that “bad eminence,” as I am sure that I should have found it.

I soon noticed a slight deflection from the perpendicular at the upper part of the spire. This has long been observed. I could not say that I saw the spire quivering in the wind, as I felt that of Strasburg doing when I ascended it,—swaying like a blade of grass when a breath of air passes over it. But it has been, for at least two hundred years, nearly two feet out of the perpendicular. No increase in the deviation was found to exist when it was examined early in the present century. It is a wonder that this slight-looking structure can have survived the blasts, and thunderbolts, and earthquakes, and the weakening effects of time on its stones and timbers for five hundred years. Since the spire of Chichester Cathedral fell in 1861, sheathing itself in its tower like a sword dropping into its scabbard, one can hardly help looking with apprehension at all these lofty fabrics. I have before referred to the fall of the spire of Tewkesbury Abbey church, three centuries earlier. There has been a good deal of fear for the Salisbury spire, and great precautions have been taken to keep it firm, so that we may hope it will stand for another five hundred years. It ought to be a “joy forever,” for it is a thing of beauty, if ever there were one.

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I never felt inclined to play the part of the young enthusiast in “Excelsior,” as I looked up at the weathercock which surmounts the spire. But the man who oils the weathercock-spindle has to get up to it in some way, and that way is by ladders which reach to within thirty feet of the top, where there is a small door, through which he emerges, to crawl up the remaining distance on the outside. “The situation and appearance,” says one of the guide-books, “must be terrific, yet many persons have voluntarily and daringly clambered to the top, even in a state of intoxication.” Such, I feel sure, was not the state of my most valued and exemplary clerical friend, who, with a cool head and steady nerves, found himself standing in safety at the top of the spire, with his hand upon the vane, which nothing terrestrial had ever looked down upon in its lofty position, except a bird, a bat, a sky-rocket, or a balloon.

In saying that the exterior of Salisbury Cathedral is more interesting than its interior, I was perhaps unfair to the latter, which only yields to the surpassing claims of the wonderful structure as seen from the outside. One may get a little tired of marble Crusaders, with their crossed legs and broken noses, especially if, as one sometimes finds them, they are covered with the pencilled autographs of cockney scribblers. But there are monuments in this cathedral which excite curiosity, and others which awaken the most striking associations. There is the “Boy Bishop,” his marble effigy protected from vandalism by an iron cage. There is the skeleton figure representing Fox (who should have been called Goose), the poor creature who starved himself to death in trying to imitate the fast of forty days in the wilderness. Since this performance has been taken out of the list of miracles, it is not so likely to be repeated by fanatics. I confess to a strong suspicion that this is one of the ambulatory or movable stories, like the “hangman’s stone” legend, which I have found in so many different parts of England. Skulls and crossbones, sometimes skeletons or skeleton-like figures, are not uncommon among the sepulchral embellishments of an earlier period. Where one of these figures is found, the forty-day-fast story is likely to grow out of it, as the mistletoe springs from the oak or apple tree.

With far different emotions we look upon the spot where lie buried many of the Herbert family, among the rest,

“Sidney’s sister, Pembroke’s mother,”

for whom Ben Jonson wrote the celebrated epitaph. I am almost afraid to say it, but I never could admire the line,

“Lies the subject of all verse,”

nor the idea of Time dropping his hour-glass and scythe to throw a dart at the fleshless figure of Death. This last image seems to me about the equivalent in mortuary poetry of Roubiliac’s monument to Mrs. Nightingale in mortuary sculpture,—poor conceits both of them, without the suggestion of a tear in the verses or in the marble; but the rhetorical

exaggeration does not prevent us from feeling that we are standing by the resting-place of one who was

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“learn’d and fair and good”

enough to stir the soul of stalwart Ben Jonson, and the names of Sidney and Herbert make us forget the strange hyperboles.

History meets us everywhere, as we stray among these ancient monuments. Under that effigy lie the great bones of Sir John Cheyne, a mighty man of war, said to have been “overthrown” by Richard the Third at the battle of Bosworth Field. What was left of him was unearthed in 1789 in the demolition of the Beauchamp chapel, and his thigh-bone was found to be four inches longer than that of a man of common stature.

The reader may remember how my recollections started from their hiding-place when I came, in one of our excursions, upon the name of Lechmere, as belonging to the owner of a fine estate by or through which we were driving. I had a similar twinge of reminiscence at meeting with the name of Gorges, which is perpetuated by a stately monument at the end of the north aisle of the cathedral. Sir Thomas Gorges, Knight of Longford Castle, may or may not have been of the same family as the well-remembered grandiose personage of the New England Pilgrim period. The title this gentleman bore had a far more magnificent sound than those of his contemporaries, Governor Carver and Elder Brewster. No title ever borne among us has filled the mouth quite so full as that of “Sir Ferdinando Gorges, Lord Palatine of the Province of Maine,” a province with “Gorgeana” (late the plantation of Agamenticus) as its capital. Everywhere in England a New Englander is constantly meeting with names of families and places which remind him that he comes of a graft from an old tree on a new stock. I could not keep down the associations called up by the name of Gorges. There is a certain pleasure in now and then sprinkling our prosaic colonial history with the holy water of a high-sounding title; not that a “Sir” before a man’s name makes him any better,—for are we not all equal, and more than equal, to each other?—but it sounds pleasantly. Sir Harry Vane and Sir Harry Frankland look prettily on the printed page, as the illuminated capital at the head of a chapter in an old folio pleases the eye of the reader. Sir Thomas Gorges was the builder of Longford Castle, now the seat of the Earl of Radnor, whose family name is Bouverie. Whether our Sir Ferdinando was of the Longford Castle stock or not I must leave to my associates of the Massachusetts Historical Society to determine.

We lived very quietly at our temporary home in Salisbury Close. A pleasant dinner with the Dean, a stroll through the grounds of the episcopal palace, with that perpetual feast of the eyes which the cathedral offered us, made our residence delightful at the time, and keeps it so in remembrance. Besides the cathedral there were the very lovely cloisters, the noble chapter-house with its central pillar,—this structure has been restored and rejuvenated since my earlier visit,—and there were the peaceful dwellings,

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where I insist on believing that only virtue and happiness are ever tenants. Even outside the sacred enclosure there is a great deal to enjoy, in the ancient town of Salisbury. One may rest under the Poultry Cross, where twenty or thirty generations have rested before him. One may purchase his china at the well-furnished establishment of the tenant of a spacious apartment of ancient date,—“the Halle of John Halle,” a fine private edifice built in the year 1470, restored and beautified in 1834; the emblazonment of the royal arms having been executed by the celebrated architectural artist Pugin. The old houses are numerous, and some of them eminently picturesque.

Salisbury was formerly very unhealthy, on account of the low, swampy nature of its grounds. The Sanitary Reform, dating from about thirty years ago, had a great effect on the condition of the place. Before the drainage the annual mortality was twenty-seven in the thousand; since the drainage twenty in the thousand, which is below that of Boston. In the Close, which is a little Garden of Eden, with no serpent in it that I could hear of, the deaths were only fourteen in a thousand. Happy little enclosure, where thieves cannot break through and steal, where Death himself hesitates to enter, and makes a visit only now and then at long intervals, lest the fortunate inhabitants should think they had already reached the Celestial City!

[Illustration: Salisbury Cathedral.]

It must have been a pretty bitter quarrel that drove the tenants of the airy height of Old Sarum to remove to the marshy level of the present site of the cathedral and the town. I wish we could have given more time to the ancient fortress and cathedral town. This is one of the most interesting historic localities of Great Britain. We looked from different points of view at the mounds and trenches which marked it as a strongly fortified position. For many centuries it played an important part in the history of England. At length, however, the jealousies of the laity and the clergy, a squabble like that of “town and gown,” but with graver underlying causes, broke up the harmony and practically ended the existence of the place except as a monument of the past. It seems a pity that the headquarters of the Prince of Peace could not have managed to maintain tranquillity within its own borders. But so it was; and the consequence followed that Old Sarum, with all its grand recollections, is but a collection of mounds and hollows,—as much a tomb of its past as Birs Nimroud of that great city, Nineveh. Old Sarum is now best remembered by its long-surviving privilege, as a borough, of sending two members to Parliament. The farcical ceremony of electing two representatives who had no real constituency behind them was put an end to by the Reform Act of 1832.

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Wilton, the seat of the Earl of Pembroke, within an easy drive's distance from Salisbury, was the first nobleman's residence I saw in my early visit. Not a great deal of what I then saw had survived in my memory. I recall the general effect of the stately mansion and its grounds. A picture or two of Vandyke's had not quite faded out of my recollection. I could not forget the armor of Anne de Montmorenci,—not another Maid of Orleans, but Constable of France,—said to have been taken in battle by an ancestor of the Herberts. It was one of the first things that made me feel I was in the Old World. Miles Standish's sword was as far back as New England collections of armor carried us at that day. The remarkable gallery of ancient sculptures impressed me at the time, but no one bust or statue survived as a distinct image. Even the beautiful Palladian bridge had not pictured itself on my mental tablet as it should have done, and I could not have taken my oath that I had seen it. But the pretty English maidens whom we met on the day of our visit to Wilton,—daughters or granddaughters of a famous inventor and engineer,—still lingered as vague and pleasing visions, so lovely had they seemed among the daisies and primroses. The primroses and daisies were as fresh in the spring of 1886 as they were in the spring of 1833, but I hardly dared to ask after the blooming maidens of that early period.

One memory predominates over all others, in walking through the halls, or still more in wandering through the grounds, of Wilton House. Here Sir Philip Sidney wrote his "Arcadia," and the ever youthful presence of the man himself rather than the recollection of his writings takes possession of us. There are three young men in history whose names always present themselves to me in a special companionship: Pico della Mirandola, "the Phoenix of the Age" for his contemporaries; "the Admirable Crichton," accepting as true the accounts which have come down to us of his wonderful accomplishments; and Sidney, the Bayard of England, "that glorious star, that lively pattern of virtue and the lovely joy of all the learned sort, ... born into the world to show unto our age a sample of ancient virtue." The English paragon of excellence was but thirty-two years old when he was slain at Zutphen, the Italian Phoenix but thirty-one when he was carried off by a fever, and the Scotch prodigy of gifts and attainments was only twenty-two when he was assassinated by his worthless pupil. Sir Philip Sidney is better remembered by the draught of water he gave the dying soldier than by all the waters he ever drew from the fountain of the Muses, considerable as are the merits of his prose and verse. But here, where he came to cool his fiery spirit after the bitter insult he had received from the Earl of Leicester; here, where he mused and wrote, and shaped his lofty plans for a glorious future, he lives once more in our imagination, as if his spirit haunted the English Arcadia he loved so dearly.

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The name of Herbert, which we have met with in the cathedral, and which belongs to the Earls of Pembroke, presents itself to us once more in a very different and very beautiful aspect. Between Salisbury and Wilton, three miles and a half distant, is the little village of Bemerton, where “holy George Herbert” lived and died, and where he lies buried. Many Americans who know little else of him recall the lines borrowed from him by Irving in the “Sketch-Book” and by Emerson in “Nature.” The “Sketch-Book” gives the lines thus:—

“Sweet day, so pure, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky.”

In other versions the fourth word is *cool* instead of *pure*, and *cool* is, I believe, the correct reading. The day when we visited Bemerton was, according to A——’s diary, “perfect.” I was struck with the calm beauty of the scene around us, the fresh greenness of all growing things, and the stillness of the river which mirrored the heavens above it. It must have been this reflection which the poet was thinking of when he spoke of the bridal of the earth and sky. The river is the Wiltshire Avon; not Shakespeare’s Avon, but the southern stream of the same name, which empties into the British Channel.

So much of George Herbert’s intellectual and moral character repeat themselves in Emerson that if I believed in metempsychosis I should think that the English saint had reappeared in the American philosopher. Their features have a certain resemblance, but the type, though an exceptional and fine one, is not so very rare. I found a portrait in the National Gallery which was a good specimen of it; the bust of a near friend of his, more intimate with him than almost any other person, is often taken for that of Emerson. I see something of it in the portrait of Sir Philip Sidney, and I doubt not that traces of a similar mental resemblance ran through the whole group, with individual characteristics which were in some respects quite different. I will take a single verse of Herbert’s from Emerson’s “Nature,”—one of the five which he quotes:—

“Nothing hath got so far
But man hath caught and kept it as his prey;
His eyes dismount the highest star:
He is in little all the sphere.
Herbs gladly cure our flesh because that they
Find their acquaintance there.”

Emerson himself fully recognizes his obligations to “the beautiful psalmist of the seventeenth century,” as he calls George Herbert. There are many passages in his writings which sound as if they were paraphrases from the elder poet. From him it is that Emerson gets a word he is fond of, and of which his imitators are too fond:—

“Who sweeps a room as for thy laws
Makes that and the action *fine*.”

The little chapel in which Herbert officiated is perhaps half as long again as the room in which I am writing, but it is four or five feet narrower,—and I do not live in a palace. Here this humble servant of God preached and prayed, and here by his faithful and loving service he so endeared himself to all around him that he has been canonized by an epithet no other saint of the English Church has had bestowed upon him. His life as pictured by Izaak Walton is, to borrow one of his own lines,

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“A box where sweets compacted lie;”

and I felt, as I left his little chapel and the parsonage which he rebuilt as a free-will offering, as a pilgrim might feel who had just left the holy places at Jerusalem.

Among the places which I saw in my first visit was Longford Castle, the seat of the Earl of Radnor. I remembered the curious triangular building, constructed with reference to the doctrine of the Trinity, as churches are built in the form of the cross. I remembered how the omnipresent spire of the great cathedral, three miles away, looked down upon the grounds about the building as if it had been their next-door neighbor. I had not forgotten the two celebrated Claudes, Morning and Evening. My eyes were drawn to the first of these two pictures when I was here before; now they turned naturally to the landscape with the setting sun. I have read my St. Ruskin with due reverence, but I have never given up my allegiance to Claude Lorraine. But of all the fine paintings at Longford Castle, no one so much impressed me at my recent visit as the portrait of Erasmus by Hans Holbein. This is one of those pictures which help to make the Old World worth a voyage across the Atlantic. Portraits of Erasmus are not uncommon; every scholar would know him if he met him in the other world with the look he wore on earth. All the etchings and their copies give a characteristic presentation of the spiritual precursor of Luther, who pricked the false image with his rapier which the sturdy monk slashed with his broadsword. What a face it is which Hans Holbein has handed down to us in this wonderful portrait at Longford Castle! How dry it is with scholastic labor, how keen with shrewd scepticism, how worldly-wise, how conscious of its owner's wide-awake sagacity! Erasmus and Rabelais,—Nature used up all her arrows for their quivers, and had to wait a hundred years and more before she could find shafts enough for the outfit of Voltaire, leaner and keener than Erasmus, and almost as free in his language as the audacious creator of Gargantua and Pantagruel.

I have not generally given descriptions of the curious objects which I saw in the great houses and museums which I visited. There is, however, a work of art at Longford Castle so remarkable that I must speak of it. I was so much struck by the enormous amount of skilful ingenuity and exquisite workmanship bestowed upon it that I looked up its history, which I found in the “Beauties of England and Wales.” This is what is there said of the wonderful steel chair: “It was made by Thomas Rukers at the city of Augsburgh, in the year 1575, and consists of more than 130 compartments, all occupied by groups of figures representing a succession of events in the annals of the Roman Empire, from the landing of Aeneas to the reign of Rodolphus the Second.” It looks as if a life had gone into the making of it, as a pair or two of eyes go to the working of the bridal veil of an empress.

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Fifty years ago and more, when I was at Longford Castle with my two companions, who are no more with us, we found there a pleasant, motherly old housekeeper, or attendant of some kind, who gave us a draught of home-made ale and left a cheerful remembrance with us, as, I need hardly say, we did with her, in a materialized expression of our good-will. It always rubbed very hard on my feelings to offer money to any persons who had served me well, as if they were doing it for their own pleasure. It may have been the granddaughter of the kindly old matron of the year 1833 who showed us round, and possibly, if I had sunk a shaft of inquiry, I might have struck a well of sentiment. But

“Take, O boatman, thrice thy fee,”

carried into practical life, is certain in its financial result to the subject of the emotional impulse, but is less sure to call forth a tender feeling in the recipient. One will hardly find it worth while to go through the world weeping over his old recollections, and paying gold instead of silver and silver instead of copper to astonished boatmen and bewildered chambermaids.

On Sunday, the 18th of July, we attended morning service at the cathedral. The congregation was not proportioned to the size of the great edifice. These vast places of worship were built for ages when faith was the rule and questioning the exception. I will not say that faith has grown cold, but it has cooled from white heat to cherry red or a still less flaming color. As to church attendance, I have heard the saying attributed to a great statesman, that “once a day is Orthodox, but twice a day is Puritan.” No doubt many of the same class of people that used to fill the churches stay at home and read about evolution or telepathy, or whatever new gospel they may have got hold of. Still the English seem to me a religious people; they have leisure enough to say grace and give thanks before and after meals, and their institutions tend to keep alive the feelings of reverence which cannot be said to be distinctive of our own people.

In coming out of the cathedral, on the Sunday I just mentioned, a gentleman addressed me as a fellow-countryman. There is something,—I will not stop now to try and define it,—but there is something by which we recognize an American among the English before he speaks and betrays his origin. Our new friend proved to be the president of one of our American colleges; an intelligent and well-instructed gentleman, of course. By the invitation of our host he came in to visit us in the evening, and made himself very welcome by his agreeable conversation.

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I took great delight in wandering about the old town of Salisbury. There are no such surprises in our oldest places as one finds in Chester, or Tewkesbury, or Stratford, or Salisbury, and I have no doubt in scores or hundreds of similar places which I have never visited. The best substitute for such rambles as one can take through these mouldy boroughs (or burrows) is to be found in such towns as Salem, Newburyport, Portsmouth. Without imagination, Shakespeare's birthplace is but a queer old house, and Anne Hathaway's home a tumble-down cottage. With it, one can see the witches of Salem Village sailing out of those little square windows, which look as if they were made on purpose for them, or stroll down to Derby's wharf and gaze at "Cleopatra's Barge," precursor of the yachts of the Astors and Goulds and Vanderbilts, as she comes swimming into the harbor in all her gilded glory. But it must make a difference what the imagination has to work upon, and I do not at all wonder that Mr. Ruskin would not wish to live in a land where there are no old ruins of castles and monasteries. Man will not live on bread only; he wants a great deal more, if he can get it,—frosted cake as well as corn-bread; and the New World keeps the imagination on plain and scanty diet, compared to the rich traditional and historic food which furnishes the banquets of the Old World.

What memories that week in Salisbury and the excursions from it have left in my mind's picture gallery! The spire of the great cathedral had been with me as a frequent presence during the last fifty years of my life, and this second visit has deepened every line of the impression, as Old Mortality refreshed the inscriptions on the tombstones of the Covenanters. I find that all these pictures which I have brought home with me to look at, with

"that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude,"

are becoming clearer and brighter as the excitement of overcrowded days and weeks gradually calms down. I can *be* in those places where I passed days and nights, and became habituated to the sight of the cathedral, or of the Church of the Holy Trinity, at morning, at noon, at evening, whenever I turned my eyes in its direction. I often close my eyelids, and startle my household by saying, "Now I am in Salisbury," or "Now I am in Stratford." It is a blessed thing to be able, in the twilight of years, to illuminate the soul with such visions. The Charles, which flows beneath my windows, which I look upon between the words of the sentence I am now writing, only turning my head as I sit at my table,—the Charles is hardly more real to me than Shakespeare's Avon, since I floated on its still waters, or strayed along its banks and saw the cows reflected in the smooth expanse, their legs upward, as if they were walking the skies as the flies walk the ceiling. Salisbury Cathedral stands as substantial in my thought as our own King's Chapel, since I slumbered by its side, and arose in the morning to find it still there, and not one of those unsubstantial fabrics built by the architect of dreams.

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On Thursday, the 22d of July, we left Salisbury for Brighton, where we were to be guests at Arnold House, the residence of our kind host. Here we passed another delightful week, with everything around us to contribute to our quiet comfort and happiness. The most thoughtful of entertainers, a house filled with choice works of art, fine paintings, and wonderful pottery, pleasant walks and drives, a visitor now and then, Mr. and Mrs. Goldwin Smith among the number, rest and peace in a magnificent city built for enjoyment,—what more could we have asked to make our visit memorable? Many watering-places look forlorn and desolate in the intervals of “the season.” This was not the time of Brighton’s influx of visitors, but the city was far from dull. The houses are very large, and have the grand air, as if meant for princes; the shops are well supplied; the salt breeze comes in fresh and wholesome, and the noble esplanade is lively with promenaders and Bath chairs, some of them occupied by people evidently ill or presumably lame, some, I suspect, employed by healthy invalids who are too lazy to walk. I took one myself, drawn by an old man, to see how I liked it, and found it very convenient, but I was tempted to ask him to change places and let me drag him.

With the aid of the guide-book I could describe the wonders of the pavilion and the various changes which have come over the great watering-place. The grand walks, the two piers, the aquarium, and all the great sights which are shown to strangers deserve full attention from the tourist who writes for other travellers, but none of these things seem to me so interesting as what we saw and heard in a little hamlet which has never, so far as I know, been vulgarized by sightseers. We drove in an open carriage,—Mr. and Mrs. Willett, A——, and myself,—into the country, which soon became bare, sparsely settled, a long succession of rounded hills and hollows. These are the South Downs, from which comes the famous mutton known all over England, not unknown at the table of our Saturday Club and other well-spread boards. After a drive of ten miles or more we arrived at a little “settlement,” as we Americans would call it, and drove up to the door of a modest parsonage, where dwells the shepherd of the South Down flock of Christian worshippers. I hope that the good clergyman, if he ever happens to see what I am writing, will pardon me for making mention of his hidden retreat, which he himself speaks of as “one of the remoter nooks of the old country.” Nothing I saw in England brought to my mind Goldsmith’s picture of “the man to all the country dear,” and his surroundings, like this visit. The church dates, if I remember right, from the thirteenth century. Some of its stones show marks, as it is thought, of having belonged to a Saxon edifice. The massive leaden font is of a very great antiquity. In the wall of the church is a narrow opening, at which the priest is supposed to have sat and listened to the confession of the sinner on the outside of the building. The dead lie all around the church, under stones bearing the dates of several centuries. One epitaph, which the unlettered Muse must have dictated, is worth recording. After giving the chief slumberer’s name the epitaph adds,—

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"Here lies on either side, the remains of each of his former wives."

Those of a third have found a resting-place close by, behind him.

It seemed to me that Mr. Bunner's young man in search of Arcady might look for it here with as good a chance of being satisfied as anywhere I can think of. But I suppose that men and women and especially boys, would prove to be a good deal like the rest of the world, if one lived here long enough to learn all about them. One thing I can safely say, —an English man or boy never goes anywhere without his fists. I saw a boy of ten or twelve years, whose pleasant face attracted my attention. I said to the rector, "That is a fine-looking little fellow, and I should think an intelligent and amiable kind of boy." "Yes," he said, "yes; he can strike from the shoulder pretty well, too. I had to stop him the other day, indulging in that exercise." Well, I said to myself, we have not yet reached the heaven on earth which I was fancying might be embosomed in this peaceful-looking hollow. Youthful angels can hardly be in the habit of striking from the shoulder. But the well-known phrase, belonging to the pugilist rather than to the priest, brought me back from the ideal world into which my imagination had wandered.

Our week at Brighton was passed in a very quiet but most enjoyable way. It could not be otherwise with such a host and hostess, always arranging everything with reference to our well-being and in accordance with our wishes. I became very fond of the esplanade, such a public walk as I never saw anything to compare with. In these tranquil days, and long, honest nights of sleep, the fatigues of what we had been through were forgotten, the scales showed that we were becoming less ethereal every day, and we were ready for another move.

We bade good-by to our hosts with the most grateful and the warmest feeling towards them, after a month of delightful companionship and the experience of a hospitality almost too generous to accept, but which they were pleased to look upon as if we were doing them a favor.

On the 29th of July we found ourselves once more in London.

VI.

We found our old quarters all ready and awaiting us. Mrs. Mackellar's motherly smile, Sam's civil bow, and the rosy cheeks of many-buttoned Robert made us feel at home as soon as we crossed the threshold.

The dissolution of Parliament had brought "the season" abruptly to an end. London was empty. There were three or four millions of people in it, but the great houses were for the most part left without occupants except their liveried guardians. We kept as quiet as possible, to avoid all engagements. For now we were in London for London itself, to do

shopping, to see sights, to be our own master and mistress, and to live as independent a life as we possibly could.

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The first thing we did on the day of our arrival was to take a hansom and drive over to Chelsea, to look at the place where Carlyle passed the larger part of his life. The whole region about him must have been greatly changed during his residence there, for the Thames Embankment was constructed long after he removed to Chelsea. We had some little difficulty in finding the place we were in search of. Cheyne (pronounced "Chainie") Walk is a somewhat extended range of buildings. Cheyne Row is a passage which reminded me a little of my old habitat, Montgomery Place, now Bosworth Street. Presently our attention was drawn to a marble medallion portrait on the corner building of an ordinary-looking row of houses. This was the head of Carlyle, and an inscription informed us that he lived for forty-seven years in the house No. 24 of this row of buildings. Since Carlyle's home life has been made public, he has appeared to us in a different aspect from the ideal one which he had before occupied. He did not show to as much advantage under the Boswellizing process as the dogmatist of the last century, dear old Dr. Johnson. But he remains not the less one of the really interesting men of his generation, a man about whom we wish to know all that we have a right to know.

The sight of an old nest over which two or three winters have passed is a rather saddening one. The dingy three-story brick house in which Carlyle lived, one in a block of similar houses, was far from attractive. It was untenanted, neglected; its windows were unwashed, a pane of glass was broken; its threshold appeared untrodden, its whole aspect forlorn and desolate. Yet there it stood before me, all covered with its associations as an ivy-clad tower with its foliage. I wanted to see its interior, but it looked as if it did not expect a tenant and would not welcome a visitor. Was there nothing but this forbidding house-front to make the place alive with some breathing memory? I saw crossing the street a middle-aged woman,—a decent body, who looked as if she might have come from the lower level of some not opulent but respectable household. She might have some recollection of an old man who was once her neighbor. I asked her if she remembered Mr. Carlyle. Indeed she did, she told us. She used to see him often, in front of his house, putting bits of bread on the railing for the birds. He did not like to see anything wasted, she said. The merest scrap of information, but genuine and pleasing; an instantaneous photograph only, but it makes a pretty vignette in the volume of my reminiscences. There are many considerable men in every generation of mankind, but not a great number who are personally interesting,—not a great many of whom we feel that we cannot know too much; whose foibles, even, we care to know about; whose shortcomings we try to excuse; who are not models, but whose special traits make them attractive. Carlyle is one of these few, and no revelations can

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prevent his interesting us. He was not quite finished in his parental existence. The bricklayer's mortar of his father's calling stuck to his fingers through life, but only as the soil he turned with his ploughshare clung to the fingers of Burns. We do not wish either to have been other than what he was. Their breeding brings them to the average level, carries them more nearly to the heart, makes them a simpler expression of our common humanity. As we rolled in the cars by Ecclefechan, I strained my eyes to take in every point of the landscape, every cottage, every spire, if by any chance I could find one in that lonely region. There was not a bridge nor a bit of masonry of any kind that I did not eagerly scrutinize, to see if it were solid and honest enough to have been built by Carlyle's father. Solitary enough the country looked. I admired Mr. Emerson's devotion in seeking his friend in his bare home among what he describes as the "desolate heathery hills" about Craigenputtock, which were, I suppose, much like the region through which we were passing.

It is one of the regrets of my life that I never saw or heard Carlyle. Nature, who seems to be fond of trios, has given us three dogmatists, all of whom greatly interested their own generation, and whose personality, especially in the case of the first and the last of the trio, still interests us,—Johnson, Coleridge, and Carlyle. Each was an oracle in his way, but unfortunately oracles are fallible to their descendants. The author of "Taxation no Tyranny" had wholesale opinions, and pretty harsh ones, about us Americans, and did not soften them in expression: "Sir, they are a race of convicts, and ought to be thankful for anything we allow them short of hanging." We smile complacently when we read this outburst, which Mr. Croker calls in question, but which agrees with his saying in the presence of Miss Seward, "I am willing to love all mankind *except an American*."

A generation or two later comes along Coleridge, with his circle of reverential listeners. He says of Johnson that his fame rests principally upon Boswell, and that "his *bow-wow* manner must have had a good deal to do with the effect produced." As to Coleridge himself, his contemporaries hardly know how to set bounds to their exaltation of his genius. Dibdin comes pretty near going into rhetorical hysterics in reporting a conversation of Coleridge's to which he listened: "The auditors seemed to be wrapt in wonder and delight, as one observation more profound, or clothed in more forcible language, than another fell from his tongue.... As I retired homeward I thought a SECOND JOHNSON had visited the earth to make wise the sons of men." And De Quincey speaks of him as "the largest and most spacious intellect, the subtlest and most comprehensive, in my judgment, that has yet existed amongst men." One is sometimes tempted to wish that the superlative could be abolished, or its use allowed only to old experts. What are men to do when they get to heaven, after having exhausted their vocabulary of admiration on earth?

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Now let us come down to Carlyle, and see what he says of Coleridge. We need not take those conversational utterances which called down the wrath of Mr. Swinburne, and found expression in an epigram which violates all the proprieties of literary language. Look at the full-length portrait in the Life of Sterling. Each oracle denies his predecessor, each magician breaks the wand of the one who went before him. There were Americans enough ready to swear by Carlyle until he broke his staff in meddling with our anti-slavery conflict, and buried it so many fathoms deep that it could never be fished out again. It is rather singular that Johnson and Carlyle should each of them have shipwrecked his sagacity and shown a terrible leak in his moral sensibilities on coming in contact with American rocks and currents, with which neither had any special occasion to concern himself, and which both had a great deal better have steered clear of.

But here I stand once more before the home of the long-suffering, much-laboring, loud-complaining Heraclitus of his time, whose very smile had a grimness in it more ominous than his scowl. Poor man! Dyspeptic on a diet of oatmeal porridge; kept wide awake by crowing cocks; drummed out of his wits by long-continued piano-pounding; sharp of speech, I fear, to his high-strung wife, who gave him back as good as she got! I hope I am mistaken about their everyday relations, but again I say, poor man!—for all his complaining must have meant real discomfort, which a man of genius feels not less, certainly, than a common mortal.

I made a second visit to the place where he lived, but I saw nothing more than at the first. I wanted to cross the threshold over which he walked so often, to see the noise-proof room in which he used to write, to look at the chimney-place down which the soot came, to sit where he used to sit and smoke his pipe, and to conjure up his wraith to look in once more upon his old deserted dwelling. That vision was denied me.

After visiting Chelsea we drove round through Regent's Park. I suppose that if we use the superlative in speaking of Hyde Park, Regent's Park will be the comparative, and Battersea Park the positive, ranking them in the descending grades of their hierarchy. But this is my conjecture only, and the social geography of London is a subject which only one who has become familiarly acquainted with the place should speak of with any confidence. A stranger coming to our city might think it made little difference whether his travelling Boston acquaintance lived in Alpha Avenue or in Omega Square, but he would have to learn that it is farther from one of these places to the other, a great deal farther, than it is from Beacon Street, Boston, to Fifth Avenue, New York.

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An American finds it a little galling to be told that he must not drive in his *numbered* hansom or four-wheeler except in certain portions of Hyde Park. If he is rich enough to keep his own carriage, or if he will pay the extra price of a vehicle not vulgarized by being on the numbered list, he may drive anywhere that his Grace or his Lordship does, and perhaps have a mean sense of satisfaction at finding himself in the charmed circle of exclusive "gigmanity." It is a pleasure to meet none but well-dressed and well-mannered people, in well-appointed equipages. In the high road of our own country, one is liable to fall in with people and conveyances that it is far from a pleasure to meet. I was once driving in an open carriage, with members of my family, towards my own house in the country town where I was then living. A cart drawn by oxen was in the road in front of us. Whenever we tried to pass, the men in it turned obliquely across the road and prevented us, and this was repeated again and again. I could have wished I had been driving in Hyde Park, where clowns and boors, with their carts and oxen, do not find admittance. Exclusiveness has its conveniences.

The next day, as I was strolling through Burlington Arcade, I saw a figure just before me which I recognized as that of my townsman, Mr. Abbott Lawrence. He was accompanied by his son, who had just returned from a trip round the planet. There are three grades of recognition, entirely distinct from each other: the meeting of two persons of different countries who speak the same language,—an American and an Englishman, for instance; the meeting of two Americans from different cities, as of a Bostonian and a New Yorker or a Chicagonian; and the meeting of two from the same city, as of two Bostonians.

The difference of these recognitions may be illustrated by supposing certain travelling philosophical instruments, endowed with intelligence and the power of speech, to come together in their wanderings,—let us say in a restaurant of the Palais Royal. "Very hot," says the talking Fahrenheit (Thermometer) from Boston, and calls for an ice, which he plunges his bulb into and cools down. In comes an intelligent and socially disposed English Barometer. The two travellers greet each other, not exactly as old acquaintances, but each has heard very frequently about the other, and their relatives have been often associated. "We have a good deal in common," says the Barometer. "Of the same blood, as we may say; quicksilver is thicker than water." "Yes," says the little Fahrenheit, "and we are both of the same mercurial temperament." While their columns are dancing up and down with laughter at this somewhat tepid and low-pressure pleasantries, there come in a New York Reaumur and a Centigrade from Chicago. The Fahrenheit, which has got warmed up to *temperate*, rises to *summer heat*, and even a little above it. They enjoy each other's company mightily. To be sure, their scales differ,

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but have they not the same freezing and the same boiling point? To be sure, each thinks his own scale is the true standard, and at home they might get into a contest about the matter, but here in a strange land they do not think of disputing. Now, while they are talking about America and their own local atmosphere and temperature, there comes in a second Boston Fahrenheit. The two of the same name look at each other for a moment, and rush together so eagerly that their bulbs are endangered. How well they understand each other! Thirty-two degrees marks the freezing point. Two hundred and twelve marks the boiling point. They have the same scale, the same fixed points, the same record: no wonder they prefer each other's company!

I hope that my reader has followed my illustration, and finished it off for himself. Let me give a few practical examples. An American and an Englishman meet in a foreign land. The Englishman has occasion to mention his weight, which he finds has gained in the course of his travels. "How much is it now?" asks the American. "Fourteen stone. How much do you weigh?" "Within four pounds of two hundred." Neither of them takes at once any clear idea of what the other weighs. The American has never thought of his own, or his friends', or anybody's weight in *stones* of fourteen pounds. The Englishman has never thought of any one's weight in *pounds*. They can calculate very easily with a slip of paper and a pencil, but not the less is their language but half intelligible as they speak and listen. The same thing is in a measure true of other matters they talk about. "It is about as large a space as the Common," says the Boston man. "It is as large as St. James's Park," says the Londoner. "As high as the State House," says the Bostonian, or "as tall as Bunker Hill Monument," or "about as big as the Frog Pond," where the Londoner would take St. Paul's, the Nelson Column, the Serpentine, as his standard of comparison. The difference of scale does not stop here; it runs through a great part of the objects of thought and conversation. An average American and an average Englishman are talking together, and one of them speaks of the beauty of a field of corn. They are thinking of two entirely different objects: one of a billowy level of soft waving wheat, or rye, or barley; the other of a rustling forest of tall, jointed stalks, tossing their plumes and showing their silken epaulettes, as if every stem in the ordered ranks were a soldier in full regimentals. An Englishman planted for the first time in the middle of a well-grown field of Indian corn would feel as much lost as the babes in the wood. Conversation between two Londoners, two New Yorkers, two Bostonians, requires no foot-notes, which is a great advantage in their intercourse.

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To return from my digression and my illustration. I did not do a great deal of shopping myself while in London, being contented to have it done for me. But in the way of looking in at shop windows I did a very large business. Certain windows attracted me by a variety in unity which surpassed anything I have been accustomed to. Thus one window showed every conceivable convenience that could be shaped in ivory, and nothing else. One shop had such a display of magnificent dressing-cases that I should have thought a whole royal family was setting out on its travels. I see the cost of one of them is two hundred and seventy guineas. Thirteen hundred and fifty dollars seems a good deal to pay for a dressing-case.

On the other hand, some of the first-class tradesmen and workmen make no show whatever. The tailor to whom I had credentials, and who proved highly satisfactory to me, as he had proved to some of my countrymen and to Englishmen of high estate, had only one small sign, which was placed in one of his windows, and received his customers in a small room that would have made a closet for one of our stylish merchant tailors. The bootmaker to whom I went on good recommendation had hardly anything about his premises to remind one of his calling. He came into his studio, took my measure very carefully, and made me a pair of what we call Congress boots, which fitted well when once on my feet, but which it cost more trouble to get into and to get out of than I could express my feelings about without dangerously enlarging my limited vocabulary.

Bond Street, Old and New, offered the most inviting windows, and I indulged almost to profligacy in the prolonged inspection of their contents. Stretching my walk along New Bond Street till I came to a great intersecting thoroughfare, I found myself in Oxford Street. Here the character of the shop windows changed at once. Utility and convenience took the place of show and splendor. Here I found various articles of use in a household, some of which were new to me. It is very likely that I could have found most of them in our own Boston Cornhill, but one often overlooks things at home which at once arrest his attention when he sees them in a strange place. I saw great numbers of illuminating contrivances, some of which pleased me by their arrangement of reflectors.

Bryant and May's safety matches seemed to be used everywhere. I procured some in Boston with these names on the box, but the label said they were made in Sweden, and they diffused vapors that were enough to produce asphyxia. I greatly admired some of Dr. Dresser's water-cans and other contrivances, modelled more or less after the antique, but I found an abundant assortment of them here in Boston, and I have one I obtained here more original in design and more serviceable in daily use than any I saw in London. I should have regarded Wolverhampton, as we glided through it, with more interest, if I had known at that time that the inventive Dr. Dresser had his headquarters in that busy-looking town.

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One thing, at least, I learned from my London experience: better a small city where one knows all it has to offer, than a great city where one has no disinterested friend to direct him to the right places to find what he wants. But of course there are some grand magazines which are known all the world over, and which no one should leave London without entering as a looker-on, if not as a purchaser.

There was one place I determined to visit, and one man I meant to see, before returning. The place was a certain book-store or book-shop, and the person was its proprietor, Mr. Bernard Quaritch. I was getting very much pressed for time, and I allowed ten minutes only for my visit. I never had any dealings with Mr. Quaritch, but one of my near relatives had, and I had often received his catalogues, the scale of prices in which had given me an impression almost of sublimity. I found Mr. Bernard Quaritch at No. 15 Piccadilly, and introduced myself, not as one whose name he must know, but rather as a stranger, of whom he might have heard through my relative. The extensive literature of catalogues is probably little known to most of my readers. I do not pretend to claim a thorough acquaintance with it, but I know the luxury of reading good catalogues, and such are those of Mr. Quaritch. I should like to deal with him; for if he wants a handsome price for what he sells, he knows its value, and does not offer the refuse of old libraries, but, on the other hand, all that is most precious in them is pretty sure to pass through his hands, sooner or later.

"Now, Mr. Quaritch," I said, after introducing myself, "I have ten minutes to pass with you. You must not open a book; if you do I am lost, for I shall have to look at every illuminated capital, from the first leaf to the colophon." Mr. Quaritch did not open a single book, but let me look round his establishment, and answered my questions very courteously. It so happened that while I was there a gentleman came in whom I had previously met,—my namesake, Mr. Holmes, the Queen's librarian at Windsor Castle. My ten minutes passed very rapidly in conversation with these two experts in books, the bibliopole and the bibliothecary. No place that I visited made me feel more thoroughly that I was in London, the great central mart of all that is most precious in the world.

Leave at home all your guineas, ye who enter here, would be a good motto to put over his door, unless you have them in plenty and can spare them, in which case *Take all your guineas with you* would be a better one. For you can here get their equivalent, and more than their equivalent, in the choicest products of the press and the finest work of the illuminator, the illustrator, and the binder. You will be sorely tempted. But do not be surprised when you ask the price of the volume you may happen to fancy. You are not dealing with a *bouquiniste* of the Quais, in Paris. You are not foraging in an old

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book-shop of New York or Boston. Do not suppose that I undervalue these dealers in old and rare volumes. Many a much-prized rarity have I obtained from Drake and Burnham and others of my townsmen, and from Denham in New York; and in my student years many a choice volume, sometimes even an Aldus or an Elzevir, have I found among the trumpery spread out on the parapets of the quays. But there is a difference between going out on the Fourth of July with a militia musket to shoot any catbird or "chipmunk" that turns up in a piece of woods within a few miles of our own cities, and shooting partridges in a nobleman's preserves on the First of September. I confess to having felt a certain awe on entering the precincts made sacred by their precious contents. The lord and master of so many *Editiones Principes*, the guardian of this great nursery full of *incunabula*, did not seem to me like a simple tradesman. I felt that I was in the presence of the literary purveyor of royal and imperial libraries, the man before whom millionaires tremble as they calculate, and billionaires pause and consider. I have recently received two of Mr. Quaritch's catalogues, from which I will give my reader an extract or two, to show him what kind of articles this prince of bibliopoles deals in.

Perhaps you would like one of those romances which turned the head of Don Quixote. Here is a volume which will be sure to please you. It is on one of his lesser lists, confined principally to Spanish and Portuguese works:—

"Amadis de Gaula ... folio, gothic letter, FIRST EDITION, unique ... red morocco super extra, *double* with olive morocco, richly gilt, tooled to an elegant Grolier design, gilt edges ... in a neat case."

A pretty present for a scholarly friend. A nice old book to carry home for one's own library. Two hundred pounds—one thousand dollars—will make you the happy owner of this volume.

But if you would have also on your shelves the first edition of the "Cronica del famoso cabalero cid Ruy Diaz Campadero," not "richly gilt," not even bound in leather, but in "cloth boards," you will have to pay two hundred and ten pounds to become its proprietor. After this you will not be frightened by the thought of paying three hundred dollars for a little quarto giving an account of the Virginia Adventurers. You will not shrink from the idea of giving something more than a hundred guineas for a series of Hogarth's plates. But when it comes to Number 1001 in the May catalogue, and you see that if you would possess a first folio Shakespeare, "untouched by the hand of any modern renovator," you must be prepared to pay seven hundred and eighty-five pounds, almost four thousand dollars, for the volume, it would not be surprising if you changed color and your knees shook under you. No doubt some brave man will be found to carry off that prize, in spite of the golden battery which defends it, perhaps to Cincinnati, or Chicago, or San Francisco. But do not be frightened. These Alpine heights of

extravagance climb up from the humble valley where shillings and sixpences are all that are required to make you a purchaser.

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One beauty of the Old World shops is that if a visitor comes back to the place where he left them fifty years before, he finds them, or has a great chance of finding them, just where they stood at his former visit. In driving down to the old city, to the place of business of the Barings, I found many streets little changed. Temple Bar was gone, and the much-abused griffin stood in its place. There was a shop close to Temple Bar, where, in 1834, I had bought some brushes. I had no difficulty in finding Prout's, and I could not do less than go in and buy some more brushes. I did not ask the young man who served me how the old shopkeeper who attended to my wants on the earlier occasion was at this time. But I thought what a different color the locks these brushes smooth show from those that knew their predecessors in the earlier decade!

I ought to have made a second visit to the Tower, so tenderly spoken of by Artemus Ward as "a sweet boon," so vividly remembered by me as the scene of a personal encounter with one of the animals then kept in the Tower menagerie. But the project added a stone to the floor of the underground thoroughfare which is paved with good intentions.

St. Paul's I must and did visit. The most striking addition since I was there is the massive monument to the Duke of Wellington. The great temple looked rather bare and unsympathetic. Poor Dr. Johnson, sitting in semi-nude exposure, looked to me as unhappy as our own half-naked Washington at the national capital. The Judas of Matthew Arnold's poem would have cast his cloak over those marble shoulders, if he had found himself in St. Paul's, and have earned another respite. We brought away little, I fear, except the grand effect of the dome as we looked up at it. It gives us a greater idea of height than the sky itself, which we have become used to looking upon.

A second visit to the National Gallery was made in company with A——. It was the repetition of an attempt at a draught from the Cup of Tantalus. I was glad of a sight of the Botticellis, of which I had heard so much, and others of the more recently acquired paintings of the great masters; of a sweeping glance at the Turners; of a look at the well-remembered Hogarths and the memorable portraits by Sir Joshua. I carried away a confused mass of impressions, much as the soldiers that sack a city go off with all the precious things they can snatch up, huddled into clothes-bags and pillow-cases. I am reminded, too, of Mr. Galton's composite portraits; a thousand glimpses, as one passes through the long halls lined with paintings, all blending in one not unpleasing general effect, out of which emerges from time to time some single distinct image.

In the same way we passed through the exhibition of paintings at the Royal Academy. I noticed that A—— paid special attention to the portraits of young ladies by John Sargent and by Collier, while I was more particularly struck with the startling portrait of an ancient personage in a full suit of wrinkles, such as Rembrandt used to bring out with wonderful effect. Hunting in couples is curious and instructive; the scent for this or that kind of game is sure to be very different in the two individuals.

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I made but two brief visits to the British Museum, and I can easily instruct my reader so that he will have no difficulty, if he will follow my teaching, in learning how not to see it. When he has a spare hour at his disposal, let him drop in at the Museum, and wander among its books and its various collections. He will know as much about it as the fly that buzzes in at one window and out at another. If I were asked whether I brought away anything from my two visits, I should say, Certainly I did. The fly sees some things, not very intelligently, but he cannot help seeing them. The great round reading-room, with its silent students, impressed me very much. I looked at once for the Elgin Marbles, but casts and photographs and engravings had made me familiar with their chief features. I thought I knew something of the sculptures brought from Nineveh, but I was astonished, almost awe-struck, at the sight of those mighty images which mingled with the visions of the Hebrew prophets. I did not marvel more at the skill and labor expended upon them by the Assyrian artists than I did at the enterprise and audacity which had brought them safely from the mounds under which they were buried to the light of day and the heart of a great modern city. I never thought that I should live to see the Birs Nimroud laid open, and the tablets in which the history of Nebuchadnezzar was recorded spread before me. The Empire of the Spade in the world of history was founded at Nineveh by Layard, a great province added to it by Schliemann, and its boundary extended by numerous explorers, some of whom are diligently at work at the present day. I feel very grateful that many of its revelations have been made since I have been a tenant of the travelling residence which holds so many secrets in its recesses.

There is one lesson to be got from a visit of an hour or two to the British Museum,—namely, the fathomless abyss of our own ignorance. One is almost ashamed of his little paltry heartbeats in the presence of the rushing and roaring torrent of Niagara. So if he has published a little book or two, collected a few fossils, or coins, or vases, he is crushed by the vastness of the treasures in the library and the collections of this universe of knowledge.

I have shown how not to see the British museum; I will tell how to see it.

Take lodgings next door to it,—in a garret, if you cannot afford anything better,—and pass all your days at the Museum during the whole period of your natural life. At threescore and ten you will have some faint conception of the contents, significance, and value of this great British institution, which is as nearly as any one spot the *noeud vital* of human civilization, a stab at which by the dagger of anarchy would fitly begin the reign of chaos.

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On the 3d of August, a gentleman, Mr. Wedmore, who had promised to be my guide to certain interesting localities, called for me, and we took a hansom for the old city. The first place we visited was the Temple, a collection of buildings with intricate passages between them, some of the edifices reminding me of our college dormitories. One, however, was a most extraordinary exception,—the wonderful Temple church, or rather the ancient part of it which is left, the round temple. We had some trouble to get into it, but at last succeeded in finding a slip of a girl, the daughter of the janitor, who unlocked the door for us. It affected my imagination strangely to see this girl of a dozen years old, or thereabouts, moving round among the monuments which had kept their place there for some six or seven hundred years; for the church was built in the year 1185, and the most recent of the crusaders' monuments is said to date as far back as 1241. Their effigies have lain in this vast city, and passed unharmed through all its convulsions. The Great Fire must have crackled very loud in their stony ears, and they must have shaken day and night, as the bodies of the victims of the Plague were rattled over the pavements.

Near the Temple church, in a green spot among the buildings, a plain stone laid flat on the turf bears these words: "Here lies Oliver Goldsmith." I believe doubt has been thrown upon the statement that Goldsmith was buried in that place, but, as some poet ought to have written,

Where doubt is disenchantment
'Tis wisdom to believe.

We do not "drop a tear" so often as our Della Cruscan predecessors, but the memory of the author of the "Vicar of Wakefield" stirred my feelings more than a whole army of crusaders would have done. A pretty rough set of filibusters they were, no doubt.

The whole group to which Goldsmith belonged came up before me, and as the centre of that group the great Dr. Johnson; not the Johnson of the "Rambler," or of "The Vanity of Human Wishes," or even of "Rasselas," but Boswell's Johnson, dear to all of us, the "Grand Old Man" of his time, whose foibles we care more for than for most great men's virtues. Fleet Street, which he loved so warmly, was close by. Bolt Court, entered from it, where he lived for many of his last years, and where he died, was the next place to visit. I found Fleet Street a good deal like Washington Street as I remember it in former years. When I came to the place pointed out as Bolt Court, I could hardly believe my eyes that so celebrated a place of residence should be entered by so humble a passageway. I was very sorry to find that No. 3, where he lived, was demolished, and a new building erected in its place. In one of the other houses in this court he is said to have labored on his dictionary. Near by was a building of mean aspect, in which Goldsmith is said to have at one time resided. But my kind conductor did not profess to be well acquainted with the local antiquities of this quarter of London.

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If I had a long future before me, I should like above all things to study London with a dark lantern, so to speak, myself in deepest shadow and all I wanted to see in clearest light. Then I should want time, time, time. For it is a sad fact that sight-seeing as commonly done is one of the most wearying things in the world, and takes the life out of any but the sturdiest or the most elastic natures more efficiently than would a reasonable amount of daily exercise on a treadmill. In my younger days I used to find that a visit to the gallery of the Louvre was followed by more fatigue and exhaustion than the same amount of time spent in walking the wards of a hospital.

Another grand sight there was, not to be overlooked, namely, the Colonial Exhibition. The popularity of this immense show was very great, and we found ourselves, A—— and I, in the midst of a vast throng, made up of respectable and comfortable looking people. It was not strange that the multitude flocked to this exhibition. There was a jungle, with its (stuffed) monsters,—tigers, serpents, elephants; there were carvings which may well have cost a life apiece, and stuffs which none but an empress or a millionairess would dare to look at. All the arts of the East were there in their perfection, and some of the artificers were at their work. We had to content ourselves with a mere look at all these wonders. It was a pity; instead of going to these fine shows tired, sleepy, wanting repose more than anything else, we should have come to them fresh, in good condition, and had many days at our disposal. I learned more in a visit to the Japanese exhibition in Boston than I should have learned in half a dozen half-awake strolls through this multitudinous and most imposing collection of all

“The gorgeous East with richest hand
Showers on her kings,”

and all the masterpieces of its wonder-working artisans.

One of the last visits we paid before leaving London for a week in Paris was to the South Kensington Museum. Think of the mockery of giving one hour to such a collection of works of art and wonders of all kinds! Why should I consider it worth while to say that we went there at all? All manner of objects succeeded each other in a long series of dissolving views, so to speak, nothing or next to nothing having a chance to leave its individual impress. In the battle for life which took place in my memory, as it always does among the multitude of claimants for a permanent hold, I find that two objects came out survivors of the contest. The first is the noble cast of the column of Trajan, vast in dimensions, crowded with history in its most striking and enduring form; a long array of figures representing in unquestioned realism the military aspect of a Roman army. The second case of survival is thus described in the catalogue: “An altar or shrine of a female saint, recently acquired from Padua, is also ascribed to the same sculptor [Donatello]. This very valuable

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work of art had for many years been used as a drinking-trough for horses. A hole has been roughly pierced in it." I thought the figure was the most nearly perfect image of heavenly womanhood that I had ever looked upon, and I could have gladly given my whole hour to sitting—I could almost say kneeling—before it in silent contemplation. I found the curator of the Museum, Mr. Soden Smith, shared my feelings with reference to the celestial loveliness of this figure. Which is best, to live in a country where such a work of art is taken for a horse-trough, or in a country where the products from the studio of a self-taught handicraftsman, equal to the shaping of a horse-trough and not much more, are put forward as works of art?

A little time before my visit to England, before I had even thought of it as a possibility, I had the honor of having two books dedicated to me by two English brother physicians. One of these two gentlemen was Dr. Walshe, of whom I shall speak hereafter; the other was Dr. J. Milner Fothergill. The name Fothergill was familiar to me from my boyhood. My old townsman, Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse, who died in 1846 at the age of ninety-two, had a great deal to say about his relative Dr. John Fothergill, the famous Quaker physician of the last century, of whom Benjamin Franklin said, "I can hardly conceive that a better man ever existed." Dr. and Mrs. Fothergill sent us some beautiful flowers a little before we left, and when I visited him he gave me a medallion of his celebrated kinsman.

London is a place of mysteries. Looking out of one of the windows at the back of Dr. Fothergill's house, I saw an immense wooden blind, such as we have on our windows in summer, but reaching from the ground as high as the top of the neighboring houses. While admitting the air freely, it shut the property to which it belonged completely from sight. I asked the meaning of this extraordinary structure, and learned that it was put up by a great nobleman, of whose subterranean palace and strange seclusion I had before heard. Common report attributed his unwillingness to be seen to a disfiguring malady with which he was said to be afflicted. The story was that he was visible only to his valet. But a lady of quality, whom I met in this country, told me she had seen him, and observed nothing to justify it. These old countries are full of romances and legends and *diableries* of all sorts, in which truth and lies are so mixed that one does not know what to believe. What happens behind the high walls of the old cities is as much a secret as were the doings inside the prisons of the Inquisition.

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Little mistakes sometimes cause us a deal of trouble. This time it was the presence or absence of a single letter which led us to fear that an important package destined to America had miscarried. There were two gentlemen unwittingly involved in the confusion. On inquiring for the package at Messrs. Low, the publishers, Mr. Watts, to whom I thought it had been consigned, was summoned. He knew nothing about it, had never heard of it, was evidently utterly ignorant of us and our affairs. While we were in trouble and uncertainty, our Boston friend, Mr. James R. Osgood, came in. "Oh," said he, "it is Mr. Watt you want, the agent of a Boston firm," and gave us the gentleman's address. I had confounded Mr. Watt's name with Mr. Watts's name. "W'at's in a name?" A great deal sometimes. I wonder if I shall be pardoned for quoting six lines from one of my after-dinner poems of long ago:—

—One vague inflection spoils the whole with doubt,
One trivial letter ruins all, left out;
A knot can change a felon into clay,
A not will save him, spelt without the k;
The smallest word has some unguarded spot,
And danger lurks in i without a dot.

I should find it hard to account for myself during our two short stays in London in the month of August, separated by the week we passed in Paris. The ferment of continued over-excitement, calmed very much by our rest in the various places I have mentioned, had not yet wholly worked itself off. There was some of that everlasting shopping to be done. There were photographs to be taken, a call here and there to be made, a stray visitor now and then, a walk in the morning to get back the use of the limbs which had been too little exercised, and a drive every afternoon to one of the parks, or the Thames Embankment, or other locality. After all this, an honest night's sleep served to round out the day, in which little had been effected besides making a few purchases, writing a few letters, reading the papers, the Boston "Weekly Advertiser" among the rest, and making arrangements for our passage homeward. The sights we saw were looked upon for so short a time, most of them so very superficially, that I am almost ashamed to say that I have been in the midst of them and brought home so little. I remind myself of my boyish amusement of *skipping stones*,—throwing a flat stone so that it shall only touch the water, but touch it in half a dozen places before it comes to rest beneath the smooth surface. The drives we took showed us a thousand objects which arrested our attention. Every street, every bridge, every building, every monument, every strange vehicle, every exceptional personage, was a show which stimulated our curiosity. For we had not as yet changed our Boston eyes for London ones, and very common sights were spectacular and dramatic to us. I remember that one of our New England country boys exclaimed, when he first saw a block of city dwellings, "Darn it all, who ever see anything like that 'are? Sich a lot o' haousen all stuck together!" I must explain that "haousen" used in my early days to be as common an expression in speaking of houses among our country-folk as its phonetic equivalent ever was in Saxony. I felt not unlike that country-boy.

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In thinking of how much I missed seeing, I sometimes have said to myself, Oh, if the carpet of the story in the Arabian Nights would only take me up and carry me to London for one week,—just one short week,—setting me down fresh from quiet, wholesome living, in my usual good condition, and bringing me back at the end of it, what a different account I could give of my experiences! But it is just as well as it is. Younger eyes have studied and will study, more instructed travellers have pictured and will picture, the great metropolis from a hundred different points of view. No person can be said to know London. The most that any one can claim is that he knows something of it. I am now just going to leave it for another great capital, but in my concluding pages I shall return to Great Britain, and give some of the general impressions left by what I saw and heard in our mother country.

VII.

Straitened as we were for time, it was impossible to return home without a glimpse, at least, of Paris. Two precious years of my early manhood were spent there under the reign of Louis Philippe, king of the French, *le Roi Citoyen*. I felt that I must look once more on the places I knew so well,—once more before shutting myself up in the world of recollections. It is hardly necessary to say that a lady can always find a little shopping, and generally a good deal of it, to do in Paris. So it was not difficult to persuade my daughter that a short visit to that city was the next step to be taken.

We left London on the 5th of August to go *via* Folkestone and Boulogne. The passage across the Channel was a very smooth one, and neither of us suffered any inconvenience. Boulogne as seen from the landing did not show to great advantage. I fell to thinking of Brummel, and what a satisfaction it would have been to treat him to a good dinner, and set him talking about the days of the Regency. Boulogne was all Brummel in my associations, just as Calais was all Sterne. I find everywhere that it is a distinctive personality which makes me want to linger round a spot, more than an important historical event. There is not much worth remembering about Brummel; but his audacity, his starched neckcloth, his assumptions and their success, make him a curious subject for the student of human nature.

Leaving London at twenty minutes before ten in the forenoon, we arrived in Paris at six in the afternoon. I could not say that the region of France through which we passed was peculiarly attractive. I saw no fine trees, no pretty cottages, like those so common in England. There was little which an artist would be tempted to sketch, or a traveller by the railroad would be likely to remember.

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The place where we had engaged lodgings was Hotel d'Orient, in the Rue Daunou. The situation was convenient, very near the Place Vendome and the Rue de la Paix. But the house was undergoing renovations which made it as unpresentable as a moulting fowl. Scrubbing, painting of blinds, and other perturbing processes did all they could to make it uncomfortable. The courtyard was always sloppy, and the whole condition of things reminded me forcibly of the state of Mr. Briggs's household while the mason was carrying out the complex operations which began with the application of "a little compo." (I hope all my readers remember Mr. Briggs, whose adventures as told by the pencil of John Leech are not unworthy of comparison with those of Mr. Pickwick as related by Dickens.) Barring these unfortunate conditions, the hotel was commendable, and when in order would be a desirable place of temporary residence.

It was the dead season of Paris, and everything had the air of suspended animation. The solitude of the Place Vendome was something oppressive; I felt, as I trod its lonely sidewalk, as if I were wandering through Tadmor in the Desert. We were indeed as remote, as unfriended,—I will not say as melancholy or as slow,—as Goldsmith by the side of the lazy Scheldt or the wandering Po. Not a soul did either of us know in that great city. Our most intimate relations were with the people of the hotel and with the drivers of the fiacres. These last were a singular looking race of beings. Many of them had a dull red complexion, almost brick color, which must have some general cause. I questioned whether the red wine could have something to do with it. They wore glazed hats, and drove shabby vehicles for the most part; their horses would not compare with those of the London hansom drivers, and they themselves were not generally inviting in aspect, though we met with no incivility from any of them. One, I remember, was very voluble, and over-explained everything, so that we became afraid to ask him a question. They were fellow-creatures with whom one did not naturally enter into active sympathy, and the principal point of interest about the fiacre and its arrangements was whether the horse was fondest of trotting or of walking. In one of our drives we made it a point to call upon our Minister, Mr. McLane, but he was out of town. We did not bring a single letter, but set off exactly as if we were on a picnic.

While A—— and her attendant went about making their purchases, I devoted myself to the sacred and pleasing task of reviving old memories. One of the first places I visited was the house I lived in as a student, which in my English friend's French was designated as "Noomero sankont sank Roo Monshure ler Pranse." I had been told that the whole region thereabout had been transformed by the creation of a new boulevard. I did not find it so. There was the house, the lower part turned into a shop, but there were the windows out of which I used to look along the Rue Vaugirard,—*au troisieme* the first year, *au second* the second year. Why should I go mousing about the place? What would the shopkeeper know about M. Bertrand, my landlord of half a century ago; or his first wife, to whose funeral I went; or his second, to whose bridal I was bidden?

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I ought next to have gone to the hospital La Pitie, where I passed much of my time during those two years. But the people there would not know me, and my old master's name, Louis, is but a dim legend in the wards where he used to teach his faithful band of almost worshipping students. Besides, I have not been among hospital beds for many a year, and my sensibilities are almost as impressible as they were before daily habit had rendered them comparatively callous.

How strange it is to look down on one's venerated teachers, after climbing with the world's progress half a century above the level where we left them! The stethoscope was almost a novelty in those days. The microscope was never mentioned by any clinical instructor I listened to while a medical student. *Nous avons change tout cela* is true of every generation in medicine,—changed oftentimes by improvement, sometimes by fashion or the pendulum-swing from one extreme to another.

On my way back from the hospital I used to stop at the beautiful little church St. Etienne du Mont, and that was one of the first places to which I drove after looking at my student-quarters. All was just as of old. The tapers were burning about the tomb of St. Genevieve. Samson, with the jawbone of the ass, still crouched and sweated, or looked as if he did, under the weight of the pulpit. One might question how well the preacher in the pulpit liked the suggestion of the figure beneath it. The sculptured screen and gallery, the exquisite spiral stairways, the carved figures about the organ, the tablets on the walls,—one in particular relating the fall of two young girls from the gallery, and their miraculous protection from injury,—all these images found their counterpart in my memory. I did not remember how very beautiful is the stained glass in the *charniers*, which must not be overlooked by visitors.

It is not far from St. Etienne du Mont to the Pantheon. I cannot say that there is any odor of sanctity about this great temple, which has been consecrated, if I remember correctly, and, I will not say desecrated, but secularized from time to time, according to the party which happened to be uppermost. I confess that I did not think of it chiefly as a sacred edifice, or as the resting-place, more or less secure, of the "*grands hommes*" to whom it is dedicated. I was thinking much more of Foucault's grand experiment, one of the most sublime visible demonstrations of a great physical fact in the records of science. The reader may not happen to remember it, and will like, perhaps, to be reminded of it. Foucault took advantage of the height of the dome, nearly three hundred feet, and had a heavy weight suspended by a wire from its loftiest point, forming an immense pendulum,—the longest, I suppose, ever constructed. Now a moving body tends to keep its original plane of movement, and so the great pendulum, being set swinging north and south, tended to keep

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on in the same direction. But the earth was moving under it, and as it rolled from west to east the plane running through the north and south poles was every instant changing. Thus the pendulum appeared to change its direction, and its deviation was shown on a graduated arc, or by the marks it left in a little heap of sand which it touched as it swung. This experiment on the great scale has since been repeated on the small scale by the aid of other contrivances.

My thoughts wandered back, naturally enough, to Galileo in the Cathedral at Pisa. It was the swinging of the suspended lamp in that edifice which set his mind working on the laws which govern the action of the pendulum. While he was meditating on this physical problem, the priest may have been holding forth on the dangers of meddling with matters settled by Holy Church, who stood ready to enforce her edicts by the logic of the rack and the fagot. An inference from the above remarks is that what one brings from a church depends very much on what he carries into it.

The next place to visit could be no other than the Cafe Procope. This famous resort is the most ancient and the most celebrated of all the Parisian cafes. Voltaire, the poet J. B. Rousseau, Marmontel, Sainte Foix, Saurin, were among its frequenters in the eighteenth century. It stands in the Rue des Fosses-Saint Germain, now Rue de l'Ancienne Comedie. Several American students, Bostonians and Philadelphians, myself among the number, used to breakfast at this cafe every morning. I have no doubt that I met various celebrities there, but I recall only one name which is likely to be known to most or many of my readers. A delicate-looking man, seated at one of the tables, was pointed out to me as Jouffroy. If I had known as much about him as I learned afterwards, I should have looked at him with more interest. He had one of those imaginative natures, tinged by constitutional melancholy and saddened by ill health, which belong to a certain class of poets and sentimental writers, of which Pascal is a good example, and Cowper another. The world must have seemed very cruel to him. I remember that when he was a candidate for the Assembly, one of the popular cries, as reported by the newspapers of the time, was *A bas le poitrinaire!* His malady soon laid him low enough, for he died in 1842, at the age of forty-six. I must have been very much taken up with my medical studies to have neglected my opportunity of seeing the great statesmen, authors, artists, orators, and men of science outside of the medical profession. Poisson, Arago, and Jouffroy are all I can distinctly recall, among the Frenchmen of eminence whom I had all around me.

The Cafe Procope has been much altered and improved, and bears an inscription telling the date of its establishment, which was in the year 1689. I entered the cafe, which was nearly or quite empty, the usual breakfast hour being past.

Garcon! Une tasse de cafe.

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If there is a river of *mneme* as a counterpart of the river *lethe*, my cup of coffee must have got its water from that stream of memory. If I could borrow that eloquence of Jouffroy which made his hearers turn pale, I might bring up before my readers a long array of pallid ghosts, whom these walls knew well in their earthly habiliments. Only a single one of those I met here still survives. The rest are mostly well-nigh forgotten by all but a few friends, or remembered chiefly in their children and grandchildren.

"How much?" I said to the *garçon* in his native tongue, or what I supposed to be that language. "*Cinq sous*," was his answer. By the laws of sentiment, I ought to have made the ignoble sum five francs, at least. But if I had done so, the waiter would undoubtedly have thought that I had just come from Charenton. Besides, why should I violate the simple habits and traditions of the place, where generation after generation of poor students and threadbare Bohemians had taken their morning coffee and pocketed their two lumps of sugar? It was with a feeling of virile sanity and Roman self-conquest that I paid my five sous, with the small additional fraction which I supposed the waiter to expect, and no more.

So I passed for the last time over the threshold of the Cafe Procope, where Voltaire had matured his plays and Piron sharpened his epigrams; where Jouffroy had battled with his doubts and fears; where, since their time,—since my days of Parisian life,—the terrible storming youth, afterwards renowned as Leon Michel Gambetta, had startled the quiet guests with his noisy eloquence, till the old *habitués* spilled their coffee, and the red-capped students said to each other, "*Il ira loin, ce gaillard-la!*"

But what to me were these shadowy figures by the side of the group of my early friends and companions, that came up before me in all the freshness of their young manhood? The memory of them recalls my own youthful days, and I need not go to Florida to bathe in the fountain of Ponce de Leon.

I have sometimes thought that I love so well the accidents of this temporary terrestrial residence, its endeared localities, its precious affections, its pleasing variety of occupation, its alternations of excited and gratified curiosity, and whatever else comes nearest to the longings of the natural man, that I might be wickedly homesick in a far-off spiritual realm where such toys are done with. But there is a pretty lesson which I have often meditated, taught, not this time by the lilies of the field, but by the fruits of the garden. When, in the June honeymoon of the seasons, the strawberry shows itself among the bridal gifts, many of us exclaim for the hundredth time with Dr. Boteler, "Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did." Nature, who is God's handmaid, does not attempt a rival berry. But by and by a little woolly knob, which looked and saw with wonder

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the strawberry reddening, and perceived the fragrance it diffused all around, begins to fill out, and grow soft and pulpy and sweet; and at last a glow comes to its cheek, and we say the peach is ripening. When Nature has done with it, and delivers it to us in its perfection, we forget all the lesser fruits which have gone before it. If the flavor of the peach and the fragrance of the rose are not found in some fruit and flower which grow by the side of the river of life, an earth-born spirit might be forgiven for missing them. The strawberry and the pink are very delightful, but we could be happy without them.

So, too, we may hope that when the fruits of our brief early season of three or four score years have given us all they can impart for our happiness; when “the love of little maids and berries,” and all other earthly prettinesses, shall “soar and sing,” as Mr. Emerson sweetly reminds us that they all must, we may hope that the abiding felicities of our later life-season may far more than compensate us for all that have taken their flight.

I looked forward with the greatest interest to revisiting the Gallery of the Louvre, accompanied by my long-treasured recollections. I retained a vivid remembrance of many pictures, which had been kept bright by seeing great numbers of reproductions of them in photographs and engravings.

The first thing which struck me was that the pictures had been rearranged in such a way that I could find nothing in the place where I looked for it. But when I found them, they greeted me, so I fancied, like old acquaintances. The meek-looking “Belle Jardiniere” was as lamb-like as ever; the pearly nymph of Correggio invited the stranger’s eye as frankly as of old; Titian’s young man with the glove was the calm, self-contained gentleman I used to admire; the splashy Rubenses, the pallid Guidos, the sunlit Claudes, the shadowy Poussins, the moonlit Girardets, Gericault’s terrible shipwreck of the Medusa, the exquisite home pictures of Gerard Douw and Terburg,—all these and many more have always been on exhibition in my ideal gallery, and I only mention them as the first that happen to suggest themselves. The Museum of the Hotel Cluny is a curious receptacle of antiquities, many of which I looked at with interest; but they made no lasting impression, and have gone into the lumber-room of memory, from which accident may, from time to time, drag out some few of them.

After the poor unsatisfactory towers of Westminster Abbey, the two massive, noble, truly majestic towers of Notre Dame strike the traveller as a crushing contrast. It is not hard to see that one of these grand towers is somewhat larger than the other, but the difference does not interfere with the effect of the imposing front of the cathedral.

I was much pleased to find that I could have entrance to the Sainte Chapelle, which was used, at the time of my earlier visit, as a storehouse of judicial archives, of which there was a vast accumulation.

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With the exception of my call at the office of the American Legation, I made but a single visit to any person in Paris. That person was M. Pasteur. I might have carried a letter to him, for my friend Mrs. Priestley is well acquainted with him, but I had not thought of asking for one. So I presented myself at his headquarters, and was admitted into a courtyard, where a multitude of his patients were gathered. They were of various ages and of many different nationalities, every one of them with the vague terror hanging over him or her. Yet the young people seemed to be cheerful enough, and very much like scholars out of school. I sent my card in to M. Pasteur, who was busily engaged in writing, with his clerks or students about him, and presently he came out and greeted me. I told him I was an American physician, who wished to look in his face and take his hand,—nothing more. I looked in his face, which was that of a thoughtful, hard-worked student, a little past the grand climacteric,—he was born in 1822. I took his hand, which has performed some of the most delicate and daring experiments ever ventured upon, with results of almost incalculable benefit to human industries, and the promise of triumph in the treatment of human disease which prophecy would not have dared to anticipate. I will not say that I have a full belief that hydrophobia—in some respects the most terrible of all diseases—is to be extirpated or rendered tractable by his method of treatment. But of his inventive originality, his unconquerable perseverance, his devotion to the good of mankind, there can be no question. I look upon him as one of the greatest experimenters that ever lived, one of the truest benefactors of his race; and if I made my due obeisance before princes, I felt far more humble in the presence of this great explorer, to whom the God of Nature has entrusted some of her most precious secrets.

There used to be—I can hardly think it still exists—a class of persons who prided themselves on their disbelief in the reality of any such distinct disease as hydrophobia. I never thought it worth while to argue with them, for I have noticed that this disbelief is only a special manifestation of a particular habit of mind. Its advocates will be found, I think, most frequently among “the long-haired men and the short-haired women.” Many of them dispute the efficacy of vaccination. Some are disciples of Hahnemann, some have full faith in the mind-cure, some attend the seances where flowers (bought from the nearest florist) are materialized, and some invest their money in Mrs. Howe’s Bank of Benevolence. Their tendency is to reject the truth which is generally accepted, and to accept the improbable; if the impossible offers itself, they deny the existence of the impossible. Argument with this class of minds is a lever without a fulcrum.

I was glad to leave that company of—patients, still uncertain of their fate,—hoping, yet pursued by their terror: peasants bitten by mad wolves in Siberia; women snapped at by their sulking lap-dogs in London; children from over the water who had been turned upon by the irritable Skye terrier; innocent victims torn by ill-conditioned curs at the doors of the friends they were meaning to visit,—all haunted by the same ghastly fear, all starting from sleep in the same nightmare.

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If canine rabies is a fearful subject to contemplate, there is a sadder and deeper significance in *rabies humana*; in that awful madness of the human race which is marked by a thirst for blood and a rage for destruction. The remembrance of such a distemper which has attacked mankind, especially mankind of the Parisian sub-species, came over me very strongly when I first revisited the Place Vendome. I should have supposed that the last object upon which Parisians would, in their wildest frenzy, have laid violent hands would have been the column with the figure of Napoleon at its summit. We all know what happened in 1871. An artist, we should have thought, would be the last person to lead the iconoclasts in such an outrage. But M. Courbet has attained an immortality like that of Erostratus by the part he took in pulling down the column. It was restored in 1874. I do not question that the work of restoration was well done, but my eyes insisted on finding a fault in some of its lines which was probably in their own refracting media. Fifty years before an artist helped to overthrow the monument to the Emperor, a poet had apostrophized him in the bitterest satire since the days of Juvenal:—

“Encor Napoleon! encor sa grande image!
Ah! que ce rude et dur guerrier
Nous a coute de sang et de pleurs et d’outrage
Pour quelques rameaux de laurier!

* * * * *

“Eh bien! dans tous ces jours d’abaissement, de peine,
Pour tous ces outrages sans nom,
Je n’ai jamais charge qu’un etre de ma haine,...
Sois maudit, O Napoleon!”

After looking at the column of the Place Vendome and recalling these lines of Barbier, I was ready for a visit to the tomb of Napoleon. The poet’s curse had helped me to explain the painter’s frenzy against the bronze record of his achievements and the image at its summit. But I forgot them both as I stood under the dome of the Invalides, and looked upon the massive receptacle which holds the dust of the imperial exile. Two things, at least, Napoleon accomplished: he opened the way for ability of all kinds, and he dealt the death-blow to the divine right of kings and all the abuses which clung to that superstition. If I brought nothing else away from my visit to his mausoleum, I left it impressed with what a man can be when fully equipped by nature, and placed in circumstances where his forces can have full play. “How infinite in faculty! ... in apprehension how like a god!” Such were my reflections; very much, I suppose, like those of the average visitor, and too obviously having nothing to require contradiction or comment.

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Paris as seen by the morning sun of three or four and twenty and Paris in the twilight of the superfluous decade cannot be expected to look exactly alike. I well remember my first breakfast at a Parisian cafe in the spring of 1833. It was in the Place de la Bourse, on a beautiful sunshiny morning. The coffee was nectar, the *flute* was ambrosia, the *brioche* was more than good enough for the Olympians. Such an experience could not repeat itself fifty years later. The first restaurant at which we dined was in the Palais Royal. The place was hot enough to cook an egg. Nothing was very excellent nor very bad; the wine was not so good as they gave us at our hotel in London; the enchanter had not waved his wand over our repast, as he did over my earlier one in the Place de la Bourse, and I had not the slightest desire to pay the garcon thrice his fee on the score of cherished associations.

We dined at our hotel on some days, at different restaurants on others. One day we dined, and dined well, at the old Cafe Anglais, famous in my earlier times for its turbot. Another day we took our dinner at a very celebrated restaurant on the boulevard. One sauce which was served us was a gastronomic symphony, the harmonies of which were new to me and pleasing. But I remember little else of superior excellence. The garcon pocketed the franc I gave him with the air of having expected a napoleon.

Into the mysteries of a lady's shopping in Paris I would not venture to inquire. But A — and I strolled together through the Palais Royal in the evening, and amused ourselves by staring at the glittering windows without being severely tempted. Bond Street had exhausted our susceptibility to the shop-window seduction, and the napoleons did not burn in the pockets where the sovereigns had had time to cool.

Nothing looked more nearly the same as of old than the bridges. The Pont Neuf did not seem to me altered, though we had read in the papers that it was in ruins or seriously injured in consequence of a great flood. The statues had been removed from the Pont Royal, one or two new bridges had been built, but all was natural enough, and I was tempted to look for the old woman, at the end of the Pont des Arts, who used to sell me a bunch of violets, for two or three sous,—such as would cost me a quarter of a dollar in Boston. I did not see the three objects which a popular saying alleges are always to be met on the Pont Neuf: a priest, a soldier, and a white horse.

The weather was hot; we were tired, and did not care to go to the theatres, if any of them were open. The pleasantest hours were those of our afternoon drive in the Champs Elysees and the Bois de Boulogne,—or “the Boulogne Woods,” as our American tailor's wife of the old time called the favorite place for driving. In passing the Place de la Concorde, two objects in especial attracted my attention,—the obelisk, which was lying, when I left it, in the great boat which brought it from the Nile, and the statue of Strasbourg, all covered with wreaths and flags. How like children these Parisians do act; crying “A Berlin, a Berlin!” and when Berlin comes to Paris, and Strasbourg goes back to her old proprietors, instead of taking it quietly, making all this parade of patriotic symbols, the display of which belongs to victory rather than to defeat!

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I was surprised to find the trees in the Bois de Boulogne so well grown: I had an idea that they had been largely sacrificed in the time of the siege. Among the objects which deserve special mention are the shrieking parrots and other birds and the yelping dogs in the grounds of the Society of Acclimatization,—out of the range of which the visitor will be glad to get as soon as possible. A fountain visited by newly married couples and their friends, with a restaurant near by, where the bridal party drink the health of the newly married pair, was an object of curiosity. An unsteadiness of gait was obvious in some of the feasters. At one point in the middle of the road a maenad was flinging her arms about and shrieking as if she were just escaped from a madhouse. But the drive in the Bois was what made Paris tolerable. There were few fine equipages, and few distinguished-looking people in the carriages, but there were quiet groups by the wayside, seeming happy enough; and now and then a pretty face or a wonderful bonnet gave variety to the somewhat *bourgeois* character of the procession of fiacres.

[Illustration: Place de la Concorde]

I suppose I ought to form no opinion at all about the aspect of Paris, any more than I should of an oyster in a month without an *r* in it. We were neither of us in the best mood for sight-seeing, and Paris was not sitting up for company; in fact, she was “not at home.” Remembering all this, I must say that the whole appearance of the city was dull and dreary. London out of season seemed still full of life; Paris out of season looked vacuous and torpid. The recollection of the sorrow, the humiliation, the shame, and the agony she had passed through since I left her picking her way on the arm of the Citizen King, with his old *riflard* over her, rose before me sadly, ominously, as I looked upon the high board fence which surrounded the ruins of the Tuileries. I can understand the impulse which led the red caps to make a wreck of this grand old historical building. “Pull down the nest,” they said, “and the birds will not come back.” But I shudder when I think what “the red fool-fury of the Seine” has done and is believed capable of doing. I think nothing has so profoundly impressed me as the story of the precautions taken to preserve the Venus of Milo from the brutal hands of the mob. A little more violent access of fury, a little more fiery declamation, a few more bottles of *vin bleu*, and the Gallery of the Louvre, with all its treasures of art, compared with which the crown jewels just sold are but pretty pebbles, the market price of which fairly enough expresses their value,—much more, rather, than their true value,—that noble gallery, with all its masterpieces from the hands of Greek sculptors and Italian painters, would have been changed in a single night into a heap of blackened stones and a pile of smoking cinders.

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I love to think that now that the people have, or at least think they have, the power in their own hands, they will outgrow this form of madness, which is almost entitled to the name of a Parisian endemic. Everything looked peaceable and stupid enough during the week I passed in Paris. But among all the fossils which Cuvier found in the Parisian basin, nothing was more monstrous than the *poissardes* of the old Revolution, or the *petroleuses* of the recent Commune, and I fear that the breed is not extinct. An American comes to like Paris as warmly as he comes to love England, after living in it long enough to become accustomed to its ways, and I, like the rest of my countrymen who remember that France was our friend in the hour of need, who remember all the privileges and enjoyments she has freely offered us, who feel that as a sister republic her destinies are of the deepest interest to us, can have no other wish than for her continued safety, order, and prosperity.

We returned to London on the 13th of August by the same route we had followed in going from London to Paris. Our passage was rough, as compared to the former one, and some of the passengers were seasick. We were both fortunate enough to escape that trial of comfort and self-respect.

I can hardly separate the story of the following week from that of the one before we went to Paris. We did a little more shopping and saw a few more sights. I hope that no reader of mine would suppose that I would leave London without seeing Madame Tussaud's exhibition. Our afternoon drives made us familiar with many objects which I always looked upon with pleasure. There was the obelisk, brought from Egypt at the expense of a distinguished and successful medical practitioner, Sir Erasmus Wilson, the eminent dermatologist and author of a manual of anatomy which for many years was my favorite text-book. There was "The Monument," which characterizes itself by having no prefix to its generic name. I enjoyed looking at and driving round it, and thinking over Pepys's lively account of the Great Fire, and speculating as to where Pudding Lane and Pie Corner stood, and recalling Pope's lines which I used to read at school, wondering what was the meaning of the second one:—

"Where London's column, pointing to the skies
Like a tall bully, lifts its head and lies."

The week passed away rapidly enough, and we made ready for our departure. It was no easy matter to get a passage home, but we had at last settled it that we would return in the same vessel in which we had at first engaged our passage to Liverpool, the *Catalonia*. But we were fortunate enough to have found an active and efficient friend in our townsman, Mr. Montgomery Sears, who procured staterooms for us in a much swifter vessel, to sail on the 21st for New York, the *Aurania*.

Our last visitor in London was the faithful friend who had been the first to welcome us, Lady Harcourt, in whose kind attentions I felt the warmth of my old friendship with her admired and honored father and her greatly beloved mother. I had recently visited their

place of rest in the Kensal Green Cemetery, recalling with tenderest emotions the many years in which I had enjoyed their companionship.

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On the 19th of August we left London for Liverpool, and on our arrival took lodgings at the Adelphi Hotel.

The kindness with which I had been welcomed, when I first arrived at Liverpool, had left a deep impression upon my mind. It seemed very ungrateful to leave that noble city, which had met me in some of its most esteemed representatives with a warm grasp of the hand even before my foot had touched English soil, without staying to thank my new friends, who would have it that they were old friends. But I was entirely unfit for enjoying any company when I landed. I took care, therefore, to allow sufficient time in Liverpool, before sailing for home, to meet such friends, old and recent, as cared to make or renew acquaintance with me. In the afternoon of the 20th we held a reception, at which a hundred visitors, more or less, presented themselves, and we had a very sociable hour or two together. The Vice-Consul, Mr. Sewall, in the enforced absence of his principal, Mr. Russell, paid us every attention, and was very agreeable. In the evening I was entertained at a great banquet given by the Philomathean Society. This flourishing institution enrolls among its members a large proportion of the most cultivated and intelligent gentlemen of Liverpool. I enjoyed the meeting very highly, listened to pleasant things which were said about myself, and answered in the unpremeditated words which came to my lips and were cordially received. I could have wished to see more of Liverpool, but I found time only to visit the great exhibition, then open. The one class of objects which captivated my attention was the magnificent series of models of steamboats and other vessels. I did not look upon them with the eye of an expert, but the great number and variety of these beautiful miniature ships and boats excited my admiration.

On the 21st of August we went on board the Aurania. Everything was done to make us comfortable. Many old acquaintances, friends, and family connections were our fellow-passengers. As for myself, I passed through the same trying experiences as those which I have recorded as characterizing my outward passage. Our greatest trouble during the passage was from fog. The frequency of collisions, of late years, tends to make everybody nervous when they hear the fog-whistle shrieking. This sound and the sight of the boats are not good for timid people. Fortunately, no one was particularly excitable, or if so, no one betrayed any special uneasiness.

On the evening of the 27th we had an entertainment, in which Miss Kellogg sang and I read several poems. A very pretty sum was realized for some charity,—I forget what,—and the affair was voted highly successful. The next day, the 28th, we were creeping towards our harbor through one of those dense fogs which are more dangerous than the old rocks of the sirens, or Scylla and Charybdis, or the much-lied-about maelstrom.

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On Sunday, the 29th of August, my birthday, we arrived in New York. In these days of birthday-books our chronology is not a matter of secret history, in case we have been much before the public. I found a great cake had been made ready for me, in which the number of my summers was represented by a ring of raisins which made me feel like Methuselah. A beautiful bouquet which had been miraculously preserved for the occasion was for the first time displayed. It came from Dr. Beach, of Boston, *via* London. Such is the story, and I can only suppose that the sweet little cherub who sits up aloft had taken special charge of it, or it would have long ago withered.

We slept at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, which we found fresh, sweet, bright,—it must have been recently rejuvenated, I thought. The next day we took the train for New Haven, Springfield, and Boston, and that night slept in our own beds, thankful to find ourselves safe at home after our summer excursion, which had brought us so many experiences delightful to remember, so many friendships which have made life better worth living.

In the following section I shall give some of the general impressions which this excursion has left in my memory, and a few suggestions derived from them.

VIII.

My reader was fairly forewarned that this narrative was to be more like a chapter of autobiography than the record of a tourist. In the language of philosophy, it is written from a subjective, not an objective, point of view. It is not exactly a “Sentimental Journey,” though there are warm passages here and there which end with notes of admiration. I remind myself now and then of certain other travellers: of Benjamin of Tudela, going from the hospitalities of one son of Abraham to another; of John Buncler, finding the loveliest of women under every roof that sheltered him; sometimes, perhaps, of that tipsy rhymester whose record of his good and bad fortunes at the hands of landlords and landladies is enlivened by an occasional touch of humor, which makes it palatable to coarse literary feeders. But in truth these papers have many of the characteristics of private letters written home to friends. They *are* written for friends, rather than for a public which cares nothing about the writer. I knew that there were many such whom it would please to know where the writer went, whom he saw and what he saw, and how he was impressed by persons and things.

If I were planning to make a tour of the United Kingdom, and could command the service of all the wise men I count or have counted among my friends, I would go with such a retinue summoned from the ranks of the living and the dead as no prince ever carried with him. I would ask Mr. Lowell to go with me among scholars, where I could be a listener; Mr. Norton to visit the cathedrals with me; Professor Gray to be my botanical oracle; Professor Agassiz to be always

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ready to answer questions about the geological strata and their fossils; Dr. Jeffries Wyman to point out and interpret the common objects which present themselves to a sharp-eyed observer; and Mr. Boyd Dawkins to pilot me among the caves and cairns. Then I should want a better pair of eyes and a better pair of ears, and, while I was reorganizing, perhaps a quicker apprehension and a more retentive memory; in short, a new outfit, bodily and mental. But Nature does not care to mend old shoes; she prefers a new pair, and a young person to stand in them.

What a great book one could make, with such aids, and how many would fling it down, and take up anything in preference, provided only that it were short enough; even this slight record, for want of something shorter!

Not only did I feel sure that many friends would like to read our itinerary, but another motive prompted me to tell the simple story of our travels. I could not receive such kindness, so great evidences of friendly regard, without a strong desire, amounting to a positive necessity, for the expression of my grateful sense of all that had been done for us. Individually, I felt it, of course, as a most pleasing experience. But I believed it to have a more important significance as an illustration of the cordial feeling existing between England and America. I know that many of my countrymen felt the attentions paid to me as if they themselves shared them with me. I have lived through many strata of feeling in America towards England. My parents, full-blooded Americans, were both born subjects of King George III. Both learned in their early years to look upon Britons as the enemies of their country. A good deal of the old hostility lingered through my boyhood, and this was largely intensified by the war of 1812. After nearly half a century this feeling had in great measure subsided, when the War of Secession called forth expressions of sympathy with the slaveholding States which surprised, shocked, and deeply wounded the lovers of liberty and of England in the Northern States. A new generation is outgrowing that alienation. More and more the older and younger nations are getting to be proud and really fond of each other. There is no shorter road to a mother's heart than to speak pleasantly to her child, and caress it, and call it pretty names. No matter whether the child is something remarkable or not, it is *her* child, and that is enough. It may be made too much of, but that is not its mother's fault. If I could believe that every attention paid me was due simply to my being an American, I should feel honored and happy in being one of the humbler media through which the good-will of a great and generous country reached the heart of a far-off people not always in friendly relations with her.

I have named many of the friends who did everything to make our stay in England and Scotland agreeable. The unforeseen shortening of my visit must account for many disappointments to myself, and some, it may be, to others.

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First in the list of lost opportunities was that of making my bow to the Queen. I had the honor of receiving a card with the invitation to meet Her Majesty at a garden-party, but we were travelling when it was sent, and it arrived too late.

I was very sorry not to meet Mr. Ruskin, to whom Mr. Norton had given me a note of introduction. At the time when we were hoping to see him it was thought that he was too ill to receive visitors, but he has since written me that he regretted we did not carry out our intention. I lamented my being too late to see once more two gentlemen from whom I should have been sure of a kind welcome,—Lord Houghton and Dean Stanley, both of whom I had met in Boston. Even if I had stayed out the whole time I had intended to remain abroad, I should undoubtedly have failed to see many persons and many places that I must always feel sorry for having missed. But as it is, I will not try to count all that I lost; let me rather be thankful that I met so many friends whom it was a pleasure to know personally, and saw so much that it is a pleasure to remember.

I find that many of the places I most wish to see are those associated with the memory of some individual, generally one of the generations more or less in advance of my own. One of the first places I should go to, in a leisurely tour, would be Selborne. Gilbert White was not a poet, neither was he a great systematic naturalist. But he used his eyes on the world about him; he found occupation and happiness in his daily walks, and won as large a measure of immortality within the confines of his little village as he could have gained in exploring the sources of the Nile. I should make a solemn pilgrimage to the little town of Eyam, in Derbyshire, where the Reverend Mr. Mompesson, the hero of the plague of 1665, and his wife, its heroine and its victim, lie buried. I should like to follow the traces of Cowper at Olney and of Bunyan at Elstow. I found an intense interest in the Reverend Mr. Alger's account of his visit to the Vale of Llangollen, where Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Ponsonby passed their peaceful days in long, uninterrupted friendship. Of course the haunts of Burns, the home of Scott, the whole region made sacred by Wordsworth and the group to which he belongs would be so many shrines to which I should make pilgrimages.

I own, also, to having something of the melodramatic taste so notable in Victor Hugo. I admired the noble facade of Wells cathedral and the grand old episcopal palace, but I begged the bishop to show me the place where his predecessor, Bishop Kidder, and his wife, were killed by the falling chimney in the "Great Storm."—I wanted to go to Devizes, and see the monument in the market-place, where Ruth Pierce was struck dead with a lie in her mouth,—about all which I had read in early boyhood. I contented myself with a photograph of it which my friend, Mr. Willett, went to Devizes and bought for me.

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There are twenty different Englands, every one of which it would be a delight to visit, and I should hardly know with which of them to begin.

The few remarks I have to make on what I saw and heard have nothing beyond the value of first impressions; but as I have already said, if these are simply given, without pretending to be anything more, they are not worthless. At least they can do little harm, and may sometimes amuse a reader whom they fail to instruct. But we must all beware of hasty conclusions. If a foreigner of limited intelligence were whirled through England on the railways, he would naturally come to the conclusion that the chief product of that country is *mustard*, and that its most celebrated people are Mr. Keen and Mr. Colman, whose great advertising boards, yellow letters on a black ground, and black letters on a yellow ground, stare the traveller in the face at every station.

Of the climate, as I knew it in May and the summer months, I will only say that if I had any illusions about May and June in England, my fireplace would have been ample evidence that I was entirely disenchanted. The Derby day, the 26th of May, was most chilly and uncomfortable; at the garden-party at Kensington Palace, on the 4th of June, it was cold enough to make hot drinks and warm wraps a comfort, if not a necessity. I was thankful to have passed through these two ordeals without ill consequences. Drizzly, or damp, or cold, cloudy days were the rule rather than the exception, while we were in London. We had some few hot days, especially at Stratford, in the early part of July. In London an umbrella is as often carried as a cane; in Paris "*un homme a parapluie*" is, or used to be, supposed to carry that useful article because he does not keep and cannot hire a carriage of some sort. He may therefore be safely considered a person, and not a personage.

The soil of England does not seem to be worn out, to judge by the wonderful verdure and the luxuriance of vegetation. It contains a great museum of geological specimens, and a series of historical strata which are among the most instructive of human records. I do not pretend to much knowledge of geology. The most interesting geological objects in our New England that I can think of are the great boulders and the scratched and smoothed surface of the rocks; the fossil footprints in the valley of the Connecticut; the trilobites found at Quincy. But the readers of Hugh Miller remember what a variety of fossils he found in the stratified rocks of his little island, and the museums are full of just such objects. When it comes to underground historical relics, the poverty of New England as compared with the wealth of Old England is very striking. Stratum after stratum carries the explorer through the relics of successive invaders. After passing through the characteristic traces of different peoples, he comes upon a Roman pavement, and below this the weapons

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and ornaments of a tribe of ancient Britons. One cannot strike a spade into the earth, in Great Britain, without a fair chance of some surprise in the form of a Saxon coin, or a Celtic implement, or a Roman fibula. Nobody expects any such pleasing surprise in a New England field. One must be content with an Indian arrowhead or two, now and then a pestle and mortar, or a stone pipe. A top dressing of antiquity is all he can look for. The soil is not humanized enough to be interesting; whereas in England so much of it has been trodden by human feet, built on in the form of human habitations, nay, has been itself a part of preceding generations of human beings, that it is in a kind of dumb sympathy with those who tread its turf. Perhaps it is not literally true that

One half her soil has walked the rest
In poets, heroes, martyrs, sages;

but so many of all these lie within it that the whole mother island is a *campo santo* to all who can claim the same blood as that which runs in the veins of her unweaned children.

The flora and fauna of a country, as seen from railroad trains and carriages, are not likely to be very accurately or exhaustively studied. I spoke of the trees I noticed between Chester and London somewhat slightly. But I did not form any hasty opinions from what happened to catch my eye. Afterwards, in the oaks and elms of Windsor Park, in the elms of Cambridge and Oxford and Salisbury, in the lindens of Stratford, in the various noble trees, including the cedar of Lebanon, in which Tennyson very justly felt a pride as their owner, I saw enough to make me glad that I had not uttered any rash generalizations on the strength of my first glance. The most interesting comparison I made was between the New England and the Old England elms. It is not necessary to cross the ocean to do this, as we have both varieties growing side by side in our parks,—on Boston Common, for instance. It is wonderful to note how people will lie about big trees. There must be as many as a dozen trees, each of which calls itself the “largest elm in New England.” In my younger days, when I never travelled without a measuring-tape in my pocket, it amused me to see how meek one of the great swaggering elms would look when it saw the fatal measure begin to unreel itself. It seemed to me that the leaves actually trembled as the inexorable band encircled the trunk in *the smallest place it could find*, which is the only safe rule. The English elm (*Ulmus campestris*) as we see it in Boston comes out a little earlier perhaps, than our own, but the difference is slight. It holds its leaves long after our elms are bare. It grows upward, with abundant dark foliage, while ours spreads, sometimes a hundred and twenty feet, and often droops like a weeping willow. The English elm looks like a much more robust tree than ours, yet they tell me it is very fragile, and that its limbs are constantly breaking off in high winds, just as happens with our

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native elms. Ours is not a very long-lived tree; between two and three hundred years is, I think, the longest life that can be hoped for it. Since I have heard of the fragility of the English elm, which is the fatal fault of our own, I have questioned whether it can claim a greater longevity than ours. There is a hint of a typical difference in the American and the Englishman which I have long recognized in the two elms as compared to each other. It may be fanciful, but I have thought that the compactness and robustness about the English elm, which are replaced by the long, tapering limbs and willowy grace and far-spreading reach of our own, might find a certain parallelism in the people, especially the females of the two countries.

I saw no horse-chestnut trees equal to those I remember in Salem, and especially to one in Rockport, which is the largest and finest I have ever seen; no willows like those I pass in my daily drives.

On the other hand, I think I never looked upon a Lombardy poplar equal to one I saw in Cambridge, England. This tree seems to flourish in England much more than with us.

I do not remember any remarkable beeches, though there are some very famous ones, especially the Burnham beeches.

No apple-trees I saw in England compare with one next my own door, and there are many others as fine in the neighborhood.

I have spoken of the pleasure I had in seeing by the roadside primroses, cowslips, and daisies. Dandelions, buttercups, hawkweed looked much as ours do at home. Wild roses also grew at the roadside,—smaller and paler, I thought, than ours.

I cannot make a chapter like the famous one on Iceland, from my own limited observation: *There are no snakes in England*. I can say that I found two small caterpillars on my overcoat, in coming from Lord Tennyson's grounds. If they had stayed on his premises, they might perhaps have developed into "purple emperors," or spread "the tiger moth's deep damasked wings" before the enraptured eyes of the noble poet. These two caterpillars and a few house-flies are all I saw, heard, or felt, by day or night, of the native fauna of England, except a few birds,—rooks, starlings, a blackbird, and the larks of Salisbury Plain just as they rose; for I lost sight of them almost immediately. I neither heard nor saw the nightingales, to my great regret. They had been singing at Oxford a short time before my visit to that place. The only song I heard was that which I have mentioned, the double note of the cuckoo.

England is the paradise of horses. They are bred, fed, trained, groomed, housed, cared for, in a way to remind one of the Houyhnhnms, and strikingly contrasting with the conditions of life among the wretched classes whose existence is hardly more tolerable



than that of those *quasi*-human beings under whose name it pleased the fierce satirist to degrade humanity. The horses that are driven in the hansoms of London are the best I have seen in any public conveyance. I cannot say as much of those in the four-wheelers.

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Broad streets, sometimes, as in Bond Street, with narrow sidewalks; *islands* for refuge in the middle of many of them; deep areas; lofty houses; high walls; plants in the windows; frequent open spaces; policemen at near intervals, always polite in my experience,—such are my recollections of the quarter I most frequented.

Are the English taller, stouter, lustier, ruddier, healthier, than our New England people? If I gave my impression, I should say that they are. Among the wealthier class, tall, athletic-looking men and stately, well-developed women are more common, I am compelled to think, than with us. I met in company at different times five gentlemen, each of whom would be conspicuous in any crowd for his stature and proportions. We could match their proportions, however, in the persons of well-known Bostonians. To see how it was with other classes, I walked in the Strand one Sunday, and noted carefully the men and women I met. I was surprised to see how many of both sexes were of low stature. I counted in the course of a few minutes' walk no less than twenty of these little people. I set this experience against the other. Neither is convincing. The anthropologists will settle the question of man in the Old and in the New World before many decades have passed.

In walking the fashionable streets of London one can hardly fail to be struck with the well-dressed look of gentlemen of all ages. The special point in which the Londoner excels all other citizens I am conversant with is the hat. I have not forgotten Beranger's

"Quoique leurs chapeaux soient bien laids
*** ***! moi, j'aime les Anglais;"

but in spite of it I believe in the English hat as the best thing of its ugly kind. As for the Englishman's feeling with reference to it, a foreigner might be pardoned for thinking it was his fetich, a North American Indian for looking at it as taking the place of his own medicine-bag. It is a common thing for the Englishman to say his prayers into it, as he sits down in his pew. Can it be that this imparts a religious character to the article? However this may be, the true Londoner's hat is cared for as reverentially as a High-Church altar. Far off its coming shines. I was always impressed by the fact that even with us a well-bred gentleman in reduced circumstances never forgets to keep his beaver well brushed, and I remember that long ago I spoke of the hat as the *ultimum moriens* of what we used to call gentility,—the last thing to perish in the decay of a gentleman's outfit. His hat is as sacred to an Englishman as his beard to a Mussulman.

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In looking at the churches and the monuments which I saw in London and elsewhere in England, certain resemblances, comparisons, parallels, contrasts, and suggestions obtruded themselves upon my consciousness. We have one steeple in Boston which to my eyes seems absolutely perfect: that of the Central Church, at the corner of Newbury and Berkeley streets. Its resemblance to the spire of Salisbury had always struck me. On mentioning this to the late Mr. Richardson, the very distinguished architect, he said to me that he thought it more nearly like that of the Cathedral of Chartres. One of our best living architects agreed with me as to its similarity to that of Salisbury. It does not copy either exactly, but, if it had twice its actual dimensions, would compare well with the best of the two, if one is better than the other. Saint-Martin's-in-the-Fields made me feel as if I were in Boston. Our Arlington Street Church copies it pretty closely, but Mr. Gilman left out the columns. I could not admire the Nelson Column, nor that which lends monumental distinction to the Duke of York. After Trajan's and that of the Place Vendome, each of which is a permanent and precious historical record, accounting sufficiently for its existence, there is something very unsatisfactory in these nude cylinders. That to the Duke of York might well have the confession of the needy knife grinder as an inscription on its base. I confess in all honesty that I vastly prefer the monument commemorating the fire to either of them. That *has* a story to tell and tells it, —with a lie or two added, according to Pope, but it tells it in language and symbol.

As for the kind of monument such as I see from my library window standing on the summit of Bunker Hill, and have recently seen for the first time at Washington, on a larger scale, I own that I think a built-up obelisk a poor affair as compared with an Egyptian monolith of the same form. It was a triumph of skill to quarry, to shape, to transport, to cover with expressive symbols, to erect, such a stone as that which has been transferred to the Thames Embankment, or that which now stands in Central Park, New York. Each of its four sides is a page of history, written so as to endure through scores of centuries. A built-up obelisk requires very little more than brute labor. A child can shape its model from a carrot or a parsnip, and set it up in miniature with blocks of loaf sugar. It teaches nothing, and the stranger must go to his guide-book to know what it is there for. I was led into many reflections by a sight of the Washington Monument. I found that it was almost the same thing at a mile's distance as the Bunker Hill Monument at half a mile's distance; and unless the eye had some means of measuring the space between itself and the stone shaft, one was about as good as the other. A mound like that of Marathon or that at Waterloo, a cairn, even a shaft of the most durable form and material, are fit memorials of the

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place where a great battle was fought. They seem less appropriate as monuments to individuals. I doubt the durability of these piecemeal obelisks, and when I think of that vast inverted pendulum vibrating in an earthquake, I am glad that I do not live in its shadow. The Washington Monument is more than a hundred feet higher than Salisbury steeple, but it does not look to me so high as that, because the mind has nothing to climb by. But the forming taste of the country revels in superlatives, and if we could only have the deepest artesian well in the world sunk by the side of the tallest column in all creation, the admiring, not overcritical patriot would be happier than ever was the Athenian when he looked up at the newly erected Parthenon.

I made a few miscellaneous observations which may be worth recording. One of these was the fact of the repetition of the types of men and women with which I was familiar at home. Every now and then I met a new acquaintance whom I felt that I had seen before. Presently I identified him with his double on the other side. I had found long ago that even among Frenchmen I often fell in with persons whose counterparts I had known in America. I began to feel as if Nature turned out a batch of human beings for every locality of any importance, very much as a workman makes a set of chessmen. If I had lived a little longer in London, I am confident that I should have met myself, as I did actually meet so many others who were duplicates of those long known to me.

I met Mr. Galton for a few moments, but I had no long conversation with him. If he should ask me to say how many faces I can visually recall, I should have to own that there are very few such. The two pictures which I have already referred to, those of Erasmus and of Dr. Johnson, come up more distinctly before my mind's eye than almost any faces of the living. My mental retina has, I fear, lost much of its sensitiveness. Long and repeated exposure of an object of any kind, in a strong light, is necessary to fix its image.

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Among the gratifications that awaited me in England and Scotland was that of meeting many before unseen friends with whom I had been in correspondence. I have spoken of Mr. John Bellows. I should have been glad to meet Mr. William Smith, the Yorkshire antiquary, who has sent me many of his antiquarian and biographical writings and publications. I do not think I saw Mr. David Gilmour, of Paisley, whose "Paisley Folk" and other writings have given me great pleasure. But I did have the satisfaction of meeting Professor Gairdner, of Glasgow, to whose writings my attention was first called by my revered instructor, the late Dr. James Jackson, and with whom I had occasionally corresponded. I ought to have met Dr. Martineau. I should have visited the Reverend Stopford Brooke, who could have told me much that I should have liked to hear of dear friends of mine, of whom he saw a great deal in their

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hours of trial. The Reverend Mr. Voysey, whose fearless rationalism can hardly give him popularity among the conservative people I saw most of, paid me the compliment of calling, as he had often done of sending me his published papers. Now and then some less known correspondent would reveal himself or herself in bodily presence. Let most authors beware of showing themselves to those who have idealized them, and let readers not be too anxious to see in the flesh those whom they have idealized. When I was a boy, I read Miss Edgeworth's "L'Amie Inconnue." I have learned to appreciate its meaning in later years by abundant experiences, and I have often felt unwilling to substitute my real for my imaginary presence. I will add here that I must have met a considerable number of persons, in the crowd at our reception and elsewhere, whose names I failed to hear, and whom I consequently did not recognize as the authors of books I had read, or of letters I had received. The story of my experience with the lark accounts for a good deal of what seemed like negligence or forgetfulness, and which must be, not pardoned, but sighed over.

I visited several of the well-known clubs, either by special invitation, or accompanied by a member. The Athenaeum was particularly attentive, but I was unable to avail myself of the privileges it laid freely open before me during my stay in London. Other clubs I looked in upon were: the Reform Club, where I had the pleasure of dining at a large party given by the very distinguished Dr. Morell Mackenzie; the Rabelais, of which, as I before related, I have been long a member, and which was one of the first places where I dined; the Saville; the Savage; the St. George's. I saw next to nothing of the proper club-life of London, but it seemed to me that the Athenaeum must be a very desirable place of resort to the educated Londoner, and no doubt each of the many institutions of this kind with which London abounds has its special attractions.

My obligations to my brethren of the medical profession are too numerous to be mentioned in detail. Almost the first visit I paid was one to my old friend and fellow-student in Paris, Dr. Walter Hayle Walshe. After more than half a century's separation, two young friends, now old friends, must not expect to find each other just the same as when they parted. Dr. Walshe thought he should have known me; my eyes are not so good as his, and I would not answer for them and for my memory. That he should have dedicated his recent original and ingenious work to me, before I had thought of visiting England, was a most gratifying circumstance. I have mentioned the hospitalities extended to me by various distinguished members of the medical profession, but I have not before referred to the readiness with which, on all occasions, when professional advice was needed, it was always given with more than willingness, rather as if it were a pleasure to give it. I could not have accepted

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such favors as I received had I not remembered that I, in my time, had given my services freely for the benefit of those of my own calling. If I refer to two names among many, it is for special reasons. Dr. Wilson Fox, the distinguished and widely known practitioner, who showed us great kindness, has since died, and this passing tribute is due to his memory. I have before spoken of the exceptional favor we owed to Dr. and Mrs. Priestley. It enabled us to leave London feeling that we had tried, at least, to show our grateful sense of all the attentions bestowed upon us. If there were any whom we overlooked, among the guests we wished to honor, all such accidental omissions will be pardoned, I feel sure, by those who know how great and bewildering is the pressure of social life in London.

I was, no doubt, often more or less confused, in my perceptions, by the large number of persons whom I met in society. I found the dinner-parties, as Mr. Lowell told me I should, very much like the same entertainments among my home acquaintances. I have not the gift of silence, and I am not a bad listener, yet I brought away next to nothing from dinner-parties where I had said and heard enough to fill out a magazine article. After I was introduced to a lady, the conversation frequently began somewhat in this way:—

“It is a long time since you have been in this country, I believe?”

“It is a *very* long time: fifty years and more.”

“You find great changes in London, of course, I suppose?”

“Not so great as you might think. The Tower is where I left it. The Abbey is much as I remember it. Northumberland House with its lion is gone, but Charing Cross is in the same old place. My attention is drawn especially to the things which have not changed,—those which I remember.”

That stream was quickly dried up. Conversation soon found other springs. I never knew the talk to get heated or noisy. Religion and politics rarely came up, and never in any controversial way. The bitterest politician I met at table was a quadruped,—a lady’s dog,—who refused a desirable morsel offered him in the name of Mr. Gladstone, but snapped up another instantly on being told that it came from Queen Victoria. I recall many pleasant and some delightful talks at the dinner-table; one in particular, with the most charming woman in England. I wonder if she remembers how very lovely and agreeable she was? Possibly she may be able to identify herself.

People—the right kind of people—meet at a dinner-party as two ships meet and pass each other at sea. They exchange a few signals; ask each other’s reckoning, where from, where bound; perhaps one supplies the other with a little food or a few dainties;

then they part, to see each other no more. But one or both may remember the hour passed together all their days, just as I recollect our brief parley with the brig Economist, of Leith, from Sierra Leone, in mid ocean, in the spring of 1833.

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I am very far from despising the science of gastronomy, but if I wished to institute a comparison between the tables of England and America, I could not do it without eating my way through the four seasons. I will say that I did not think the bread from the bakers' shops was so good as our own. It was very generally tough and hard, and even the muffins were not always so tender and delicate as they ought to be. I got impatient one day, and sent out for some biscuits. They brought some very excellent ones, which we much preferred to the tough bread. They proved to be the so-called "seafoam" biscuit from New York. The potatoes never came on the table looking like new fallen snow, as we have them at home. We were surprised to find both mutton and beef overdone, according to our American taste. The French talk about the Briton's "*bifteck saignant*," but we never saw anything cooked so as to be, as we should say, "rare." The tart is national with the English, as the pie is national with us. I never saw on an English table that excellent substitute for both, called the Washington pie, in memory of him whom we honor as first in pies, as well as in war and in the hearts of his countrymen.

The truth is that I gave very little thought to the things set before me, in the excitement of constantly changing agreeable companionship. I understand perfectly the feeling of the good liver in Punch, who suggests to the lady next him that their host has one of the best cooks in London, and that it might therefore be well to defer all conversation until they adjourned to the drawing-room. I preferred the conversation, and adjourned, indefinitely, the careful appreciation of the *menu*. I think if I could devote a year to it, I might be able to make out a graduated scale of articles of food, taking a well-boiled fresh egg as the unit of gastronomic value, but I leave this scientific task to some future observer.

The most remarkable piece of European handiwork I remember was the steel chair at Longford Castle. The most startling and frightful work of man I ever saw or expect to see was another specimen of work in steel, said to have been taken from one of the infernal chambers of the Spanish Inquisition. It was a complex mechanism, which grasped the body and the head of the heretic or other victim, and by means of many ingeniously arranged screws and levers was capable of pressing, stretching, piercing, rending, crushing, all the most sensitive portions of the human body, one at a time or many at once. The famous Virgin, whose embrace drove a hundred knives into the body of the poor wretch she took in her arms, was an angel of mercy compared to this masterpiece of devilish enginery.

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Ingenuity is much better shown in contrivances for making our daily life more comfortable. I was on the lookout for everything that promised to be a convenience. I carried out two things which seemed to be new to the Londoners: the Star Razor, which I have praised so freely, and still find equal to all my commendations; and the mucilage pencil, which is a very handy implement to keep on the writer's desk or table. I found a contrivance for protecting the hand in drawing corks, which all who are their own butlers will appreciate, and luminous match-boxes which really shine brightly in the dark, and that after a year's usage; whereas one professing to shine by night, which I bought in Boston, is only visible by borrowed light. I wanted a very fine-grained hone, and inquired for it at a hardware store, where they kept everything in their line of the best quality. I brought away a very pretty but very small stone, for which I paid a large price. The stone was from Arkansas, and I need not have bought in London what would have been easily obtained at a dozen or more stores in Boston. It was a renewal of my experience with the seafoam biscuit. "Know thyself" and the things about thee, and "Take the good the gods provide thee," if thou wilt only keep thine eyes open, are two safe precepts.

Who is there of English descent among us that does not feel with Cowper,

"England, with all thy faults, I love thee still"?

Our recently naturalized fellow-citizens, of a different blood and different religion, must not suppose that we are going to forget our inborn love for the mother to whom we owe our being. Protestant England and Protestant America are coming nearer and nearer to each other every year. The interchange of the two peoples is more and more frequent, and there are many reasons why it is likely to continue increasing.

Hawthorne says in a letter to Longfellow, "Why don't you come over, being now a man of leisure and with nothing to keep you in America? If I were in your position, I think I should make my home on this side of the water,—though always with an indefinite and never-to-be-executed intention to go back and die in my native land. America is a good land for young people, but not for those who are past their prime. ... A man of individuality and refinement can certainly live far more comfortably here—provided he has the means to live at all—than in New England. Be it owned, however, that I sometimes feel a tug at my very heart-strings when I think of my old home and friends." This was written from Liverpool in 1854.

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We must not forget that our fathers were exiles from their dearly loved native land, driven by causes which no longer exist. "Freedom to worship God" is found in England as fully as in America, in our day. In placing the Atlantic between themselves and the Old World civilizations they made an enormous sacrifice. It is true that the wonderful advance of our people in all the arts and accomplishments which make life agreeable has transformed the wilderness into a home where men and women can live comfortably, elegantly, happily, if they are of contented disposition; and without that they can be happy nowhere. What better provision can be made for a mortal man than such as our own Boston can afford its wealthy children? A palace on Commonwealth Avenue or on Beacon Street; a country-place at Framingham or Lenox; a seaside residence at Nahant, Beverly Farms, Newport, or Bar Harbor; a pew at Trinity or King's Chapel; a tomb at Mount Auburn or Forest Hills; with the prospect of a memorial stained window after his lamented demise,—is not this a pretty programme to offer a candidate for human existence?

Give him all these advantages, and he will still be longing to cross the water, to get back to that old home of his fathers, so delightful in itself, so infinitely desirable on account of its nearness to Paris, to Geneva, to Rome, to all that is most interesting in Europe. The less wealthy, less cultivated, less fastidious class of Americans are not so much haunted by these longings. But the convenience of living in the Old World is so great, and it is such a trial and such a risk to keep crossing the ocean, that it seems altogether likely that a considerable current of re-migration will gradually develop itself among our people.

Some find the climate of the other side of the Atlantic suits them better than their own. As the New England characteristics are gradually superseded by those of other races, other forms of belief, and other associations, the time may come when a New Englander will feel more as if he were among his own people in London than in one of our seaboard cities. The vast majority of our people love their country too well and are too proud of it to be willing to expatriate themselves. But going back to our old home, to find ourselves among the relatives from whom we have been separated for a few generations, is not like transferring ourselves to a land where another language is spoken, and where there are no ties of blood and no common religious or political traditions. I, for one, being myself as inveterately rooted an American of the Bostonian variety as ever saw himself mirrored in the Frog Pond, hope that the exchanges of emigrants and re-migrants will be much more evenly balanced by and by than at present. I hope that more Englishmen like James Smithson will help to build up our scientific and literary institutions. I hope that more Americans like George Peabody will call down the blessings of the English people by noble

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benefactions to the cause of charity. It was with deep feelings of pride and gratitude that I looked upon the bust of Longfellow, holding its place among the monuments of England's greatest and best children. I see with equal pleasure and pride that one of our own large-hearted countrymen has honored the memory of three English poets, Milton, and Herbert, and Cowper, by the gift of two beautiful stained windows, and with still ampler munificence is erecting a stately fountain in the birthplace of Shakespeare. Such acts as these make us feel more and more the truth of the generous sentiment which closes the ode of Washington Allston, "America to Great Britain:" We are one!

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I have told our story with the help of my daughter's diary, and often aided by her recollections. Having enjoyed so much, I am desirous that my countrymen and countrywomen should share my good fortune with me. I hesitated at first about printing names in full, but when I remembered that we received nothing but the most overflowing hospitality and the most considerate kindness from all we met, I felt sure that I could not offend by telling my readers who the friends were that made England a second home to us. If any one of them is disturbed by such reference as I have made to him or to her, I most sincerely apologize for the liberty I have taken. I am far more afraid that through sheer forgetfulness I have left unmentioned many to whom I was and still remain under obligations.

If I were asked what I think of people's travelling after the commonly accepted natural term of life is completed, I should say that everything depends on constitution and habit. The old soldier says, in speaking of crossing the Beresina, where the men had to work in the freezing stream constructing the bridges, "Faut du temperament pour cela!" I often thought of this expression, in the damp and chilly weather which not rarely makes English people wish they were in Italy. I escaped unharmed from the windy gusts at Epsom and the nipping chill of the Kensington garden-party; but if a score of my contemporaries had been there with me, there would not improbably have been a funeral or two within a week. If, however, the super-septuagenarian is used to exposures, if he is an old sportsman or an old officer not retired from active service, he may expect to elude the pneumonia which follows his footsteps whenever he wanders far from his fireside. But to a person of well-advanced years coming from a counting-room, a library, or a studio, the risk is considerable, unless he is of hardy natural constitution; any other will do well to remember, "Faut du temperament pour cela!"

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Suppose there to be a reasonable chance that he will come home alive, what is the use of one's going to Europe after his senses have lost their acuteness, and his mind no longer retains its full measure of sensibilities and vigor? I should say that the visit to Europe under those circumstances was much the same thing as the *petit verre*,—the little glass of Chartreuse, or Maraschino, or Curacoa, or, if you will, of plain Cognac, at the end of a long banquet. One has gone through many courses, which repose in the safe recesses of his economy. He has swallowed his coffee, and still there is a little corner left with its craving unappeased. Then comes the drop of liqueur, *chasse-café*, which is the last thing the stomach has a right to expect. It warms, it comforts, it exhales its benediction on all that has gone before. So the trip to Europe may not do much in the way of instructing the wearied and overloaded intelligence, but it gives it a fillip which makes it feel young again for a little while.

Let not the too mature traveller think it will change any of his habits. It will interrupt his routine for a while, and then he will settle down into his former self, and be just what he was before. I brought home a pair of shoes I had made in London; they do not fit like those I had before I left, and I rarely wear them. It is just so with the new habits I formed and the old ones I left behind me.

But am I not glad, for my own sake, that I went? Certainly I have every reason to be, and I feel that the visit is likely to be a great source of happiness for my remaining days. But there is a higher source of satisfaction. If the kindness shown me strengthens the slenderest link that binds us in affection to that ancestral country which is, and I trust will always be to her descendants, "dear Mother England," that alone justifies my record of it, and to think it is so is more than reward enough. If, in addition, this account of our summer experiences is a source of pleasure to many friends, and of pain to no one, as I trust will prove to be the fact, I hope I need never regret giving to the public the pages which are meant more especially for readers who have a personal interest in the writer.